

TutorTube: Reflexives

Fall 2020

Introduction

Hello and welcome to TutorTube, where The Learning Center's Lead Tutors help you understand challenging course concepts with easy to understand videos. My name is Darren Churn, Lead Tutor for Spanish. In today's video, we will explore reflexives. Let's get started!

Conjugating in Spanish

In order to understand how reflexives work, we need to understand how to conjugate in Spanish. In English, we pair the subject of our sentences with our verbs without changing the verb much. An example would be to talk. Going through all of the different subjects I get I talk, you talk, he/she talks, we talk, and they talk. As you can see, the verb talk is barely altered.

In Spanish, the entire ending of the verb changes. If we take hablar, we then drop the AR and add the corresponding endings for each subject. I talk is translated to hablo. The conjugation gives us 3 things: the subject (yo), the tense (present), and the verb itself (to talk). When adding a reflexive, we get another part which is the "to oneself."

Reflexives

Introducing a 4th element to verbs includes the addition of actual reflexive pronouns. The pronouns are me, te, se, nos, and se. These pronouns align with the same subjects used for conjugating. When used with verbs that are conjugated to the same subject, these pronouns are me myself, yourself, him/herself, ourselves, and themselves. Let's look at an example.

The verb lavar means to wash in its infinitive form. If we were going to make the infinitive reflexive it would be seen as lavarse. If I want to say, "I wash myself," I need to conjugate lavar to the yo form to form lavo. I also need to put the corresponding reflexive pronoun of me before the verb. "Me lavo" translates to "I wash myself."

How to Place Reflexives

The easiest way to think of the placement of reflexives is that the pronouns will always go before a verb if it is conjugated. If I have the verb miras and wanted to make it reflexive, I will place te before it and make it te miras/you see yourself.

Or as we have seen before *lavo* with a reflexive would need *me*. Put them together and you get “*Me lavo*” because *lavar* is conjugated.

There are two main instances to place the reflexive at the end: if the verb is in the infinitive and the present progressive. Our sentence is “I need to shower myself.” Because I need forces the verb *necesitar* to be conjugated to *necesito*, the verb *duchar* stays in the infinitive. However, we now have a reflexive as well. Because the verb associated with the verb is not conjugated, the corresponding reflexive pronoun is attached to the end. We get the sentence “*Necesito ducharme*.” The other situation where the verb goes at the end is with the present progressive. The present progressive is the “I am doing something” in Spanish. This is formed by *estar* + the verb + *ando* or *iendo*. “I am showering myself” is translated to “*Estoy duchandome*.”

Reciprocated

Falling under the same umbrella that reflexives do are reciprocated actions. These verbs are only associated with *nos* and *se*. In this situation, two individuals are doing the same action to each other. Let’s look at some examples. “*Nos abrazamos*” is translated to “We hug each other.” *Abrazar* is conjugated to the *nosotros* form and the reciprocated pronoun is chosen to match. With the *ellos/ellas/ustedes*, *se* is used. “They fight each other” is translated to “*Se pelean*.”

Outro

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