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百度知道>提示信息 知道宝贝找不到问题了> 提示信息 知道宝贝找不到问题了> Ouvrez le Livre! in French With 2 stress on the first syllabes. But to be honest, stressing is not really important in French. And this one : ouVREZ le Livre! sounds correct to my ears as well. Especially of yo want to hightlight the fact of opening. As if it was : ouVREZ! ... le LIvre! Last edited: Jan 10, 2016 By Occitan, and you know, nowadays, there are not a lot of people that actually can be able to speak fluently in Occitan. And ouVREZ le LIvre can be said in Paris, I live and was born in Paris surburbs. By the way, is Occitan still spoken somewhere in South France nowadays? The elderly might still speak it in the most remote villages. By the way, is Occitan still spoken but would be nowhere in South France nowadays? near as healthy as, say, Corsican. It's true that there are few native speakers (except for Gascon, according to UNESCO), but it influences the accent, what is called accent du Midi (more standard) or Francitan (stronger). Last edited: Jan 20, 2016 It's still spoken but would be nowhere near as healthy as, say, Corsican. I was hearing a few TV interviews in Corsican the other day and I realised that Corsican is probably the most comprehensible "Italian dialect/language". It is very very similar to Italian, indeed. It is a sort of Italian with French R and intonation. I really hope no Corsican will be offended by my statement. Page 2 Yes, it was kind of rhetorical question. Is it possible to say when a language sounds Romance, Slavic, Germanic at all? Provided that 'sounding Romance' means having all or most of the pan-Romance sounds and none or few 'new' sounds not present in most other Romance sounds and none or few 'new' sounds not present in most other Romance' means having all or most of the pan-Romance sounds and none or few 'new' sounds not present in most other Romance' means having all or most of the pan-Romance' means having all or most of the pan-Romance sounds and none or few 'new' sounds not present in most of the pan-Romance' means having all or most of the pan-Romance' means havin one: [dz] regarding vowels, it does not lack any of the typical seven and has no extra one, so it keeps the Romance system intact.2. Catalan would rank second, as regarding vowels, it does not lack any of the seven, but has an extra one that is the most common: [a]3. Romanian, as a surprise maybe, would rank third, as regarding consonants, it only lacks the palatals [p] and [s], and has two 'extra' ones: [a] like in Catalan, and [i] After the podium, the 4th and 5th places are reserved for the Ibero-Romance languages. I know that most may say that Portuguese sounds less Romance than Spanish (well, to me, it is rather the other way round), but the fact is that it depends on whether we focus on consonants, European Portuguese lacks the affricates [t] and [d], as well as [r] (but not in all dialects), and it has one 'extra' sound: [b] Modern Spanish lacks many more consonants: [z], [ʃ], [ʒ], [dʒ], [v] and, recently, [β], and it has two 'extra' ones Portuguese does not lack any of the seven, but has as many as seven 'extra' onesAnd I agree that, at least out of the six major ones, modern French is the least Romance-sounding, as regarding consonants, it lacks the affricates [t] and [d], the [r]/[r], and the seven, but has as many as eight or nine 'extra' sounds. Obviously this should be taken as a simple analysis. 'Sounding Romance' is subjective, not scientifically objective, as it would also depend on the position of the phoneme, prosody and many other features, and it should be related to the number of non-Romance words which are common in the language. rather, Provided that 'sounding Romance' means having all or most of the pan-Romance sounds and none or few 'new' sounds not present in most other Romance languages, I would say: Good job! Anyway I am wondering what about Italian is more similar to Finnish or Swedish rather than Spanish or, say, Romanian in this regard. As a consequence, the lack of geminates is clearly audible when Spanish or Romanian people speak Italian. I haven't seen any reference to the ts sound. It lacks in Spanish, Portuguese and French, if I am not mistaken. Last edited: Jan 24, 2016 Great analysis. Only two comments: 1. I think it is misleading the number of extra vowels that Portuguese and French have, since most of them are just the nasal realizations. I would say that Portuguese has two extra vowels ([v] and [i]) and French five ([a], [ə], [œ], [ø] and [y]). Then I would mention nasalization. 