

Perdido en tres idiomas

Cada frase del episodio, con su traducción justo debajo. Cobertura completa: todas las líneas, sin omisiones.

INTRODUCTION (ENGLISH)

Hey, welcome to Poco a Poco Podcast.

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My name is Juan, and... this is the very first episode.

My name is Juan, and... this is the very first episode.

So, no pressure, right?

So, no pressure, right?

Okay, a little pressure.

Okay, a little pressure.

Here's the idea behind this show.

Here's the idea behind this show.

We're going to learn Spanish... the real way.

We're going to learn Spanish... the real way.

Not with flashcards.

Not with flashcards.

Not with a list of verbs to memorize.

Not with a list of verbs to memorize.

We're going to learn it through stories.

We're going to learn it through stories.

My stories, actually.

My stories, actually.

I'll talk mostly in Spanish... slowly, clearly... and at the end, we'll break down the words and the grammar that actually matter.

I'll talk mostly in Spanish... slowly, clearly... and at the end, we'll break down the words and the grammar that actually matter.

No boring tables.

No boring tables.

Just real language, explained properly.

Just real language, explained properly.

So, today's story.

So, today's story.

I want to tell you about something that happened to me three times... in three different countries.

I want to tell you about something that happened to me three times... in three different countries.

I got lost.

I got lost.

Yes, lost. Like, "where am I, what is happening" lost.

Yes, lost. Like, "where am I, what is happening" lost.

Once in Valencia, my hometown.

Once in Valencia, my hometown.

Once in London.

Once in London.

And once in Tokyo.

And once in Tokyo.

Same situation, more or less, every time.

Same situation, more or less, every time.

But three completely different reactions from the people who helped me.

But three completely different reactions from the people who helped me.

And I think that... says a lot about culture.

And I think that... says a lot about culture.

Maybe more than any textbook could.

Maybe more than any textbook could.

Alright. Let's get into it... in Spanish, from here.

Alright. Let's get into it... in Spanish, from here.

Stay with me, even if you don't catch every word.

Stay with me, even if you don't catch every word.

That's exactly the point.

That's exactly the point.

CUERPO PRINCIPAL (ESPAÑOL → ENGLISH)

Bueno... antes de empezar con la historia... me presento un poco.

Well... before starting the story... let me introduce myself a little.

Me llamo Juan.

My name is Juan.

Nací en Valencia.

I was born in Valencia.

Y me crié aquí también... en España.

And I WAS RAISED here too... in Spain.

Pero con los años... viví en varios sitios.

But over the years... I lived in several places.

Estudié la universidad... en Inglaterra.

I studied at university... in England.

Varios años... allí.

Several years... there.

Por eso hablo inglés... con bastante fluidez.

That's why I speak English FAIRLY FLUENTLY.

Bueno... eso espero.

Well... I hope so.

Después de la universidad... trabajé muchos años en una empresa grande.

After university... I worked many years at a big company.

Era director comercial.

I was a SALES DIRECTOR.

Viajaba constantemente.

I traveled constantly.

Madrid... Barcelona... Valencia...

Madrid... Barcelona... Valencia...

Reuniones... presentaciones... hablar en público todo el tiempo.

Meetings... presentations... public speaking all the time.

Dirigía equipos... bastante grandes.

I MANAGED TEAMS... fairly large ones.

Aprendí mucho de esa época... la verdad.

I learned a lot from that time... honestly.

A gestionar personas... a hablar delante de cien personas... sin que te tiemble la voz.

Managing people... speaking in front of a hundred people WITHOUT YOUR VOICE SHAKING.

Bueno... casi sin que te tiemble.

Well... almost without it shaking.

Pero... mi verdadera pasión... nunca fue el mundo de la empresa.

But... my TRUE PASSION was never the corporate world.

Mi pasión... siempre fueron los idiomas.

My passion was always languages.

Hace dos años... dejé ese trabajo.

Two years ago... I left that job.

Y empecé este proyecto.

And I started this project.

Este podcast... vamos.

This podcast... I mean.

Ah... y una cosa más... antes de la historia.

Ah... one more thing... before the story.

Desde joven... estudio japonés.

Since I was young... I've studied Japanese.

Como hobby... al principio.

As a hobby, at first.

Pero en un momento dado... dije, bueno... voy a tomarme un año libre.

But at some point... I said, well... I'm going to TAKE A YEAR OFF.

Y me fui a vivir a Japón.

And I went to live in Japan.

Un año entero... en Tokio.

A whole year... in Tokyo.

Vale... ahora sí... la historia.

Okay... now yes... the story.

Os voy a contar algo... que me pasó tres veces.

I'm going to tell you something... that happened to me three times.

