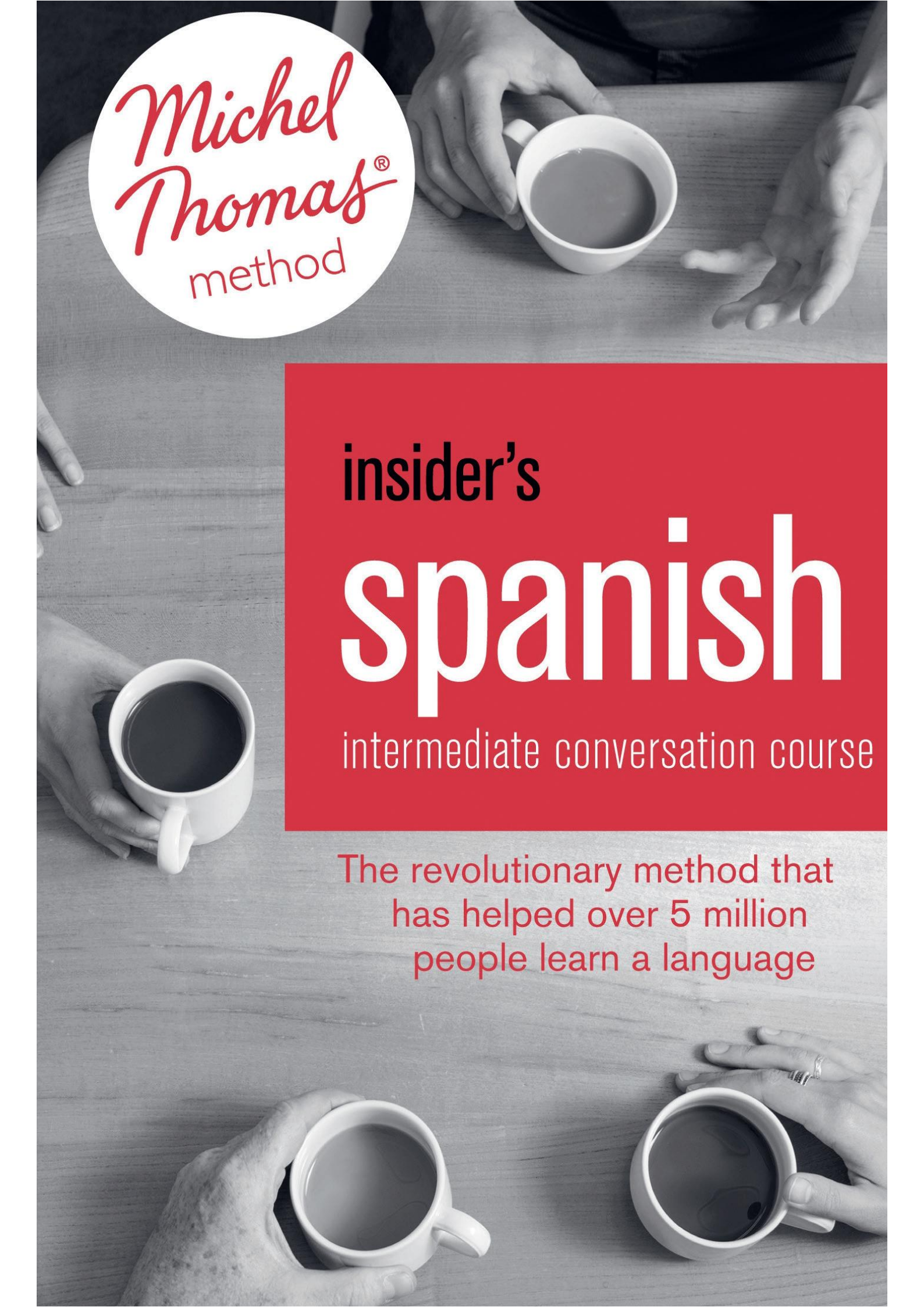




Michel  
Thomas<sup>®</sup>  
method

insider's

# spanish

intermediate conversation course

The revolutionary method that  
has helped over 5 million  
people learn a language

*To Sarah, our mother and sister*

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# Introduction

Welcome to *Insider's Spanish: Intermediate Conversation Course with the Michel Thomas Method*. This conversation course is designed to offer you, the intermediate learner, an opportunity to advance your fluency, listening comprehension and conversation skills, expand your vocabulary (words and expressions) and improve your grammar. It is based around authentic conversations that provide examples of Spanish and a view of the culture of the people who speak it. By the end of the course you will be able to communicate more naturally by employing **conversation strategies** used by native speakers, and to discuss current topics with confidence and **fluency**.

