

## **An analysis of sempre, mesmo and bem: Brazilian Portuguese word order as applied to EFL instruction**

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### **Abstract:**

The aim of this paper is to present a contrastive analysis of three high frequency words, *sempre* 'always', *mesmo* 'even/really', and *bem* 'well', in order to inform the instruction of Brazilian Portuguese speakers in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. This work is largely inspired by Ambar, (2008) who compares these same three adverbs' semantic and syntactic expression in European and Brazilian Portuguese. A multifactorial approach (Costa, 2004) to the analysis of these English/Brazilian Portuguese words demonstrates how the syntax (word order) and semantics (meaning) are inextricably linked and interdependent. While this paper focuses on adverbs, the analysis extends to include the analysis of *mesmo* as intensifier and adjective in order to clarify this issue for English language instruction. The findings reveal that in order for Portuguese speakers to avoid common errors influenced by their first language (L1), they will need to understand these syntax-semantic relationships. For example, *sempre* 'always' in Portuguese allows an additional 'correlation of events' interpretation, four distinct interpretations of *mesmo* 'really/even' in Portuguese translate to four different English words, and an evaluative reading of *bem* 'well' requires a change in emphasis and intonation in English. A discussion of these results suggests that pedagogical practices which focus on both form and meaning are key for successful adverb use by second language learners.

### **Introduction**

As early as the year 1900, scholars, linguists, and grammarians recognized that the grammatical category of adverbs tended to be "the catch-all of lost, strayed and stolen grammaticisms" (Harrison, 1900, p. 162). The extensive variation of adverbial meaning and function caused linguists to develop numerous systems for dividing adverbs into various, often arbitrary subclasses. For instance, Jackendoff (1972) classified adverbs into verbal phrase adverbs, subject-oriented adverbs, and speaker-oriented adverbs, whereas Ernst (2003) distinguished between functional and predicational adverbs and Neves (2000) described adverbs as diatonic, epistemic, delimiting, or affective. This diverse sampling of classifications systems demonstrates the complexity of identifying and defining this "catch-all" category.

Therefore, instead of focusing on just one of these classification systems, this paper illuminates the differences between three adverbs in English and Brazilian Portuguese, inspired by the detailed analysis of “a special class of adverbs” undertaken by Ambar (2008): *sempre* ‘always’, *mesmo* ‘really/even’, and *bem* ‘well’. While Ambar (2008) compares the syntax/semantic relationships of these adverbs in European Portuguese and Brazilian Portuguese, the present study takes up a comparison between Brazilian Portuguese and English informed by Costa’s (2004) multifactorial approach to the syntax of adverbs. Such an analysis calls for a review of basic adverb word order in English and Brazilian Portuguese, followed by a discussion of the semantic role of the adverb in these two languages. (Throughout the entirety of this paper, references to “Portuguese” imply “Brazilian Portuguese” specifically.) From there, specific examples of *sempre*, *mesmo*, and *bem* as they differ from their English counterparts will be reviewed in relation to structural and semantic variation, leading to a discussion of pedagogical implications in the EFL classroom. Although this paper focuses on adverb word order, the analysis extends to include an analysis of *mesmo* as intensifier and adjective. Since *mesmo* serves multiple grammatical categories in Brazilian Portuguese although it is only used as an adverb in English, it presents a considerable challenge to Brazilian Portuguese speakers in the context of the EFL instruction and is, therefore, considering important to the present analysis.

### **A Multifactorial Approach to Adverb Word Order**

Adverbs are often referred to as free moving due to their acceptable usage in a variety of slots within the sentence structure; however, linguists such as Samara (1989) have argued that adverbs really have a “strict rigid order” and “fixed position” determined by a variety of factors. While a complete comparative analysis of adverbs of manner is outside of the scope of this

paper, an example of basic manner adverb word order in Brazilian Portuguese and English provides a good starting point for an analysis of adverb placement.

- (1) a. *Cuidadosamente* (,) o Ivo tinha feito o trabalho.  
 b. O Ivo tinha *cuidadosamente* feito o trabalho.  
 c. O Ivo tinha feito *cuidadosamente* o trabalho.  
 d. O Ivo tinha feito o trabalho *cuidadosamente*.  
 e. \* O Ivo *cuidadosamente* tinha feito o trabalho. (Silva, 2001, p.64)
- (2) a. *Carefully* (,) Ivo had done the work.  
 b. Ivo had *carefully* done the work.  
 c. \*Ivo had done *carefully* the work.  
 d. Ivo had done the work *carefully*.  
 e. \* Ivo *carefully* had done the work.

