LINGUISTIC VARIATION AND PRONUNCIATION IN ELEMENTARY COURSES OF PORTUGUESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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▪ ABSTRACT: this article discusses pronunciation in elementary courses of Portuguese as a second language. It is argued that pronunciation is a critical component of the language, and therefore should be taught in elementary classes. Based on empirical evidence from linguistic studies, we list some of the most important topics of the Brazilian Portuguese sound system that students should learn. Following that, we analyze six textbooks of Portuguese as a second language. We observe whether or not these materials teach pronunciation, as well as what kind of theoretical and practical components each textbook offers. We come to the conclusion that there is much difference in how textbooks discuss pronunciation: some of them do not provide any information on phonetics and phonology, whereas others present charts with correspondences between sounds and letters of the language, and others devote more time to theoretical explanation and exercises that can surely help students acquire more proficiency, both in speaking and understanding others. This connection between relevant aspects that must be taught in Portuguese as a second language and the comparison between textbooks allows us to argue that teaching pronunciation is a crucial component for our students' literacy while learning Portuguese as a second language.

▪ KEYWORDS: Portuguese as a second language; pronunciation in second language acquisition; phonetics and phonology; teaching materials of Portuguese as a second language.

Introduction

The literature on dialectal variation in Brazilian Portuguese (BP) is quite rich. Several works report research on various topics (ABAURRE; RODRIGUES, 2002, CASTILHO, 2010, BAGNO, 2013, OLIVEIRA JÚNIOR, 2019). More specifically, there is ample body of research analyzing BP phonetics and phonology (see, for example, CRISTÓFARO-SILVA, 2012, PERINI, 2004). This topic is likely to be one of the most studied areas in BP Linguistics. Unfortunately, not much research on that

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area is applied to teaching pronunciation of Portuguese as a Foreign Language (PFL). As we shall see later, among the various PFL textbooks available, there is plenty inconsistency about the pronunciation topics taught and exercises offered to help students acquire more proficiency in speaking and understanding BP. It is as though the range of scientific studies on BP is not taken into account in PFL manuals. In order to establish connections between academic knowledge and textbooks in this area, this article organizes a collection of studies on BP phonetics and phonology that points to which aspects of BP pronunciation should be emphasized in PFL classes. Furthermore, we analyze how six PFL textbooks address BP pronunciation.

Preliminary Remarks

When thinking about teaching pronunciation, some important questions arise: Why teach pronunciation? Is this really necessary? The simple answer is that pronunciation should be taught in PFL classes for a few reasons: 1) When a foreigner has a clear pronunciation, they are more easily understood by speakers of the target language, whether native or non-native; 2) When a person has clear pronunciation, they are also able to better understand the words spoken, even when they are not familiar with them. As a result, someone who learns pronunciation will more likely be able to figure out the spelling of a word they have not been exposed to before; 3) Another reason to teach pronunciation is that the phonetic-phonological rules of a language are a productive system that applies to all the contexts they describe (PINKER, 1999). In most Brazilian dialects, for example, *ti* will be pronounced as [tʃi], and *te* in coda position is also [tʃi] (CÂMARA JÚNIOR, 1977; SIMÕES, 2008). By learning pronunciation rules, students have a reliable source that will guide them to correctly produce these and other sounds. Additionally, this will provide them with a relatively stable correspondence between graphemes and phonemes.

When teaching pronunciation, it is also crucial to discuss linguistic variation. Since Brazil is a big country with a wide range of dialects, the other question that needs to be addressed is what specific dialect or dialect characteristics should we teach. Should we teach palatalization of *t* and *d*, as in [tʃ]ia and [dʒ]ia (PERINI, 2004)? For letter *r,* what kind of phonetic realization should we adopt: glottal, retroflex, velar, vibrant, tap (CRISTÓFARO-SILVA, 2012; PERINI, 2010; OLIVEIRA LIMA, 2013)? All language dialects are obviously equally valid. A student going to São Paulo's countryside will learn retroflex *r* in coda. Another student going to certain southern regions might learn the vibrant *r*. Dialect variation occurs as a consequence of the cultural richness of Brazil as a whole. Although there are variables of greater or lesser socioeconomic prestige (LABOV, 1973, 2001), speaking a specific dialect does not prevent students from being understood by people from other dialects. If they identify themselves more with one specific geographic region of Brazil, students can make voluntary dialect changes based on that cultural identity. This is always an option available to those who learn not only

BP, but any foreign language. Spanish speakers may or may not, for example, choose to use the pronunciation of dental *s* as in *zapato* or *corazón*, which is typical of certain regions of Spain. That same person, later on, can change their dialect because they are in a Hispanic country in Latin America that does not have this feature. The language learner can be more or less aware of these adjustments.

What we are discussing here, however, is what are the phonetic-phonological characteristics of BP that we should teach our PFL students. In order to make that decision, a few points need to be discussed. In cases where there is variation (such as palatalization of *t* and *d*), it is helpful to consider the frequency of each of these variables (BYBEE, 1985, 2002). This information is crucial to guide our option towards one variable or the other. In this article, it is argued that PFL students should be informed about how BP varies in pronunciation according to factors such as geography, social class, and age group. Nonetheless, they should systematically be taught the most frequent phonetic-phonological aspects in the language, as this also facilitates listening comprehension. In order to determine which variables are the most recurrent, it is important to have access to linguistic studies that analyze each topic (e.g. CRISTÓFARO-SILVA, 2012; CALLOU *et al.*, 1996). The following section presents a non-exhaustive list of these topics and the main studies that have been carried out in this regard. This information, based on data collected and analyzed from various Brazilian dialects (BUENO, 1944; CÂMARA JÚNIOR, 1977) will help us decide which aspects of pronunciation to teach in elementary PFL courses.

