Rosetta Stone Portuguese (Brazil) levels 1, 2, & 3 Personal Edition Version 4 (TOTAlE)

Reviewed by
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PRODUCT AT A GLANCE

Product Type:
Drill and practice, tutorial, game, and live simulation

Language:
Brazilian Portuguese

Level:
Beginning to intermediate, age 6 and above; for Rosetta Studio and Rosetta World, minimum age is 13

Activities:
word/phrase-picture matching, pronunciation practice, transcription, multiple-choice grammar exercises, vocabulary learning through association, listening comprehension, various reinforcement games, online interaction with other learners and native speakers

Media Format:
CD-ROMs (version 4) with software installation and respective language levels; Quick Start guide (leaflet) plus on-the-go capabilities (CDs with audio from the program)

Operating System(s):
Windows (XP, Vista, 7, or higher)
Macintosh (Mac OS 10.4 or higher)

Hardware Requirements:
1 GHz processor or faster, 1GB of RAM, 600 MB disk space per level, 16-bit sound card, microphone and speakers (a headset with microphone is included), CD/DVD drive, 1024 x 768 display resolution, USB port for headset with microphone

Supplementary Software:
None (only necessary for online version)

Documentation:
Activation card and Quick Start guide; transcriptions of all audio for each level are included on CD-ROMs
Online: FAQ, Quick Start guides, Trouble Shooting, User’s Manual, updates

Price:
Each level, $179; Level 1 & 2 set, $279; Level 1, 2 & 3 set, $379; no discount for multiple copies; site licenses not available; separate packages must be purchased for each workstation; each package includes free online access for the first 3 months
GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Rosetta Stone (hereafter referred to as RS) is an acclaimed and award-winning software\(^1\) for language learning which is widely used throughout the world by individual learners, companies, and governments. The developers of RS claim that the best method for learning a new language is to be immersed in an environment that emulates the conditions under which we learned our first language and to tap into the same naturalistic and intuitive mechanisms we used in order to learn the new language in a fun and effortless manner. They have for this purpose developed a method they refer to as dynamic immersion, the foundation of which rests on association building and on interactions with other learners and with native speakers. There is no use of translation, memorization, explicit (metalinguistic) discussion, or focus on form (mapping of linguistic forms to functions). The association during learning is made possible through the joint use of pictures, audio, and text that provides contextual cues and pushes the learner to think in the language without making use of their first language. The focus of the method is thus more on meaning and functions than on form, as such terms are defined by Doughty and Long (2003).

The fourth version of RS (TOTALe)\(^2\) has both offline and online components. Rosetta Course\(^3\) (which does not depend on an internet connection) is exactly the same as in the third version of RS. Version 4 offers online components (these require that users be connected to the internet at all times), namely Rosetta Studio and Rosetta World. In Rosetta Studio, learners can schedule live classes with native teachers of the language they are learning, and in Rosetta World learners have the opportunity to engage in a series of activities and games with other people learning the same language or with native speakers of that language.

Rosetta Course uses basically the same unit/lessons organization and topics, pictures, activities, and dialogues (see Figure 1) for every one of the 31 languages in which the program is available, but with some variation in the treatment of linguistic concepts to accommodate each language’s needs.

Figure 1
Language Basics
For most languages (including the Brazilian Portuguese version reviewed here), there are three different levels (some languages have fewer and others more levels) that incrementally build upon each other. Each level can be bought separately (but each level is less expensive if bought as part of a set) and contains four units in which each unit contains four Core Lessons and a "Milestone" exercise (see Figure 1 above). Each Core Lesson focuses on a single topic and specific grammar points (the latter being done implicitly with no explicit focus on linguistic structure). After each Core Lesson, users can choose specific exercise types (e.g., listening, writing, reading, speaking, and grammar) and can also do a Review section at the end in order to check their understanding of the material covered up to that point. Most of the exercises found in the Focus sections are, however, already included in the Core Lesson (these are marked in color instead of in gray) with the same format and content.

