

# Modern Brazilian Portuguese Grammar

## **A PRACTICAL GUIDE**

SECOND EDITION

John Whitlam



# Modern BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE Grammar

*Modern Brazilian Portuguese Grammar: A Practical Guide* is an innovative reference guide to Brazilian Portuguese, combining traditional and function-based grammar in a single volume.

The *Grammar* is divided into two parts. Part A covers traditional grammatical categories such as agreement, nouns, verbs and adjectives. Part B is carefully organized around language functions covering all major communication situations such as establishing identity, making contact and expressing likes, dislikes and preferences.

With a strong emphasis on contemporary usage, all grammar points and functions are richly illustrated with examples. Building on the success of the first edition, this edition also includes:

- An introduction to the history and current status of Brazilian Portuguese
- Notes for Spanish speakers pointing out the main grammatical differences between the two languages
- Additional explanation and exemplification of areas of particular difficulty for learners.

A combination of reference grammar and practical usage manual, *Modern Brazilian Portuguese Grammar* is the ideal source for learners of Brazilian Portuguese at all levels, from beginner to advanced.

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John Whitlam

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# Preface to the second edition

My intention when I proposed the first edition of the Routledge *Modern Brazilian Portuguese Grammar* was to write the grammar I wished had existed when I myself first started studying the language more than thirty years ago. At that time, textbooks for English-speaking learners described European Portuguese, with Brazilian variants banished to appendices and footnotes, if mentioned at all. Even there, the information was sketchy and unreliable. Once I came to Brazil, I soon realized I could disregard most of what I had read in the books, especially as far as the spoken language was concerned. I longed for a comprehensive grammar book that dealt exclusively with Brazilian Portuguese and was not afraid to present and discuss the considerable differences between the spoken and written languages without value judgements. It took me thirty years, the last decade of which living in Brazil, to feel qualified enough even to attempt to write one myself.

The reaction to the first edition has been more than gratifying. In the intervening years, Brazil has grown immeasurably in economic importance and global prominence, while the expansion and affordability of mass travel means that more people than ever are able to visit the country for themselves. This has brought something of a boom in the study of specifically Brazilian Portuguese and whereas Portuguese has traditionally been studied as a minor or subsidiary to Spanish in the English-speaking world, it is now available as a major in many universities and colleges.

In this second edition, I have added new information where it may be useful and reformulated some parts of the text in the interests of clarity. One new feature in this second edition is the inclusion of a paragraph at the end of each chapter in the Structures section pointing out major differences between Portuguese and Spanish. These are for the benefit of the many students of Portuguese who already know some Spanish, but they can simply be ignored by those who do not. I have also included a new introduction to Brazilian Portuguese outlining how it has evolved since the discovery of Brazil in 1500 and some of the contemporary issues surrounding the language.

I would like to reiterate my thanks to Dr Beatriz Caldas for her perceptive and thought-provoking comments on the text of the first edition and to Andrea Hartill of Routledge for her continued confidence in me and support throughout. I am also grateful to all the friends, family, students and colleagues in Brazil who have, mostly unwittingly, served as informants for this book. This second edition is dedicated to the memory of Marcelo Affonso.

John Whitlam  
Rio de Janeiro  
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# Introduction to this book

This book aims to provide a complete and practical guide to the Portuguese language as it is spoken and written in Brazil today. It is divided into two main parts: *Structures* and *Functions*.

*Part A – Structures* is a concise grammar of Brazilian Portuguese organized in the traditional way, describing the different grammatical features in turn. You can use this section both for systematic study of grammar and for quick reference when you want to know something about a particular form or structure (e.g. the subjunctive forms of a particular verb, how adjectives agree with nouns, when to use **ser** or **estar**, etc.).

*Part B – Functions*, which is the larger of the two parts, is organized according to the kinds of things you might want to say or write in particular situations in Portuguese, and here you can look up such things as how to apologize, how to say what you like and dislike, how to describe a person, etc. You will find that sometimes the same information is given in both parts of the book, although it is organized in a different way: in Part A by grammatical category and in Part B by linguistic function.

You will often want to refer back and forth between the two parts of the book; indeed, you are encouraged to do so, and to help you find what you are looking for, there are numerous cross-references indicated in the text or by arrows in the margin. There is also an index of words and topics at the back of the book so that you can find information again quickly and easily.

In Brazilian Portuguese there are considerable differences between informal and formal usage and between spoken and written language, and these are pointed out where appropriate. Every attempt has been made to reflect the register of different forms and structures in the content and translation of the numerous example sentences.

Traditional grammatical terms have been used, especially in the *Structures* part, though they are usually explained with reference to English. You can also find an explanation of any grammatical terms you may be unfamiliar with in the *Glossary*.

The following abbreviations have been used:

<i>fem.</i>	feminine
<i>indic.</i>	indicative
<i>imperf.</i>	imperfect
<i>masc.</i>	masculine
<i>pl.</i>	plural

## INTRODUCTION TO THIS BOOK

<i>pluperf.</i>	pluperfect
<i>pres.</i>	present
<i>sing.</i>	singular
<i>subj.</i>	subjunctive.

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