superlexa.

Spanish Made Familiar

The spelling patterns, 100 word origins, and a true story you can read in Spanish.

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What is in this book

English took thousands of words from Latin and French, and Spanish grew out of Latin. That means you already know a lot of Spanish words. Some are easy to spot and some are hidden.

Part 1 shows the spelling patterns, like -tion becoming -ción, that let you recognize thousands of words.

Part 2 gives you 100 common words you can't guess from the spelling, like noche, with the English word hiding inside each one.

Part 3 is a full true story in Spanish, the story of Flight MH370. It shows how the stories in the app start out: most of the words are ones you can almost recognize.

Part 1: The spelling patterns

These word endings work the same way across hundreds of words.

-tion becomes -ción

nation / nación, information / información, education / educación, conversation / conversación

-ty becomes -dad

city / ciudad, university / universidad, reality / realidad, opportunity / oportunidad

-ous becomes -oso

famous / famoso, delicious / delicioso, generous / generoso, curious / curioso

-ic becomes -ico

public / público, electric / eléctrico, classic / clásico, romantic / romántico

-ly becomes -mente

rapidly / rápidamente, finally / finalmente, normally / normalmente, exactly / exactamente

-ent, -ant becomes -ente, -ante

different / diferente, president / presidente, important / importante, elegant / elegante

-al stays -al

hospital, animal, natural, normal, personal, central

-ble stays -ble

possible / posible, terrible, probable, flexible, visible

-ist becomes -ista

artist / artista, tourist / turista, dentist / dentista, optimist / optimista

-ive becomes -ivo

active / activo, creative / creativo, positive / positivo, negative / negativo

-ence, -ance becomes -encia, -ancia

difference / diferencia, science / ciencia, distance / distancia, importance / importancia

-ary becomes -ario

salary / salario, necessary / necesario, dictionary / diccionario, vocabulary / vocabulario

-ure becomes -ura

culture / cultura, temperature / temperatura, literature / literatura, adventure / aventura

Three things to remember

Words ending in -ción are stressed on the last syllable: nación sounds like "nah-see-OHN."

To make an -ly word, take the Spanish adjective and add -mente: final becomes finalmente.

These patterns work most of the time, so trust your guess when you are reading. If it doesn't fit the sentence, look the word up.

How to spot the hidden words

Many Spanish words changed their sounds over the centuries while English kept the Latin spelling. Once you know these six changes, a lot of words stop looking foreign.

Latin f became Spanish h
hablar (to speak) and fable, hijo (son) and filial, humo (smoke) and fume, harina (flour) and farina.

Latin pl and cl became Spanish ll
lleno (full) and plenty, llorar (to cry) and implore, llamar (to call) and claim, llave (key) and clef.

Latin ct became Spanish ch
noche (night) and nocturnal, leche (milk) and lactose, ocho (eight) and octopus, estrecho (narrow) and strict.

Stressed e often became ie
tierra (land) and terrain, diente (tooth) and dental, piedra (stone) and petroleum, hierro (iron) and ferrous.

Stressed o often became ue
puerta (door) and portal, fuerte (strong) and fort, bueno (good) and bonus, cuerpo (body) and corpse.

Spanish puts an e before sp, st and sc
especial and special, estudiante and student, espacio and space, estatua and statue, escuela and school.

These ten words look like English but mean something else

Spanish	Looks like	Means
embarazada	embarrassed	pregnant
éxito	exit	success
actual	actual	current, present-day
sensible	sensible	sensitive
largo	large	long
ropa	rope	clothes
fábrica	fabric	factory
librería	library	bookstore
carpeta	carpet	folder
asistir	assist	to attend

Part 2: 100 words you can't guess from the spelling

Every entry here is copied from the Superlexa dictionary. The English word on the right of each entry is its hidden cousin, the one to remember it by.

70 words from the MH370 story

You will see all of these again in Part 3.

1 **noche** nocturnal

Night. Noche comes from Latin nox, noctis, "night," the root of English "nocturnal" and "equinox," when night equals day. English "night" is a distant cousin from the same ancient word. Latin -ct- regularly became Spanish -ch-, as in octo to ocho, so noctem became noche, as in buenas noches, "good night."

2 **cielo** celestial

Sky, heaven. Cielo is Latin caelum, "sky, heaven," which gives English "celestial," heavenly. Stressed Latin ae became Spanish ie, as caecus became ciego, "blind." Cielo is also an endearment: mi cielo, "my darling."

3 **año** annual

Year. Año is the annus of "anno Domini," A.D., "in the year of the Lord." It comes from Latin annus, "year," which also gives "annual" and "anniversary," and Latin -nn- became Spanish ñ, as canna became caña, "cane." Tener with años gives age: tengo veinte años, "I am twenty."

4 **mes** semester

Month. Mes comes from Latin mensis, "month," which gives English "menstrual" and "semester," from sex menses, "six months." English "month" is a distant Germanic cousin, from the same old word for "moon."

5 **día** diary

Day. Día is Latin dies, "day," the diem of "carpe diem," "seize the day," and "per diem," "per day." The same Latin gives English "diary" and, through French, "journal" and "journey," a day's travel. Buenos días is "good morning."

6 **mar** marine

Sea. Mar is Latin mare, "sea," the root of English "marine," "maritime," and "submarine." English keeps a native cousin in "mermaid," a maid of the "mere," the old word for sea or lake.

7 **tiempo** tempo

Time / weather. Tiempo comes from Latin tempus, "time," as in "tempus fugit," "time flies," and English "tempo" and "temporary." The weather sense has a twin in English "tempest," from Latin tempestas, "season, weather," built on the same tempus. Hace buen tiempo means "the weather is nice."

8 **madrugada** premature

The early morning hours, dawn, the small hours before sunrise. Madrugada comes from madrugar, "to get up early," from Vulgar Latin maturicare, built on Latin maturare, "to ripen, to hurry." The same root gives English "mature" and "premature," literally "ripe too early," and the madrugada is the hour for being early.

