

## Episode 29\_Life Under Lockdown\_transcript

**Owain** [00:00:00] Hello and welcome to the English Waffle, a podcast aimed at advanced English language learners who want to improve their listening skills by listening to real conversations. My name's Owain and in each episode, Mike and I do a bit of waffling about a specific topic. We typically like to talk about light-hearted topics and we don't often venture into the territory of serious news, but no one can ignore what's going on at the moment. And one of the worst hit places during this pandemic has been Spain, in particular Madrid. And in this episode, I talk to a friend of mine who lives in Madrid, and he tells us a little bit about what it's like to be there on the lockdown. Let's get waffling.

**Theme music** [00:00:42] Welcome to the English waffle, where we talk about random stuff. We'll take you on a journey where you'll find out soon enough why listening to the waffle is an entertaining...

[00:00:56] [indistinct discussion]

**Owain** [00:01:03] All right, so can you. Do you know how the English waffle music goes? I tell you what, that's going to be a test we're going to do for everything to guest on the English Waffle. We're gonna ask them to to to hum the English Waffle theme tune to see if they're listeners or not. Well done Lorenzo! Nice!

**Theme music** [00:01:25] ...the English Waffle where we talk about random stuff. We'll take you on a journey where you'll find out soon enough. Why listening to the waffle is an entertaining way of sharing with you foreigners the things that British people say. So join us on the Waffle and strap yourself in for 10 whole earthly minutes of English listening.

**Owain** [00:01:52] Hello and welcome to another episode of The English Waffle. Today I'm here with Lorenzo, who is a very good friend of mine from my time in Spain. Unfortunately, I'm no longer...I can no longer speak to Lorenzo in person, not because of lockdown or anything like that, but because we're in different countries, because I moved to England and Lorenzo is still in Spain. For me it's quite interesting 'cause...Hi Lorenzo...great to talk to you.

**Lorenzo** [00:02:24] Hi Owain. Hi. Glad to see you. Glad to see you and hear you again.

**Owain** [00:02:29] Yeah. No, it's it's we don't often get the opportunity, but now we have, you know, every day pretty much the chance to connect online. Right? It's pretty...

**Lorenzo** [00:02:39] Absolutely, I think that this lockout has giving...given us a chance to get back to basics with some old friends, don't you think, I mean, you get to you get together, you Skype with everybody, you Whatsapp with everybody. Maybe a little bit more than you used to.

**Owain** [00:02:54] Yeah, maybe a bit too much. I'm struggling actually to keep up with all of my online...interactions, to be honest.

**Lorenzo** [00:02:59] Yeah, you're right. Right yes.

**Owain** [00:03:02] It's li...It's like a full time job pretty much. So, but anyway Lorenzo, just just I'll give you a little bit of an introduction and I'll launch into the to the first question if you like it's um... You you work in the the food industry, right? In.

**Lorenzo** [00:03:15] Yes.

**Owain** [00:03:15] ...restaurants and menu development and things like that. Yeah?

**Lorenzo** [00:03:20] Yes, yes, yes. We have over 500 restaurants in Spain, most of them franchises and associates. Yes. So we were the first ones to to actually go down during this crisis.

**Owain** [00:03:32] I was gonna say...How's that going? Yeah. Not too well at the moment.

**Lorenzo** [00:03:35] Well it looks bleak, actually. Well, depending depending on the let's say of the digital transformation stage you're in, I mean, you would be able to go out again and y'know prove yourself. But I think this is going to be a cruel test for those restaurants in Spain and all over the world, obviously.

**Owain** [00:03:56] Well, I mean, you're also a chef, Lorenzo, is that right? And I have to say, um, a very good one. I can confirm that firsthand.

**Lorenzo** [00:04:08] Not that good.

**Owain** [00:04:08] But you've also worked as a cooking teacher, right?

**Lorenzo** [00:04:11] Yeah, yeah, for six years.

**Owain** [00:04:13] Right ok.

**Lorenzo** [00:04:13] And then I became this kind of consultant, the head chef of different brands.

**Owain** [00:04:18] Right, and and I understand, I remember you telling me, basically, that it's less well paid, but it does give you kind of a better quality of life, better timetable. And I think you once said to me, "Oh, I would love to go back to teaching so I could spend more time with my family". Do you still stand by those words?

