

## VOCABULARY · EPISODE 63

## Master 100 Essential Sentences Like a Native

Key words &amp; expressions · English + Español

10 words

Your English Toolbox

1

## to sound native

sonar como un nativo · hablar con naturalidad de hablante nativo

## DEF

to speak in a way that is indistinguishable from someone who grew up with the language — in rhythm, vocabulary choices, intonation, and cultural references

*Sounding native is often misunderstood as having a native accent. It is much broader — it is about the whole feel of the language: the idioms you choose, the contractions you use, the pauses you take. Many non-native speakers sound more native than actual natives in their English.*

## ES

Hablar de una manera indistinguible de alguien que creció con el idioma — en ritmo, elecciones de vocabulario, entonación y referencias culturales.

A menudo se malentiende como tener un acento nativo. Es mucho más amplio.

**You don't need a British accent to sound native — you need natural rhythm, idioms, and confidence.**

You don't need a British accent to sound native — you need natural rhythm, idioms, and confidence. -> No necesitas un acento británico para sonar como un nativo — necesitas ritmo natural, modismos y confianza.

**The sentences in this episode are chosen specifically because they will make you sound native in casual conversation.**

These sentences will make you sound native in casual conversation. -> Estas frases te harán hablar con naturalidad de hablante nativo en conversaciones informales.

2

## to nail a conversation

dar en el clavo en una conversación · salir perfecto de una conversación

## DEF

to handle a conversation perfectly — saying exactly the right things with the right tone, leaving the interaction feeling successful

*Nail a conversation implies precision and satisfaction — not just getting through it, but doing it well. The goal of learning essential sentences is to give you the tools to nail more interactions in English.*

## ES

Manejar una conversación perfectamente — diciendo exactamente las cosas correctas con el tono adecuado, dejando la interacción sintiéndose exitosa.

Implica precisión y satisfacción — no solo superarla, sino hacerlo bien.

**She nailed the conversation with her manager because she had practised the key phrases that morning.**

She nailed the conversation with her manager because she had practised the key phrases that morning. -> Dio en el clavo en su conversación con su jefe porque había practicado las frases clave esa mañana.

**Once you have these sentences ready, you can nail conversations you used to dread.**

Once you have these sentences ready, you can nail conversations you used to dread. -> Una vez que tengas estas frases preparadas, podrás salir perfecto de conversaciones que antes te daban miedo.

3

## authenticity

### la autenticidad · la cualidad de ser genuino y fiel a uno mismo

#### DEF

the quality of being genuine and true to yourself — not performing or pretending to be something you are not

*Authenticity in language learning challenges the 'sound native' goal. Many learners aim to erase their accent and identity to sound native, but research shows that authentic non-native speakers — confident, genuine, expressive in their own voice — are often more effective communicators. You do not need to be a native speaker; you need to be an authentic one.*

#### ES

La cualidad de ser genuino y fiel a uno mismo — no actuar ni fingir ser algo que no eres.

Desafía el objetivo de 'sonar como nativo'. Los hablantes no nativos auténticos son a menudo comunicadores más efectivos.

**Authenticity matters more than perfection — speak in your own voice, not an imitation of one.**

Authenticity matters more than perfection — speak in your own voice, not an imitation of one. -> La autenticidad importa más que la perfección — habla con tu propia voz, no imitando una.

**She stopped trying to imitate a native accent and instead focused on authenticity — clear, genuine, confident.**

She stopped trying to imitate a native accent and instead focused on authenticity — clear, genuine, confident. -> Dejó de intentar imitar un acento nativo y en cambio se centró en la autenticidad — clara, genuina, segura.

4

## fluency

### la fluidez · la capacidad de comunicar ideas con suavidad y eficiencia

#### DEF

the ability to communicate ideas smoothly and efficiently — without long pauses, searching for words, or losing the thread

*Fluency is often confused with perfection. A fluent speaker is not necessarily error-free — they are smooth. They have strategies for when they do not know a word (paraphrase, ask, keep going). Fluency is about flow, not flawlessness. Many accurate but non-fluent speakers freeze mid-sentence; fluent speakers navigate through.*

#### ES

La capacidad de comunicar ideas con suavidad y eficiencia — sin largas pausas, buscar palabras o perder el hilo.