En tres países distintos.

In three different countries.

Me perdí.

I GOT LOST.

Las tres veces... me perdí caminando por la calle.

All three times... I got lost walking down the street.

Y las tres veces... tuve que preguntar a un desconocido... cómo llegar a mi destino.

And all three times... I had to ask A STRANGER how to get to my destination.

Empecemos por Valencia... mi ciudad.

Let's start with Valencia... my city.

Esto fue hace años... cuando todavía vivía aquí.

This was years ago... when I still lived here.

Iba a casa de un amigo... a una zona que no conocía bien.

I was going to a friend's house... to an area I didn't know well.

Y, claro... me perdí.

And, of course... I got lost.

Como siempre... vamos.

As always... I mean.

Así que... paré a un hombre... que estaba en la puerta de un bar.

So... I stopped a man... who was at the door of a bar.

Y le pregunté, muy educado... "perdone, ¿sabe usted dónde está esta calle?"

And I asked him, very politely... "DO YOU KNOW WHERE THIS STREET IS?"

Y el hombre... se lo tomó como un proyecto personal.

And the man... TOOK IT AS A PERSONAL PROJECT.

No exagero.

I'M NOT EXAGGERATING.

Me preguntó de dónde venía.

He asked me where I was coming from.

Me preguntó a quién iba a visitar.

He asked me who I was going to visit.

Me contó que él conocía esa calle... desde hace cuarenta años.

He told me he'd known that street... for forty years.

Y entonces... llamó a otro hombre... que pasaba por allí.

And then... he called over another man... who was passing by.

"¡Eh, Paco! ¿Tú sabes dónde está tal calle?"

"Hey, Paco! Do you know where such-and-such street is?"

Y ahora ya éramos tres... discutiendo sobre el mejor camino.

And now there were three of us... arguing about the best route.

Al final... entre los dos, más bien entre los tres... me explicaron el camino con todo detalle.

In the end... between the two, or rather the three of them... they EXPLAINED THE WAY IN GREAT DETAIL.

Y antes de irme... el primer hombre me dijo... "espera, espera, ¿tienes tiempo para un café?"

And before I left... the first man said to me... "WAIT, WAIT, DO YOU HAVE TIME FOR A COFFEE?"

Tuve que decir que no... que llegaba tarde.

I had to say no... that I was running late.

Pero me fui pensando... qué majo... este hombre.

But I left thinking... WHAT A LOVELY GUY.

Cinco minutos para dar una dirección... se convirtieron en quince.

Five minutes to give directions... turned into fifteen.

Y nadie tenía prisa.

And NOBODY WAS IN A HURRY.

Ahora... Londres.

Now... London.

Esto fue durante mis años de universidad.

This was during my university years.

Iba a una entrevista de trabajo... en una zona de la ciudad que no conocía.

I was going to a job interview... in an area of the city I didn't know.

Y, otra vez... me perdí.

And, once again... I got lost.

Empiezo a pensar... que el problema soy yo... no las ciudades.

I'm starting to think... that I'm the problem... not the cities.

Así que pregunté a una mujer... que esperaba en un semáforo.

So I asked a woman... who was waiting at a traffic light.

"Excuse me, do you know where this street is?"

"Excuse me, do you know where this street is?"

Y la mujer... me miró, muy amable.

And the woman... LOOKED AT ME, VERY KINDLY.

Me dio la dirección exacta.

She gave me the exact address.

Clara... directa... perfecta.

Clear... direct... perfect.

"Turn left, then it's the second street on your right."

"Turn left, then it's the second street on your right."

Y ya.

And that was it.

Ni una pregunta más.

NOT ONE MORE QUESTION.

Ni "¿a dónde vas?"... ni "¿de dónde eres?"

Not "where are you going?"... not "where are you from?"

Información... y listo.

Information... and done.

Y lo curioso es... que no fue fría, la mujer.

And the curious thing is... SHE WASN'T COLD.

Fue amable... sonrió... todo correcto.

She was kind... she smiled... everything proper.

Pero había una distancia educada... ¿no?

But there was A POLITE DISTANCE... right?

Como diciendo... "te ayudo, pero no invado tu espacio."

As if saying... "I'll help you, but I won't invade your space."

Y la verdad... en ese momento, con prisa por la entrevista... lo agradecí muchísimo.

And honestly... in that moment, rushing for the interview... I appreciated it enormously.

Y ahora... Tokio.

And now... Tokyo.

Esto fue durante mi año viviendo allí.

This was during my year living there.

Iba a una clase de japonés... en un barrio nuevo para mí.

I was going to a Japanese class... in a neighborhood new to me.

Y... bueno... ya sabéis.

And... well... you know what happened.