**Lorenzo** [00:04:37] Now I'm having second thoughts about that. Well, yeah, definitely, this past four, and it's going to become, five weeks of being...have been intense.

**Owain** [00:04:51] Has it...Is it five weeks now?

**Lorenzo** [00:04:52] Well, no, it's four weeks, but I actually...I started on the 8th, so tomorrow I'm going to start my fifth week of isolation.

**Owain** [00:05:03] OK, so you've been in your flat with your family now for four weeks already and you're starting your fifth week.

**Lorenzo** [00:05:10] Yep. Yep. Starting tomorrow.

**Owain** [00:05:11] And you just...you just had some good news from Pedro Sanchez about...

**Lorenzo** [00:05:16] Well, apparently the the curve is going down and we are taking control of the virus and everything, but, I mean, I would say that you still have work to do. I mean, maybe the numbers are going down, but this is far from gone.

**Owain** [00:05:33] Right and I understand that the the the lock is going to be extended. Right. For... till the end of.

**Lorenzo** [00:05:37] Last Saturday...told us that it's going to be another two weeks. So it's going to last in the last days of April, maybe twenty sixth, twenty ninth, I just can't recall.

**Owain** [00:05:49] But I mean...I mean, a lot of this stuff, obviously, we we are following the news pretty much...You have plenty of time to go on the Internet and check out the news you can see what's going on in the world. And we, you know, we've seen some pretty negative things from Spain, some scary statistics. We've also seen some really uplifting, amazing images of people on their balconies clapping the health carers. What I'd like to talk to you, though, about Lorenzo is is your experience within those four walls over the last few weeks. How how...what are you doing just to to keep sane? Pretty much. What, What's it like?

**Lorenzo** [00:06:33] Well, actually, you take things with kind of a...with a pinch of salt and pinch of philosophy, I would say. I mean, you have two kids...

**Owain** [00:06:41] Yeah.

**Lorenzo** [00:06:41] I mean, they have to read, they have to write. I mean, they are...they are 5 and 7, close to being 6 and 8. So they are precisely that stage where, you know, they they ask for you to, y'know, to be more than a father, you know, and you have to be there and...How would I say it? Erm, these last four weeks have been more than about focussing on the children...

**Owain** [00:07:10] Right.

**Lorenzo** [00:07:10] ...than anything else? I mean, you don't have much time to think about the virus and how deadly it's going to be or I mean, you just focus on your kids. And, I mean, you get up, you have brekkie, then you go for the, I dunno, for the reading exercises and the writing exercises and you have Zumba classes.

**Owain** [00:07:33] Zumba classes. Oh nice!.

**Lorenzo** [00:07:33] Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I mean, you're not just the dad; you're the dad, you're the teacher, you're the Zumba monitor, you are...

**Owain** [00:07:39] Right, right.

**Lorenzo** [00:07:40] ...just everything in the single day. Then, well, you try to, I mean, it's been great. I mean, it's I'm sure most families have found it a little bit rough at times. But overall, I mean, it's been a good experience...

**Owain** [00:07:57] Right.

**Lorenzo** [00:07:58] ...with lots of positives, also, I mean, not just, you know, stressing things or, you know, I mean, it's been fun.

**Owain** [00:08:07] Okay. So...so thinking about positives - What are...What are...been the good things about being shut up with your family for the last four weeks? What what what've you enjoyed?

**Lorenzo** [00:08:17] Well, actually, you know what, to be focussing on your children, to be able to, you know, to relax and watch a little bit of telly with them, to relax and grow a little bit with them, to do, you know, the usual things you take for granted, er, now you're actually able to do them? I mean, to be able to be a part of their...of their, I don't know, reading classes or how..., I mean, every single success of your own children during these these days, you're a big part of them. You are just just a big part of it. I mean, Alejandro, mum...my son, he's a starting to to write and he's starting to read in both languages, I mean, you know, in English or in... a... and in Spanish. And every single word he can...you know, you know that you're a part of it.

