Abstract: This study aimed at investigating EFL teacher education in Brazil and their knowledge about English Phonetics and Phonology and pronunciation. Six Brazilian EFL teachers answered a sequence of eight questions which revealed that all teachers were experienced teachers of English and that five out of the six had a university degree in English. They revealed that teachers had difficulty to answer the last three questions regarding the production of vowel epenthesis in initial /s/ clusters, final-single consonants and simple past tense -ed. The results obtained have pedagogical significance since teachers would have difficulty in identifying Brazilian EFL learners’ pronunciation errors and in helping students to solve them, possibly influenced by the lack of knowledge from their education, the approach used in class and the market demands.

Key words: EFL; teacher education; pronunciation.

Introduction

Brazil has received influence from people from different parts of the world during the last five hundred years. Generally, as Pagel (2002) points out, this influence is related to the degree of cultural-economic superiority that a particular country has at a certain moment in human history. Based on this point of view, he considers that Brazil received much influence from the French language during the 19th century and from the English language in the 20th century when the United States of America have assumed the condition of the most important country all over the world.

According to Pagel (2002), English has been taught as foreign language at the majority of Brazilian schools since 1942. Despite this high influence of English in Brazilian educational system, Pagel (2002) argues that the two latest versions - 1971 and 1996 - of the Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional (LDB), a Brazilian law for Education that organizes the whole educational system all over the country, does not pay much attention to foreign language teaching in Brazilian schools, what seems contradictory since English is the foreign language most frequently taught at Brazilian elementary and secondary schools, as previously mentioned. He presents an interesting point of view that to teach foreign languages to Brazilian students is important due to the necessity of integrating them to other people and to the technology developed all over the world.

An interesting point to be raised here is teacher education, especially in Brazil, since they are the professionals who are going to make the link between the learners and the language used to integrate people and technology around the world.
In the case of English teacher education, researchers, such as Almeida Filho (2000), Celani (2000), Gimenez (1999), Heberle and Meurer (2001), Perin (2001) and Richards (1998), consider that these teachers have to be well trained, aware of their reality and reflect about their own work in class in order to be able to conduct good classes. An important justification to follow this perspective presented by these researchers is pointed out by Holden & Rogers (2002), who call the attention to the fact that students tend to imitate their teachers' abilities, including pronunciation, which implies that if teachers have difficulties in pronunciation, their students will probably emulate them. However, it is a well known fact that foreign and/or second language learners have different difficulties in learning pronunciation of the target language.

In regard to Brazilian learners of English as foreign language (EFL), Baptista (2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2002) identifies their most frequent difficulties and errors regarding English pronunciation. She calls especial attention to the pronunciation of vowels, consonants in both initial and final positions, syllables, including the production of epenthesis in initial /s/ clusters, final consonants and simple past tense -ed, stress, rhythm and intonation.

Considering these points raised here about teacher education, the intensive use of English in Brazil and the most frequent Brazilian pronunciation errors, the aim of this study was to investigate Brazilian EFL teachers’ education and the importance devoted to pronunciation in Brazil by analyzing their beliefs about English pronunciation of three problematic contexts – initial /s/ clusters, final-single consonants and past tense -ed – as well as about its Phonetics and Phonology and teacher education.

1. Review of Literature

Taking into account the fact that foreign language teachers can be considered adult advanced learners of the foreign language they teach, authors, such as Brown (1994), Hammond (1995), Lightbown and Spada (1993) and Ur (1996), claim that these teachers are able to acquire good pronunciation because they can deal with great variety of information. This happens, according to Lightbown and Spada (1993) due to the advanced development of the brain in advanced adult learners what allows these learners to receive information through the use of comprehensible input, which takes the form of explanations, as observed by authors, such as Edge (1997), Hammond (1995), Keys (2001), Pica (1994), Revell (1995) and Ur (1996).

Regarding teacher education, Richards (1998) classifies Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE) in six dimensions: a) theories of teaching, which concern teachers' and researchers' opinions and thoughts about teaching; b) teaching skills, which involve the selection and preparation of materials, presentations and communicative activities, c) communication skills, which refer to the teachers' ability to communicate, to explain and to give specific instructions to the students in class, which is especially important for those teachers who are not native speakers of English; d) subject matter knowledge, which includes knowledge about different aspects of the language, such as phonetics and phonology, grammar and syntax, discourse analysis, TESOL methods and second language
acquisition; e) pedagogical reasoning skills and decision-making, which are also related to
the choice of materials that can help students to solve problems they have been facing
concerning language and f) contextual knowledge, which refers to teachers' awareness of
their social, political and physical reality.

