

THE ART OF SPEECH

To learn to translate or write a language is one thing, to speak it is another. Many persons succeed in the former, who utterly fail in the latter. What is the secret of translating? The mastery of the main principles of syntax (without necessarily touching on the technicalities) and the possession of a vocabulary more or less extensive.

The secret of learning to speak is this: committing to memory ready-made phrases and using them as the occasion arises. The student who in studying a text-book contents himself with merely translating, without attempting to commit to memory the common phrases he meets with, never learns to speak the language he is studying.

Speaking does not mean *composing*, it rather means uttering constructions that have been well committed to memory. This self evident truth has been much overlooked by teachers, but has been recognized by some, and hence there are a number of methods for learning languages which contain no grammar whatsoever, but merely phrases for the student to memorize.

Where these methods fail

The utter lack of any system, order or gradation in these phrase-methods is really amazing and is quite enough to condemn them. But what renders them absolutely valueless is that they contain no word of explanation of the constructions or idioms given, and it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for a student to memorize phrases which he does not clearly understand.

We have in the preceding pages introduced the student in a practical way to the general syntax of Spanish, being careful to explain all idiomatic constructions met with, and we think we have placed him in a position where he can intelligently memorize the common phrases of Spanish speech, and that he can do this without great effort. Let him remember it is not sufficient to memorize the phrases, he must use them.

Buenos días, caballero.
Buenas tardes, caballero.
Buenas noches, señora (señorita).
¿Cómo está V.?
Muy bien, gracias.
¿Cómo le va?
No estoy bueno.
¿Qué tal?
¿Cómo van los negocios?
¿Qué hay de nuevo?
Nada de particular.
¿Cómo lo pasa V.?

Good day, sir.
Good evening, sir.
Good night, Madam (Miss).
How are you?
Very well, thanks.
How goes it to you (how are you)?
I am not well.
How d'ye do?
How is business?
What is there of new?
Nothing (of) special.
How do you pass it (how are you)?