**Owain** [00:09:05] Yeah, yeah. I mean it...

**Lorenzo** [00:09:06] ...and that...

**Owain** [00:09:06] ...and th...and this is coming from a dad who...okay, yeah, you...I think you've had, um, peaks of work where you have had to spend a lot of time away from your family.

**Lorenzo** [00:09:17] Away, yes.

**Owain** [00:09:19] I, I...I remember when when we were over there, erm, more or less neighbours and we would come around and you would tell me, well, yeah, we were up until about two o'clock in the morning last night preparing these bottles for for the school. You know,...uh, I've I've never seen such dedication to school projects 'cause you're quite artistic...

**Lorenzo** [00:09:44] Yeah, maybe...

**Owain** [00:09:45] ...that's that's the...

**Lorenzo** [00:09:48] Well, I'm going to be honest with you. Erm, maybe that's just an excuse because actually me and Olga, we we absolutely enjoy all those crafts.

**Owain** [00:09:57] Right.

**Lorenzo** [00:09:57] I mean, we just love them, love them, love them. so...

**Owain** [00:09:59] Yeah. Yeah.

**Lorenzo** [00:10:00] ...maybe that's just an excuse. I mean, the children, yeah, they could help, but...

**Owain** [00:10:04] But it's more about you.

**Lorenzo** [00:10:05] I would say mostly it was because of us.

[00:10:09] [laughter]

**Owain** [00:10:11] It was kind of like a ni...a by-product of the fact that you had...

**Lorenzo** [00:10:14] Absolutely!

**Owain** [00:10:14] ...had something something good to take to school.

**Lorenzo** [00:10:16] Yes. No doubt. No doubt. Yes. Yes.

**Owain** [00:10:20] Ok...

**Lorenzo** [00:10:20] Now, well, you're doing that also, I mean, we've been growing, I think it's, green beans.

**Owain** [00:10:28] Oh, yes?

**Lorenzo** [00:10:28] Chickpeas....

**Owain** [00:10:30] Oh, nice. Ok.

**Lorenzo** [00:10:30] Whatever...whatever we can.

**Owain** [00:10:33] Are you going for sub...subsistence there Lorenzo or...?

**Lorenzo** [00:10:37] No, no, no, no, not subsistence, just to...you know, we had a...we had three chickpeas left in the bag and, you know, I'd forgotten and then we say, oh, well, let's plant them and we just did. That's good. I mean, you have to find new things to do with it with the children. I mean, that's it.

**Owain** [00:10:55] Yeah, 'cause, I mean, lit...literally your your flat is is your whole world at the moment, I mean...

**Lorenzo** [00:11:00] Oh, forty five square meters of the whole world. Yes.

**Owain** [00:11:06] Yeah, yeah, I mean...and I, I...my my thoughts just go o... 'cause you live in a pretty similar flat to the place where I used to live in in Madrid and my my thoughts just go out to everybody in Madrid and anywhere in the world, actually, who is stuck in in a flat somewhere in the centre of the city. I used used to be there myself. And just by sheer chance, I'm living a different, in a different place now. And I'm so grateful for it. But fingers crossed, very soon this will all come to an end. We'll be able to [indistinct] our lives.

**Lorenzo** [00:11:38] It has to...

**Owain** [00:11:39] It has to.

**Lorenzo** [00:11:39] It has to. It has to.

**Owain** [00:11:41] Yeah, er, and actually one of the...one of the...It's quite sad for me in a sense, Lorenzo, because, um, obviously, you're...erm, you're in Spain. You speak English and Spanish. And one of the things I think that that brought us together is is as as friends and as two families was the fact that we...we have this kind of bilingual thing going on and

that that's what I really wanted to talk about...talk to you about it in another English Waffle episode.

**Lorenzo** [00:12:07] Ok. Ok. Love to. Yes.

**Owain** [00:12:10] It's unfortunate that that this whole thing has has has come up first. But I think I think it's really interesting to give people an insight into, however brief, into what it's like to be there in Madrid right now. I mean, erm...

