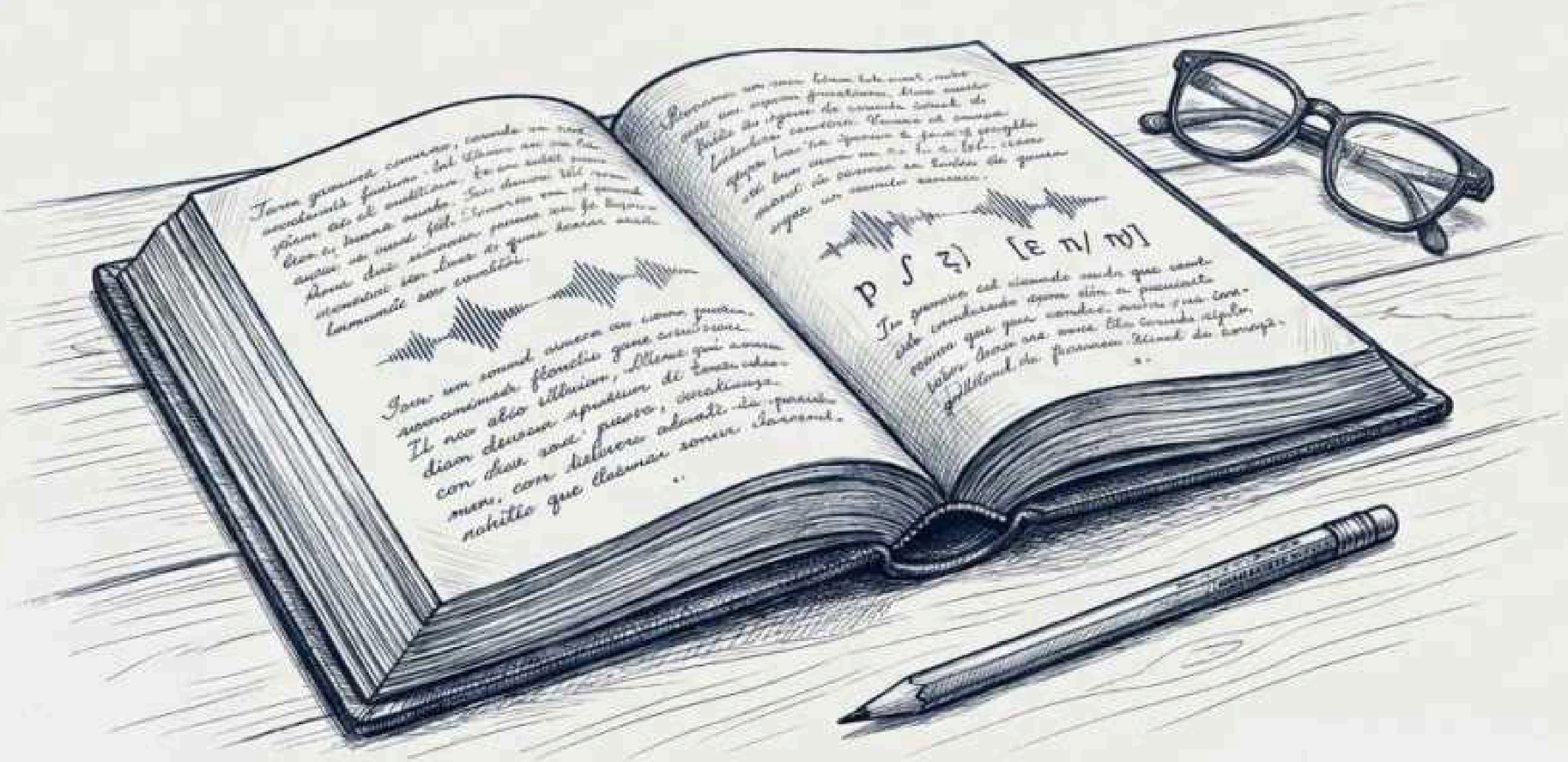
¶ 1.1

SPAN 101 B: Sounds, Letters, and Greetings
Lecture 1



English Spelling ?