At the end of each unit, there is a Milestone exercise, which takes the form of a photonovel and requires users to "interact" with the characters in the story by speaking predetermined sentences/words they have learned in the unit into the microphone, either by reacting to a question made by one of the story characters or by asking a question themselves (see Figure 2).

The topics explored in the three levels and units, regardless of the language being studied are:

- **Level 1**: language basics (unit 1), greetings and introductions (unit 2), work and school (unit 3), and shopping (unit 4);
Level 2
travel (unit 1), past and future (unit 2), friends and social life (unit 3), and dining and vacation (unit 4); and
Level 3
home and health (unit 1), life and world (unit 2), everyday things (unit 3), and places and events (unit 4).

The product comes with four CD-ROMs (one containing the installation software and the other three the specific language levels). Also included are a headset with a microphone and a multiple-CD set called Audio Companion containing the audio material presented in the software. RS also includes a 6-month money-back guarantee with a no-questions-asked policy if customers are not satisfied with the product.

Rosetta World interacts directly with Rosetta Course, given that the activities and games in Rosetta World are only unlocked (i.e., made accessible) as users successfully complete the Core Lessons. Rosetta World also has a live feed which indicates in real time what other RS users have achieved and allows users to interact with each other, either by playing games individually or jointly or by engaging in a sort of tandem practice. This tandem practice is called Simbio and makes it possible for two people interested in practicing each other’s language to interact with each another. Along with Rosetta Studio, Rosetta World adds the opportunity to interact live with others who speak the learner’s target language, an aspect of the immersion environment that was previously lacking in the third version. Rosetta World and Rosetta Studio are available for a limited period of 3 months but can be extended upon additional payment. Figure 3 shows the Rosetta World interface.

Figure 3
Rosetta World Interface

Documentation
The documentation accompanying the product includes the User’s Manual, transcription of all audio, and a Quick Start guide, as well as online access to Quick Start guides, Trouble Shoot-
ing, User’s Manual, FAQs, video tutorials, and transcripts of all course contents. In addition, given the widespread use of RS, there are various forums on the web where users can ask questions and get answers from other RS users. The 78-page User’s Manual is accessible both from within the software interface and online, and the course contents can be found in a folder in the CD accompanying each level. Users are however not made aware of this and might not come across these useful documents. On the other hand, RS offers an award-winning 24/7 live chat and telephone customer support.

EVALUATION

Technological Features

For purposes of testing, all three levels of Rosetta Stone Portuguese (Brazil) were installed on both a Macintosh laptop running Mac OS X Snow Leopard (10.6) and on a Windows laptop running Windows 7. The complete installation procedure, including the software and adding each language level to the software, took 20 minutes but ran smoothly; no problems were encountered. When running the program for the first time, users are asked to create an account which consists of entering a user name, selecting their gender and age for the purposes of speech recognition, choosing which course mode they would like to follow from a menu (Standard, Speaking and Listening Focus, Reading and Writing, etc.), and setting up the microphone for speech recognition. The selection of course mode (see Figure 4) influences the type of activities presented after the Core Lesson, the order and length of each activity, and the points at which the review sections are presented (the Core Lesson is the same regardless of mode).

Figure 4
Course Mode Selection

![Course Mode Selection](image-url)
An important asset of RS is its performance tracking capability. At any point in each lesson, users have the possibility of exiting, pausing (only possible at transitions between exercises, and the pause button only appears for a couple of seconds), or skipping the exercise or lesson altogether (a feature not possible for the Review sections). The program keeps track not only of users’ performance in each activity (score, correct and incorrect answers; see Figure 5) but also which activities have been explored or skipped, making it easy for users to pick up where they left off at a future point in time.

