

BONUS MATERIAL

ELIMINATE MORE
MISTAKES



PORTUGUESE SPEAKERS

MAKE IN **ENGLISH**



GORDON GAFFNEY

INTRODUCTION

These general tips are useful for all students of English but are especially suited to Portuguese speakers. They come from my notes from over 2500 hours of classes teaching English to native Portuguese speakers. I continue to teach English to Portuguese speakers today and you can read more about [my classes here](#).

In 2016 I realised there was a lack of information and teaching resources specifically for these students so I decided to write my book [*Eliminate the 63 Most Common Mistakes Portuguese Speakers Make in English*](#). I think it's a good idea for all Portuguese speakers to work on internalising its content.

In early 2018 I decided to review my thousands of pages of student notes for more common mistakes my students make. These errors are not as vitally important but I think it is beneficial to try and eliminate them too.

Therefore this free eBook is the perfect companion to [*Eliminate the 63 Most Common Mistakes Portuguese Speakers Make in English*](#) which is available to buy on PDF, EPUB, MOBI. If you don't have a Kindle or other eReader device you can [read about EReader apps for iOS and Android here and read books on your smartphone or tablet](#).

I have grouped this book into sections, similar to how [I teach in my classes](#). They are:

1. Direct Portuguese Errors
2. False Cognates/False Friends
3. Pronunciation
4. Uncountable Nouns
5. General Common Errors
 - a. Extended Family
 - b. More on Time
 - c. Love/Relationships/Weddings
 - d. Verbs

1. Direct Portuguese Errors

These are errors where you translate directly from Portuguese but this produces an error in English.

The classic example being:

Tenho 26 anos = ~~I have 26 years~~ = I am 26 or I am 26 years old.

2. False Cognates/False Friends

This is where you think that the Portuguese and English words that sound the same also mean the same, but unfortunately they are not.

For example:

pretender = ~~to pretend~~ = to intend

The best thing to do here is to memorise them, or as a native might say *to learn them off*, which is the phrasal verb for *to memorise*. The examples here are relatively common, however the most important ones are [covered in my book](#).

Let's look at an example which shows a very important point about translating Portuguese directly into English which is related to this:

motivo = motive is very formal

We talk about a *motive* for a murder, so it is used in formal legal English in court. In everyday speaking we say:

motivo = ~~motive~~ = reason

It is important to remember that this is not an error so it is not a false cognate or a false friend.

Another example is:

principal = principal is formal

The principal aim of the organisation is formal Business English.

In legal documents you might have *the principal owner* of a business. However in everyday speaking people will use this:

principal = ~~*principal*~~ = *main*

That is the principal road = *That is the main road.*

The company's principal office is in Dublin = *The company's main office is in Dublin.*

THIS GIVES US A VERY IMPORTANT TIP WHEN SPEAKING ENGLISH

When the Portuguese and English words sound similar, in general the English word will be **formal**.

If you use these formal words in speaking people will understand you, however, the problem is a native will probably use the informal word when they speak to you so you will need to know them understand them, and it is always good to try and speak like a native.

3. Pronunciation

A short section on pronunciation, I will describe the correct pronunciation here but it is better to hear them for yourself!

[So there are audio files on my website here.](#)

4. Uncountable Nouns

Another short section of more errors with uncountable nouns, again the most important and most common ones are [in my book](#).

5. General Common Errors

The main body of the book contains relatively quick tips and grammar points. Again the major grammar points, including the present perfect, are covered extensively in my book.

These tips are very quick and come with examples, but they are very

common and are especially suited to Portuguese speakers.

I have subdivided this section into larger blocks where possible.

a) Extended Family

Vocabulary and strategies to help describe extended family such as *cunha* and *sogra* in English.

b) More on Time

Very important in everyday speaking and Business English, but I feel this topic is not covered well enough in most books or regular classes, so we will cover ideas such as *the week before last*, *the month after next*.

c) Love/Relationships/Weddings

Vocabulary and phrasal verbs with some common slang.

d) Verbs

Let's start!

DIRECT PORTUGUESE ERRORS

These errors could be immediately recognisable to you as you might be making them already!