It is also important to ponder about when we should start teaching pronunciation. We propose that this topic should be introduced at the beginning of elementary courses. In the context of this article, "elementary courses" should be understood as PFL introductory courses, also known as "Elementary Portuguese I" and "Elementary Portuguese II". It is crucial, however, to teach pronunciation in all levels of Portuguese courses, but that ideally should start in the first semester of systematic exposure to the Portuguese language. Why so early? Because, once students master pronunciation rules, they will be learning new vocabulary with a pronunciation compatible with BP. This prevents fossilization of incorrect pronunciation patterns (SELINKER, 2015; HAN, 2004). It also ensures that in the classroom students and teachers will be using the same pronunciation guidelines, therefore all input in class is consistent, thus facilitating understanding among students. In the first few days of classes, students are not expected to immediately speak all the words correctly. Gradually, with exercises and teacher's feedback, students will have a better grasp of the BP sound system. In more advanced courses, students will already have more exposure to different linguistic variables, so that is when more details on pronunciation could be provided. The teacher can even show videos that have fewer common dialects in BP, which will make students aware of the dialect and cultural differences prevalent in Brazil. On the other hand, in elementary courses, it is important to stick to more basic information. Providing students with too much detail about pronunciation is not productive given the amount of vocabulary and grammar topics that they are expected to handle alongside the sound system.

One final aspect to consider when teaching BP pronunciation is: is it necessary to use phonetic symbols to teach pronunciation? Those certainly make the description of the sounds more precise, since each symbol corresponds to a specific sound (CRISTÓFARO-SILVA, 2012). However, using the phonetic alphabet is not crucial. As long as the teacher can explain the details of the phonetic or phonological aspect they are addressing, the phonetic symbols are not necessary.

In the following section, we present ample body of research that will help teachers decide which BP pronunciation traits should be taught in PFL courses. We also propose some practical strategies to teach pronunciation.

BP Pronunciation Applied to PFL

Prior to the discussion of specific issues related to teaching BP pronunciation, we would like to discuss a few general strategies to teach pronunciation. These are based mostly on our own practice in the classroom.

- Although pronunciation rules should be taught at the beginning of elementary courses, mastering grapheme-phoneme correspondences requires some cognitive processing. Especially during the first weeks of classes, the teacher may have to monitor and answer questions the students may have in that regard. In order to track their progress in pronunciation, students can be encouraged to record their own reading of the same text at the beginning and at the end of the semester. This comparison will show the aspects they have improved, and what they still need to work on;
- For non-native speakers, the main reference to pronounce sounds is written language. Although the correspondence between graphemes and phonemes is not straightforward in BP, spelling should still be the main source to teach pronunciation (MORAIS, 2010). Thus, teaching pronunciation should start from a connection with the spelling system, showing the sounds associated with certain letters in specific contexts (CAGLIARI; CAGLIARI, 1999);
- If the teacher knows how to speak the students' native language, they can use information from that language to help students understand the articulation of some sounds. When teaching the sounds for letter *r*, for example, it is always useful to show English-speaking students that this pronunciation in BP (in specific contexts) is similar to that of *h* in word-initial position, as in **_h_**_ouse_ and **_h_**_ome_. This comparison between the native language and the target language definitely helps students better articulate certain sounds.

In the following paragraphs, we will address several aspects of the BP sound system. Our goal is to make a list of topics teachers could address when teaching BP pronunciation.

We begin our remarks by discussing a rule that overlaps with another one and, therefore, could be one of the first ones to be taught. We are talking about the pronunciation of the vowels and *e* and *o* in unstressed final coda position, as in *film**e*** 'film', *telefon**e*** 'telephone', *livr**o*** 'book', *bol**o*** 'cake'. This rule will impact the palatalization of *t* and *d*, therefore it is important to address it first. Câmara Júnior (1977), Perini (2004), Simões (2008) agree that, in final postonic position, *e* and *o* are pronounced, respectively, [ɪ] and [ʊ],[1] as in the following examples: *film**e*** film[ɪ] 'film', *telefon**e*** telefon[ɪ] 'telephone', *livr**o*** livr[ʊ] 'book', *bol**o*** bol[ʊ] 'cake', and so on. Although the unreduced pronunciation still remains in some southern dialects (HORA, [2009]), there is evidence that, in unstressed final coda position, *e* and *o* are reduced in most BP dialects. This rule is very important, especially for native Spanish speakers, who tend to pronounce these two segments as [e] and [o] because of the interference of their native language. Students should be warned that this same reduction also occurs in plural forms: *film**e**s* film[ɪ]s 'films', *telefon**e**s* telefon[ɪ]s 'telephones', *livr**o**s* livr[ʊ]s 'books', *bol**o**s* bol[ʊ]s 'cakes'. The same is true in nasal diphthongs: *aviã**o*** aviã[ʊ] 'airplane', *mã**e*** mã[ɪ] 'mother', *mã**e**s* mã[ɪ]s 'mothers'. These details are not transparent to non-native speakers, so it is important to bring them to our students' attention.