In (1) the only ungrammatical placement of the Brazilian Portuguese adverb *cuidadosamente* is (1e), after the subject and before the auxiliary verb. On the other hand, (2c) and (2e) demonstrate that placement after the verb and before the object is ungrammatical in English even though it is acceptable in Brazilian Portuguese.

As both of these examples involve auxiliaries, it is appropriate to also consider a similar sentence in the present tense without an auxiliary.

- (3) a. *Cuidadosamente* (,) o Ivo fez o trabalho.  
 b. O Ivo fez *cuidadosamente* o trabalho.  
 c. O Ivo fez o trabalho *cuidadosamente*.  
 d. \* O Ivo *cuidadosamente* fez o trabalho.

- (4) a. *Carefully* (,) Ivo did the work.  
 b. \*Ivo did *carefully* the work.  
 c. Ivo did the work *carefully*.  
 d. Ivo *carefully* did the work.

In this case, an adverb positioned after the verb phrase (4b) is an ungrammatical construction in English. So although it is acceptable in Brazilian Portuguese (1c, 3b), adverbs may not be placed between the verb and the object in English (2c, 4b). This contrast causes difficulties for Brazilian Portuguese speakers learning English who may expect that they will be able to interrupt the verb and object with an adverb, since it is permissible in their first language (L1). Equally notable is the fact that (3d) is ungrammatical in Brazilian Portuguese but acceptable in English (4d). However, it is important to note that preverbal adverb positioning in Brazilian Portuguese is only impossible for certain adverbs including adverbs of degree, which are commonly known as *-mente* adverbs and correspond to certain ‘-ly’ adverbs in English.

Alternatively, Costa’s Multifactorial Approach (2004) uses descriptivist grammar in order to form an understanding of adverb behavior and distribution. Costa (2004) considers lexical factors, categorical information, semantic factors, syntactic factors, and information structure requirements as essential to a complete analysis of this complex category of adverbs (p.712). Of particular interest to Costa (2004) are the factors which indicate the syntax-semantic relationships for ambiguous adverbs. Without a specific meaning mapped onto their lexicon, such as the ‘-ly’ in manner adverbs, ambiguous adverbs derive their meaning from syntactic placement (Costa, 2004). The current study will analyze three adverbs of this type, which obtain multiple meanings based on their position within the sentence.

As has already been demonstrated, adverbs are permissible in a wide variety of grammatical positions in both English and Brazilian Portuguese. Yet, this generous flexibility provokes the question of why and when certain positions would be preferable to others. Are the reasons for these preferences purely structurally based, or do they also reflect differences in meaning? To explore this question, we may consider the following example:

- (7) a. Louisa departed *rudely*.  
 b. Louisa *rudely* departed.

(McConnell-Ginet, 1982, p. 159)

According to McConnell-Ginet (1982), adverbs such as (7a) are “verbal phrase (VP) internal adverbs,” since they directly describe the action or the verb in that phrase. Following this reasoning, ‘rudely’ in (7a) would directly describe the verb ‘departed’ to mean that Louisa departed in a rude manner. On the other hand, adverbs like the example in (7b) would be “VP external adverbs,” which may refer to events or situations partially designated by the VP (McConnell-Ginet, 1982, p. 159). So, to McConnell-Ginet (1982), (7b) would mean that the fact that Louisa departed was rude. Even though the exact way that she departed might not have been rude, the event or situation of her leaving, outside of the VP itself, is described.

McConnell-Ginet’s (1982) analysis fits into the “association view” (Shaer, 2003) of adverb word order. by which “distinct semantic and/or syntactic properties are associated with distinct positions in sentences,” and “adverbs are sensitive to and dependent on the properties of these positions” (p. 213). In essence, the theory suggests that the syntax and semantics of adverbs are inextricably linked and must be understood as interdependent. Linguists who follow Wyner (1998) examine the meanings (semantics) associated with different positions (syntax) in the sentence (Ernst, 2002; Frey, 2003; Katz, 2003). Since, however, it has been suggested that

multiple semantic interpretations of adverbs lie “in the properties of the particular adverbs *themselves* rather than particular adverb positions” (Shaer, 2003, p. 213), the present study will investigate three frequently used adverbs: *sempre* (always), *mesmo* (really/even), and *bem* (well) instead of generalizing to broader categories of adverbs. Furthermore, due to the fact that *mesmo* acts also as an intensifier and adjective, the word order and meanings of *mesmo* in these contexts will also be reviewed in order to inform English language instruction.