Correcting them will have you speaking more like a native quickly. The basis here is that translating something directly from Portuguese to English creates an error. Naturally these mistakes are very common as the structure of each language is different.

The classic example of this is one that students of English might learn in their very first class.

~~I have 23 years~~ = I am 23 years old

Tenho 23 anos = ~~I have 23 years~~ = I am 23 or I am 23 years old

We know that translating directly doesn't work in this case so we have to 'think' in English or remember the differences when discussing age.

Another verb related to age is *completar* = ~~to complete~~ = to turn

~~When you complete 60 years~~ = When you turn 60.

~~He will complete 50 years next year~~ = He will turn 50 next year.

~~I am completing 5 years of marriage~~ is the direct Portuguese translation and is an error. Instead say:

I am celebrating 5 years of marriage.

or

It is my fifth wedding anniversary, remember that fifth is 5th in writing.

or

We are 5 years married.

~~They are completing 40 years of marriage~~ = They are celebrating their fortieth [40th] wedding anniversary.

last classes = last few classes

Let's extend the important section [from my book](#).

Saying *last class* is fine.

But unfortunately:

últimas aulas = ~~last classes~~

Instead say *the last **few** classes*

We can extend this to more examples:

nos últimos meses = ~~in the last months~~ = *in the last few months*

os últimos jogos = ~~the last games~~ = *the last few games*

as últimas vezes = ~~the last times~~ = *the last few times*

It is the same with *next*.

nas próximas aulas = ~~in the next classes~~ = *in the next few classes*

nos próximos meses = ~~in the next months~~ = *in the next few months*

very much = really

~~I like very much~~, this is direct Portuguese, a native will say *I really like*.

Also word order is important here.

~~I love very much Ireland~~ = *I really love Ireland*.

~~I like very much football~~ = *I really like football*.

Or to use *odiar* = *to hate*:

I hate very much rainy weather = I really hate rainy weather.

I hate very much fish = I really hate fish.

comum = common = normal or regular

Unfortunately when you think of *comum* we don't usually use *common*, we use *normal* or *regular*.

A synonym for *common* is *prevalent*.

So if you are thinking of *prevalente* then you can use *common*.

In this free eBook I use the terms *a common mistake* or *a common error*.

These errors are **prevalent** or **prevalente**.

If *comum* means *usual* or *standard* then we say *normal* or *regular*.

a common coffee = a normal coffee or a regular coffee

a common bar = a normal bar or a regular bar

a common girl = a regular girl or a normal girl

a common class = a normal class or a regular class

We can have a common conversation = We can have a normal conversation.

quanto tempo? = how much time? = how long?

If you translate directly from Portuguese here people will understand you, but a tip is to think of the [U2 song Sunday Bloody Sunday](#).

At 44 seconds Bono sings the lyrics:

How long? How long must we sing this song?

How much time is this movie? = How long is this movie?

With time, in general we say *long* and the opposite is *short*, and not *little time* or *few time*.

~~*I lived in Ireland for much time*~~ = *I lived in Ireland for a long time*.

~~*My brother was here for 5 minutes, he only stayed for a little time*~~ = *My brother was here for 5 minutes, he only stayed for a short time*.

MORE SUPERQUICK TIPS

motivo = motive = reason

As discussed already *motivo = motive* is very formal.

Motive is legal English, in court people talk about someone's motive for committing a crime such as murder.

In everyday English we say *reason*.

motivo = motive = reason

~~*Can you give me a motive?*~~ = *Can you give me a reason?*

~~*The motive for the decision*~~ = *The reason for the decision*.

However:

segundas intenções = second intentions = ulterior motives

~~*He had second intentions for talking to me*~~ = *He had ulterior motives for talking to me*.

special plates = special dishes

The physical piece of ceramic or plastic is called a *plate* in English. When we think of a plate of food we often use the word *dish* and not *plate*. Chefs in professional kitchens or on TV shows talk a lot about dishes.

That is a nice dish means that is a nice plate of food.

For the next dish means for the next plate of food, or for the next course.