The second BP pronunciation rule to be taught can be about *t* and *d*. In some BP dialects, these segments are usually palatalized when followed by *i*, as in ***ti***a [tʃ]ia 'aunt' and ***di***a [dʒ]ia 'day'. In other contexts, these letters are pronounced as [t] or [d], without palatalization. Perini (2010, p. 343) states that "*A pronúncia [tʃ] do **t** antes do som [i], típica da região Sudeste, parece estar ganhando terreno também no Sul. No Norte e Nordeste, não é comum, e o **t** ali se pronuncia [t] em todas as posições.*"[2] Simões (2008, p. 54) comments on the "*pronúncia especial*" of *t* and *d* followed by [i]. Perini (2004) points out that [tʃ] and [dʒ] occur almost exclusively before [i] or [j] (semivowel), spelled as *i* or *e*. He also emphasizes that these alophones replace [t] and [d], which never occur immediately before [i]. There is evidence that allophonic contexts for *t* and *d* are also one of the crucial aspects to be taught in PFL. While teaching this aspect, it is important to mention two contexts that are not so clear in which palatalization also occurs: 1) There is an overlap of the previous rule (about the reduction of *e* and *o* in final coda) and this one. Because of that, words like *tar**de*** 'afternoon' and *noi**te*** 'night' will have their final *e* reduced to [ɪ], which will ultimately also lead to the palatalization of *t* and *d* in these contexts. Explaining this overlap of rules, Perini (2010, p. 343) states, "*O som [i] geralmente é representado na escrita pela letra **i**. Mas a letra **e**, quando átona, é muitas vezes pronunciada [i], e nesses casos o **t** também se pronuncia [tʃ]*";[3] 2) When words ending with *te* are given suffixes, the palatalization

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[1] The phonetic symbols used in the article are those proposed by Cristófaro-Silva (2012).

[2] "The pronunciation [tʃ] for **t** before sound [i], typical in Southeast Brazil, seems to be gaining more space also in the South. In North and Northeastern areas of the country, **t** is pronounced [t] in all contexts." (PERINI, 2010, p. 343, our translation)..

[3] "Sound [i] is usually spelled as **i**. But letter **e**, when unstressed, is often pronounced as [i], and in these cases **t** is also pronounced as [tʃ]". (PERINI, 2010, p. 343, our translation).

of *t* also occurs: *frequente* 'frequent'- *frequentemente* 'frequently, often' frequen[tʃĩ] mente, *eloquente* 'eloquent' – *eloquentemente* 'eloquently' eloquen[tʃĩ]mente.

The third point about the BP sound system, and perhaps the most controversial one due to its wide variation, is the pronunciation of the rhotic sounds. According to each dialect, letter *r* can have quite a few phonetic realizations. The chart below, based on Cristófaro-Silva (2012) shows those possibilities, along with examples and appropriate contexts in which each sound occurs:

Chart 1 – Phonetic realizations for letter *r* in BP

Symbol	Classification	Examples	Translation	Context
h	Voiceless glotal fricative	*rato* *carro* *mar* *carta*	mouse car sea letter	word-initial position RR word-final syllable-final position before a voiceless consonant
ɦ	Voiced glotal fricative	*árvore*	tree	syllable-final position preceded by a voiced consonant
X	Voiceless velar fricative	*rato* *carro* *mar* *carta*	mouse car sea letter	word-initial position RR word-final syllable-final position before a voiceless consonant
ɣ	Voiced velar fricative	*árvore*	tree	syllable-final position preceded by a voiced consonant
ɾ	Voiced alveolar tap	*cara* *prata* *mar* *carta*	face silver sea letter	intervocalic position tautosyllabic consonant clusters coda (São Paulo's dialect)
ɻ	Voiced alveolar retroflex	*mar* *carta*	sea letter	end of a word or syllable (countryside dialect)

Source: Cristófaro-Silva (2012, p. 38-39).

Given all possibilities that Chart 1 displays, it is hard to choose which *r* variables to teach in PFL. As we can see, the choice for one sound or another can be determined by word context, but also by dialect variation. The sounds [h] and [ɦ], typically found in Belo Horizonte's dialect, for example, alternate with [X] and [ɣ], which, in the same word contexts, are used in the Carioca dialect. In cases like that, teaching these four sounds would not be necessary, as a dialect typically adopts either one pair or the other. The map below shows the distribution of rhotic sounds according to Brazilian regions (OLIVEIRA LIMA, 2013, p. 87):

Figure 1 – Distribution of rhotics in coda in Brazilian states
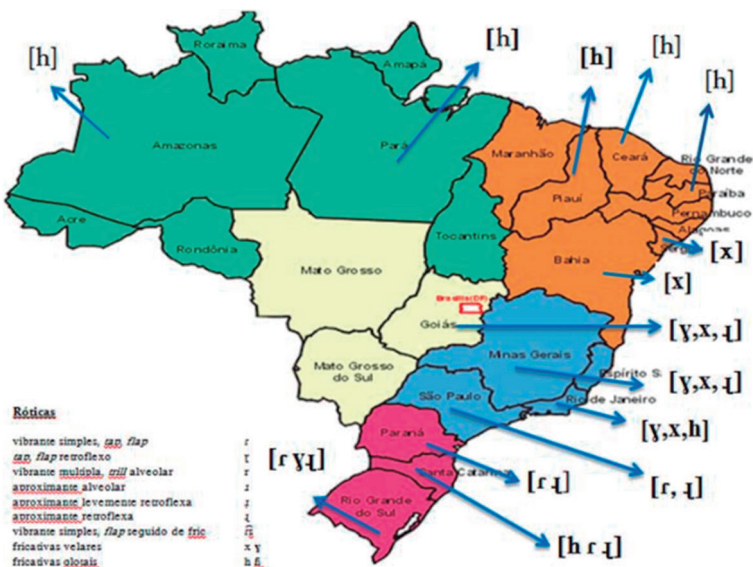
Source: Oliveira Lima (2013, p. 87).

