



How to Stay Motivated and Make Consistent Progress with Spanish: Interview with Brittany Davis, Spanish Con Salsa Members Challenge Winner

Episode 15

In this episode, we're talking to a Spanish learner that's probably a lot like you. Brittany feels a connection with Latino culture, music, and her local community. After downloading numerous apps and stocking up on textbooks, Brittany was still unable to have a conversation in Spanish. Brittany shares the strategy that led her to a 549-day Spanish learning streak. I hope this conversation helps you to find an approach to learning Spanish that will inspire you to reach your goals.

Time	Speaker	Transcript
00:01	Host	Hola y bienvenidos. Welcome to episode 15 of the Learn Spanish Con Salsa podcast. In today's episode, I'm going to share a conversation with you that I recently had with Brittany Davis. Now if you're wondering who is Brittany, she's probably a lot like you. Brittany started learning Spanish about maybe a year or so ago and she really feels connected to the culture, the music, and she was really looking for a way to make consistent progress and stay motivated while she was learning. And so in this conversation with Brittany, she's going to share some of her successes, some of the things that she struggled with and ultimately what led her to really be able to make consistent progress with her Spanish. Now Brittany is a part of our Spanish Con Salsa members only community. And if you're wondering about what that is, I will speak a little bit about that after the conversation.
00:53	Host	But one thing we do within the membership community is that we have challenges from time to time. So Brittany is actually the winner of our last 90 day members challenge. So it was a 90 day challenge where every single week members in the Spanish Con Salsa community had to complete different activities, whether it had to do with listening, comprehension, Spanish conversation, practice learning a new grammar point, a new skill, completing a course. We had a variety of activities, a lot of different challenges. They also did a lot with music as well. So everyone sort of had some friendly

		competition and they also competed for a prize. So the prize for this round of the members challenge that just wrapped up at the end of last year was a trip to Puerto Rico. So it's a seven night stay. So Brittany actually at the time we had this conversation, she was just a finalist in the challenge that she didn't yet know that she was a winner.
01:43	Host	So this conversation that you're about to hear was actually the final activity of the challenge was to have a conversation to reflect on the progress that she had made throughout the challenge and really since she had joined the Spanish Con Salsa community as well as answering some questions in Spanish as sort of a test to her skill level and where she was at that point and the progress she had made. So I hope you enjoy this conversation with Brittany and that it will inspire you. We're talking all about how to stay motivated and make consistent progress learning Spanish because I know a lot of you out there and I know I definitely have struggled with consistency and really making Spanish a part of my day, my daily routine, and really ultimately a part of my life. I really hope that this conversation with Brittany inspires you and that you get some ideas on how you can find an approach to learning Spanish that really works for you and that most importantly you can continue with for the long haul and stay consistent. Okay. So with that, here is our conversation with Brittany.
02:48	Host	So Brittany, how were you learning Spanish before you joined Spanish con salsa?
02:51	Brittany	Like I was getting a bunch of books from the library trying to read through them. I was getting book recommendations and ordering them. And so I a bunch of books sitting in front of me and I'm trying to get dedicated to reading at least one of them and then some. And then when it came to conversation I was like stumped and I'm like, oh I need to learn how to say this. And next thing I know I'm jumping in different places in the book and still learning absolutely nothing.
03:16	Host	So you had the classic stack of books stack of textbooks that were so much fun that you just didn't get to read them ever, right?
03:26	Brittany	Uh huh.
03:27	Host	Yeah, I've heard that before. I'm familiar with that story. So, so then you know with your stack of books that you had and really struggling to have a conversation, what was your biggest problem you would say at the time that you had with learning Spanish before you joined?
03:41	Brittany	I guess it would be staying motivated. Cause I mean when you feel like you're like doing a lot, like you're reading all of these things or

