

Antônio Roberto Monteiro Simões

22 Portuguese

Abstract: This chapter is divided into two main parts. Firstly, it situates and discusses the relevance of the Portuguese language in our current global context. An awareness that has stemmed from the preparation of this part is the fragility and vulnerability in the remarkable efforts to promote and internationalize Portuguese. This first section also discusses the innovating initiatives that have gained new grounds in the US, pushed by the current situation that Brazil enjoys. Secondly, it discusses some features of Portuguese and typical difficulties that learners of Portuguese may encounter in the Portuguese language. This part also points out the coincidence with the current changes in the Brazilian society and the ongoing process of parametric changes in Portuguese (Tarallo 1993; Galves 1993; Roberts 1993; Kato/Ramos 1999) that have been happening in Brazil in the last one hundred years or more, but not in Portugal.

Keywords: Second Language Acquisition, português língua estrangeira, Portuguese for Spanish speakers, teaching and learning, parametric changes

1 Introduction

As of 2013, the world has an estimated population of 7,095,217,980. Among the most populous countries we find China 1,349.59; India 1,220.80; United States 316.67; Indonesia 251.16; Brazil 201.01; Pakistan 193.24; Nigeria 174.51; Bangladesh 163.65; Russia 142.50; Japan 127.25 (*The World FactBook*, July 2013).

Likewise, of the approximately 7000 human languages in our planet, it is estimated that the most spoken languages by native speakers are, in terms of percentages that correspond to the world populations, *Mandarin* Chinese 12.44%, Spanish 4.85%, English 4.83%, Arabic 3.25%, Hindi 2.68%, Bengali 2.66%, Portuguese 2.62%, Russian 2.12%, Japanese 1.8%, Standard German 1.33%, Javanese 1.25% (2009 (estimates)). Despite of Brazil's influential role in our current world, Portuguese is not yet one of the UN languages. The UN traditionally includes Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Castilian Spanish, as their official languages. The *Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa* (CPLP) was created on July 17, 1996, in Lisbon, and today its membership includes Angola, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Guiné-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe and East-Timor. One of the main goals of CPLP has been to make Portuguese as one of the official languages of the United Nations, which seems reasonable given the existing global context.

Among the Romance languages, Portuguese is second to Spanish (≈25 Spanish) in number of native speakers.¹ The great challenge to Brazilianists and Lusophone scholars is to find ways to use this advantage to promote and increase the number of students and speakers of Portuguese, as well as to make Portuguese an international language. In the United States where the promotion of Portuguese in the classroom is remarkable, enrolment numbers are still limited.

The 2012 report of European Commission's *Eurydice* (cf. Eurydice/European Commission 2012) concludes that in Europe, the usefulness of a language is one of the main deciding factors to choose a foreign language to study, which makes English by far the most studied foreign language in Europe. The traditional trend in Europe to study Spanish, French, Russian and German, in addition to English is also a trend in the US. Therefore, the main challenge of the CPLP and institutions like the *Instituto Camões* and *Rede Brasil Cultural* is to promote the usefulness and internationalization of Portuguese in foreign languages study in competition with powerhouses like the *Instituto Cervantes*, *Alliance Française*, 孔子学院, *Goethe Institut*, *Società Dante Alighieri* and the *British Council*, to mention some (≈3 Language Policy, Management and Planning).

2 The Relevance of Portuguese in Today's World

Table 1 depicts enrolments in the US universities where there is an effervescence of interests in Portuguese, mostly likely because of Brazil.

Table 1: The most studied languages on US college campuses in fall 2009. Course enrolments in languages other than English reached a new high in 2009. Enrolments grew by 6.6% between 2006 and 2009, following an expansion of 12.9% between 2002 and 2006. This increase continues a rise in enrolment in languages other than English that began in 1995 (Furman/Goldberg/Lusin 2010).

Language	Enrolments	Change since 2006	Language	Enrolments	Change since 2006
1. Spanish	864,986	+ 5.1%	8. Arabic	35,083	+ 46.3%
2. French	216,419	+ 4.8%	9. Latin	32,606	+ 1.3%
3. German	96,349	+ 2.2%	10. Russian	26,883	+ 8.2%
4. ASL	91,763	+ 16.4%	11. Ancient Greek	20,695	- 9.4% ¹
5. Italian	80,752	+ 3.0%	12. Biblical Hebrew	13,807	- 2.4%
6. Japanese	73,434	+ 10.3%	13. Portuguese	11,371	+ 10.8%
7. Chinese	60,976	+ 18.2%	14. Korean	8,511	+ 19.1%

¹ For a thorough review and discussion of all Romance languages, cf. Roca (1999).

The numbers in Table 1 clearly show that Portuguese in the US has recently experienced a significant growth of 10.8% in enrolments. But the actual balance is so disparagingly different, that the task to reach enrolment numbers comparable to French and Italian cannot be left to the teachers and administrators abroad alone. The *Ministério das Relações Exteriores* of Brazil may want to invest more on the promotion and internationalization of Portuguese. The effective internationalization of national languages is intelligent diplomacy. The benefits are obvious, and the returns unimaginable. Investment on the internationalization of a language and its culture is perhaps the best approach to contemporary use of soft power (Nye 2004) that most influential countries like the US, China, Britain, France, to mention some, have adopted.

It is true that there have been significant increases in enrolments in Portuguese around the world, especially in the US if we take into account that enrolments in Portuguese used to be even more limited. But there is considerable work to be done to make Portuguese one of the major languages taught in the classroom worldwide, in elementary and secondary schools, in language institutes and in colleges.

