



RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

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

Produced by Graduate Students in the M.Ed. In TESL Program
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Portuguese American Style

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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
 - Príncipe
 - South America
 - Brazil
 - Asia
 - Macau



Regional Variations of Portuguese

- 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 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 | 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 dáblu 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 c (“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. Chama (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-shect
- "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 professoro/a (teacher) with or without their last names mentioned.

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