M.Ed. In TESL Program
Language Group Specific Informational Reports

Produced by Graduate Students in the M.Ed. In TESL Program
In the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development

Language Group: Portuguese
Author: Sarah LeBlanc

Program Contact Person: Nancy Cloud (ncloud@ric.edu)
Portuguese American Style

By: Sarah Le Blanc

TESL 539

Spring 2009
Portuguese in Fall River

- Fall River has the largest Portuguese-speaking community in the United States according to the 2000 Census report.
- 43.9% of residents in Fall River identified themselves as being Portuguese or from Portuguese heritage.
Portuguese Speaking Students

- 28.8% of students enrolled in B.M.C. Durfee High School of Fall River are English Language Learners
- A large portion of these students are Portuguese speakers from Brazil and the Azorean Islands
History of Portuguese Language

- Portuguese belongs to a group of languages that evolved from Latin called “Romance” or “Neo-Latin”
- After the Romans invaded the Iberian Peninsula Latin became increasingly established and finally replaced native languages
- When Portugal was founded it adopted Portuguese, its own “neo-Latin”, as the national language
Portuguese Influences

- Portuguese language is influenced by many groups that settled in the Iberian Peninsula
  - Moorish influence- words beginning in “al” “almofada”-pillow
  - Celtic influence- “Ontem”-yesterday
  - Chinese influence- “chá”- tea
  - Japanese influences- “arigato”- “obrigado”- thank you
  - French influences-“rue”- “rua”- street
Portuguese Language

- Portuguese is the sixth most spoken language in the world; it is spoken by approximately 200 million people on four continents.
  - Europe
    - Portugal
  - Africa
    - Angola
    - Mozambique
    - Guine-Bissau
    - Cape Verde
    - Sao Tome
    - Principe
  - South America
    - Brazil
  - Asia
    - Macau
The Portuguese language varies from the mainland to the Azores and Brazil.

The language also varies within the mainland, the Azores, and Brazil.

The accent placed on vowels differs from place to place, as does the over/under-pronunciation of words.

Azorean Portuguese is considered a minority dialect.
Portuguese Alphabet

Portuguese language consists of 9 vowel sounds, this is fewer than in English

Aa  Bb  Cc  Dd  Ee  Ff  Gg  Hh  Ii  Jj  Kk  Ll  Mm
á  bê  cê  dê  é  efe  gê  agá  l  jota  cá/capa  ele  eme

Nn  Oo  Pp  Qq  Rr  Ss  Tt  Uu  Vv  Ww  Xx  Yy  Zz
ene  ó  pê  quê  erre  esse  tê  u  vê  dábliu  xis  ípsilon  zê

K, W and Y are only used in foreign loan words ex. In Portuguese New York is written Nova Iorque
Portuguese Writing System

- **Accent marks:**
  - Acute and circumflex accents (´ and ^) to indicate stressed syllables.
  - Tilde (˜) used to show “nasalized” vowel sounds.
  - Grave accent (for example, “À”).
  - Dieresis mark with the letter u (“ü”).
  - Cedilla with the letter ç (“Ç”) indicating a “s” sound.
Grammar

- Portuguese questions are expressed by intonation, and not auxiliaries, this may lead to mistakes in negative transfer ex. You went to school yesterday?

- Irregular plurals may confuse a Portuguese speaker such as deer or fish because in Portuguese these words are made plural by adding an s at the end of the word.
Obstacles ELLs might encounter

- Masculine and Feminine forms of words
  - This may result in students placing o or a before words ex. O Bank
- Cão = tion
  - Informação = information
- “ch” = “sh”
  - Ex. Cháma (call) is pronounced shama
  - An ESL student may pronounce chatter as shatter
- “j” is pronounced like the “s” in treasure
  - An ESL student may pronounce subject as sub-sheet
- “s” at the end of a word or syllable (before another consonant makes the “sh” sound
  - Ex. “Inglês” is pronounced “Inglesh”
  - An ESL student might pronounce pieces as pea-sesh
Phonology

- The limited vowel sounds in the Portuguese language make it difficult for Portuguese speaking students to understand Diphthongs such as in bear/bare ex. Megan and Magan.

- The Portuguese Language also contains fewer consonant clusters resulting in the placement of vowel sounds in between, before or after consonants ex. Strange becomes e-strange.
Portuguese Communication Style

- It is polite and customary to exchange cordialities before discussing business.
- It is extremely rude to discuss business in social situations.
- When meeting hand-shakes are accompanied by direct eye-contact.
- Once a relationship has been built women will kiss on both cheeks starting with the right.
- Elders are referred to as senhor or senhora with or without their last name mentioned.
- Professionals are referred to by their titles ex. doutor (doctor) or proffessoro/a (teacher) with or without their last names mentioned.
Works Cited

Books


Internet Sites


Images from Clipart
M.Ed. in TESL Program
Nancy Cloud, Director
Educational Studies Department
Rhode Island College, HBS 206 #5
600 Mt. Pleasant Avenue
Providence, RI 02908
Phone (401) 456-8789
Fax (401) 456-8284
ncloud@ric.edu

The M.Ed. in TESL Program at Rhode Island College
is Nationally Recognized by TESOL and NCATE