Figure 1 has a global view of the distribution of the CPLP member countries. In other words, it is a map-mundi that shows the traditional regions where Portuguese is spoken: Azores Islands, Madeira Islands, Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde Islands, Macao or Macau, East Timor, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe Islands.



Figure 1: Map, created by the author, showing traditional regions of the Luso-Brazilian World where Portuguese is spoken.

In fact, speakers of Portuguese form communities that extend further than usually seen in these regions. Additional countries with Portuguese speaking communities are

“Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Belgium, Bermuda, Canada, Congo, Curacao, France, Germany, Guyana, India, Jamaica, Luxembourg, Malawi, Paraguay, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela and Zambia” (Lewis/Simons/Fennig 2013).

Other countries are certainly missing in the above list. In Argentina, for example, there is a population of over 40,000 native speakers of Portuguese and more than 300 Brazilian enterprises and businesses, according to the Brazilian Embassy in Buenos Aires, in 2013. Furthermore, in this additional list, there are very large communities of Portuguese speakers. In France (↗27 France) for example, according to *Ethnologue* (Lewis/Simons/Fennig 2013) there were 750,000 speakers of Portuguese in 1989. In India, dispersed through Goa, Daman, Diu, Dadra, and Nagar Haveli, there were an estimated 250,000. On the other hand, in France, where Portuguese is taught through the Instituto Camões as a foreign language and a heritage language, from elementary schools to College, the actual numbers through the regular public schools and universities are very limited or non-existent (cf. *Eurydice* 2012), despite the multilingual societies of the European Union. The trend for neglecting Portuguese in the regular public school system is characteristic of the entire European Union, although there are signs of an increased interest in Portuguese as a third foreign language, because of the economic interests in Brazil (↗30 Portugal and Brazil).

Through the Instituto Camões, created in 1929, Portugal has had a tradition of teaching Portuguese abroad as a heritage and non-heritage or foreign language. The reach of the *Rede Brasil Cultural* is relatively more recent. Although it has existed for over 50 years, only recently it started increasing its activities. The Instituto Camões probably indicates the weight of its presence through *pontos de rede*. If this is correct, France is by far the most important tie to Portugal, with 785 *pontos de rede*, followed by Switzerland with 390, Germany with 174, Spain 148, United Kingdom 123, South Africa 58 and Italy 24. The USA has 20 *pontos* and Brazil has 11 *pontos*. Other countries have anywhere from a dozen or so to 1 *pontos*. The *Rede Brasil Cultural* also recognizes the importance of these areas by having *centros* in selected regions. The *Rede Cultural* has its strongest presence in Latin America, through ten *centros*, compared to only three *centros* in Europe, in Finland (Helsinki), Catalonia (Barcelona) and Italy (Rome).

In the US, one of the current attractions regarding the teaching and learning of Brazilian Portuguese (BP) started in South Florida. A number of new programs to teach BP in the US public schools started being created recently, a trend that most likely will continue in the coming years. Here we find a typical case of need of Portuguese because of the presence of Brazilian families in these areas. One of the main buyers of real state in Florida and other areas of the US are Brazilian families whose identity with Brazil is the strongest.



Figure 2: *Rede Brasil Cultural*: Balloons in green represent 23 *centros culturais*, in blue are the 40 *leitorados*, and in yellow the five *núcleos de estudos brasileiros*. Curiously, according to Diniz (2012), *centros* are *instituições*, *núcleos* or *instituições* are *entidades* and *leitorados* are *modalidades*. Source of map: *Rede Brasil Cultural*, <http://goo.gl/maps/tA1XX>, (10.07.2013).

The pioneer work that triggered these new programs started in 2003, with a plan worked out by teachers and administrators at the Ada Merritt Elementary School in the District of Miami. Furthermore, in the last years, key universities in the US, Tuft University, Boston University and the MIT, have created new programs in Portuguese. These waves of success in the teaching and learning interest of BP in the US are not commonly seen in the rest of the world, although the potential for other success stories outside the US is also enormous. These initiatives and developments, however, are often threatened.

In Angola, for instance, we find an effort to innovate in Portuguese classes in Angola, taking into account indigenous languages familiar to local pupils (Garcia Neto 2012). In Germany, given that Spanish is becoming a popular language, Reimann (forthcoming) suggests that interested scholars could benefit from this trend to promote Portuguese among speakers of Spanish.

On the other hand, the magazines *Mundo Português* (2013) and *Portugal P* (2013) report that the new 2013 requirement of 100 Euros to enroll in classes in the *Instituto Camões* resulted in an estimated loss of c. 3,000 students out of a grand total of 57,212 students currently enrolled abroad, along with the firing of teachers.

3 Population and Enrolment Numbers in Portuguese Classes

Statistics that give Portuguese less than 240 million speakers, as of 2013, will raise questions. For instance, Portuguese is often said to have around 204 million speakers.

But just Brazil and Portugal have a population of approximately 200 million and 10 million people respectively (*The World Factbook – CIA*, 10.07.2013).

The number of L2 speakers of any language is probably the hardest to estimate. Even so, *Ethnologue* (Lewis/Simons/Fennig 2013) estimates that there are 15 million of speakers of Portuguese as a foreign language.

It is helpful to have these estimates even though we know that such a counting is extremely difficult to verify.

On the other hand, a more palpable data regarding the use of foreign languages can be found among the users of the internet. The data on internet users can indicate the power of penetration of a language. Governmental institutions and other global key players use this information in planning, investments, policies, and all sorts of social, political, economic, and financial actions that affect our daily lives (↗3 Language Policy, Management and Planning).