Spanish Spelling →



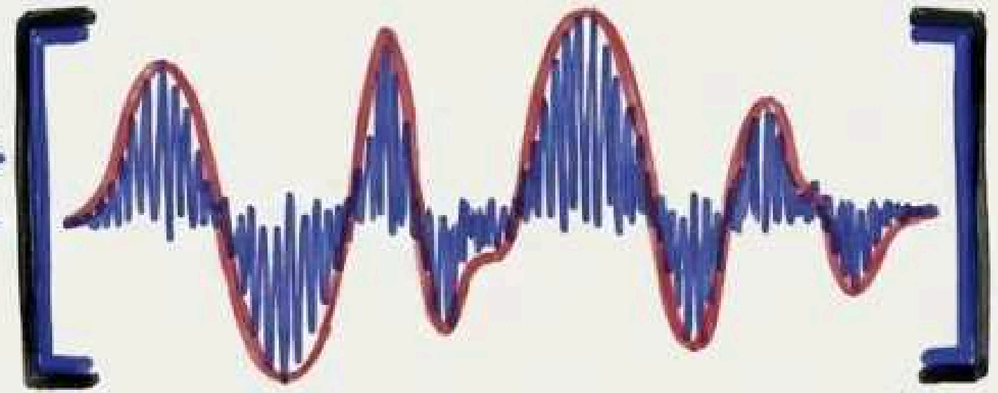
Correct Pronunciation on Day 1

Correct Pronunciation on Se Typography

[1 Letter (or small group)] = [1 Predictable Sound]

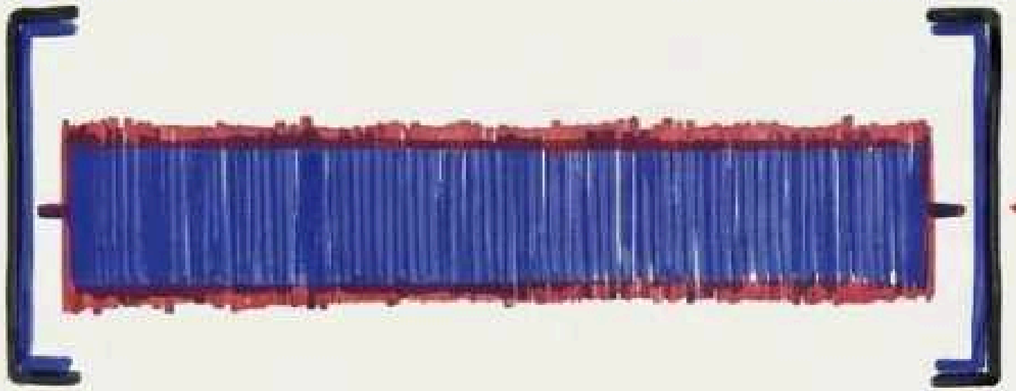
The spelling system is almost ***perfectly regular.*** By the end of this lecture, you will **read aloud** and **greet politely.**

The Heart of the System: Pure Vowels



English Vowels
(Gliding & Changing)





Spanish Pure Vowels
(a, e, i, o, u)

Keep your mouth in the **exact same shape** from start to finish.

Every vowel pronounced.
Zero lazy "uh" sounds.

Vowel	English Equivalent (Cut Short)	Spanish Practice
a	father	mesa
e	bed	vino
i	machine	solo
o	more	uno
u	rule	uno



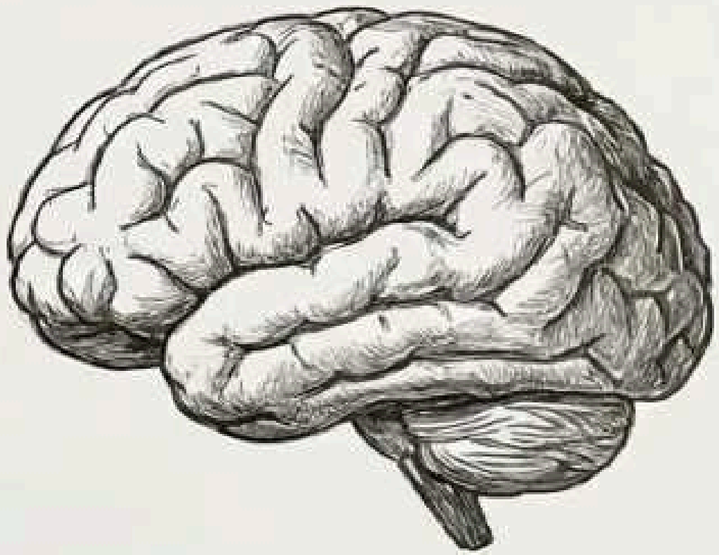
h = ∅ (Always silent)