Despite all variables that this map displays, it is interesting to notice that the glottal sound [h] is prevalent in coda position in the Northern and Northeastern regions, except for the states of Bahia and Sergipe. In the Central-West, Southeast and South, there is an alternation between [h] and [X], in addition to the usage of other variables, such as retroflex *r*. In the Central-West region, the glottal variable was not registered, but it was found in the Southeast and Southern states as well. Another interesting point to consider is that, in terms of population, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo are the largest Brazilian cities. Because of that maybe it would make sense to adopt the dialect of one of these two capitals. The issue, however, is that these two cities have very different options in terms of rhotics. In Rio de Janeiro, for example, the map shows the variables [h, X, ɣ, ɾ], depending on the geographic variation within the state itself and also on word context. Additionally, there is also the idiolect, the fact that each individual has their particular linguistic history and therefore there may be specific speakers with different pronunciation characteristics. Bueno (1944) comments that the aspirated rhotic [h] is more frequent in the states of Alagoas, Pernambuco, and in the city of Rio de Janeiro. Perini (2010) mentions that the variables [h] and [ɾ] are prevalent in BP. To sum up our conclusions about the rhotic sounds in PFL teaching, the following remarks should be pointed out: 1) The sound tap ([ɾ]) must be present in the phonetic system because it is distinctive in intervocalic contexts (*caro* 'expensive') and tautosyllabic consonant clusters (*criança* 'child'). None of the other possibilities could fit in these two contexts; 2) On the other hand, in dialects where the alternation is largely between the pairs [h, ɦ] and [X, ɣ], the map above displays the highest prevalence of [h] in coda. Due to

these factors, and also in line with Perini (2010), we propose a rhotic system with the sounds [h] and [ɾ], distributed in the following contexts:

Chart 2 – Contexts for [h] and [ɾ]

Symbol	Description	Contexts	Examples	Translation
h	Voiceless glottal fricative	word-initial position	*rato*	mouse
		RR	*carro*	car
		medial coda	*porta*	door
		final coda	*cor*	color
		followed by *l, n, s*	*Israel*	Israel
ɾ	Voiced alveolar tap	between vowels	*cara*	face
		tautosyllabic consonant cluster	*prata*	silver

Source: Author's elaboration.

This system, with only two possibilities of phonetic realization for rhotics, and also with exclusive contexts, makes it easier for students to learn these sounds. It is important to mention that these are not the only possibilities, but this is a rather simplified version of the rhotic inventory. Later on, as they familiarize themselves with Brazil, our students can definitely choose other variables.

Another aspect to consider with regards to the rhotics is the fact that, in infinitive forms, final *r* is typically deleted. Leite de Vasconcelos (1928) was the first to register that. Oliveira (1983), interviewing 50 speakers from Belo Horizonte, observed that *r* was deleted in 81.59% of cases in verb codas. Perini (2010, p. 344) also addresses *r* deletion in verbal forms, and mentions that this makes "[com que] *partir* e *parti* se pronunciem da mesma maneira".[4] The author also comments that "*Essa omissão não é característica da fala "inculta", mas é universal no Brasil, em todas as regiões e todas as classes sociais. O **r** final só é pronunciado em falas muito formais (como em um discurso em público)...*"[5] Since *r* deletion in infinitive forms is so widespread in BP, our students should also be warned about that. That will make them speak BP closer to how it is spoken in real life.

Moving on to sibilant sounds, in Rio de Janeiro, in coda position, *s*, *x* and *z* are phonetically realized as [ʃ] or [ʒ], depending on whether the following consonant is voiceless or voiced: *festa* fe[ʃ]ta 'party' or *desde* [ʒ]de 'since'. Callou *et al.* (1996), analyzing data from NURC, observed that alveopalatal variables are more frequent in the cities of Rio de Janeiro and Recife. Other Brazilian regions have a preference

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4   "*partir* 'to leave' and *parti* "I left" be pronounced in the same way." (PERINI, 2010, p. 343, our translation).

5   "This deletion is not characteristic of just "careless" speech, but it is universal in Brazil in all regions and social classes. Final **r** is pronounced only in very formal speech (as in a public speech)…" (PERINI, 2010, p. 344, our translation).

for the alveolar variables [s] and [z] in coda. Considering that the pronunciation of [ʃ] or [ʒ] in coda is a characteristic of only a few cities in Brazil, it would be wiser to teach [s] and [z] in this position. The sounds [ʃ] and [ʒ] will be taught in their contexts where there is little to no linguistic variation, such as in *chuva* [ʃ]uva 'rain' or *janela* [ʒ]anela 'window'. There is no need to add these sounds in coda position. The sounds [s] and [z] can be used as the standard pronunciation for *s*, *x* and *z* in coda. The sound [s] occurs before voiceless consonants, like *festa* fe[s]ta 'party', and [z] occurs before voiced consonants, as in *desde* de[z]de 'since'.