Concerning English teachers' education in Brazil, Almeida Filho (2000) writes that
the *Letras* courses, which prepare students to be language teachers, have some problems.
He mentions that these courses are considered old-fashioned and not prepared to educate
the professionals the market needs. In addition to Almeida Filho’s position, researchers,
such as Celani (2000), Heberle and Meurer (2001), Perin (2001) and Richards (1998),
emphasize that teachers must be well-trained in specific language skills throughout the
undergraduate course and even after being graduated, taking improvement courses in order
to keep up to date.

Because the focus of this study is on teachers’ education, knowledge and beliefs
about English Phonetics and Phonology and on the importance devoted to pronunciation in
Brazil, only information related to teacher education and pronunciation are provided in the
next paragraphs following Richard’s (198) fourth dimension just mentioned and the
findings of Baptista (2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2002) regarding Brazilians’ pronunciation of
English.

Researchers, such as Brown (1994), Cook (2001), Hammond (1995), Richards and
Rodgers (1986) and Seidlhofer (2001) claim that the approach the teachers have to use in
class gives too much importance to communication and fluency rather than to accuracy or
training. In the case of Brazilian teachers and schools, this situation has probably occurred
due to the fact that the majority of Brazilian schools use is the Communicative Language
Teaching (CLT) approach which, as described by Brown (1994), Cook (2001), Hammond
(1995), Richards and Rodgers (1986) and Seidlhofer (2001), appeared to replace the
Audiolingual Method (ALM) used in the 1960’s and in the beginning of the 1970’s, giving
much importance to communication and fluency rather than to accuracy, as done by the
ALM. Nevertheless, as pointed out by Berri (2002), this great emphasis on communication
and fluency can cause an increase in pronunciation mistakes. Because of the characteristics
of CLT, Hammond (1995) considers that the CLT approach does not know what to do with
pronunciation in class.

Nevertheless, researchers in the field of Phonetics and Phonology have found that
learners of English as a second/foreign language who speak different first languages have
difficulties with specific contexts of English, either consonants or vowels. Regarding
Brazilian EFL learners, Baptista (2001, 2002) identifies vowels, consonants in initial and
final positions, such as the interdental fricatives, the alveolar stops /t, d/ that are frequently
pronounced as the affricates /tʃ, dʒ/ respectively; the initial /s/ clusters and the simple pas
tense -ed, as difficult sounds for these learners.

In regard to the pronunciation of sounds, such as initial /s/ clusters, final-single
consonants and simple past tense -ed, that appeared in the questionnaire of the present
study answered by the teachers, Rebello (1997), Rauber (2002, 2006), Silveira (2002) and
Cornelian Jr. (2003) found that Brazilians have difficulty in the pronunciation of initial /s/
clusters due to vowel epenthesis before the /s/ and voicing of the /s/ in /s/ sonorant

Concerning Brazilian EFL teachers’ beliefs about Brazilians’ difficulties in English pronunciation, Delatorre (2004) carried out a study with three teachers of EFL who were graduated in letras and enrolled at the Programa de Pós-Graduação em Inglês (PPGI) of Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC) at the moment the study was conducted. Two teachers were MA students and one of them was a PhD student who answered a questionnaire about difficulties in English pronunciation by Brazilians and strategies Brazilians use to improve pronunciation.

In terms of strategies used by Brazilian EFL learners to improve pronunciation, Delatorre (2004) found that three teachers mentioned that Brazilians rely most frequently in teachers’ pronunciation and in listening to music whereas two out of three teachers believed that students use movies to improve English pronunciation and one teacher, out of three teachers, believed that Brazilian EFL students followed the course book recordings to improve pronunciation. Regarding teachers’ beliefs about Brazilian EFL learners’ difficulties in English pronunciation, Delatorre (2004) found that all three teachers considered that Brazilians have difficulty with vowels, the “th” sounds and -ed found in the simple past tense and past participle of regular verbs; two out of three teachers considered that Brazilians have problems with the pronunciation of final-single consonants and the -s from the third person singular and plural of nouns and, only one teacher, out of three teachers, mentioned that Brazilians have difficulty with initial /s/ clusters.

