

PREFACE

A number of researchers have conducted studies in an attempt to describe how English sounds and syllables are perceived and produced by Brazilian learners and to identify factors that might affect these processes (e.g., Baptista, 1992; Rebelo, 1997; Silva Filho, 1998; Koerich, 2002; Major, 1986; Zimmer, 2004; Kluge, 2004; Rauber, 2002). Based on the findings obtained in this body of research, a few studies have proposed teaching guidelines to make Brazilian learners aware of the differences between the phonetic and phonological inventories of English and Portuguese and to improve their pronunciation (Silveira, 2004; Alves, 2004; Cristófaró Silva, 2005; Nobre-Oliveira, 2007; Bettoni-Techio, 2008). For a complete list of references, we refer the readers to Silveira and Baptista (2007).

This issue of *Ilha do Desterro* includes a collection of papers that focus on English interphonology, especially the acquisition of consonants and syllables. Of the eight papers, seven investigate the English interphonology of Brazilians, while one reports on the English interphonology of Spanish speakers. Readers interested in obtaining further information about the interphonology of these two groups of speakers are referred to the book organized by Baptista and Watkins (*English with a Latin Beat*, 2006), which is reviewed by Cardoso in this issue.

The articles comprising this issue were organized by topic. Thus, the first paper investigates the perception and production of word-final nasal consonants (Kluge & Baptista), scrutinizing the influence of the

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preceding vowel. The next three papers examine the production of word-final consonants. Zimmer and Alves discuss the status of terminal devoicing of stops, reporting on empirical results of a comparison on the production of English word-final stops by Brazilians and Americans. The palatalization of word-final alveolars is the issue investigated by Bettoni-Techio and Koerich, who are also interested in the effects of the preceding context on palatalization. Osborne, in research of a broader scope, presents the results of a case study and provides an overview of the pronunciation patterns that an adult Brazilian learner, immersed in an L2 context, resorts to when producing English consonants.

Two papers report on the acquisition of simple and complex codas. Delatorre investigates how sonority influences the production of vowel epenthesis in verbs ending in *-ed*. Cruz questions the extent to which the insertion of a paragogic vowel (e.g. “top” [topɪ]) after English word-final consonants by Brazilian learners hinders speech intelligibility, as judged by British listeners.

The last two papers deal with pronunciation instruction and training. Cardoso reviews two of his own studies on word-final stops and, based on the findings, proposes some pedagogical activities to help Brazilian learners improve their production of the target consonants. Finally, Gómez Lacabex, García Lecumberri and Cooke focus on the perception of English unstressed syllables by Spanish learners. The authors report on the effects of auditory and articulatory training and compare learners’ performance on a perception pretest and posttest, concluding that both types of training can contribute to improving perception of unstressed vowels.

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Guest Editors

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DEDICATION

We would like to dedicate this issue to the memory of our friend, colleague and co-editor, Rosana Koerich, who left us prematurely during the final stages of preparation of this issue. Rosana contributed immensely to the development of research in this area and advised a number of Master's and doctoral theses throughout her career. We will certainly miss her valuable contributions, mainly in the area of speech perception, not to mention her unique sense of humor.