## **Sempre**

### TEMPORAL/ASPECTUAL

The temporal/aspectual adverb *sempre* ‘always’ allows for pre-verbal and post-verbal positioning, following the general rule demonstrated by Silva & Araújo (2008) with *cuidadosamente* ‘carefully’, that the Portuguese adverb cannot fall between the subject and the auxiliary verb. However, Brito (2001) notes that while *sempre* ‘always’ may interrupt the verb and the object in a post-verbal position (9a), the pre-verbal position, seen in (8a), is much more common (p.78).

- (8) a. Eles *sempre* querem a mesma coisa.  
 b. They always want the same thing.
- (9) a. Eles querem *sempre* a mesma coisa.  
 b. \*They want always the same thing.

(Brito, 2001, p.78)

Therefore, English instructors teaching speakers of Brazilian Portuguese would be wise to inform students that while the post-verbal option exists in Brazilian Portuguese, it is not an option in English.

## CORRELATION OF EVENTS

So far, it may seem that *sempre* ‘always’ is a typical adverb of manner, following the general patterns of adverbs. However, as Ambar (2008) points out, Brazilian Portuguese allows for both a temporal/aspectual reading of *sempre* ‘always’ as well as a ‘correlation-of-events’ interpretation:

- (10) a. O João *sempre* vai a Paris.  
 b. John always goes to Paris.

### TEMPORAL

- (11) a. O João vai *sempre* a Paris de trem.  
 b. \*John goes always to Paris by train.

### CORRELATION OF EVENTS

(Ambar, 2008, p. 157)

Grammatically, the example above supports the general rule that Brazilian Portuguese allows the adverb to interrupt the verb and the object (11a), although it is grammatically impossible in English (11b). Since *sempre* ‘always’ occurs before the verb in (10), this structure is possible in both languages. However, upon closer observation of the meanings, there is a deeper level of semantic difference related to the placement of the adverb. While both languages allow a ‘temporal’ reading, only Portuguese has a ‘correlation of events’ reading, which would mean something like “every time that John goes to Paris, he goes by train.” Due to the subtle nature of this difference, native Portuguese speakers may say or write (11b), and an English speaker would interpret it in the temporal sense instead a correlation of events sense.

This common transfer from L1 is complicated by the fact that the preferred order for the ‘correlation of events’ interpretation is not always consistent. Instead, the availability of the

‘correlation of events’ reading also depends upon various other factors such as “morphological tense, determination of the object and the lexical aspect of the verb” (Ambar, 2008, p.158). The impact of such syntactic and semantic factors upon meaning further confirms the merit of Costa’s multifactorial approach (2004). In light of such evidence, English language instructors would need to be mindful of an intended meaning of ‘correlation of events’ in a variety of contexts and teach students an alternate sentence structure to express a ‘correlation of events’.

### **Mesmo**

Similarly, the common Brazilian Portuguese adverb *mesmo* ‘even/really’ displays a variety of cross-linguistics syntactic and semantic differences; however, it is important to point out a certain word order in which *mesmo* ‘even/really’ is an adjective. While this paper concentrates on adverbs, it is important to extend the analysis of *mesmo* to include the cases in which *mesmo* is an adjective or intensifier due to the important implications this holds for English language learners. Students in the EFL classroom often attempt to use the English adverbs ‘even’ and ‘really’ as adjectives and adverbs, as permitted in Brazilian Portuguese. For this reason, the following three examples take an aside from the analysis of adverb word order to include the word order of *mesmo* as adjective and intensifier. When instructing English language learners on the usage of *mesmo* as an adverb, additional uses of *mesmo* in Brazilian Portuguese will likely surface and the following comparative analysis will prove useful for instruction.

ADJECTIVE: (*Det*) *mesmo* *S*

- (12) a. [<sub>NP</sub> a *mesma* profesora] deu aula para nós.  
 b. \* [<sub>NP</sub> the *really/even* teacher] gave class to us.  
 c. MEANING: *The same* teacher taught us.