Table 2 shows Portuguese as the fifth most used language in the internet. The “Examples for the Interpretation of Data” are also of interest. Example C uses Japan to explain the column “Growth in Internet”. It gives Japan a growth of 110.7%. Brazil in the same period grew nine times more, i.e. 990.1%. According to this information, we can anticipate that Portuguese can soon become fourth place, if we take into account that nations like Mozambique and Angola have not yet started using the internet as other nations do.

Table 2: Comparative data of internet users by language: *Internet World Stats – Usage and Population Statistics*, <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats7.htm>, (10.07.2013).

Top Ten Languages Used in the Web (Number of Internet Users by Language)					
Top Ten Languages In The Internet	Internet Users by Language	Internet Penetration by Language	Growth in Internet (2000–2011)	Internet Users % of Total	World Population for this Language (2011 Estimate)
English	565,004,126	43.4 %	301.4 %	26.8 %	1,302,275,670
Chinese	509,965,013	37.2 %	1,478.7 %	24.2 %	1,372,226,042
Spanish	164,968,742	39.0 %	807.4 %	7.8 %	423,085,806
Japanese	99,182,000	78.4 %	110.7 %	4.7 %	126,475,664
Portuguese	82,586,600	32.5 %	990.1 %	3.9 %	253,947,594
German	75,422,674	79.5 %	174.1 %	3.6 %	94,842,656
Arabic	65,365,400	18.8 %	2,501.2 %	3.3 %	347,002,991
French	59,779,525	17.2 %	398.2 %	3.0 %	347,932,305
Russian	59,700,000	42.8 %	1,825.8 %	3.0 %	139,390,205
Korean	39,440,000	55.2 %	107.1 %	2.0 %	71,393,343

Top Ten Languages Used in the Web (Number of Internet Users by Language)					
Top Ten Languages In The Internet	Internet Users by Language	Internet Penetration by Language	Growth in Internet (2000–2011)	Internet Users % of Total	World Population for this Language (2011 Estimate)
Top 10 Languages	1,615,957,333	36.4 %	421.2 %	82.2 %	4,442,056,069
Rest of the Languages	350,557,483	14.6 %	588.5 %	17.8 %	2,403,553,891
World Total	2,099,926,965	30.3 %	481.7 %	100.0 %	6,930,055,154

NOTES: (1) Top Ten Languages Internet Stats were updated for May 31 2011. (2) Internet Penetration is the ratio between the sum of Internet users speaking a language and the total population estimate that speaks that specific language. (3) The most recent Internet usage information comes from data published by Nielsen Online, International Telecommunications Union, GfK, and other reliable sources. (4) World population information comes from the U.S. Census Bureau. (5) For definitions and navigation help in several languages, see the Site Surfing Guide. (6) Stats may be cited, stating the source and establishing an active link back to Internet World Stats. Copyright © 2012, Miniwatts Marketing Group. All rights reserved worldwide.

Examples for interpretation of the data: A) There are 99,182,000 Japanese speaking people using the Internet, this represents 4.7 % of all the Internet users in the world. B) Out of the estimated 126,475,664 population of the world that speaks Japanese, 78.4 % use the Internet. C) The number of Japanese Speaking Internet Users has grown 110.7 % in the last eleven years (2000–2011).

Portuguese has today a different role than it used to have. All the interest in Brazil helps increase the interest in the Portuguese language. Such interest combined with the history of European Portuguese (EP), and the potential and strategic presence of the other Portuguese speaking States will impact our world in the near future. To promote the internationalization of Portuguese, it will require finding motivation factors, i.e. the usefulness of the language.

4 The Portuguese Language

4.1 Typical Elements of Interest in the Teaching and Acquisition of Portuguese

This second part of this chapter suggests elements in the Luso-Brazilian Linguistic and Cultural World with respect to language acquisition. The following discussion is not intended to be exhaustive, but to point out common topics of interest. It has been well accepted that the main goal of a foreign language classroom is not to talk in excess about the target language, but to provide opportunities for the student to develop language skills. Talking about the language is often helpful and should not be avoided when it

becomes necessary. But the study of foreign languages should focus on the development of language skills (↗18 Competences, Language Skills and Linguistic Means).

Speakers of Romance languages and particularly speakers of Spanish (↗25 Spanish) and Galician have an advantage to learn Portuguese. However, the key to profit from this advantage is to study Portuguese as a completely different language, instead of relying on the similarities and making no effort to learn the language. The similarities are helpful at the beginning, but if the student does not move on from the beginning, those similarities will become stumbling blocks for the student.

Portuguese has many varieties, but they do not posit significant obstacles to communication. Although in descriptive grammars no language or no variety of a language is considered superior, the educated speech of the acrolect is used by prescriptive grammarians to advise on “good norms” of speaking. This language register, however, tends to be formal, especially in its written form. It is very important to know the educated language, but also to avoid its pedantic side.

There are two main varieties of Portuguese, polarized between Portugal and Brazil (↗30 Portugal and Brazil). Portuguese as a foreign language is an area of study still in its early developments, if we compare the existing publications about other languages. But given the current ebullition of linguistic studies, one can hope for a significant decrease of this gap.

It would be very helpful to see in this flux of current research more research devoted to the *description of Portuguese* either in terms of general theory or in terms of Second Language Acquisition (↗10 Second Language Acquisition), so that scholars could benefit of a better understanding of how the language works and improve teaching tools. In Spanish for example, and this may be similar in Portuguese, there is evidence that 3–5 years old children depend on lexical cues, i.e. reliance on *querer que, para que*, etc. to use the subjunctive. Later in their development, 5–10 years of age, children will probably rely on semantic cues, i.e. wishes, telling how, to decide on the use of subjunctive. As these children reach further development, they will gradually become ready to use syntactic cues as well as more developed lexical and semantic cues to polish their use of the subjunctive. This type of information can help our understanding of the language learning process in adults learners of Portuguese or any foreign language, because what is observed in the linguistic development of children may find parallels in the linguistic development of adults or provide insights to our understanding of how adults learn a foreign language (↗16 Language Learner).

