

## Pronunciation Made Easy



Simple & Intuitive

bridging L1 and L2

Hello!

I thought I'd start this newsletter by suggesting a simple and intuitive way to **introduce my "bridging L1 and L2" pronunciation strategy** to your students, preferably, your beginner students. It's how I did it for years before my 'Aha moment' in Jan. 2003.

At the beginning of the school year, with the 5th graders, I always started with the alphabet. Since you're well into the second term, you can always revise it by having students spell words they usually misspell, for example. And while you're at it, go over the entire alphabet. Here's how I did it.

### Introducing the "bridging L1 and L2" pronunciation strategy

**First step:** Have the students repeat each letter of the alphabet a couple of times and then sing the alphabet song, always an enjoyable moment. (Since you're in the middle of the second term, you may want to skip this part.)

**Second step:** Associate a Portuguese sound (based on vowels, diphthongs and consonants) to each letter. Write them on the board.

a /ei/ b /b*i*/ c /s*í*/ d /d*í*/ e /i/ f /éf/ g /d*ji*/ h /eitch/ i /ai/ j /d*jei*/ k /kei/ l /él/ m /ém/ n /én/ o

/ou/ p /p*i*/ q /k*iu*/ r /ár/ s /éss/ t /t*i*/ u /iú/ v /v*i*/ w /dabeliú/

x /ékss/ y /uai/ z /z*i*/ (or /zéd/)

**N.B.:** Diphthongs are underlined because they are a set, 'ss' stresses the middle or final /s/ sound, and the /a/ in /dabeliú/ sounds like the 'a' in the Portuguese "agora" (= now) and in the English "about".

**Third step:** Create columns of the different sounds on the board. Then the students say each letter and place it under the corresponding column.

/ei/ /i/ /é/ /ai/ /ou/ /iu/ /á/  
a b f i o q r

Once they start getting the idea of using Portuguese sounds - all my students loved it and grasped it at once! -, you can choose to have your students come up with simple one- or two-syllable words that have these same sounds and place them in the corresponding columns.

Examples for each option:

/ei/ day, great, say  
/i/ green, see, tea  
/é/ bed, head  
/ai/ hi, my, night  
/ou/ boat, hello, note  
/á/ car, dark, far, park

/iú/ use (v.), unit

Or you can move on to the colors, for example.

white /uait/ grey /grei/ blue /blú/ brown /braun/ green /grín/ yellow /iélou/

Another option is to move straight to the days of the week and the months.

The whole idea is to **start small** (very wise advice that I learned from an American author while researching for my Master's thesis) and then build on your experience. Notice that in the choices referred, you're using vocabulary that the students should already master.

If you find this to be a simple and intuitive pronunciation strategy, you don't need to reinvent the wheel. I **have created an e-dictionary with 3.500+ English words already transcribed using Portuguese sounds** and their meaning(s) in Portuguese. **Why not buy it?** (See link below) It also includes a table with all the sounds used and example words together with recordings of the sounds and their example words.

If you're not sure yet, listen to a couple of examples of my students' pronunciation in an audio file by Francisca recorded by me in class around 2005 using a Toshiba PDA. It was a fabulous piece of technology! The video by Rodrigo was a surprise present for me that he recorded at home and sent me by email in the same year. (See attachments)

### **On the Radical English front**

I suggest you read fellow Radical English co-founder Rita Baker's article, [A Global Approach to Teaching Phrasal Verbs](#). My comment to Rita on LinkedIn: "A fabulous article on phrasal verbs and how they can be taught by using a simple and intuitive approach. Rita Baker at her best once again."

Judy Thompson gave her third webinar in a Google Hangout on Air titled "Literacy and Pronunciation - Making the Impossible Possible". Here's the [presentation](#) in Slideshare.

### **Webinar with your students**

My offer to hold a webinar with a class of yours to try out my pronunciation is in "Go" mode. Please contact me at tere-deca-at-gmail-dot-com if you're interested.

I'll be trying out my strategy f2f with a group of senior citizens tomorrow, 1Mar. Hope all goes well. It'll be the first time I do it with non-students of mine.

Feel free to share this month's newsletter with anyone who may be interested.

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Enjoy pronouncing! :-)

Tere