*~~We went to a restaurant and I had a fish plate~~ = *We went to a restaurant and I had a fish dish.**

unique/only

o único lugar = ~~the unique place~~ = the only place

Unique and only are synonyms, they are very similar but unique is more scientific and specific and, like all Portuguese sounding words, is a bit more formal.

Also look at the use of unique as an adjective.

We can say:

Dublin is unique.

This restaurant is unique.

The Mona Lisa is unique.

We can't say ~~this restaurant is only.~~

Or ~~The Mona Lisa is only.~~

We use only with another noun.

Like in our example:

~~the unique place~~ = the only place

~~The unique meeting I have today~~ = The only meeting I have today.

~~This is the unique watch I own~~ = This is the only watch I own.

graças o deus = ~~Thanks God~~ = Thank God

In English we don't use the plural *Thanks* here, just the singular *Thank* in everyday speaking.

At mass or church the full expression is *Thanks be to God*, but people don't say this in everyday speaking.

FALSE COGNATES/FALSE FRIENDS

Words in Portuguese that have similar sounding word that is incorrect in English. It is best to use examples:

pretender = to pretend = to intend

I ~~pretend~~ to study a lot of English this year = I intend to study a lot of English this year.

He ~~pretends~~ to go to the gym today = He intends to go to the gym today.

I ~~pretend~~ to tidy the house today = I intend to tidy the house today.

However, we do have a verb *to pretend* in English, it is *fingir*.

The boy pretended he was Superman.

As a joke I pretended to be my brother on the phone.

She pretended to be happy but she was angry.

atual = actual = current

The ~~actual~~ President of the USA is Donald Trump = The current President of the USA is Donald Trump.

The ~~actual~~ capital of Brazil is Brasilia = The current capital of Brazil is Brasilia.

my ~~actual~~ job = my current job

I like my ~~actual~~ boss = I like my current boss.

Which means that:

atualmente = actually = currently

~~I am actually living in Dublin~~ = I am currently living in Dublin.

~~He is actually single~~ = He is currently single.

However:

na realidade = actual

na realidade ele e um cara bom = He is actually a nice guy.

realmente = actually

The capital of Brazil is actually Brasilia and not Rio.

So this can be very confusing for Portuguese speakers.

classificar = ~~to classify~~ = to qualify

~~Brazil classified for the World Cup~~ = Brazil qualified for the World Cup.

~~Real Madrid classified for the Champions League final~~ = Real Madrid qualified for the Champions League final.

internar = ~~to intern~~ = to admit to hospital

~~to intern to hospital~~ = to admit to hospital

Yes, *to admit* is the same verb as *admitir* but it has a different meaning here.

*~~The man was interned to hospital with chest pains~~
= The man was admitted to hospital with chest pains.*

*~~The doctors decided to intern the woman to hospital~~ =
The doctors decided to admit the woman to hospital.*

In English *to intern* means to put someone in prison for political or military reasons.

For instance internment was a huge issue in Northern Ireland in 1970s,

where people could be put in prison without trial or charge.

However we have another important false cognate here:

estagiário = an intern

I am working as an intern.

We have 6 full-time staff and 2 interns.

estagio = an internship

You do an internship in English.

Putting everything together:

~~*She is interning in an engineering firm*~~ = *She is doing an internship in an engineering firm.*

~~*He must intern as part of his college course*~~ = *He must do an internship as part of his college course.*

treinar = to train = to practice

In general:

~~*I need to train my English*~~ = *I need to practice my English.*

~~*I want to train my listening*~~ = *I want to practice my listening.*

~~*Let's train our conversation*~~ = *Let's practice our conversation.*

We do use *to train* in English, mainly in these ways:

Athletes train. They practice their sport every day.

Football players train every day.

Olympic athletes train for a marathon.

In Business English, when you start a new job or a new role [*papel*] at work,

you need *to be trained*. Perhaps *a manager will train you*. You might see an image like this:



Some more examples:

We are closed on Monday due to staff training.

Training is provided.

It can be expensive to train new staff.

Finally we have *people who train animals*, especially dogs.

He is a dog trainer.

I trained my dog to sit.

The tiger attacked his trainer.

dimensionar = to dimension = to measure

To dimension doesn't exist in English so we need to use *to measure*.