Effective learning of any language normally happens in a *communicative and cultural* context, in terms of how a culture uses the language. Kramsch (2008) has spelled out the relation between language and culture and how cultural differences affect the use of a language (↗5 Languages and Identities).

It is surprising and insightful to discover how native speakers of a language perceive the “same” object in a different way. The perception of the world in other cultures can produce cultural differences that look deceptively unimportant. Inatten-

tion to it may not result in anything but an intellectual curiosity, but sometimes it may result in serious misunderstandings in our daily lives, from the streets to more diplomatic or government levels. The appropriate use of a language must take into account contextual, cultural and pragmatic awareness. This also applies to the cultural and pragmatic use of Portuguese. Context awareness takes time to be acquired. It is related to the choice of words. Some words may fit better in informal situations, others in formal situations. The choice of syntactic constructions also changes from register to register.

Brazil does not have the same tradition as universities in Europe or in the US. Not even the academic tradition found in other Latin American countries. The “first” Brazilian university, the *Universidade do Rio de Janeiro*, was founded in 1920, but it was more of a nominal institution than an integrated academic institution. The first de facto Brazilian university was the *Universidade de São Paulo*, created on January 25, 1934. Scholarly and scientific research was not of interest during colonization and it was never really promoted after colonization until the second half of last century.

Table 3 (left): Figures with the number of Ph.D. recipients in Brazil, until the year 2000 (Guimarães/Lourenço/Cosac 2001); **Table 3 (right):** The new trend of male and female recipients of doctoral degrees, between 1966 and 2008 (Centro de Gestão e Estudos Estratégicos, Ministério da Ciência e Tecnologia 2010).

Number of Ph.D. by 5 Year Periods	Number of Ph.Ds. Awarded in Brazil	Number of Ph.Ds. Awarded Abroad	Total
Until 1965	98	71	169
1966–1970	175	159	334
1971–1975	495	364	859
1976–1980	717	610	1327
1981–1985	1215	974	2189
1986–1990	2263	1064	3327
1991–1995	4409	1852	6261
1996–2000	6954	1385	8339
Total	16326	6479	22805

Year	Men (%)	Women (%)
1996	55,8	44,2
1997	54,5	45,5
1998	54,8	45,2
1999	54,1	45,9
2000	52,5	47,5
2001	51,0	49,0
2002	51,3	48,7
2003	50,2	49,8
2004	50,6	49,4
2005	50,9	49,1
2006	51,1	48,9
2007	51,7	48,3
2008	48,5	51,5

Fonte: Coleta Capes (Capes, MEC).

This was the Brazilian cultural context until the sixties. Given these transformations in a relatively short period, it is reasonable to think that the linguistic and cultural contacts abroad of the involved individuals will, upon returning to Brazil, influence their surroundings. Therefore, the Brazilian *context* of the sixties became different in the seventies, eighties, and far more different in the nineties and in 2013. The population of Brazil only started using the Portuguese language as its main language by the

middle of the 18th Century. On the other hand, the current growth in number of doctoral degrees in Brazil is greater than in countries like the USA, France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan and South Korea (Marchelli 2005, 9).

For more than a century, the BP language, like Brazil (↗30 Portugal and Brazil), has been going through changes, in ways that scholars (e.g. Tarallo 1993; Galves 1993; Roberts 1993) have compared to the changes in French centuries ago, a clear case of parametric changes in progress. There are many differences in vocabulary, although there is still a high degree of intelligibility among all communities of the Luso-Brazilian Worlds. The linguistic system in general has been maintained.

The linguistic changes above mentioned about BP happen in all domains. They are amazingly interesting changes for scholars doing research in historical and contemporary analyses of natural languages, and that is the reason why so much research work (cf. Kato/Ramos 1999) has come out about these changes, in the last decades.

The following sections will focus on some of the typical features of pronunciation and syntax.

4.2 Pronunciation: Phonetics and Phonology

4.2.1 Vowels

A common way of describing the Portuguese vowels is presented in Table 4. Note that the central vowel, referred to as schwa (/ə/), has an “only in EP” under it. This is to indicate that it is a vowel phoneme only in EP. In American English all unstressed vowels in spontaneous discourse tend to centralize, to reduce as a schwa. The underlined vowels of the English words *about* and *southern* are good examples of schwas in unstressed and stressed syllables.² Recently, some descriptions of BP have added a phonetic schwa in their description of BP. This is a recent trend, which still causes disagreements among linguists (Simões 2008; Silva 2005). On the other hand, it is generally agreed that there is a schwa phoneme in EP (Mateus 1975; Câmara Jr. 1970; 1972).

The issue of the supposed phonetic schwa in BP is still a matter of controversy. Maybe, given the ongoing parametric changes above mentioned, there is also an ongoing process of incorporating a schwa in BP. Table 4 contains the monophthong vowels of Portuguese.

² The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines schwa as ‘an unstressed mid-central vowel’. This is also a common definition among some linguists. In fact, it is common to have schwas in stressed position (e.g. *Southern*). Hence, I have adopted the definition of schwa as ‘a reduced and mid-central vowel’.