hola → sounds like ola

hotel → sounds like otel

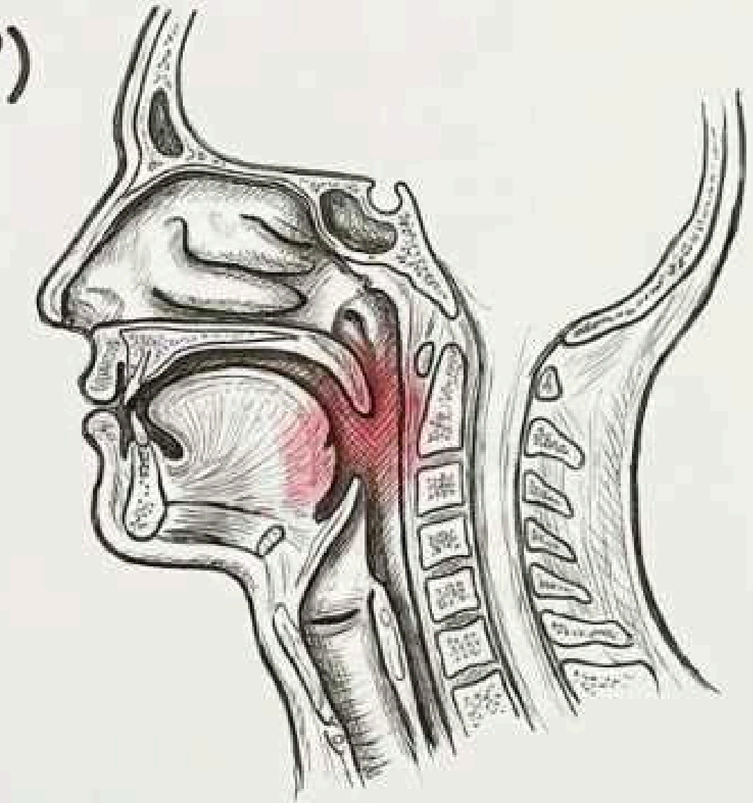
b = v = [soft b]

vino and bien begin with the exact same sound.



[J] → Always a rough sound
(back of throat, strong English 'h')
→ jugo (juice), hijo (son)

[G]
- G + [e, i] → Rough sound
  → gente (people)
- G + [a, o, u] → Hard sound
  → gato (cat)



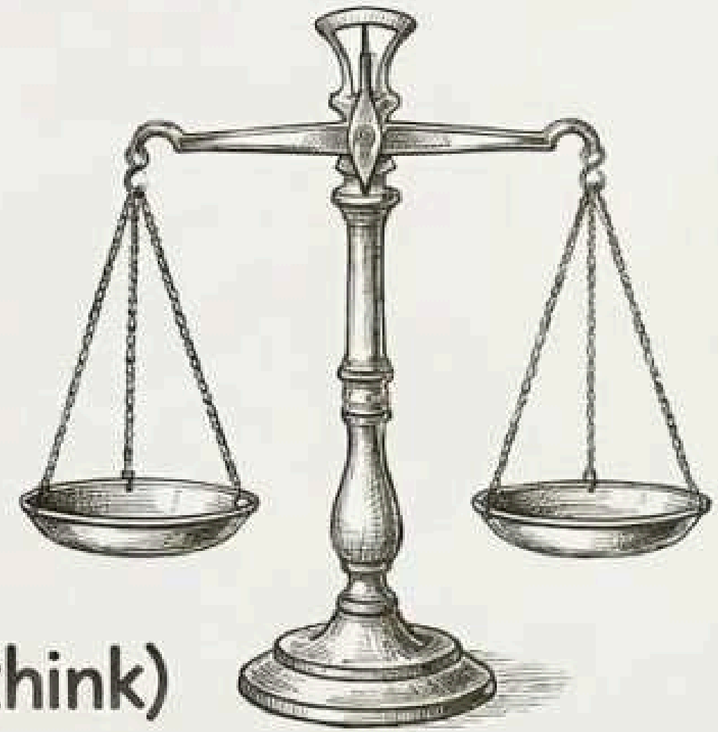
[C]

C + [a, o, u] → Hard 'K' → casa

C + [e, i]
→ Soft sound

→ Latin America:
Sounds like 's'
→ cena (dinner)

→ Spain:
Sounds like 'th' (think)
→ cena



Both are correct. Everyone understands both.

qu + ~~u~~ = [k]

queso (cheese) starts with “k”.

z = [soft c]

zapato (shoe).

Dry erase board

One sound, not two.