(Klein, 1998, p.93)

In the preceding example (12a), *mesmo* ‘even/really’ displays agreement morphology in “a *mesma* profesora.” English instructors may point out this syntactic clue to help Brazilian Portuguese speakers identify a need for an alternate word choice in English, ‘same’ in this case.

INTENSIFIER: (*Det*) *S mesmo*

Yet, it is not only when *mesmo* ‘even/really’ is an adjective that alternative words are used in English. The following example where *mesmo* acts as an intensifier is another such instance.

- (13) a. [<sub>NP</sub> A profesora *mesma*] cancelou aula. (Não foi outro.)  
 b. \*The teacher *even* cancelled class. (It wasn’t another.)  
 c. MEANING: The teacher *herself* cancelled class. (It wasn’t someone else.)

While there is some discrepancy, Siemund (2000) argues that *mesma* ‘even/really’ at the far right of the noun phrase (NP) may be described as an adnominal intensifier (ANS), or an “endocentric expansions of an NP” (p.118). It is for this reason that the pronoun ‘herself’ must be used in English, to retain the function of *mesmo* ‘even/really’ as emphasizing the role of the referent within the NP, in this case ‘the teacher’. Notice that while the English (13b) is grammatical, it does not intensify the noun within the NP. Also noteworthy is the necessary number and agreement morphology in “a profesora *mesma*” as well as “**h**erself.” Again such morphology may be used to signal to students a need for alternate wording.

CONTRASTIVE: *mesmo S V*

On the other side, the far left of the NP (14), *mesmo* ‘even/really’ parallels English in both form and meaning. In these cases, *mesmo* ‘even/really’ serves to imply an extreme example

compared to the implied reality, as in “*Even* a blind squirrel finds an acorn sometimes.” In contrast to previous examples, *mesmo* ‘even/really’ does not exhibit agreement morphology.

- (14) a. *Mesmo* o João comprou o livro.  
 b. *Even* John bought the book.  
 c. MEANING: *Even* John bought the book.

These sentences suggest that it was unlikely that John would buy the book, but even so, he did buy it. According to Siemund (2000), this would be an adverbial intensifier (AVS), since it expands a verbal phrase (VP), in this case ‘bought the book’.

CONFIRMATORY: *S V mesmo, S V mesmo (Adv)*

Moreover, Subject-Verb-Adverb word orders, with an optional additional adverb, provide confirmatory interpretations.

*S V mesmo*

- (15) a. O João chorou *mesmo*.  
 b. \*John cried *really*.  
 c. MEANING: John *did* cry.

(Ambar, 2008, p. 164)

While affirmative declarative sentences in English lacking auxiliaries require the {DO} transformation (15c) in order to obtain this particular confirmatory reading, *mesmo* ‘even/really’ after the verb performs this function in Brazilian Portuguese (15a). Brazilian Portuguese speakers learning English, would need to learn the option of using {DO} in such instances as: “Did John cry, really?” / “Yes, he *did* cry.” They would also need to understand that the {DO} is placed before the verb accompanied by the {AFFIRM} morpheme, a change in intonation for emphasis.

*S V mesmo*

Furthermore, in English sentences with auxiliaries, the {AFFIRM} morpheme can be placed directly on the auxiliary instead of *mesmo* ‘even/really’ (16c, 17c).

- (16) a. O João pode tocar o piano *mesmo*.  
 b. John *can* play the piano really.  
 c. MEANING: John *can* play the piano.
- (17) a. O João tem tocado o piano *mesmo*.  
 b. John has played the piano really.  
 c. MEANING: John *has* played the piano.

*S V mesmo (Adv)*

When an additional adverb, such as *afinal* ‘finally’, accompanies *mesmo* ‘even/really’, that adverb retains its lexical meaning while *mesmo* ‘even/really’ acquires the confirmatory meaning with the {AFFIRM} morpheme. In English sentences without an auxiliary, {DO} is required(18); however, the {AUX} acquires the stressed {AFFIRM} morpheme when present (19, 20). English language learners should also notice in all the following examples that the adverb may be inserted between the {AUX} and the verb

- (18) a. (Afinal) O João (afinal) chorou *mesmo* (afinal).  
 b. (Actually) John (actually) cried really (actually).  
 c. MEANING: (Actually) John (actually) *did* (actually) cry (actually).
- (19) a. (Afinal) O João (afinal) pode tocar o piano *mesmo* (afinal).  
 b. (Actually) John (actually) can play the piano really (actually).  
 c. MEANING: (Actually) John (actually) *can* (actually) play the piano (actually).

