

## EPISODE 7: 2 TRUTHS 1 LIE

A: OK. So Ciaran, we were talking that I think, well, we were, you know, trying to figure out things that maybe we would want to talk about on this podcast because we are teachers, but we're also language users. Obviously, we've been students, etcetera, etcetera. And we said maybe it'd be fun for us to do some of the activities that we force our students to do in class, especially the conversation activities because they're kind of fun. They're all like kind of Ice Breakers. They're socializing types of activities, right?

C: Fun, that's what we do. Yeah.

A: I mean I hope so and I we've talked we've talked about it before that the more fun you have when you're studying and in class the more you learn because your affective filter goes down like to get all linguistic and about it, you know. Effective filter goes down, the water comes pouring in, so...

C: and then you're not embarrassed and then you start participating and...

A: Exactly your confidence builds, and you go on to have a fruitful productive life as a happy member of society.

C: That's what we hope!

A: Or not in society. Exactly. So I think we were talking about the... we had to discuss is it two lies and one truth, two truths and one lie. People, I'm sure, do it both ways, but we agreed on two truths and one lie.

C: An absolute classic game.

A: Absolutely. I think it's lots of fun. Linguistically it's great because you can really practice some adjectives that you might not otherwise use if you're not a native speaker, you know, you take some time to think about, carefully construct this kind of



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exaggerated representations of reality. And one lie. Now the truth. You should make them sound as exciting as possible without lying, of course.

C: And you need to ask questions like a detective to make sure that the person is telling the truth.

A: Try to **trip up the other person** and when you answer, you've got to think you're like, 'oh, if I pause too long, will they think I'm lying?'. Or 'if I answer too quickly, will they think I'm telling the truth, or will they think I'm lying?'. There's a lot of psychology involved in. You could also reframe it as a tricking the policeman type of game. In fact, it's practice for the day that you get arrested for inappropriate behavior in an English class. That this is the way the stories would go.

C: It's more than an English class.

A: Exactly.

C: Life experience.

A: So, you're gonna start off and you're gonna tell us, well, say something, a statement, and I will have to inquire and try to figure out if you are true or "**BS**". But we will, we will hold off our judgment until each of us have said our three situations.

C: BS?

A: BS,

C: B...Ah.

A: Yes. Bull poop.

C: OK, yes, not telling the truth.

A: Exactly. Again, one is bull poop and the others are true.

C: I'm going to start. I've got: the Queen of England, who recently passed away.



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A: Yes, rest in peace.

C: May she rest in peace. And the Queen of England, well, she awarded an MBE, which is a member of the British Empire. It's like a medal.

A: It's like a knighthood, right?

C: No, similar. It's not as much as a knighthood.

A: You can call them Sir?

C: No, no, no. But yeah it's along those lines or something. Yeah, well, the Queen of England awarded an MBE to my aunt. Who lives in Northern Ireland.

A: OK, so let's start with a very complicated question. Why?

C: Well, it's actually a very nice story because my aunt had this really big house in the countryside in Ireland and she was a very nice woman.

A: Oh, this is not true at all.

C: Exactly.

A: This is clearly BS.

C: Because she was such a nice person she thought, well, one of the things you can do in society is to help those who are less fortunate than yourself, right?

A: Yeah. I fully agree with that.

C: So she took in kids who for whatever reason had lost their family, who were not with their family. She didn't adopt these kids.

A: OK.

C: Because adopting is different.

A: She kidnapped them.



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C: Not exactly kidnapping either.

A: Somewhere between adoption and kidnapping is...

C: We would call it **fostering**, what she did. She **fostered** children.

A: in the US we have foster homes also.

C: You have that, OK. Well, my aunt had a foster home. So she took these kids in the, you know, who were in unfortunate circumstances, she would keep them, at least until they were...very often until they were 18, or they were, you know, of age to live by themselves. So, she fostered hundreds, maybe even thousands of kids over the years.

A: Interesting. OK.

