



## School 2: What are you doing about the whole lunch thing?

<http://coerll.utexas.edu/brazilpod/cob/lesson.php?p=20>





Think of all of the American movies and TV shows that Brazilians might have seen about life in American high schools. How weird is it for them to imagine what it is really like to go to school in the United States? Sílvia and Antônio pick up on some of the big items: changing classrooms, metal detectors, individual lockers, and lunchrooms. You have got to admit, their observations make for an interesting *Conversa Brasileira*.

SÍLVIA: É, mas agora eles vão demorar **1** um pouquinho pra sair.  
Yeah, but they will be delayed just a bit in leaving.

ANTÔNIO: Pois é, **2** mas...  
Yeah, but...

SÍLVIA: A gente espera um pouquinho aqui.  
Let's wait here a bit.

ANTÔNIO: Vamos sentar um pouco aqui então, né?  
So let's sit here for a sec, ok?

SÍLVIA: Sim, vamos...  
Yeah, let's...

ANTÔNIO: Pra gente...  
So we...

SÍLVIA: ...bater um papinho aqui. **3** Muito, muito tempo que a gente não se vê.  
...chat a bit here. It's been forever since we've seen each other!

ANTÔNIO: Pois é.  
Yeah.

SÍLVIA: Bom encontrar você! E bom saber que os dois estão na mesma escola, né? Interessante.  
So good to see you! And so good to know that both of them are in the same school, right? Interesting.

ANTÔNIO: Pois é.  
Yeah.

SÍLVIA: Como é que tá o Marco? O Marco tá gostando da escola? Da experiência nova?  
How is Marco doing? Does he like the school? The new experience?

**ANTÔNIO:** Tá. Tá, tá gostando bastante. Assim, ④ ele tava contando a história que no outro dia ele quase se perdeu por causa da coisa ⑤ de mudar de sala, né? Que você tem que mudar de sala aqui, então... Todo mundo sai...

Yeah, yeah, he is really enjoying it. Well, he was telling me that the other day he almost got himself lost because of changing rooms, you know? You have to change classrooms here, so... Everybody leaves...

**SÍLVIA:** Que não é tão, que não é tão semelhante no Brasil. Exato.  
This is not; it's not so similar to Brazil. Exactly.

**ANTÔNIO:** Pois é, eu acho.  
Yeah, I guess.

**SÍLVIA:** Não, você já imaginou que... Eles têm o quê? Duas mil, três mil pessoas... Todo mundo cruzando...  
No, can you imagine that... They have... what? Two, three thousand people... everybody criss-crossing through...

**ANTÔNIO:** Provavelmente!  
Probably!

**SÍLVIA:** ...e mudando de sala no mesmo momento!  
...and changing classrooms at the same time!

**ANTÔNIO:** Ele falou, justamente que aí tinha..  
He said that there was...

**SÍLVIA:** Ele já se perdeu alguma vez?  
Has he ever got himself lost?

**ANTÔNIO:** Ele já quase se perdeu, ele disse, na verdade. Que tava procurando a sala lá, que saiu um monte de gente, aquela coisa de ficar mudando, não sei o quê... Quase se atrasou. Que é outra coisa que eles são muito rígidos aqui, com o negócio<sup>5</sup> de horário, né?

Actually, he said that he almost got himself lost. He was looking for his classroom, and then a bunch of people got up, everyone moving around, etc. He was almost late. That's another thing here they are very strict about this thing about being on time.

**SÍLVIA:** Isso é verdade.  
That's true.

**ANTÔNIO:** Que eles te olham com uma cara horrível! ⑥  
They look at you with that grumpy face!

**SÍLVIA:** É, mas com o tempo ele vai, ele se ajeita, né? ⑦ Tudo, tudo se ajeita. Daqui a pouco ⑧ ele tá acostumado já. Agora Gabriel, sabe uma coisa

interessante que ele chegou pra... E foi não só novidade pra ele, mas pra mim também. Ele chegou falando do... primeiro dia... do detector de metal que tem na escola!

Yeah, but give him some time and he'll get used to it, you know? Everything will be all right. Before you know it, he'll be use to it. Now Gabriel, it's interesting that he came... And it wasn't just something new for him, but for me too. He came home talking... on the first day... about the metal detectors that they have at school!

ANTÔNIO: Sim, que coisa estranha...  
Yeah, that's so weird!