Figure 5
Tracking

Another feature of RS is its proprietary speech recognition system. Users can specify the speech precision level: easy, normal, medium, or difficult. Taking advantage of the fact that this reviewer is a native speaker of Brazilian Portuguese, he experimented extensively with the speech system. At all the different levels of precision offered, he distorted his accent to a level of thickness similar to that of a stereotypical nonnative speaker of Portuguese (even leaving out words, mispronouncing several sounds, changing several stress-bearing syllables in a single utterance, etc.). In quite a few of these cases, the input was accepted by the system, even when the speech recognition threshold was set to maximum. In other tests the system refused to accept his normal native pronunciation. The system can be useful (it also indicates which words have been mispronounced) provided that the input speed and prosody in particular are close to that used by native speakers employed in the recordings and as long as users’ input could be understood by a native speaker. It is worth noting that when no input is captured by the system (e.g., during a pronunciation activity) for a period of 15 seconds or so, the system informs users of this fact and asks whether they would like to either set up the microphone again, ignore the warning and continue with the activity, or simply turn off speech recognition for that session.
In some of the exercises, it is possible for users to compare their own pronunciation to that of a native speaker by allowing them to see the sound waves and pitch contours of both pronunciations (similar to what one sees in the Praat program). Users can decrease the speed of the audio to increase their awareness of the specific sounds in each word/sentence, but it is not possible to play both audio files at the same time. The reviewer believes that listening to both audio files simultaneously instead of playing one after the other would give users a much better idea of their progress in pronunciation. Moreover, despite being a quite interesting technological feature, he does not see how ordinary language learners could benefit from such graphic depictions (see Figure 6) without proper linguistic or phonetic training.

Figure 6
Graphic Representation of Pronunciation

One more component of RS worthy of mention is the inclusion of an optional virtual keyboard that can be used during the writing exercises, which is especially useful for languages with a non-Latin character set.

Both on the Windows and Macintosh tests, the program ran with good speed and only once was a crash or unexpected problem/procedure encountered. Moreover, the navigation through the program was smooth.

Activities (Procedure)
Each unit in RS explores a different topic and introduces users to relevant vocabulary, sentences, structures (implicitly), and functions associated with that topic.
The activities offered by the core program fall into the following categories (see Figure 1 above): pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The great majority of these activities are tutorials, and a few of them (pronunciation and speaking) are actually more typical of drill-and-practice exercises. All the activity types (with the Milestone photonovel being slightly different) generally follow a format of two to six pictures on the screen. For some activities, it is not very clear what users need to do. This issue is more problematic at Level 1 and especially if it is the first time learners use RS because most users are likely not to have read the User’s Manual that comes with the product (some might not even know of its existence). The instructions for each activity are not automatically displayed on the screen at the start of the activity but are instead accessible through an ever present question mark that at times blinks for no apparent reason (see Figure 7). The lack of direct instructions on the screen seems to be an unfortunate point. Furthermore, in some cases, the instructions are misleading. As Figure 7 (a supposed reading activity) shows, users are required to click on the phrase that matches the picture shown, despite the fact that the instructions read “Click on the picture that matches the phrase.”

Figure 7
Reading Activity

The activities in a unit serve as a means not only to practice individual skills such as reading, listening, writing, and pronunciation but also to cover the predetermined topic of the unit involving the vocabulary items and grammatical functions to be learned. For example, vocabulary items in Level 3 Unit 1 are prepositions, object names, and names for open spaces (e.g., park, swimming pool, etc). Functions such as giving orders, expressing predictions, making comparisons, and so forth are explored and grammar points such as progressive aspect and
“it is +adj+ to do something” are emphasized. There is some implicit attention to syntax, vocabulary, and spelling in the units, but no explicit focus on morphology or discourse. The lack of focus on discourse is easily noticeable throughout the three levels of Rosetta Course, given that the majority of exchanges are either one or two sentences long, with the sentences becoming considerably longer in some parts of Level 3. Even at higher levels, however, very few of the sentences are inserted in more elaborate discourse contexts. Rosetta Studio and Rosetta World, on the other hand, provide discourse contexts in which learners hold conversations with Studio coaches, as well as with other learners and native speakers.