9 **dormir** dormitory

To sleep. Dormir is Latin dormire, "to sleep," kept almost unchanged, and English has it in "dormitory," a sleeping hall, "dorm," and "dormant," asleep or inactive.

10 **correr** current

To run. Correr comes from Latin currere, "to run," and so does the "curriculum" of "curriculum vitae," "the course of one's life." The same root gives English "current," a running flow, "courier," a runner with messages, and "course." Spanish correo, "mail," was first the running messenger.

11 **silla** sedentary

Chair. Silla, "chair," comes from Latin sella, "seat," built on sedere, "to sit," the root of English "sedentary." A silla de ruedas, "chair of wheels," is a wheelchair, and a silla de montar is a saddle.

12 **bebida** beverage

A drink or beverage. Bebida is "a thing drunk," the feminine participle of beber, "to drink," used as a noun, as comida, "food," is made from comer. Beber comes from Latin bibere, "to drink," which also gives English "beverage" and "imbibe."

13 **manta** mantle

Blanket. Manta, "blanket," comes from manto, "cloak," from Late Latin mantum, a shortening of mantellum, "cloak," the source of English "mantle." A mantilla, the lace shawl, is a little manta. The manta ray was named with this Spanish word, for being broad and long like a blanket.

14 **viajar** voyage

To travel. Viajar comes from viaje, "trip," the same word as English "voyage." Both go back to Latin viaticum, "provisions for the road," from via, "road," as in English "via."

15 **volver** revolve

To return. Volver is the turning in English "revolve," "evolve," and "involve." It comes from Latin volvere, "to turn, to roll," and in Spanish turning narrowed to turning back, returning; a "volume" was first a rolled scroll. Volver a plus a verb means "to do again": volvió a llamar, "he called again."

16 **volar** volatile

To fly. Volar is "to fly," from Latin volare, the root of English "volatile," quick to fly off or evaporate. "Volley" comes from the same verb by way of French volée, "flight," a ball hit in the air. Its noun vuelo means "flight."

17 **buscar** busker

To look for, to search. Buscar is probably the source of English "busk" and "busker": the street performer goes about seeking a living. The English word came through French busquer, "to prowl, to seek," from Spanish buscar or its Italian twin buscare. Where buscar itself comes from is uncertain.

18 **joven** juvenile

Young; young person. Joven comes from Latin iuvenis, "young," the root of English "juvenile" and "rejuvenate," to make young again. Iuvenis is also a distant relative of English "young" itself. Los jóvenes means "young people."

19 **pareja** pair

Couple / partner. Pareja is a little "pair": it comes from Late Latin paricula, a diminutive of par, "equal," the root of English "pair" and "peer." A pareja is two who match, a couple, or one's partner.

20 **hombre** human

Man. Hombre is the homo of "Homo sapiens," and English has borrowed it whole, as in "a tough hombre." It comes from Latin hominem, a form of homo, "man, human being," which also gives "human" and "homicide." Hominem lost a vowel and grew a b between m and r, a change also seen in hambre, "hunger," from Latin famen.

21 **casa** casino

House. Casa is the house in English "casino," Italian for "little house." It comes from Latin casa, "hut, cottage," which displaced the grander domus in everyday speech. En casa means "at home," and mi casa es su casa, "my house is your house," is a famous welcome.

22 **salida** salient

Exit. Salida is the "exit" sign in Spanish buildings: a going out, from salir, "to go out." Salir comes from Latin salire, "to leap," which also gives English "sally," a rush out of a besieged town, and "salient." Salida is also a departure, as of a train.

23 **mundo** mundane

World. Mundo is Latin mundus, "world," the mundi of "sic transit gloria mundi," "so passes the glory of the world," and of a "mappa mundi," a medieval world map. It gives English "mundane," "worldly, ordinary." Todo el mundo, "all the world," means "everybody," and el Nuevo Mundo is the New World.

24 **señal** signal

Signal / sign. Señal is English "signal," from Late Latin signale, from signum, "mark, sign," the root of "sign," "signature," and "design." Latin -gn- became Spanish ñ, as signum gave seña, "sign," and lignum gave leña, "firewood."

25 **oscuro** obscure

Dark. Oscuro is English "obscure," from Latin obscurus, "dark, dim, hidden." English kept the figurative sense, Spanish the literal darkness, and dropped the b along the way.

26 **último** ultimate

Last. Último is the root of English "ultimate," "ultimatum," a last demand, and "ultra-." It comes from Latin ultimus, "farthest, last," from ultra, "beyond." Por último means "finally."

27 **esperar** desperate

To hope / to wait / to expect. Esperar means both "to hope" and "to wait," from Latin sperare, "to hope." English "desperate" is the same verb with de-, "away": to be desperate is to be out of hope. Spanish stretched hoping into waiting, since to wait for something is to hope it comes. The language Esperanto takes its name from the same root, "one who hopes."

28 **revisar** revise

To review / to check. Revisar is "to revise," at root "to look again." It is built on Latin revisus, "looked at again," from re-, "again," and videre, "to see," the root of "video," "vision," and "supervise." In Spanish it is the everyday verb for checking something over, as a mechanic checks a car.

29 **entrenar** train

To train. This word is closely related to English "train," from the same French root, both verbs shifting from "to drag along" to "to prepare through practice or exercise." Spanish took *entrenar* from French *entraîner*, a compound of *en-* and *traîner*, "to drag," from Vulgar Latin *traginare*, a frequentative of *trahere*, "to pull or drag."

30 **parecer** appear

To seem / to appear. Parecer is a cousin of English "appear": both come from Latin parere, "to come into view." Spoken Latin made parescere from it, and English "apparent" and "apparition" share the root. Me parece means "it seems to me, I think."

31 **cambiar** change

To change. Cambiar is the same word as English "change." Both come from Late Latin cambiare, "to barter, to exchange," a word the Romans picked up from the Celts of Gaul; French wore it down to changer, which English borrowed. "Exchange" is the same verb with ex-.