C: And in the late 90s, my aunt has... is no longer with us.

A: I'm sorry. But she's with the queen.

C: She's with the queen, now, the Queen is with her.

A: Sorry. OK.

C: Get the order right!

A: Sorry.

C: And uh, no, I mean it was brilliant. It was like, this happens around New Year, OK? And. She was in there. She got...It was an envelope. It was a letter, was sent to her house. She opened it.

A: With a million pounds.

C: It did not have £1,000,000. At the stamp of the, you know, written by the Queen saying we'll give you an MBE, come over to Buckingham Palace, you know, date of visit is you know whenever, March the 14th.



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A: If it wasn't actually March the 14<sup>th</sup>, does this count as your untrue story? If it was in fact, March 16th instead?

C: No, no, no.

A: Just to be clear, but this is an important point. Rules of the game when we use this with students, you gotta point out, don't be a jerk.

C: Yeah.

A: You know, like, if your story is not true, it's like, no, I'm actually 1 meter 59, not 1 meter 57, you know?

C: OK, no, she, she actually thought it was her daughter because she had her own family as well. She thought it was her. Yeah.

A: That **played a prank** on her?

C: Yeah, played a prank. So she just kind of threw it in the bin and said, yeah, very funny, everyone. And then I think it was the rest of the family. We're all looking like 'no, no, this, this kind of looks serious'. And did a little bit of investigating. And it was true. She went over to Buckingham Palace with her daughter, had tea with the Queen and the Corgis, and she got her medal. People often ask what was it like to meet her, you know? And she said it was really, it was in and out. She said it wasn't like this massive meeting.

A: So there's wasn't shots or anything, whiskey involved...

C: There's like, about 20 people in, cup of tea, get their medal, and out again. But that's my first story.

A: I have to say for my own happiness, I'm going to choose to believe this story because to Americans, anything related to all that weird royalty stuff just sounds like a magical fairy tale. So, for now, I'll accept it and reserve judgment till later.

C: OK.



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A: I don't know if mine is. Mine's quite more American, right?

C: Go for it.

A: So, um. Basically, my bombastic statement is that we all know what Halloween is. We know the traditions of trick or treat.

C: Halloween is an Irish tradition. Its origins are Irish.

A: Yes. Yeah, everything's Irish.

C: Of course.

A: It's all Hallows Eve, which is really All Saints Day, which is really the same as the 1st of November here. So in the end, I tell my students that Halloween and All Saints Day is actually the same thing.

C: Because Ireland is the center of the universe, didn't you know?

A: It was the US before there was a US.

C: Exactly.

A: That's true.

C: So, Halloween.

A: On Halloween, you know the time of year where obese American children get diabetes. Wait, no, sorry. Where they provide their future, they set up their genetics to get diabetes later in their future, and you go knocking on people's doors and you ask for candy and you're dressed up in your costumes and blah, blah, blah. We used to trick or treat, and we would go to Michael Jordan's house, the basketball player.

C: Michael Jordan. Basketball. Famous, yeah?

A: *The* Michael Jordan. Not like, hey, you know Michael Jordan Goldberg from down the street. No, no, no, no. *The* Michael Jordan.



A: Yeah.

A: His wife Juanita (*Huanita*), now ex-wife Juanita (*Huanita*). Not Juanita. Juanita (*Huanita*) because we're speaking American.

C: Yeah.

A: She would answer the door and we would go trick or treat. And she would give us a gift certificates from McDonald's for a Big Mac, which when you're 13 years old, 12 years old, that's kind of like 1000 calories. Like this is going to keep me going for days. And so we would get those from her. And then we would be happy and be like, oh, my God, Michael Jordan's wife gave us a gift certificate for a Big Mac.

C: Oh, I really want to believe this. I think this is going to be true.

A: Yes?

C: We'll find out later.

A: Alright, so, do you need some details of the story? Any way I can convince you? You're already convinced?

C: I'm convinced.

A: OK. Alright.

C: I'm good. I'm good to go.