Table 4: The vowel system of Portuguese, based on Simões (2008). The tilde (~) over a vowel means a nasal vowel. Note that this table indicates that the nasal vowel in *sendo* is either front, high-mid (*semi-fechada*), or front low-mid (*semi-aberta*). Traditionally, this vowel has been described as high-mid or *semi-fechada*.

	<i>Anteriores ou Palatais</i> Front or Palatal	<i>Centrais</i> Central	<i>Posteriores ou</i> <i>Velares</i> Back or Velar	
+ <i>Altas</i> / High	/ i / /ĩ/ mito, minto		/ ũ / / u / mundo, mudo	<i>Fechadas</i> “Close” or High
– <i>Altas</i> / – High – <i>Baixas</i> /	/ e /, /ẽ/ cedo, sendo	/ ə / only in EP	/ õ / / o / bonde, pôde	<i>Semi-fechadas</i> “Close-mid” or High-mid
– Low	/ ε /, /ẽ/ Zeca, sendo	/ ẽ / manta	/ɔ/ bode	<i>Semi-abertas</i> “Open-mid” or Low-mid
+ <i>Baixa</i> / + Low		/ a / mata		<i>Aberta</i> “Open” or Low
	– <i>Recuadas</i> – Retracted – <i>arredondadas</i> – Round	– <i>Arredondadas</i> + <i>Recuadas</i> – Round	+ Retracted + <i>Arredondadas</i> + Round	

Changes in vowel quality permeate Portuguese and this vowel instability has characterized the language throughout its evolution. Vowels in Portuguese change depending on where they are in a word or in a sentence. This instability can be observed through actual phonological processes, as an abstraction, or by comparing the spoken language with its orthography. The orthographic vowels *e* and *o*, for example, in the word *escrito* have the same orthographic and phonological representations, i.e. /*e*/ and /*o*/. They are pronounced [i] and [u] because they are in weak positions, i.e. unstressed, in the word *escrito*: /eS.ˈkri.to/ → [iS.ˈkri.tu].³ The vowel *i* in the syllable *-cri-* is in strong position because it is stressed. On the other hand *i* does not change in an easily noticeable way in Portuguese. But it can be generalized that in Portuguese vowels in strong position do not change. At the end of the word *escritor* the vowel *o* is pronounced [o] because it is in strong position: [iS.kri.ˈtoR] (Simões 2008).

Non-native speakers of Portuguese will need to learn the Portuguese vowels not present in their native languages, in addition to learning the changes in vowel quality.

3 Capital symbols like S and R in these transcriptions mean that these sounds vary depending on the region and sometimes the speaker. Symbols enclosed in slashes or square brackets indicate pronunciation. Slashes (/ /) enclose phonological transcription, i.e. phonemes, broad transcription, whereas brackets ([]) enclose phonetic transcription, i.e. more details.

The Portuguese vowels that are less common in other languages and highly productive in Portuguese are the five nasal vowels and the low-mid oral vowels, also referred to very commonly as “open-vowels”. English and French have these open vowels but not as exactly corresponding to their Portuguese ones. Spanish does not have open vowels. Hence the difficulty native speakers of English, French (≈20 French) and Spanish (≈25 Spanish) find to produce open vowels in Portuguese. The nasal phonemes will not be an obstacle to French speakers, but English and Spanish speakers may find some difficulties.

It is interesting to note that vowel instability is most likely one of the main factors if not the main factor that makes the intelligibility of Portuguese harder for native speakers of Spanish than the intelligibility of Spanish among native speakers of Portuguese (Simões 2008). Only very recently, I found out that Jensen (1989) has empirically documented this well-known phenomenon of mutual intelligibility, among speakers of Portuguese and Spanish.

With respect to diphthongs, speakers of Spanish and English should not have difficulties with diphthongs in Portuguese. French speakers may find difficulties, given that French normally does not have diphthongs. As a result a native speaker of French may create hiatus where there should be a diphthong, e.g. the word for box in Portuguese is “caixa”. Using BP as a reference, the French tend to say illegally *[ka.í. ja] instead of the legal form [káí.ja].

Given the common phonological processes of vowel instability in Portuguese, learners of Portuguese should master these processes. Unstressed vowels in Portuguese will change in quality. For example a common change is to raise vowels in BP (e.g. *foto*, *padre*, are generally pronounced *fôtu*, *pádrî*), whereas in Portugal vowels tend to become central (schwa) or deleted (e.g. *foto*, *padre*, are generally pronounced *fôtə*, *pádrə*). It is important to take these vowels changes into account because their changes may cause further changes in adjacent consonants. In BP, a person who raises or changes *e* into *i* will also change the pronunciation of the preceding consonants *t* and *d*, as in

futebol (soccer): /fu.te.'bɔl/ → [fu.ti.'bɔ^u] and then [fu.tʃi.'bɔ^u]

depois (after): /de.'pois/ → [di.'pois] and then [dʒi.'pois]

Note: The symbols **tʃ** and **dʒ** sound like the **ch** and **j** in English, in words like church and Joe.

If the person's idiolect does not change the /e/, the /t/ and /d/ will remain as they are, alveolar.

4.2.2 Consonants

In Portuguese, especially BP, if we use as reference the register of national television speakers,⁴ the consonants tend to be well articulated, e.g. a stop consonant, voiceless or voiced, is realized as such. Thus, speakers of English and French should have no problems pronouncing most of them, whereas speakers of Spanish will need to make an extra effort to articulate them more clearly, in addition to learning new consonants that are not part of their consonant inventory.

Table 5: The consonants of Portuguese, compared to English and Spanish. Adapted from Simões (2008).