The great majority of the exercises in Rosetta Course consists of one of the following: clicking on the appropriate picture that describes a word, a sentence, or a situation (Vocabulary, Listening and Reading, Listening, and Reading); repeating the word/sentence heard (Pronunciation and Speaking); typing what users hear (Writing); providing audio input in a limited exchange (Core Lessons and Milestone); or selecting the correct word out of a short list (Grammar).

Rosetta World and Rosetta Studio, however, are a welcome addition to Rosetta Course because they have improved on some of the flaws present in prior versions (these will be discussed shortly). Rosetta World (see Figure 8) allows users to put into practice the knowledge they have acquired in Rosetta Course by taking part in engaging games and activities either alone (Solo mode), with other learners of the same language (Duo mode), or even with native speakers of the language they are learning (Simbio mode).

Figure 8
Solo Mode, Duo Mode, or Simbio Mode

The reading passages presented in Rosetta World make it possible for users to both read and listen to the content and also to see pictures of selected words in the text (see Figure 9).
In Rosetta Studio, users can schedule live practice sessions led by a native teacher of the language and attended by up to three other learners of the language. While the activities and stories in Rosetta World are incrementally unlocked according to the progress made in Rosetta Course, Rosetta Studio sessions for a given level can be scheduled regardless of the fact that users might not actually have completed the specific lesson that the live practice session targets.

**Teacher Fit (Approach)**

In the past decades, there have been a plethora of approaches to language learning, some emphasizing the RS point of view (e.g., the natural approach advocated by Krashen), others adhering to a much more explicit focus on language structure itself along with use of translation (grammar translation), and still others making use of a blended mixture of useful approaches without dogmatically sticking to a single model (communicative approach). The natural approach defended by RS is in fact far from the way adults actually learn a language (see Bley-Vroman’s [1988] fundamental difference hypothesis). As children, we interact through language with other speakers, thus learning the language in a highly social, affective, and rich manner. In addition, children do not have the linguistic background that adults can refer to in order to make the learning of a second language easier. These aspects are missing in Rosetta
Course and what RS calls interaction is, in this reviewer’s opinion, a rather poor and limited version of what one would encounter in a real-life conversation. The user/learner assumes a passive attitude in Rosetta Course, as a native Ukrainian-speaker the reviewer asked to test the software noted. Nevertheless, some established principles of language acquisition are integrated into the method, such as constant review of previously covered material, multimodal integration (sounds, pictures, and words), and use of a diverse range of target structures (Chapelle, 2001). Rosetta World and Rosetta Studio (the new features of version 4) manage to bring the words “immersion” and “interaction” considerably closer to their true meaning when compared to Rosetta Course alone. However, in order to bring a truly socially and linguistically rich environment to the method, the type of immersion and interaction provided by these components still shows room for improvement.

As Doughty and Long (2003, p. 51) put it, “[m]ethodological principles are putatively universally desirable instructional design features, motivated by theory and research findings in SLA, educational psychology, and elsewhere .... The theoretical and empirical support make them features which should probably characterize any approach to language teaching, task-based or otherwise.” Due to a lack of space, delving into each principle they expose will not be possible in this review, but the reviewer would like to draw attention to four of them which are most relevant for independent language learning through tutorial software: provide rich (not impoverished) input, encourage inductive (“chunk”) learning, focus on form, and provide negative feedback.

In terms of rich input, this is not the case with RS most of the time, but Rosetta World and Rosetta Studio present somewhat more natural-sounding language than Rosetta Course. The language (and pronunciation) used in the exercises and by the teachers in the live sessions of Rosetta Studio can be said to be either neutral or many times quite artificial compared to how Portuguese is actually spoken in Brazil. The length of the sentences in Rosetta Course is too short in the majority of cases (even for Level 3), with a great deal of the “interaction” experienced being limited to either answering a question asked by the native speaker employed in the recordings, asking a question which the native speaker will respond to, or matching a picture to what was heard or shown on the screen.