Regarding pronunciation and corrective feedback Brazilian EFL teachers provide to their students, Delatorre (2003) conducted a study in which she observed and recorded three classes from two teachers of English at Extracurricular course at UFSC who were a Master in Linguistics and a doctoral student at PPGI in the area of Phonetics and Phonology (Teacher A) and a Master in Literature (Teacher B). Delatorre (2003) found that Teacher A give different types of corrective feedback to her students, including explicit correction, recast, repetition, metalinguistics cues, and, no correction, whereas Teacher B gave corrective feedback by explicit correction, repetition and, no correction. Teacher A also took her students to the language laboratory, explained them the influence of stress and the raising and falling intonation in English and, explained the pronunciation of a word by transcribing it on the board using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The sounds that both teachers most frequently corrected were vowels (front, back, central), vowel epenthesis in final single consonants and simple past tense -ed, as well as the production of fricative an nasal consonants and syllable stress. Despite the difference in types of corrective feedback given to their students, both teachers paid attention to the most frequent pronunciation errors produced by Brazilian EFL learners that were pointed out by Baptista (2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2002).

Interestingly, Edge (1997) and Koerich (2002a) present a new alternative to deal with pronunciation in class. They suggest the use of visual, audio information and gestures, including the IPA and transcriptions on the board to call students attention and improve pronunciation in class. However, in order to follow Edge’s and Koerich’s suggestions and to benefit from research in the field of Phonetics and Phonology, as suggested by Baptista
(2002), teachers have to be well trained in English pronunciation. Nevertheless, as Berri (2002) and Koerich (2002a) claim, teachers have not received training in Phonetics and Phonology during the last decades in Brazil.

2. Method

The focus of this study was on Brazilian EFL teachers' education and beliefs about English pronunciation, especially concerning final consonants, regular verbs in the past tense and in initial /s/ clusters, and the importance devoted to pronunciation in class. Participants of this study were six Brazilian EFL teachers from two different private English schools of Florianópolis who were teaching to pre-intermediate and intermediate levels at the moment the research was conducted and were called as Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, Teacher D, Teacher E and Teacher F by the researcher. The teachers/participants were interviewed by the researcher at the end of their classes in order to gather the data.

The interview with the teachers intended to verify their a) knowledge about/importance given to English phonetics and phonology, b) time spent abroad, c) teaching experience and d) academic background. The interview consisted of 8 questions in which the first five questions concerned their knowledge of Phonetics and Phonology, experience living abroad, experience teaching English and teacher training programs whereas the last three questions were specifically about the pronunciation of initial /s/ clusters, final-single consonants and regular verbs in the past tense -ed. The first five questions were answered orally whereas questions six and seven were read and explained by the teachers/participants. The researcher provided the target words of each question in small cards. In questions eight, participants heard a sentence with two different pronunciations, one with vowel epenthesis production and a second version without vowel epenthesis insertion in contexts in italics, mainly the cluster /sk/ in the word school, the -ed in the verb planned, and the final consonant /k/ in the word strike. This last question was audio-recorded by a proficient Brazilian EFL speaker with large experience in EFL teaching and research. The questions used in the interview are presented below and the respective answers to them are displayed in Table 1.

1 - How long have you been teaching English?

2 - Have you ever lived in an English speaking country? If so, how much time?

3 - Have you ever studied Phonetics and Phonology?

4 - Do you think it is important to know Phonetics and Phonology in order to deal with pronunciation in class?

5 - Do you have a university degree in education and/or English?
6 - Is skut a possible word in English? In Portuguese? Why?

7 - What is the difference in pronunciation of the following words: traded, stripped, tagged, planned and played?

8 - The teachers of that school have planned a strike for next week.

Considering the answers for the questions presented above, the expected answers for questions one to five were yes or no or personal information as time of experience and university degree. On the other hand, the answers for questions six to eight were more complex since teachers/participants have to explain them. The expected answer to question six was that skut is a possible English word because Brazilian Portuguese (BP) does not have this type of initial cluster. Moreover, the expected answer to question seven was that the regular verbs in the past tense can have three different pronunciations, such as /td/ /t/ or /d/, according to the previous context, and finally, the expected answer to question eight is that in the first version of the sentence there was the production of vowel epenthesis in initial /s/ clusters, final-single consonants and past-tense -ed.

