

VOCABULARY · EPISODE 48

English for Farsi Speaking People

Key words & expressions · English + Español

10 words

Your English Toolbox

1

a false friend**un falso amigo · una palabra trampa**

DEF

a word in a foreign language that looks or sounds similar to a word in your native language but has a completely different meaning

False friends are one of the biggest hidden traps in language learning — they feel safe because they look familiar, but they can cause embarrassing misunderstandings. Farsi speakers have specific false friends with English that this episode explores.

ES

Una palabra en un idioma extranjero que parece similar a una palabra en tu lengua materna pero que tiene un significado completamente diferente.

Los falsos amigos son una de las mayores trampas ocultas en el aprendizaje de idiomas — se sienten seguros porque parecen familiares.

In English, 'sensible' means 'reasonable' — not 'sensitive'. This is a classic false friend for many learners.

In English, 'sensible' means 'reasonable' — not 'sensitive'. This is a classic false friend. -> En inglés, 'sensible' significa 'razonable' — no 'sensible'. Este es un falso amigo clásico.

Once you know a false friend, you will never forget it — they are unforgettable precisely because they tricked you once.

Once you know a false friend, you will never forget it. -> Una vez que conoces un falso amigo, nunca lo olvidas.

2

to get mixed up**confundirse · hacerse un lío**

DEF

to confuse two things, people, or ideas and mistake one for the other; to become confused or disoriented

Get mixed up is natural and informal — it happens to every learner and to native speakers too. The key is to notice when you are getting mixed up and treat it as information, not failure.

ES

Confundir dos cosas, personas o ideas y tomarlas por la otra; volverse confundido o desorientado.

Es natural e informal — le ocurre a todos los estudiantes y también a los hablantes nativos.

It's easy to get mixed up between 'lend' and 'borrow' — they are mirror images of each other.

It's easy to get mixed up between 'lend' and 'borrow'. -> Es fácil confundirse entre 'lend' y 'borrow'.

She got mixed up between 'affect' and 'effect' for years, but now she has a trick that always works.

She got mixed up between 'affect' and 'effect' for years, but now she has a trick that always works. -> Durante años se hacía un lío entre 'affect' y 'effect', pero ahora tiene un truco que siempre funciona.

3

to trip you up

hacerte tropezar · hacerte caer en un error inesperado

DEF

to cause you to make an error or become confused, often unexpectedly

Trip you up is the phrasal verb for a hidden difficulty that causes an error. A word that looks familiar but means something different in English will trip you up if you do not check it. False friends are famous for this.

ES

Causarte cometer un error o confundirte, a menudo de forma inesperada.

El phrasal verb para una dificultad oculta que causa un error. Los falsos amigos son famosos por esto.

False friends will trip you up if you assume familiar-looking words have the same meaning in English.

False friends will trip you up if you assume familiar-looking words have the same meaning in English. -> Los falsos amigos te harán tropezar si asumes que las palabras de aspecto familiar tienen el mismo significado en inglés.

That word tripped her up in the exam because it looked exactly like a word in her first language.

That word tripped her up in the exam because it looked exactly like a word in her first language. -> Esa palabra la hizo caer en un error inesperado en el examen porque parecía exactamente una palabra de su primera lengua.

4

deceptive

engañoso · que parece una cosa pero en realidad es otra

DEF

appearing to be one thing while actually being something different — misleading in a subtle way

Deceptive is the adjective for false friends. The word looks honest but misleads. In language learning, deceptive vocabulary is the most dangerous because your confidence works against you — the more familiar a word looks, the more likely you are to assume you know it.

ES

Que parece ser una cosa mientras que en realidad es algo diferente — engañoso de forma sutil.

El adjetivo para los falsos amigos. La palabra parece honesta pero lleva a error.

The most deceptive words in English are those that look exactly like words in your language but mean something completely different.

The most deceptive words in English are those that look exactly like words in your language but mean something completely different. -> Las palabras más engañosas en inglés son las que parecen exactamente palabras en tu idioma pero significan algo completamente diferente.

She found English vocabulary deceptive at first — so many words looked familiar but behaved differently.

She found English vocabulary deceptive at first — so many words looked familiar but behaved differently. -> Al principio encontró el vocabulario inglés engañoso: parecía una cosa pero en realidad era otra con tantas palabras de aspecto familiar pero que se comportaban de forma diferente.

5

to look up a word

buscar una palabra · consultar el significado de una palabra

DEF

to search for the meaning, pronunciation, or usage of a word in a dictionary or reference

Look up a word is the action that separates passive confusion from active learning. The moment you look up a word, its context is fresh and memorable. The habit of immediately looking up unfamiliar words — especially deceptive ones — is one of the highest-return vocabulary habits.

ES

Buscar el significado, pronunciación o uso de una palabra en un diccionario o referencia.

La acción que separa la confusión pasiva del aprendizaje activo. El momento en que buscas una palabra, su contexto está fresco y es memorable.

Whenever a word looks familiar but feels slightly wrong, look it up — do not trust the assumption.

Whenever a word looks familiar but feels slightly wrong, look it up — do not trust the assumption. -> Cuando una palabra parece familiar pero se siente ligeramente incorrecta, búscala — no confíes en la suposición.

She looked up every word she was not one hundred percent sure about and gradually her errors reduced.

She looked up every word she was not one hundred percent sure about and gradually her errors reduced. -> Consultó el significado de cada palabra de la que no estaba segura al cien por cien y gradualmente sus errores se redujeron.

