



Grandparents I: Hopscotch and Marbles or Polly Pocket?

<http://coerll.utexas.edu/brazilpod/cob/lesson.php?p=15>





Some of our greatest childhood memories are often those of interactions with grandparents: playing cards, fishing, hanging out in the tool shed, hearing stories, etc. Talk about different worlds! This dialog compares grandpa's games with tops, kites, and marbles to Alice's Polly Pocket computer games. "You just google it, grandpa." The games and topics may be different, but what stays the same is the great feeling that comes when grandparents chat away with grandchildren. In this case, Ivo and Alice's chat is a perfect example of another *Conversa Brasileira*.

IVO: Alice, onde você está?
Alice, where are you?

ALICE: Ah, vô, tô aqui na cozinha.
I'm in the kitchen, grandpa.

IVO: Fazendo o quê?
What are you doing?

ALICE: Tô brincando no computador.
I'm playing on the computer

IVO: Brincando no computador?! Você tá jogando ❶ no computador? Que é isso, filha?
Playing on the computer?! You're playing on the computer? What's this, sweetie?

ALICE: É, você pode... ir no Google e pôr um jogo e aí depois você pode brincar.
Yeah, you can... go to Google and type in a game then you can play it.

IVO: Poxa, no meu tempo não tinha nada disso... ❷ Prá começar, ❸ não tinha nem computador!
Wow, in my time we didn't have anything like this... First of all, we didn't even have a computer!

ALICE: É...
Yeah...

IVO: Então a gente brincava de outras coisas, tá certo?
So we played other things, you know?

ALICE: É.
Yeah.

- IVO: Então os meninos gostavam de rodar pião, ④ soltar papagaio, ⑤ jogar bolinha de gude... ⑥
So the boys liked to spin tops, fly kites, play with marbles...
- ALICE: Como você joga “rodar pião”, de novo?
How do you spin a top, again?
- IVO: Rodar pião? Pião era uma pecinha de madeira, assim, que a gente enrolava uma cordinha nele, jogava com força, puxava a cordinha e ele ficava rodando...
Spin a top? It was a piece of wood, like this, and we would roll a cord around it, throw it really hard, rip the cord off, and it would keep on spinning...
- ALICE: E como era a bolinha de gude?
And what about marbles?
- IVO: Bolinha de gude? Eram bolinhas de vidro, coloridas, bonitinhas, que a gente brincava com elas. Fazia um buraquinho lá e tentava encostar lá no buraquinho e o outro tentava tirar a bolinha da gente. Mas era legal!
Marbles? They were little glass balls, colorful, cute, and we would play with them. We would make a target and try to knock the ball onto the target while the other guy tried to take our balls away. But it was cool!
- ALICE: Ah.
Oh.
- IVO: Agora, as meninas tinham outro tipo de brinquedo, certo?
Now, the girls had different types of toys, you know?
- ALICE: É.
Yeah.
- IVO: As meninas brincavam de casinha... ⑦ Você sabe o que é, né?
The girls would play house ... you know what that is, right?
- ALICE: É.
Yeah.
- IVO: De jogar amarelinha... ⑧
Play hopscotch...
- ALICE: Como que joga amarelinha?
How do you play hopscotch?
- IVO: Amarelinha? Você não lembra?
Hopscotch? Don't you remember?

ALICE:	Eu não sei. I don't know...
IVO:	Você não sabe? You don't know?
ALICE:	Não. No...
IVO:	Então, é um risco que a gente fazia na calçada, assim, fazendo as 'casas', e lá em frente você fazia uma casa redonda, assim, e escrevia 'céu'. Então jogava um pedrinha assim e ia pulando as casas, e tal, 9 até chegar na casinha, lá no 'céu'. So, we would draw a line on the sidewalk, like this, making 'houses', and way at the top there would be a round house, like this, with the word 'heaven' written on it. So you would throw a pebble like this and would jump from house to house, and so on, until you reached the final house, in 'heaven.'
ALICE:	Que legal! Cool!
IVO:	Legal, né? Cool, huh?
ALICE:	Ah, ah. Uh, huh.
IVO:	Mas isso já passou, 10 né? Isso é coisa do passado. Então vamos ver o que que nós temos pra aprender hoje aqui. Você pode ensinar pro vovô alguma coisa aí? But that's all gone now, right? Those are things from the past. So let's see what we have to learn today? Can you teach your grandpa something?
ALICE:	É, aqui eu tô brincando de Poly Pocket e não é tanto de menina, menino. Yeah, I'm playing Polly Pocket and it's not so much as a girl's..., I mean not a boy's game.
IVO:	Mas é jogo de menina? So it's a girl's game?
ALICE:	É. Yeah.
IVO:	Tá, bom. Mas eu vou aprender assim mesmo, 11 tá? Ok. But I will still learn it anyway, ok?
ALICE:	Ah, aqui eu tô brincando que você pode clicar nesses, e olha, aqui você pode escolher... e fica lá.