3. Results and Discussion

The results obtained with their answers to the questionnaire presented in the Method section are displayed in Table 1. A general analysis of the results demonstrates that all teachers/ participants followed the expected tendencies regarding type of answer to questions one to five in comparison to the expected answers described at the end of the Method section since all teachers/participants answered yes or no or provided some information to answer these questions. On the other hand, their answers to questions six to eight varied since the majority of the participants provided incomplete answers to these questions, as Table 1 demonstrates. The meaning of their answers is provided with the discussion of the results.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Teacher A</th>
<th>Teacher B</th>
<th>Teacher C</th>
<th>Teacher D</th>
<th>Teacher E</th>
<th>Teacher F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- Time teaching English</td>
<td>16 years</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>Long time</td>
<td>6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Time living abroad</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1 year in the U.S. and 2 in South Africa</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>in the U.S. 1 year and a half and 3 months</td>
<td>Many times in the U.S. while taking courses</td>
<td>1 year in the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - Phonetics/Phonology study</td>
<td>Yes undergradate course</td>
<td>Yes undergradate course and in the US</td>
<td>Yes undergradate course</td>
<td>Yes undergradate course</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- Pho/Phono pronun in class</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - University degree</td>
<td>in English</td>
<td>in English</td>
<td>in English, MA in Applied Linguistics, PhD student</td>
<td>in English, MA in Linguistics Discourse Analysis</td>
<td>in English, MA in Literature</td>
<td>undergrad student of French at UFSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- Skut - an English word</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- Skut - a Portuguese word</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Probably not</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes (escuti)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- Able to explain skut</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>More or less</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>More or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7- Able to explain the -ed</td>
<td>More or less</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Conscious about the differences</td>
<td>Conscious about the differences</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Conscious about the differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8- Able to choose the sentence</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8- Explanation</td>
<td>Proficient speaker</td>
<td>Proficient speaker</td>
<td>Did not explain</td>
<td>Because of intonation</td>
<td>Did not explain</td>
<td>Did not explain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These results presented in Table 1 demonstrate that all six teachers/participants had at least some experience of six years or a larger experience in EFL teaching in Brazil. Moreover, these results demonstrate that five out of the six teachers had a degree in English, including two Teachers who had an MA in English language and one teacher whose degree was in English literature and, finally, that Teacher F did not have a degree in English, at the moment the data were collected since she was studying French in the Letras course at UFSC. Furthermore, according to the results displayed in Table 1, these four teachers/participants who had a degree in English language also mentioned that they had access to some information about English Phonetics and Phonology at some time during their academic education, especially during the undergraduate course. Interestingly, as Table 1 demonstrates, Teacher B also mentioned that she acquired some knowledge of Phonetics and Phonology when she lived in the United States. Consequently, these results about teacher education are totally in agreement with Richards’ (1998) claims about Second/Foreign (foreign is my choice) Language Teacher Education which states, in the fourth of its six dimensions, that language teachers must have access to different aspects of the language they are going to teach, including Phonetics and Phonology either during their academic education or during extra courses they take to improve their education.

Nevertheless, talking to the teachers after the interview and with other teachers who taught at the same schools, they revealed that they had not had any course in Phonetics and Phonology and/or pronunciation since they graduated as they probably had had in teaching grammar and/or vocabulary. This situation is not in agreement with Celani’s (2000), Heberle and Meurer’s (2001), Richards’ (1998) and Perin’s (2001) claims since they consider that teachers must be well trained in specific language skills, including Phonetics and Phonology during the undergraduate course and after it in order to keep up to date. However, these results reflect the fact that teachers of foreign languages have not been trained in the field of Phonetics and Phonology in the last three decades in Brazil, as emphasized by Berri (2002) and Koerich (2002a). This lack of training in Phonetics and Phonology can probably be explained by the intensive use of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Brazil, which is an approach that pays a lot of attention to fluency and communication (Brown, 1994; Cook, 2001; Hammond, 1995; Richards & Rodgers, 1986; Seidlhofer, 2001). Despite this lack of training in the field of Phonetics and Phonology, four out of the six teachers/participants considered that it is important to know Phonetics and Phonology to deal with pronunciation in class (see the answers to question four in Table 1), what can be interpreted as a positive assumption towards the language they teach.

