

# LEARNING A LANGUAGE IS LIKE RIDING A BIKE

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**INFINITY PODCASTS 410**

# LEARNING A LANGUAGE IS LIKE RIDING A BIKE

And that night I went to bed and i  
woke

up at about three o'clock in the  
morning

and i couldn't breathe

which was a very scary experience

hey folks how's it going i am very  
excited to share today's lesson with

ollie

from i will teach you a language

ollie

speaks eight languages fluently  
and in today's lesson you will hear

story about how a

near-death experience helped him  
to learn spanish

so just to start off i think there's

quite an interesting story

that we had seen so i was  
wondering if  
you could tell the audience about  
your  
near-death experience yeah so this  
was when i almost  
died it was about 15 years ago and  
i tell this story to to  
to explain how i learnt really good  
spanish because before this  
happened I was learning spanish  
but i i found it very difficult and  
this  
experience happened and it really  
changed how i learned spanish so i  
was traveling in argentina  
and this was i think in 2003  
and i was traveling up to the north  
of the country up on the border  
with bolivia  
and um it was this beautiful little  
village up in the mountains called  
irusha and it was

very very high up and i was  
with some friends and we had a  
we'd enjoyed like a really nice  
steak and a bottle of red wine and  
at that night i went to bed  
and i woke up at about three  
o'clock in  
the morning and i couldn't breathe  
which was a very scary experience  
I don't know if you've ever had this  
happen  
very high up in the mountains but  
it's not it's not nice  
so i kind of jumped out of bed and  
um didn't know what to do so i  
kind of ran outside onto the  
balcony  
and i remember standing on this  
big  
balcony looking out over this huge  
valley with a full moon shining  
light down  
across the whole valley it was a

very  
surreal experience and i couldn't  
breathe the breath wasn't coming  
back and i think about  
two or three minutes pass and i still  
couldn't breathe i was  
you know trying to breathe as  
heavily as i could and i i thought  
then you know this is it i'm gonna  
die on top of this  
mountain um luckily the breath  
came back  
and and i was okay in the end but i  
was  
very scared from what happened so  
i sat down  
outside and i was too scared to go  
back to bed  
and so all i had with me to pass the  
time  
because we didn't have iphones  
back then  
all i had with me was a spanish

book that i'd bought from a local  
bookshop  
and it was it was far too difficult  
for me i remember it was chronic  
by garcia marquez it was too  
difficult  
for me but i didn't have anything  
else to do  
so i started reading this book in  
spanish like plodding through the  
pages one by one didn't really  
understand most of it but some bits  
I could understand but i was too  
scared to go back to bed so i kept  
on reading  
and i must have been reading this  
book for about three hours or so  
before i eventually fell asleep all  
right  
so now we're going to learn all the  
most difficult vocabulary  
and pronunciation from this clip  
but i

want to let you know  
that the clips that you're watching  
today are just an excerpt from my  
full  
interview with ollie on the beyond  
borders talk show  
you can listen to it for free right  
now  
just click the link in the description  
and now grab a pen and paper  
and let's get ready to learn  
so just to start off i think there's  
quite an interesting story  
that we had seen so i was  
wondering if  
you could tell the audience about  
your near-death experience you  
probably are  
familiar with each of these words  
when  
you look at them separately  
however sometimes in order to  
improve your vocabulary

you don't need to learn new words  
but rather learn new ways to  
combine words you already know  
in new collocations  
in the most basic meaning near  
means a short distance away  
as in he lives near london in a more  
advanced use of this word  
you can use it to mean almost  
doing something or  
almost in a particular state you can  
say  
the work is near completion  
or in its adverb form it is nearly  
done  
another example is he was near  
tears as ali said next a near-death  
experience  
is one in which you almost die  
but you don't we usually associate  
these with a big realization  
or epiphany and i was traveling up  
to



the north of the country up on the  
border with bolivia  
and um it was this beautiful little  
village up in the mountains called  
irusha

notice how ollie uses the adverb up  
to describe some  
actions that happen in the north of  
the area he's talking about  
in this case in the country of  
Argentina here's a similar example  
we're driving up to san francisco  
for

the conference we use down  
in the same way they live down  
south in a small village  
ali says he was staying in a small  
town

up on the border with bolivia  
do you know what that means  
village limit capital  
and it was very very high up and i  
was uh with some friends and we

had a we'd enjoyed like a really  
nice  
steak and a bottle of red wine and  
there's a good deal of connected  
speech in this sentence  
as you can notice he doesn't fully  
enunciate each sound in these  
words  
simply because it isn't necessary so  
he reduced anda to anna  
then bottle of becomes bought to  
love  
like a really nice steak and a bottle  
of red wine and  
a really nice steak and a bottle of  
red wine and  
and that night i went to bed and i  
woke  
up at about three o'clock in the  
morning and i couldn't breathe  
once again here ollie links and  
reduces  
some of his words in this sentence