2. Another factor to take into account could be phonotactics, specially final consonants. I think this could be a possible axis, going from more permissive to less permissive, as for final consonants. I'm not very sure however: French < Catalan < Romanian < Portuguese < Spanish < Italian o Another factor to take into account could be a possible axis, going from more permissive to less permissive, as for final consonants. I'm not very sure however: French < Catalan < Romanian < Portuguese < Spanish < Italian has the following interesting feature: Standard Italian has the following interesting feature: Standard Italian has a phonological rule that deletes word-final midvowels preceded by a sonorant in contexts where another word follows. This phenomenon is traditionally referred to as troncamento (apocope), and it is often considered an optional rule. poter dire vuol fare - He/she wants to do mar Adriatico - Adriatic sea han detto - They have said abbiam fatto - we have done The following cases are not optional: ben fatto from bene - well done qual è from quale - which/what dottor from dottore /doctor before a noun professor from professore / teacher /professor before a noun gran bel discorso - nice/good speech San from santo - holy - saint bel from bello - nice quel / from quello - that nessun - no/ no one / any ciascun - each alcun - no /no one / any ciascun - each alcun - no /no one / any ciascun - each alcun - no /no one / any ciascun - each alcun - no/ no one / any ciascun - each alcun - no /no one / any ciascun - each alcun - each al more common, though it is often optional as I have said. Last edited: Jan 24, 2016 I think a language sounds Romance when it has: a) preference for open syllables b) only /s, z, r, l, n, m/ in syllable coda and only /r, l/ after a cosonant, then c) few consonant cluster types. Contemporary standard metropolitan French is the least "Romance sounding". "E" muet (etymological /e, a/) in French is regularly dropped, so sentences like je te l'ai dit are pronounced [[ste'di] instead of [37, t4 le di] and word accent is lost, for example the word ami [a'mi] has a different stress in European Portuguese. Unstressed /e/ and sometimes /i, u/, for example o presidente falou com o ministro e os deputados sounds like [u prs'dent falou com o ministru ju] dpu'tad]]. So French and European Portuguese have few vowels and a lot of "non-Romance" consonant clusters, like /tp/ (in l'ami de Pierre) or /rs, mn, dp, ds/ (in o presidente falou com o ministro e os deputados), French lost word stress. This is why I said they are the most "difficult" from a phonetic point of view. I'd say Catalan is in third position, with a moderate vowel reduction and more consonant clusters, Romanian is fourth, Brazilian Portuguese fifth, Spanish sixth (all final unstressed "e" are dropped after /s, z, r, l, m, n/) and Italian seventh. Germanic languages have, compared to Romance languages, more vowel reduction and more consonant clusters, for example in Russian there are /pt, bd, tk, kt, gd, vb, fp, ft, zd, pf, tv, dv, gv, fs, vz, vm, vn, dn, kn, mn,, tm, tsv/ with two consonants, /vdr, vzb, vzl, fpr, fsp, zdr, kst, mgl, mgn/ with three consonants, /vzgl, vzdr, fspl, fstr/ with even four consonants. See here for some phonetic transcription of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in some Romance languages. East and West Slavic have a typical way of pronouncing vowels. For example in Russian, stressed /a, a, y, o, y/ are often pronounced /ia ie ii wo wu/. See here for some example (for example the football player Shevchenko speaking in Italian). So I think French and European Portuguese are the least "Romance sounding" ones. I haven't seen any reference to the ts sound. It lacks in Spanish, Portuguese and French, if I am not mistaken. Italian is more similar to Finnish or Swedish The final vowels -i and -a, -ä are dropped (and a preceding long consonant is shortened) in certain endings, of which the most important are the inessive case ending -ssa ~ -ssä, the elative -sta ~ -stä, the adessive -lta ~ -ltä, the translative -ksi, the second person singular possessive suffix -si, the conditional -isi and the past tense -s/i. The final -i of diphthongs (e.g. ai, oi, ui, äi) is dropped in unstressed syllables. This also often applies to the -i of the past tense and the first vowel of the conditional ending -isi. "Finnish: an essential grammar", page 246. Often Finnish is considered the European language having more vowels, but in the spoken language many vowels are dropped. Last edited: Jan 24, 2016 "Finnish: an essential grammar", page 246. Often Finnish: an essential grammar", page 246. Often Finnish: an essential grammar", page 246. Often Finnish is considered the European language many vowels are dropped. I was obviously referring to geminate consonants in my previous post. No other language has as many geminate consonants as Italian and Finnish in Europe. What do you think about the following Italian feature: In Italian there is no phonemic distinction between long and short vowels, but vowels in stressed open syllables, unless word-final, are long. There's also a difference in pronunciation when the vowel is followed by a single or a geminate consonant. The same occurs in Scandinavian Languages (Norwegian and Swedish), but in this latter case, the distinction is phonemic. ['ka:sa] Last edited: Jan 24, 2016 I was obviously referring to geminate consonants in my previous post. No other language has as many geminate consonants as Italian and Finnish in Europe. Ture, I was only pointing out that spoken Finnish is different from the written one. In Italian double consonants are possible only in intervocalic position. The same occurs in Scandinavian Languages (Norwegian and