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Digital Sound Texts in Teaching and Learning Portuguese as a Mother Tongue

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1. Introduction

Goals

- ✓ What are the practices, challenges and opportunities of using podcasts and audiobooks in teaching Portuguese as a Mother Tongue (PMT), according to the teachers?
- ✓ What are they, according to the former students of PMT?

Plan

1. Introduction
2. Methods
3. Results
4. Discussion
5. Final considerations

1. Introduction

“sound texts”	
Audiobooks (AB) – recordings of books being read aloud, often literary texts (Cordón-García, 2018)	**Podcasts (PC)** – audio files distributed via the internet (sometimes also including images, video, or screen recordings), covering different types of content (such as news, interviews, advertising sketches, informational texts, etc.) and varying greatly in length (Carvalho, Aguiar & Maciel, 2009)

1. Introduction

Relevant resources in mother-tongue language teaching and learning	
Pedagogical reflection • Reading comprehension and fluency, motivation for reading (Nash, 2023) • Literature review; vocabulary, phonemic awareness, whole-word recognition, reading modeling, and access to more difficult texts (Best, 2020) **Empirical studies** • Reading skills and reading motivation among struggling readers (Whittingham et al., 2013) • Studies' review: generally positive effects on reading motivation and, in some cases, reading fluency and comprehension (Moore & Cahill, 2016)	• Oral communication, exposure to different language varieties, greater student participation and interaction, learner autonomy, and contact with authentic communication situations (Benedetti, 2018) • Oral genres such as debates (Campos & Matuda, 2019) • Content review, reading practice, and recording interviews and debates (Moura, 2009)

2. Methods

- **Exploratory Study**
- → Research project *Exploring Digital "Sound Texts" in Language Teaching in Portugal* (TxSon_PT; PTIN/UID4372-LE@D/022023), developed at LE@D.
- **Phase 1** – Online questionnaire (Qualtrics), distributed through personal contacts and social media in order to reach a sample that was as large and heterogeneous as possible. [the results are presented in this paper].
- → 18 teachers and 11 adult former students of Portuguese as a Mother Tongue
- → Convenience sample, providing an initial overview of the use of sound texts and enabling the identification of trends and issues requiring further investigation.
- **Phase 2** – Semi-structured interviews to explore in greater depth the issues identified as relevant [data still under analysis].

2. Methods

Questionnaire

Questionnaire structure (2 versions: teachers and students)

Introduction and informed consent
(only adults)

I. Sociodemographic and professional information

- ✓ Gender
- ✓ Age
- ✓ Educational level
- ✓ (Profession)
- ✓ Teaching level(s)

II. Previous concepts

- ☒ Characteristic(s) of AB
- Known title of an AB
- ☒ Characteristic(s) of PC
- Known title of a PC

III. Practices and difficulties

- Agreement with statements about the use of AB/PC
- Any experience to share?
- Agreement with statements about the difficulties using AB/PC
- Any difficulty to share?

IV. Affordances

- Agreement with statements about the educational benefits of AB/PC
- Any affordance to share?

Closing and acknowledgements

2. Methods

Questionnaire

- **Example of question on agreement with statements**

(Likert scale with explanation)

Indicate your level of agreement with the existence of the following difficulties in the use of audiobooks and podcasts in teaching and learning the language you teach.

	1 = totally disagree	2 = disagree	3 = neither agree nor disagree	4 = agree	5 = totally agree
a) Few available audiobooks/podcasts.	○	○	○	○	○
b) Few free audiobooks/podcasts.	○	○	○	○	○

2. Methods

Participants

18 Teachers

- ✓ 94% (17) feminine
- ✓ 44% (8) 50-59 years old
- ✓ 22% (4) 40-49 years old
- ✓ 22% (4) 60-69 years old
- ✓ 39% (7) BA degree
- ✓ 33% (6) PhD
- ✓ 17% (3) MA
- ✓ 44% (8) 3th Cycle of Basic Education
- ✓ 39% (7) Secondary Education
- ✓ 22% (4) High Education

11 Students

- ✓ 91% (10) feminine
- ✓ 45% (5) 40-49 years old
- ✓ 27% (3) 30-39 years old
- ✓ 18% (2) 18-19 years old
- ✓ 36% (4) BA degree
- ✓ 27% (3) MA

