

Conversations in Spain

A film by Daniel Emmerson presented by EnglishClub.com



Activity 1

How much do you know about Spain? Test yourself with this 'true or false' quiz!

1. Spain is the largest country in Western Europe.
2. Barcelona is the capital city of Spain.
3. The population of Spain is 46 million.
4. Spain borders Portugal and France.
5. Spain has been a member of the European Union since 1986.

Activity 2

Now watch the first part of the film: Conversation 1. Circle the person who talks about the points below.

- | | | | | | |
|--|----------|-------|-------|-----------|------|
| 1. A teacher who speaks English very well | Jonathan | Nuria | Laura | Christina | Sara |
| 2. Far-sighted parents know their children need English | Jonathan | Nuria | Laura | Christina | Sara |
| 3. Granada is a tourist city | Jonathan | Nuria | Laura | Christina | Sara |
| 4. Learning very, very much at the academy | Jonathan | Nuria | Laura | Christina | Sara |
| 5. Needing English in the future for work | Jonathan | Nuria | Laura | Christina | Sara |
| 6. Preparing to take an exam in English | Jonathan | Nuria | Laura | Christina | Sara |
| 7. The job pages in the newspapers | Jonathan | Nuria | Laura | Christina | Sara |
| 8. The key to speaking English fluently is to think in English | Jonathan | Nuria | Laura | Christina | Sara |
| 9. The school's location in the centre of town | Jonathan | Nuria | Laura | Christina | Sara |

Activity 3

Now watch the first part again. Which points on the list below does the School Director mention? Tick the points you hear. (Be careful: there are two points he does not mention!)

1. My father started this school.
2. There were no English schools in Granada at that time.
3. It was fashionable for young women to study English.
4. Universities were closed to women until the late 40s/early 50s.
5. English is a requirement for most jobs these days.
6. We organise study courses in the UK for our students.
7. We only employ native-speaking teachers.
8. There are a lot of hotels in Granada.
9. Professionals such as lawyers need English.
10. There are few job opportunities in Granada.

Activity 4

Now watch Conversation 2 and correct the mistakes in the following statements.

1. Giulio is in Madrid to attend a training course.
2. He started learning English at secondary school.
3. His English teacher in middle school was not very good.
4. He went to the US for one month.
5. He is a shy person.
6. He says people judge you and make fun of you when you speak English.
7. He says you must avoid making mistakes if you want to improve your English.

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Activity 5

In the next part of the film you are going to watch an interview with a Spanish English teacher. Before you watch, think of three difficulties students might have when they learn English in Spain. Then watch the film and see if your predictions were correct.

1. 2. 3.

Activity 6

Now watch Conversation 3 again and put Beatriz's comments in the list below into the correct order.

- A. It's important for someone to 'push' you to talk in English.
- B. Learning pronunciation from teachers who have bad pronunciation is a problem.
- C. Lessons in school focus on grammar exercises more than talking.
- D. People are afraid of making mistakes when speaking to foreigners.
- E. Private English lessons support what students learn at school.
- F. Students don't get enough speaking practice in class at school.
- G. When you study a language you have to like it.
- H. You have to travel.

Activity 7

Discuss the following questions.

- 1. In what ways are the difficulties experienced by students in Spain similar to those in your country?
- 2. The School Director says that English is a requirement for practically any job in Spain. Is this true in your country? If so, how long has this been the case?
- 3. Do you agree with Nuria when she says that the key to fluency is thinking in English? If so, what can students do to help themselves develop the habit of thinking in English?
- 4. To what extent do you agree with Giulio when he says that making mistakes is a way to improve your English? How do you feel if you make mistakes when you are speaking English?
- 5. Do you agree with Beatriz when she says that you have to 'jump' (get over) the embarrassment you feel when you are speaking English? If so, what is the best way to do this?
- 6. The film consisted of 3 conversations (the director, the learner, the teacher). Why do you think the film makers interviewed people in these roles?
- 7. What other questions do you think the film should have asked?
- 8. What did you find most interesting or surprising about the video?

Activity 8

Imagine you are making a film like 'Conversations in Spain'. Interview your partner using the questions below.

- 1. Is learning English compulsory in schools in your country?
- 2. How important is English for job-seekers in your country?
- 3. What aspects of learning English are difficult for students in your country?
- 4. How does the culture or background of people in your country affect their language learning?
- 5. What tips and advice do you have for other learners of English?

The information, statements and answers used in this worksheet are taken from the film in question and interviewees' responses. They are not necessarily true for the whole country, nor do they necessarily reflect the views of the filmmaker or of EnglishClub.com.