

To realize": realizar vs. darse cuenta de

Darse cuenta de (algo) is the standard way of saying "to realize (something)", that is, when that mental light bulb suddenly turns on.

¿No **te das cuenta de** que tengo 20 años? Don't you realize I'm 20 years old?

Realizar is a real Spanish verb, but it means "to accomplish" or "to carry out":

Realicé todos los proyectos que me dieron. *I carried out all projects they gave me.*