In engineering, people use the word *dimensions* a lot as it is a more formal or technical term. People will also say *measurements*, a bit more informal.

~~*I dimensioned the wood = I measured the wood.*~~

~~*We need to dimension the room = We need to measure the room.*~~

reforma = to reform = to refurbish/to renovate

~~*They are reforming their house = They are renovating/refurbishing their house.*~~

~~*It is an old building we need to reform it = It is an old building we need to refurbish/renovate it.*~~

~~*The restaurant reopened after it was reformed = The restaurant reopened after it was refurbished/renovated.*~~

However with laws we do use the verb *to reform*, like in Portuguese.

~~*The politicians are refurbishing/renovating the labour laws*~~
= The politicians are reforming the labour laws.

~~*The President wants to refurbish/renovate our tax laws*~~ *= The President wants to reform our tax laws.*

canal = canal and channel

There are two words for this in English, so it can be confusing.

There is the *Panama Canal* and the *Suez Canal*. Venice in Italy is famous for its *canals*, as is Amsterdam in the Netherlands/Holland, and in the industrial revolution many *canals* were built in the UK and Ireland.

The *Grand Canal* and *Royal Canal* are both in Dublin.

However there is also the word *channel*.

~~*The English Canal = The English Channel*~~

The English Channel is between France and England. So there is the famous ~~canal~~*tunnel* = *channel tunnel*.

A *canal* is artificial or man-made and a *channel* is natural.

And on television we have ~~canals~~*channels*.

Channel 4 is a famous TV station in the UK.



CHANNEL FOUR TELEVISION

Or you probably know this:



Discovery Canal = Discovery Channel

PRONUNCIATION

When I taught English in Brazil at least 90% of my students had excellent pronunciation with no real problems whatsoever. However it was an area that a lot of students were worried about.

If you want to work on pronunciation then the most important areas to work on are in my book. When they are pronounced incorrectly they do sound very strange, or quite funny, to a native speaker.

Here are a few more examples from my student notes, and [check out my website for audio files to help you.](#)

danger/dangerous

Remember that *perigro* = *danger*

and

perigroso = *dangerous*

That dark street is danger = *That dark street is dangerous.*

Be careful with pronunciation here.

the letter 'r'

The biggest difference in pronunciation between English and Portuguese is the letter 'r'.

If you pronounce *rotten* in the Portuguese way it sounds like *hotten* to an English speaker, so it requires practice to get right.

Hotten doesn't exist in English but it sounds like a word similar to *hot* or *quente* in Portuguese so it can be confusing.

sign/signal

This is a strange one. Portuguese speakers have no problem with *sign*.

Maybe you know the 90s pop song [The Sign by Ace of Bass](#).

You must check road signs.

There is a no smoking sign in the restaurant.



Naturally you think you add on *-al* to the end but the pronunciation changes. The 'g' is not silent here. A strange one for sure!

telephone signal sounds like *seeg-nal*

silent letter -bt

When these 2 letters are together the 'b' is silent as in the following examples

debts sounds like *dets*

doubt sounds like *dout*

Related to this is:

encanamento = *plumbing* which sounds like plum-ing [the 'b' is silent].

muscle

muscle = ~~*muskel*~~ = *mussel*

mussel is also the word for *mexilhão* in English.

And one final quick one, be careful here that we don't say:

~~*civil engineer course*~~ = *civil engineering course*

[Check out our mp3 files of pronunciation here.](#)

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UNCOUNTABLE NOUNS

Certainly not the most important area of English but something students should try and work on. There aren't any rules or even any good reasons for these countable/uncountable nouns! The most important ones are in my book but here are some more fairly common ones in everyday speaking to memorise.

fofoca = gossip

But it is uncountable, ~~*gossips*~~ does not exist.

~~*I read 2 gossips = I read 2 articles.*~~

~~*I heard a couple of gossips = I heard some gossip.*~~

~~*I heard a couple of gossips = I heard a couple of rumours.*~~

Rumour is a synonym for *gossip*.

clothes has a very similar pronunciation to the verb *to close*, *fechar* in Portuguese.

