



Hobbies 2: Collecting Brazilian Musical Instruments

<http://coerll.utexas.edu/brazilpod/cob/lesson.php?p=06>





Now there's an interesting hobby. Denise has been collecting musical instruments. And why not? Brazil has really cool instruments like her *cavaquinho*, her *ganzá*, and her *pandeiro*. So when Michelle was traveling recently, and knowing about Denise's collection, she was nice enough to buy Denise a *triângulo* to add to her collection. As they talk about it we see a nice example of a *Conversa Brasileira*.

MICHELLE: Olá, tudo bem?
Hi, how are you?

DENISE: Oi, tudo bom.
Hi, I'm fine.

MICHELLE: Tudo joia. E você?
I'm great. How about you?

DENISE: Tô joia. Tô aqui, ó, com a minha coleção. ❶
I'm great. I'm here, you see, with my collection.

MICHELLE: Ah, então tá bom. Eh, eu tô vendo a sua coleção, ❷ mas eu trouxe um novo objeto pra sua coleção.
Oh, that's nice! I see your collection, but I brought a new item for your collection.

DENISE: Ah, que legal!
How cool!

MICHELLE: Eu tive viajando no Nordeste e lembrei... me lembrei de você e comprei um triângulo.
I was travelling in the Northeast and I thought... I thought of you, so I bought a triangle.

DENISE: Uau!
Wow!

MICHELLE: Acho que você não tem ainda, né? ❸
I believe you don't have one yet, right?

DENISE: Muito bom. Não, não tenho.
Very nice. No, I don't have one.

MICHELLE: Ah, então tá bom...
Well, that's good...

DENISE: Eu já te mostro tudo o que eu tenho, mas esse aqui eu não tinha... Que legal! Onde que você comprou?
I'll show you everything that I have, but this item here I don't have one yet... How cool! Where did you buy it?

MICHELLE: Então,¹¹ eu comprei numa loja de instrumentos musicais lá no Nordeste.
Well, I bought it in a store for musical instruments in the Northeast.

DENISE: Uh?
Uh?

MICHELLE: Ah, você gostou?
Did you like it?

DENISE: Ah, muito!
Oh, yes!

MICHELLE: Ah, então tá bom...
That's good...

DENISE: Obrigada, obrigada. Agora já tá...
Thank you, thank you. Now it is...

MICHELLE: Mas, mas me mostra...
But please show me...

DENISE: Minha coleção tá começando a tomar forma...
My collection is starting to take shape...

MICHELLE: Isso, me mostra agora o seu...
Yeah, show me your...

DENISE: Então, ¹¹ ainda não tenho muita coisa, mas tenho aqui o cavaquinho... ⁴
Well, I still don't have many items, but I have here a *cavaquinho*...

MICHELLE: Hum...
Hum...

DENISE: ... que de todos é o meu preferido, né? ⁵
... out of all of them is my favorite, you know?

MICHELLE: Ah, tá...
Oh, I see...

DENISE: Acho que ele tem, assim, as formas bonitas... Acho que... Olha, é bem, bem legal, né?
I think it has, you know, a beautiful shape... I think that... Look, it's very, very cool, huh?

MICHELLE: Super bonito.
Very beautiful.

DENISE: A madeira... os detalhes todos da madeira... acho... adoro. Esse é o meu predileto!⁵ Então, aí o ganzá...
The wood... all the details in wood... I think... I love it. This is my favorite one! Then, there's a ganzá...

MICHELLE: Olha, e como é que toca isso? **6**
Wow! How do you play it?

DENISE: Percussão...
Percussion...

MICHELLE: Ah...
Ah...

DENISE: Então,¹¹ aí é uma questão, né? **7** Assim... eu ainda não sei tocar, eu só coleciono...
Well, that's a problem... I don't know how to play it, I'm only a collector...

MICHELLE: Ah, tá...
Oh, I see...