		how to say certain words and you're on your Duolingo app and still not having complete sentences or you're on your uh, phone, downloading all of these apps and getting absolutely no results from actually conversing with somebody says something to you like really fast and you're like, wait, I haven't learned that yet. Like it was the staying motivated because I have a tendency of like, like I'm a perfectionist so knowing that I am doing things to in order to speak and to do it like grammatically correct and knowing that I either was unable to do it or make sense and when I did it was really disheartening. And so staying motivated was really complicated for me.
04:39	Host	How would you say that's changed since you've been a member of Spanish Con Salsa?
04:43	Brittany	I'd say it's changed because since I started like literally not a day's gone by where I haven't studied. So I'd say that means I've gotten really good at being motivated.
04:55	Host	Yeah I notice your track or your track record on Habit Share is like ridiculous. Like every time I check in I'm like, Whoa, she's got a streak going. So you've definitely kept up with your, um, with study on a regular basis.
05:08	Brittany	Cause like for me, like, like with anything, like for me, like I would tell myself, I'll give myself two weeks and see how it goes. Like that's like my streak. Like, Oh, I'm like exercise before the summer and like two weeks before I'll start, and then that's what happens. And it's the same thing with everything else. Like I give myself two weeks and then two weeks later it may or may not still be a thing. And it's usually not, so the fact that my habit share says 549 days, I think. I'm like...
05:36	Host	Wow, wow, what a record. So, um, so Brittany then, I guess with that, what, what do you like most about being a member?
05:49	Brittany	I'd say being able to work with music and it's a lot more of a fun in more motivating way to stick to Spanish. Cause like usually I'm not very motivated to do anything but thus far like when I needed to know something I knew okay so I can go to this song to learn it or I can go to the member's page and watch this video or I can go to the uh, pronunciation courses or I can go to this. I know there, there hasn't been something yet in the Spanish Con Salsa that wasn't able to help me. Like, uh, like there's always something that breaks down what I needed to know and that's very helpful to me. So I'm def...I would definitely miss that.
06:43	Host	What's the most significant improvement that you've noticed in your Spanish? So either something that you've noticed or it could be something that one of your friends or someone else that you're

		speaking to noticed. Because sometimes we're our own worst critics and we don't always realize when we're improving until someone else tells us. So is there something that either you've noticed yourself or that someone you've talked, you've talked to said, hey, you know, Brittany, you've really gotten better with this, that you didn't notice until they brought it to your attention?
07:12	Brittany	Um, I think it's definitely a little bit of everything. Like I can definitely say that I've noticed improvement cause thinking about where I was like year ago and like thinking about how literally the only words I knew how to say was "hola" and "adios" and now it's like I was, I was talking to my mom last weekend. It was like I was telling her I was trying to study for my meeting this weekend and in English because I was going to an English meeting this time and each time I was trying to go over my answers, my brain kept turning it into Spanglish. I was like, I must be learning something because I can't keep one language. So it's like the fact that I can like start thinking an actual sentences and like switching between the two languages shows and there's an improvement there. And even among my friends, like they've even said like, uh, a lot of them will ask me like, where are you learning Spanish? Your Spanish is really good, like you need to come teach me.
08:16	Brittany	So it's like the, um, they gave me compliments on my pronunciation and the, and the being able to hold a conversation. Like true, there will be moments where I still have to ask them "como?" because like sometimes they go really fast and I'm like, uh, and so they'll slow it down and then they'll say it to me again a little slower. And then I'm like, oh, and then I can reply. So it's like, I know I still have a lot of work to do because like I still get lost sometimes, but to know that the vocabulary is there, it's just a matter of, you know, being around it more and putting it into practice more. I think that was in one of the courses on the member page, it mentioned about how uh, you have passive vocabulary and then you have active vocabulary. So I think that's like, uh, something that I find of improvement that I know that the vocabulary is there and little by little what's coming out as I go along. So like to be able to hold conversations and know that I have the ability to do it, that's definitely shows me that I'm improving.
09:31	Host	That's great. Yeah. And you know, it is good when you get to get that feedback from other people because like I said, sometimes we can feel like, oh, we're making progress but it's so slow and we went to, you know, do better and know more faster. But when you have someone else, especially in native speaker that says, Hey, you know, your pronunciation is good or you don't really have an accent, like

		that can really motivate you to keep going. So that's pretty cool. Okay.
09:54	Host	And if a friend were to call you and they said to you, Brittany, I really want to learn Spanish, what would you tell them?
10:01	Brittany	Don't listen to what I got to say to you, look at the results. The thing is I have been able to fulfill all the goals I've set forth in Spanish thus far because I literally sat down and said, okay, I'm gonna try this course. And that's never happened before. So it's like, uh, I think I said before that a lot of my friends, they're exactly the same way as me. They get a lot of books and they go on a lot of apps and they still get really, really unnerved about not being able to have a conversation in Spanish. But with Spanish Con Salsa, I mean you don't get that feeling of overwhelm. It's nothing but fun and music and it's like you can have, you can literally learn and have a jam session at the same time. So why wouldn't you join?
10:52	Host	I like that, that's a good way to put it. I always say, in the class that I do on how to learn Spanish with Latin music. I always give the example of a desk. So I show one picture where there's a desk with like a stack of textbooks and they're all like covered up and there's a bunch of stuff on the desk and then there's another desk that literally just has a phone with some headphones in it, right, and maybe like a pen and a pad. Right. And it's so much cleaner and it's like, what would you rather learn at the end of the day if you've had a busy day at work or at school or hanging out with friends and you're just tired and you come home and you go, oh, now I'm going to study Spanish. Would you rather look at a stack of books or would you rather pop in your headphones, listen to some really fun music and learn at the same time and without fail, everyone always picks the option that has the headphones because who wouldn't want to learn that way?
11:40	Host	So definitely thank you for saying that. That definitely reaffirms you know that you can learn without having to pull out textbooks. Not that books are bad, right? Like, I'm not saying you should be illiterate, but when it comes to speaking Spanish, what really helps people get over the hump is not keeping your nose in a book all day. Um, so definitely you've proven that with your commitment and the progress that you've made. Um, so with that, we're going to switch to Spanish.
12:05	Host	So I'm going to switch and ask you a couple of questions in Spanish. So first, just a few things about you and then I'm going to do what we call on the podcast, the quick fire round, which is five questions en español and you'll have to answer them off the top of your head. Okay, so...lista? <i>Ready?</i>