Uh, here I'm playing where you can click here, and look, here you can choose it... and it stays there.

IVO: Ah, e aí você vai completando o que falta do quadro?
Oh, and then you finish what's missing in the picture?

ALICE: Hum, hum.
Uh, huh.

IVO: Ah, legal!
Oh, cool!



Usage Notes

1. *Brincando* no computador?! Você tá *jogando* no computador?

English speakers can struggle with these two different verbs in Portuguese, *brincar* and *jogar*, since they both correspond to one verb in English, “to play:”

a) *Brincar*: usually means “to play around, entertain, amuse, divert.” It also can be used to express “to mock, joke, fun, fool.”

b) *Jogar*, on the other hand, means to take part in a game or to make a move in a game (notice that the idea of a “game” is usually involved). *Jogar* can also mean “to gamble.”

When talking about “to play an instrument,” use the Portuguese verb *tocar*: *tocar piano*, *tocar violão*, *tocar flauta*, etc (with no article before the noun).

2. Poxa, no meu tempo não tinha *nada disso*...

This is a great expression in Portuguese: *nada disso*... Grandpa is saying that in his time they didn’t have anything “like that” or “of the kind...” You can also use this expression by itself and, in this case, the meaning will be something like “no such matter!” or “no way!”, usually when you are disagreeing with somebody or something: *Nada disso! Você está errado*... (No way! You’re wrong...)

3. *Prá começar*, não tinha nem computador!

Talk about different worlds! “First of all”, in grandpa’s time, they didn’t even have a computer... Notice how different the structure of this expression is in Portuguese: *Prá começar*, the equivalent to “to begin **with**” or “first of all.”

4. rodar pião

Grandpa brings back memory of boys' favorite games and toys in his time... Spinning tops was one of them... When grandpa was a kid, they use to have mainly tops made of wood, with a pulling string to make them move. We still have tops in Brazil, but plastic and metal have largely supplanted the use of wood, and there are several kinds that can be easily spun using only the movement of the hand. Do not mistake pião for peão—this last one meaning “peon.”

5. soltar papagaio

Flying kites was another great boys' favorite game in grandpa's time, and it still remains up-to-date in Brazil, meanly in small cities and suburbs. In his time, they had to make their own kites from scratch, of bamboo and paper. Not an easy endeavor! It was common a kind of competition among the boys to see which kite could fly higher and faster. They use to use a “cutting line,” made of crushed glass and glue in order to cut the line of the other kites and remain the last to fly (what sometimes could result in injuries). There is a lot of geographic variation regarding this word in Brazil: papagaio, pipa, quadrado, cafifa, pandorga (at Rio Grande do Sul state), arraia ou pepeta (at Acre and Amazonas states). You can use either the verb “soltar” or “empinar” with it.

6. jogar bolinha de gude

Grandpa also tells Alice about playing with marbles, another boys' favorite game in his time, and still played mainly in the Northeast of Brazil. The marbles (bolinhas de gude) are usually made from colored glass, and there are several different games and modalities played with them.

7. brincar de casinha

Talking about girls' favorite games and toys in grandpa's time, he remembers how the girls loved to play house. Notice the use of the diminutive here (you know, Brazilians love it!): brincar de casinha – as well as in bolinha de gude, amarelinha, etc. The use of diminutive in Portuguese is a very common way to express affection, tenderness, cuteness – so proper to the child's world of games and toys ...

8. *jogar amarelinha*

Playing hopscotch was another hit among the girls during grandpa's childhood, and it is still very common in Brazil nowadays.

9. Então *jogava* um pedrinha assim e *ia pulando* as casas, e *tal*, até chegar na casinha

What a great example of Brazilian use of verb tenses! Notice the imperfect *jogava* followed by the gerund (*pulando*) along with a verb of motion in the imperfect (*-ia*) instead of simply *pulava*. This is a way to emphasize the continuous aspect of the action, what would not be accomplished if grandpa had just said *pulava* (jumped).

Notice as well the expression *e tal*. This is the short version for *et cetera e tal*, informally used to mean “and other things,” usually at the end of a list of things.

10. Mas isso *já passou*, né?

Grandpa brings back memory of the favorite games and toys in his time, but he knows that it is all gone now, he knows that it *já passou*... What a great verb in Portuguese, *passar*, with several different meanings! Literally “to pass,” it is not the case here; here it means “to be gone, to be over.” Another example could be: *Já passou a chuva* (The rain is over).

11. Mas eu vou aprender *assim mesmo*, tá?

Ok, *Polly Pocket* is not so much as a boy's game, but grandpa wants to play it anyway... He could also have said *mesmo assim* (with the same order of the equivalent expression in English “even so”).