3. Results
Concepts' understanding

		Teachers		Students	
		N.º	%	N.º	%
Audiobooks	Known audiobooks	10	56%	6	55%
	Audio or video recording of a book *(only correct option)*	2	11%	2	18%
	Other properties identified: • Dramatized recording of a literary work. • Available in MP3 format. • Duration longer than one hour.				
Podcasts	Known podcasts	13	72%	9	82%
	Audio or video recording of different types of content (e.g., interviews, news, instructions, etc.) *(only correct option)*	2	11%	6	55%
	Other properties identified: • Recording of a conversation made available online • Available in MP3 format • Duration shorter than one hour				

3. Results
Pedagogical practices (teachers)

	Mean	Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Totally agree
· I **use** audiobooks in my language classes.	**2,78**	5	3	2	7	1
· I **encourage** students to use audiobooks outside of class (e.g., as homework).	**3,22**	1	3	6	7	1
· The **use of audiobooks is frequent** in the subject I teach, considering my knowledge of language teaching and learning.	**2,50**	4	5	5	4	0
· I consider audiobooks to be **useful** for language teaching and learning.	**4,11**	0	0	3	10	5
· I **use** podcasts in my language classes.	**3,50**	2	1	4	8	3
· I **encourage** students to use podcasts outside of class (e.g., as homework).	**3,50**	1	2	4	9	2
· The **use of podcasts is frequent** in the subject I teach, considering my knowledge of language teaching and learning.	**3,11**	0	7	3	7	1
· I consider podcasts to be **useful** for language teaching and learning.	**4,28**	0	1	1	8	8

3. Results
Pedagogical practices (students)

	Mean	Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Totally agree
· My teachers **used** audiobooks in Portuguese classes.	**1,82**	7	2	0	1	1
· They **gave instructions** that encouraged me to use audiobooks outside of class (e.g., as homework).	**1,64**	7	2	1	1	0
· I consider audiobooks to be **useful** for learning Portuguese.	**2,91**	3	0	4	3	1
· I **use / have used** audiobooks in Portuguese on my own initiative.	**4,09**	0	0	3	4	4
· My teachers **used** podcasts in Portuguese classes.	**1,73**	7	2	0	2	0
· They **gave instructions** that encouraged me to use podcasts outside of class (e.g., as homework).	**1,55**	7	2	2	0	0
· I consider podcasts to be **useful** for learning Portuguese.	**3,36**	2	0	3	4	2
· I **use / have used** podcasts in Portuguese on my own initiative.	**3,91**	0	0	4	4	3

3. Results

Challenges faced by teachers

	Mean	Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Totally agree
· Few audiobooks/podcasts **available**.	**3,17**	1	4	8	1	4
· Few audiobooks/podcasts **available for free**.	**3,39**	1	4	6	1	6
· Few audiobooks/podcasts **suitable** for pedagogical objectives.	**3,17**	1	5	4	6	2
· **Lack of time** to search for audiobooks/podcasts.	**3,94**	0	2	2	9	5
· **Lack of class time** to address/integrate audiobooks/podcasts.	**3,44**	0	5	3	7	3
· **Lack of interest/relevance** of these media for achieving the pedagogical objectives set out in the curriculum.	**2,33**	2	10	4	2	0
· **Lack of pedagogical training** on how to use and/or promote the use of audiobooks and podcasts for language teaching and learning.	**3,11**	1	5	5	5	2
· Difficulty in maintaining students' **concentration**.	**2,56**	1	10	3	4	0
· Difficulty in **assimilating** the content.	**2,61**	1	9	4	4	0
· Inability to control playback **speed** in audiobooks/podcasts.	**2,89**	0	8	5	4	1

3. Results

Challenges faced by students

	Mean	Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Totally agree
· Few audiobooks/podcasts **available**.	**3,73**	0	2	2	4	3
· Few audiobooks/podcasts **available for free**.	**4,09**	0	1	1	5	4
· Few audiobooks/podcasts **suitable** for learning objectives.	**3,82**	0	1	3	4	3
· **Lack of time to search** for audiobooks/podcasts.	**3,36**	0	1	5	5	0
· **Lack of time to use** audiobooks/podcasts.	**3,27**	0	2	4	5	0
· **Lack of interest/relevance** of these media for achieving my Portuguese improvement goals.	**2,55**	1	5	3	2	0
· **Lack of ideas** on how to use audiobooks and podcasts to improve my Portuguese skills.	**3,27**	0	2	4	5	0
· Difficulty **concentrating** while listening.	**3,18**	0	3	3	5	0
· Difficulty **assimilating** the content.	**2,64**	1	4	4	2	0
· Inability to control playback **speed** in audiobooks/podcasts.	**2,55**	1	5	3	2	0