Comparison of Spanish and BP Consonants, Using Some of the English Consonants as Interface		
Spanish	(Brazilian) Portuguese	English
/p/ pura	/p/ pura	/p/ spot
/b/ [b] vuelo; but not [β] as in abuelo	/b/ botar (in Span. = poner)	/b/ boy
/t/ taco	/t/ taco	/t/ stop
/d/ [d] da, but not [ð] as in Ada	/d/ Ada	/d/ day
/k/ casa	/k/ casa	/k/ sky
/g/ [g] gata, but not [ɣ] as in la gata	/g/ a gata	/g/ goal
/m/ mapa	/m/ mapa	/m/ me
/n/ nada	/n/ nada	/n/ no
/ɲ/ or /ɲ/ mañana (in Spanish it is a palatal phoneme)	/ɲ/ [ʎ] manhã Note: The use of velar /ɲ/ is not ideal, but it helps avoiding Spanish /ɲ/. Spanish “ɲ” and Portuguese “nh” are very different. Spanish “ɲ” is more of an anterior lingual articulation; Portuguese “nh” is posterior lingual, a tongue feature that pushes the palatal contact further back in Portuguese, although not quite velar. The symbol [ʎ] or [ʎ̥] may be the best solution to represent “nh” in BP.	No equivalent; but using ni as in onion helps
/f/ fé	/f/ fé	/f/ fault
No equivalent	/v/ votar	/v/ vault

⁴ There is not an agreement as to what constitutes a “standard” register, in BP.

Comparison of Spanish and BP Consonants, Using Some of the English Consonants as Interface		
/s/ sé	/s/ sei, caça, cassa	/s/ sea
No equivalent	/z/ fazer, casa	/z/ zoo
No equivalent <i>phoneme</i>	/ʃ/ /ʒ/ acho	/ʃ/ mission, fish
No equivalent <i>phoneme</i>	/ʒ/ /ʒ/ ajo, garagem	/ʒ/ vision
/x/ jota	[x] rota, carro, genro, desrespeito; Other variants: [h], [ʁ], [χ], [r]	The h-sound, as in “hope” is fine
/rr/=/r/ querría, carro; softer than BP [rr]	[rr]=[r] rota, carro, genro, desrespeito; harder than in Spanish	No equivalent
/r/ quería, práctica, francés	/r/ queria, prática, francês	[r] batter , better in American English
/l/ lata	/l/ lata	/l/ low
/ʎ//ll/ caballero, as pronounced in the center and north of Spain, but especially in the north.	/ʎ/ or [l'iy] cavalheiro or [ka.va.'ʎe'.ru] Note: In BP, we traditionally use λ to represent the phoneme for “lh.”	no equivalent phoneme, but English sequence <i>lli</i> in <i>million</i> is similar.

In general, neither Spanish nor English have nasal vowels that will change the meaning of a word if replaced by its corresponding oral vowel. Again, English speakers may have an advantage here because English does have the interjection “uh-huh” (/ã-’hã/), which can be regarded as a very close equivalent of BP /ã/, as in *cantando*.

Furthermore, Portuguese orthography may deceive foreigners, especially when a word ends in an “n” or “m”. In actual speech these letters are not pronounced as nasal consonants. Instead they make the preceding vowel a nasal diphthong. Pronunciation of these letters as nasal consonants is illegal in Portuguese. It should not be a matter of great concern when a nasal consonant follows a vowel inside a word. The great difference happens when these sequences are in word final position: *som*, *nenhum*, *assim*, *falam*, *vem*, *porém*, *aparecem* (Simões 2008; 2013).

4.2.3 Phonological processes

4.2.3.1 Stress Assignment in Portuguese

In general, words in Portuguese fall into a three-syllable window as follows (the little squares represent the syllable positions in words):

... □.□.□.□ – *oxytones* (1), *por.tu.guês*;

... □.□.□.□ – *paroxytones* (2), *di.ñi.cil*;

... □.□.□.□ – *proparoxytones* (3), *pa.ra.le.le.pí.pe.do*.

Likewise in Spanish although not as much, paroxytone words are often considered the most common pattern. If we subscribe to that claim, we can consider paroxytones unmarked. This would explain why in the Portuguese orthography paroxytones do not have as many stress markers as much as proparoxytones and oxytones, the marked ones, do. It is also noteworthy that there are some unusual cases of stress in the 4th syllable, but these are limited to one or two cases of lexicon borrowings like “técnica”, i.e. [té.ki.ni.ka]. This pattern is similar to Spanish *sobresdrújulas* in words like “cómprelo” i.e. [kóm.pre.me.lo].

Scholars (e.g. Mateus 1975; 1983; Bisol 1994; Cagliari 1999; Lee 2007) have tried to explain stress assignment in Portuguese with a single rule, based on the high occurrence of paroxytone words. These attempts, usually influenced by the generativist tradition in US Linguistics, are still inconclusive. The explanations in Portuguese require excessive abstraction and solutions that create artifacts. Maybe the ongoing changes in BP are behind the difficulties one finds to describe stress assignment in a predictable manner. After all the efforts so far, it may be the case that stress assignment is not predictable in Portuguese (cf. Câmara Jr. 1970; 1972).

4.2.3.2 Linking processes in Portuguese

A very common phonological process in Portuguese is the linking of the last consonant of a word with the following vowel of the next word. Speakers of English and French should not have difficulties to duplicate this process in Portuguese, given that these languages have similar processes, especially French. Native speakers of Spanish make this linking in the same way Spanish does, which is illegal in Portuguese. For instance, the consonant /s/ will change to [z] in Portuguese, whereas in Spanish it stays as [s], in these linking processes (Simões 2008).

