

Aprender sin estudiar — English translation

Recurso de apoyo opcional. Úsalo solo si te atascas — la inmersión en español es donde está el aprendizaje real.

Antes de leer esto en lugar del español...

Este documento es una red de seguridad, no un sustituto. Las palabras en MAYÚSCULAS tienen su propia entrada detallada en el documento de Vocabulario. Las frases en *cursiva subrayada* están explicadas en el documento de Gramática. Consulta esos documentos para entender el matiz real — esta traducción solo da el significado superficial.

PALABRA = vocabulario destacado frase = punto de gramática

INTRODUCTION

Welcome back to Poco a Poco Podcast.

I'm Juan... and today... I want to talk about something that changed the way I learn languages.

Last episode... I told you about Pulp Fiction.

About watching it three times in one day with my friend Yuki... and how something clicked.

Well... that experience opened a door.

Today I'm going to tell you what was on the other side.

Films... TV shows... music... not just as entertainment.

As the most powerful language learning tools I've ever used.

And there's a name for why it works... a theory by a linguist called Stephen Krashen.

Let's get into it.

MAIN STORY

After the Pulp Fiction thing... something changed in my head.

I started watching films and TV shows in a different way.

It was no longer just entertainment.

It was... an opportunity to learn.

But not learning like in class.

Not with a book... not with grammar exercises... not with vocabulary lists.

Learning... without **REALIZING** that I was learning.

And that... is exactly what a linguist called Stephen Krashen says.

Krashen has a very simple idea... but a very important one.

He says the best way to learn a language... is not to study it.

It's... to be in contact with it.

To listen to it... to read it... to live it.

But with one condition.

The content has to be... a little harder than your current level.

Not much harder.

Just a little.

Krashen calls it... "i plus one".

The "i" is what you already know.

The "plus one" is... that small step beyond.

If the content is too easy... you don't progress.

If it's too hard... you get frustrated and give up.

But if it's just a little above your level... your brain does the work by itself.

Without you noticing.

And the most important thing of all... Krashen says this works best when the content truly interests you.

When it **AMUSES** you... when it excites you... when you **CAN'T STOP** listening to it.

He calls it "compelling input".

Input that grabs you.

And that's exactly what happened to me... with a TV show.

It was called Black Books.

I don't know if you know it.

It was a British comedy... from a channel called Channel 4.

It only lasted three series... eighteen episodes in total.

Each episode was about twenty-five minutes long.

And it was... the funniest thing I'd ever seen.

The show is about a man called Bernard Black.

Bernard is the owner of a bookshop in London.

But the funny thing is... Bernard hates people.

He hates his customers.

He doesn't want to sell books.

He doesn't want to talk to anyone.

He just wants to smoke... drink wine... and be left alone.

He's a terrible character... but you love him.

His assistant is called Manny... who is exactly the opposite.

Manny is kind, optimistic, enthusiastic... and Bernard treats him terribly.

And then there's Fran... Bernard's friend... who has a shop next door.

Fran is **A MESS**... but an adorable mess.

The three of them together are... well... absolute chaos.

The humour in Black Books is... very special.

It's absurd... surreal... sometimes it has no logic at all.

One character says something completely normal... and another responds with something that **MAKES NO SENSE**.

And that... is exactly what makes it so funny.

The creator of the show is Dylan Moran... an Irish comedian.

And the humour has that mix... between the intellectual and the completely ridiculous.

Well... I discovered Black Books in my second year in England.

Someone recommended it to me at work... at the cinema.

And I remember watching the first episode... and not understanding everything.

The characters spoke fast... they used expressions I didn't know.

But I understood enough.

I understood the situation... I understood the faces... I understood the tone.

And I laughed.

I laughed a lot.

So much that... I decided to watch the same episode again.

And again.

I was **GETTING HOOKED** on a show I didn't fully understand.

But every time I watched it... I **CAUGHT** something new.

An expression I hadn't understood before.

A word that suddenly... **MADE SENSE**.

And without **REALIZING** it... *I was learning English.*

I was watching TV... laughing... **HAVING A GOOD TIME**.

And at the same time... my brain was working.

It was processing new vocabulary.

It was absorbing grammatical structures.

It was learning... without studying.

That's exactly what Krashen describes.

Compelling input.

Content that grabs you so much... that your brain learns by itself.

With Black Books... something happened that hadn't happened before.

I started **THINKING IN ENGLISH**.

Not all the time... but in some moments.

I'd remember a phrase from Bernard... and laugh to myself.

On the bus... in the **SUPERMARKET QUEUE... ANYWHERE**.

And that phrase... was in English.

I hadn't translated it.

I hadn't studied it.

It was simply... there.

In my head.

Because I'd heard it so many times... that it had become part of my memory.