A: Ok, you're an easy sell.

C: Easy sell. OK, you had Michael Jordan, I've got George Clooney.

A: We all have George Clooney.

C: Now, George Clooney. My statement here is my brother bought George Clooney a pint of Guinness in a Belfast Pub and watched a game of football with him.

A: Was Bono there?



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C: Bono was not there.

A: I always forget, actually.

C: Bongo.

A: Bongo, OK. So, Bono was not there.

C: Bono was not there. No. I will explain why.

A: OK.

C: As you know, George Clooney, actor. One of the movies or, the movies that he's famous for, Ocean's 11, Ocean's 12, Ocean's 13.

A: Ah, yeah, Michael Clayton.

C: No. Although, I think...

A: That's kind of an Irish name, Michael Clayton.

C: I think that was Soderbergh as well. Was it Steven Soderbergh?

A: it might be. It's a great movie, great movie.

C: Steven Soderbergh uses, as a musical supervisor and as somebody who creates and composes music for his movies, a DJ from Belfast who's called David Holmes.

A: Is this the same story or is this a different story?

C: This is the same story.

A: Ohh, OK.

C: And this is the reason why we're getting to George Clooney. Because David Holmes was asked to do the music for the Ocean's 11 movie.

A: 12, 13, 15 and eight also.





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C: And so obviously he goes over to Los Angeles. The local **lad** from Belfast is like, you know, he's done well for himself. Goes over to Los Angeles. He said it was brilliant because he got to use, you know, he had so much of a budget. He is saying like suddenly instead of using, you know, whatever keyboard is, like, I can actually ask James Brown, trumpet player, to come into the studio slice though saxophone player. So, he had all these musicians. He made the music for these movies and Clooney's really into music, so they got on quite well, and when Clooney was traveling, he would...I mean, David actually still lives in Belfast. And so, you know, when these people travel, they meet up wherever. And one of the things that happens in the UK is some of the big, big football games can be early on. Pretty early.

A: What do you mean, early on?

C: Yeah, like about midday or something. Yeah, early on the day.

A: To keep the hooligans from getting too drunk?

C: Pretty much, yeah. It's like if you have the game at 12:00 o'clock, they can't be that drunk by that time.

A: Breaking stereotypes about football fans.

C: So, you will often get like a huge game, Derby Game or something early, early.

A: A Derby game! No way!

C: Early on the day to avoid...Yeah. And my brother thought yeah, he's like 'it's about 12:00 o'clock'. He thought 'I'm just gonna **nip down** to the pub, watch the game, come back, cook lunch'. So, he goes to the pub by himself, very few people there, and when he goes in, he goes 'that really looks like', you know, David Holmes because they live in the same neighborhood and 'that really looks like George Clooney', and that *is* George Clooney. So, he goes over. Introduce themselves. Say 'look, I don't really want to bother



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you, etcetera. But, you know, big fan of the movies', you know, and they say, 'yeah, yeah. I mean, why don't you sit down?' And...

A: But did he know David Holmes or no?

C: No, personally, no.

A: OK.

C: I mean, he knew who he was.

A: He didn't have friends in common or something?

C: No, no, no, no, no, no.

C: But he knew they lived in a similar neighborhood

A: He's that weirdo in the pub bothering the famous musician.

C: And the famous people said, well, you know, since you seem OK, sit down, have a pint.

A: OK, when we get tired of you, we'll kick you out.

C: Exactly.

A: OK.

C: Yeah.

A: Alright. Well, I'll buy that for now, I guess.

C: Right.

A: So, that's interesting though. Alright, I guess we're gonna...

C: Continue.

