

Task 1: Unpacking the jargon

| Acronym | Stands for... |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| SEN | |
| MAT | |
| ASD | |
| ADHD | |
| EAL | |
| DfE | |
| NC (PoS) | |
| SOW | |
| KS2 / KS3 / KS4 / KS5 | |
| GCSE | |
| GCE | |
| SATs | |
| CATs | |
| AfL | |
| ICT | |
| BYOD | |
| MFL | |
| TL | |
| STEM | |
| VAK | |
| TA | |
| SENCo | |
| IEP | |



Task 2: Defining the content of the languages curriculum

What do we teach when we teach a foreign language?

Write a definition in English of each content element you've listed above:

Task 3: What are the main errors and misconceptions of beginner English learners of Spanish?

Task 4: How can you develop your ability to explain / present new grammar to learners?

Ideas from group discussion:



Common errors and misconceptions

1. TENER not 'to be'

In English we use the verb “to be” when talking about age: “I am 25 years old.” But in Spanish the verb “*tener*” (to have) is used with age. To say that you are 25 years old, you would say “*Tengo 25 años*” (I am 25). This translates literally to “I have 25 years,” hence the common mistake by both English and Spanish speakers in their respective second language. There are a quite a few other Spanish phrases that use the verb “to have” (*tener*) while their English counterparts use “to be”. Here are ten of these phrases with which you should *tener cuidado* (be careful) when using:

- *tener calor* (to be hot)
- *tener cuidado* (to be careful)
- *tener frío* (to be cold)
- *tener hambre* (to be hungry)
- *tener miedo de/a* (to be afraid of)
- *tener prisa* (to be in a hurry)
- *tener razón* (to be right)
- *tener sed* (to be thirsty)
- *tener sueño* (to be sleepy)
- *tener suerte* (to be lucky)

2. SER or ESTAR

Useful ways to help students remember when to use ESTAR:

“How you feel and where you are, that is when you use *estar*.”

Location, location, location = *estar*

State – how you are now = *estar*

3. Capitalization rules

Words that are capitalized in both Spanish and English:

Names of people (*Cristiano Ronaldo*)

Names of places (*Madrid, España*)

Names of newspapers and magazines (*El País*)

The first word of titles (movies, books, articles, plays)

Words that are not capitalized in Spanish but are in English:

Days of the week (*lunes, martes, miércoles* – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday)

Months of the year (*enero, febrero, marzo* – January, February, March)

Words in titles, except the first (“*Cien años de soledad*” – “100 Years of Solitude”)

Languages (*Estudio español*. – I study Spanish.)

Religions (*Mis padres son católicos*. – My parents are Catholic.)

Nationality (*Soy estadounidense*. – I’m American.)

4. Adjectival position

The fact that Spanish adjectives often come after the noun is a challenge for learners new to Spanish.

G Ser and estar Page 210

Ser is used for:
Description: **Soy** alto y bastante delgado.
Origin: ¿**Eres** de Colombia?
Character: **Es** muy honesto.
Time: **Son** las cinco de la tarde.
Occupation: **Somos** mecánicos.
Relation: ¿**Sois** mis primos, no?

Estar is used for:
Position: **Estoy** de pie.
Location: ¿**Estás** en Madrid?
Action: **Está** estudiando.
Condition: **Estamos** cansados. ¿**Estáis** bien?
Emotion: **Están** contentos.



5. Gender

The fact that each noun is either masculine or feminine and must be learnt with its word for a / the is difficult for many learners. It's not hard to understand it, it's just hard to remember to learn and use the correct gender word with every new noun. It helps to have the pattern that most nouns that end in –a are feminine, and most that end in –o are masculine, (and –e ending nouns are more often masculine but could be either). It's then helpful to know the main exceptions:

Masculine nouns ending in –a:

el problema, el programa, el sistema, el poema, el idioma, el tema, el clima, el telegram, el mapa, el planeta, el día, el sofá

Feminine nouns ending in –o:

la radio, la mano

6. Use and omission of articles.

Spanish and English differ in their use / omission of articles in several ways. Here are some of the key differences:

i. **SER + professions**

Soy profesor. = I am a teacher.

ii. **Abstract nouns**

La paz es muy importante. = Peace is very important.

iii. **GUSTAR + nouns**

Me gustan las películas de terror. = I like horror films.

7. Collective nouns

In English, many collective nouns can be used with either a singular or plural verb. E.g. **family, government, team, audience.**

However, there are a few, notably **police** and **people**, which must be used with a plural verb. In Spanish, collective nouns are almost always used with a singular verb.

8. GUSTAR (and other similar verbs)

A more accurate translation of **gustar** might be "to be pleasing to", because it better explains why the indirect object pronouns **me, te, le, nos, os, and les** are used in conjunction with it, and why it needs either 3rd person singular or plural endings.

9. Pronouns (and their omission)

Pupils learn the subject pronouns only to need to be told that they don't often need to use them, unless for emphasis. Remembering that 'voy' = I go, particularly when translating from English into Spanish is not straightforward.

10. Double negatives

In English, these are incorrect. In Spanish, they are necessary: No tengo nada = I don't have anything.

Rule: In Spanish, negative sentences need negative words. Don't mix negative and positive.

Barron's 1001 Pitfalls in Spanish – Holt & Dueber 4th edition (2010)

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/1001-Pitfalls-Spanish-Marion-](https://www.amazon.co.uk/1001-Pitfalls-Spanish-Marion-Holt/dp/0764143476/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=1477326875&sr=8-2)

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