

## Can Language Be Taught Over the Internet?

Teaching a new language incorporates three tools, listening, writing, and speaking. When learning a language over the Internet, there are few options when it comes to practicing written language. How can the Spanish language be taught over the Internet? Is this as powerful as taking a class?

There are three components teachers utilize in the classroom when teaching a Spanish foreign-language class. The first is listening. The teacher will repeat words and phrases. Tapes of people speaking will be used to get students acquainted with accents. English to Spanish translation will be necessary at first while students learn everyday words. While listening, students will be asked to respond. Speaking is the second component used when teaching a foreign language. Spanish translation is difficult for some, easier for others, but necessary when first learning a language. By speaking and listening, students begin to remember words and phrases and also when to use them. They will also begin to form sentences on their own using new combinations of the words. As their vocabulary grows, so will their understanding of the language.

The third component of teaching Spanish is writing. English to Spanish translation is used to assist when learning to recognize words on the page. This is the hardest of all three components for most students. But it is the most important. Reading and writing in another language will help a student when traveling, and when corresponding with those who speak Spanish.

Online language aides include two of the three components. These aides rely on listening as their primary learning tool. Some may ask a student to repeat a word or phrase, but without a teacher present, no one knows for sure if the student is following the instructions. Writing is hardly taught at all. Online language aides can provide extra instruction for the student when they are away from the classroom. Many teachers recommend extra study and these aides are filled with pictures and games that help a student learn common words and phrases. But what about meaning? Some words cannot be taught by sight; they must be heard or written down to have their full impact appreciated.

Learning tools are useful for people who are looking for a basic foundation. For those who are advancing, these aides will not be of much help. Written language is just as important as verbal language.

Online language aides offer a very limited view of language. Language is much more than words. It is how people express emotions, feelings, and information. When a student is schooled in all three components of language, they will have a greater appreciation of the language and will be able to communicate more effectively in the world.

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### About the Author

Peter LeSar makes it easy to quote and buy Spanish translation services (<http://www.ispeak.net/Spanish-translation>) at [www.ispeak.net](http://www.ispeak.net) (<http://www.ispeak.net>). For more language-related articles by Peter, see his Language Translation Library (<http://www.ispeak.net/language-translation-library>).