



Chile Vocabulary Lesson

Hello and welcome to the vocabulary lesson for the conversation “Chile.” This is a conversation between Joe and a friend of ours named Will. Will had lived and worked in Chile for a year.

Okay, let's begin.

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At the beginning of the conversation Joe says, “Hey, you know what dawned on me?”

Dawned on me. Dawned on me means to realize, to remember. Dawned on me. For example: After leaving the grocery store, it dawned on me that I forgot to buy a cucumber. Dawned on me.

Then Will says, “What’s that?” Joe says, “The last time I saw you, you told, you mentioned something and, I didn’t even realize it until we had already gone our separate ways. And that was that you had lived in Chile before.”

Gone our separate ways. This means when people who were together leave one another. Gone our separate ways. For example: When the bar closed, it was time for us to go our separate ways. So, in this case, go our separate ways.

So then Joe goes on to say, “I didn’t even remember that. It’s like I don’t know...” Will says, “Yeah, I...” And Joe says, “know if you ever told me that.” And then Will says, “Yeah, I lived in Chile, uh, for a year not long after college.”

Yeah. Yeah is just slang or casual or informal for yes. Not long after. Not long after is a short amount of time. For example: Phillip started a summer job working at the bank not long after he finished school for the year. Not long after.

Okay, then moving on in the conversation Joe says, “Wait, what year was this?” And Will says, “That was in 1992.” And Joe says, “Oh, man. So, did you, pretty much right after you graduated, you just decided to travel, or...”

When Joe says, “Oh man...” That’s just an expression, like, oh wow, oh gee, oh man. Pretty much right after. Now this means right around the time of or close to the time of. Pretty much right after.

Then Will says, “It took me a year to save up the money and then I went travelin’. Yeah, I planned on goin’ right away. But it took me a little while and, uh, I made it.”

Travelin’, goin’... these are just shortened for... Travelin’ is shortened for traveling. Goin’ is shortened for going.



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Then Joe says, “Did you know Spanish at the time, or...”

What Joe’s saying here is, did you know how to speak Spanish at the time you were in Chile? Did you know Spanish at the time.

And then Will says, “I thought I did.” And Joe laughs. And Will says, “When I got to Chile I realized I had no idea what anybody was talking about.”

Had no idea. That means did not know. For example: I had no idea what I wanted to do when I finished high school. Had no idea.

And then Joe says, “Was it because they were speaking too fast, or...” And Will says, “It was because I didn’t really know Spanish.” So then Joe laughs and says, “Wait, how much, how much Spanish did you have before that?”

How much Spanish did you have before that? So what he’s saying is, how many Spanish classes did you have before going to Chile?

“Did you take some in college? Or was it just from living in San Francisco and living in The Mission or something?”

The Mission. This is short for the Mission District. District is like an area. The Mission District is a neighborhood in San Francisco. For example: When Joe first moved to San Francisco, he found an apartment in The Mission. The Mission.

So then Will says, “Oh, I had taken Spanish since I was twelve years old. And I was, and I took it, uh, for about three years in college as well. And when I got to Chile, it was really difficult, um, uh. However I was able to get by. And I was able to make friends.”

I had taken Spanish. So what Will is saying is I had taken Spanish classes since I was twelve years old. I had taken Spanish. Get by. Get by means to do okay by using only what you have. For example: Although I did not speak Spanish very well, I was able to get by when I went to Mexico. Get by.

Then Joe says, “Right.” And Will goes on to say, “And I met some really nice people who were patient with the language and everything, uh... It was a group of, uh, people who liked to, uh, um, hang out and play guitar and go dancing...”

So he met some really nice people who were patient. Patient means people... these were people who were willing to take their time with him. For example, they spoke slowly when they were talking to him. Patient.



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Hang out. Hang out means to casually pass time. For example: My friends and I like to hang out at the café near my house. Hang out.

So then Joe says, “Oh that’s good.” And Will says, “and there were a lot of, a lot of people, a lot of foreigners, like travelers, in the group. But not like tourists. But people who were kind of my age and who were living there.”

Kind of. Kind of means sort of. For example: When I first visited Chicago, I thought it was kind of like New York. Kind of.

Then Joe says, “Yeah.” And Will says, “And they, uh, uh. There were these Chilean people who, uh, basically were my friends the whole time I was there.”

Basically is almost used as a filler here. Filler meaning it’s not even really needed. But it can mean just. For example: The people were just my friends. The people were basically my friends.

Okay then Will goes on to say, “I was only there for a year. But still I met a lot of really good people, uh, very early on. And by the time I left I spoke a lot of Spanish.”

Early on. Early on means in the beginning. For example: Early on when I moved to San Francisco I would get lost a lot. Now that I have lived here for three years I never get lost. Early on.

And Joe says, “A year, that’s a good amount of time.”

A good amount. That means a lot. For example: I spent a good amount of money buying a plane ticket to Thailand. A good amount.

Then Will goes on to say, “Yeah, I wouldn’t have been able to learn so much Spanish as I did in a year though if I hadn’t been in school for so long. Even though it wasn’t, uh, um, even though it wasn’t super fa-...a super fast way to learn Spanish, uh... I mean I learned so much more a year in Chile than I did in all the school that I ever had.”

Super fast. That just means very fast. Super fast way to learn Spanish.

Then Will goes on to say, “Uh, it still gave me a really good foundation.”

So good foundation means a good amount of information to start with. For example: I learned to speak a little Spanish as a child. It was a good foundation for studying Spanish in college. Good foundation.

So Will goes on to say, “So when I went to, uh, Chile I was able to, uh, to make friends there and, uh,



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speak the language almost all the time. And by the time I came back I knew a lot of Spanish.”