SÍLVIA: Imagina que interessante, né? Não, mas, interessante. Com essas histórias que a gente às vezes vê nos filmes aí. Essas, né, essas, essa violência...  
It's interesting, you know? No, but, interesting. With all those stories that we've seen in the movies. Those, you know, this violence...

ANTÔNIO: Sai atirando... 9  
Shooting everywhere...

SÍLVIA: ... esses tiroteios e tudo. Então, pelo menos aqui a gente sabe que ele tem... Entra lá e passa pelo detector de metal... Mas, pelo menos tá, tá seguro. Essa foi uma coisa que pra mim foi muito: "Uau! Detector de metal!" Interessante.  
... all those stories about shooting and everything. Well, at least here we know he has... He enters and goes through the metal detector... But at least he's, he's safe. To me, this was something very: "Wow! Metal detector!" Interesting.

ANTÔNIO: Pois é, pelo menos, não sei... Você sabe que não entra com arma, não fica guardando as coisas... Porque você pode guardar 10 as coisas também. Tem essa coisa do armário só pra você, né?  
That's right, at least, I don' know... You know that they can't enter with a gun, they can't hide things... Because people can hide things too. Here you've got individual lockers, right?

SÍLVIA: Ai, igualzinho a gente vê nos filmes!  
Yeah, it's so like what we see in the movies!

ANTÔNIO: Justamente!  
Exactly!

SÍLVIA: Isso é engraçado!  
That's funny!

ANTÔNIO: Aí você tem essa coisa de "só pra você"... Ah, eu gosto de guardar as minhas coisas... Fica legal também. Pra não ficar zanzando, 11 já que

você tem que... né, guardar as coisas aí.

So, they have this "just for you" kind of thing... And, I like putting up my own things... It's kind of cool too. You don't have to keep walking around, since you can... you know, store your things in there.

SÍLVIA:

Aqui, 12 como é que você tá fazendo com a história 5 do lanche, da comida? Como é que ele tá se alimentando? Eles tão, tão... Na sala dele... Como é? Porque o Gabriel, até agora, a gente tá tentando descobrir, não sei... Vô dar dinheiro pro Gabriel pra ele trazer pra, pra escola, porque não sei como é que... Até agora não, não sei.

Look, what are you doing about the whole lunch and meal thing? What is he doing for food? Are they, are they..., in his class, how is he doing it? Because in Gabriel's case, so far, we are trying to figure it out, I don't know... I'm going to give Gabriel money to take to, to school, because I don't know, so far, I just don't know what to do...

ANTÔNIO:

Parece que eles têm alguma coisa parecida com uma cantina, não sei, alguma coisa assim, né? Pra eles...

It looks like they have something like a "cantina", I don't know, something like this, you know? So they...

SÍLVIA:

Cantina... 13 Não a italiana, mas é como... *cafeteria*...

"Cantina"... Not the Italian one, but it's like a... cafeteria...

ANTÔNIO:

Eu acho, é, mais ou menos alguma coisa assim, né? Porque no Brasil você tinha... Não sei, pelo menos na escola que eu estudava, tinha a coisa da merenda, né? Que você...

I guess, yeah, something like that, right? Because in Brazil we used to have... I don't know, at least at the school I used to go to, we used to have a "merenda" (school lunch), you know? So you...

SÍLVIA:

A merenda! 14

"Merenda"!

ANTÔNIO:

Pelos menos quando eu fazia...

At least when I used to go to...

SÍLVIA:

A cantina... Tinha algumas pessoas, algumas pessoas ficavam com vergonha de merendar, mas eu merendava sempre na escola!

The "cantina"... There were some people, some people were embarrassed to get the "merenda", but I used to always get it at school!

ANTÔNIO:

Pois é, aí tinha isso. E, e... Mas aí agora acho que ele tá comprando aqui na cantina. Alguma coisa assim. Ele não...

Yeah, so we used to have that. And, and... But I think now he is buying

food here in the cafeteria. Something like that. He doesn't...

**SÍLVIA:** Não gosta de trazer, tem vergonha de trazer lanche. Trazer nessas pla... nessas sacolinha plástica, tem vergonha. Aí não quer trazer lanche. Esses menino nessas idade é assim...  
He doesn't like to bring a sack lunch, he's embarrassed about bringing a sack lunch, he's just embarrassed about bringing the little plastic bags. So, he doesn't want to bring sack lunch. Boys this age are like that...

