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

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Some studies have demonstrated the relevance of using audiobooks and podcasts (here collectively referred to as "sound texts") in promoting, for instance, reading and oral skills (e.g., Best, 2020; Moura, 2009; Nash, 2023; Whittingham et al., 2013). However, very little is known about the actual use of these digital resources in teaching and learning Portuguese as a Mother Tongue (PMT) in Portugal.

Therefore, this exploratory study, part of an ongoing research project, aims to investigate the pedagogical practices, challenges, and opportunities of using sound texts in teaching and learning PMT and to answer two research questions: (i) What are the practices, challenges and opportunities of using podcasts and audiobooks in teaching PMT, according to the teachers? What are they, according to the former students of PMT? To this end, an online questionnaire was completed by a convenience sample recruited through personal contacts and social media, composed of 18 teachers of PMT and 11 adult students who had studied PMT in Portugal. The questionnaire included mainly closed questions with Likert scale and also some open questions.

The following results stand out. First, in spite of some differences, teachers' and students' standpoints primarily converge. In fact, regarding pedagogical practices, several responses from both teachers and students indicate that podcasts, and especially audiobooks, are rarely used, despite teachers valuing their usefulness. The main challenges highlighted by both groups of respondents are the scarcity of (freely) available audio texts and the lack of time to search for them. Concerning the potential of these digital resources, teachers and students primarily highlight vocabulary expansion, development of oral skills, exposure to other language varieties (extremely important in a pluricentric language such as Portuguese), and motivation increase.

In this paper, we present the framework and previous studies, the methodological options of the study, and the results obtained in terms of practices, challenges and opportunities. Despite the reduced sample size, the collected data constitute a good starting point to promote a reflection on the usage of these digital resources as a tool to develop different language skills in the context of PMT education.

Keywords: podcasts, audiobooks, teaching and learning, Portuguese as a Mother Tongue, language skills

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