

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Absolute Beginner S3 #9

I'm Sorry, I Can't Speak Spanish!

CONTENTS

- 2 INTRODUCTION
- 2 LESSON CONVERSATION
- 3 POST CONVERSATION BANTER
- 3 VOCAB LIST
- 5 KEY VOCABULARY AND PHRASES
- 6 LESSON FOCUS

9

INTRODUCTION

Alisha: Hi listeners, I'm Alisha.

Fernando: Hola amigos, soy Fernando . Hey everyone, I'm Fernando.

Alisha: Welcome back to Absolute Beginner Season 3, Lesson 9 – I'm Sorry, I Can't Speak Spanish!

Fernando: Here we'll learn how to talk about language ability using the verb hablar, which means "to speak".

Alisha: This conversation takes place at a store in Mexico.

Fernando: And it's between Spanish language student Ashley, and the shop clerk.

Alisha: The speakers don't know each other, and they are in a business setting, so they will be using formal Spanish.

Alisha: Let's listen to the conversation.

LESSON CONVERSATION

Attendant: Buenas tardes.

Ashley: ¡Perdón, yo no hablo español!

Attendant:

¿No habla español?

Ashley: No, solamente un poquito.

Alisha: Let's hear the conversation one time slowly.

Attendant:

Buenas tardes.

Ashley: ¡Perdón, yo no hablo español!

Attendant:

¿No habla español?

Ashley: No, solamente un poquito.

Alisha: Now let's hear it with the English translation.

Attendant: Buenas tardes.

Alisha: Good afternoon!

Ashley: ¡Perdón, yo no hablo español!

Alisha: Sorry, I don't speak Spanish.

Attendant:

¿No habla español?

Alisha: You don't speak

Spanish?

Ashley: No, solamente un poquito.

Alisha: No, only a little.

POST CONVERSATION BANTER

Alisha: So Fernando, in the dialogue, Ashley first says she doesn't speak Spanish, and then she says she speaks a little. I'm kind of confused.

Fernando: Well, I think maybe she got nervous, or was taken by surprise. Like she thought the shop clerk was going to start talking to her.

Alisha: And the first thing out of her mouth is "I don't speak Spanish!"

Fernando: (Laughs) Right. But then she admits she speaks a little bit.

Alisha: Speaking of being able to speak other languages... are we going to run into a lot of confused faces when we go to Mexico and try to speak in English?

Fernando: As close as it is to the United States, still a lot of people in Mexico cannot speak English.

Alisha: So it's good to know your Spanish then?

Fernando: Definitely. I mean, a lot of people are used to hearing it, especially in big cities and tourist areas, but not a lot can truly speak it.

Alisha: And does Spanish itself vary a lot from one part of Mexico to another?

Fernando: Some expressions, slang, and voice intonation do, but essentially no. You can use the same Spanish everywhere in Mexico, and in other Spanish speaking countries.

Alisha: Ok, so in this dialogue, Ashley is saying "I don't speak Spanish!" Is this polite? or will people be offended?

Fernando: No, it is polite. She is also saying Perdón, yo no hablo español, which means "excuse me."

Alisha: All right, now let's move onto the vocab.

VOCAB LIST

Alisha: Let's take a look at the vocabulary for this lesson.

The first word we shall see is:

Fernando: buenas [natural native speed]

Alisha:

good

Fernando: buenas [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: buenas [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: tardes [natural native speed]

Alisha: evening (literal evenings)

Fernando: tardes [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: tardes [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: perdón [natural native speed]

Alisha: sorry

Fernando: perdón [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: perdón [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: no [natural native speed]

Alisha: no

Fernando: no [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: no [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: hablo [natural native speed]

Alisha: I speak

Fernando: hablo [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: hablo [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: español [natural native speed]

Alisha: Spanish

Fernando: español [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: español [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: solamente [natural native speed]

Alisha: only

Fernando: solamente [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: solamente [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: un, una [natural native speed]

Alisha: a /

an

Fernando: un, una [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: un, una [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: poquito(a) [natural native speed]

Alisha: a little bit

Fernando: poquito(a) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: poquito(a) [natural native speed]

KEY VOCABULARY AND PHRASES

Alisha: Let's have a closer look at the usage for some of the words and phrases from this lesson.