And with music, something similar happened to me... but different.

At that time... I listened to a lot of Oasis.

Well... it was England in the nineties... everyone listened to Oasis.

It was practically compulsory.

And I remember singing their songs without understanding all the words.

But I sang them with the right accent... with the right rhythm.

My mouth knew how to say the words... before my brain knew what they meant.

And that... is something only music can do.

A book doesn't teach you the rhythm of a language.

A class doesn't teach you what a sentence sounds like when a real person says it.

But a song you listen to twenty times... does.

There's a concept that fits perfectly with Krashen's theory.

It's called "**THE AFFECTIVE FILTER**".

The idea is simple.

When you're nervous... when you're afraid of **MAKING A MISTAKE**... when you feel pressure... your brain shuts down.

It puts up a filter... a barrier... and stops absorbing.

But when you're relaxed... when you're enjoying yourself... when you're laughing with Bernard Black... that filter disappears.

And your brain absorbs like **A SPONGE**.

That's why traditional classes sometimes don't work.

It's not that the content is bad.

It's that the context... produces anxiety.

And anxiety closes the door to learning.

Series, films, music... open that door.

Because there's no exam at the end.

There's no grade.

There's nobody judging whether you understood everything or not.

Just you... and a story you like.

Now... I want to share with you... some practical things I learned about how to use shows and films to learn a language.

Because **IT'S NOT ENOUGH** to just sit in front of the TV.

There are ways that work... and ways that don't.

First... **SUBTITLES**.

A lot of people watch shows in another language... but with subtitles in their own language.

This is a mistake.

If the subtitles are in your language... your brain reads the subtitles... and stops listening.

It's easier to read than to listen.

What really works... is putting the subtitles in the language of the show.

If you're watching a show in Spanish... put the subtitles in Spanish.

That way your brain receives the same message through two channels... ears and eyes.

And the two signals **REINFORCE EACH OTHER**.

I started doing this with Black Books... and the difference was enormous.

I'd see an expression written on screen... at the same time as I heard it.

And my brain stored it twice as well.

Second... choose something you really like.

It doesn't matter if it's a comedy, a drama, a documentary... whatever.

What matters is that it interests you.

If you're bored... your brain disconnects.

Black Books worked for me because it **AMUSED** me so much... I **COULDN'T STOP**.

It was fun first... and educational second.

Never the other way round.

I know people who try to watch 'educational' films in another language... films they don't care about... just because they think it's good for learning.

It doesn't work.

If you don't care about the story... your brain doesn't try to understand it.

Third... don't be afraid to repeat.

Watching the same episode two or three times... is not wasting time.

It's exactly the opposite.

Every time you repeat... you understand more.

Every time you repeat... your brain connects more pieces.

It's like Pulp Fiction with Yuki... the third time was the one that clicked.

With Black Books the same thing happened.

The first time... I laughed without understanding everything.

The second time... I **CAUGHT** the expressions I'd missed.

The third time... I could repeat the phrases myself.

And fourth... music.

Music works in a different way.

With music you don't learn grammar.

You don't learn complex vocabulary.

But you learn something that books don't teach.

You learn rhythm... pronunciation... the melody of the language.

When you sing a song in another language... the words stick in your memory in a special way.

It's as if the music glues them there.

And there's something I'd like to tell you before finishing.

Something I think is important.

There is no single way to learn a language.

Books help.

Classes help.

Teachers help.

But what really changes things... is finding something you like so much... that you forget you're learning.

Krashen was right.

The best learning... is learning that doesn't feel like learning.

And one more thing.

If you're listening to this podcast right now... you're already doing this.

You're receiving comprehensible input... in Spanish.

Spanish that's a little harder than what you already know... but not too much.

Exactly what Krashen recommends.

So... congratulations.

You're learning... without studying.

Little by little.

CLOSING — VOCABULARY & GRAMMAR

Okay... let's look at some vocabulary from today's episode.

First... **ENGANCHARSE**. I used this when I was talking about Black Books.

ENGANCHARSE means to get hooked on something... from "gancho"... a hook.

Second... **PILLAR**. Very versatile and very colloquial.

Here it means to catch or get... to suddenly understand something.

Third... **SUBTÍTULOS**. In Spanish you 'poner los subtítulos' — poner, not turn on.

And finally... **DARSE CUENTA**. To realize, to become aware.

Remember: 'realizar' is a false friend — it means to carry out, not to realize.

Now... the grammar point. *El gerundio*.

The Spanish gerund is only for actions in progress — never for future plans or as a noun.

"Estaba viendo Black Books cuando alguien llamó a la puerta."

The imperfect paints the background... the gerund gives you the ongoing action.

That's all for today. Hasta pronto.