4.3 Syntax

One of the most important topics in the study of Portuguese is the use of subject and object pronouns in Portuguese, an area that reveals a clear process of changes in BP that have no parallel in EP. There are many consequences from the findings in this area of study and hence the enormous amount of research that has been done in the last decades to confirm an ongoing process of change in BP (cf. Tarallo 1993; Galves 1993; Roberts 1993; Kato/Ramos 1999).

Languages like English and French must use subjects explicitly because the verb forms are not sufficient to identify the subject or actor or agent in a sentence. Latin,

Spanish, Italian and other languages do not need to have explicit subject because in general the verb forms in these languages can indicate clearly who the actor/agent or subject is.

BP used to be classified as a Pro-Drop language, or a language that can drop the pronouns, that is to say to use pronouns implicitly. But given the ongoing changes, BP may end up like French. Pro-Drop languages use explicit and implicit subjects to varying degrees. BP still uses implicit subjects optionally, although not as much as Spanish and Italian.

– *Cê viu esse filme? – Vi sim*, (“Did you see this movie? – Yes I saw it”.) without the subject “eu” before “vi”. But some people may opt for the use of *eu*: *Eu vi sim*.

The use of *você* (you, singular) requires some brief digression. At first, the reduced form of *você*, *cê*, is common in subject position, in spoken language. As an object it is usually not reduced. Secondly, as a form of address for the second person, *você* replaces the pronoun *tu* in most of the Brazilian territory. Although, in Brazil in general *você* is used interchangeably between people whether intimate or not, whether the same social level or not, this is not the case in Portugal. In Portugal, *você* is only used in cases of familial intimacy and when someone occupies a higher place and addresses someone in the lower position. In sum, the use of *você* tends to be avoided in Portugal, although some people have been more used to it due to seeing its usage widespread in popular Brazilian soap operas broadcasted in Portugal, and is common and similar to the use of “you” in English (Simões 2008; 2013).

BP in general has shown a shift towards an increasing use of *explicit subject* (*sujeito pleno*), especially in the *spoken* language. If we placed some languages in an axis going from languages with explicit subject to implicit subject, this is a way of depicting them:

Explicit Subject

Implicit Subject

English-French-----Brazilian Portuguese-----Spanish-----Italian-Latin

In the case of BP, it is necessary to distinguish between the written and the spoken language. As it has been discussed above, *spoken* BP seems to be shifting towards French for its frequent use of explicit subject pronouns. In the formal written language, we still find a greater use of implicit subject in BP, although less than in Spanish. Curiously, a new language style in BP is currently developing on the internet, especially in e-mails and chatting rooms. This internet style shows a mix of spoken and written language with a Pro-Drop tendency.

Furthermore, BP also leaves out *object* pronouns. Speakers of English, Spanish, French and even EP who are used to employing object pronouns without difficulty will also have to adapt and, mentally or intuitively, fill in the missing object pronouns, according to context. Therefore, in BP, especially in the spoken language, the *object pronoun* is frequently omitted as shown in the preceding dialogue, of which we extracted the last sentence, *Vi sim*. (Literally, “Saw,” instead of “I saw it.”)

This is unlikely to happen in Spanish (*Sí, lo vi.*), English (*Yes, I saw it.*) or French (*Oui, je l'ai vu*). One of the factors that may generate the implicit use of object pronouns in BP is that there is a common confusion among the general population of Brazil regarding the use of the expected forms of the object pronouns. Speakers of EP are not immune to this confusion but they normally have less difficulty than speakers of BP with the use of object pronouns (Azevedo 2005). Another factor may be the limited access of Brazilians to adequate schooling in the past, especially immigrants.

Although one can find normative misuse of pronouns in Portugal, the lack of consistence in object pronoun usage is more common in Brazil. Students and teachers familiar with pronoun usage in the Hispanic World will realize that similar variations are common in Spanish as well, e.g. *leísmo, laísmo, loísmo*, agreement confusion in *se*-constructions, and the use of *tú*-forms with *voseo* (e.g. *¿(Vos) Quieres eso?* instead of *¿Querés eso?*), to mention some. Similarly, in Brazil we find related phenomena: *Eu não lhe conheço!* ('I don't know you'), instead of the normative usage *Eu não o conheço*, which illustrates a common case of *lheísmo* in BP.

In spoken BP native speakers tend to avoid the use of the direct object pronouns that have vowel forms, i.e. the vowel-like pronouns *o, a, os, as*, because they may sound rare or pedantic: *Nós as queremos bem*. However, the object pronouns that start with a consonant are more common, i.e. *me, te, se, lhe, lhes*: *Nós te queremos bem*. In Portugal, vowel-like pronouns are more commonly used.

The reflexive *se* is becoming less frequent in spoken BP, contrary to Spanish: *Senta ai!* in BP vs *Siéntate!* in Spanish.

With respect to subject pronouns, in Portuguese, especially in Brazil, one can hear the use of *tu* combined with the verb in a *você-* or *ele-form*: *Tu vai querer isso?* instead of *Tu vais querer isso?*. In Portugal, one can expect less mixing in an educated register, but still present here and there, e.g. *Por favor, verifiquem o vosso programa* (Azevedo 2005) – use of the verb in third person and with the possessive in second.

In Brazil there is more confusion not only with the use of pronouns, but also agreement in general. The simple expression *Obrigado*, a masculine form, used to be said by males only. Females should say *Obrigada*, but it is now common to hear female speakers saying *Obrigado*. Just like Spanish in some geographical area, in Brazil the use of plural forms has been losing ground as well: – *Tem várias pessoa aí fora*, instead of – *Tem várias pessoas aí fora* ('There are several persons outside'), or – *Vê dois pão francês, por favor*, instead of *Vê dois pães franceses, por favor* ('Give me two French breads, please').

