

## STUDY – Learning from scratch

### TRANSCRIPT

I went to Brazil some years ago and I started learning Portuguese there. The hardest time was probably the first three or four months because I was **learning from scratch**. I didn't know any Portuguese before. When I **went out** with other people, everyone was speaking Portuguese, so I couldn't **join in** the conversation, which I found really difficult because I like meeting people, I like talking to people, so I found that whole period really **frustrating**. And then after a while I started to **pick up** a few phrases, I started to understand a little bit more. Every day I studied with a grammar book and then I **went out** and spoke to people. I was very **motivated** obviously because I was living there.

Everywhere I went I had a little dictionary, so I took that with me...so if I was trying to say something to someone, I used to **flick through** the dictionary to find the word I wanted. This is not a great way to have a conversation, so it made talking to people very slow and difficult. I also started **noting down** useful phrases in a notebook and I kept the notebook in my back pocket. Every time I learned a new word I **wrote it down** in the book and when I **had a spare few minutes** I **took out** the book and tried to learn these new words and phrases, so I found that pretty useful. I found I was able to **build up** my vocabulary quite quickly this way.

I think the hardest thing in the first few months was trying to **keep up with** a conversation, because all the local people seemed to speak so quickly. They speak at their normal speed and they don't **slow down** for you, so that was very difficult.

I think the best thing living in another country when you're learning the language is that you're **surrounded by** the language, so you **pick up** a lot of words and phrases just by listening to people. Listening to the radio, watching TV, so I found that helped me a lot as well. After about three or four months I could **get by** fairly well. I could speak to people in shops, I could talk to taxi drivers. I could have basic conversations. After six months or more I found I could **get my message across** much better. So it's **frustrating** at first but if you **stick with** it, it's really **rewarding** in the end.

## VOCABULARY

**learn from scratch** – start learning from absolute beginner level, from zero

**go out** – socialise with other people

**join in** – take part in, participate

**frustrating** – a situation that makes you annoyed because you can't do what you want

**pick up** – learn casually, informally, through conversation

**motivated** – a feeling that encourages you to do something

**flick through** – look at the pages of a book very quickly

**note down** – write notes in a book

**a spare few minutes** – a bit of extra, free time when you're not busy

**build up** – increase, develop

**keep up with** – maintain the same speed or level as others

**slow down** – reduce speed

**surrounded by** – something is all around you

**get by** – manage, survive, cope

**get my message across** – communicate what you want to say to other people

**stick with something** – continue to do something without giving up, even though it may be hard

**rewarding** – something that makes you feel positive at the end of a difficult task

## GRAMMAR

### Phrasal verbs

**Type 1** (there is no object after the adverb)

Verb + adverb (no object)

e.g. *I tried to learn some of the language to help me **get by***

**Type 2** (if the object is a pronoun it must come before the adverb)

Verb + adverb + object/ verb + object + adverb

e.g. *I need time to **pick up** the language OR I need time to **pick** the language **up***

**Type 3** (the object must come after the preposition)

Verb + preposition + object

Verb + adverb + preposition + object

e.g. *I **jumped at** the chance*

e.g. *It's hard to **keep up with** a conversation*

**Type 4** (there are two objects)

Verb + object + preposition + object

Verb + object + adverb + preposition + object

e.g. *I will **keep** you **to** your promise*

e.g. *I couldn't **get** my message **across to** the locals*