

Interview with Socorro and Jaime Cienfuegos talking about her success with IN ENGLISH

[Mr. and Mrs. Cienfuegos purchased a set of the video series IN ENGLISH for use in their home. After using IN ENGLISH for a few weeks and seeing the progress Mrs. Cienfuegos made, Mr. and Mrs. Cienfuegos told the publishers of IN ENGLISH that they would consent to be interviewed on video.

What follows is the English translation of the unrehearsed conversation they had on video with Richard Bourell in September, 2003. The transcript is also available in Spanish.]

VLP: How did you try to learn English in the past?

SC: I tried to learn English by going to Adult School, reviewing my school work, or watching television, but I wouldn't understand it. At the adult school, the teachers would teach to large groups where there would be some students who were more advanced, who knew more words and the students who knew less would become even further behind. It was a lot of work for me to learn the vocabulary of many different things. Just repeating and writing the vocabulary wasn't enough for me to remember the words. I needed something audio-visual. And that was the reason that it was so difficult for me in the past.

VLP: How did you react when you saw IN ENGLISH for the first time?

SC: When I saw a lesson from IN ENGLISH for the first time, I understood it by seeing and hearing the words, seeing and hearing what was happening. Each image that you see on the video is labeled and pronounced, in this way you understand it when you see it and you then learn it. When you see the lesson in the book you can remember the words exactly, and I didn't have to write them and didn't have to repeat them because I could already remember them in my mind. I didn't have to translate. This made me happy. This helped me a lot more learning this way.

VLP: How did you react after using IN ENGLISH at home?

SC: When I began to use the method I felt better, I felt more sure of myself, I felt happy because I understood! I noticed that I could learn the words more quickly without taking as much time studying, writing the words so much, and I would remember what I had studied! This motivated me to start a regular time for studying, early in the morning, when it was quieter in the house. I would try to review the lesson in the afternoon, but if I couldn't I would review the next day. Again, I learn more and retain more than before.

VLP: What do you like about using IN ENGLISH?

SC: What I like about the IN ENGLISH method is that it's pleasing, pleasant. The people on the video giving the information, giving the class, are easy to understand and very friendly, they speak well and aren't monotonous and fake. They're nice. I understand the program and feel comfortable with it and I have recommended it . . . I'm

not a young person who easily retains what I have learned, it requires more work for me for whatever, and I've been trying to study English for many years, and I have learned more with this method than I ever did before with classes, teachers, books and friends. With IN ENGLISH you can return to the beginning of the video and repeat it and it isn't tedious!

VLP: How is IN ENGLISH different from the programs that you have used before?

SC: I've had a number of programs. I had a program from the National Polytechnic that had a cassette with a lesson with the vocabulary that was similar, the record giving you the pronunciation of the vocabulary, the book giving you the lesson IN ENGLISH and also in Spanish. But after reading it and telling myself that I understood it, I see that in fact later I couldn't remember or understand it. Seeing it in the video is different! I've remembered it better and understood it better!

VLP: If a friend of yours was thinking about buying IN ENGLISH, what would you say to them?

SC: I would tell them that I recommend this program because I've been convinced that this is the best program. I also recommend this program because I want to help others. Because for me this has been beneficial and I have recommended this to my friends who have children because you need to help your children. I have recommended the program to my sister-in-laws, my neighbors and said that I was convinced that it was helping me and that I thought that it would help them as well, whether they go to school or not, that it would benefit them.

VLP: Tell us how you discovered IN ENGLISH and how you decided to buy it?

JC: We discovered it at a book fair in San Diego. We found it very interesting after looking around at all the stands at the fair. We stopped to really look at it because I had been looking for a program that would really motivate my wife to learn English. After many years she hadn't been able to learn English. The person who was explaining the program at the booth showed us three or four words on the video to see if we could learn them. I looked at my wife and we said that we would think about it. 24 hours later we came back to the fair and said I'll take it, because after the 24 hours my wife could remember the new words that she had only seen for a minute! This was extremely rare because she had had failure after failure with other systems. My wife didn't like the programs that existed. She wouldn't accept them. So how could I say no to this program? At that moment I didn't know how much it cost. But I knew that if my wife learned 3 words in a minute, I would pay for it.

SC: I had seen the method called ----- [a program advertised heavily in the Hispanic community], and my husband had the cassettes, I put them on, but after getting a quarter of the way through the program I gave up and turned it off. I didn't like the classroom setting that was on the video. I didn't like it, didn't learn anything, and felt like it I was back with the group in the classroom. So when I saw IN ENGLISH and found out how quickly I could learn the words, that's what convinced me.

Additional comments from JC and SC:

JC: In this area there are many latinos (Hispanics) who don't have better jobs because they don't speak English. This is a serious problem!

SC: And because the method is expensive,

JC: Yes, they can't buy [it] because it is very expensive.

SC: How much is it?

JC: I don't know, but I know they can't buy it.

JC: And as far as going to school to study English, many can't because they have to work extra hours to put enough money together to live. Having an English program at home you can make your own schedule. If you can study in the morning you are fresher than at the end of a work day. That's how it is with my wife.

SC: When I get up early to study with IN ENGLISH, that is when I have time for myself to study, before everyone else gets up and work begins.

JC: Another aspect that is very important is to get to know what the United States is. If we don't speak English we won't be able to take the test to become a U.S. citizen. If we don't know English we won't know which politicians are defending our rights as latinos. If we don't speak English we cannot ask for a better salary. If we don't speak English anyone can take advantage of us and we can't defend ourselves. And if we get sick, we can't call a doctor to help us. I think it is just basic that we speak English to be able to live here, not as an obligation but as a necessity.

VLP: And what about the cost of IN ENGLISH?

SC: The cost is reasonable. I think it the most economic and COMPLETE of all of them. Other methods are much more expensive and don't teach the same way.

JC: The other advantage is that we could buy it in two parts. So if you don't have enough money to buy the whole program, you can start with the first part. But when you see that you are learning with the beginning videos, it's certain that they will want to continue and buy the more advanced videos as well. You have to buy the second part when you see the results!