Again, in a coincidence of trends with Spanish, BP places object pronouns in general in front of the verb. Brazilians, however, are not always consistent in their pronoun usage. A good rule of thumb for non-natives is to use the pronouns in a more consistent manner and understand that natives may not do so.

Finally, there are orthographic differences mainly between Portugal and Brazil, but they are of relatively little concerns. One difference that becomes quickly noticed

is the use of consonants in syllable final position (*facto*, *ótimo*, etc.) in Portugal, but normally the written language poses no problem of comprehension, as newspapers and blogs on the internet can easily attest to the high level of intelligibility throughout the Luso-Brazilian world.

Three particular grammar phenomena of Portuguese as a foreign language will require the attention of learners. One is the aspectual contrast of the *Preterite* and *Imperfect*, in the Indicative mode. Although most grammars rely on detailed lists of the different linguistic contexts to train language learners on these verbal aspects, a simpler way to approach their differences may be to generalize the use of the Preterite to express facts or actions, and the Imperfect to describe or narrate. Such generalizations will require considerable training of learners to become familiar with the concepts of *action* and *description*, but in the long run they will be easier to remember than lists of different contexts.

The other phenomenon is the use of the *Present Perfect* (Spanish *he hablado*, *has hablado*, ...; Eng. *I have spoken*, *You have spoken*, *He has spoken*, ...; French *J'ai parlé*, *Tu as parlé*...). The use of these forms requires special attention from speakers of other languages, because the same verb sequence in Portuguese has another meaning. These compound verbs of the present perfect are usually rendered in Portuguese with the simple forms of the Preterite: *Eu falei*, *ocê falou*, *ele falou*, etc.

With regards to the future subjunctive, the third phenomenon, it is not used in Spanish anymore, except in some literary expressions of very *limited usage*, e.g. *fuere lo que fuere*, *sea lo que fuere* (Eng. “Whatever will be”), *viniere lo que viniere* (Eng. “Whatever comes”). On the other hand, in Portuguese the future subjunctive is still *highly productive* even among children: *Se Deus quiser* (Eng. “God willing”), *Seja o que for* (Eng. “Whatever will be”), *quando eu puder* (Eng. “whenever I can”), *enquanto estiverem sentados* (Eng. “while (you, plural) seated”), etc. Therefore, speakers of Spanish can at least understand when to use the *future subjunctive* in Portuguese because its use in Portuguese coincides with the use of the *present subjunctive* in Spanish in adverbial clauses that indicate forthcoming events (Simões 2008; 2013).

Table 6: Examples of how the Present Subjunctive in Spanish corresponds to Portuguese Future Subjunctive.

Spanish (Present Subjunctive)	Portuguese (Future Subjunctive)
Quando <i>terminen</i> el trabajo les <u>voy a dar/doy</u> el premio, ¿vale?	Quando <i>terminarem</i> o trabalho eu <u>dou/vou</u> dar o prêmio, está bem assim?
Así que <i>pueda</i> , te <u>llamo</u> .	Assim que <i>puder</i> te <u>telefono</u> .

With respect to word order, we find differing trends in Portuguese and Spanish. Like other Romance languages, both languages inherited from Latin a great deal of *flexibility* in the ordering of words. However, Spanish has a greater tendency to a *verb* + *subject* word order. The sentence below,

Sí, lo decidimos nosotros. is equivalent to Sim, nós decidimos isso.

The ongoing changes in BP also impact on word order. Languages considered to have implicit subjects have a tendency to a greater flexibility in word order as it is the case of Latin and Spanish. BP already has a more fixed SVO (Subject+Verb+Object) word order than Spanish. With the current trends in BP, we can expect BP to become similar to English, a language characterized by a relatively more fixed SVO order.

In conclusion, Portuguese uses definite articles much more than English. Definite articles are so common in Portuguese that proper names can have articles: *O João, A Mônica, A Argentina, A França* (in Brazil), but *França* (without article in Portugal), *Ela é a minha namorada* (literally, *‘‘She is *the* my girlfriend’’), to use a few illustrations.

5 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was twofold. The first part examined the role and relevance of Portuguese in the current world. This first part revealed the outstanding ongoing developments to promote and internationalize Portuguese, along with the fragility of the existing networks and programs to teach Portuguese as a foreign language, or as an Heritage and Non-Heritage. The second part provided a brief description of typical features of the Portuguese language that language specialists may find useful. This description of the Portuguese language contrasts the two main varieties of Portuguese, BP and EP, and uses comparable examples mainly from English, Spanish, French to facilitate the understanding of the points described in the discussions.

Due to limited space, a number of important features of Portuguese were left out, e.g. the contrast of *ser* and *estar* and the personal infinitive, to mention some. But it is hoped that the implicit dialogue of this chapter will contribute not only to the language specialists in Portuguese as a Foreign, Heritage or non-Heritage language, but also in the continuous creation of teaching materials. For instance, contrasting Portuguese with another language familiar to the student can accelerate the learning process. Hence the extensive use of Spanish in comparison with Portuguese throughout the discussions in this chapter. There are already materials for Portuguese prepared for speakers of Spanish and other languages, but more materials are necessary not only to improve the learning experience inside and outside the classroom, but also to maintain the vitality of the Portuguese language programs. Scholars interested in a more detailed description of Romance languages in contrast may find of interest the *Gramática Comparativa Houaiss: Quatro Línguas Românicas* (Azeredo et al. 2011), in which the grammar of Portuguese, Spanish, French and Italian are contrasted.

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