Another crucial point to be taught in PFL pronunciation refers to letter *l*. In onset position or as the second letter in tautosyllabic consonant clusters, *l* represents the sound [l], as in *livro* [l]ivro 'book', and *blusa* b[l]usa 'blouse'. On the other hand, both in medial or final coda, in most BP dialects, *l* is vocalized as [w], as in *sal* sa[w] 'salt' and *soldado* so[w]dado 'soldier' (CRISTÓFARO-SILVA, 2012). Hora ([2009], p. 36) states that "*A variante semivocalizada [w], tanto em posição medial como em posição final, é a mais recorrente no Brasil. De norte a sul, é possível encontrá-la, e sua utilização independe de sexo, idade ou escolaridade.*"[6] Quandt (2004) and Hora (2007) also show evidence for *l* vocalization in coda. There are, therefore, linguistic studies that support the decision to teach this trait of BP. This distinction between *l* in onset and coda is very important, especially for English or Spanish speakers, since in these two languages letter *l* represents the sound [l] in both contexts, which is not true for BP.

One of the most challenging aspects of BP pronunciation is the nasal quality of vowels. Students should be aware of the contexts in which vowels should be nasal or nasalized. In order to do that, a distinction should be made between letters *m* and *n* at the beginning of a syllable, as in *amor* 'love' and *sino* 'bell', and the same letters in middle or final coda position, as in *antigo* 'old' and *ontem* 'yesterday'. In the first two cases, *m* and *n* start syllables (PERINI, 2004). In the last two examples, *m* and *n* indicate that the previous vowel is a nasal one, that is, those are not phonemes. We should also mention the digraph *nh*, which always makes the preceding vowel nasal: *banho* b[ã]nho 'bath' and *sonho* s[õ]nho 'dream'. It should also be noticed that BP has five nasal vowels and that the tilde (˜) indicates that *a* or *o* are nasal vowels in the diphthongs -ão(s), as in *pão*(*s*) 'bread', -*ãe*(*s*), as in *mãe*(*s*) 'mothers' e -*ões*, as in *aviões* 'airplanes'. Additionally, letter *m* in final coda usually forms a diphthong with the previous vowel, as in *amam* '(they) love', *bem* 'well', *bom* 'good (masculine, singular)', etc. Perini (2004, p. 53) mentions, for example, that "The sound [ẽ] never occurs word-finally; there it is replaced by the diphthong [ẽj]." When *m* is in final coda, English native speakers often have the impulse to press their lips against each other as if they were going to pronounce a bilabial consonant, as it is the case in their native language. To avoid this type of mispronunciation, these spelling correspondences should be gradually explained and reinforced. Starting from the spelling of nasal sounds, it is

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6   "The semivocalized variant [w], both in medial and final position, is the most recurrent in Brazil. From North to South, it is possible to find it, and its usage is regardless of sex, age group and years studied." (HORA, [2009], p. 36, our translation).

easier to pronounce these sounds in the appropriate contexts. It is also necessary to offer practical exercises that encourage students to realize that in nasal sounds the air current comes out simultaneously through the nose and mouth (CRISTÓFARO-SILVA, 2012).

Overall, the topics discussed in this section are the most relevant ones to be taught in elementary PFL courses. In the next section, we will analyze how textbooks address the BP phonetic-phonological system.

How Pronunciation is Addressed by PFL Textbooks

Based on what was discussed in the previous sections, six BP textbooks were chosen to analyze how they address pronunciation. All the books were published no more than 10 years ago. This was an important factor for two reasons: 1) First, books published more recently are more likely to still be adopted in PFL courses. Older books are often gradually discarded by schools and universities as newer ones are published; 2) More recent books are probably guided by more up-to-date pedagogies and perhaps present more modern approaches to teaching pronunciation. Below we present a chronological list by year of publication of the six selected books. The order displayed below is not necessarily the same one that will be followed when the textbooks are analyzed.

1. Simões (2008). *Pois não: Brazilian Portuguese course for Spanish speakers, with basic reference grammar*[7]
2. Slade (2012). *Bom dia, Brasil! Português básico para estrangeiros*
3. Jouët-Pastré *et al*. (2013a). *Ponto de encontro*: Portuguese as a world language and its workbook for Brazilian Portuguese: Jouët-Pastré *et al*. (2013b). *Brazilian Portuguese student activities manual for Ponto de encontro*: Portuguese as a world language
4. Otuki de Ponce (2014). *Como está o seu português?*
5. Harumi de Ponce *et al.* (2017). *Fale português* (volume 1)
6. Huback *et al*. (2018). *Gramática básica do português brasileiro*

None of these materials is specific to teach PFL pronunciation. These are textbooks used in elementary-level courses to address grammar and vocabulary. Some manuals, such as *Ponto de Encontro: Portuguese as a world language* (JOUËT-PASTRÉ *et al.*, 2013a), can be split in more than one semester, so we will only analyze their first chapters. Although these books are not specifically targeted at teaching pronunciation, it would be important for them to present some information about the BP phonetic-phonological system. By doing so, students will know how to correctly pronounce

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[7]   This textbook was actually published more than 10 years ago. Although this goes against our criteria to select teaching materials, this textbook was still used in our comparison because it is the only one that is targeted at Spanish speakers. We thought it would be interesting to analyze how a textbook with that specific audience in mind would address the BP phonetic system.

the new words they may be learning. Below we present our findings as we analyzed these textbooks.