Swedish), but in this latter case, the distinction is phonemic. ['kan:e] - ['ka:ne] ['ka: thing happens in Icelandic. In Italian and Icelandic vowel length is not phonemic. The Italian consonant clusters at the beginning of a word sound very unromance to me and Slavic-like. In Latin there were schola, stadium, not escuela, estadio. Anyway, in Italian we use lo, uno before these nouns, so lo stadio and el estadio sound pretty similar, this cluster is always in intervocalic position. If I had to forget for a moment that I speak some Romance languages (to a certain degree), then my answer could be: Does French with vowels ü, ö sound like a Romance language? It doesn't sound typically Romance. A "non-Romance-native person" spontaneously expects the vowels ü, ö rather in Finno-Ugric, Turkish, Germanic, etc ... languages, but not in the Neo-Latin ones. The Italian consonant clusters at the beginning of a word sound very unromance to me and Slavic-like ... Not only the clusters themselves, but also the pronunciation [z] of the initial s- before voiced consonants (e.g. svegliare, sdraio, smarrire, svenire, ....) sounds "very similar meaning/function as the Italian prefix s-. In Latin there were schola, stadium, not escuela, estadio. Anyway, in Italian we use lo, uno before these nouns, so lo stadio and el estadio sound pretty similar, this cluster is always in intervocalic position. Yes, but the Italian written documents we find sporadically also solutions similar to Spanish, i.e. with initial i- before the s impura). All in all, I think that the subjective feeling of the non-Romance natives/speakers about what sounds and what doesn't sound Romance, is given/influenced by the image (experience/impression/knowledge) of the medieval Latin. From this point of view, I'd say that the Italian is phonetically perhaps the more Romance-sounding language, followed by the Spanish. (E.g. Hannibal ante portas, amantes amentes, das ut des, etc. ... sound almost Spanish, but not Italian). Last edited: Jan 26, 2016 Yes, European Portuguese sounds like Polish to me. (I know no one will agree, but I am not making this up, it really sounds like Polish to me) I sometimes say that Polish is French of Slavic languages, because of the nasal vovels and complex grammar. French Mount Blanc is pronounced (writing in Polish characters) like ma bla (interesting that we actually pronounce the name as mount blank, for some reason). Spanish people call Catalones polacos, and it is probably not because those languages are similar, but because of the Catalonian being really difficult. ^I don't think French grammar is particularly harder than that of other Romance languages (the same for Catalan). In my view, French grammar is very very similar to the Italian one and Romanian or Literary Portuguese are way harder than French. As for the Slavic languages, are you sure that Polish grammar is more complex than Czech, Slovak or, say, Slovenian and Serbo-Croatian. Does Polish retain the dual (like Slovenian) or the Aorist or the Imperfect tense like Croatian? As for the Slovenian and Serbo-Croatian. Sorry, I meant spelling Rz could be confused for z or sz, ó and u sound the same, ch and h sound the same... There are rules for these homophonic letters, but each of them has a lot of exceptions. The easiest way to write them correctly is to know a foreign Slavic language, to see the etymological changes don't have such homophonic letters, except Slovak e and ä (they should be different, but they aren't in nowadays Slovak). French is well known for confusing spelling. svaria, sbrana ... (with the voiced s- they sound a bit Slavic to me, like e.g. the existing Slovak words zvaria, sbrana ... (with the voiced s- they sound a bit Slavic to me, like e.g. the existing Slovak words zvaria, sbrana ... (with the voiced s- they sound a bit Slavic to me, like e.g. the existing Slovak words zvaria, sbrana ... (with the voiced s- they sound a bit Slavic to me, like e.g. the existing Slovak words zvaria, sbrana ... (with the voiced s- they sound a bit Slavic to me, like e.g. the existing Slovak words zvaria, sbrana ... 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I'd say that the voiced /s/ before voiced consonants is normal in both Romance and Slavic languages, but it's unvoiced in Germanic languages, see the English slip, small. .. that Italians pronounce /zlip/ and /zmol/ like snow (/zno/) and slow (/zlo/) I think it is a bit silly to grade a language's difficulty without a criteria to define "hardness to learn." Every language has characteristics about it that make it the "hardest to learn" in some aspects. For example, as a learner of Spanish, I find it especially difficult to master the numerous dialects and regional varieties. This would not be nearly as big of a problem, say in Romanian, since there are only about 20 million speakers almost exclusively centered around one country. In that regard, I think Spanish would top the list. Just think of how many ways you can say "cool" in Spanish. Every country has their own way, most have multiple unique ways, and Mexico in particular seems to have dozens of possibilities. And whoever said Spanish has a