By the time I came back I knew a lot of Spanish. What he’s saying here is by the time I came back to America, by the time I returned to America, I knew a lot of Spanish.

And then he goes on to say, “That was fun, but, uh, the trip itself was the best part. The experience of, uh, living and traveling and working in Chile was something I’ll never forget. That was one of the best years of my life.” And then Joe says, “Was that the first time that you’d done any sort of, like, y’know, traveling like that? Or had you, had you gone on a trip like this, y’know, while you were in college during summer? Or...”

Y’know is used a lot in conversation and it’s just short for “you know.”

Then Will says, “I had gone on, uh, uh many trips to Mexico...” And Joe says, “Uh-huh.” And Will then goes on to say, “when I was in college. Every chance I could, of course, I would go to Mexico. Ah, I love Mexico.” And Joe says, “Yeah, it’s...” And Will says, “When I...” And Joe says, “so close.” And Will says, “when I was in Chile, that was the first time though that I took a trip hitchhiking.”

Hitchhiking. This means to travel by getting a free ride in a car with someone you do not know. For example: In Hawaii I did not have to rent a car because hitchhiking is very easy. Hitchhiking.

Then Will goes on to say, “In the summer I went to the south of Chile and, uh, that was a really good time. Uh, when I first got there we had, uh, I had no idea what I was doin’.”

Had no idea what I was doin’. So he’s saying he didn’t know what he was doing. Doin’ is just short for doing.

And Will goes on to say, “And I just thought, I’m just gonna wing it...”

Gonna is short for going to. Wing it. Wing it means to do something without any planning. For example: We planned to eat at the restaurant but when we arrived it was closed. So we had to wing it. Wing it.

So then Will goes on to say, “uh... I’m never gonna be able to get a job here and, uh... I just, uh, went on this fantastic trip. And when I got back to the city, uh, realizing that since I wasn’t able to get a job I was probably gonna have to go home...”

Fantastic trip. Fantastic just means great trip. This really good trip.

So he goes on to say, “One of the people that I met, um, in the first week that I was there offered me a job. Or told me about a job that I later got at the school that she worked at. So I was able to live there a whole year.”



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So first Will is saying he spoke with someone that offered him a job and then he corrects himself. He changes what he says. And he says "Or she told me about a job that I later got..." Offered a job means someone is giving him a job. Someone is asking him to work there. So he corrects himself... "Oh no, she didn't offer me a job. She just told me about the job."

So then Joe says, "What were you doin' there?"

Doin', being short for doing.

Will says, "I was teaching, uh, geography and literature to, uh, a lot of different aged kids, mostly around eleven and twelve." And Joe says, "Oh that sounds like a great job. You actually get a chance to interact with, uh, the younger generation as well."

Actually here means really. You really get a chance to interact with the younger generation. Younger generation means group of people who are younger. Younger generation.

And then Will says, "Absolutely."

So absolutely meaning definitely. For sure.

He goes on to say, "That's why I went there in the first place. Although goin' salsa dancing and, uh, hanging out with my friends was, uh, was another really good part of it." And Joe laughs, "I can just see you out on the town salsa dancing."

Out on the town. This means to have fun while going to different places in a town or city. For example: On Friday night I like to go out on the town with my friends. We usually go to a bar and then go dancing. Out on the town.

And then Will says, "Yeah, I, uh, I was a pretty terrible salsa dancer, it's true. But, I had a lot of fun."

Pretty terrible. This means very bad.

And Joe says, "Well, you know what? I guess that's really all that matters, doesn't it?" And Will says, "That's right. Yeah, absolutely when you go on a trip like that. That's what you want is to learn a lot and have a really good time."

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So, this concludes the vocabulary lesson for the conversation "Chile." I would like to point out some things.



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In this conversation as well as all of the conversations, you're going to hear many words that have been shortened. For example: "Goin'" short for going, "travelin'" short for traveling, "y'know" short for you know, "gonna" short for going to, "doin'" short for doing. You won't see this ever in written English but you will hear words shortened in day to day conversations. You will also hear a lot of "uh-huh", which is just like saying, okay, or yes, "uh-huh". You'll hear a lot of "uh", "uh", "um", "um". Again, you won't see these things in written English but you will hear them in conversations. "Uh" and "um" are just times when native English speakers will pause or take a break in something that they're saying. It's just kind of breaking up the conversation. Or maybe they're thinking of what they're going to be saying next. You'll also hear slang or very informal words such as "yeah". "Yeah" being short, or not really even short... It's more of slang or informal or casual for yes. You'll hear "yeah" used a lot. Something else you will hear a lot used in conversations is "like". Many times "like" is just used as a filler. So that means that it's not even really necessary to say it. It's not needed. It's just kind of put in the conversation. For example: "Like, I don't know if you ever told me that." Here, "like" is not even needed. I could just say, I don't know if you ever told me that. But "like" was put in there. So many times this happens. It's just kind of put in for no reason. "Like" can also mean, as you probably know, to have positive or good feelings about someone. "I really *like* Tom Cruise. I think he's a very good actor." "Like" can also be used to compare something. Or it could mean such as. Here's an example of this: "Was that the first time that you had done any sort of, you know, traveling *like* that? Or had you gone on a trip *like* this before?" So, was this the first time that you had done any sort of traveling "like" that... such as that. That's a completely different meaning for "like" then... such as.

So now, to make sure you have a basic understanding of the vocabulary, listen to this conversation... this vocabulary lesson a few times if you need to. And make sure, always make sure you do it in a relaxed way. Don't get too worried about it. And then, when you're ready, go to the mini-story.

Alright. Bye, bye.