[l + l = ll = [y]]

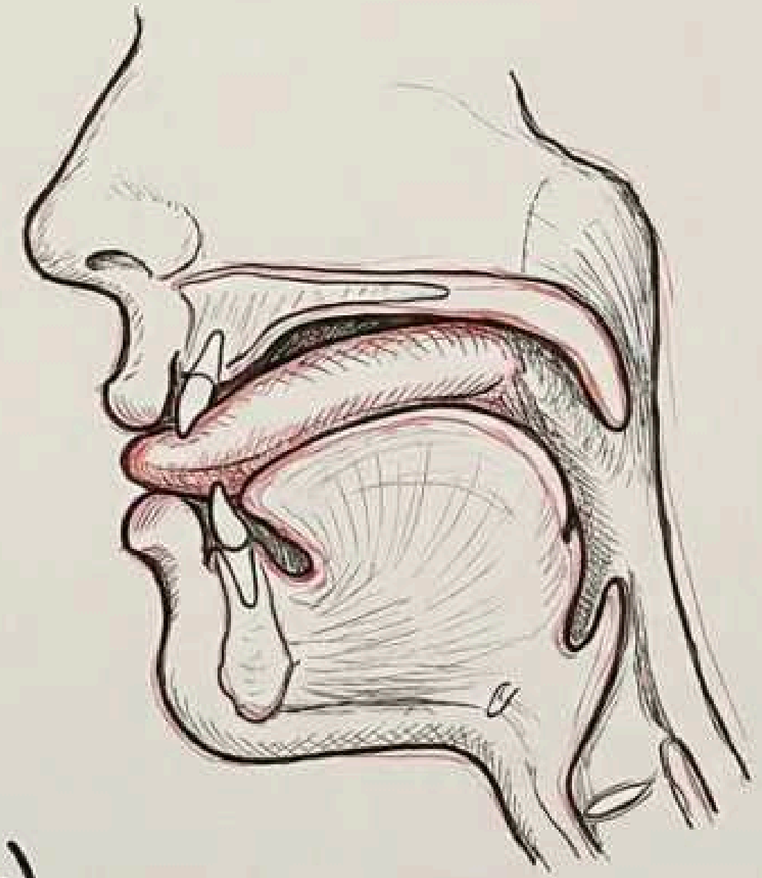
calle (street) in most places.

¶ 1.9

26 English Letters + ñ = 27 Letters Total

(Note: 'k' and 'w' appear mainly in borrowed words)

Ñ



ñ ≈ ny (as in canyon)

español, mañana (tomorrow)

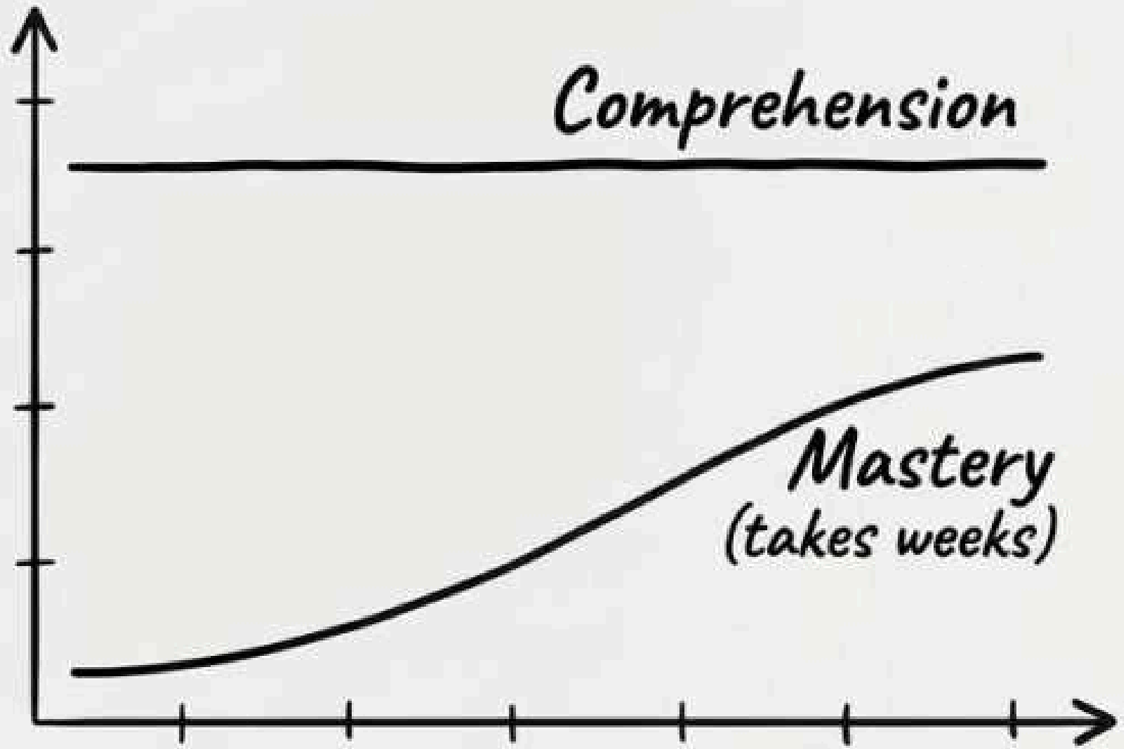
Single Tap — Tongue Taps — Trill (Rolled)