12:23	Brittany	Sí <i>Yes</i>
12:24	Host	Okay, vamos a empezar. Entonces Brittany, quiero saber un poquito de ti, entonces, ¿de dónde eres? <i>OK, let's start. So Brittany, I want to know a little bit about you, so where are you from?</i>
12:33	Brittany	Nací en Dundalk, Maryland y soy de Baltimore, Maryland, y tengo 22 años. <i>I was born in Dundalk, Maryland and I'm from Baltimore, Maryland, and I am 22 years old.</i>
12:56	Host	Y... ¿qué haces con tu tiempo libre? <i>And, what do you do with your free time?</i>
12:57	Brittany	En mi tiempo libre, me gusta salir con mis amigos. A mí me gusta escribir canciones y hornear, jugar [practicar] deportes, especialmente basquetbol y tenis. <i>In my free time, I like to go out with my Friends. I like to write songs and bake, play sports, especially basketball and tennis.</i>
13:05	Host	Okay. Y ¿cuánto tiempo llevas estudiando español? <i>OK, and how long have you been studying Spanish?</i>
13:09	Brittany	Un año y nueve meses. <i>One year and 9 months.</i>
13:13	Host	Okay. No mucho tiempo pero bastante. Y Brittany, ¿por qué quieres ser bilingüe? ¿Por qué es importante para ti aprender español? <i>OK, not much time but quite a bit. And Brittany, why do you want to be bilingual? What is it important for you to learn Spanish?</i>
13:30	Brittany	Quiero aprender español porque me ayuda a extender mi ministerio porque quiero poder hablar con otras en el ministerio y muchas personas que hablan español. Así que, aprender español me ayuda a hacerlo. Y también porque me ayudara sentir más cerca a [de] mi mejor amiga y su familia en Florida porque son dominicanas y puertorriqueños y también ahora tengo mucha familia aquí que habla español ahora. Y me ayudan aprender y quiero entender a ellos. <i>I want to learn Spanish because it helps me extend my ministry because I want to be able to talk to other people in the ministry and many people that speak Spanish. So, learning Spanish helps me to do that. And also because it helps me feel closer to my best friend and her family in Florida because they are Dominican and Puerto Rican and also now I have a lot of family here that speaks Spanish now. And they help me learn and I want to understand them.</i>
14:25	Host	Bien, bien. ¿Cuál es tu palabra favorita en español? <i>OK good. What is your favorite song in Spanish?</i>
14:26	Brittany	A mí me gusta la palabra desafortunadamente. Suena graciosa. <i>I like the word "unfortunately." It sounds funny.</i>

