



These notes accompany the Podcast lesson that you may access at <http://tltc.la.utexas.edu/brazilpod/tafalado/lesson.php?lt=gra&p=14>.

Grammar Lesson #14: Absence of Direct Object Pronouns Mobile Homes

Dialog

Michelle: **Você viu aquele caminhão levando aquela casa inteirinha?**

¿Viste tú aquel camión llevando aquella casa entera?

Did you see that truck carrying that whole house?

Valdo: **Vi sim. Que coisa, né?**

Sí lo vi. Qué cosa, ¿verdad?

I did see it. How weird, huh?

Michelle: **Pois é, a primeira vez que vi tomei um susto. Você compraria aquela casa pra você?**

Pues, la primera vez que lo vi, me asusté. ¿Comprarías tú aquella casa?

Yeah, the first time that I saw one it surprised me. Would you ever buy that house for you?

Valdo: **Não, não compraria não. Prefiro a minha casa de concreto no Brasil que está bem presa ao chão. E você transportaria sua casa assim com tudo dentro?**

No, no la compraría. Prefiero que mi casa en Brasil sea de concreto y que esté bien fijada en el suelo. ¿Transportarías tú la casa así con todo adentro?

No, I wouldn't buy it. I prefer a concrete home in Brazil that is well attached to the ground. And would you transport your house like that with every thing in it?

Michelle: **Transportaria sim. Por que? Você não gosta desse sistema não?**

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Sí, la transportaría. ¿Por qué? ¿A ti no te gusta el sistema?

Yes, I would transport it. Why? Don't you like the system here?

Valdo: Não gosto muito não. Como já te disse, prefiro minha casa bem presa ao chão.

No me gusta mucho. Como ya te dije, prefiero una casa que esté en el suelo.

No, I don't like it a lot. As I already told you, I prefer my house to be stuck to the ground.

Cultural Notes

Besides the lessons in pronunciation and grammar, all of the dialogs key on some cultural issue that Valdo and Michelle have noticed as Brazilians living in the United States.

Normally in Brazil houses are made of concrete and cement, making it impossible to move them to another location. People in Brazil may move from one house to another, but they would never move the house itself. So, it is indeed strange the idea of a mobile or prefab home that is then placed on a semi heading down the street is a strange site indeed.

Grammar Notes

In this dialog we see examples of when Brazilians generally omit direct object pronouns. Let's look at a couple of examples.

English

- (1) Did you buy the **car**?
- (2) Yes, I bought **it** yesterday.

- (3) Did you see **Mary** yesterday?
- (4) Yes, I saw **her** at the store.

In English, speakers have to use the pronouns in order for the sentence to be correct. In response to the questions above, it would not be correct in English to say, "I bought yesterday" or "I saw at the store."



Brazilians, however, commonly drop the pronouns from sentences. The idea is understood from context and as such "goes without saying." The English examples above are rendered in Portuguese as follows:

Portuguese

- (5) Você comprou o **carro**?
- (6) Eh, comprei ontem.

- (7) Você viu a **Maria** ontem?
- (8) Eh, eu vi sim.

If speakers do use the pronouns, the sentences above could be rendered:

- (9) Eh, eu **o** comprei ontem.
- (10) Eh, eu **a** vi sim.

Another tendency in Brazilian Portuguese is to use the subject pronouns, even though the meaning in the sentence would call for object pronouns:

- (11) **É**, eu comprei **ele** ontem.
- (12) **É** eu vi **ela** sim.

So, what is a learner of Portuguese supposed to do?

The forms with the direct object pronouns (examples 9 and 10) sound more formal. Save those for when you are writing or when you are speaking in formal settings. In general speech, just leave out the direct object pronouns and chances are that you'll sound just fine. And finally, save the sentences that substitute the subject pronouns (11 and 12) for those times where your general Portuguese has already advanced quite a bit. Deep down all Brazilians know that these forms are technically wrong, even if everyone uses them.