6

to double-check

verificar dos veces · comprobar algo una segunda vez para asegurarse

DEF

to verify something a second time to make sure it is correct — especially when in doubt

Double-check is the habit of verification. In language use, you double-check: a word you are not sure about, the meaning of a phrase that seems off, the spelling of a word before sending. Developing the double-check habit prevents confident errors — which are worse than uncertain ones.

ES

Verificar algo una segunda vez para asegurarse de que es correcto — especialmente cuando hay duda.

El hábito de la verificación. Los errores confiados son peores que los inseguros.

When you are not sure whether a word means what you think, double-check before using it.

When you are not sure whether a word means what you think, double-check before using it. -> Cuando no estés seguro de si una palabra significa lo que crees, verifícala dos veces antes de usarla.

She always double-checked words that looked like her native language before including them in writing.

She always double-checked words that looked like her native language before including them in writing. -> Siempre comprobaba una segunda vez las palabras que parecían su lengua materna antes de incluirlas en su escritura.

7

word choice

la elección de palabras · seleccionar la palabra adecuada para el contexto

DEF

the selection of specific words to express a meaning — especially the decision between words that seem similar but have different connotations

Word choice is the difference between accurate English and natural English. Two words can have the same dictionary meaning but different feelings. 'Slim' and 'thin' both describe a body shape, but one is a compliment and the other may not be. Word choice is where real fluency lives.

ES

La selección de palabras específicas para expresar un significado — especialmente la decisión entre palabras que parecen similares pero tienen connotaciones diferentes.

La diferencia entre inglés preciso y inglés natural. Dos palabras pueden tener el mismo significado en el diccionario pero diferentes sensaciones.

Good word choice is what separates competent English from natural English — the right word in the right moment.

Good word choice is what separates competent English from natural English — the right word in the right moment. -> Una buena elección de palabras es lo que separa el inglés competente del natural — la palabra adecuada en el momento adecuado.

She realised her word choice was making her sound rude when she actually meant to be direct.

She realised her word choice was making her sound rude when she actually meant to be direct. -> Se dio cuenta de que su selección de la palabra adecuada para el contexto la hacía sonar grosera cuando en realidad pretendía ser directa.

8

an assumption

una suposición · asumir algo como cierto sin verificarlo

DEF

something you accept as true without checking or verifying, based on what seems familiar or logical

Assumption is the cognitive trap that false friends exploit. You see a word, assume you know it, and use it incorrectly. Catching your own assumptions in language learning is a metacognitive skill — and it is one of the most valuable things you can develop.

ES

Algo que aceptas como cierto sin comprobar ni verificar, basado en lo que parece familiar o lógico.

La trampa cognitiva que explotan los falsos amigos. Ves una palabra, asumes que la conoces, y la usas incorrectamente.

The most dangerous thing in language learning is a confident assumption — it is the error you do not know you are making.

The most dangerous thing in language learning is a confident assumption — it is the error you do not know you are making. -> Lo más peligroso en el aprendizaje de idiomas es una suposición confiada — es el error que no sabes que estás cometiendo.

She had been making an incorrect assumption about the word for twenty years until she looked it up.

She had been making an incorrect assumption about the word for twenty years until she looked it up. -> Había estado asumiéndolo algo como cierto sin verificarlo sobre la palabra durante veinte años hasta que lo buscó.

9

to be aware of something

ser consciente de algo · tener conocimiento activo de un hecho o situación

DEF

to have knowledge or understanding of a fact or situation — especially one that could affect your learning or performance

Be aware of is slightly more formal than 'know about' — it implies active consciousness, not passive knowledge. In language learning, being aware of your own patterns — errors, habits, strengths — is the prerequisite for changing them.

ES

Tener conocimiento o comprensión de un hecho o situación — especialmente uno que podría afectar tu aprendizaje o rendimiento.

Ligeramente más formal que 'saber sobre' — implica consciencia activa. Ser consciente de tus propios patrones de errores es el requisito previo para cambiarlos.

Be aware of the false friends in your language pair — knowing they exist is half the battle.

Be aware of the false friends in your language pair — knowing they exist is half the battle. -> Sé consciente de los falsos amigos en tu par de idiomas — saber que existen es la mitad de la batalla.

She became more aware of her own error patterns after recording herself and listening back.

She became more aware of her own error patterns after recording herself and listening back. -> Se volvió más consciente de sus propios patrones de errores después de grabarse y escucharse.

10

to transfer

transferir · aplicar patrones de un idioma en otro

DEF

to apply a skill, knowledge, or pattern from one context to another — especially from your first language into English

Transfer is the cognitive process that both helps and hinders language learning. Positive transfer occurs when your first language and English work the same way. Negative transfer (interference) happens when you apply a pattern from your first language that does not work in English.

ES

Aplicar una habilidad, conocimiento o patrón de un contexto a otro — especialmente de tu primera lengua al inglés.

El proceso cognitivo que tanto ayuda como obstaculiza el aprendizaje de idiomas. La transferencia negativa ocurre cuando aplicas un patrón de tu primera lengua que no funciona en inglés.

Transfer from your first language can help or hurt — the key is knowing when to trust it and when to check.

Transfer from your first language can help or hurt — the key is knowing when to trust it and when to check. -> Transferir de tu primera lengua puede ayudar o perjudicar — la clave es saber cuándo confiar y cuándo comprobar.

She realised she was transferring word order from her first language into English, which explained a recurring error.

She realised she was transferring word order from her first language into English, which explained a recurring error. -> Se dio cuenta de que estaba aplicando patrones del orden de palabras de su primera lengua al inglés, lo que explicaba un error recurrente.