The textbook *Pois não* (SIMÕES, 2008) offers extensive and in-depth sections on BP pronunciation. As this is a manual targeted at Spanish speakers, the differences between the two apparently similar languages are emphasized. In the first chapter, before starting with grammar topics, the author addresses the differences between the Spanish and BP sound systems. This approach seems to align with the recommendations we discussed in the previous section, because students will already know the correct pronunciation of the new words they will be learning. This textbook uses linguistic concepts (principles about phonetic symbols, as well as the usage of brackets for phonetic transcriptions and slashes for phonological representation). Some classical linguists, such as Mattoso Câmara Jr., are quoted to explain peculiarities of BP. This book teaches how to pronounce oral and nasal vowels, as well as consonants, always taking into account the comparison with Spanish. Diagrams showing the vocal tract are used to illustrate the differences between consonant and vowel sounds in both languages (SIMÕES, 2008). After that, a chart with the letters of the alphabet, the phonetic symbols they can represent and examples of words in which each grapheme occurs is presented (SIMÕES, 2008). In cases such as letter *x*, which has several possible phonetic realizations, all these possibilities are covered, with examples for every possible pronunciation. Phonetic transcriptions, both in Portuguese and Spanish, are often used in this introductory part, probably to help students make a smoother transition from one language to another. Several exercises are offered. Some of them address phonetic distinctions based on spelling, while others help students distinguish pairs such as *avó* 'grandmother' and *avô* 'grandfather.' It is difficult for Spanish speakers to produce and make the distinction between pairs of open and closed vowels, that is probably why it is very helpful to emphasize this topic. Throughout the textbook there is more detailed information on specific rules, along with reviews and reinforcement of what was already addressed in the first chapter. In Lesson 2, for example, the differences between /s/ and /z/ are addressed, as well as /a/ and /ã/ (SIMÕES, 2008). After comparing Spanish and Portuguese, a reading that has open vowels and the representation of the sound *z* underlined is presented (SIMÕES, 2008). Students should be aware of these sounds when reading this passage aloud. After that, an exercise in visual perception of articulatory gestures is presented (SIMÕES, 2008). Students should watch a video in which the sound has been muted. Based on articulatory gestures the speakers in the video make with their lips, students should be able to identify the sounds without hearing them. Some examples of these pairs are: 1. *Quim* [kĩ] or *Kim* [kim], 2. *lã* 'wool' or *lama* 'mud', 3. *sou* '(I) am' or *sol* 'sun.' This is a very specific exercise that will certainly help students not only in sound perception, but also in the correct pronunciation of sounds. Overall, *Pois não* (SIMÕES, 2008) is a quite comprehensive manual in the way it addresses the BP phonetic-phonological system. Not only does it explain the pronunciation rules of the language, but it also provides students with exercises that will most likely improve their pronunciation and listening skills. Among the textbooks

selected for this article, *Pois não* (SIMÕES, 2008) is the one that best represents the great variability inherent to the BP sound system. This book is therefore aligned with the recommendations we proposed in the previous subsections, with regards to how to teach BP pronunciation and which aspects should be taught.

Bom dia, Brasil (SLADE, 2012) is an elementary book organized around thematic units. The first chapter presents information about pronunciation, starting with vowels and then consonants. The fact that pronunciation is addressed right at the beginning is a positive point. This will enable students to apply the correct rules of the BP sound system from the very first beginning. This book, however, does not mention the contexts for the sounds that it addresses. For both vowels and consonants, a list of letters is displayed, followed by an example of a word with that letter and the transcription of the sound it represents. Below is an example of that for letter *a*:

a	la[8]	/la/	'there'
ã	f**ã**	/fã/	'fan'
an	c**an**ta	/kãta/	'she/he sings'
am	s**am**ba	/sãba/	'samba (Brazilian music genre)'

The fact that this book presents such detailed information about the possible phonetic realizations for vowels is a positive point. It takes away the misleading idea that every vowel is pronounced the same way. This is certainly an advantage of this manual. For consonants, something similar is presented, as for letter *t*:

t	tapa	/tápa/	'slap'
	tia, sete	/tʃia/, /sétʃi/	'aunt, seven'
		(**t** *seguido de* **i** *é pronunciado com ligeira fricção*)	
		(**t** followed by **i** is pronounced with some friction)	

Although the explanation for the palatalization of *t* is not technical, it is still very good that this book notes this specific phonetic realization of *t* when followed by *i*. This book, however, presents examples such as the ones we quoted above, but it does not explain the pronunciation rules. It does not mention, for example, that unstressed *e* in final coda is pronounced as [i] in most BP dialects. Without this information, students will have difficulties understanding the palatalization of *t* and *d* before *e* in final coda, such as in *noi**te*** 'night' and *tar**de*** 'afternoon.' In the examples above, one of the words used to teach the pronunciation of letter *t* was *sete* 'seven', which falls into that category. Without explaining this rule in more depth, these connections are not clear. Given the lack of information on the textbook, the teacher would have to connect the examples provided with the actual rules. Along the same lines, when explaining the pronunciation of letter *s*, the author uses the words ***s**ala* and *i**ss**o*. These words

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8   We assume there was a typo, because this word should have an accent mark: *lá*.