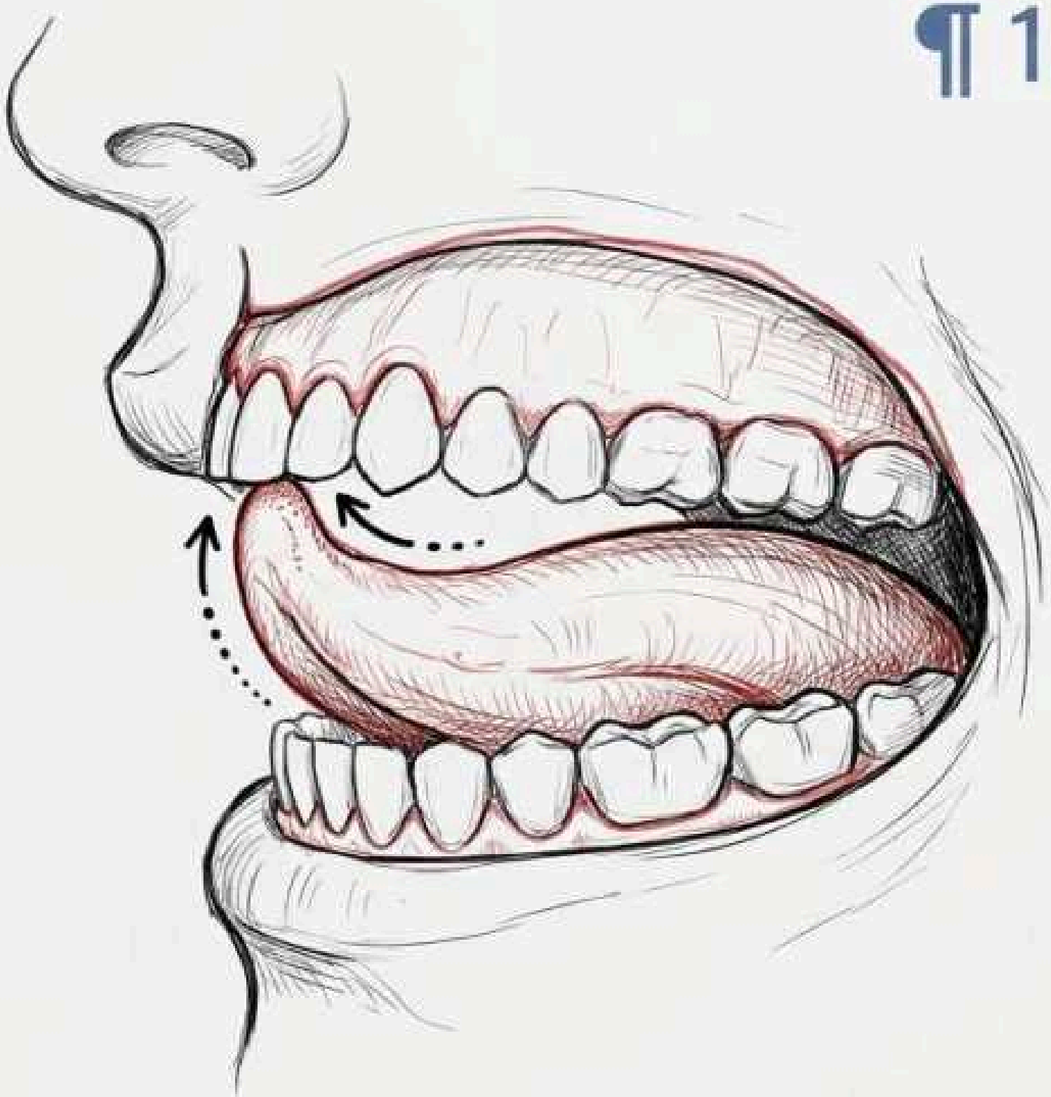


Single 'r' between vowels.
Almost like 'dd' in ladder.
→ pero (but)

Double 'rr' or starting 'r'.
→ perro (dog), rojo (red)

pero and perro differ ONLY
by this specific sound.





