



This is Part 3 of the interview teacher Steve Ford gave to Inglês Online.

(Steve) Many of my Brazilian students actually live in North America, so... Some in the United States and some in Canada, so... We always talk about that too, like...

(Ana) Oh, that's interesting Steve. That's what came to my mind right now, do they ask you about that, do they make comments about how different it is in Brazil?...

(Steve) Always, always. I have a student...

(Ana) It's good to have someone to talk to about that.

(Steve) It is, it really is. Like, I have a student right now, I won't give his name, you know, to maintain his privacy... He's planning to be a doctor here and, so we often talk about how he can develop a Canadian persona... Yeah, it's a process, it's a process that, you know, I've had to develop travelling so he's starting to do that too... to develop his own persona. It's not easy but it's not impossible. Maybe it's easier to go from rational and more distant to emotional, than from emotional to...

(Ana) Yeah, yeah... maybe here in Brazil... I don't know. I think I'm speaking more, you know, for myself... I can't speak for everyone but maybe it's a matter of learning how not to take things so personally.

(Steve) Yeah, I think so.

(Ana) 'Cause it's a matter of culture sometimes and there's nothing you can do. I mean, it's not about you, right?

(Steve) Exactly. And I helped another student who immigrated to Toronto. He's originally from São Caetano in Brazil. I guess that's, like, a city just outside of São Paulo and he's, he... I mean, incredible. Brazilians have the incredible ability to adapt, and I think in maybe five, six months, you know, I helped him to adapt to living in Toronto. So he bought an apartment there and now he's living there. He's all... you know, set up and... yeah, yeah. So, Brazilians... you can do it!

(Ana) I know! Everywhere you go in the world you will meet Brazilians there.

(Steve) Exactly. Yeah, I have Brazilian students in Japan, I have another Brazilian student in Holland and she has adapted very well so Brazilians are wonderful in terms of adaptation.

(Ana) Let's move on to the next question...

(Steve) You bet.

(Ana) Professor Sergio... He asks, *Steve – in your experience, what's the most difficult learning area for students?*

(Steve) I think that depends on the nationality, Sergio, and with my Latin language speaking students... people who speak Portuguese, French, Italian, Spanish... what I find is the fact that English and Portuguese, for example, are similar in some ways that many of the words have a different word stress. So, I'm going to give you a little tip, so I mean... Most times in Portuguese if the stress is at the end of the word – oh God, now I sound like an English teacher...

(Ana) Go ahead... Well, English-teaching moment...

(Steve) So for example... right, sure. So I mean, if you're saying "informação", so the "ção", the word stress at the end... in English we know that it's falling on "ation", "information". So typically the word stress comes before in English but, for some reason, they do not put the accent above where the word stress should be. And I think this gives students a lot of difficulty. You know, how can I learn the pronunciation when there is no, there's no accent above the word.

(Ana) Graphic mark, OK.

(Steve) "I need a GPS device to find my way", you know, "around this language"... and nobody has made one. So pronunciation, definitely, prepositions for sure... Prepositions give students a lot of difficulty. Phrasal verbs for sure... Sometimes, verb tenses you know... In the Latin languages many times, for example, you can use progressive tenses. You can say, I am liking this, I am loving this. And grammatically in English that would not be considered correct. So...



(Ana) Yeah, although I've heard that a lot, I mean...

(Steve) I know, informal English...

(Ana) Right, in very informal... yeah.

(Steve) Yeah, yeah. And this is the thing, too... is that, in English there is the way that people speak it and then... when people go to do a test like the TOEFL, the IELTS or the Cambridge, if they use those same strategies...

(Ana) They flunk...

(Steve) Yeah, they flunk 'cause... "Oh, that's wrong, you can't do it like that." So, I think that's also a challenge for... It's good that you mentioned that because it shows that English is divided into different levels of formality so... I think that's another challenge for students, it's to separate the different levels of formality of English. Semi-formal, what is academic.

(Ana) Yeah, I think it all comes down... in the end it comes down to your purpose...

(Steve) That's true.

(Ana) Most people, I don't know, most students I come across... they just wanna speak. They just wanna be able to comprehend what people tell them, and just be able to respond or to initiate a conversation. But some people want to, I don't know... Go the, maybe, academic route and study literature or be a scientist of the language and they probably have to know all the formal rules and everything.

(Steve) Yeah. And I think it's important for everybody to remember that... it's important to learn a good English because, you know, in the future it'll give you more opportunities... 'cause usually the people who contact me say, "I want to learn English because I need it for my work" I'm talking to people on the phone or something like that".

I think it's important for people to try to learn the best English they can. And that's why I'm trying to make it fun, because I know that a lot of people... they work all day long, they come home, they're tired and then, "Oh my God, I have to study English now? I want to watch TV, I don't want to study English"

(Ana) Yeah, they deserve a good laugh.

(Steve) Exactly!

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