

# Coffee Break **Travel Diaries**

## Season 2, Lesson 1

Transcript and Notes



### **Study text**

Soy Ainhoa ¡y acabo de terminar la universidad! Así que un viaje por el oeste de Sudamérica con mi amiga Luisa y su hermano Esteban parecía una buena forma de celebrarlo. Hace dos días llegamos a Perú, pero después de cruzar el charco y con el *jet lag*, solo dormimos. ¡En cambio, ayer no paramos por Lima: había muchas cosas para ver y poco tiempo! Madrugamos y cogimos el bus para ver el Puente de los Suspiros. La leyenda dice que si se cruza el puente aguantando la respiración, tu deseo se cumplirá.

#### **acabo de terminar**

*I have just finished*

The verb **acabar** on its own means “to end” or “to finish”. Many verbs in Spanish change their meaning when followed by a specific preposition, as in this case. When the word **de** follows the verb **acabar**, the meaning changes to “to have just done something” and this applies in all the tenses. For example:

### **Miguel acaba de salir.**

Miguel has just gone out.

### **Miguel acabó de salir cuando empezó a llover.**

Miguel had just gone out when it started to rain.

### **así que**

*so, therefore*

### **un viaje por**

*a trip around, along*

The words **por** and **para** often simply mean “for”. However **por** is used when there is a sense of movement around or along somewhere. Notice the difference between these two expressions:

### **Hice un viaje a Barcelona.**

### **Hicimos un viaje por el norte de España.**

The first one means “we made a trip to Barcelona”, whereas the second one infers a continual trip *around* the north of Spain.

### **el oeste**

*the west*

### **parecía > parecer**

*it seemed*

The verb **parecer** is a commonly used and a very useful one to know. Its most usual meaning is that of “to seem” as in this text. It is also used when talking about appearance.

### **Tu abuela parece mucho más joven que la mía.**

Your grandmother looks a lot younger than mine.

When talking about things being alike, or people looking like each other, **parecer** becomes reflexive.

**No te pareces en nada a tu hermana.**

You don't look anything like your sister.

**Parecer** can also be used if you are giving your opinion with the appropriate indirect object pronoun.

**Me parece una buena idea.**

It seems a good idea to me.

**celebrarlo**

*to celebrate it*

**Celebrar** is used in the infinitive as it follows another verb, **parecía**, even though both verbs are separated by the phrase **una buena forma**. As there is an infinitive used here, the pronoun **lo** is added on to the end of the verb, rather than before it, as in for example, **lo celebramos**, "we celebrate it".

**hace dos días**

*two days ago*

**Hacer** is the verb "to make", or "to do", but when used in the third person with a time expression means "ago".

**Hace veinte años fui a Madrid por primera vez.**

Twenty years ago I went to Madrid for the first time.

**llegamos a**

*we arrived in*

This is the first of the verbs used in the preterite tense in this text. Remember the "we" part of the verb in the this past tense is exactly the same as in the present tense.

**Llegamos** can mean "we arrive" or "we arrived". We need to know the context of the

expression to decide which is the most appropriate translation. Often there are time phrases to help.

**Anoche llegamos muy cansados.**

Last night we arrived very tired.

**Son las ocho - llegamos a Cuzco a las nueve esta mañana.**

It's 8am, we are arriving in Cuzco at nine o'clock this morning.

Also note to say "arrive in", we use **llegar a** and not **en**.

**cruzar el charco**

*to cross the pond*

The word **charco** means "puddle" or "pond". Here it is being used colloquially to talk about the Atlantic Ocean which is known in English as the Pond.

**solo dormimos**

*we only slept / all we did was sleep*

This is another example of a preterite tense verb in the first person plural, or "we" part.

**Dormimos** can also mean "we sleep" in the present tense, and the verb **dormir** is a stem changing verb. **Solo** can be the adjective or adverb for "alone", or the adverb for "only".

**en cambio**

*however, whereas*

**no paramos por**

*we didn't stop in*

We continue with examples of the preterite tense in the "we" part of the verb. Here is a reminder of the regular **-ar** endings in this tense:

**é/aste/ó/amos/asteis/aron**

Obviously in spoken Spanish the accents let us know where the stress of the word falls but it is important to include accents in written Spanish as they can change meaning. If we contrast **paro** with **paró**, the first is the present tense for “I stop”, whereas the second is the preterite tense for “he/she stopped”.

### **había muchas cosas para/por/que ver**

*there were many things to see*

In the present tense we use the word **hay** to say “there is” or “there are”, and this comes from the verb **haber**. Here we see an example of **hay** in the imperfect tense **había**, meaning “there was” or “there were”.