simple spelling system has never been to Central and South Mexico, where Aztec and Mayan words are notoriously difficult to read and pronounce. My friend's last name is Zempoatectl, and that is a rather easy to pronounce last name compared to many others that are much more complicated. What's more, in order to master Spanish you must learn multiple cultures (European, Amerindian, African, etc.), multiple types of governments and political and legal systems and how they work, cuantious amounts of history and names of geographical locations, and little bits and pieces of other languages like "Guaraní" in order to really know what people are saying. In that regard, I think Spanish tops the list in difficulty, or comes in the top two at the very least. It is also important to take into account the availability of media and what not to learn the language. Here in the States, Spanish is probably by far the easiest to immerse yourself in for a number of reasons. There are millions of immigrants throughout the country, almost all libraries have a Spanish section (some better than others), almost all movies have a Spanish dub or subtitles, most regions have a Spanish radio station, and the amount of content available online is huge, especially from Spain (rtve.es for example). Because of this, Spanish in some ways becomes the easiest to learn, at least from an American standpoint. So, I think this ranking business is a bit pointless, since there is no criteria defined here. Even within my post, Spanish goes from hardest to easiest, depending on what we're talking about. So, I think this ranking business is a bit pointless, since there is no criteria defined here. I used grammatical and phonetic criteria. It seems you're estending the matter to the different, both phonetically and grammatically, than, for example, European and Rioplatense Spanish. For example, as a learner of Spanish, I find it especially difficult to master the numerous dialects and regional varieties? Not to mention a non-native speaker of Spanish. Italian or Catalan also have various regional or local varieties, this does not mean that we need to know all the varieties. There are continuous discussions about different regional words or phrases in the Italian or Catalan forums. Please read Posts number 13 and 25. I did define the criteria.... (essentially, taking into account grammar, phonology and spelling). Last edited: Feb 10, 2016 This does not mean that we need to know all the varieties. I suppose I'm referring to my own experience here in the States, where there is a mesh of immigrants hailing from every Spanish-speaking country in the world. In order for me to understand what they are all saying, I personally have to master every dialect, and Spanish, if I'm not mistaken, has the most. Certainly, I'm not saying that I know British or Australian English as an English native, but if I were to go to those countries, I can assure you I would feel very lost for quite some time. It is the same in Spanish. What I mean by no criteria is that there is no criteria established at the beginning of the thread, nor by the person who opened the thread (that I could tell). It simply says, "based on what I find difficult." Every person, then, seems to have their own individual criteria and so ranks things differently. I used grammatical and phonetic criteria. It seems you're estending the matter to the different varieties a language can have. In this respect, European and Brazilian Portuguese are more different, both phonetically and grammatically, than, for example, European and Rioplatense Spanish. It is true that Brazilian Portuguese is more different than European and Rioplatense Spanish. It is true that Brazilian Portuguese is more different than European and Rioplatense Spanish. for the difference between the Spanish in Madrid, Spain, Buenos Aires, Argentina, Mexico, San Juan, Puerto Rico, and, say, Spanish from Ecuatorial Guinea, then I think I could argue that overall there is greater difference than in Portuguese. I once had a Mexican friend ask me (a complete gringo) to interpret for him when we went to visit a Puerto Rican family since he was unable to understand what they were talking about. What's more, in order to master Spanish you must learn multiple cultures (European, Amerindian, African, etc.), multiple types of governments and political and legal systems and how they work, cuantious amounts of history and names of geographical locations, and little bits and pieces of other languages like "Guaraní" in order to really know what people are saying. It's the first time I hear somebody saying that you must take into account these factors if you immerse yourself in a foreign country, but they're included in a different "pack", which are the cultural barriers. If you go abroad you must overcome linguistic and cultural barriers. And I wouldn't include dialectal differences as well as ease of immersion when trying to measure the difficulty of a given language. It is true that Brazilian Portuguese is more different than European Portuguese, when compared only to Madrid Spanish and Rioplantense Spanish, but if you account for the difference