With this course you'll acquire insider knowledge about the culture and the native use of the language. You will gain cultural insight through the conversation topics and opinions of the speakers, as well as through what the teacher adds. With the conversation strategies, you will learn ways of managing and **maintaining** conversations naturally and appropriately. By using expressions to 'show your interest', 'change a topic', etc. you will sound polite and feel more confident when having conversations.

# Course summary

- ▶ Intermediate-level audio conversation course with an emphasis on conversation strategies, fluency and insider knowledge
- ▶ Michel Thomas's 'second phase', following on from his *Foundation*, *Intermediate* and *Language Builder* courses, incorporating listening and conversation
- ▶ Appropriate for all learners at an intermediate level, not just those who have completed the Michel Thomas courses
- ▶ Real, inherently interesting conversations between friends that give an insider's view of a 'hot topic'
- ▶ The author's voice guides you through the language and the target culture, also offering an Insider's view. This includes not only teaching the language but also guiding you through the appropriate use of language in the cultural context, helping you avoid embarrassment and misunderstanding
- ▶ New, more colloquial vocabulary
- ▶ Useful intermediate-level conversation strategies to help learners sound more natural and fluent, as well as polite and appropriate
- ▶ 'Language plus': listen in on a Michel Thomas Method lesson with teacher and students covering language structures
- ▶ 'Sounds of the language' section, with models provided by native speakers, including individual sounds, fluency and intonation
- ▶ 7 hours of recorded material

**\*Please note there are no track numbers on the app course, but you can use the headings in the phrase list as a guide to follow the booklet.**



# Entretenimiento

## Entertainment

**By the end of this chapter you will:**

- ▶ **have learned to discuss popular TV shows.**
- ▶ **be confident using conversation strategies to:**
  - ▷ **qualify something that's been said.**
  - ▷ **seek other people's opinions.**
  - ▷ **introduce your own opinion to the conversation.**
  - ▷ **express shock and surprise.**
- ▶ **be able to understand and use the vosotros verb forms (Spain).**
- ▶ **understand the relative importance of fluency and accuracy.**
- ▶ **be able to recognize and understand some Spanish colloquialisms.**

## 1.1 Key vocabulary

### 🎧 track 01.01

|                              |                                   |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| entretenido, entretenimiento | entertaining, entertainment       |
| rato                         | short time, while                 |
| encerrado                    | shut in                           |
| engancharse (a)              | to become hooked (on)             |
| alejado                      | distant, far                      |
| anunciante                   | advertiser                        |
| éxito                        | success                           |
| gente                        | people                            |
| comportarse                  | to behave                         |
| espantarse                   | to be shocked, scared, frightened |

## 1.2 Conversation 1: **Los reality** – ¿a favor o en contra? *Reality TV – for or against?*

Reality television is a relatively new genre, and one that can polarize opinion. From the earliest experiments it has evolved quickly into hundreds of different shows, from 'fly on the wall' celebrity reality shows, to

the type where people are confined in unfamiliar surroundings, and the even newer type of 'scripted reality' shows, which market themselves as something of a hybrid between real life documentary and reality TV.

I spoke to a couple of new friends from work, Nando and Eva, about reality TV shows to find out what they think. The first time you listen to our conversation try to work out if Nando would take part in a reality show and what Eva's reaction is to his reply.

🎧 **track 01.02**

**VJC**

Quería preguntaros acerca de un tema que puede resultar bastante polémico. ¿A vosotros os gusta ver los *reality shows*?

**NANDO**

Pues... Puede ser entretenido, pero solo para un rato. La verdad es que ver a doce personas encerradas en una casa no tiene mucha gracia, por lo menos para mí.

**VJC**

A mí tampoco me parece muy interesante. ¿Y tú qué opinas, Eva?

**EVA**

Personalmente, creo que no es muy productivo para quienes lo siguen, pues implica engancharse a algo que está muy alejado de la realidad. Por lo general, los participantes no aportan nada interesante, y lo único que les interesa es ser conocidos.

