



Spanish Quotes

BEGINNER:

“No hay nada más hermosa que la risa.”

“There is nothing more beautiful than laughter.”

Frida Khalo (Mexico)

- ➔ ‘**No hay...**’ In English, we have two different phrases - ‘there is’ and ‘there are.’ However, in Spanish they are the same word! All you need to say is ‘hay.’
 - ◆ Hay dos perros. (There are two dogs.)
 - ◆ Hay un edificio. (There is a building.)
- ➔ ‘...que...’ You may have learned that ‘que’ means ‘what.’ That is true, but it can also mean ‘than’ when writing comparisons.
 - ◆ Me gustan los perros más que los gatos. (I like dogs more than cats.)
- ➔ ‘...la risa.’ In Spanish, it literally says ‘the laughter,’ but the English translation doesn’t include the word ‘the.’ Why? Well, we don’t always need to put ‘the’ before words in English, but in Spanish, more often than not, we need to put some form of ‘the’ before most nouns. Let’s look at the example above:
 - ◆ Me gustan los perros más que los gatos. (I like dogs more than cats.)
Here you must include ‘los’ before both dogs and cats. It’s just a fun rule in Spanish!

“Los secretos mágicos de sus abuelos les fueron revelados por voces que vivieron por el camino del silencio de la noche.”

“The magical secrets of their grandparents were revealed to them by voices that lived on the path of the night’s silence.”

Popol Vuh (Guatemalan origin)



- ‘Los secretos mágicos...’ Remember that in Spanish, the adjective usually comes *after* the noun.
 - ‘...les fueron revelados...’ Here, ‘les’ means ‘them’. In English, we would say ‘revealed *to* them,’ but the ‘to’ is not necessary in Spanish. Instead, ‘them’ is just placed before the verb. These words, called *indirect object pronouns*, always come before the verb in Spanish. For example:
 - ◆ Te doy mi libro. (I give you my book.)
 - ◆ Les voy a llamar. (I am going to call them.)
 - ◆ Nos interesa la clase. (The class interests us.)
 - ‘...por voces...’ We often assume both ‘por’ and ‘para’ mean only ‘for.’ However, ‘por’ often means ‘by,’ like in this example.
 - ‘...por el camino...’ Here, ‘por’ doesn’t mean ‘for’ or ‘by!’ Instead, its meaning is closer to ‘around’ or ‘on.’
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“Te quiero no por quien eres sino por quien soy cuando estoy contigo.”

“I love you not because of who you are, but because of who I am when I’m with you.”
Gabriel García Márquez (Colombian author)

- ‘Te quiero...’ There are many ways to say ‘I love you’ in Spanish. The one that most people learn is ‘te amo,’ but ‘te quiero’ is used just as often in Spanish. This can be used between friends, family members, or even couples. It can be used to express just a close friendship or budding romantic love, depending on who you use it with. Try it out with your friends!
- ‘...por...’ We have yet another us of ‘por!’ Whenever you want to express a cause and say ‘because of,’ don’t say ‘porque de.’ Just use ‘por!’
- ‘...sino...’ Whenever you want to say ‘not this but that,’ the word ‘but’ is NOT ‘pero.’ Instead, we use the word ‘sino.’ Let’s look at examples:
 - ◆ La araña no es un insecto, sino un arácnido. (The spider is not an insect, but an arachnid.)



- ◆ No hay un solo ejercicio, sino muchos. (There is not just one exercise, but many.)

→ ‘...contigo.’ If you want to say that you are with someone, you usually use two words. For example: ‘con ella’ (with her), ‘con ellos’ (with them), ‘con nosotros’ (with us). However, you don’t say ‘con tú’ or ‘con mí.’ Instead we combine the words to create the following:

- ◆ contigo: with you
 - ◆ conmigo: with me
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*“Sembrado para comer es sagrado sustento del hombre que fue hecho de maíz.
Sembrado por negocio es hambre del hombre que fue hecho de maíz.”*

“(Corn) sown to eat is a sacred sustenance for man, who was made from corn. (Corn) sown for business is the hunger of man (also) made by corn.”