3. Results
Affordances

	Teachers			Students		
	Mean	Agree	Totally agree	**Mean**	Agree	Totally agree
Listening comprehension	**4,50**	7	10	**4,10**	7	2
Reading	**3,17**	7	2	**3,40**	4	1
Speaking skills	**4,33**	9	8	**4,20**	8	2
Writing	**3,56**	8	3	**3,20**	3	1
Pronunciation	**4,44**	8	9	**4,10**	5	3
Exposure to different language varieties	**4,44**	6	10	**4,20**	4	4
Vocabulary development	**4,22**	8	7	**4,40**	6	4
Motivation	**4,17**	5	8	**4,00**	6	2
Concentration / attention development	**4,28**	7	8	**3,80**	4	2
Better content assimilation	**4,06**	4	8	**3,70**	3	2

4. Discussion

Concepts and knowledge

Teachers and students generally recognize audiobooks and podcasts but often struggle to define them precisely. Students tended to explain the concepts more accurately than teachers, especially the concept of podcast.

→ In line with Castelo, Braz & Seara (2024), on additional languages

Pedagogical practices

Teachers reported limited use of audiobooks and podcasts, although they considered them useful. Podcasts were used more frequently than audiobooks.

Students reported even lower exposure to these resources in Portuguese classes than teachers reported using them. However, many students said they used audiobooks and podcasts independently.

→ In line with Castelo, Braz & Seara (2024), on additional languages

4. Discussion

Main challenges

Both teachers and students highlighted:

- Lack of freely available audiobooks and podcasts
- Limited availability of materials suited to learning objectives
- Lack of time to search for resources

Students also mentioned difficulties concentrating while listening and uncertainty about how to use these resources effectively.

→ In line with Castelo, Braz & Seara (2024), on additional languages

Affordances

Both groups: listening comprehension, speaking skills, pronunciation, exposure to different language varieties, vocabulary development, motivation

Teachers: concentration development, content assimilation

→ Slightly different from Castelo, Braz & Seara (2024), being found here a greater agreement among teachers and students

4. Discussion

Facilitating quick and free access to sound texts

- Greater expression of interest from teachers in the creation and free availability of audiobooks associated with school textbooks
- Creation of audiobooks and podcasts by teachers themselves and even by students, which can be made available to the entire teaching and student community, while respecting copyright
- Provision of a platform, freely accessed and used by all Portuguese language teachers, containing audiobooks and podcasts aligned with the curriculum and learning standards of the subject, along with activity suggestions for the various language components

4. Discussion

Promoting more frequent and effective use of audio texts in the teaching and learning of a first language

Raising teachers' awareness of the integration of audiobooks/podcasts into teaching

- ✓ Research and dissemination articles on the advantages and practices of integrating audiobooks/podcasts into teaching
- ✓ Preparation of exemplary teaching sequences

Raising learners' awareness of the autonomous use of audiobooks/podcasts

- ✓ Suggestions, guidance, and/or instructions from teachers (preferably personalised instructions) [implying increased teacher training]
- ✓ Competitions on the comprehension of a set of relevant sound texts
- ✓ A website with suggestions of sound texts and activities for their autonomous use

(adapted from Castelo, Xavier & Liu, 2024, proposal for audiobooks in foreign language teaching)

5. Final considerations

Limitations

- Small sample size
- Interview data had not yet been fully analyzed
- Teacher´s and student´s generations and ages

Future work

- Improve access to sound texts
- Promote more frequent and effective use in Portuguese mother-tongue teaching and learning
- Continue developing the research project Exploring Digital “Sound Texts” in Language Teaching in Portugal (TxSon_PT)
- Investigate differences between perceived and actual use of sound texts across educational levels

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Thank you for your attention!
Moltes gràcies per la vostra atenció!

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