

Curso FS-03 KEYS TO SPANISH VOCABULARY

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This course is taught in Spanish & English.

Open to students with at least a Low Intermediate level of Spanish (2 semesters of college Spanish or equivalent).

Objectives

The aim of the Course is to empower participants with an understanding of the nature of words in Spanish, as well as with the ability to take full advantage of them in spoken and written usage. As students of Spanish we know that the greatest drawback we face is a lack of vocabulary. The audio-oral approach to language acquisition gives emphasis to phonetics and syntax, but it is less useful in helping us build a word-power that enables us to say interesting things at the right moment. We also know that the memorization of words is a poor method for learning vocabulary.

In *Keys to Spanish Vocabulary* it is the *recall* of what we do know that constitutes our approach to solid vocabulary growth.

The aim of this Course is to ensure that students return home having acquired a really sophisticated skill in using vocabulary in speech and in controlled contexts where composition is required.

Language knowledge is like an iceberg: 20% of it is above water. When students understand, they recall, and when they recall, they can really make use of that same language.

Methodology

The following outline will focus constantly on the issue of understanding for recall, retention, and the use of vocabulary in practical oral and written contexts.

Syllabus

1) Applied linguistics for understanding and using words in Spanish.

Etymology

Phonetics

Morphology

Semantics (general<> regional)

2) The nature of the word: perfect<> imperfect

The root word or *lexeme*

Root word variables

3) The affix or *afijo*

The suffix/el sufijo

The prefix/el prefijo

The infix/el infijo

4) The linking vowel or *vocal tónica*

5) Introduction to etymology

6) Semantic issues as related to cognates

7) Levels of communication: learned and popular usages: spoken and written language

8) Precision in communication: are there really synonyms?

- 9) How words in a sentence influence one another as to their meaning
- 10) Verbal morphemes or suffixes and verbal action within the time spectrum
- 11) Idiomatic uses of words
- 12) The dictionary as a source of word power

At all times during our study of the nature of words, emphasis will be placed on the understanding of theory for the purpose of using those same words in conversation and composition.

Bibliography

The instructor will provide students with hand-outs on issues concerning applied linguistics, as well as daily worksheets dealing with the particulars of word formation that correspond to in-class activities.

Assessment

The grade will be based on in-class activity (30%), quizzes in which students are encouraged to experiment (30%), and on individual and controlled research projects involving the use of resources such as the dictionary. As the course moves forward, it will become increasingly bilingual and students will be invited to use Spanish more and more in our activities.