Do not worry if you cannot roll the "r" yet.
You will be understood with a simple tap.

Practice: Say caro (expensive) vs. carro (car) a few times each day.

The rest of Spanish pronunciation is genuinely easy. You now know nearly all of it.

The Algorithm of Stress
(Which syllable to emphasize)

¶ 1.12

IF word ends in:
Vowel, 'n', or 's'

THEN stress the
second-to-last syllable.

Examples: ha-blo, jo-ven, ca-sas

IF word ends in:
Any other consonant

THEN stress the
last syllable.

Examples: ha-blar, ciu-dad, pa-pel

The Override Key: Accent Marks

¶ 1.13

Function 1: Breaking the Rules

Tells you exactly how to say the word; no guessing.

Examples:
teléfono, canción, café

Function 2: Differentiating Meaning

Separates identical words mathematically:

tú (you) ≠ tu (your)

Predictive Punctuation

¶ 1.14



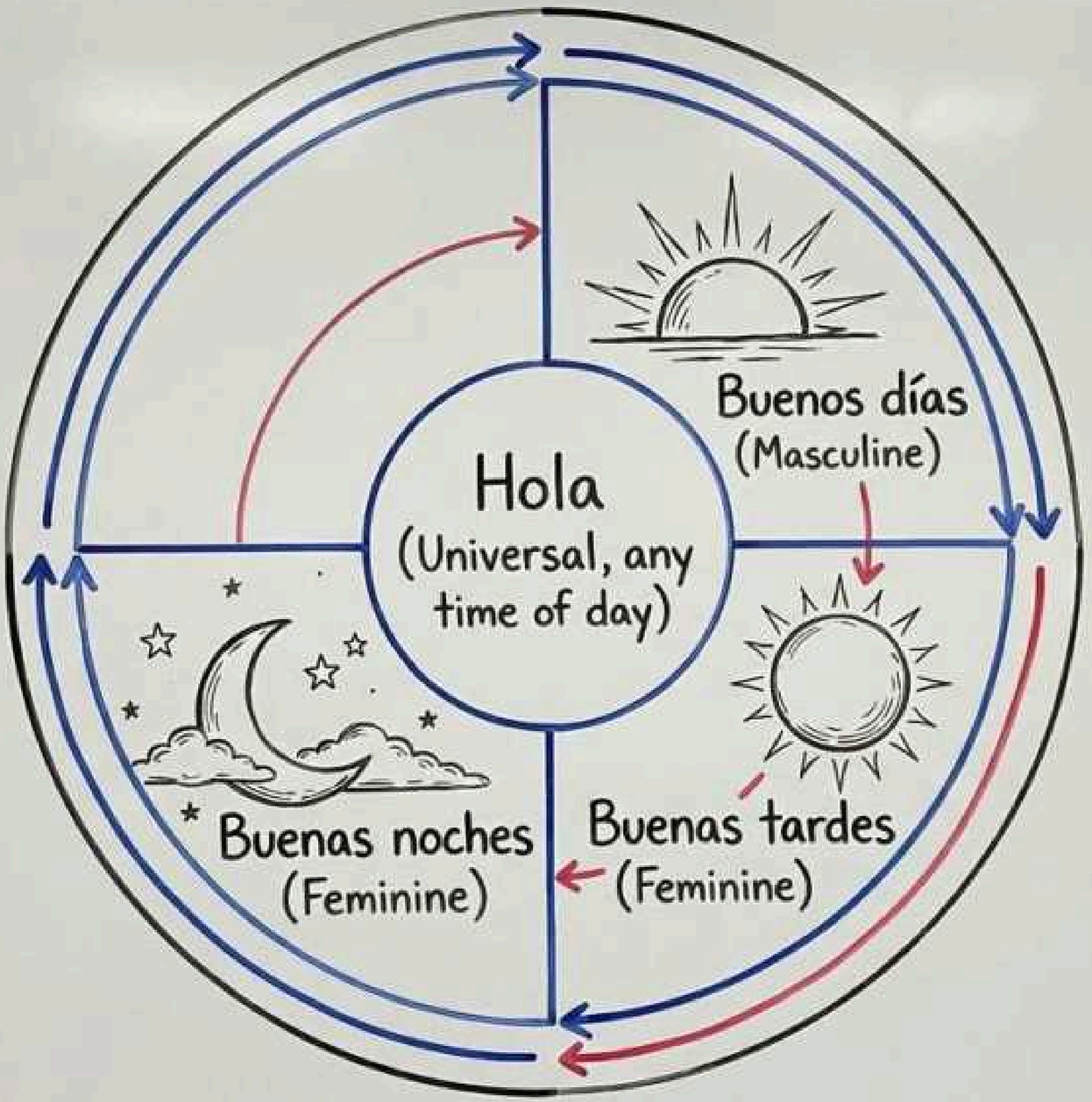
Early Warning: Question Incoming ... [?]