**Lorenzo** [00:12:25] You know what's...

**Owain** [00:12:26] Any final words Lorenzo, anything that you just want to say?

**Lorenzo** [00:12:29] Yeah, interesting about, you know, the experience is that you never realise how bad it could get.

**Owain** [00:12:37] Right.

**Lorenzo** [00:12:38] And you are never able to see how bad it could get.

**Owain** [00:12:41] Yeah.

**Lorenzo** [00:12:41] I remember maybe three weeks ago we saw Italy, you know, the numbers were sky rocketing all the way up, er, the number of beds, they would double ours and everything and not two weeks later, I mean, we are past them. So the thing is, don't ever let your guard down...

**Owain** [00:12:59] Yeah.

**Lorenzo** [00:12:59] ...please follow every single every single, what do you say...?

**Owain** [00:13:07] Like guideline or recommendation.

**Lorenzo** [00:13:08] Guidelines, you know, the government says.

**Owain** [00:13:10] I think...there...instructions now.

**Lorenzo** [00:13:13] Because...Yes. You could be a lot closer in to this situation that you might imagine.

**Owain** [00:13:17] Yeah. Yeah, yeah, exactly.

**Lorenzo** [00:13:20] So, stay safe, stay safe,...

**Owain** [00:13:22] Stay home.

**Lorenzo** [00:13:23] Stay safe.

**Owain** [00:13:24] And stay home.

**Lorenzo** [00:13:26] And stay home. Yes. At least yeah, these days, yeah, maybe you have to stay home, yes, definitely.

**Owain** [00:13:33] I mean it's a few months... In a few months time, I'm pretty sure we're all we'll all be back to normal more or less. OK. Yeah. Thanks. On that note, just one final word.

**Owain** [00:13:44] Plans for tomorrow?

**Lorenzo** [00:13:46] Oh god, er, I think we have Zumba...Zumba classes from 11 to 12.

**Owain** [00:13:52] Oh Zumba class again. Oh right.

**Lorenzo** [00:13:53] Yeah. Every single day. Yes, every single day after aerobics. Yeah, no, you have to. You have to keep something. You have to keep all this up.

**Owain** [00:14:02] Yeah. Any any any reading time for you?

**Lorenzo** [00:14:05] Absolutely not. I thought I would have, but. No, no, not at all.

**Owain** [00:14:11] All right, well, maybe that's something for tomorrow. Just put your foot down and say guys like, you know, I've I've done the English Waffle eps...in...interview. How about I can just have five minutes to read a book?

**Lorenzo** [00:14:23] OK. Yes, I'll do that.

**Owain** [00:14:24] Yeah, give it a try, give it try.

**Lorenzo** [00:14:25] I'll tell them it was your idea.

**Owain** [00:14:29] Ok. All right Lorenzo. Well, thank you very much for coming on. And as I said, I hope...I hope we get the opportunity to have another conversation in the future about a different topic.

**Lorenzo** [00:14:38] Whenever you want. I'm not going anywhere.

**Lorenzo** [00:14:40] Brilliant, well, thanks for listening, everybody. And please look out for the, er, the transcript for this episode on the English Waffle website, er, keep waffling!

### **How much did you understand?**

**Owain** [00:14:57] So that was Lorenzo, Life Under Lockdown in Madrid, Spain. What is your life like under lockdown? What are you finding difficult about it? What positive things have you found? Why not write in and share your experiences with us? You can go to our website, englishwaffle.co.uk. And go to the Contact Us page and you can find options to write us a message via the browser or via WhatsApp.

[00:15:30] Now, as we mentioned before, we're currently looking at ways to improve the podcast. We know the sound quality isn't always the best, especially when we have to record online. But we're working on it. And we're also speaking to some of you about ways to improve the content of the podcast. One thing you've shown interested in...interest in is having some support with each episode after the conversation with help to clarify some of

the things said immediately after you've listened to the episode. Many of you don't have time to go onto the website and look at the transcripts, etc. So...the idea is to help you with something, maybe, maybe something you misunderstood or anything you've missed. To do this, I'm going to ask you a few questions. After each one, I'll pause, so you can think about your answer. Think about your answers. And if you need more time, you, of course, can pause the audio. Then I'll give you the answer, or the answers, so you can check your ideas. This time I'm going to focus on specific vocabulary items. OK.