32 **respuesta** response

Answer. Respuesta is the Spanish "response." It began as respuesto, the old past participle of responder, "to answer," turned into a noun, the way puesto comes from poner. Responder goes back to Latin respondere, "to promise back," from spondere, "to pledge," which also gives "sponsor" and "spouse."

33 **despedida** petition

Farewell, goodbye; send-off; dismissal. A despedida is a farewell or a send-off: una despedida de soltero is a bachelor party, the goodbye to single life. The word holds pedir, "to ask," because Old Spanish espedirse meant to ask leave to go. It comes from Latin expetere, "to ask for," from petere, "to seek," the root of English "petition" and "appetite."

34 **barco** embark

Boat, ship. Barco is the bark of English "embark," to go aboard a boat, and "disembark," to leave one: Spanish embarcar and desembarcar. It grew out of barca, "small boat," from Late Latin barca, which also gives English "barque," a sailing ship. Un barco de vela is a sailboat, and estamos en el mismo barco means "we are in the same boat."

35 **seguir** sequel

To follow / to continue. Seguir means "to follow" and "to keep on," and comes from Latin sequi, "to follow," the root of English "sequel," "sequence," and "consequence." The sequitur of "non sequitur," "it does not follow," is the same verb. Sigue adelante means "keep going."

36 **llegar** apply

To arrive. Llegar began as a sailor's word. It comes from Latin applicare, used for bringing a ship to land, the source of English "apply," built on plicare, "to fold," as in "complicate." Latin pl- regularly became Spanish ll-, as pluvia, "rain," became lluvia.

37 **caja** case

Box; cash register, checkout. Caja is the same word as English "case," the kind that holds things, and it is behind "cash" as well. All come from Latin capsa, "box, chest," which also gives "capsule," a little box. "Cash" first meant the money box, as caja still means the till in a Spanish shop.

38 **cubrir** cover

To cover. Cubrir is English "cover." Both come from Latin cooperire, "to cover completely," from co-, "thoroughly," and operire, "to cover," which reached English through Old French covrir. Its past participle is irregular: cubierto, "covered."

39 **ala** aisle

Wing; also the brim of a hat, or a flank in sports or the military. Ala is the wing in English "aisle," once the side wing of a church, and in "aileron," the hinged flap on an aircraft wing, French for "little wing." Both come from Latin ala, "wing," through French aile.

40 **pertenecer** pertain

To belong. Pertenecer is English "pertain" with a Spanish ending: what pertains to someone belongs to them. Both come from Latin pertinere, "to reach to, to belong to," from per-, "through," and tenere, "to hold," which also gives "pertinent," "tenant," and "contain."

41 **dejar** relax

To leave / to let, allow. Dejar is the Spanish cousin of English "relax," to let loose. It comes from Latin laxare, "to loosen, to let go," from laxus, "loose," as in "lax," and Old Spanish still had it as lexar; the d- probably came from de, often used with the verb. Dejar de means "to stop doing," as in dejar de fumar, "to stop smoking."

42 **quedar** quiet

To stay / to remain / to be left / to agree to meet. Quedar is English "quiet" turned into a verb: to stay is to come to rest. It comes from Latin quietare, "to put at rest," from quies, "rest," which also gives "tranquil" and "quit," to leave a thing at rest.

43 **hallazgo** inflate

A find, a discovery. Hallazgo comes from hallar, "to find," which goes back to Latin afflare, "to breathe on," probably first used of hounds sniffing out game. Its root flare, "to blow," gives English "inflate" and "deflate." The ending -azgo marks the result, so a hallazgo is what has been found.

44 **palabra** parable

Word. Palabra is the same word as English "parable." Both come from Latin parabola, "a comparison, a story," which in everyday speech came to mean simply a word. The same Latin word, as French parler, "to speak," gives English "parliament," a place for talking, and "parley." English "palaver" comes from the Portuguese form, palavra, picked up by sailors, and "parole" was first a prisoner's word of honor.

45 **voz** vocal

Voice. Voz is the voice in English "vocal," "vowel," and "advocate," someone called to speak for another. It comes from Latin vox, vocis, "voice," as in the phrase vox populi, "the voice of the people." En voz alta means "aloud" and en voz baja "quietly."

46 **nuevo** novice

New; (as a noun, nueva) a piece of news. Nuevo is the "New" in Nuevo México, New Mexico, and Nueva York. As a noun, una nueva is a piece of news, just as English "news" is at root "new things": la Buena Nueva, "the Good News," is the Gospel, and ¿qué hay de nuevo? is "what's new?" It comes from Latin novus, "new," the root of English "nova," "novice," and "renovate," and a distant cousin of English "new" itself.

47 **hacer** fact

To do, to make. Hacer comes from Latin facere, "to do, to make," the verb of "de facto," "in fact," and of "facsimile," from fac simile, "make alike." It also gives English "fact," "factory," and "manufacture," made by hand. Latin f- became Spanish h-, as fabulari became hablar. Hacer also speaks of weather and time: hace frío, "it is cold," and hace dos años, "two years ago."

48 **dar** data

To give. Dar comes from Latin dare, "to give," whose participle datum, "a thing given," is English "data" and "date," once the day written on a letter as "given." Dar is in many phrases, such as dar las gracias, "to give thanks," and darse cuenta, "to realize."

49 **tener** tenant

To have. Tener comes from Latin tenere, "to hold," the root of English "tenant," "maintain," "obtain," and "lieutenant," from French lieu tenant, "place holder." In spoken Latin "to hold" took over from habere as the everyday verb for owning, and haber was left as a helper verb. Tener que means "to have to."

50 **encontrar** encounter

To find / to meet. Encontrar is English "encounter," from Latin in- plus contra, "against": to come up against something. It means both "to find" an object and "to meet" a person, and encontrarse means "to be, to feel," as in me encuentro bien, "I feel well."

51 **mientras** interim

While, meanwhile. Mientras holds the same Latin as English "interim," "meanwhile." It comes from Late Latin dum interim, "while, in the meantime," worn down in Old Spanish to demientre and mientre before the -s was added. Mientras tanto means "meanwhile."