**VJC**

A pesar de todo, muchísima gente los sigue con expectación y un fervor casi religioso. ¿Por qué creéis que tienen tanto éxito?

**NANDO**

Al principio, cuando eran la novedad, sí que tenían mucha audiencia; sin embargo, no estoy seguro de que esto siga siendo así. Estos programas tuvieron su auge en la televisión, pero después de varias ediciones, todo se vuelve bastante reiterativo y aburrido.

**EVA**

¡Menudo fraude! Son solamente negocios de unos cuantos, que utilizan gente simplemente para llenar un espacio en TV. Yo creo que ya los canales no saben qué inventar y, por eso, ponen programas con el único objetivo de tener anunciantes que les paguen montones de dinero.

**VJC**

Entonces, ¿consideraríais participar en un *reality* alguna vez? Imaginad que fuerais seleccionados al azar.

**EVA**

¡Ni hablar! Son denigrantes, y no entiendo cómo la gente participa solo para tener dos minutos de fama.

**NANDO**

Bueno, pues, si me hubieran elegido para participar, me pagarían un montón de dinero, ¿no? Así que si fuese un *reality* bueno, tal vez lo haría.

**EVA**

¡Nando! ¿En serio? ¡No sabía que te vendías al mejor postor!

### 1.2.1 CONVERSATION 1: DID THAT MAKE SENSE? CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING!

#### 🎧 track 01.03

- 1 ¿A alguno de los dos amigos, Nando y Eva, les gusta ver los *reality shows*?
- 2 Según Eva, ¿qué es lo único que les interesa a los participantes de los *reality shows*?
- 3 ¿Qué quiere decir Nando con la expresión 'tuvieron su auge'?

## 1.3 Language plus

During these lessons you will be listening in on a class with two other students. Take part by stopping your playing device when I ask them questions (indicated by beeps in tracks 01.04 and 01.05 only), so that you can work out your own answers. Then listen to the correct responses.

### 1.3.1 CONVERSATION STRATEGIES

#### 🎧 track 01.04

#### QUALIFY SOMETHING THAT'S BEEN SAID

**tal vez / por lo menos / por lo general** *maybe / at least / in general*

#### SEEK OTHER PEOPLE'S OPINIONS

**¿Qué crees? / ¿Y tú qué opinas? / ¿Por qué crees...? / ¿Considerarías...?**

*What do you think? / And what's your opinion? / Why do you think...? / Would you consider...?*

#### INTRODUCING YOUR OWN OPINION TO THE CONVERSATION

**Para mí / Yo creo que / Personalmente** *For me / I think / believe (that) / Personally*

#### EXPRESS SHOCK AND SURPRISE

**¡Ni hablar! / ¿En serio? / ¡No sabía...!** *No way! / Are you serious? / Seriously? / I didn't know...!*

## 1.3.2 THE VOSOTROS VERB FORMS

### 🎧 track 01.05

In your earlier studies of Spanish, you might have not come across the **vosotros** form, for two reasons: firstly, it is an informal *you* form (the plural of **tú**), and when you are in the early stages of language learning the chances are that you won't know your interlocutors very well and should use the formal **usted/ustedes**. The second reason is that many students learn Spanish in order to use it in Latin America, where the **vosotros** form is never used, not even in the most informal of situations – the **ustedes** form is used in both formal and informal situations. Now, however, you are no longer a beginner, and if you are going to speak Spanish in Spain you will hear, and need to use, the **vosotros** form.

#### 1.3.2.1 The -is ending

The key to the **vosotros** verb forms is the **-is** ending which, in combination as **-áis, -éis, -ís** and **-réis**, is stressed in the present and future tenses. Remove the **r** of the infinitive and replace it by **is**.

|         | <b>-ar</b> | <b>-er</b> | <b>-ir</b> |
|---------|------------|------------|------------|
| present | -áis       | -éis       | -ís        |
| future  | -réis      |            |            |

**¿Qué pensáis de los *reality*?** *What do you think of reality shows?*

**¿Por qué creéis que tienen tanto éxito?** *Why do you think they have such success?*

**Os referís a la novela de Orwell, ¿no?** *You're referring to Orwell's novel, aren't you?*

**¿Participaréis en un *reality*?** *Will you take part in a reality show?*

In the present subjunctive you switch tracks (with **-ar** verbs switching to **-e**, and **-er** and **-ir** verbs to **-a**):

|         | <b>-ar</b> | <b>-er</b> | <b>-ir</b> |
|---------|------------|------------|------------|
| present | -éis       | -áis       |            |

