



Using English to learn Spanish

SIMILARITIES SPANISH/ENGLISH

Spanish, like French, derived from Latin, which, in turn, was influenced by the Greek language.

The following is an estimate of the proportions of English words with French, Latin and Greek origin, **totaling 61%**:

- **Latin**, including modern scientific and technical Latin: 28%
- **French**, including Old French and early Anglo-French: 28%
- **Greek**: 5%

(source: Oxford Dictionaries)

You can see the similarities in these examples. The word "disciple" derives from the Latin "discipulus", which is "discípulo" in Spanish; "route," from the French "route," "ruta" in Spanish; and "tactic," from the Greek "*taktiki*," "táctica" in Spanish.

In addition to this, some English words derive directly from Spanish, like hurricane (huracán), canoe (canoa) or guerrilla (guerrilla). Besides, nowadays, the mutual influence (the influence of English in the world, and the influence of Spanish in the US) results in more and more "common words" entering the dictionary, words like siesta, piñata, or salsa.

Many other words are also related in Spanish and English due to a common derivative. These words are referred in the text as indirect cognates. Examples are:

- The Spanish word *año* and English "year" are linked by words like "annual" (anual in Spanish).
- *avión* and "plane" are linked by words like "aviation" (*aviación* in Spanish).
- *carne* and "meat" are linked by words like "carnivore" (*carnívoro* in Spanish).
- *diente* and "tooth" are linked by words like "dentist" (*dentista* in Spanish).

SOUNDS, WORDS, SENTENCES

One of the pillars of *Spanish for Californians'* methodology is to separate clearly the three components of the language, and to teach them sequentially. Thus, the student learn:

- 1- **to read and write**
- 2- **to memorize words**
- 3- **to speak**

The Association of Spanish Academies has just released *The New Spanish Grammar* (Nueva Gramática de la Lengua Española). In addition, it exists one common dictionary, and one ortography (Ortografía de la Lengua Española). These three books form the standard Spanish regardless of where Spanish is spoken: Madrid, Mexico City, Buenos Aires, or Los Angeles.

LATIN AMERICA AND SPAIN

Spanish is a very unified language: **22 countries and one language**. The rules of grammar and spelling are the same all over the Spanish-speaking world. The differences between dialects are limited mostly to the preference of some words over others, and some differences in the pronunciation.

The Association of Academies of the Spanish Language comprises 22 Academies corresponding to all countries that has Spanish as their official language (the Hispanic American countries and Spain), The US, Puerto Rico, and The Philippines.

The book includes the appendix "**Notes About Dialects**" that explains the differences of the three major dialects: Spain, Latin America and Argentina. We treat this issue separately from the body of the book because the existing differences, even those of the major dialects, are still minor, and they don't lead to miscommunication among Spanish speakers.

SPANISH IN THE US

Also as an appendix, *Spanish for Californians* shows those peculiarities of the popular Spanish, the "**Local Words of California.**"

In general, the Spanish spoken in the US follows the Latin American standard, but outside standards, the Spanish on the streets, due to the inevitable interference with English, is adopting a growing number of English words. These represent "the local words of California". The following examples are self explanatory: manager, landlord, taxes, biles, part-time, yarda...