52 **antes** a.m.

Before. Antes is ante, "before," with an adverb -s, and ante is the a of a.m.: ante meridiem, "before midday." Antes de means "before": antes de comer, "before eating." Cuanto antes means "as soon as possible."

53 **después** p.m.

After / afterward. Después holds Latin post, "after," the P in "p.m.," post meridiem, "after midday." It is des, "from," plus pues, which in old Spanish meant "after" and comes from post, the source of "post-" in "postwar" and "postpone." Después de comer means "after eating."

54 **desde** exit

From / since. Desde stacks up Latin de, "from," and ex, "out of," the ex of English "exit" and "export." Late Latin fused de ex into Old Spanish des, and then another de was added to make desde.

55 **sobre** superior

On / about / envelope. Sobre comes from Latin super, "above, over," the super- of "superior," "supreme," and "Superman." It means "on" and "about": sobre la mesa, "on the table," un libro sobre gatos, "a book about cats." As a noun, sobre is an "envelope," the cover laid over a letter.

56 **vez** vice versa

Time / occasion. Vez is the "vice" of "vice versa," "the turn reversed," and of "vice president," one who serves in turn for another. It comes from Latin vicis, "turn, change," so each vez is one turn of something happening. It sits in many common phrases: tal vez, "maybe," otra vez, "again," and a veces, "sometimes."

57 **cada** catalogue

Each, every. Cada comes from Greek kata, "down, one by one," which Late Latin borrowed in phrases like cata die, "day by day." The same kata begins English "catalogue," a list counted down item by item. Common phrases are cada uno, "each one," and cada vez más, "more and more."

58 **todo** total

All; everything. Todo comes from Latin totus, "whole, all," the toto of "in toto," "as a whole," and the source of English "total." A "factotum," a person who does every job, is Latin fac totum, "do everything," in Spanish haz todo. Todo el mundo, literally "all the world," means "everybody."

59 **todavía** via

Still / yet. Todavía is toda vía, "all the way": what is still going has kept on all the way to now. It comes from Latin tota via, from totus, "whole," as in English "total," and via, "road," as in "via" and "viaduct."

60 **nada** native

Nothing. Nada comes from Latin (res) nata, "a thing born," used in sentences like "not a thing born," which wore down to mean "nothing." Natus, "born," is the root of English "native" and "nation." De nada means "you're welcome," and English has borrowed nada for "nothing at all."

61 **mil** mile

Thousand. Mil is Latin mille, "thousand," the root of English "million," "millennium," and "mile": the Roman mile was mille passus, "a thousand paces." Miles de means "thousands of."

62 **sur** south

South. Sur is English "south" come home: Old English suþ passed into French as sud, and Spanish borrowed it from French. Norte, este, and oeste came the same way, from English through French, which is why they look so English.

63 **estrecho** strict

Narrow; a strait. Estrecho is the Spanish form of English "strait," so the Strait of Gibraltar is el Estrecho de Gibraltar. Both come from Latin strictus, "drawn tight," the source of English "strict," and a narrow passage is one drawn tight. Latin -ct- became Spanish -ch-, as noctem became noche.

64 **seis** sextet

Six. Seis, "six," comes from Latin sex, "six," the root of English "sextet" and "sexagenarian," a person in their sixties. Latin sex and English "six" are ancient cousins from the same prehistoric numeral, as is the Greek hex of "hexagon."

65 **algo** alias

Something. Algo comes from Latin aliquod, "something," built from alius, "other," and quod, "what." Alius gives English "alias" and "alien," and quod is the Q in Q.E.D., quod erat demonstrandum, "which was to be shown."

66 **ya** déjà vu

Already / now. Ya comes from Latin iam, "already, now," which also hides in French déjà, as in "déjà vu," "already seen." It is one of the most frequent words in Spanish: ya llegó, "he has already arrived," ya no, "no longer," and ¡ya!, "enough!" or "right now!"

67 **cuando** when

When. Cuando is Latin quando, "when," barely changed. Latin qu- answers to English wh-, so quando and "when," quod and "what," qui and "who" are matching pairs inherited from one ancestor. With an accent, cuándo asks the question "when?"

68 **sin** sine qua non

Without. Sin, "without," is Latin sine, "without," the sine of "sine qua non," "without which not," an essential condition. Sin embargo means "nevertheless," and sin duda, "without a doubt."

69 **hacia** face

Toward. Hacia, "toward," began as Old Spanish faz a, "face to": to go hacia a place is to go the way one's face is turned. Faz comes from Latin facies, "face," the source of English "face" and "facial," and Latin f- later became h-. Without the accent, hacia is a different word from hacía, "was doing."

70 **hasta** hasta la vista

Until, up to; even. Hasta is the hasta of "Hasta la vista, baby," the Terminator's goodbye: hasta la vista is "until we see each other again," and hasta luego is "see you later." It means "until, up to," and also "even": hasta los niños lo saben, "even the children know it." It is usually traced to Arabic hatta, "until," from the centuries of Al-Andalus, and Old Spanish wrote it fasta.

30 more everyday words

71 **agua** aquatic

Water. Agua is Latin aqua, "water," the "aqua" of English "aquarium," "aquatic," and "aqueduct." Between vowels Latin -qu- softened to Spanish -gu-, as equa, "mare," became yegua.

72 **leche** lactose

Milk. Leche is the leche of café con leche, "coffee with milk," and dulce de leche. It comes from Latin lac, lactis, "milk," the root of English "lactose," and Latin -ct- became Spanish -ch-, as noctem became noche.

73 **pan** companion

Bread. Pan is in English "companion," the one who shares bread: Latin com-, "with," plus panis, "bread." The same panis gives "pantry," first a bread room, and Spanish compañero, "companion."

74 **carne** carnivore

Meat, flesh. Carne is the carne of "chili con carne," "chili with meat." It comes from Latin caro, carnis, "flesh," which also gives "carnivore," a meat-eater, "carnal," and "incarnate." Carnival was the last feast of meat before Lent.