In Rosetta Studio, the amount of interaction is considerably higher. The students participating in the live sessions interact both with the teacher and with each other, through role plays led by the teacher. Having requested an acquaintance of mine (Romanian nationality) who speaks some Portuguese to take part in two live sessions with three other speakers, the reviewer noticed however that each of the students probably spoke for less than 10 minutes during the 50-minute sessions. In spite of the fact that some desirable features are present during these live sessions, such as the ability for the teacher to move objects around in the pictures (see Figure 10) and write both prompts and unknown vocabulary on the screen, one of the teachers quite often did not correct errors made by the students.
It must be noted, however, that there was some variability in the approach of the teachers leading the live sessions; both prioritized fluency, but one of them provided slightly more correction than the other. In addition, the "immersion" experienced in these live sessions is in great part limited to interacting with other learners of the language, who have their own language problems. The infrequent correction of wrong input by the teacher and the fact that a good share of the interaction in Rosetta Studio and in Rosetta World is between nonnative speakers of the language might lead to two undesirable effects: fossilization of wrong structures and a false sense of linguistic accuracy in the learners.

Despite there being a welcome and desirable focus on fluency development in Rosetta Studio and Rosetta World, the reviewer believes that having the live sessions individually with the native teacher (best option) and perhaps one other student (secondary option) would bring Rosetta Stone much closer to its "immersion" and "interaction" claim.

Even though there are some interesting phonetic phenomena of Brazilian Portuguese that were paid attention to in the recordings (such as the vowel [o] being pronounced as [u] and the vowel [e] being pronounced as [i] in unstressed syllables), the speed of delivery and intonation of the speakers is quite often artificial and not representative of the language one hears in Brazil. In one example, the sentence Os estudantes estão carregando suas mochilas ‘The students are carrying their backpacks’ (the use of only the word carregando in this case implies carrying with the hands) was used in an exercise, but the corresponding picture showed students "wearing" their backpacks instead, which in Portuguese would be rendered by the sentence Os estudantes estão usando mochilas ‘The students are wearing backpacks’ or Os estudantes estão carregando suas mochilas nas costas ‘The students are carrying their backpacks on their backs.’ Apart from the Milestone exercise, the exercises in Rosetta Course cannot be said to be authentic in the sense that they reflect what the users might encounter outside of the classroom (Chapelle, 2001).
Another area in which Rosetta Course could improve is the sociocultural aspect of the specific language being studied. The fact that the very same pictures and word/sentences are used in the great majority of cases, regardless of the language being learned, results in considerable dissociation between the people in the pictures, the currencies used (e.g., dollars, euros, pounds, etc.), the culture represented in the pictures and what one would find in the country in question. However, it must be said that using the same linguistic transcript regardless of language is also common to other methods (such as Pimsleur) and offers the advantage of making sure that users are exposed to and learn the most frequent words, chunks (congruent with principle of encouraging inductive (“chunk”) learning above), and functions in a language (e.g., apologizing, requesting, etc.), which arguably tend to be universal. However, this could be done in a way that reflects the culture and customs of the country(ies) in which the languages are spoken. The texts presented in Rosetta World do however show that RS is becoming more aware of the need to include culturally and socially pertinent materials in the software. Several texts deal with traditional Brazilian culture (such as samba music and dance, cities like Rio de Janeiro and Ouro Preto, and typical dishes like feijoada).

With regard to the principle of focus on form, focus is done (implicitly) only during the grammar exercises (see Figure 11).