Me perdí... otra vez.

I got lost... again.

Así que pregunté a un hombre mayor... que estaba cerrando su tienda.

So I asked an older man... who was closing his shop.

En mi japonés... todavía un poco torpe... le pregunté cómo llegar.

In my still somewhat CLUMSY Japanese... I asked him how to get there.

Y el hombre... se quedó pensando un momento.

And the man... PAUSED TO THINK FOR A MOMENT.

Y entonces... cerró la tienda.

And then... he closed the shop.

Literalmente... cerró la tienda.

Literally... he closed the shop.

Y me dijo... "venga, te acompaño."

And he told me... "come on, I'll walk you there."

Caminamos juntos... unos diez minutos.

We walked together... about ten minutes.

Casi sin hablar... la verdad.

Almost without talking... honestly.

Alguna pregunta breve... alguna respuesta breve.

The occasional brief question... the occasional brief answer.

Pero caminé conmigo... hasta la puerta misma del edificio.

But he walked with me... all the way to the building's door.

Y entonces hizo una pequeña reverencia... y se fue.

And then he made A SMALL BOW... and left.

Sin esperar nada.

WITHOUT EXPECTING ANYTHING.

Sin charla.

No small talk.

Solo... acción.

Just... action.

Me quedé ahí parado un momento... pensando... "vale... esto ha sido especial."

I stood there for a moment... thinking... "okay... that was special."

Así que... tres países.

So... three countries.

Tres reacciones... completamente distintas.

Three completely different reactions.

En Valencia... la dirección se convierte en una conversación... casi en una pequeña fiesta.

In Valencia... directions turn into a conversation... almost a little party.

En Londres... la dirección es información precisa, educada... y rápida.

In London... directions are precise, polite information... and fast.

En Tokio... la dirección se convierte en una acción... en acompañarte físicamente... sin necesidad de palabras de más.

In Tokyo... directions turn into an action... into walking with you physically... without needing extra words.

¿Y cuál es mejor?

And which one is better?

Ninguna.

None of them.

Ese es el punto... realmente.

That's really the point.

No es mejor ni peor.

It's not better or worse.

Es diferente.

It's different.

Cada reacción tiene su propia lógica... su propia manera de mostrar que te importa el otro.

Each reaction has its own logic... its own way of showing that you matter to them.

El español lo muestra con palabras... con tiempo... con cercanía.

Spanish shows it with words... with time... with closeness.

El inglés... al menos en ese momento, en Londres... lo mostró con eficiencia y respeto por mi prisa.

English... at least in that moment, in London... showed it with efficiency and respect for my hurry.

El japonés lo mostró con un gesto... con una acción que vale más que mil palabras.

Japanese showed it with a gesture... with an action worth more than a thousand words.

Y aprendí algo más... ese día.

And I learned something else... that day.

Que a veces... la ayuda más grande... no necesita ni una sola palabra.

That sometimes... the biggest help... doesn't need a single word.

Bueno... y aquí está mi reflexión final... de verdad.

Well... and here's my final reflection... for real.

Yo podría haber aprendido esto en un libro.

I could have learned this from a book.

"Los españoles son cálidos, los ingleses son reservados, los japoneses son discretos."

"The Spanish are warm, the English are reserved, the Japanese are discreet."

Frases muy bonitas... y muy vacías.

Very pretty sentences... and very empty.

Porque no entiendes nada de verdad... hasta que te pierdes en la calle.

Because you don't truly understand anything... until you get lost in the street.

Hasta que necesitas ayuda de un desconocido.

Until you need help from a stranger.

Y ahí... en ese momento pequeño... aparece la cultura entera de un país.

And there... in that small moment... THE ENTIRE CULTURE OF A COUNTRY appears.

Por eso me apasionan los idiomas.

That's why I'm passionate about languages.

No son solo palabras.

They're not just words.

Son la puerta a entender cómo piensa, cómo siente, cómo ayuda... la gente de otro lugar.

They're the door to understanding how people think, feel, and help... in other places.

Y esa puerta... solo se abre... si hablas el idioma.

And that door... only opens... if you speak the language.

Bueno... y esa es la historia de hoy.

Well... and that's today's story.

Perdido tres veces... en tres países.

Lost three times... in three countries.

Y un poquito más sabio... espero.

And a little wiser... I hope.

CLOSING - VOCABULARY & GRAMMAR (ENGLISH)

Okay, let's break down today's episode.

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Five expressions, plus one small grammar point.

Five expressions, plus one small grammar point.

First word: "majo."

First word: "majo."

I said, about the man in Valencia, "qué majo, este hombre."

I said, about the man in Valencia, "qué majo, este hombre."

A dictionary will tell you "majo" means "nice" or "kind."