DENISE: Mas eu vou aprender. Eu tô, tô no caminho... Eu já tenho... tenho já é...
But I'll learn how. I'm, I'm on my way to learning... I already have... I already have...

MICHELLE: OK. Então o seu hobby é só colecionar por enquanto...
OK. So, your hobby will be collecting for a while...

DENISE: Pois é...
That's right...

MICHELLE: ... depois você vai aprender um por um.
... then you'll learn them one by one.

DENISE: É.
Yes.

MICHELLE: OK.
OK.

DENISE: É, esse é um plano futuro, assim, de aprender.
That's a future plan, to learn.

MICHELLE: OK, certo.
OK, all right.

DENISE: Bom, aí temos o apito. **8**
Well, then we have the whistle.

MICHELLE: Certo.
OK.

DENISE: O tamborim...
The *tamborim*...

MICHELLE: Eu gosto desse som.
I like that sound.

DENISE: Uh, uh... carnaval, samba...
Uh, uh... *Carnaval*, samba...

MICHELLE: Isso.
That's right.

DENISE: E o nosso...
And our...

MICHELLE: Pandeiro.
Pandeiro.

DENISE: Pandeirinho, né?
Pandeirinho, right?

MICHELLE: Que legal!
How cool!

DENISE: Pele de cabra... também... Então é isso, não tem... e agora o triângulo, né?
Goatskin... also... So that's it, there's no... and now the triangle, right?

MICHELLE: E agora o triângulo.
And now the triangle.

DENISE: O triângulo...
The triangle...

MICHELLE: Claro! Mas você já tem várias coisas... é muito bom!
Sure! You have a lot of things... it's very good!

DENISE: Uh, uh!
Uh, uh!

MICHELLE: Eu falei pra você que minha mãe toca, né?
I told you that my mother plays, right?

DENISE: É mesmo? ⑨
Really?

MICHELLE: É.
Yes.

DENISE: Eu lembro que você falou, mas eu não lembro...
I remember that you told me, but I don't remember...

MICHELLE: É.
Yes.

DENISE: O que que ela toca mesmo? ⑨
What is it that she plays?

MICHELLE: É verdade... minha mãe toca violão, toca piano, toca teclado...
That's true... my mother plays the guitar, the piano, the keyboard...

DENISE: E você toca o quê?
And what do you play?

MICHELLE: Ela não é colecionadora como você...
She is not a collector like you...

DENISE: Eh...
Eh...

MICHELLE: Não, eu não toco nada...
No, I don't play anything...

DENISE: Mas como não toca nada? Sua mãe toca esse monte de coisa, você tinha que tocar também...
How do you not play anything? Your mother plays all those things, you have to play something too...

MICHELLE: Eu não toco nada. Infelizmente, eu não sei nem pegar no cavaquinho ou no violão. ⑩ Mas, enfim, várias pessoas na minha família gostam de música e...
I don't play anything. Unfortunately, I don't even know how to hold a *cavaquinho* or a guitar. But, anyway, several people in my family like music, and...

DENISE: Uh, uh.
Uh, uh.

MICHELLE: ... é muito legal. Eu acho muito legal, mas não tenho esse dom.
... it's so cool. I think it's very cool, but I don't have this talent.



Usage Notes

1. Tô aqui, ó, com a minha coleção

Brazilians often end a phrase with the word *ó*. It's hard to describe the English equivalent, but is it something like "hey, are you listening?" but in kind of a soft, non aggressive sort of way. It comes from the verb *olhar*, meaning to look.

2. a) Tô aqui, ó, com a minha coleção b) ... eu tô vendo a sua coleção

The challenge for non-native speaker is when to say *com minha coleção* (with my collection), *tô vendo sua coleção* (I see your collection) and when to say *com a minha coleção* (with the my collection), *tô vendo a sua coleção* (I see the your collection). Brazilians often add the definite article "the" before nouns. Notice that in English we could directly translate these phrases without the extra "the": with my collection, I see your collection. By adding the extra "the" it is almost like saying "with that collection of mine" or "I see that collection of yours," which adds a focus. Part of this is a regional difference where in the Northeast of Brazil there is a greater tendency to drop the definite article (*de minha mãe* instead of *da minha mãe*).

