
Brazilian Portuguese Speaking Practice: The Imitation Technique

This lesson will help you develop your conversational skills using an imitation exercise. Imitation is the best exercise to improve pronunciation, improve your accent, increase your vocabulary, and get some speaking practice, even when you don't have anyone to talk to.

Before we start, let's talk about how to choose the best study material.

Where to find the ideal materials for this exercise?

For this exercise, you can choose a video or podcast that you enjoy and that provides access to both the audio and its transcript. You can begin by using my YouTube channel. Afterwards, I recommend repeating this activity with other videos or podcasts of your preference.

The best material is the one that interests you, so it can vary from person to person. I recommend searching for YouTube channels and podcasts that cover topics you find interesting. Additionally, it's important to find material suitable for your proficiency level.

If you can't find audio with a transcription, we recommend using YouTube's automatic closed captioning. It's not perfect, but it works well.

I will list some suggestions below:

Beginner & upper-beginner level:

[Speaking Brazilian YouTube Channel – Basic Course Playlist \(subtitles available\)](#)

[Speaking Brazilian YouTube Club \(transcripts available\)](#)

[O Show da Luna YouTube Channel \(automatic caption\)](#)

[Varal de Histórias YouTube Channel \(automatic caption\)](#)

Intermediate & advanced level:

[Speaking Brazilian YouTube Channel – Bate-Papo Playlist](#)

[Speaking Brazilian Podcast \(audio only\)](#)

[Podcast Café Brasil \(transcripts available\)](#)

[Brasil Escola YouTube Channel \(automatic caption\)](#)

[Jana Viscardi YouTube Channel \(automatic caption\)](#)

The Imitation Technique

I divided this activity into 3 parts, and I'll guide you all step by step. We will do an exercise at the beginner level, one at the intermediate level, and one at the advanced level.

Step 1- Listen and read.

In this first part of the exercise, you should simply listen and read the text closely. You don't need to do anything else. Simply listen to the audio and read the text.

Step 2 – Listen, pause, and repeat.

In this second part, you should repeat aloud everything you hear. Listen to the same audio, but this time, pause it after each sentence and repeat each word. In this part of the exercise, it's important for you to imitate the pronunciation and intonation of the native speaker.

Step 3 – Shadowing: listen and speak at the same time.

In this part, you should listen to the audio and say what you're hearing at the same time. This exercise is called "shadowing." This step is much more difficult than the previous steps, but it's an amazing exercise to develop your fluency in Portuguese.

As Aventuras de João

João's Adventures

Part 1 - Beginner Level

João é um menino curioso e alegre. Ele mora em São Paulo com seus pais, mas passa os fins de semana em Indaiatuba com sua avó, Maria. A casa de sua avó tem um quintal grande com muitas árvores frutíferas. João passa o dia no quintal, subindo nas árvores e comendo frutas. À noite, ele adora ouvir as histórias que sua avó conta.

João is a curious and cheerful boy. He lives in São Paulo with his parents, but spends the weekends in Indaiatuba with his grandmother, Maria. His grandmother's house has a large backyard with many fruit trees. João spends his day in the backyard, climbing the trees and eating fruits. At night, he loves listening to the stories his grandmother tells.

Part 2 - Intermediate Level

Um certo dia, João estava brincando no quintal de sua avó quando viu um pedaço de papel atrás de um arbusto. Ele pegou o papel e o abriu cuidadosamente. Era um mapa antigo que tinha o desenho de cada árvore do quintal e traçava um caminho que João não conhecia. "Se eu seguir este mapa, talvez encontre um tesouro", pensou João. A avó, que o observava de longe, sorriu.

One day, João was playing in his grandmother's backyard when he saw a piece of paper behind a bush. He picked up the paper and carefully opened it. It was an old map that had a drawing of each tree in the backyard and traced a path João didn't know. "If I follow this map, maybe I'll find a treasure," João thought. The grandmother, who was watching from a distance, smiled.

Part 3 - Advanced Level

Impulsionado pela curiosidade, João decidiu seguir o mapa. Ele já tinha explorado o quintal muitas vezes, mas nunca tinha se interessado pelos cantos sem árvores. Ele seguiu todas as pistas cuidadosamente até que encontrou uma pequena caixa escondida abaixo de umas pedras. Dentro dela, João encontrou pequenos brinquedos que haviam pertencido a seu avô. Seus olhos brilharam de alegria. Havia encontrado um tesouro!

Driven by curiosity, João decided to follow the map. He had explored the backyard many times but had never been interested in the corners without trees. He carefully followed all the clues until he found a small box hidden beneath some rocks. Inside it, João found small toys that had belonged to his grandfather. His eyes sparkled with joy. He had found a treasure!

How to add this exercise to your study routine

If you're a beginner and still need to read the text to understand the words, it's important to pause whatever you're doing and focus on the exercise.

If you already have an intermediate level and can comprehend the language without reading, this exercise becomes much easier. You can listen to the audio and practice imitation and shadowing while multitasking.

To incorporate this exercise into your study routine, I recommend establishing a habit of regularly listening to Portuguese podcasts or watching videos at the same time every day. For me, the best time is during breakfast or while doing household chores.

Gradually, the exercise will become easier, and the language will become more familiar. I practice imitation and shadowing exercises all the time. It has become so automatic that I don't even think about it before starting. When I listen to audio in a language I'm learning, I instinctively begin repeating what the person is saying out loud.

For me, this exercise is a game-changer in achieving fluency. I hope it's just as helpful for you.