~~*1 clothes = 1 piece of clothes*~~

~~*3 clotheses, 3 clothes = 3 pieces of clothes*~~, or you might hear *3 items of clothing* which confuses things even more.

Similar to this is *furniture*.

~~*3 furnitures = 3 pieces of furniture.*~~

~~*I need to move 2 furnitures = I need to move 2 pieces of furniture.*~~

GENERAL COMMON ERRORS

This is an extensive section based on topics that come up repeatedly in class with my students. This makes me believe that they are missing from most conventional books and regular classes but are important as they are used in everyday speaking.

Extended Family

When talking about family or extended family the 3 important words in English are:

in-law, great, and step

The best way to show how these words work is with examples.

in-law

sogro = in-law, which is a relative or relation by marriage.

We use this key suffix to construct a group of common words, you can see how this works in the examples below:

sogra = mother-in-law

sogro = father-in-law

cunhado = brother-in-law

cunhada = sister-in-law

genro = son-in-law

nora = daughter-in-law

great

great is used to show further generations in English.

bisavô = great-grandfather

We can add another *great* to show a further generation, for example *great-great-grandfather* means the father of my great-grandfather or the father of my great-grandmother.

And again we can add another *great*, so *great-great-great-grandfather* means the father of my great-great-grandfather, for example.

We can continue to add *great* as a suffix to signify a generation.

However be careful with this.

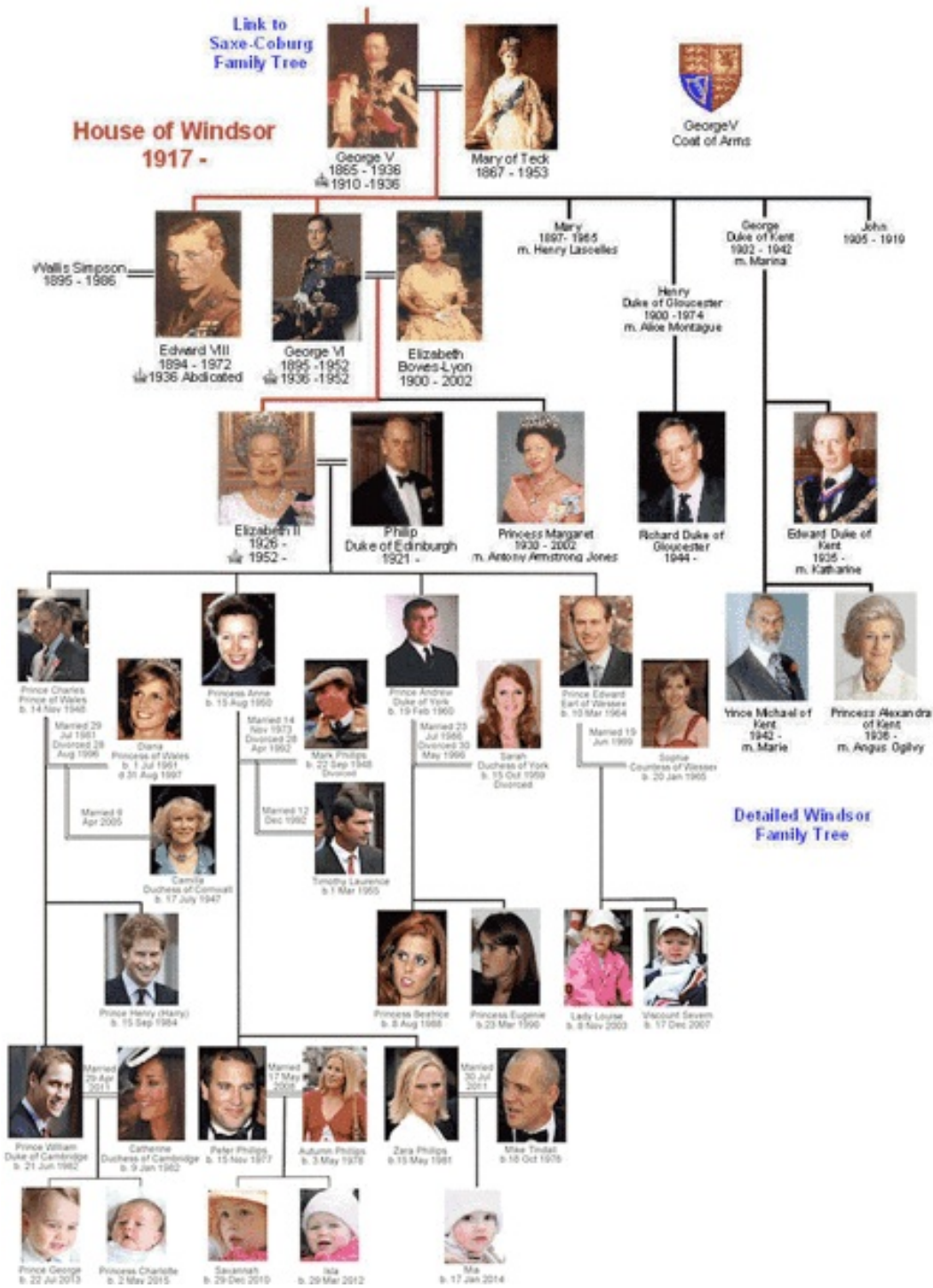
great aunt means the aunt of my mother or father, which is the same as the sister of your grandmother or grandfather, it doesn't mean the aunt of my grandmother or grandfather!

