

PERÍFRASIS (PHRASAL VERBS)

A *perífrasis* is a combination of two verbs: one conjugated (e.g. yo sigo) and one infinitive or gerund (e.g. estudiar/estudiando).

When the verb is followed by an infinitive, there's also a preposition.

The meaning, as with phrasal verbs, changes completely in some cases.

EMPEZAR A + INFINITIVO

We use this to talk about the beginning of an action.

He empezado a leer un libro.

I've started reading a book.

VOLVER A + INFINITIVO

We use this to express repetition. It means we're doing something again.

He vuelto a leer este libro.

I've read this book **again**.

= He leído este libro **otra vez**.

TERMINAR DE + INFINITIVO

We use this to talk about the end of an action. It means we were doing something and we have finished.

He terminado de leer este libro.

I've finished reading this book.

DEJAR DE + INFINITIVO

We use this to talk about the end of an action, but in this case, it means we have stopped before finishing or we have quit. It can be translated as “**not anymore**”.

He dejado de leer este libro.

I've quit reading this book.

= **Ya no** estoy leyendo este libro.

= I'm **not** reading this book **anymore**.

ACABAR DE + INFINITIVO

We use this to talk about something we just did. *Acabar* is a synonym of *terminar*, but not in this case. As it happens with phrasal verbs in English, the meaning changes when we combine it with the preposition (*de*). It can be translated as “**recently or just**”.

Acabo de leer este libro.

I've just read this book.

= He leído este libro **recientemente**.

= I've **recently** read this book.

**Acabar de + infinitivo* is always used in the present tense. *Acabo* not ~~he acabado~~.

SEGUIR + GERUNDIO

We use this to talk about something we continue doing. It can be translated as “**still**”.

Sigo leyendo este libro.

I'm still reading this book.

= **Todavía** estoy leyendo este libro.

LLEVAR + GERUNDIO

We use this to talk about how long we've been doing something. Therefore, we'll have to **always add an amount of time** in the same sentence. It can be translated as “**for or during**”.

Llevo una semana leyendo este libro.

I've been reading this book **for a week**.

= He leído este libro **durante** una semana.

We can change the order, but we always have to say how long:

Llevo una hora leyendo – Llevo leyendo una hora.

If we don't specify the duration, the sentence makes no sense:

Llevo leyendo este libro. → I've been reading this book for.