75 **huevo** oval

Egg. Huevo comes from Latin ovum, "egg," the source of English "oval," "ovary," and "ovum." Stressed Latin o became ue, and an h was written in front so the u would be read as a vowel, as in hueso, "bone."

76 **sal** salary

Salt. Sal is "salt," from Latin sal, the root of English "salary," "salad," "sauce," and "saline." Latin salarium, the source of "salary," is said to have been a soldier's allowance for buying salt, and a salad was first salted greens. Sal is also the tú command of salir, "to leave": ¡sal de aquí!, "get out of here!"

77 **hambre** famine

Hunger. Hambre, "hunger," comes from Latin fames, "hunger," the root of English "famine" and "famished." Latin f- became h-, and a b grew between m and r, as in hombre from hominem. Tener hambre is "to be hungry."

78 **mano** manual

Hand. Mano is Latin manus, "hand," the root of English "manual," "manuscript," literally "written by hand," and "manicure," "care of the hands." Echar una mano means "to lend a hand."

79 **cabeza** capital

Head. Cabeza is the head counted in "per capita," "by heads." It comes from spoken Latin capitia, from caput, "head," which gives English "capital," the head city, "captain" and "chief," the head of a group, and "decapitate."

80 **ojo** binoculars

Eye. Ojo comes from Latin oculus, "eye," the root of English "ocular" and "binoculars." Spoken Latin shortened it to oclu, and that -cl- became Spanish j, as auricula became oreja, "ear." ¡Ojo! on its own means "Watch out!"

81 **diente** dental

Tooth. Diente comes from Latin dens, dentis, "tooth," the root of English "dentist" and "dental." It is also hidden in "dandelion," French dent de lion, "lion's tooth," named for its jagged leaves. The Latin e became ie, as in tiene from tenet.

82 **lengua** language

Tongue; language. Lengua comes from Latin lingua, "tongue, language," the root of English "language," "linguist," and "lingo," and of "lingua franca," a shared trade language. Like English "tongue," it names both the body part and a language.

83 **pie** pedal

Foot. Pie comes from Latin pes, pedis, "foot," the root of English "pedal," "pedestrian," and "biped." A pie means "on foot." Dar pie a means "to give rise to," at root to give someone a footing: the phrase is often traced to cupping one's hands as a step to help a rider mount, and in the theater el pie is still the cue, the last words that tell the next actor to speak.

84 **corazón** courage

Heart. Corazón holds Latin cor, cordis, "heart," the root of English "cordial," heartfelt, and "courage." English "record" has the same heart in it: Latin recordari, "to remember," is to bring back to the heart, which gives Spanish recordar, "to remember," much as English learns things "by heart." Corazón itself is cor with an enlarging ending, and de todo corazón means "with all my heart."

85 **sangre** sanguine

Blood. Sangre, "blood," comes from Latin sanguis, sanguinem, "blood," which gives English "sanguine," once the cheerful, blood-ruled temperament, and "consanguinity," kinship by blood. Sangría, the wine punch, is named for its blood-red color.

86 **hijo** filial

Son. Hijo is the "hi" of hidalgo, the Spanish nobleman, from hijo de algo, "son of something," a man of means. It comes from Latin filius, "son," which gives English "filial." Latin f- became Spanish h-, and -li- became j.

87 **hermano** germane

Brother. Hermano comes from Latin germanus, "of the same parents," in the phrase frater germanus, "full brother," where Spanish kept the adjective and dropped the noun. Germanus also gives English "germane," closely related, and comes from germen, "sprout," as in "germ" and "germinate."

88 **padre** paternal

Father. Padre is the pater of "Pater Noster," "Our Father," and the root of English "paternal" and "patriot." It comes from Latin pater, a distant cousin of English "father," with Latin p matching English f as in pie, "foot."

89 **hablar** fable

To speak. Hablar, "to speak," comes from Latin fabulari, "to chat, to tell stories," from fabula, "story," the source of English "fable" and "fabulous." Latin f- became Spanish h-, so fabulari became hablar. Portuguese kept the f in falar, "to speak."

90 **ver** vision

To see. Ver comes from Latin videre, "to see," whose vidi, "I saw," is in "veni, vidi, vici." It gives English "video," "vision," "evident," and "provide," to see ahead. A ver means "let's see."

91 **oír** audio

To hear. Oír comes from Latin audire, "to hear," the root of English "audio," "audience," and "audit," originally a hearing of accounts. Latin au became Spanish o, as aurum became oro, "gold," and the d dropped out.

92 **comer** edible

To eat. Comer comes from Latin comedere, "to eat up completely," which also gives English "comestibles," things to eat. It is com-, "thoroughly," plus edere, "to eat," the root of "edible" and a distant cousin of English "eat" itself. The middle of the Latin word wore away, so comedere became comer.

93 **beber** beverage

To drink. Beber is the Latin verb inside English "imbibe" and "beverage." It comes from Latin bibere, "to drink." "Imbibe" is in- plus bibere, "to drink in," and "beverage" came through Old French from the same verb.

94 **cantar** chant

To sing. Cantar is a cousin of English "chant." Both come from Latin cantare, "to sing," which also gives "cantata," "incantation," and "enchant," at root to sing a spell over someone.

95 **escribir** script

To write. Escribir comes from Latin scribere, "to write," the root of English "scribe," "script," and "manuscript," written by hand. Latin s- plus consonant gained an e- in Spanish, as in escuela.

96 **leer** lecture

To read. Leer comes from Latin legere, "to gather, to choose, to read," since reading was picking out letters. The same verb gives English "legible," "lecture," and "legend," first "things to be read." The g between vowels dropped out, leaving the double e.

97 **decir** dictate

To say / to tell. Decir comes from Latin dicere, "to say," the root of English "dictate," "dictionary," and "verdict," from vere dictum, "truly said." The phrase es decir means "that is to say," and querer decir means "to mean."