To make things more confusing *grandaunt* is the same as *great aunt*.

great-grandaunt is the aunt of my grandmother or grandfather

And we can add *great* as before although naturally we don't talk about these distant ancestors in everyday speaking. I know I never have!

To illustrate this let's look at the British Royal Family.



In the bottom left corner we have Prince George and Princess Charlotte. This means Prince Charles is their grandfather and the current Queen [not actual Queen!], Queen Elizabeth is their great-grandmother, with Prince Philip their great-grandfather.

So George the Sixth, that is George VI, is their great-great-grandfather.

There was an Oscar winning film released in 2010 about George the Sixth called [*The King's Speech*](#). He had a speech impediment, a stammer, *gaguejar* in Portuguese. Colin Firth won the Academy Award for Best Actor and Geoffrey Rush starred as his unconventional speech therapist.

Step

Step is used to signify relatives or relations from a previous marriage, again it is best to look at examples:

meio-filho = stepson

enteada = stepdaughter

padrasto = stepfather

madrasta = stepmother

meio-irmão = stepbrother

meia-irmã = stepsister

Note that *meio-irmão* = *half brother* when directly translated, which also exists in English. Having a *half brother* or *half sister* means you have one parent in common, for example you have the same father or same mother.

However, look at this example:

If John has a son, Paul, and then John marries Jane who has a daughter Sofia, then Paul and Sofia are step brother and step sister, but they are not half brother and half sister as they both have different biological parents.

You can also say *step aunt*, *step uncle* in English.

So using *in-law*, *great*, and *step* as a basis you can talk about all extended

family members in English.

More on Time

Descriptions of time are especially important in Business English and the following important terms again seem to be ignored in conventional books and classes.

Eve

Eve is an old English word for the day or the night before.

December 31st is *New Year's Eve* in English, often shortened to NYE. It means the day or night before New Year's Day.

January 1st is New Year's Day

December 24th is Christmas Eve, so the day or night before Christmas Day.

24th is twenty-fourth in English, not twenty four as in Portuguese, this is a common error and is covered extensively in [*Eliminate the 63 Most Common Mistakes Portuguese Speakers Make in English*](#).

October 31st is known officially as All Hallow's Eve and then became known as *Halloween*.

Although *Eve* is an old word people might say *on the eve of my wedding*, which is the day or night before my wedding.

[Here is an example from the Guardian newspaper, of a famous story of what happened Brazilian footballer Ronaldo during the 1998 World Cup "On the eve of the final....."](#)

Before/after

We should know that *ontem* = *yesterday*

So what is *anteontem*?

anteontem = the day before yesterday

We can use this structure, *thebefore....*

This free eBook was published in 2018. So 2017 is *last year*. What do we call 2016?

It is *the year before last*.

Note we don't say *the year before last year*.

We can extend this to other time expressions.