Figure 11
Grammar Exercise

Some researchers (Schmidt and Robinson, as cited in Chapelle, 2001, p. 47) believe that learners need to attend to linguistic form for acquisition. The implicit way in which grammar is treated in RS is more congruent with a focus on meaning than on form. This is a double-sided coin. Some learners are more analytical and might prefer a more overt focus on form such as
the one advocated by the Fluenz language learning software (http://www.fluenz.com), whereas others might prefer a more implicit approach like the one used in RS. The fact that the method is available to users aged 6 and above demonstrates however that the developers chose not to take the intrinsic differences between these age groups into account.

Regarding the principle of providing negative feedback, almost no explicit feedback is provided, apart from the possibility of hearing a sound indicate that an answer is incorrect (which can be turned off) or having a word shown in gray when pronounced incorrectly during a pronunciation or speaking exercise. Even during the live sessions, the focus is considerably more on fluency than on accuracy, with the teacher providing positive reinforcement sentences such as “Well done!” even in cases when the input is not accurate. It must be said however that the teacher did in a few occasions repeat the correct form of the sentence after the student’s input.

Lastly, the division into areas such as speaking, reading, and listening seems to be quite loose and many times inaccurate when compared with how such concepts are treated in the Applied Linguistics literature. The speaking and pronunciation exercises look quite similar. Despite there being some sequencing in a set of pictures in the speaking activities and some modeling of a 2-sentence-long exchange, most are concerned with repeating what was heard and are thus more typical of pronunciation exercises. However, its validity even as a pronunciation activity might be questioned, given that the speech recognition system does not work as accurately as one might wish. The reading exercises in Rosetta Course are basically the same as the listening exercises, except that the program provides the input in written form, with very little discourse use in either case, because the sentences are either independent from one another or usually restricted to two pictures. The texts in Rosetta World are much more typical of reading activities. Their length is longer, the discourse more complex, and users need to be aware of the internal coherence and cohesion of the passages. Another example of questionable construct validity is the writing section, which is in fact more of a spelling exercise, since it contains none of the aspects that a writing exercise should contain (e.g., coherence, cohesion, organization of ideas, free word choice, etc.). As a spelling exercise, however, these activities certainly help to improve spelling.

In summary, this reviewer would argue that the Rosetta Course is quite good for vocabulary acquisition, chunk learning, and spelling. For the other areas and skills (grammar, listening, writing, speaking) it could be improved in many aspects. Listening has seen an improvement with the introduction of the texts in Rosetta World (texts that can be listened to, read, or both) and with the live practice sessions. Speaking has seen an improvement with the live sessions in Rosetta Studio. The use of pictures in Rosetta Course is quite beneficial for more concrete concepts but can lead users to make wrong inferences if the picture is ambiguous. In Figure 12, for example, the word being practiced is Olá ‘Hi,’ but the first picture is ambiguous and led my test-subject to make a wrong choice right at the beginning of Unit 1 Lesson 1.
It must be said, however, that the constant reviewing and use of previously learned vocabulary and structures makes it much more likely that they will be remembered in the longer term.

**Learner Fit (Design)**

One of the advantages of RS is its modern, colorful, and appealing design. The pictures are vivid, the user interface is attractive, and it is quite easy to navigate through the program; users can move freely between different parts of the program and return at a later point, with the advantage that their performance and activities are always tracked with no loss of information. In addition, all settings used by the program can be easily and quickly changed with no need to leave the current lesson.

RS accounts, to a certain extent, for different learning styles (especially visual and auditory) through its joint use of texts, pictures, and sounds. However, its methodology of using association in the vast majority of the exercises in the basic program and putting learners in a passive role in Rosetta Course renders the activities somewhat mundane over time (as my test subjects also noted), especially given their overuse of the 4-picture scheme. The exercises look quite similar and in fact, given the loose definition of the skill/area being practiced mentioned above, users can become unsure of what the purpose of an exercise is. More analytical learners (or even more deductive ones) who prefer a more explicit approach to language learning will simply not find such an approach in RS. However, Rosetta Studio and Rosetta
World bring to version 4 a more engaging learning environment by giving users the chance to interact with one another and to put what they have learned in Rosetta Course into real practice both with other learners and with a native speaker of the language they are learning. Despite the possibility of leading to some undesirable aspects (such as fossilization of wrong structures and pronunciation), these are certainly welcome features.