98 **sol** solar

Sun. Sol, "sun," is Latin sol, the root of English "solar," "solstice," the sun standing still, and "parasol," a shield against the sun. Hace sol means "it is sunny," and gafas de sol are "sunglasses."

99 **luna** lunar

Moon. Luna is Latin luna, "moon," the root of English "lunar" and "lunatic," since madness was once blamed on the moon's phases. Luna de miel, "moon of honey," is a honeymoon.

100 **tierra** terrain

Earth / land. Tierra is the terra of "terra firma," solid ground, and "terra incognita," unknown land. It comes from Latin terra, "earth, land," which also gives English "terrain," "territory," and "Mediterranean," the sea in the middle of the land. Latin stressed e often became ie, as terra became tierra.

Part 3: Flight MH370

This is a true story, and it is how the stories in the Superlexa app start out. About 8 out of every 10 words are cognates, names or small grammar words, so you can follow it from your first day.

Try each paragraph in Spanish first and trust your guesses. Words in red are from the list in Part 2. The English translation is in the tinted box under each paragraph, so you can check yourself as you go.

Learn these small words first

el, la, los, las the
un, una a, an
de, del of, from
en in, on, at
y, e and
o or
que that, which
con with
a, al to, at
por, para for
su, sus his, her, their
se himself, herself, itself
no no, not
más more
muy, mucho very, a lot
pero but
era, fue was
había there was

Vuelo MH370

En la **noche** del 8 de marzo de 2014, el aeropuerto internacional de Kuala Lumpur funcionaba con la energía habitual de una terminal moderna. Cientos de pasajeros de muchos países —chinos, malasios, australianos, americanos, franceses, indonesios y de otras partes del **mundo**— **esperaban** para abordar el **vuelo** MH370 de Malaysia Airlines, un Boeing 777 con destino a Beijing, la capital de China. Entre ellos había estudiantes, **hombres** de negocios, familias con niños pequeños y un grupo de artistas chinos, calígrafos famosos que regresaban de una exhibición internacional. Para casi **todos** era un **vuelo** de rutina, en una ruta que la compañía operaba **desde hacía años sin** ningún incidente serio.

On the night of March 8, 2014, Kuala Lumpur International Airport was operating with the usual energy of a modern terminal. Hundreds of passengers from many countries—Chinese, Malaysian, Australian, American, French, Indonesian, and from other parts of the world—were waiting to board Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370, a Boeing 777 bound for Beijing, the capital of China. Among them were students, businessmen, families with young children, and a group of Chinese artists, famous calligraphers returning from an international exhibition. For almost everyone, it was a routine flight, on a route that the airline had operated for years without any serious incident.

En la terminal, los monitores anunciaban las horas de **salida** y los agentes de seguridad **revisaban** pasaportes y documentos de identificación. El ambiente era relajado, casi festivo: **parejas jóvenes** que **volvían** de vacaciones, un grupo de estudiantes universitarios con sus mochilas, niños que **corrían** impacientes entre las **sillas** de la sala de espera. Nadie **tenía** razón para sospechar que aquella **noche** tan común marcaría el inicio de uno

de los casos más extraordinarios en la historia de la aviación moderna.

In the terminal, monitors announced departure times and security agents checked passports and identification documents. The atmosphere was relaxed, almost festive: young couples returning from vacation, a group of university students with their backpacks, children running impatiently between the chairs in the waiting area. Nobody had any reason to suspect that such an ordinary night would mark the beginning of one of the most extraordinary cases in the history of modern aviation.

En total **viajaban** 239 personas: 227 pasajeros y 12 miembros de la tripulación. En la cabina, el capitán —un piloto veterano con más de 18 **mil** horas de experiencia— **revisó** los instrumentos con la calma de un profesional. Su copiloto, mucho más **joven** y **todavía** en **entrenamiento** avanzado bajo supervisión, confirmó los **últimos** detalles técnicos con el control de tráfico aéreo. Detrás, los auxiliares de **vuelo** organizaron el interior del avión, contaron el inventario de las **bebidas** y prepararon **todo** para un **vuelo** nocturno más. **Nada** indicaba que esa **noche** sería diferente de cualquier otra **noche** en la historia de la aviación comercial.

In total, 239 people were traveling: 227 passengers and 12 crew members. In the cockpit, the captain—a veteran pilot with over 18,000 hours of experience—checked the instruments with the calm of a professional. His co-pilot, much younger and still in advanced training under supervision, confirmed the final technical details with air traffic control. Behind them, the flight attendants organized the interior of the plane, tallied the beverage inventory, and prepared everything for another overnight flight. Nothing indicated that this night would be any different from any other night in the history of commercial aviation.

A las 12:41 de la **madrugada**, el avión aceleró por la pista y ascendió **hacia** el **cielo oscuro**. Muchos pasajeros **ya** se preparaban para **dormir** durante las **seis** horas de **vuelo hasta** Beijing. La tripulación sirvió las primeras **bebidas** y distribuyó **mantas**. **Todo parecía** normal: la altitud se estabilizó a 35 **mil**

pies, la velocidad era constante y el avión navegaba exactamente según su plan de **vuelo** original.

At 12:41 a.m., the plane accelerated down the runway and climbed into the dark sky. Many passengers were already preparing to sleep during the six-hour flight to Beijing. The crew served the first drinks and distributed blankets. Everything seemed normal: the altitude stabilized at 35,000 feet, the speed was constant, and the plane was cruising exactly according to its original flight plan.

Cerca de la una de la **madrugada**, el avión se aproximó al límite entre el espacio aéreo de Malasia y el de Vietnam. En ese punto, el protocolo internacional exige una transferencia de comunicación: el control de Malasia pasa la información al control de Vietnam y el avión confirma el **cambio** con una **respuesta** simple. La transmisión final, a la 1:19, fue tranquila y rutinaria: "Good night, Malaysian three seven zero". Una **despedida** cordial, **sin** ninguna tensión ni ningún signo de emergencia en la **voz**.