Fernando: The first phrase we'll look at is....

Fernando: Buenas tardes, which is "good afternoon". This is a review from before.

Alisha: Yes. If you remember, we first saw this in Lesson 2. I think these greetings are pretty important, so let's review the main 3 ones. Fernando, from what time to what time do people use buenas tardes in Mexico?

Fernando: More or less from noon to 7pm.

Alisha: And before that, what do people say?

Fernando: We say buenos días. "Good morning"

Alisha: And after that?

Fernando: Buenas noches. "Good evening", and also "good night".

Alisha: Our next phrase is...

Fernando: Solamente un poquito.

Alisha: "Only a little bit." Fernando, I think this phrase is really handy!

Fernando: You think so?

Alisha: Yes – this is a good way to let someone know that you are still learning Spanish, and don't know that much yet.

Fernando: Oh, that's a good point.

Alisha: If someone asks you if you speak Spanish, and you just want to convey that you only speak a little, this is perfect.

Fernando: Solamente un poquito.

Alisha: If we break it down, what do we get?

Fernando: It's basically word for word. Solamente means "only", un means "a", and poquito means "little"

bit”.

Alisha: It sounds cute – it’s a slightly modified form of the word meaning “few” or “little”, right?

Fernando: Yes! I don’t want to get into too many details here, but poquito is the diminutive form of poco, which means “a little”. The root word means “little” but when you add ito it becomes poquito meaning “very little”, or “tiny”.

Alisha: So it’s used for emphasis basically?

Fernando: That’s right.

Alisha: Okay, now let’s move onto the grammar point.

LESSON FOCUS

Alisha: In this lesson, you’ll learn how to talk about language ability, using the verb “to speak”.

Fernando: The verb “to speak” is hablar.

Alisha: Let’s see how this is used to talk about language ability. Fernando, how do you say “I speak Spanish”?

Fernando: Yo hablo español.

Alisha: I speak Spanish.

Fernando: Here the grammar structure is subject, verb and predicate. The subject yo

Alisha: meaning “I”

Fernando: the verb hablo

Alisha: meaning “I speak”

Fernando: and the predicate español

Alisha: which means “Spanish”. One more time?

Fernando: Yo hablo español.

Alisha: Naturally, this you can substitute any other language name here. For example... “I speak English.”

Fernando: Yo hablo ingles.

Alisha: I speak French.

Fernando: Yo hablo frances.

Alisha: Okay Fernando, now how do we say that we DON’T speak a certain language?

Fernando: Easy, you just add no in front of the verb. For example, yo NO hablo español.

Alisha: “I don’t speak Spanish.” So the word no is added before the verb to make it a negative

sentence.

Alisha: Repeat with Fernando. "I speak Spanish."

Fernando: Yo hablo español [pause]

Alisha: And, I don't speak Spanish.

Fernando: Yo no hablo español. [pause]

Alisha: Okay, now let's go over how you would ask someone if they can speak a certain language. We'll use English in our examples.

Fernando: If you are asking someone in casual Spanish, you could say...Hablas ingles?

Alisha: "Do you speak", plus, "English". Repeat after Fernando.

Fernando: Hablas ingles? [pause]

Alisha: What if we were using polite Spanish?

Fernando: Then we just change the verb hablas to habla– Habla ingles? Sometimes you will hear the polite word for "you", Usted, added after the verb. Habla usted ingles?

Alisha: Repeat after Fernando.

Fernando: Habla ingles? [pause]

Alisha: Okay, great! Now remember, if you are a beginner to Spanish, you might find the phrase "just a little" quite helpful.

Fernando: Yes, the one we learned earlier. If someone asks you if you speak Spanish, you can say, solamente un poquito.

Alisha: Okay, well I think that's going to do it for this lesson!

Fernando: Thanks for listening, and see you next time.

Alisha: Bye everyone!

Fernando: Hasta luego!