A: Yeah, we're gonna continue with famous people and basketball because again, I'm from Chicago. Of course, you knew this, so you didn't ask me how it is possible that you



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used to trick or treat at Michael Jordan's from Chicago, etcetera. So, I've, I've grown up playing basketball pretty competitively my whole life. And there was a really nice sports club. I don't know...gym, but gym, you know, sounds like Rocky. We're talking like this is called the East Bay Club. It was in like a, I don't know, 50th floor of a skyscraper in Chicago. Maybe, actually, maybe it was in an older lower limit in in the downtown, like the posh business area of Chicago. And my cousins used to go there, like, between cousins who are younger, and they used to go there and like they knew that I was a big basketball player and like basketball, like cool. So people who, you know, lots of people in the US want to play basketball. Whenever they can, blah blah blah. So they invited me down there to play one day. And this was years ago, OK, this was pre-2000, whatever that was, four or two, whatever year becomes relevant in a minute. And we were playing basketball and all of a sudden, like, a guy came in like a thin, you know, like a 10, 20, 15 years older than me comes in with like clearly security guards and black suits and stuff.

C: Somebody famous.

A: Well, exactly. He starts stretching and then comes on the court. Like starts shooting around with us and like, he's just a left-handed guy. Like skinny, kind of a little taller than me. I'm not that tall. And like, he's decent, you know, and we start playing, going, we don't know, play ball for like an hour or two hours. It was fun. You know, he leaves talking to my cousins and my cousins are like, you know who that is? I'm like, who? That's Barack Obama. I'm like...

C: Whoa.

A: Like again, pre-2002, whatever. Before he was president, he was...was he a senator? I guess he was. Yeah, I think he was. Senator, State senator from Chicago. Congressman, whatever. One, one of the... I had no idea who he was.

C: Right.



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A: You know, this was in the, I guess it would have been in the 90s late 90s. And he leaves and like ohh, yeah he's this, this, this, you know, he's from the neighborhood. He's from Hawaii. But you know he became a politician in Chicago. He lives in the neighborhood like South of the Loop there by University of Chicago actually.

C: Right.

A: Barack's Old house is there and it's beautiful. Beautiful. There's amazing houses in that neighborhood. And yeah. And he leaves and afterwards like oh that's cool. Didn't become a story until you know, after, I guess, was it 2002, 2004? Let's see, 2020, 16, 12, 8, 4 would have been 2004, before he became president. And I'm like, wow, I just got a story.

C: Wow.

A: Yes.

C: Oh, I really want to believe that as well.

A: All right.

C: it could be. It could be. Because definitely...I know, Barack, Chicago.

A: Especially, you know, about the East Bank. I think I said East Bay club. East Bank Club because it's on the east Bank of the river. That's why. Really nice place. I'm not sure if it's there anymore.

C: OK.

A: All right, back to you.

C: My final one. This time it's about myself because I have my aunt, I have my brother and now myself. And I was the one-on-one teacher of somebody who's I think a little bit famous.

A: Is it Piqué?



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C: No, somebody called David Bisbal.

A: Sure, David Bisbal. Operación Triunfo, season one, baby!

C: David...

A: Do you know, do you know what is it?

C: I know exactly about season one, of course.

A: OK. Were you here for season one?

C: Of course, I was.

A: That was huge! People went insane about that show.

C: I know.

A: It's like The Voice for us anglo-people

C: Because, and this is the very reason why I was the one-on-one teacher. Because in the first season of this show, Operation Triunfo, they had a voice coach.

A: OK.

C: if you remember this?

A: I mean, I didn't really pay attention.

C: OK, you weren't paying attention.

A: but like, I had friends who would watch it.

C: The voice coach was somebody called Helen from Liverpool.

A: OK, another Liverpoolian!

C: A Liverpoolian, who is a good friend.

A: OK, what's her last name? Well, no, we're not gonna go with last names.



C: No, no, no.

A: But you know her last name?

C: I do. I do. Yeah, yeah, I know it. Well, Helen obviously was the voice coach. Now, this was brilliant because the show was like, you know, really big. **Took off big time.** Like, nobody expected the success it would have. And we were getting all the gossip really fast. You know, we were there and Helen would be telling us...

A: We've heard stories about you and gossip with students and how they had always worked out great.