Near 1:00 a.m., the aircraft approached the boundary between Malaysian and Vietnamese airspace. At that point, international protocol requires a handoff in communication: Malaysian control hands over information to Vietnamese control, and the aircraft confirms the change with a simple response. The final transmission, at 1:19, was calm and routine: "Good night, Malaysian three seven zero." A polite sign-off, without any tension or any sign of emergency in the voice.

Pocos minutos **después** ocurrió **algo** extraordinario. El transpondedor del avión —el instrumento electrónico que transmite automáticamente la posición, la altitud y otros datos vitales a los radares civiles— se desactivó. En un instante, el MH370 desapareció de las pantallas de los controladores, tanto en Malasia

como en Vietnam. No hubo **señal** de auxilio ni comunicación de emergencia. El silencio fue total e instantáneo.

A few minutes later, something extraordinary happened. The plane's transponder—the electronic instrument that automatically transmits position, altitude, and other vital data to civilian radar—was switched off. In an instant, MH370 disappeared from the controllers' screens in both Malaysia and Vietnam. There was no distress signal or emergency communication. The silence was complete and instantaneous.

Durante los primeros minutos, los controladores intentaron restablecer el contacto por radio una y otra **vez**, **sin** resultado. El avión, con sus 239 pasajeros y tripulantes, simplemente había desaparecido del sistema de vigilancia civil, como si aquel gigante mecánico se hubiera evaporado en la **oscuridad** del **cielo sobre** el **mar** de China Meridional.

During the first few minutes, controllers tried to re-establish radio contact again and again, to no avail. The aircraft, with its 239 passengers and crew, had simply vanished from the civilian surveillance system, as if that mechanical giant had evaporated into the dark sky above the South China Sea.

Sin embargo, aunque el transpondedor estaba silencioso, los radares militares de Malasia —que operan de otra manera, más primitiva pero perfectamente funcional— continuaron detectando un objeto no identificado. Lo que registraron esos radares, **cuando** los analistas examinaron los datos **días después**, resultó sorprendente. En **vez** de continuar **hacia** el norte, **hacia** Beijing, el avión ejecutó un giro de casi 180 grados y se dirigió **hacia** el oeste. Cruzó la península de Malasia en dirección al **estrecho** de Malaca.

However, even though the transponder was silent, Malaysian military radar—which operates differently, more primitive but perfectly functional—continued to detect an unidentified object. What those radars recorded, when analysts examined the data days later, turned out to be surprising. Instead of continuing north toward Beijing, the plane executed a turn of nearly 180 degrees and headed west. It crossed the Malaysian peninsula toward the Strait of Malacca.

Los expertos en aviación **quedaron** perplejos. ¿Por qué un avión comercial, **sin** ninguna alerta previa, **cambiaría** su trayectoria de manera tan drástica y aparentemente tan deliberada? El MH370 continuó su ruta anormal **sobre** el **estrecho** de Malaca, una de las rutas marítimas más activas del **mundo**, **sin** que ningún **barco** lo notara. **Después** giró **hacia** el noroeste, **hacia** el inmenso océano Índico: un área vasta, remota y casi vacía de tráfico aéreo o marítimo.

Aviation experts were baffled. Why would a commercial aircraft, without any prior alert, change its trajectory so drastically and apparently so deliberately? MH370 continued its abnormal route over the Strait of Malacca, one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world, without any ship noticing it. Then it turned northwest toward the immense Indian Ocean: a vast, remote area almost empty of air or maritime traffic.

Después de las 2:22 de la **madrugada**, el objeto desapareció también del radar militar. Durante horas no existió ninguna información confirmada **sobre** su posición. Pero había una fuente de datos que nadie había considerado en las primeras horas de la crisis: el sistema satelital de Inmarsat, un proveedor de comunicación global para aviones comerciales.

After 2:22 a.m., the object vanished from military radar as well. For hours, no confirmed information existed regarding its position. But there was a data source that no one had considered in the initial hours of the crisis: the satellite system of Inmarsat, a global communication provider for commercial aircraft.

Aunque el avión **ya** no transmitía su posición por los canales normales, su sistema satelital continuaba enviando **señales** automáticas **cada** hora, una especie de intercambio electrónico entre el avión y el satélite en órbita. Eran simples confirmaciones técnicas de que el sistema **seguía** activo. No contenían ningún

mensaje humano, ninguna **palabra**. Pero contenían **algo** crucial: el ángulo y la frecuencia exacta de **cada** transmisión.

Although the aircraft was no longer transmitting its position through normal channels, its satellite system continued to send automatic signals every hour, a kind of electronic handshake between the plane and the satellite in orbit. They were simple technical confirmations that the system remained active. They contained no human message, no words. But they contained something crucial: the exact angle and frequency of each transmission.

Los ingenieros de Inmarsat, con cálculos complejos basados en el efecto Doppler y en la geometría de los satélites, determinaron **algo** asombroso. El avión había continuado **volando** casi siete horas **después** de su **última** comunicación verbal, mucho más **tiempo** del necesario para **llegar** a Beijing. La **última señal**, registrada cerca de las 8:11 de la mañana, sugería que el combustible se había agotado en algún punto del **sur** del océano Índico, a **miles** de kilómetros de la costa occidental de Australia.

Inmarsat engineers, using complex calculations based on the Doppler effect and satellite geometry, determined something astonishing. The plane had continued flying for nearly seven hours after its last verbal communication, far longer than necessary to reach Beijing. The final signal, recorded around 8:11 a.m., suggested that the fuel had run out somewhere in the southern Indian Ocean, thousands of kilometers off the western coast of Australia.

Esta revelación transformó la **búsqueda**. Al principio se concentraba en el **mar** de China Meridional, cerca de la ruta original; ahora se expandió **hacia** el **sur**, **hacia** una de las regiones más remotas y hostiles del planeta. Australia, China, Malasia, los

Estados Unidos y muchas otras naciones coordinaron una operación multinacional **sin** precedentes.