14:38	Host	"Des-a-for-tun-a-da-men-te" eso quiero porque me cuesta mucho aprender cómo decirlo. Como, tengo que pensar mucho "desafortunadamente." <i>"Un-for-tun-ate-ly" I like that because it hard to learn how to say it. Like, I have to think about it a lot: "unfortunately."</i>
14:38	Brittany	Mmm hmm.
14:38	Host	Es muy...una palabra bastante larga no? <i>It's very...it's a pretty long word right?</i>
14:39	Brittany	Sí, mucho (muy) largo. <i>Yes, very long.</i>
14:58	Host	Entonces, cuál es tu canción favorita en español? De música latina? <i>So, what is your favorite Spanish song? From Latin Music?</i>
15:03	Brittany	Mi canción favorita es <i>Incondicional</i> por Prince Royce. <i>My favorite song is Unconditional by Prince Royce.</i>
15:13	Host	Y por qué? <i>And why?</i>
15:21	Brittany	Ah, es bonita y el ritmo es muy excelente. <i>Oh, it's pretty and the rhythm is excellent.</i>
15:30	Host	Y dos preguntas más. Cual fue la última cosa que leíste, escuchaste, o miraste en español? <i>What was the last thing you read, looked at or heard in Spanish?</i>
15:38	Brittany	Puede repetir eso por favor? <i>Can you repeat that please?</i>
15:38	Host	Si, ¿Cuál fue la última cosa que leíste, miraste o escuchaste en español? <i>Sure, what was the last thing you read, looked at or heard in Spanish?</i>
15:47	Brittany	Bueno, escuché [a la] canción en español. La canción <i>Tengo</i> por Millie Quezada. Y ella es de Republica Dominicana. <i>Well, I listened to the song in Spanish...the song "I Have" by Millie Quezada. And she is from the Dominican Republic.</i>
16:35	Host	La última pregunta: saca tu teléfono y traduce el último texto que recibiste al español. <i>The last question: Take out your phone and translate the last text you received in Spanish.</i>
16:40	Brittany	El último texto fue "claro que sí" <i>The last text was "yes of course."</i>
16:53	Host	Eso es todo, "claro que sí"? <i>That's it, "yes of course"?</i>
16:55	Brittany	Sí (risas) <i>Yes (laughs)</i>
16:57	Host	Un mensaje muy corto, muy bien. <i>A very short message, very good.</i>
17:00	Brittany	Si, muy corto.

		<i>Yes, very short.</i>
17:02	Host	<p>OK, so thanks for participating in the quick fire round. And thank you for taking the time out to answer a few questions. Buena suerte con tu español.</p> <p><i>Good luck with your Spanish.</i></p>
17:07	Host	<p>I hope you enjoyed that conversation with Brittany. As you can see, she is full of energy and has made a lot of progress with her Spanish because she found an approach that works for her. So I encourage you, again, if you're looking for some motivation and a way to stay consistent, think about joining us in the Spanish Con Salsa community. So as you know here with the podcast, we provide a lot of information about learning Spanish, ways to do it more efficiently, different dialects of Spanish learning with the culture, with music. And that is exactly what we do inside the private membership community for Spanish Con Salsa. So if you're interested in learning more about Spanish con Salsa, Go to spanishconsalsa.com/join that's spanishconsalsa.com/join and you get all of the details about the support that we provide to our members.</p> <p>So there's access to lots of courses that'll help you improve your pronunciation, your conversation skills, and also learn the language and learn about the culture through, of course, music. So that is part of the community. We also have, as we already talked about, group challenges, our members really support each other as they're learning. And we also have a team of coaches that will help you when you get stuck or really just help you come up with a plan that'll work for you. Because again, learning Spanish is something that you have to personalize and it has to really work for your particular interest, your lifestyle at the time you have available, um, and really where you want to go, right? So if you want to be fluent in Spanish because you want to travel or because you plan to retire one day in a Spanish speaking country or just because you liked the music, I want to chat with friends, right?</p> <p>Those are all very different goals and you may have different things that you need to learn and that you want to focus on. So our team of coaches will help you personalize a plan that will work for you and to help you also get in some much needed conversation practice in a really non-intimidating way. But again, I could go on and on about it. You can check it out on the website. All the details are listed there. So just go to spanishconsalsa.com/join if you're interested in checking it out. Now, you will have an opportunity to try a free trial if you sign up. So if you're interested and you just</p>

	<p>want to check it out and poke around, you're more than welcome to do that. And I also have a little bit of an incentive. You know, I have to look out for you guys that are listeners of the podcast.</p> <p>So if you put in the discount code PODCAST, you will see a little bit of a discount there off of the regular rate for membership. So again, put in the discount code at checkout. It's going to be just the word podcast, one word, and you'll see a special discount. That again is exclusive to listeners of the Learn Spanish Con Salsa podcast.</p> <p>So that is it for this episode. I hope you'll join us next week for our next episode of the Learn Spanish Con Salsa podcast. We'll be talking more about how to make Spanish a habit. So, you know, sometimes we get caught up in reaching goals, but we don't really think about how we're going to get there and we don't put the systems in place to make sure that we make consistent progress. So we'll really kind of continue this conversation about how you can make learning Spanish a part of your life and a part of your daily routine. And I'll give you some more specifics on that in next week's episode.</p> <p>So with that, as always, I hope that something that you heard today will help you go one step closer from beginner to bilingual, adios.</p>
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Show Notes: learnspanishconsalsa.com/15

Links and Resources

- [Tengo](#) por Milly Quezada
- [Incondicional](#) por Prince Royce

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