As previously mentioned, the results for questions six to eight were somehow incomplete and, as also explained above, the meaning for their answerers would be provided during the discussion of the results, what is going to be done from now on.

Regarding question six, yes/no means considering or not that skut is a possible word in English or in BP whereas maybe/probably not means that the teachers/participants were in doubt about their answers and more or less means that the question was partially answered by saying that BP words never end in [t] or that the [k] in that position would be strange in a BP word, for instance. Teacher E provided an interesting answer to this question mentioning that the word skut could be the BP word “escuti” what possibly reflect the fact that she interpreted this possible English word according to her first language knowledge and/or according to orthographic representation. Moreover, the type of answers
as *maybe/probably not* and *more or less* reflect the fact that they were not sure about their answers possibly because their knowledge of the second language pronunciation was not so well developed. On the other hand, Teachers A and B were *able to explain* why the word *skut* was not a word in BP since this kind of structure */sk/* does to occur in the onset of BP being a typical structure of English. In sum, only two teachers, out of six, provided the expected answer to question six.

In the case of question seven, *more or less* means that the teacher mentioned the three pronunciations of past tense *-ed* but was not sure about the answer and, *conscious about the differences* means that they were sure about the three pronunciations but were not able to explain where they occur. Teacher A, for instance, was a bit confused about voicing of the previous context for the *-ed* whereas Teachers B and E mentioned that the voiced consonantal and the vocalic contexts ask a */d/**, the voiceless consonantal contexts ask a */t/** and the alveolar stops */t/** and */d/** ask an extra syllable */ɪd/** to pronounce the simple past and past participle of regular verbs represented by the *-ed*. Again, only two teachers, out of six, were able to give complete answer to the question.

Finally, considering question eight, the answer *proficient speaker* means that teachers/participants perceived that the two pronunciations of the same sentence were different but they did not explain how or why the two pronunciations differed. In the case of Teacher’s D answer, who said that the difference between the two sentences was possibly due to intonation, is possibly has to do with the changes in intonation caused with three vowel epenthesis insertion in the first version of the sentence. Nevertheless, none of the teachers/participants mentioned in their answers to this question that the difference in the pronunciation of the same sentence presented in question eight of the questionnaire was related to the production/absence of vowel epenthesis in initial */s/** cluster, final consonant and past tense *-ed* despite the fact that two teachers provided correct answers to questions six and seven (see these contexts in italics in question eight of the questionnaire presented in the Method section). However, these teachers did not transfer the answers they provide in questions six and seven to the answer of question eight, which required similar answers.

This lack of knowledge in terms of English Phonetics and Phonology and on training in the pronunciation of English initial */s/** clusters, final consonants and past tense */ed* might indicate that these teachers/participants would have difficulty in identifying in their students’ the most frequent Brazilian EFL learners’ pronunciation errors presented by Baptista (2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2002) and, as occurred to Delatorre (2004), whose teachers/participants did not correctly identify these errors discussed by Baptista. Consequently, the results of the preset study might also indicate that these teachers/participants possibly would have difficulty in providing corrective feedback to their students’ pronunciation errors. They would not probably work with transcriptions on the board using the IPA, as the participant of Delatorre’s (2003) study, who was a PhD student in the field of Phonetics and Phonology, did and, as is suggested by Edge (1997) and Koerich (2002a).

Although, the main objective of dealing with pronunciation in class is not to achieve native-like pronunciation, rather, to achieve students’ awareness of pronunciation errors, as mentioned by Baptista (2006, personal communication), these teachers/participants would
probably have difficulty to achieve this objective in their classes since they encountered difficulty in explaining frequent Brazilian pronunciation errors investigated in the present study, namely initial /s/ clusters, final-single consonants and simple past tense -ed. Moreover, awareness about Brazilian EFL learners’ difficulties in pronunciation could help students avoid producing vowel epenthesis insertion since it is considered one of the most problematic errors since the insertion of an epenthetic vowel implies the addition of an extra syllable to the target words, thus modifying their structure and increasing the difficulty in understanding them.

