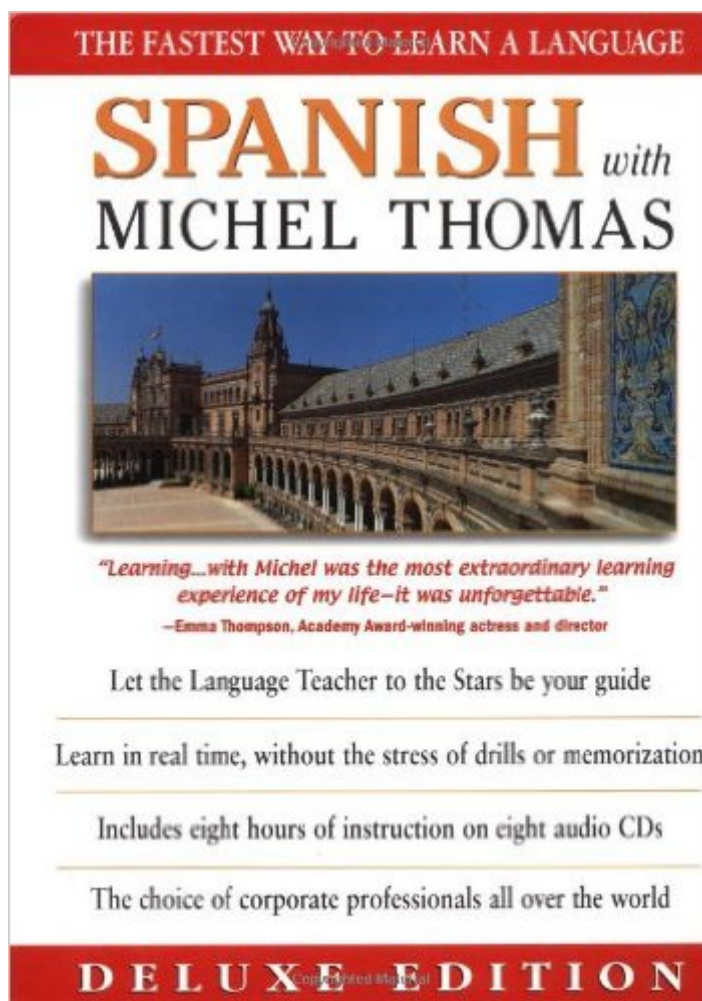


The book was found

Spanish With Michel Thomas (Deluxe Language Courses With Michel Thomas)



Synopsis

Anyone can learn a language with Michel Thomas--The World's Greatest Language Teacher. No books. No writing. No drills. And nothing to memorize--ever! With his unique program, Michel Thomas has taught celebrities, corporate leaders, and schoolchildren--with immediate and amazing results. Now the Language Teacher to the Stars invites everyone to join his class! Using Spanish with Michel Thomas, listeners learn in real time--fully understanding as they go along, turning words into short sentences, and then building them into longer, more complex sentences, until they are conversing in Spanish. Michel will have listeners formulating their own thoughts and sentences from the very beginning, even if they have never succeeded in learning a language before. Michel has used this very method to teach celebrities such as Mel Gibson, Woody Allen, Barbra Streisand, Warren Beatty, and Princess Grace of Monaco.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Michel Thomas's, the Pimsleur series, and the Barron's version of the Foreign Service Institute course are the three top-selling courses on Spanish, and I did extensive research on the various high end courses before buying his. I don't have the Pimsleur one but I did buy the U.S. Foreign Service Institute course in addition to Thomas's, and so I thought I'd make a few comments by way of comparing them in case you find them useful in choosing the right course for you. I have to say Thomas is a gifted teacher and he has a very interesting approach requiring no notes or rote memorization. He also stresses the importance of a natural, stress-free learning environment.

Thomas is a savvy guy here as this is probably one of the major stumbling blocks for the new language learner, and so he puts the student at ease right from the very beginning--a nice touch there and I give him points for that. The second cornerstone to Thomas's method is the simulated classroom environment where you work along with two other people in the class, a man and a woman. The third, and perhaps most important aspect of Thomas's course is his memorization and note-free system of learning. Thomas starts with very simple sentences and builds up from there so the student acquires the syntax almost intuitively as he goes along. Thomas also discusses differences in pronunciation as he goes, too. You build vocabulary as you go along also, with Thomas emphasizing cognates or words that are almost identical in the two languages initially. Overall, Thomas has done a very nice job here and I can see why people like Woody Allen and others say that his course is the only one that's ever worked for them. The Foreign Service Institute course is more traditional but also very good, and I like it, too.

I have mixed feelings with regard to this course. In some ways it is absolutely excellent. Where it is particularly good is on underlining the importance of the right stresses in the language and also in the use of pronouns. If you don't know where to place 'lo' at the end of this course then you are a moron. The course really does give you a strong sense of self-confidence in your ability to construct your own phrases in the language. The value of this cannot be over-estimated. Whilst I certainly would recommend it I would say that before buying it you should bear in mind the following. Firstly this course will NOT make you fluent in the language and will give you only a very limited vocabulary. Michel seems almost allergic to nouns and adjectives so you will not learn many of those. Little attention is paid to genders which are an area of difficulty for many English people trying to learn foreign languages. Not looking at genders means no attention was paid to adjective agreements- something which doesn't come naturally to Anglophones. He also chooses to ignore two tenses which are used widely in Spanish: the past historic and the subjunctive. For this reason I would recommend that you use this course in conjunction with another language cassette course - I would recommend the excellent Routledge 'Colloquial Spanish' cassette course as the ideal supplement. This brings me to my second criticism of this course. Cutting corners is all very well but this shouldn't be at the expense of accuracy. Michel is very sceptical of verb tables but if he looked more closely at them he would realise that in his course the endings he gives for the 'tu' form of the imperative are actually incorrect.

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