Example: ¿Cómo estás? (How are you?)



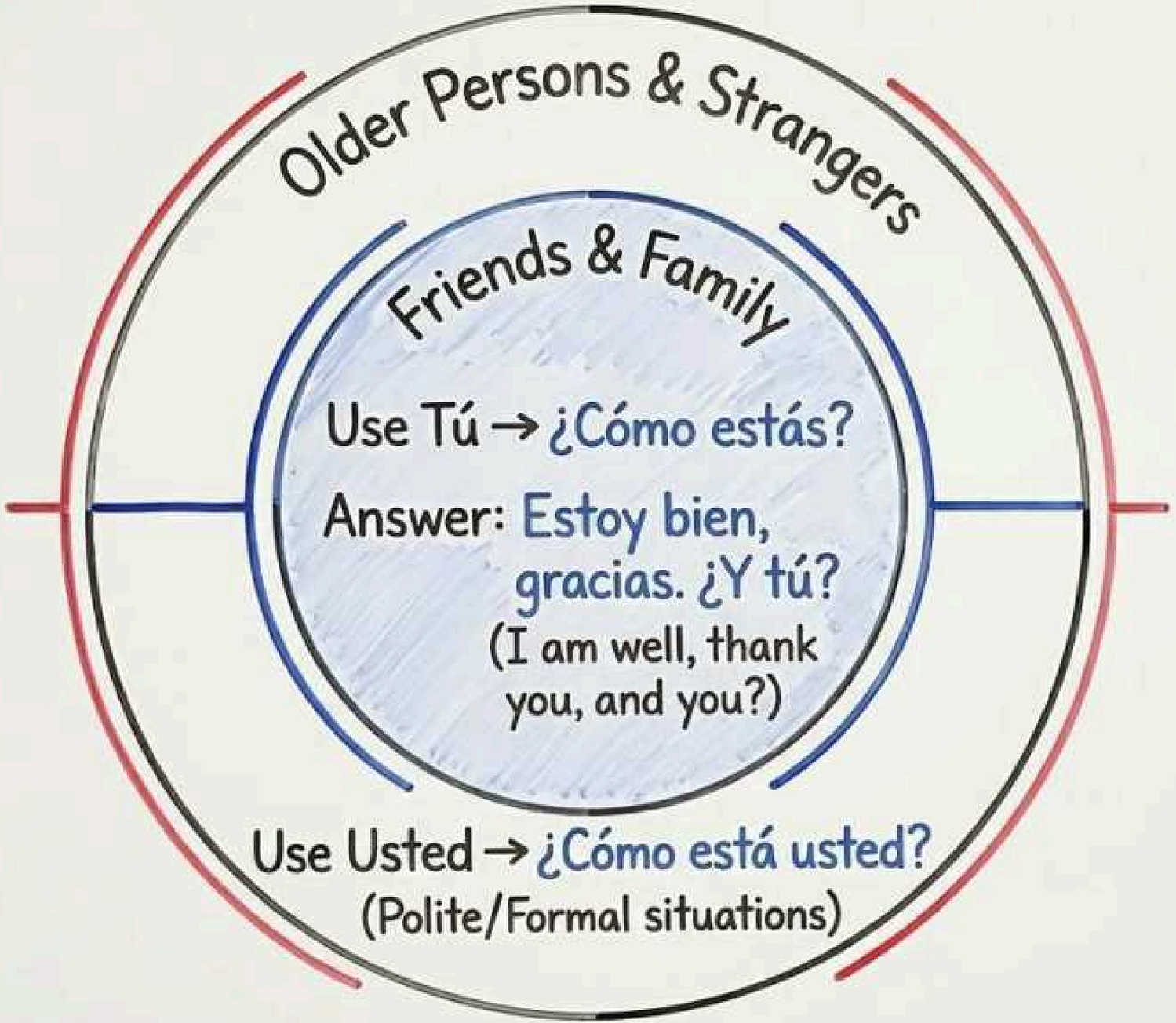
Early Warning: Exclamation Incoming ... [!]