**Quiero que imaginéis el mundo de Orwell.** *I want you to imagine Orwell's world.*

**Diego quiere que tengáis mucho éxito.** *Diego wants you to be successful.*

For a positive command, change the **-r** of the infinitive (to form) into a **-d**; for a negative command, use the subjunctive (so switch tracks, as above):

| positive   |            |            | negative    |             |            |
|------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| <b>-ar</b> | <b>-er</b> | <b>-ir</b> | <b>-ar</b>  | <b>-er</b>  | <b>-ir</b> |
| <b>-ad</b> | <b>-ed</b> | <b>-id</b> | <b>-éis</b> | <b>-áis</b> |            |

**Imaginad que...**

*Imagine that...*

**¡Elegid el mejor!**

*Choose the best (one)!*

**¡No os enganchéis a nada!**

*Don't get hooked on anything!*

In the other tenses the verb is stressed on the syllable before the end.

|                           | <b>-ar</b>     | <b>-er</b>     | <b>-ir</b> |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------|
| imperfect ('w-ing' tense) | <b>-áis</b>    |                |            |
| preterite (simple past)   | <b>-asteis</b> | <b>-isteis</b> |            |
| conditional               | <b>-ríais</b>  |                |            |

**¿Por qué no nos pagabais montones de dinero?**

*Why didn't you (used to) pay us loads of money?*

**¿Creíais que era aburrido?**

*Did you think that it was boring?*

**¿Os vendisteis al mejor postor?**

*Did you sell yourselves to the highest bidder?*

### 1.3.2.2 Irregular verb forms

There are only two irregular verb forms for **vosotros**, and these are both in the present tense: **sois** (from **ser**) and **vais** (from **ir**). All other forms for these verbs are regular in that they follow the pattern of the other persons for these verbs: present subjunctive **seáis, vayáis**; imperfect **erais, ibais**.

### 1.3.3 EXERCISES TO PRACTISE THE USE OF THE VOSOTROS VERB FORM

#### 🎧 track 01.06

**Translate into English:**

- 1 ¿Cuándo vais a participar en un *reality*?
- 2 ¿Creéis que los *reality* son denigrantes?
- 3 ¿Queréis ver un episodio entero?
- 4 ¿Os referís a la novela *1984*?
- 5 ¿Pensabais que los *reality* serían tan populares?

**Translate into Spanish, using the *vosotros* form (answers with the *ustedes* form are also supplied):**

- 6** Have you participated in reality shows?
- 7** I suggest that you watch television tomorrow.
- 8** Do what you want!
- 9** I will tell you what you should do to get two minutes of fame.
- 10** What did you think of Orwell's novel?

### 1.3.4 THE SOUNDS OF SPANISH: FLUENCY VS. ACCURACY

#### 🎧 track 01.07

When speaking Spanish, don't get too hung up on trying to achieve 100% accuracy in pronunciation and grammar: research suggests that fluency is more important than accuracy. And anecdotal evidence supports this view: when we are relaxed or uninhibited we find it much easier to speak a foreign language! Try imitating our speakers in these phrases. Go for speed rather than precision.

**¡Menudo fraude! Yo creo que ya los canales no saben qué inventar.**

*What a scam! I think that the channels don't know what to make up any more.*

**Así que si fuese un *reality* bueno, tal vez lo haría.**

*So if it were a good reality show, maybe I'd do it.*

**¿En serio? ¡No sabía que te vendías al mejor postor!**

*Are you serious? I didn't know you'd sell yourself to the highest bidder!*

### 1.3.5 COLLOQUIALISMS

Informal, colloquial sayings and phrases don't make much sense if you translate them literally, so it's useful to be able to recognize them.