between the Spanish from Ecuatorial Guinea, then I think I could argue that overall there is greater difference than in Portuguese. Yes, greater difference, but we are speaking about difficulty. Take the most difficult, complicated, variety of Spanish language and then compare it with European Portuguese or French, both phonetically and grammatically My point of view: European Portuguese is harder than Spanish, regarding grammar it depends.... French: plurals and adjectives are more complicated, there are lots of exceptions, the use of pronominal particles y and en is tricky, the usage of two auxiliary verbs and the past participle concordance are also more complicated. Spanish has plenty of diminutives, augmentatives and so on, as a consequence nouns can take various suffixes and express subtle nuances. The subjunctive mood is much more common and rich in verb endings. svaria, sbrana ... (with the voiced s- they sound a bit Slavic to me, like e.g. the existing Slovak words zvaria, zbalia) Depends on the Slavic to me, like e.g. the existing Slovak words zvaria, sbrana ... 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In Western Slavic languages, there's a preference for the [zC] combination, for all I know. But it happens also in Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese and Catalan, for example esgrima [ez'xrima] (Spanish), [iz'grima] (Brazilian Portuguese), [əz'xrima] (Catalan), so you have la scrima (the common word for this sport is scherma in Italian), la esgrima, a esgrima, a esgrima, all in intervocalic position. I think at least for Spanish you're influenced by your native language. I've just listened to the word pronounce by three native speakers (one European and Mexican Spanish) being [es'grima]. I'd say that the voiced /s/ before voiced consonants is normal in both Romance and Slavic languages, but it's unvoiced in Germanic languages, see the English slip, small. It's normal (i. e. not uncommon), but it's not the default option, at least in Russian (see above). I think it is a bit silly to grade a language's difficulty without a criteria to define "hardness to learn." Every language has characteristics about it that make it the "hardest to learn" in some aspects. For example, as a learner of Spanish, I find it especially difficult to master the numerous dialects and regional varieties. This would not be nearly as big of a problem, say in Romanian, since there are only about 20 million speakers almost exclusively centered around one country. In that regard, I think Spanish would top the list. Just think of how many ways you can say "cool" in Spanish. Every country has their own way, most have multiple unique ways, and Mexico in particular seems to have dozens of possibilities. And whoever said Spanish has a simple spelling system has never been to Central and South Mexico, where Aztec and Mayan words are notoriously difficul to read and pronounce. My friend's last name is Zempoatectl, and that is a rather easy to pronounce last name compared to many others that are much more complicated. 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There are millions of immigrants throughout the country, almost all libraries have a Spanish section (some better than others), almost all movies have a Spanish dub or subtitles, most regions have a Spanish radio station, and the amount of content available online is huge, especially from Spain (rtve.es for example). Because of this, Spanish in some ways becomes the easiest to learn, at least from an American standpoint. So, I think this ranking business is a bit pointless, since there is no criteria defined here. Even within my post, Spanish goes from hardest to easiest, depending on what we're talking about. When I was studying Hispanic filology at the university here in Europe (Germany), I had contacts to native) Spanish, although sometimes - particularly in translation classes and, of course, in dialectology classes, we discussed specific vocabulary through context, like "echar de menos" (Spain) = "extrañar" (American Spanish) and the Peruvian use of "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish) and the Peruvian use of "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish) and the Peruvian use of "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish) and the Peruvian use of "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "of course"), while in European Spanish "de repente" like "por supuesto" (meaning "de repente"), while "means" ( well-known, but Black Africa doesn't play (linguistically!) that big a role (unless I'm heavily mistaken). However, African influence is more manifest, that's true, but, however, not in every country and not in equal degree. E. g. in Argentina you most probably will find Italian more useful than Guarani, while Guarani is more important for Paraguay, given the country's bilingual society. As to slang, that's notoriously one of the most difficult registers to master, because much of it doesn't appear in dictionaries and because it's a register that's particulary subject to rapid evolution. history and names of geographical locations, aren't strictly related to "language learning", but