

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Absolute Beginner S3 #18

Which Mexican Dishes do you Like?

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INTRODUCTION

Alisha: Hi everybody, this is Alisha.

Fernando: Hola amigos, soy Fernando.

Alisha: Welcome to Absolute Beginner Season 3, Lesson 18 – Which Mexican Dishes do you Like?

Fernando: In this lesson, you'll learn how to say you can or can't do something. For this, we'll be using the verb poder - "to be able to".

Alisha: This conversation is between Ashley and her friend María, and takes place in their kitchen.

Fernando: The speakers are friends, so they'll be using casual Spanish.

Alisha: Let's listen to the conversation.

LESSON CONVERSATION

Ashley Perdón, María, no puedo comer este mole.

María: ¿Por qué?

Ashley Porque está muy picante.

María: No te preocupes, tengo tamales.

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

Ashley Perdón, María, no puedo comer este mole.

María: ¿Por qué?

Ashley Porque está muy picante.

María: No te preocupes, tengo tamales.

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

Ashley Perdón, María, no puedo comer este mole.

Sorry, Maria, I can't eat this mole.

María: ¿Por qué?

Why?

Ashley Porque está muy picante.

Because it's very spicy.

María: No te preocupes, tengo tamales.

Don't worry. I have tamales.

POST CONVERSATION BANTER

Alisha: Fernando, I have a question - why is Mexican food so spicy?

Fernando: Well, I think it's more of a myth than a reality. It's true that Mexico has over 40 different varieties of chile. But Mexican food isn't always spicy.

Alisha: It's not?

Fernando: Not necessarily - people add the spice separately. So almost anything can be made non-spicy.

Alisha: What happens if you're invited for dinner and you're served a dish you definitely can't eat?

Fernando: That's a tricky one. Mexicans are quite proud of their food, so it won't be easy to sneak away from it. But if you can't eat something, it's better to say so from the beginning --don't wait until it's served.

Alisha: So I should let them know ahead of time what I can and can't eat?

Fernando: Exactly. Or you'll end up with a huge plate of 'chile relleno' - stuffed chilies.

Alisha: That sounds dangerous!

Fernando: Oh, and don't forget to thank your host and praise their food.

Alisha: Good advice! Okay, now it's time to move onto the vocab.

VOCAB LIST

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

The first word we shall see is:

Fernando: poder [natural native speed]

to be able to, can

Fernando: poder [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: poder [natural native speed]

Next:

Alisha: comer [natural native speed]

to eat

Alisha: comer [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Alisha: comer [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: este [natural native speed]

this

Fernando: este [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: este [natural native speed]

Next:

Alisha: mole [natural native speed]
sauce made from dry chile, chocolate and spices
Alisha: mole [slowly - broken down by syllable]
Alisha: mole [natural native speed]
Next:
Fernando: por qué [natural native speed]
why
Fernando: por qué [slowly - broken down by syllable]
Fernando: por qué [natural native speed]
Next:
Alisha: porque [natural native speed]
because
Alisha: porque [slowly - broken down by syllable]
Alisha: porque [natural native speed]
Next:
Fernando: muy [natural native speed]
very
Fernando: muy [slowly - broken down by syllable]
Fernando: muy [natural native speed]
Next:
Alisha: picante [natural native speed]
spicy
Alisha: picante [slowly - broken down by syllable]
Alisha: picante [natural native speed]
Next:
Fernando: preocuparse [natural native speed]
to worry
Fernando: preocuparse [slowly - broken down by syllable]
Fernando: preocuparse [natural native speed]
Next:
Alisha: tener [natural native speed]
to have
Alisha: tener [slowly - broken down by syllable]
Alisha: tener [natural native speed]

KEY VOCABULARY AND PHRASES

Alisha: Let's take a closer look at the usage of some of the words and phrases from this lesson. The first one we'll see is...

Fernando: ...Picante...

Alisha: ...which means "spicy". Ashley used this word to describe why she couldn't eat the 'mole'.

Fernando: Yes, she said 'está muy picante.'

Alisha: "It's very spicy."

Repeat after Fernando -

Fernando: está muy picante [pause]

Alisha: And by the way, what is mole, the food that Ashley says she can't eat?

Fernando: It's a hot and sweet sauce that's made of hundreds of spices, including chocolate, and is originally from Oaxaca.

Alisha: Chocolate? Really? Sounds interesting!

Fernando: It's normally cooked with chicken and you'll find it in almost every Mexican restaurant you go to.

Alisha: Ok, and our next phrase?

Fernando: Preocuparse.

Alisha: To worry.

Fernando: Repeat after me - 'preocuparse' [pause]

Alisha: And how do you use this word?

Fernando: A very common phrase is... 'No te preocupes.' It means "don't worry."

Repeat after me - 'no te preocupes' [pause]

Alisha: This is what Maria said when Ashley told her she couldn't eat the mole.

Fernando: Right. 'No te preocupes.' She didn't want her to worry about not being able to eat it.

Alisha: It's better just to remember this as a set phrase, right?

Fernando: Yes.

Alisha: Okay, and with that, onto the grammar!

LESSON FOCUS

Alisha: The focus of this lesson is using the verb "to be able to" both in affirmative and negative form. Fernando, that verb in Spanish is...?

Fernando: poder

Alisha: "To be able to." And what are the conjugations for "I can", and "I can't"?

Fernando: puedo, no

puedo

Alisha: I can, I can't

Fernando: Repeat after me - 'puedo' [pause] 'no puedo' [pause]

Alisha: Ok, so let's review the verb "to be able to" in first, second and third person.

Ready? We'll include the pronouns this time. Repeat after Fernando. "I can".

Fernando: Yo puedo [pause]

Alisha: You can.

Fernando: Tú puedes [pause]

Alisha: He can.

Fernando: Él puede [pause]

Alisha: She can.

Fernando: Ella puede [pause]

Alisha: You can [pause].

Fernando: Usted puede [pause]

Alisha: Ok, so far so good. Now let's introduce some expressions using this verb in the affirmative - "I can", and then a verb.

Fernando: The pattern is simple - 'Puedo', and then a verb in the infinitive form. Very like much 'querer' in a previous lesson.

Alisha: Let's see some examples now, starting with - "I can eat mole."

Fernando: "I can" is 'puedo', "eat" is 'comer', and then we have mole. So all together it's... 'Puedo comer mole [pause]'

Alisha: Next is, I can sing.

Fernando: Puedo cantar [pause]

Alisha: How about... I can run.

Fernando: Puedo correr [pause]

Alisha: Now we're going to see how we can make these negative, and say "I can't" do something. It's very easy.

Fernando: Yes, just add 'no' in front of 'puedo'. 'No puedo.'

Alisha: Listen carefully and repeat after Fernando each time - "I can't eat mole."

Fernando: No puedo comer mole [pause]

Alisha: I can't sing.

Fernando: No puedo cantar [pause]

Alisha: I can't run.

Fernando: No puedo correr [pause]

Alisha: The example we had in the dialogue was in the negative- "I can't eat this 'mole'."

Fernando: 'no puedo comer este

mole.'

Alisha: For more sample sentences using this verb, be sure to check out the lesson notes. You'll find a lot more information in there.

Fernando: And try making sentences with it in the comments section too!

Alisha: Okay, I think that's going to do it for now. Take care everyone, and we'll see you next time!

Fernando: Hasta pronto!