Example: ¡Qué bien! (How good!)


Hola
(Universal, any time of day)
Buenos días
(Masculine)
Buenas tardes
(Feminine)
Buenas noches
(Feminine)

Departures	Politeness	Apology
adiós (goodbye)	por favor (please)	perdón (pardon)
hasta luego (see you later)	gracias (thank you)	lo siento (I am sorry)
hasta mañana (see you tomorrow)	de nada (you are welcome)	

These few words will take you a long way.


Older Persons & Strangers
Friends & Family
Use Tú → ¿Cómo estás?
Answer: Estoy bien, gracias. ¿Y tú?
(I am well, thank you, and you?)
Use Usted → ¿Cómo está usted?
(Polite/Formal situations)

Asking

Informal:
¿Cómo te llamas?

Formal: ¿Cómo se llama usted?



Answering

Me llamo Ana
(My name is Ana)

OR simply:
Soy Ana
(I am Ana)

Person A: **Mucho gusto** (Pleased to meet you)

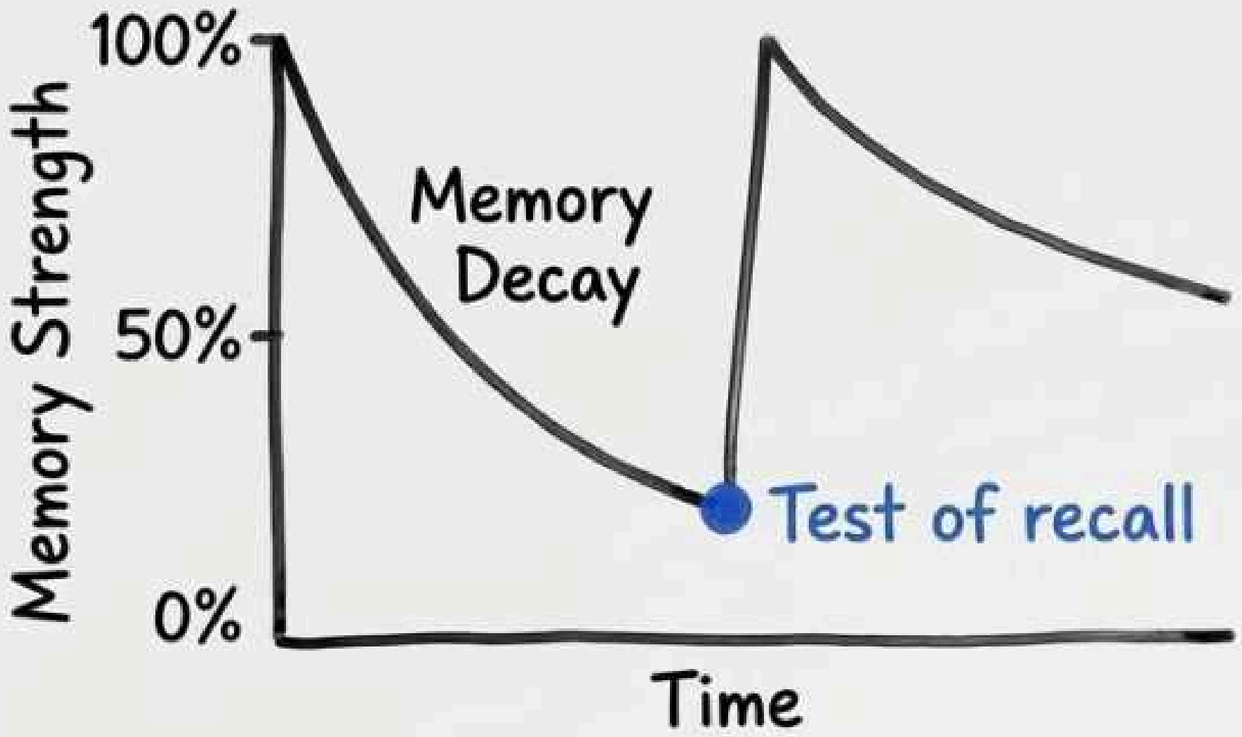
⇄

Person B: **Igualmente** (Likewise)



Read this aloud. Slowly, then faster. Replace names with your own. Speaking aloud is where the learning happens.

The Spaced Repetition Framework



Step 1 (Today):
Choose 3 greetings/phrases.
Say each aloud 5 times.

Step 2 (Tomorrow):
Say them again before looking at the page.

Note: This small test of recall across two days is the Academy's exact core study method.

Next Steps

Lecture 2: We meet nouns, gender, and the small words that go with them.