A dictionary will tell you "majo" means "nice" or "kind."

And... that's not wrong, but it misses something.

And... that's not wrong, but it misses something.

"Majo" is warmer than "nice."

"Majo" is warmer than "nice."

It's almost affectionate... like you genuinely enjoyed the person, even briefly.

It's almost affectionate... like you genuinely enjoyed the person, even briefly.

In Spanish, "qué majo" after a thirty-second interaction is totally normal.

In Spanish, "qué majo" after a thirty-second interaction is totally normal.

It's a very Spanish-specific kind of warmth toward strangers.

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Second one: "se lo tomó como un proyecto personal."

Second one: "se lo tomó como un proyecto personal."

Literally, "he took it as a personal project."

Literally, "he took it as a personal project."

This isn't a fixed idiom, exactly, but it's a very common way of describing... someone who goes way beyond what you asked for.

This isn't a fixed idiom, exactly, but it's a very common way of describing... someone who goes way beyond what you asked for.

You ask a small favor, and suddenly it's their mission.

You ask a small favor, and suddenly it's their mission.

If you want to describe that feeling in Spanish, this phrase works perfectly.

If you want to describe that feeling in Spanish, this phrase works perfectly.

Third: "¿tienes tiempo para un café?"

Third: "¿tienes tiempo para un café?"

On the surface, this just means "do you have time for a coffee?"

On the surface, this just means "do you have time for a coffee?"

But culturally... this is huge.

But culturally... this is huge.

Offering coffee to a complete stranger, after just giving directions, is a small but real gesture of hospitality.

Offering coffee to a complete stranger, after just giving directions, is a small but real gesture of hospitality.

It's not really about the coffee.

It's not really about the coffee.

It's about extending the interaction, showing goodwill.

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In many English-speaking contexts, that same offer to a stranger might actually feel a little surprising, or even slightly intrusive.

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Fourth: "torpe."

Fourth: "torpe."

I used this about my Japanese... "mi japonés todavía un poco torpe."

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The direct translation is "clumsy."

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But "clumsy" in English usually describes physical movement... tripping, dropping things.

But "clumsy" in English usually describes physical movement... tripping, dropping things.

In Spanish, "torpe" extends naturally to skills... a clumsy way of speaking, a clumsy way of explaining something.

In Spanish, "torpe" extends naturally to skills... a clumsy way of speaking, a clumsy way of explaining something.

"Torpe" simply covers more ground than "clumsy" does.

"Torpe" simply covers more ground than "clumsy" does.

Fifth, and this one's Japanese, but it matters for the story: the bow... the small reverencia the man made before leaving.

Fifth, and this one's Japanese, but it matters for the story: the bow... the small reverencia the man made before leaving.

In Spanish, we'd call it "una reverencia."

In Spanish, we'd call it "una reverencia."

In English, "a bow" is accurate, technically.

In English, "a bow" is accurate, technically.

But "bow" in English carries some... royal, formal weight, like bowing to a king.

But "bow" in English carries some... royal, formal weight, like bowing to a king.

In Japanese daily life, a small bow like that is closer to... a polite nod, a quiet "you're welcome," with your whole body instead of words.

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Neither English nor Spanish really has an equivalent gesture that's that common in everyday interactions.

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Okay, now, a small grammar point.

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Did you notice how many times I used the preterite versus the imperfect?

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"Me perdí" — preterite, a completed action, a specific moment.

"Me perdí" — preterite, a completed action, a specific moment.

But "estaba cerrando su tienda" — imperfect, describing an ongoing action happening in the background.

But "estaba cerrando su tienda" — imperfect, describing an ongoing action happening in the background.

Here's the simple way to think about it.

Here's the simple way to think about it.

Preterite is for the plot... the specific events that happened.

Preterite is for the plot... the specific events that happened.

Imperfect is for the scenery... what was already happening around those events.

Imperfect is for the scenery... what was already happening around those events.

"Me perdí" — plot.

"Me perdí" — plot.

"Estaba cerrando la tienda" — scenery.

"Estaba cerrando la tienda" — scenery.

If you keep that distinction in mind... plot versus scenery... Spanish storytelling becomes much easier to follow, and eventually, to produce yourself.

If you keep that distinction in mind... plot versus scenery... Spanish storytelling becomes much easier to follow, and eventually, to produce yourself.

Okay, that's it for episode one.

Okay, that's it for episode one.

Thank you for being here, for this very first... slightly nervous... episode.

Thank you for being here, for this very first... slightly nervous... episode.

Next time, a new story, a new piece of language.

Next time, a new story, a new piece of language.

Poco a poco, as always.

Poco a poco, as always.

See you next time.

See you next time.