A menudo se confunde con la perfección. Un hablante fluido no es necesariamente perfecto — es suave. Tiene estrategias cuando no sabe una palabra.

**Fluency means keeping the conversation flowing — paraphrase and continue, do not stop and apologise.**

Fluency means keeping the conversation flowing — paraphrase and continue, do not stop and apologise. -> La fluidez significa mantener la conversación fluyendo — parafrasea y continúa, no te detengas y te disculpes.

**Her grammar was still imperfect but her fluency was remarkable — she never lost the thread of a conversation.**

Her grammar was still imperfect but her fluency was remarkable — she never lost the thread of a conversation. -> Su gramática todavía era imperfecta pero su fluidez era notable — nunca perdió el hilo de una conversación.

5

## to pick up on

**captar · notar o percibir algo sutil — un tono, una señal social, un patrón lingüístico**

### DEF

to notice, detect or become aware of something subtle — a tone, a social cue, a linguistic pattern — without being explicitly told

*Pick up on is the receptive awareness verb. Fluent speakers pick up on social cues, tone shifts, implied meanings, and cultural signals. For language learners, this is a late-stage skill: you cannot pick up on nuance you do not yet have the language to recognise. But as proficiency grows, so does the ability to pick up on subtleties.*

### ES

Notar, detectar o tomar conciencia de algo sutil — un tono, una señal social, un patrón lingüístico — sin que te lo hayan dicho explícitamente.

El verbo de la conciencia receptiva. Los hablantes fluidos captan señales sociales, cambios de tono y significados implícitos.

***Experienced English speakers pick up on sarcasm, irony, and tone very quickly — this comes with exposure.***

Experienced English speakers pick up on sarcasm, irony, and tone very quickly — this comes with exposure. -> Los hablantes de inglés con experiencia captan el sarcasmo, la ironía y el tono muy rápidamente — esto viene con la exposición.

***She had been in the UK for two years when she finally started picking up on British understatement.***

She had been in the UK for two years when she finally started picking up on British understatement. -> Llevaba dos años en el Reino Unido cuando finalmente empezó a captar la litote británica.

6

## to blend in

**mezclarse · encajar naturalmente en un entorno sin destacar por ser diferente**

### DEF

to fit naturally into an environment or group — without standing out or drawing attention to being different

*Blend in is the assimilation goal some language learners have. For some, blending in linguistically — not drawing attention through accent or error — is the goal. For others, standing out is fine. It is worth asking: am I trying to blend in, or am I trying to communicate? They are different goals that require different practice.*

### ES

Encajar naturalmente en un entorno o grupo — sin destacar ni llamar la atención por ser diferente.

El objetivo de asimilación que tienen algunos estudiantes de idiomas. Vale la pena preguntarse: ¿intento mezclarme o intento comunicarme?

***You do not need to blend in linguistically — being understood is more important than being indistinguishable.***

You do not need to blend in linguistically — being understood is more important than being indistinguishable. -> No necesitas mezclarte lingüísticamente — ser comprendido es más importante que ser indistinguible.

***After three years abroad, she did not quite blend in, but she communicated so well it no longer mattered.***

After three years abroad, she did not quite blend in, but she communicated so well it no longer mattered. -> Después de tres años en el extranjero, no se mezcló del todo, pero se comunicaba tan bien que ya no importaba.

7

## to catch yourself

**pillarse · darse cuenta de repente de que estás haciendo, pensando o diciendo algo**

### DEF

to suddenly become aware that you are doing, thinking, or saying something — especially something habitual or unintended

*Catch yourself is the metacognitive moment in language use. You catch yourself translating instead of thinking in English. You catch yourself using a word you know is wrong. This moment of awareness — the internal editor — is the starting point of self-correction. The goal is not to eliminate errors but to catch them earlier.*

### ES

Darse cuenta repentinamente de que estás haciendo, pensando o diciendo algo — especialmente algo habitual o no intencionado.

El momento metacognitivo en el uso del idioma. Te pillas traduciendo en lugar de pensar en inglés.

***Catch yourself when you translate word-for-word — try to think in English directly instead.***

Catch yourself when you translate word-for-word — try to think in English directly instead. -> Pillate cuando traduces palabra por palabra — intenta pensar directamente en inglés.