we have three function words here  
and so all four words  
link together there's more reduction

in

the second part of this utterance  
he doesn't say this like at about  
three o'clock

in the morning rather he goes and i  
woke up

at about three o'clock in the  
morning and i couldn't and i woke  
up at about three o'clock in the  
morning and i couldn't

do you ever feel frustrated when  
you can't understand natives  
we don't always speak like you  
expect us to right

like you learned in school that is  
exactly why

we created our fluent with friends  
course

to teach you how natives really  
speak so

that you never feel lost again  
and you will have so much fun  
because  
you will learn how to do it with  
friends  
which many academic studies  
show is the best  
tv series to learn english so what  
are you waiting for  
you can try it for free right now  
with our three apart  
master class just click here or in  
the description below  
to learn more and sign up so i kind  
of jumped out of bed  
and um didn't know what to do so i  
kind of ran outside onto the  
balcony  
and i remember standing on this  
big  
balcony a balcony is a structure  
like this  
on a house or building that has

more than one story  
also notice his use of the  
preposition onto like  
into or upon this is a preposition of  
movement  
and it's important for meaning let's  
take the preposition into  
and think about these two  
sentences he ran in the house  
he ran into the house the first  
sentence means that he ran  
inside the house the second  
sentence  
means that he was outside and he  
entered the house running  
looking out over this huge valley  
with a full moon shining light  
down across the whole valley  
if something shines it produces a  
bright light for example  
the sun and the moon shine light do  
you  
know what we call the light that

comes from the sun it's sunshine  
you might go down to cornwall  
which is  
very beautiful i haven't visited but  
it's got nice beaches it's very  
beautiful but you're not guaranteed  
sunshine or good weather so  
people will travel to other parts of  
europe especially for their summer  
holiday by the beach with  
lots of sun it was a very surreal  
experience  
and i couldn't breathe the breath  
wasn't coming back surreal  
refers to a situation or experience  
that  
is very strange and difficult to  
understand  
like something from a dream  
example the train ride through the  
mountains was truly surreal  
and i i thought then you know this  
is it

i'm gonna die on top of this  
mountain uses the expression this  
is it

in relation to the moments before  
death we also use it to say  
that an important thing is about to  
be

done here are some examples  
uh i remember the very  
understanding of  
my uh my plane ticket to go to  
france

i felt like maybe this was a little  
too

overly ambitious but i felt like  
when i

bought that ticket i thought  
this is it i'm fluent in french right  
now i got it i got my ticket this is  
the ticket

you come to most parts of europe  
and

it's like you know toast with jam or

a  
cookie or a croissant or something  
like that  
and you're like this this is it i need i  
need more i need some protein  
all i had with me was a spanish  
book  
that i bought from a local  
bookshop and it was it was far too  
difficult  
we already saw the basic meaning  
of near  
and a more advanced use of that  
word  
far is the opposite of near and you  
can  
also use it in a more advanced way  
to emphasize another word as in i  
ate  
far too much and now my stomach  
hurts  
here's another example and that  
means



that i  
am careful with my money and i  
spend far less than what i make  
you know like and i do this by  
having a budget and you know  
i record everything that i spent  
just to live without that right yeah  
so i started reading this book in  
Spanish like plodding through the  
pages one by one  
if you plod through something you  
continue to make progress through  
it with  
effort at a slow but consistent pace  
example i'm still plotting through  
the applications we got  
but i should get finished soon  
anyway next day i was walking  
through the village  
happy to be alive and i realized that  
there were all these words that kept  
popping into my head these  
spanish words like el obispo

which is not a word that you used  
that  
you learn normally in textbooks i  
mean the  
the bishop and there were all these  
words like they're popping into my  
head oh that's  
strange because normally when i  
try to  
memorize new words it's very  
difficult I can't remember them  
for very long but these words were  
lodged in my head  
and i realized well it's because i  
was reading that book last night  
and so i carried on reading and i  
finished the book it was difficult  
for me but it wasn't just enough to  
understand  
and then two or three weeks later i  
went back to buenos aires  
where i was staying to see my  
friends

and i realized suddenly  
i could speak spanish so much  
more  
fluently i was speaking in longer  
sentences i had more vocabulary  
i could understand what people  
were saying to me and i realized it  
was all because  
i'd started to read this book in  
Spanish and so all of the kind of  
study that I'd done  
before that suddenly came together  
and and created a complete view of  
the of the language  
uh in my mind and so that's how i  
discovered for myself the power of  
learning with stories  
yeah and that's even stuck with you  
I mean saying like hello  
that's like a very obscure 20 years  
later i still remember it yeah  
that's very crazy  
anyway next day i was walking