This revelation transformed the search. Initially concentrated in the South China Sea, near the original route, it now expanded south toward one of the most remote and hostile regions on the planet. Australia, China, Malaysia, the United States, and many other nations coordinated an unprecedented multinational operation.

Barcos equipados con sonar avanzado, aviones militares con tecnología de detección infrarroja y submarinos autónomos de alta precisión exploraron **miles** de kilómetros cuadrados del fondo oceánico, en una región con profundidades de **hasta seis mil** metros y condiciones climáticas violentas. La operación costó más de 150 millones de dólares y se convirtió en la **búsqueda** de aviación más extensa y más cara jamás organizada.

Ships equipped with advanced sonar, military aircraft with infrared detection technology, and high-precision autonomous submarines searched thousands of square kilometers of the ocean floor in a region with depths of up to six thousand meters and violent weather conditions. The operation cost more than $150 million and became the most extensive and expensive aviation search ever organized.

Mientras tanto, el público de **todo** el **mundo siguió cada** detalle del drama. Compañías privadas de tecnología satelital publicaron imágenes del océano en plataformas digitales e invitaron a millones de voluntarios a examinar **cada** sección de las fotografías **desde** sus **casas**, en **busca** de posibles fragmentos del avión. Los canales de noticias internacionales dedicaron horas de programación al

análisis de **cada** dato **nuevo** y **cada** teoría **nueva**. Nunca **antes** un caso de aviación había generado tanta atención global.

Meanwhile, the public around the world followed every detail of the drama. Private satellite technology companies published ocean imagery on digital platforms and invited millions of volunteers to examine every section of the photos from their homes in search of possible debris from the plane. International news channels devoted hours of programming to analyzing every new piece of data and every new theory. Never before had an aviation case generated so much global attention.

Pero **mes** tras **mes**, y **después año** tras **año**, el océano Índico guardó su secreto. Ningún fragmento significativo, ninguna **señal** de la **caja** negra, ninguna evidencia física apareció en el área calculada por los expertos. Las familias de las víctimas **esperaban** con una combinación devastadora de esperanza y desesperación.

But month after month, and then year after year, the Indian Ocean kept its secret. No significant debris, no signal from the black box, no physical evidence appeared in the area calculated by experts. The families of the victims waited with a devastating combination of hope and despair.

Finalmente, en julio de 2015, más de un **año después** de la desaparición, un residente de la isla de Reunión —un territorio francés en el océano Índico occidental, a **miles** de kilómetros del área de **búsqueda** oficial— **encontró** un objeto extraño en la playa durante una caminata matutina. Era un fragmento de metal **cubierto** de conchas y organismos marinos, con la forma característica de un flaperon, una parte específica del **ala** de un

Boeing 777. **Después** de un análisis detallado, los expertos lo confirmaron: aquel fragmento **pertenecía** al **vuelo** MH370.

Finally, in July 2015, more than a year after the disappearance, a resident of Réunion Island—a French territory in the western Indian Ocean, thousands of kilometers from the official search area—found a strange object on the beach during a morning walk. It was a metal fragment covered in shells and marine growth, with the characteristic shape of a flaperon, a specific part of a Boeing 777's wing. After detailed analysis, experts confirmed it: that fragment belonged to Flight MH370.

En los **meses** y **años siguientes** aparecieron fragmentos similares en las costas de Mozambique, Tanzania, Sudáfrica y la isla de Mauricio. **Todos** eran compatibles con los patrones de las corrientes del océano Índico y **todos** confirmaban la teoría general: el avión había terminado su **vuelo** en algún punto remoto del **sur** de ese océano inmenso. Pero nunca se recuperó ninguna sección grande del fuselaje, ni las **cajas** negras con su información técnica, a pesar de **años** de exploración sistemática.

In the following months and years, similar fragments washed up on the shores of Mozambique, Tanzania, South Africa, and Mauritius Island. All were consistent with the ocean current patterns of the Indian Ocean, and all confirmed the general theory: the aircraft had ended its flight somewhere in a remote stretch of the southern reaches of that vast ocean. But no large section of the fuselage was ever recovered, nor were the black boxes with their technical data, despite years of systematic search efforts.

Con el **tiempo**, varias teorías competían por explicar la tragedia, **sin** ningún consenso entre los expertos. Algunos investigadores propusieron una falla mecánica catastrófica, posiblemente en el sistema de oxígeno o en los instrumentos electrónicos, seguida de una despresurización gradual que incapacitó a **todos** a bordo y **dejó** el avión en piloto automático **hasta** agotar el combustible. Otros analistas sugirieron una acción humana deliberada, aunque ninguna evidencia concreta confirmó esa hipótesis. Otros

consideraron factores relacionados con la carga del avión, incluyendo materiales peligrosos en la sección de carga.

Over time, several theories competed to explain the tragedy, with no consensus among experts. Some investigators proposed a catastrophic mechanical failure, possibly in the oxygen system or electronic instruments, followed by a gradual depressurization that incapacitated everyone on board and left the aircraft on autopilot until fuel was exhausted. Other analysts suggested deliberate human action, although no concrete evidence confirmed that hypothesis. Still others considered factors related to the plane's cargo, including hazardous materials in the cargo hold.

La comisión oficial de investigación, formada por expertos de varias naciones, publicó su reporte final en 2018, **después** de **años** de análisis. Su conclusión **tenía** una honestidad casi dolorosa: no existía suficiente evidencia técnica para determinar la causa exacta de la desaparición. El caso **quedó** oficialmente **sin** resolver. **Sin nuevos hallazgos** ni restos principales recuperados, las operaciones de **búsqueda** se **dieron** por concluidas. El destino final del avión y de las 239 personas a bordo permanece sumido en el misterio.

The official investigation commission, composed of experts from several nations, published its final report in 2018 after years of analysis. Its conclusion carried an almost painful honesty: there was not enough technical evidence to determine the exact cause of the disappearance. The case officially remained unsolved. With no new findings or main wreckage recovered, search operations were formally brought to an end. The final fate of the aircraft and the 239 people on board remains shrouded in mystery.

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