Right now as I write this eBook it is February, so January is last month, what is December?

It is *the month before last*.

You can also say *the week before last, the game before last* etc

In the same way that *amanhã* is *tomorrow* what is *dia depois de amanhã*?

It is the direct translation of Portuguese *the day after tomorrow*.

[Which is also the name of 2004 movie in English and Portuguese.](#)

So we can also say *the week after next, the month after next* as well as *the class after next, the game after next* etc

Short/long

~~*a few time ago*~~ is a common mistake instead say *a short time ago*. To sound more like a native you can say *a while ago*.

We use *few* with countable nouns like *hours* or *days* for example, we cannot use it with uncountable noun such as *time*.

You can say *a few hours ago, a few minutes ago, a few days ago* etc

And as already discussed:

quanto tempo = ~~how much time~~ = how long?

If you translate directly from Portuguese here you will be understood just fine. But a tip is to think of the [U2 song Sunday Bloody Sunday](#).

At 44 seconds Bono sings the lyrics:

How long? How long must we sing this song?

Love/Relationships/Weddings

There are 2 words for *casamento* in English.

casamento = marriage and wedding

Wedding which is the day or the event.

Then a *marriage* is for the rest of your life.

In general *the wedding day* also has 2 parts. There is the *ceremony*, which can be in a church or registry office. Then the party or celebration afterwards which is the *reception*.

Some useful verbs and common errors:

to get married

Paul got married yesterday.

Paul got married with Mary yesterday.

to marry [someone]

Paul married Mary yesterday.

Paul married with Mary yesterday.

A common error is using similar structures to Portuguese.

I am going to get married with Mauricio.

I am going to get married.

I am going to marry Mauricio.

He is married with Mary = He is married to Mary.

Some vocabulary:

noiva = bride, the woman

noivo = groom, the man

The customs and traditions of weddings are different around the world. In some cases there aren't direct translations of words from Portuguese to English as they don't exist.

In Ireland for example there are usually 2-5 *groomsmen*, the closest thing to this in Portuguese are *padrinhos*.

They are close friends the groom chooses to accompany him and help out at the wedding.

dama de honra = bridesmaid

Likewise the bride will usually select 2-5 bridesmaids. Again there is a well-known and popular comedy called [*Bridesmaids*](#).

In many countries the groom will select a *best man*, a man who is usually the *Mestre de Cerimônias*, Master of Ceremonies, of the wedding, he will give a speech at the reception which is often one of the highlights.

Some more useful vocabulary:

ficar noivo = to get engaged

John and Juliana got engaged.

John got engaged to Juliana.

John got engaged with Juliana.

apaixonar-se = to fall in love

There are lots of examples of this in music, books and movies.

The prince fell in love with the girl.

~~fell in love for her~~ = fell in love with her

A native will say *to go out with a girl/guy*, which means boyfriend/girlfriend, for example:

Peter is going out with Camilla means Peter and Camilla are boyfriend and girlfriend.

to see someone is very similar but possibly less serious or less committed than a boyfriend/girlfriend.

Peter is seeing Camilla.

to date, originally from the USA but common in all English, same as *to see someone*.

Peter is dating Camilla.

infidelidade = infidelity

As always *infidelity* sounds very formal and there are lots of phrasal verbs and expressions in everyday use.

Perhaps during a divorce in court you will use *infidelity* as it is a formal legal term.

To be unfaithful

John was unfaithful to Mary during their marriage.

Charlene was unfaithful to Jack before they got married

However nowadays *to cheat on someone* is probably the most used phrasal verb, certainly amongst younger people. It is used for people who are

married as well as those not married.

Mary cheated on John.

to break up with someone is to no longer be their boyfriend/girlfriend.

I broke up with boyfriend.

He broke up with his girlfriend because she cheated on him.

Mary cheated on John with Julio this means Mary and John are a couple and Julio is the third person.

Brad Pitt probably cheated on Jennifer Aniston with Angelina Jolie.

Verbs

Here is a list of verbs worth studying. Some of them are what I called 'Double Verbs' in [*Eliminate the 63 Most Common Mistakes Portuguese Speakers Make in English*](#). Which means there is just one verb in Portuguese but there are two in English.