3. *Acho que* você não *tem* ainda, né?

When learning how to use the subjunctive in Portuguese, keep in mind that even though the verb *achar* means ‘to think’, it doesn’t trigger the subjunctive. So even though this sentence is negative (doesn’t have), the verb is still in the indicative, i.e., *não tem*. However, when Brazilians use the verb *achar* in the negative, then the subjunctive is required. For example, a Brazilian would most likely say, *Eu não acho que você tenha o dinheiro*. (I don’t believe that you have the money.) Just accept it. *Achar* doesn’t take subjunctive. *Não achar* does.

4. tenho aqui o *cavaquinho*

The *cavaquinho* is a small stringed instrument, similar in many ways to the Hawaiian ukulele, which also has 4 strings. The *cavaquinho* is especially popular in certain types of samba and choro styles of music.

5. a) de todos é o meu *preferido*, né?

b) Esse é o meu *predileto*

Since the English word “favorite” sounds more like the Portuguese *favorito*, non native speakers tend to use *favorito* more than *preferido* and *predileto*. Brazilians, on the other hand, when talking about favorite things, seem to use the words *preferido* and *predileto* more often.

6. *Olha*, e como é *que* toca isso?

This is a beautiful example of Brazilian wording and phrases. A direct English phrase would be “How do you play this?” which in Portuguese would be something boring and stilted like “*Como você toca isso?*” Notice, however, a more Brazilian flow to a phrase like *Olha, e como é que toca isso?* It’s almost like saying, “and tell me again how it is that you play this”.

7. Então, aí é uma questão, né?

It takes a long time for native speakers of English to accept that fact that *questão* doesn't mean "question" as much as it means "problem." In this sentence Denise is stating that she has a problem, i.e., she collects instruments, but doesn't know how to play them. At the same time, *questão* can also take on the meaning of theme or topic, as in the phrase, *Eles querem discutir essa questão na próxima aula*.

8. Bom, aí temos o apito

The word aí can take on a meaning of location ("here" versus "there" – *aqui* X *aí*). But aí is also used to show sequence. Something comes first, aí something else follows. This second usage is what Denise is saying in this sentence. First we have the *ganzá* and then aí, we have the *apito* (whistle).

9. a) É mesmo?
b) O que que ela toca mesmo?

The dictionary meaning for *mesmo* is "same" or "really." In actual usage however, the range is much broader. In the phrase é mesmo? Denise is saying, in essence, "is that really so? I'm surprised to hear that. Could it possibly be so?" The second example is even more subtle. "*O que que ela toca mesmo?*" is almost like saying "so what is it that you say that she plays again?" It supposes that this is information that you had already received and you are asking to have it repeated.

10. Infelizmente eu não sei nem pegar no cavaquinho

Negative phrases can be especially challenging when learning Portuguese. In this example Michelle uses the word *nem* to convey the meaning of "not even at all." She is saying, basically, "I don't even know how one even holds on to a *cavaquinho* at all." So in addition to the double negative, this phrase is even strong because of the implications of "not even at all" that it carries with it.

11. então

The word então is often used at the beginning of a sentence, but the meaning can have subtle differences. Sometimes it can be used to link something that was said previously with a new idea. For example, *Ela me deu o dinheiro, então eu fui comprar o carro.* “She gave me the money and then I bought the car.” Other times então is related to a summation or conclusion, similar to the English word “so” as in, *Ele tem muitos amigos, então é fácil passar tempo com eles.* “He has a lot of friends, so it’s easy to spend time with them.” Então is also often used at the beginning of a turn as a response marker to what has gone before, something like “well.” Notice that in this dialog Denise uses então several times as a response marker.