rather to "intercultural competences", as has been pointed out previously. Well, I would say... (from hardest to easiest) 1. Romanian 2. French 3. Portuguese 4. Italian 5. Spanish Romanian - from my experience, I can say that Romanian is hard, due to the: cases -plural -genres First of all, the cases are difficult, but they're not impossible. However, there are the plurals, which can be hard, too. For example: og masă (table) pl. mese (tables) sg. ceas (clock) pl. ceasuri (clocks) And there are the genres, which can be hard, too. For example: og masă (table) pl. mese (tables) sg. ceas (clock) pl. ceasuri (clocks) And there are the genres, which can be hard, too. is mostly used for the feminine, but NOT always, as in: o bere (a beer)] un băiat [the rest of the endings are mostly used for the masculine] The other thing is that you can recognize them by the indefinite articles as well ("un" for pl.) Beside the grammar, there is the phonology, that can be easy for the English speakers... The "a", is like the "z" in "Ezio") Yes, I said EZIO. The "s", is like the "sh" in "sheep" The "î", is the hardest sound for English speakers... there's no equivalent sound for this, but it resembles to the sound that accompanies a consonant. And I'm not talking about "bi, si, di", (like in the alphabet), but about the casual spell: "bî, sî, dî". Note that the "â" is spelled the same as the "î", but used in the middle of the words, NOT at the beginning or at the end of it. French - The French is still something new to me, but I can confirm that the phonology is quite hard, and the grammar is not easy. Portuguese - All I know is that the phonology is hard, but I did not have any contact with it I've heard that the Italian grammar is quite hard, but still an easy romance language, however I don't know much about it. I think Spanish is the easiest, because of its simple phonology and easier grammar. I sometimes say that Polish is French of Slavic languages, because of the nasal vovels and complex grammar. French Mount Blanc is pronounce the name as mount blank, for some reason). Spanish people call Catalones polacos, and it is probably not because those languages are similar, but because of the Catalonian being really difficult. The Slavic languages with the most atypical grammar are actually Bulgarian and Macedonian. Im sure it's not because Catalan is that difficult, but for some other reasons, like the overall "strange" phonetics. ^I don't think French grammar is particularly harder than that of other Romance languages (the same for Catalan). In my view, French grammar is very very similar to the Italian one and Romanian or Literary Portuguese are way harder than Czech, Slovak or, say, Slovenian and Serbo-Croatian. Does Polish retain the dual (like Slovenian) or the Aorist or the Imperfect tense like Croatian? I think that the combinations of clitical pronouns in Catalan are particularly complex, at least more complex than the clitic pronouns in Catalan are particularly complex. even more difficult, but that's probably just me. As for the phonetics, I don't find it to be particularly hard, either. It is one of the few languages whose phonemes I'm able to reproduce almost perfectly, even the different consonant clusters. Once again European Portuguese Pronunciation is trickier to me: it's got a few weird vowel sounds. I find European Portuguese ones even more difficult The tricky thing of European Portuguese is to know which adverbs are atratores. If we exclude subordinating conjunctions, negation, relative pronouns are atratores. For example: todos o fazem, como se chama, aquí se come bem (indefinite/interrogative pronouns, some adverbs) but ainda/já vi-o, sempre/talvez/jamais faço-o, também/só digo-te (some adverbs) and so on. On the other hand, many Spanish and Portuguese speakers have some problem with ci and ne, and often use them in the wrong way. On the other hand, many Spanish and Portuguese speakers have some problem with ci and ne, and often use them in the wrong way. Not to mention the usage of two auxiliary verbs and the past participle agreement. Pronominal verbs are also tricky in Italian, such as: averci, avercene, farcela, mettercela, esserci, essercene and so forth. Ci, vi, ce, ve ne also lack in Romanian. In my previous posts, it was pointed out that in order to learn a language it is not reasonable to need to know all the dialects to be considered fluent. I agree; however, in the US, things are a little different. For example, I have friends here from every Spanish-speaking country (excepting Ecuatorial Guinea). Despite living in a small city of 50,000, I have frequent contact with those from virtually every major Spanish variety. In order for me to communicate with them, I need to be at least familiar with their individual dialect and regionalisms. I would like to share just one example of a word that represents the great difficulty of learning Spanish, at least in the US where there are so many Spanish-speaking immigrants. That word is Popcorn. There are over 30 ways to say it in Romanian). In this case, Spanish is up to 30 times more difficult for me to learn than Romanian. Here is the list