C: That Bisbal was with Chenoa really quickly and I was like... we knew about, well, we knew everything. OK, why was I the teacher? Because the season one, do you know who won? Do you remember who won the first season of Operación Triunfo?

A: Rosa.

C: That's right. Yeah. It wasn't Bisbal, but...

A: And it wasn't Bustamante,

C: Neither! It wasn't Bustamante. No, no, no. But really, the real winner in the way was Bisbal, because he made...

A: The real winner were the people who spent 300 hours that year watching that show. Those were the real winners.

C: Everyone's a winner, everyone's a winner. It's the taking part, not the winning.

A: Exactly.

C: And Bisbal, obviously. He, yeah, he did well for himself. And if you remember, he won some Grammys.

A: Latin Grammys?



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C: Yeah, yeah, yeah, certainly. And this is in Miami where they...you know. So obviously he has to travel there and he's gonna need some English. And so he was like, oh, God, my English is too...you know. So Helen said, well, I think I know someone who teaches English So she contacted me without telling me who this would be. And she said, I've got this, you know, student who needs to do some English classes really quickly, really needs to get up to speed very fast. He'll pay very well.

A: Yeah.

C: I was going well, OK, count me in. So I went to her flat. Yeah, rang the bell, door opens and there he is, David Bisbal, spinning around doing his famous twirl dance, which he taught me how to do.

A: So that's your third story.

C: That's my third.

A: Let's finish with you before I get to my third story.

C: Alright?

A: I'm calling this third story BS, saying the third story is not true.

C: How dare you? How dare you know that it was totally made-up?

A: You know where you lost me?

C: Where?

A: David Bisbal twirling around.

C: Oh, man.

A: No, no. Weird details for a story...got you. Alright, my third story. Well, my bombastic expression. In a period...this would have been summer 2001. Well, in 2001 in a period of six months. And I don't like swimming, but I managed to swim, or at least set foot in



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the Dead Sea, the Mediterranean on two different coasts, the Caribbean and... um lake Michigan. In a period of about five, it might have been four months, four or five months, something like that.

C: And that's the story?

A: I think that's a lot! I'm a kid from the Midwest. In four months, that's like...Think of the distances there!

C: But who, who was the celebrity that you met?

A: There's no celebrity! There's no celebrity. Why does there need to be a celebrity in the story?

C: OK, well then this story is true. OK, I don't have to go in there. So, it's between Jordan, Michael Jordan and Barack Obama.

A: Yes.

C: I am going to. I just hope Barack Obama was true and Michael Jordan was, was made-up.

A: Wrong! Other way around. Michael, when I... growing up in the 90s when I was a teenager and my biggest basketball years, all of the championship Chicago Bulls, or almost all of them except for Dennis Rodman, lived in my suburb.

C: Wow.

A: Yes, in Highland Park, Illinois, the gym that the Bulls used to practice in, which is in the first half of the Bulls documentary from this last year, is now a municipal gym where I go play basketball whenever I'm home. It's now the practice court for the Chicago Sky, which is the championship WNBA team from Chicago. They didn't win the championship this this year for the WNBA, which is the women's, they did win it last year. So that one's true.





C: OK, and Barack Obama was made-up.

A: Made-up but my cousins that took me to the East Bank club once they actually did meet him because they're part of like the socialite scene in Chicago. But...

C: OK.

A: nada que ver.

Well, I do have to admit here though, that the story...Helen, who...

A: ... is a real person.

C: She is a real person, and she is my friend, and she did work on Operación Triunfo. The lying part was that I didn't actually get to teach David Bisbal.

A: OK

## Vocabulary bank

**Trip up the other person** = demonstrate that the other person is lying

**BS** (*colloquial*) = lying

**To foster children** = temporarily give children a home and take care of them

**To play a prank on someone** = to trick someone with a practical joke

**Lad (informal)** = a young man

**Nip down** = go somewhere quickly for a short period of time

**Took off big time** = When a TV show becomes very popular quickly

**A made-up story** = a story that isn't true