present two different spellings (*s* and *ss*) for the same sound [s]. Later, the manual shows the words *casa* 'house' and *trânsito* 'transit' to explain sound [z]. Both words have intervocalic *s*, one preceded by an oral sound and the other by a nasal sound, respectively. The book does not mention the actual rule: letter *s* is pronounced as [z] when it is between vowels; *ss* is always pronounced as a true [s] sound. It would be hard for students to guess those rules by the examples given. As this is an elementary level book, these aspects would need to be further explained. Additionally, exercises that emphasize these points could be provided. Based on these remarks, we could say this manual offers some resources with regards to the BP phonetic-phonological system, but it does not fully follow all the aspects that should be taught in elementary classes. The biggest downside is that no connections are made between letters and the sounds they represent. Also, pronunciation rules are not explained in a way that would enable students to apply them in different contexts.

Como está seu português? (OTUKI DE PONCE, 2014) is a textbook from elementary to intermediate levels. This manual starts off by teaching sentence structure in Portuguese, emphasizing agreement of articles with the noun they refer to. After that, the syntactic role of words within sentences is explained, and the names of the nine grammatical categories in BP are presented. It starts with nouns, then adjectives, and ends with verbs, which are addressed in four entire chapters. Although this textbook covers topics ranging from elementary (personal pronouns) to advanced (subjunctive mood), it does make any reference to BP pronunciation. It can be said that, as it is a grammar textbook, it is not implied that information about phonetics and phonology should be included. Even so, it would be useful to teach at least correspondences between sounds and letters so that students can correctly read the words they learn. This textbook does not follow the guidelines we pointed out as relevant to the teaching of BP pronunciation. The teacher would have to prepare supplemental materials should they choose to adopt this textbook.

The textbook *Ponto de Encontro: Portuguese as a world language* (JOUËT-PASTRÉ *et al*., 2013a) is probably the most widely adopted teaching material for PFL in the United States. This book is almost 600 pages long, and it has thematic units that progressively introduce grammar topics and cultural information about Portuguese-speaking countries. Among the materials analyzed, this is the only one that simultaneously targets Brazilian and European Portuguese. Flags of both counties signal the differences between the two varieties throughout the book. This book is accompanied by a workbook in two versions: one for European Portuguese and the other for BP, which we will analyze here (JOUËT-PASTRÉ *et al.,* 2013b). The textbook does not address pronunciation of either dialect. The workbook, however, is a good resource for pronunciation, and each chapter addresses a different topic. The Preliminary Lesson, for example, provides explanations about vowels, making distinctions between stressed, unstressed, closed, and open vowels. Examples are given for each of the vowels in each of the categories mentioned (JOUËT-PASTRÉ *et al.,* 2013b). It explains that *e* and *o* in the final coda are unstressed and pronounced as [i] or [u]. Additionally, there

are audio resources available on an online platform. The same lesson introduces nasal vowels and their graphic representation using tilde (˜), *m* or *n* indicating nasalization of the previous vowels. In the same chapter, the palatalization of *t* and *d* before *i* is addressed. The overlapping rules for reduction of *e* or *o* in coda and palatalization of *t* or *d* as in noi*te* 'night' and tar*de* 'afternoon' are addressed as well. Comparisons between BP and English pronunciations are made, such as mentioning that the sound [tʃ] corresponds to the sound of *ch* in <u>*ch*</u>*eese* (JOUËT-PASTRÉ *et al.,* 2013b). Although this workbook offers helpful audio resources, there are no exercises addressing listening comprehension. That would definitely add more quality to this workbook. Each chapter has listening exercises for vocabulary and grammar topics, but there is nothing more specific for the pronunciation aspects that are taught. Without those exercises, there is no guarantee that these small sections of the workbook will be addressed at all in class. In spite of that, the high quality of the information contained in this book is undeniable, and the range of phonetic-phonological aspects of BP addressed will provide students with a solid basis for BP pronunciation. Having online resources is another positive aspect of this book, compared to the others analyzed. This textbook fully complies with the recommendations we pointed out in previous sections.

Fale português (HARUMI DE PONCE *et al.*, 2017) is the first volume of two textbooks. This manual has a modern and attractive graphic layout, with relevant cultural topics about Brazil and an intention to incorporate spoken language into PFL methodology. Each chapter is centered around a cultural unit ("*O Mercadão*", "The Carnaval", "*As Baianas de Acarajé*", etc.) and, from there, grammar topics or tasks relevant to that theme are inserted (for example, making a reservation at a restaurant, talking about *what-if* situations, etc.). Despite being designed for elementary courses, this textbook does not have even a chart with the correspondences between letters and sounds in BP. The only time pronunciation is addressed is on the last page of the book (HARUMI DE PONCE *et al.*, 2017), in the appendix "*Algumas Marcas de Oralidade*" 'Some Marks of Orality'. This section lists aspects of informal BP, such as the use of the object pronouns at the beginning of a sentence, the use of "*a gente*" 'we all' and expressions such as "*dá pra*" 'is it possible… (informal),' "*será que*" 'I wonder if,' etc. In this list, there is an item called "*simplificação de palavras*" 'word simplification.' The examples mentioned there are the reduction of the verb *ser* 'to be' (*está* x *tá*, etc.) and the contraction of *para* + singular definite article, with the examples *pra* and *pro*. These are the only pronunciation topics addressed by this textbook. Given the lack of basic teaching materials on BP pronunciation, we can say that this book does not address this topic according to the guidelines we previously set. The teacher who chooses to adopt this textbook would have to prepare additional materials.