**ANTÔNIO:** Pois é, na High School, já acha que...  
Yeah; in High School they think that...



## Usage Notes

1. *É, mas agora eles vão demorar um pouquinho pra sair.*

Notice the verb demorar in this sentence. It is the Portuguese version for the English expression of something like "to take time". The translation here could be something like: "Yeah, but now it'll take a bit for them to leave". Another usual meaning for the verb demorar is "to be delayed": *O jantar não vai demorar* as in, dinner will be ready in a bit.

2. *Pois é, mas...*

Did you notice how many times Antônio says Pois é in this dialog? This is a very common oral expression that could be translated as "Yeah...". It indicates agreement with what was just said and is usually followed by some sort of explanation or addition to the topic. It also takes on the meaning of "oh well," expressing the idea that there is not much you can do about it.

3. *...bater um papinho aqui. Muito, muito tempo que a gente não se vê.*

Do you want to chat in Portuguese? Then you're going to bater (um) papo. Literally the papo refers to the area around your throat or Adam's apple. So if someone is going to bater their papo they are hitting or knocking their Adam's apple around. What a cool way to say chat!

4. *Assim*, ele tava contando a história que no outro dia ele quase se perdeu...

*Assim* is usually an adverb that means "like this," "on this way" and also "thus, therefore." But notice that in this example it is used in a very different way, as a discourse marker (something like "well" or "like"). It has a somewhat empty meaning and acts more like a "filler" to signal a change in the direction of the conversation.

5. a) ...ele quase se perdeu por causa *da coisa* de mudar de sala  
 b) ...eles são muito rígidos aqui, com *o negócio* de horário, né?  
 c) ...como é que você tá fazendo com *a história* do lanche?

When you don't want to be specific, Brazilians often use filler words like "*coisa*" (thing), *negócio* (business), or *história* (story). These are great examples of the way oral language works.

6. Que eles *te olham com uma cara horrível!*

Literally this sentence says, "they look at you with a horrible face." This refers to a scowl, or as we put in the translation, "a grumpy face."

7. É, mas com o tempo ele vai, ele *se ajeita*, né? Tudo, tudo *se ajeita*.

*Ajeitar-se* is an interesting verb in Portuguese that means "to accommodate or adapt oneself or something easily." Hopefully it will happen to Antônio's nephew! Note that *ajeitar* (without *se*) means "to arrange, dispose" - *dar (um) jeito* in Portuguese.

8. *Daqui a pouco* ele tá acostumado já.

This expression can be a hard one for a non-native speaker: *daqui a pouco* (in a little while, shortly). Note that *daqui* (from here) is the contraction of the preposition *de* + the adverb *aqui*. Our translation ended up as, "before you know it."



9. *Sai atirando...*

The verb sair (to leave) is a very interesting one in Portuguese. Some Portuguese dictionaries list more than 20 different meanings for it! It can also be used as an auxiliary verb, and this is the case in this example: sai atirando, something like "They are shooting (everywhere)." Antônio could also say atira, but when he says sai atirando he captures more the process involved in the act of shooting, and not only the act itself.

10. Porque você pode guardar as coisas também.

Guardar is a verb that can be translated into English in some different ways: to guard, defend, set apart, store (away), to treasure, etc. It is very commonly used in a situation when you "put things inside something" like a locker, a box, a drawer, a wardrobe, etc. We can always watch moms saying: *Guarde seus brinquedos!* (Put your toys away!)

11. Pra não ficar zanzando...

Zanzar: talk about an interesting verb! It probably has African origins and means something like, "to wander, to loiter, roam, walk up and down."

12. Aqui, como é que você tá fazendo com a história do lanche?

Aqui is usually an adverb that means "here." In this dialog it is used in a very different way, as a discourse marker (something like "look" or "listen") and is probably a short version of olhe/escute aqui (look/listen here). Just like assim (see Note 5, above) it has a somewhat empty meaning and acts more as a "filler" to signal a change in the direction or subject of the conversation.

13. Cantina... Não a italiana, mas é como... cafeteria...

Here we see Sílvia explaining the meanings of the word cantina: it can be a "cafeteria" but also a "restaurant specialized in Italian food and wines." It can also be a way to refer to a "rustic restaurant."

14. A merenda!

In public schools in Brazil, the students go to school for 4 or 5 hours a day, either in the morning or in the afternoon. Because of that, they usually have lunch at home and they have a snack or a light meal at school in the middle of the morning or afternoon. They can bring their snack from home, buy it at the cantina (cafeteria) or have the merenda (school lunch). The merenda is free and made from scratch in the school kitchen, but some students have a prejudice against it, as if it would only be for "the poor kids" who don't have any money to buy their snack in the cantina.