***She started catching herself mid-sentence using the wrong tense and correcting immediately, which accelerated her progress.***

She started catching herself mid-sentence using the wrong tense and correcting immediately, which accelerated her progress. -> Empezó a pillarse a mitad de frase usando el tiempo verbal incorrecto y corrigiéndose de inmediato, lo que aceleró su progreso.

8

## to come naturally

**salir de forma natural · no requerir esfuerzo porque algo se ha aprendido hasta el punto de ser automático**

### DEF

to require no effort or thought because something has been learned so thoroughly that it happens automatically

*Come naturally is the acquisition goal. When something comes naturally in a second language, it has been fully acquired — it no longer requires conscious processing. Grammar rules do not need to be recalled. Vocabulary does not need to be looked up. The language just flows. This is the point where using English stops feeling like work.*

### ES

No requerir esfuerzo ni pensamiento porque algo se ha aprendido tan completamente que ocurre automáticamente.

El objetivo de la adquisición. Cuando algo sale de forma natural en un segundo idioma, ha sido completamente adquirido.

***Fluency comes when grammar and vocabulary start to come naturally — when you stop consciously applying rules.***

Fluency comes when grammar and vocabulary start to come naturally — when you stop consciously applying rules. -> La fluidez llega cuando la gramática y el vocabulario empiezan a salir de forma natural — cuando dejas de aplicar reglas conscientemente.

***After two years of daily English, basic conversations came naturally to her — she no longer thought about grammar.***

After two years of daily English, basic conversations came naturally to her — she no longer thought about grammar. -> Después de dos años de inglés diario, las conversaciones básicas le salían de forma natural — ya no pensaba en la gramática.

## to express yourself

9

### expresarte · comunicar tus pensamientos, sentimientos, opiniones y personalidad plenamente

#### DEF

to communicate your thoughts, feelings, opinions, and personality in language — fully and accurately

*Express yourself is the ultimate goal of language learning. It is not about grammar or vocabulary — it is about having the linguistic tools to say exactly what you mean, with the nuance you intend. Many learners plateau at a functional level but feel frustrated because they cannot fully express themselves — they are reduced to simpler thoughts than they actually have.*

#### ES

Comunicar tus pensamientos, sentimientos, opiniones y personalidad en el idioma — de forma plena y precisa.

El objetivo final del aprendizaje de idiomas. No se trata de gramática o vocabulario — se trata de tener las herramientas lingüísticas para decir exactamente lo que quieres decir.

***The goal is to express yourself in English exactly as you do in your mother tongue — with all your complexity.***

The goal is to express yourself in English exactly as you do in your mother tongue — with all your complexity.

-> El objetivo es expresarte en inglés exactamente como lo haces en tu lengua materna — con toda tu complejidad.

***She started feeling truly comfortable in English when she could finally express herself with the same wit she had in Spanish.***

She started feeling truly comfortable in English when she could finally express herself with the same wit she had in Spanish. -> Empezó a sentirse verdaderamente cómoda en inglés cuando finalmente pudo expresarse con el mismo ingenio que tenía en español.

## 10 colloquial language

### el lenguaje coloquial · el habla informal y cotidiana — el inglés usado en conversaciones informales

#### DEF

informal, everyday speech — the kind of English used in casual conversation rather than in formal or written contexts

*Colloquial language is what learners hear when they socialise with native speakers but rarely see in textbooks. It includes contractions, idioms, informal vocabulary, and natural reductions. Mastering colloquial language is what makes a learner sound natural, as opposed to sounding like a textbook — technically correct but oddly formal.*

#### ES

El habla informal y cotidiana — el tipo de inglés usado en conversaciones informales en lugar de contextos formales o escritos.

Lo que los estudiantes escuchan cuando socializan con hablantes nativos pero raramente ven en los libros de texto.

***Colloquial language is learned through exposure to real conversation, not through grammar books.***

Colloquial language is learned through exposure to real conversation, not through grammar books. -> El lenguaje coloquial se aprende a través de la exposición a la conversación real, no a través de libros de gramática.

***She had excellent formal English from years of study, but struggled to understand colloquial language in social situations.***

She had excellent formal English from years of study, but struggled to understand colloquial language in social situations. -> Tenía un excelente inglés formal de años de estudio, pero le costaba entender el lenguaje coloquial en situaciones sociales.