#### FROM THE CONVERSATION

**(Para) un rato**

*For a while*

**(No) tiene gracia**

*It's (not) funny*

**¡Ni hablar!**

*No way!*

**Un montón de...**

*Loads of...*

**¿En serio?**

*Seriously?*

**Menudo/a fraude / basura / coincidencia**

*What a scam / load of rubbish / coincidence*

## SOME OTHER SPANISH COLLOQUIALISMS

|                          |                                                      |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>¡Qué guay!</b>        | <i>Cool! (Spain)</i>                                 |
| <b>¡Qué lindo/linda!</b> | <i>Beautiful! / Wonderful! (South America)</i>       |
| <b>Pasarlo de miedo</b>  | <i>To have a great time</i>                          |
| <b>Vaya...</b>           | <i>Well...</i>                                       |
| <b>Me da igual</b>       | <i>I don't care / mind / It doesn't matter to me</i> |
| <b>De vez en cuando</b>  | <i>From time to time</i>                             |

## 1.4 Conversation 2: El concepto del 'Gran Hermano' *The 'Big Brother' concept*

The very first reality TV show, 'Big Brother', shot to success and popularized a whole genre. But not everyone who watched it would have read George Orwell's novel *1984*, from which the 'Big Brother' name was taken and the concept substantially adapted. The book portrays a dark dystopia where citizens live under constant surveillance by the all-seeing government, via screens on the walls of every room.

I spoke to media journalist Diego Aguas de Zafonero to find out more about why the reality TV show concept is apparently so popular. What is his explanation for the popularity of the 'Big Brother' concept? What does he think of Orwell's novel?

### 🎧 track 01.08

- VJC** Como periodista cultural, me imagino que podrías tener una idea de los *reality shows* distinta a la opinión pública general. ¿Qué opinas del '*reality*'?
- DIEGO** Es interesante ver cómo han evolucionado a partir de un concepto bastante diferente. Si uno habla de 'Gran Hermano' – o 'Big Brother' – actualmente, muchos daríamos por hecho que se está hablando del popular *reality*, mientras que el concepto tiene un origen mucho más complicado y antiguo.
- VJC** Sí, te refieres a la novela *1984* de Orwell, ¿verdad? Es un libro muy interesante. No obstante, es..., no sé, más pesimista y menos accesible que el tipo de serie de televisión que ha surgido con el mismo nombre.

**DIEGO**

Exacto. El *reality show* 'Gran Hermano' hizo famoso este género en todo el mundo, y supuso una gran revolución como programa de televisión. Sin embargo, el concepto que Orwell introduce en su novela describe un gobierno obsesionado con la vigilancia constante e ininterrumpida, algo no muy positivo que los creadores del programa modificaron, en pro del entretenimiento.

**VJC**

¡Y ha tenido un éxito extraordinario! Yo recuerdo cuando 'Big Brother' era más o menos el único *reality show* en la tele, y para mucha gente era casi una obsesión.

**DIEGO**

Y todo partió de la idea de poner a un grupo de gente normal en observación continua y sin pausa. Para mucha gente, resulta muy tentador ver cómo se comportan otras personas, y comprobar que tenemos puntos de vista diferentes, pero también aspectos en común.

**VJC**

Y personalmente, ¿te gusta verlos?

**DIEGO**

Puf... Me da bastante igual. Los veo de vez en cuando, puede que vea un episodio entero. Pero temo que si Orwell estuviera vivo hoy en día, se espantaría al ver cómo su concepto se ha masificado, lo que, en parte, ha dado la razón a su predicción.

### 1.4.1 CONVERSATION 2: DID THAT MAKE SENSE? CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING!

#### 🎧 track 01.09

- 1 ¿Cuál fue el origen del concepto 'Gran Hermano'?
- 2 Los creadores del programa modificaron el concepto de Orwell – ¿por qué?
- 3 ¿A qué se refiere Diego con la expresión 'masificado'?

## 1.5 What do you think? Time for you to take part in a conversation!

#### 🎧 track 01.10

- 1 ¿Te gusta ver los *reality shows*? ¿Por qué (no)?
- 2 ¿Crees que los canales de televisión tienen una responsabilidad social?

- 3 Si un miembro (*member*) de tu familia pensara en participar en un *reality show*, ¿qué le dirías a él o a ella?

**INSIDER'S TIP: PERSONAL SPACE**

Northern Europeans and North Americans often find that the unspoken rules surrounding personal space and contact feel very different in Spain or Latin America. If you're from a country where the social concept of personal space is more or less an arm's length for people you don't know, you might find it unsettling at first to find people you've never met putting their arms around you or taking your hand. Don't be alarmed, or think that you're being treated oddly – it's simply that the idea of personal space is different. Especially as tourists in new countries, we tend to be on the alert for pickpockets or muggers, but try not to let that stop you from relaxing into what are some of the most welcoming social contexts in the world.