**Question 1** [00:16:43] At the beginning of the conversation. What am I struggling to keep up with?

**Answer 1** [00:17:01] That's correct, I'm struggling to keep up with my online interaction. It's not an easy task. There are so many friends and contacts to interact with. I'm struggling to keep up.

**Question 2** [00:17:17] OK, so then I introduce Lorenzo. I give a bit of information about his background, I mention something he said to me in the past. Why do you ask Lorenzo whether he 'stands by those words'?

**Answer 2** [00:17:45] Right, the particular thing he told me was that he wanted to change back to a teaching job which allows him to spend more time with his family. And of course, the, er, the funny thing is that he's spending more time with his family now than he could have possibly imagined. And my question is, do you still believe or support the idea behind that, that wish, that desire? 'stand by those words', 'stand by your words' very often we say.

**Question 3** [00:18:23] Later, I talk about what we've seen in the news before asking Lorenzo about his personal experience and I mention 'health carers'. What do I mean when I refer to 'health carers'?

**Answer 3** [00:18:44] Actually, some of you may have spotted this as a mistake. I got confused and mixed up 'healthcare workers' and 'carers'. Healthcare workers are people who work for the national health system: doctors, nurses. And carers are a different system, who work in care homes and typically look after elderly people or other vulnerable members of society. This happens to me from time to time. I...when you're speaking spontaneously, you get confused and you say things that even just a few seconds later you think, does that, does that exist? It's too late to do anything about it.

**Question 4** [00:19:29] When I ask Lorenzo about his experience in lockdown and strategies, strategies for staying sane, why does he say you have to take it with a pinch of salt?

**Answer 4** [00:19:51] I think what Lorenzo means here is that that, erm, you basically try not to worry too much about it. And this is kind of related to the true meaning of this particular expression, which actually to not completely believe something you're told. So he's kind of kind of...it's a bit of a mixed metaphor, which is quite common in spoken to our interactions and most of the time we don't notice because we we...we get the idea of what someone's saying and we move on to the next part of the conversation. To take something with a pinch of salt as, for example, if if we said the government says lockdown will end next week, you might take that news with a pinch of salt; you might not fully believe that it's true. And I actually think later Lorenzo kind of clarifies his intended meaning by following up with an original take on the expression, a pinch of philosophy, by which he means, you

know, you kind of have to be philosophical about the whole thing, you know, and sec...accept it calmly without being angry.

**Question 5** [00:21:02] OK. As part of Lorenzo's description of their daily activities, he mentions 'brekkie'. What does brekkie mean?

**Answer 5** [00:21:16] Yep. Some of you probably are saying that it is a slang term for breakfast and you are...you are correct. And Lorenzo also mentions planting chickpeas and things like that.

**Question 6** [00:21:31] And why...why do you ask him? Are you going for subsistence there? What do I mean?

**Answer 6** [00:21:49] Right. Yeah. I'm kind of asking about what he's trying to do by planting chickpeas and lentils and things like that. The question is, are you aiming at or intending to achieve some kind of subsistence - being able to survive on food without depending on anybody else? So, are you 'going for' is quite a useful phrasal verb 'to go for something'. Another example may be 'Oh, he's got a new haircut. I think he's going for a new look.'

**Question 7** [00:22:24] OK. Towards the end of the conversation. I try to be positive and I say, something along the lines of, 'Fingers crossed, very soon, this will all come to an end.' What does 'fingers crossed' mean?

**Answer 7** [00:22:46] Yep, you're quite right. It means we hope something will happen. Often we say it, sometimes we even physically do it. We cross our fingers and, yeah, so you might play the lottery and cross your fingers that you're gonna win. You hope you can win?

[00:23:06] Well, I hope this has been a useful review of some of the language in this episode. If you have any comments, please write in and tell us about th...tell us what you think and see you next time. Keep waffling!