through the village  
happy to be alive and i realized that  
there were all these words that kept  
popping into my head these  
spanish  
if you say that something keeps  
happening it happens many times  
or continues to happen for example  
I was reading the chronicles of  
Narnia in French  
and they kept saying one word  
ebay what  
is fe i don't know that keeps saying  
it Vanessa is another amazing  
English teacher  
and i also had the pleasure to  
interview her on beyond borders  
after you finish this video i  
recommend  
that you check out the lesson with  
her  
where you will get five tips to  
improve

your english speaking  
now you can find that linked up  
here  
and in the description down below  
ali here says that words kept  
popping in his head  
we say this when we start to think  
about something perfect so  
does this at all make you think  
about Justin Timberlake that's the  
first thing that popped into my  
head is that that song i was just  
gonna  
say the same thing i've got it in my  
head now i'm just like singing  
it's such a great song and a really  
great video as well with scarlett  
johansson i can't remember them  
for very long  
but these words were lodged in my  
head  
if something is lodged somewhere  
it is firmly stuck to lodge

something  
means to make something become  
stuck

example the poor kid got his head  
lodged between the rails

and i realized well it's because i  
was reading that book last night  
and so i carried on reading and i  
finished the book it was difficult  
for me but it wasn't just enough to  
understand

carry on is a phrasal verb used to  
mean

to continue doing something  
it's more common in british english

example  
sorry i interrupted you please carry  
on

and that's even stuck with you i  
mean

saying like hello that's like a very  
obscure 20 years later i still  
remember

it yeah  
that's very crazy if something  
sticks you remember it  
we also often say it like it's stuck  
with me  
example the things my grandma  
taught me as a kid stuck with me  
obscure means not well known and  
is usually not very important  
here i mean that Obeseball is a  
word  
that's not part of everyday Spanish  
doing great so far now get ready  
for a challenge  
we're going to test everything you  
learned by watching both  
clips without subtitles and  
answering  
some quiz questions and if you've  
enjoyed this lesson  
remember the full interview with  
Ollie is available  
for free it's linked in the

description down below  
so just to start off i think there's  
quite an interesting story  
that we had seen so i was  
wondering if  
you could tell the audience about  
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Spanish because before this  
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at that night i went to bed  
and i woke up at about three  
o'clock in

the morning and i couldn't breathe  
which was a very scary experience  
I don't know if you've ever had this  
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very high up in the mountains but  
uh it's not it's not nice  
so i kind of jumped out of bed and  
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didn't know what to do so i kind of  
ran outside onto the balcony  
and I remember standing on this

big  
balcony looking out over this huge  
valley with a full moon shining  
light  
down across the whole valley it  
was a very surreal experience  
and i couldn't breathe the breath  
wasn't coming back and i think  
about two or three minutes passed  
and i still couldn't breathe i was  
you know trying to breathe as  
heavily as I could and I I thought  
then you know this is it I'm gonna  
die on top of this  
mountain luckily the breath came  
back and and i was okay in the end  
but i was very scared from what  
happened so i sat down  
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back to bed  
and so all i had with me to pass the  
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all i had with me was a spanish  
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bookshop and  
it was it was far too difficult for me  
I remember it was chronica de la  
muerte by garcia marquez it was  
too difficult  
for me but i didn't have anything  
else to do  
so i started reading this book in  
spanish like plodding through the  
pages one by one didn't really  
understand most of it but some bits  
I could understand but i was too  
scared to  
go back to bed so i kept on reading  
and i must have been reading this  
book  
for about three hours or so before i  
eventually  
fell asleep anyway next day i was  
walking through  
the village happy to be alive and i

realized that there were all these words that kept popping into my head these spanish words like el obispo which is not a word that you used that you learn normally in textbooks means the the bishop and there were all these words like they're popping into my head oh that's strange because normally when i try to memorize new words it's very difficult I can't remember them for very long but these words were lodged in my head and i realized well it's because i was reading that book last night and so i carried on reading and i finished the book it was difficult for me but it wasn't just enough to understand and then

um two or three weeks later i went  
back to buenos aires where i was  
staying to see my friends and i  
realized suddenly i could  
speak Spanish so much more  
fluently i  
was speaking in longer sentences i  
had more vocabulary  
i could understand what people  
were  
saying to me and i realized it was  
all because  
i'd started to read this book in  
Spanish  
and so all of the kind of study that  
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uh in my mind and so that's how i  
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[https://t.me/Podcast\\_English\\_listening](https://t.me/Podcast_English_listening)