Lastly, given the fact that the speech recognition system is quite often unreliable, many students might believe that they are pronouncing things in a way close to the way they should be pronounced because the program accepts their input. Other students might notice this problem and become quite suspicious of the speech recognition component and the software in general. The obvious risk to not having their pronunciation properly corrected is that it might lead to entrenched pronunciation problems.

The software seems more suitable to younger learners and adolescents than to adults, despite the fact that the program is commercially advertised as suitable for ages 6 and above. Its marketing premise that the best way to learn a foreign language is by emulating the way we learned our first language notwithstanding, the cognitive skills, demands (cognitive and emotional), and processes of older learners are quite different from those of children (Bley-Vroman, 1988), and RS does not take these differences into account.

SUMMARY

The award-winning Rosetta Stone software is built on the premise that the best way to learn foreign languages is by emulating how first languages are learned, which is reflected in its pervasive integrated use of pictures, sounds, and texts. Although it contains some features which are desirable for language acquisition (e.g., constant review of material, use of associations, and now in version 4 engagement with the language), there is still progress to be made in terms of addressing different learning styles and sociocultural factors. Moreover, in Rosetta Course, it is at times a challenge to understand the purposes of some exercises, which may cause one to question the validity of certain exercises and result in a program more suitable for the acquisition of vocabulary and chunk expressions. The new components of version 4, namely Rosetta Studio and Rosetta World, are certainly a welcome feature and allow learners to interact with the language in a more realistic and engaging way. There is, however, still room for improvement and users should be aware of both the strengths and weaknesses of RS if used as a stand-alone method, especially if one desires to develop accuracy as well as fluency.

SCALED RATING

(1 low-5 high)

Pedagogical Features: 2 (offline), 3.5 (online)
Sociolinguistic Accuracy: 1.5 (offline), 3.0 (online)
Use of Computer Capabilities: 4 (offline), 5 (online)
Ease of Use (student/teacher): 4 (offline and online)
Overall Evaluation: 2.0 (offline), (3.5 online)
Value for Money: 2.0 (offline), 3.5 (online)
PRODUCER’S CONTACT INFORMATION

Rosetta Stone Ltd.
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Phones: 866 834 6115 (support, USA); 800 280 8172 (sales, USA)
Email: No email available (only online form or chat)

NOTES

1 Awards include Gold Award for Best CD-ROMs used in School, Best Software in Second Language Foreign Language Learning Program annual awards (ComputED magazine), and Best CD-ROM for Language Learning i-Magic Award.

2 Rosetta Stone version 4 Personal Edition, released in September 2010, was installed and used for this review. There is another edition available, called Homeschool, which contains additional resources.

3 From this point on, Rosetta Course will always refer to the offline component of Rosetta Stone.

4 Rosetta Stone claims that the performance of their speech recognition system is better if used in conjunction with the headset included with the software.

5 PRAAT is a free and widely used software for phonetic analysis (http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat).

6 This is done in a sort of tandem practice, in which two learners interested in practicing each other’s native language interact and socially engage in activities and conversations.

REFERENCES


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**REVIEWER’S BIODATA**

Victor D. O. Santos holds a B.A in Linguistics from the Federal University of Minas Gerais (Brazil) and an M.A. in Language and Communication Technologies from the University of Saarland (Germany) and the University of Groningen (Netherlands). He holds an ICALT Certificate in English Language Teaching from the University of Cambridge and has taught English for more than 6 years in his native Brazil. At the moment, Mr. Santos is a Ph.D. student in Applied Linguistics and Technology and a Teaching Assistant at Iowa State University (USA).

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