- (20) a. (Afinal) O João (afinal) tem tocado o piano *mesmo* (afinal).  
 b. (Actually) John (actually) has played the piano really (actually).  
 c. MEANING: (Actually) John (actually) *has* (actually) played the piano (actually).

CONFIRMATORY and CONTRASTIVE: *S V mesmo O*

Still, categories of interpretation are not as fixed as they may seem. For example, Ambar (2008) identifies two possible interpretations for a single sentence construction listed below.

- (21) a. O João comprou *mesmo* o livro.  
 b. \*John bought *really* the book.  
 c. MEANING: John *really* bought the book.

CONFIRMATORY

- (22) a. O João comprou *mesmo* o livro.  
 b. \*John bought *even* the book.  
 c. John *even* bought the book.

CONTRASTIVE

(Ambar, 2008, p.162)

Ambar (2008) posits that (21, 22) offer a confirmatory and contrastive reading, which result in different word choices in English. In the confirmatory (21), John *really* did buy the book, and he wasn't lying. On the other hand, in the contrastive (22) reading, among other things that John chose to buy, he *even* bought the book. These examples demonstrate the important role of the context in order to choose the correct word choice. English language learners need to learn to first determine the meaning of the phrase and use *really* for a confirmatory statement and *even* to express a contrastive one.

## Bem

Another small but frequently used adverb, *bem* ‘well’ parallels *mesmo* ‘even/really’ in its variety of interpretations and placement; however, the usage of *bem* ‘well’ is also marked by distinctive prosody and flexibility. Ambar (2008) proposes two interpretations of *bem* ‘well’, the manner reading and the evaluative reading. The evaluative reading implies the speaker’s particular “point of view” while the manner is that of a typical *-ly* adverb (Ambar, 2008, p.174).

### MANNER

*Bem* ‘well’ in the context of examples (23, 24) modifies the verb *{FAZER}* ‘{DO}’ in a way that would be expected of other manner adverbs, such as *cuidadosamente* ‘carefully’. However the focus differs between the two examples, as noted by the underlined text.

- (23) a. A *María* fez *bem* o seu trabalho.  
 b. \*Mary did *well* her work.  
 c. MEANING: Mary did her work *well*. (Emphasis on ‘work’)
- (24) a. A *María* fez o seu trabalho *bem*.  
 b. Mary did her work *well*.  
 c. MEANING: Mary did her work *well*. (Emphasis on ‘well’)

While (23) suggests a focus on the object and is marked by corresponding strong stress on *trabalho* ‘work’, the focus in (24) is placed on the adverb *bem* ‘well’ with a stronger stress attributed to this word. Although the stress remains in the sentence-final position in Portuguese, the word order changes. On the other hand, the English surface structure is ambiguous on this account, and only the stress attributed to words marks the focus of the sentence.

While Brazilian Portuguese prefers to place the adverb in close proximity to the verb, *bem* ‘well’ in example (25) presents a curious exception, causing various linguists to theorize

about this alternative placement for so-called atonic monosyllabic adverbs. Some explain this exception based on syntactic reasoning (Cinque 1993) or traditional theory (Menuzzi & Miotto, 2006). However, the present analysis follows Costa (1998), who argues for the interaction between syntax, discourse and prosody (p.102). If a difference in meaning is involved in the decision between these two positions within the sentence, then it involves careful consideration by English instructors in order to help students accurately express themselves.

- (25) a. O Mário joga volei bem.  
 b. Mario plays volleyball well.  
 c. MEANING: Mario plays volleyball well. (Emphasis on ‘well’)
- (26) a. O Mário fala *bem* frances.  
 b. \*Mario speaks well French.  
 c. MEANING: Mario speaks French *well*. (Emphasis on ‘French’)

(Silva & Araújo, 2008, p. 21)

In a particularly relevant study, Silva & Araújo (2008) analyzed native Portuguese speakers and their decisions on how to position *bem* ‘well’ within sentences such as (25, 26). Her findings revealed that while the sentence-final position (25) may denote a focalized constituent, it “is preferred in 15 of 21 possible occurrences... even when it is not the most natural rhythm” nor the focus of the sentence (Silva & Araújo, 2008, p.21). Brazilian Portuguese speakers need to be taught that there is only one possible sentence structure in English (25, 26) in which *bem* ‘well’ follows the object, without interrupting the verb and its object. As this appears to be the preferred position for many speakers of Brazilian Portuguese, it may not be a difficult syntactic issue. However, students should be advised that in order to emphasize the adverb *bem*

‘well’, they should attribute stress to it or add an intensifier before the adverb, such as “very” or “quite.”