Miguel Ángel Asturias- “Hombre de Miaz” (Guatemala)

- You may be wondering why the English quote starts with the word ‘corn,’ but the Spanish one doesn’t. Well, in English we always have to have a subject at the beginning of the sentence. In Spanish, though, we don’t! This is a quote taken from a book, so if corn was previously mentioned, it does not have to be named again if the reader understands what the sentence is referring to. This happens all the time in Spanish!
- ◆ Ella es mi amiga. Es muy amable. (She is my friend. (She) is very nice.) Here, the subject, ‘she,’ is obvious, so it is not restated.
 - ◆ Mi ciudad favorita es Barcelona. Es hermosa. (My favorite city is Barcelona. (It) is beautiful.) Again, Barcelona is not repeated because the subject is clear.
- ‘Sembrar’ means to plant, or to sow. It usually refers to crops.
- ‘...para comer...’ This looks like it would be translated ‘for to eat,’ but that doesn’t sound right! Instead, when we have ‘para’ before an infinitive verb (verbs that end in -ar, -er, -ir), para means ‘to.’
- ◆ Necesito mi libro para estudiar. (I need my book to study.)
 - ◆ Te daré dinero para comer. (I will give you money to eat.)
- ‘...del hombre...’ Whenever we have ‘de el,’ we combine those two words to make ‘del.’ Why? Well, ‘de’ ends with the same sound that ‘el’ starts with, so instead of trying to clearly separate the words, we just combine



them for ease of speech! It's like when we say 'an elephant' instead of 'a elephant.' 'An' is our way of separating similar-sounding words for a clearer understanding of spoken English!

ADVANCED:

"Mi padre decía: hay quienes les toca dar sangre y hay a quien le toca dar fuerzas; entonces mientras podamos, demos la fuerza."

"My father would say: there are those who must give blood and there are some who must give strength; so while we can, let's give strength."

Rigoberta Menchú - "Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la Conciencia"
(Guatemala)

- '...decía...' This form is called the *imperfect*, which is one of the past tense forms. In English, we can say 'I said,' 'I used to say,' or 'I would say' all to talk about something we commonly said in the past. In Spanish, there is one tense to represent that - the *imperfect*. There are two endings to the imperfect: -ía (for -er/-ir verbs) and -aba (for -ar verbs).
 - ◆ Yo hablaba con mi amiga todos los días. (I used to talk to my friend every day.)
 - ◆ Nosotros comíamos arroz cada domingo cuando era niño. (We used to eat rice every Sunday when I was a boy.)
- '...les toca...' This is a fun verb! The infinitive form is *tocarse*, which may look like 'to touch' or 'to play.' However, with the 'se' added, it means something completely different! It usually means that it is someone's turn for something. In the quote, it is implied that it was someone's turn to give blood/strength. In other words, they had no choice. In a lighter tone, it is also used when playing a game and it is someone's turn.
 - ◆ Me toca dirigir la reunión. (It's my turn to lead the meeting. - Here, the person does not have much choice.)
 - ◆ Amigo, ite toca! / Amigo, ies tu turno! (Dude, it's your turn! Both forms are acceptable and used.)
- '...demos...' This verb is in the *imperative* voice, or command voice. Whenever you want to say 'Let's do this!' or 'Let's do that!' we use the command voice! Without getting into too many details, here are some examples: (Try memorizing them and saying them to your Spanish teacher to impress them!)



- ◆ ¡Hagámoslo! (Let's do it!)
- ◆ ¡Estudiemos! (Let's study!)
- ◆ ¡Hablemos! (Let's talk!)
- ◆ ¡Practiquemos! (Let's practice!)
- ◆ ¡Repasemos! (Let's review!)
- ◆ “Seamos realistas y hagamos lo imposible.” - Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara (Cuba) (Let's be realistic and do the impossible.)

→ ‘...podamos...’ You might be thinking, they made a mistake! This should be ‘podemos,’ not ‘podamos!’ But, this is actually an example of the *subjunctive* tense. We could write a whole book on the subjunctive, but we'll try to keep it simple! One example of when we use the *subjunctive* is when a time is not clear or when we are wishing for something. In the quote, it says ‘while we can,’ which does not have a clear time set. So, we use the *subjunctive*! Let's look at some more examples:

- ◆ Te voy a visitar cuando pueda. (I'm going to visit you when I can.)
- ◆ Cuando nosotros terminemos, te llamo. (When we finish, I will call you.)

In both of these examples, the time is not clear, so we use the subjunctive form of the verb. For regular -er/-ir verbs, the endings start with -a, and for regular -ar verbs, the endings start with -e.

- Poder - ...cuando yo pueda. ...mientras nosotros podamos.
- Terminar - ...cuando nosotros terminemos.