of words I know for popcorn: Palomitas (de maíz), palomas, crispetes, crispetes, crispetas, rosetas, rosetas, rosetas, pororó, pipoca, pochoclos, cotufas, esquite, cabritas, maíz pira, canchita, cancha blanca, millo, pacón, poporopo, gallitos, maduritas. This is but a taste of the immense variety and complexity of learning Spanish in the US. Many speakers understand palomitas, but many do not. I could easily share thousands more examples like this with simple words like avocado, pineapple, jacket, cake, chile, beans, young lad, kid, and the list goes on and on. This also applies to grammar, albeit to a lesser degree. Spanish is hard simply for its immense size and regional differences in vocabulary. At least in the US, could I be considered fluent in Spanish if I can only communicate fluently to my Mexican neighbor, but only brokenly with the Spaniard family living two houses down, my Puerto Rican friends down the street, or my co-worker from Uruguay? I would lose my job as a translator for the US spanishspeaking market if I was only familiar with one dialect, as I must select the words that the majority of Hispanics here in the US will understand. I must chase after that illusive and perhaps non-existent "universal Spanish" that everyone here seems to be referencing when they unanimously list "Spanish" as hands down the easiest language to learn. In some regards, it is the easiest. But if you take into account what learning the language is like for a poor gringo like me, then I believe it is reasonable to say, when it comes to learning vocabulary in the US in order to speak fluently with everyone I see, Spanish is by far the most difficult of all. Here is the list of words I know for popcorn: Palomitas (de maíz), palomas, crispetes, crispetas, rosetas, rosetas, rosetas, pororó, pipoca, pochoclos, cotufas, esquite, cabritas, maíz pira, canguil, rosas, flores, bufas, pajaretas, cocalecas, poscon, pocorn, popcon, canchita, cancha blanca, millo, pacón, popcopo, gallitos, maduritas. To begin with, some could simply be removed from that list. Crispetes is Catalan, not Spanish. Popcorn (or phonetic deviations) is English. In most of the cases where a local variation is used, or a native word such as pororó from Guarani or cancha from Quechua, people are also acquainted with another of the general ones, which usually is palomitas/rosetas (de maíz). This is but a taste of the immense variety and complexity of learning Spanish in the US. Many speakers understand palomitas, but many do not. I could easily share thousands more examples like this with simple words like avocado, pineapple, jacket, cake, chile, beans, young lad, kid, and the list goes on and on. As with popcorn, there are usually two or three which are the most common, and usually one or two are perfectly understood by most speakers, even if they may not be the one used by them locally. Often one of the general ones is used in the country too, only less frequently. Saying speakers will not understand you is like thinking that you'll experience big problems with English speakers just because sidewalk is pavement in Britain or footpath in Australia. This also applies to grammar, albeit to a lesser degree. Spanish is hard simply for its immense size and regional differences in vocabulary. At least in the US, could I be considered fluent in Spanish if I can only communicate fluently to my Mexican neighbor, but only brokenly with the Spaniard family living two houses down, my Puerto Rican friends down the street, or my co-worker from Uruguay? I would lose my job as a translator for the US Spanish-speaking market if I was only familiar with one dialect, as I must select the words that the majority of Hispanics here in the US will understand. I must chase after that illusive and perhaps non-existent "universal Spanish" that everyone here seems to be referencing when they unanimously list "Spanish" as hands down the easiest language is like for a poor gringo like me, then I believe it is reasonable to say, when it comes to learning vocabulary in the US in order to speak fluently with everyone I see, Spanish is by far the most difficult of all. If that was so, companies and organizations would hire dozens of Spanish', just like there is no 'universal that there isn't a clearly standardized language working as one at an educated level, which accepts a certain range of lexical and grammar diversity at a local level. Unlike in English, there is an association of all academies working on it. Moreover, while it is true that each country prefers to hear their variety in such things as dubs (specially true for Spain and Mexico), the exchange of cultural products is continuous and many words from a different country are easily learnt or deduced. If anything, the real big challenge is only in the slang. At a personal level, I can understand that it might look frustrating at times, even from a native point of view, but that does not really add that much to the inherent difficult of a language in particular. Besides, it is not true that a language is more dialectal just because it is bigger in size. Less spoken ones can have just as much variation in many terms too.