#### EVALUATIVE

While the manner reading of *bem* ‘well’ differs only in emphasis, the evaluative interpretation calls for alternate word choice and word order.

- (27) a. *Bem* te disse para não fazer isso!  
 b. \**Well* I told you to not do that!  
 c. MEANING: I *did* tell you not to do that!
- (28) a. O Pedro *bem* que tinha me avisado.  
 b. \*Peter *well* that had me advised.  
 c. MEANING: Peter *had* advised me!

(Ambar, 2008, p.175)

Ambar (2008) explains that in these “evaluative” readings, “the truth of the proposition is reinforced by the speaker’s belief in it” (p.173). These sentence structures demonstrate a focus on the action as completed, represented in English by a contrastive/affirmative stress on the first {AUX}, created by the {AFFIRM} transformation. The semantic differences in these sentences may cause confusion for Portuguese speakers, since (27) seeks not to characterize the advice as positive but to affirm that it actually did happen. Similarly, (28) announces assuredly that Peter had done some advising instead of expressing the quality of that advising. Both of these correspond to the affirmative transformation in English, but it is important to help students recognize that for this expressed meaning they cannot use the word “well.” Instead, students will need to either use the {DO} transformation or place a contrastive/affirmative stress on the first {AUX}. It is especially important to point out that (27) is a grammatical English sentence, but in

this case ‘well’ would act as a filler instead of providing the evaluative interpretation inherent in the parallel Portuguese construction.

### An Overview of the Differences

The following summary charts (Figures 1-4) synthesize key features of general manner adverbs (1), *sempre* (2), *bem* (3), and *mesmo* (4) in a way that will be useful to students and instructors.

Figure 1.

<i>Cuidadosamente</i>				
Meaning	Word Order Portuguese	Portuguese Example	Word Choice	English Example
MODIFIER	<i>x S V O</i>	<i>Cuidadosamente o Ivo fez o trabalho.</i>	<i>carefully</i>	<i>Carefully, Ivo did the work.</i>
	<i>S V x O</i>	<i>O Ivo fez cuidadosamente o trabalho.</i>		<b>*Ivo did carefully his work.</b>
	<i>S V O x</i>	<i>O Ivo fez o trabalho cuidadosamente.</i>		<i>Ivo did the work carefully.</i>
	<b>*S x V O</b>	<b>*Ivo cuidadosamente fez o trabalho.</b>		<b>Ivo carefully did the work.</b>

Figure 2.

<i>Sempre</i>				
Meaning	Word Order Portuguese	Portuguese Example	Word Choice	English Example
TEMPORAL/ ASPECTUAL	S x V O	Eles <i>sempre</i> querem a mesma coisa.	<i>always</i>	They <i>always</i> want the same thing.
	S V x O	Eles querem <i>sempre</i> a mesma coisa.		<b>*Joao wants <i>always</i> the same thing.</b>
CORRELATION OF EVENTS	S V x Event <sub>1</sub> Event <sub>2</sub>	O João vai <i>sempre</i> a Paris de trem.		<b>João <i>always</i> goes to Paris by train.</b>

Figure 3.

<i>Bem</i>				
Meaning	Portuguese Word Order	Example Portuguese	Word Choice	English Example
MANNER (focus on O)	S V x O	A María fez <i>bem</i> o trabalho.	<i>well</i>	<b>Mary did her work <i>well</i>.</b>
MANNER (focus on Adv)	S V O x	A María fez o trabalho <i>bem</i> .		Mary did her work <b>very well</b> .

EVALUATIVE	$x V \text{ \_\_\_}$	Bem te disse para não fazer isso!	$\{\emptyset\}$ , <i>emphasis</i>	I <b><i>did</i></b> tell you not to do that!
	$S x \text{ \_\_\_\_}$	O Pedro <i>bem</i> que tinha me avisado!		Peter <b><i>had</i></b> advised me!

Figure 4.