There might be 2 'normal' verbs or there might be 1 normal verb and one phrasal verb that is very common in everyday speaking or in Business English.

Let's get started!

acontecer = to happen, to take place

to happen means suddenly, unexpected or unplanned.

The accident happened at 6pm.

The earthquake happened at 8pm local time.

to take place is used when something is planned. We often use it when talking about events, sport, concerts, meetings etc

~~the show that happened~~ = the show that took place

~~The concert happened in Chevrolet Hall~~ = The concert took place in Chevrolet Hall.

~~The game will happen in Rio~~ = The game will take place in Rio.

~~The presentation will happen in the conference room~~ = The presentation will take place in the conference room.

Also note that:

~~The accident took place at 6pm.~~ = The accident happened at 6pm. Accidents are never planned.

to afford

to afford = to have enough of something to do something, usually used when talking about money.

I can't afford a Ferrari means I don't have enough money to buy a Ferrari.

He can afford to stop working means he has enough money and can stop working.

I can't afford to lose this customer, a Business English expression, means I don't have enough money if I lose this customer.

I can afford to take a day's holidays tomorrow means I have enough work done and I don't need to spend time working tomorrow.

I can't afford to take a day's holidays tomorrow means I must work tomorrow as I need the money or I need to get work done or I don't have enough work done now to take a day's holidays tomorrow.

Having or not having **enough** of something is the key idea here.

I can afford this \$400 suit but not the \$4000 suit means I have enough money to buy the \$400 suit but not the \$4000

to tell

A quick grammar point but an important one and a very common mistake.

to tell about = to tell me about

We must tell [SOMEONE]. There should be an object there.

My boss told about the new office = My boss told us about the new office

or we can use a different verb:

My boss talked about the new office.

She told about her new job = She told her friend about her new job, or She talked about her new job.

emprestar = to borrow and to lend

Another important 'Double Verb'. In English we have two verbs for *emprestar* so it is important not to confuse them.

to lend

The bank lends money to the customer.

And

to borrow

The customer borrows money from the bank.

Ireland borrowed money from the International Monetary Fund.

The common mistakes are:

The bank borrows money to the customer.

~~The customer lends money from the bank.~~

Notice the verbs and prepositions, it is always:

to borrow from and *to lend to*

And we never say

~~to borrow to~~ or ~~to lend from~~

~~I had lots of pens so I borrowed one to my friend in class~~ = *I had lots of pens so I lent one to my friend in class.*

~~He lent his friend's car~~ = *He borrowed his friend's car.*

~~Jim borrowed his lawn mower to his neighbour~~ = *Jim lent his lawn mower to his neighbour.*

~~I lent a book from the library~~ = *I borrowed a book from the library.*

Therefore:

~~Can you borrow me a book?~~ = *Can you lend me a book?*

Can I borrow a book from you? is also fine.

levantar = to raise and to raise

There is a subtle difference between these two verbs, let's look at examples:

to raise

The government raises taxes, we use *to raise* when something, a subject, in this case *the government*, performs the action.

Also:

Parents raise children.

to rise

temperatures are rising in Brazil, no one performs the action, it just happens.

Now look at these errors:

~~*The government rises taxes*~~ = *The government raises taxes.*

~~*Prices are raising due to inflation*~~ = *Prices are rising due to inflation.*

~~*I want to rise this shelf*~~ = *I want to raise this shelf.*

~~*Tensions are raising in the office*~~ = *Tensions are rising in the office.*

~~*That couple rose 4 children*~~ = *That couple raised 4 children.*

to fight and to argue

to fight can be verbal or physical, it can mean both so sometimes it is not clear in speaking what we mean, for example:

They were fighting this can be a physical fight with punches or kicks etc or just verbal, shouting at one another.

to argue is only verbal.

The couple argued in the restaurant.

I fought with my sister this could be a physical fight or it could be verbal.

I argued with my boss it is clear it is only verbal.

THANKS

Thank you for downloading and reading this eBook, I hope that you learned plenty from it. [Check my website](#) for more great content and good luck with your English studies.