### **poco tiempo**

*little time*

### **madrugamos**

*we got up early*

The verb **madrugar** is a lovely word meaning “to get up early”. The noun from this verb is **la madrugada**, which refers to the early hours of the morning.

### **cogimos > coger**

*to catch*

### **el Puente de Suspiros**

*the Bridge of Sighs*

### **la leyenda**

*the legend*

### **si se cruza > cruzar**

*if you cross > to cross*

The **se** in this phrase is not the reflexive pronoun, it is used as the passive **se**. This happens when we are not specifying who is actually doing the action. In English we would probably translate this as “you” but it is unspecified and means people in general.

### aguantando la respiración

*holding your breath*

**Aguantar** also means “to stand” in the sense of “to put up with” or “bear”. For example, **no aguanto el calor** meaning “I can’t stand the heat”. Here it is in the gerund, the equivalent part of the verb which ends in -ing in English.

### tu deseo se cumplirá

*your wish will come true*

A direct translation of **cumplir** is “to fulfill” and you might recognise at least part of this verb from the word for birthday, **cumpleaños**, whose literal meaning is “to fulfill years”.

Después, fuimos hacia el norte por la costa para ver el Faro de la Marina. También vimos Huaca Pucllana, las ruinas de una pirámide escalonada del siglo I. Está en medio de la ciudad, por lo que fue bastante sorprendente. Antes de continuar, comimos por el centro. Pedimos causa rellena, papa a la huancaína y cau cau. Escogimos esos platos porque tenían un nombre peculiar, ¡pero todo estaba buenísimo! Finalizamos el día viendo la Plaza de las Armas y la Plaza de San Martín, la Basílica de San Francisco y el Mercado Municipal Gran Mariscal Ramón Castilla. ¡Lima es una ciudad de contrastes!

### hacia el norte

*towards the north*

Watch this little word **hacia**, as it means “towards”. However, if we add an accent to the **i**, the word changes in meaning to the verb **hacer** in its imperfect tense. Accents are always important!

### **por la costa**

*along the coast*

### **para ver**

*(in order) to see*

There are lots of examples of **por** and **para** in this episode, and they are not always being used to mean “for”. **Para** is often used with the infinitive to talk about purpose, and an appropriate translation is “in order to”. However, when we translate into English, we would normally omit “in order” as this is implied, and simply translate as “to”.

### **el Faro**

*the lighthouse*

### **vimos > ver**

*we saw > to see*

This is another first person plural example of a verb in the preterite tense. This tense is used when talking about completed actions in the past. **Ver** is an irregular verb in this tense and interestingly follows the pattern for the **-ir** verbs, but it does not require any accents.

### **vi/viste/vio/vimos/visteis/vieron**

### **una pirámide escalonada**

*a stepped pyramid*

As our travellers are visiting the tourist areas of Peru, they are visiting ancient pyramids which you can imagine had steps climbing to the top. The word **escalonada** comes from

the verb **escalonar** meaning “to arrange” or “to spread out”, therefore a good translation for the idea of a “stepped” or “tiered” place.

Another word for “step” as on a staircase is **peldaño**, but if we were talking about “steps” in the sense of walking or dancing, we would use the word **paso**, as in the dance **paso doble**, meaning “double steps”.

### del siglo I

*from the first century*

### en medio de

*in the middle of*

### por lo que

*for that reason*

### sorprendente

*surprising*

### antes de continuar

*before going on*

**Antes de** plus an infinitive is a common way of saying “before doing something” and can be useful to avoid complex verb structures and the subjunctive as the phrase **antes de que** usually triggers the subjunctive.

### comimos > comer

*we ate*

### pedimos > pedir

*we ordered*

Another example of a verb in its first person plural form and another irregular verb.

**Pedir** is the verb “to ask (for)” and is also used when ordering food and drink. The



English word "petition" comes from this Latin root. **Pedir** in the present tense is a stem changing verb:

**pido/pides/pide/pedimos/pedís/piden**

The verb "to ask (a question)" is the regular **-ar** verb **preguntar**.

**causa rellena /limeña**

*a Peruvian potato salad*

**papa a la huancaína**

*Huancayo style potatoes*

**cau cau**

*Peruvian tripe stew*

**escogimos > escoger**

*we chose*

**tenían un nombre peculiar**

*they had strange names*

**finalizamos el día viendo**

*we ended the day seeing*

In Spanish we often hear the gerund, the part of the verb in English which ends in -ing and in Spanish in **-ando** or **iendo**, being used with the verb **estar** in the present continuous tense. However it is also used with verbs like **finalizar** or **acabar** to mean "to end up doing something".

**acabamos el día comiendo platos típicos.**

We ended the day eating typical dishes.

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