<i>Mesmo</i>				
Meaning	Word Order Portuguese	Example Portuguese	Word Choice	Example English
ADJECTIVE	(Det) $x S$	A <i>mesma</i> profesora deu aula para nós.	<i>the same</i>	<b><i>The same</i></b> teacher taught us.
INTENSIFIER	(Det) $S x$	A profesora <i>mesma</i> cancelou aula.	<i>x-self</i>	The teacher <b><i>herself</i></b> cancelled class.
CONTRASTIVE	$x S V$	<i>Mesmo</i> o João comprou o livro.	<i>even</i>	<b><i>Even</i></b> John bought the book.
CONFIRMATORY	$S V x$	O João chorou <i>mesmo</i> .	<b><i>{DO}</i></b>	<b><i>John did cry.</i></b>
	$S V x$ (Adv)	O João chorou <i>mesmo</i> afinal.	<b><i>{DO}</i></b>	<b><i>John did cry</i></b> <b>actually.</b>

	(Adv) S V x	Afinal o João chorou <i>mesmo</i> .		<b>Actually John did cry.</b>
	S (Adv) V x	O João afinal chorou <i>mesmo</i> .		<b>John actually did cry.</b>
CONFIRMATORY	S V x O	O João comprou <i>mesmo</i> o livro.	<i>really</i>	<b>John really bought the book.</b>
CONTRASTIVE		O João comprou <i>mesmo</i> o livro.	<i>even</i>	<b>John even bought the book.</b>

### Discussion

While the preceding charts offer a concise summary of the present analysis, they are meant as a form of reference, rather than a sole teaching strategy. It is strongly recommended that each of these descriptive rules on the placement of *sempre*, *mesmo* and *bem* be taught in separate lessons, since the differences are quite extensive. The specific teaching practices will vary greatly depending on the demographics of the classroom: age, language experience and context.

For younger learners, a good place to start is with the general rule that in English the adverb may not interrupt the verb and its object. This may be demonstrated by dividing the sentence into constituents instead of individual words. For example, the immediate constituents of the sentence “The dog ate the bone hungrily” would be [the dog] [ate] [the bone] [hungrily]. However, for the purposes of this lesson, [ate] and [the bone] should be together, so that they

cannot be interrupted. The teacher could place these constituents on different colored sentence strips and allow students to rearrange the sentence strips into different sentence structures. While students may construct some nonsensical sentences such as “ate the bone the dog hungrily,” these can be sorted out in a class discussion. Piagetian pedagogy claims that learning is achieved through discovery, and even more easily by children who are already active linguists discovering their own language and additional languages.

Slightly older students may be encouraged to study newspaper and magazine articles, highlighting the adverbs that they find and analyzing the parts of speech in the environment surrounding the adverbs. Speeches, tv commercials and song lyrics abound with adverbs in addition to sample student essays. The instructor should choose examples wisely in order to focus on specific types of adverbs as well as the frequent *sempre* ‘always’, *mesmo* ‘even/really’ and *bem* ‘well’.

Adults or experienced learners may be given a list of example Brazilian Portuguese sentences from the previous charts (Figures 1-4). Advanced students could then discuss the meanings of *sempre*, *mesmo* and *bem* in these sentences, writing short Portuguese dialogues for the contexts in which they would be used. They could then attempt to match English example sentences and meanings with the Portuguese counterparts, rewriting the dialogues in English.

Independent of the age and experience level of the students, one important element in teaching such grammatical structures as word order is negative evidence. Negative evidence that points out ungrammaticalities is essential for L2 learners since they “sometimes make incorrect overgeneralizations, in many cases based on the L1, that cannot be disconfirmed by positive evidence alone” (White, 1991, p.134). In a study of 11 and 12 year old francophone students, only those who were taught using negative evidence were able to identify that the adverb could

not interrupt the verb and the object in English (White, 1991). Therefore, use of error correction and other negative evidence should be an integral part of form-focused instruction to complement meaning-focused lessons.

While this is merely a study of three lexical items, the complexity and frequency of *sempre* ‘always’, *mesmo* ‘even/really’, and *bem* ‘well’ in both written and spoken discourse make them significant to an investigation of Brazilian Portuguese adverbs. The varied lexical, syntactic, and semantic differences for each adverb require focused lessons, since native Brazilian Portuguese speakers would not intuit or easily recognize such distinctions. While very unique in their own rights, these adverbs also display general qualities of typical manner adverbs like *cuidadosamente*, such as not interrupting the verb and its object. Although intended for Brazilian Portuguese speakers in the EFL classroom, the present analysis could also prove beneficial for the instruction of English speakers learning Brazilian Portuguese.

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