Gramática básica do português brasileiro (HUBACK *et al.*, 2018) is a PFL grammar book that uses Cognitive Linguistics principles to explain grammar topics. This book provides information about the BP phonetic-phonological system in the final chapter, which deals with spelling. The authors present two charts, one with letters that can represent different sounds (for example for letter *s*, which can represent [s] or [z]),

and another one displaying how the same sound can be represented by different letters (as it is the case of [s], which can be represented by *ç* or *s*, among other possibilities). The phonetic symbols for each BP sound are presented. There are no listening exercises, but based on the rules presented, activities are proposed in which, for example, in a set of words, students must underline the letters that represent the sound [k], and circle those that represent the sound [s], to distinguish between cases such as **c**asa 'house', and **c**edo 'early'. Other exercises involve filling in the blanks with the letter that represents the correct sound according to the context of the word. Some exercises compare the same sound with different spellings in different words. This book introduces the basic pronunciation topics that we mentioned in the previous section and that would be crucial while teaching PFL. In spite of that, having no listening exercises to train sound perception is one of its small downsides.

Considering the six textbooks analyzed in this article, *Pois não* (2008) and *Ponto de Encontro* (2013) are the ones that comply the most with the guidelines set for the PFL curriculum. In the next subsection, we present our final remarks for this discussion about BP pronunciation teaching materials.

Final remarks

This article discusses why pronunciation should be taught in PFL introductory courses. By learning how to pronounce BP sounds correctly, students can not only express themselves well in the language, but also better understand others. Linguistic studies were presented to support the main aspects of pronunciation that should be addressed in PFL courses. The topics addressed in this article can guide teachers on how to prepare supplemental materials when teaching pronunciation. As it has been emphasized at length throughout this article, pronunciation should be taught in elementary BP courses. By doing so, fossilization in pronunciation patterns will be avoided. Based on the pronunciation aspects that we recommended for elementary courses, six PFL textbooks were analyzed. Our goal was to observe what kind of information they present about the BP sound system, in addition to what kind of exercises are offered, and if the topics addressed were compatible with the ones we recommended. *Pois não* (SIMÕES, 2008) and *Ponto de encontro: Portuguese as a world language* (JOUËT-PASTRÉ *et al*., 2013a), along with its workbook *Brazilian Portuguese student activities manual for Ponto de encontro: Portuguese as a world language* (JOUËT-PASTRÉ *et al.,* 2013b) are the ones that present most of the topics we suggested on the main section of this article. The former is more comprehensive as it offers a wide variety of exercises, both for writing and listening. The latter provides a good deal of information about the BP phonetic-phonological system, but the fact that it does not offer exercises to reinforce specific pronunciation topics raises the question of whether the information presented in the workbook will actually be used in the classroom. *Gramática básica do português brasileiro* (HUBACK *et al.,* 2018) is

also a good resource for pronunciation, but it does not offer audio exercises. *Bom dia, Brasil* (SLADE, 2012) does offer information on pronunciation, but it does not provide students which much detail on that. Finally, the textbooks *Fale português* (HARUMI DE PONCE *et al.*, 2017) and *Como está seu português?* (OTUKI DE PONCE, 2014) do not present any information about pronunciation. Instructors who adopt these textbooks will likely have to prepare supplemental materials. The pronunciation guidelines presented in this article can be used for that purpose.

Although teaching pronunciation is not one of the topics that textbooks address the most, there are already some materials, such as *Pois não* (SIMÕES, 2008) and *Ponto de encontro: Portuguese as a world language* (JOUËT-PASTRÉ *et al.*, 2013a and 2013b) (along with its workbook), which address this topic appropriately. We hope that in the future more information about the BP phonetic-phonological system may be addressed by new PFL materials. Without addressing pronunciation, our students' literacy education would not be complete.

- *RESUMO: Este artigo tem como objetivo discutir aspectos teóricos e práticos referentes ao ensino de pronúncia em cursos elementares de português como língua estrangeira (PLE). Primeiramente, apresentam-se argumentos que justificam por que a aprendizagem da pronúncia é importante em aulas de PLE. Posteriormente, com base em diversas pesquisas científicas, listam-se aspectos relevantes da pronúncia do português brasileiro (PB) que poderiam ser sejam apresentados aos alunos de PLE. Finalmente, realizamos uma análise sobre como seis livros didáticos de PLE apresentam informações sobre o sistema fonético-fonológico do PB. Observamos tanto os conteúdos teóricos quanto os exercícios práticos sobre esse tema. Concluímos que existe discrepância na forma como os materiais didáticos abordam esse tópico: alguns não apresentam nenhuma informação sobre fonética e fonologia, outros mencionam correspondências entre grafemas e fonemas, enquanto outros, mais completos, oferecem explicações e exercícios que podem auxiliar o aluno na produção e percepção dos sons do PB. A partir dessa conexão entre que aspectos devemos ensinar sobre a pronúncia do PB e como os livros didáticos abordam esse tópico, argumenta-se, finalmente, que o ensino de pronúncia é fundamental para a formação e o letramento mais amplo de alunos de PLE.*

- *PALAVRAS-CHAVE: português como língua estrangeira; pronúncia em segunda língua; fonética e fonologia; livros didáticos de português como língua estrangeira.*

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