According to the results presented in Table 1 and as discussed above, five out of the six teachers had a degree in English and four out to these five teachers mentioned that they had had access to the study of Phonetics and Phonology when they were undergraduate students, at least. Contradictory, these teachers were not able to explain the pronunciation errors investigated in this study when they were asked to do so. This contradiction may suggest that there is a gap to be filled in either during or after being graduated. The main difficulty in having access to Phonetics and Phonology during the undergraduate course possibly occurs because this field is considered too difficult by the teachers of the Letras courses in some institutions whereas the difficulty in having access to it after being graduated possibly occurs because most of the schools and school coordinators do not pay much attention to Phonetics and Phonology or pronunciation, as the teachers/participants and other teachers told to the researcher. This lack of opportunity to get in contact with Phonetics and Phonology or pronunciation after graduating possibly occurs because the schools and the school coordinators consider it too difficult to deal with or because they believe that native-like pronunciation would not be achieved by EFL learners or finally, because they are not conscious that developing awareness about pronunciation errors in EFL learners is the main focus of the use of pronunciation in class, improving learners’ pronunciation whether this is the objective of the learner, as a consequence.

Despite the difficulty in explaining pronunciation errors and the lack of opportunity to learn and improve their knowledge about the Phonetics and Phonology and pronunciation, five of the teachers became curious about the questions and the possible explanations for the questions presented in this study. According to the teachers' reactions, it seemed that five of the six teachers were receptive and interested in training and learning about the pronunciation of the language they teach, about which they did not have much background when the study was carried out.

Final remarks

All six teachers observed have some experience in teaching English and four of them assumed they have some knowledge in Phonetics and Phonology. Teacher E graduated in Literature and Teacher F was an undergraduate student in Letras - French language at UFSC. However, the four teachers who had studied Phonetics and Phonology were not able to give complete answers to the last three questions from the questionnaire.

These results indicate that their knowledge about Phonetics and Phonology and pronunciation was not sufficient to answer the questions presented. Moreover, these results
possibly reflect the demands of the market and the extensive use of CLT in Brazil, adopted in both schools where the teachers/participants taught when the data were collected, since both the market and the CLT emphasize the use of communication in class, sometimes neglecting the use of pronunciation in class. Furthermore, apparently, the majority of the Letras courses is not preparing the future teachers of English to deal with Phonetics and Phonology and pronunciation. In addition, the market seems to stimulate and contribute to this situation since it does not generally looks for teachers who are able to understand different aspects of the language they are going to teach, rather, it looks for teachers who are able to establish communication in class.

Regarding pedagogical implications of the results discussed, they suggest that these teachers' inability to answer to some questions about Phonetics and Phonology - questions six, seven and eight from the questionnaire – would lead to the conclusion that these teachers would not be able to understand other aspects of Phonetics and Phonology and to deal with pronunciation in class and, consequently, a) to follow Baptista’s (2001, 2002) suggestions to deal with initial /s/ clusters and word-final consonants in order to decrease teachers' and students' pronunciation mistakes; b) to attend to Rauber's (2002) suggestions that emphasize teachers' responsibility to help their students to acquire good pronunciation, which is directly related to the practice of accurate targets instead of deviant targets defended by Koerich (2002b) and, c) to use explicit information to help second language/foreign language learners to take advantage of effective practice obtained with the use of audio or visual information, such as gestures and the IPA symbols on the board (Edge, 1997; Koerich, 2002a).

In order to help teachers with this complicated task, Baptista (2002) proposed that pronunciation manuals should be prepared specifically for speakers of different native languages (NLs), such as BP. However, the successful use of these materials in class requires teachers’ knowledge about Brazilian EFL learners’ pronunciation errors that few teachers possibly have. But there is the other side: teachers' curiosity about this study means that if they were well trained in the field of Phonetics and Phonology and pronunciation, they would probably be able to revert the situation. Since teachers have demonstrated that they are interested in improving their knowledge in English pronunciation, this is necessary that the universities represented by the Letras courses and the market, frequently represented by the schools, work together and in the direction of giving opportunity for teachers to improve their education in all aspects of the language they teach, including Phonetics and Phonology, rather than simply neglecting this important field, essential to complete the development of these professionals who teach English as a foreign language in Brazil. Needless to say that this effort will benefit the learners, who will have teachers better prepared and more motivated to teach.

Further studies in the area of teachers’ beliefs about pronunciation and Phonetics and Phonology should involve a larger number of participants from different regions of the country. They also should involve a larger interview/questionnaire concerning other aspects of English pronunciation, as well as teachers’ and students’ strategies to improve pronunciation and teachers’ feedback to pronunciation errors. Classes of participants should be recorded.
References


