

# Ricardo's Spanish Coaching Dispatch

## More on "Are You a Sponge Bob Spanish Learner?"

Last week I wrote a post which asked the question, "Are You a Sponge Bob Spanish Learner?" Based on the number of people who read it and commented, it hit a nerve.

So here's the nerve... people are struggling to find the right pace with their Spanish program. Are you?

Let me bring us back into this with a quote from the post and then I want to dig a little bit deeper into this. I'll make this brief but I think this may really help you.

"One of the most important things to consider in your Spanish learning is pace. You need to find that point at which your brain stays moist with the information but doesn't lose it. It's call long-term retention, or we might even say, processing time. Yes, your brain needs time to process everything it is taking in."

Now, this is another way of talking about assimilation. Different people have different assimilation abilities. Ok, so you get that. Pace. Find the right pace. But here's the thing about pace. To get the right pace you can't be on either extreme. So this pace thing is about finding the right balance. You don't want your "brain sponge" to be too wet and drippy, ok? But you also don't want it to be dry and *crackily*.

Almost all the mail I got on this and the comments were about "slowing down." In other words, most people felt like they were going too fast or they weren't absorbing the information. Let's agree here that the temptation for most of you will be to want to slow down, not speed up.

### **Be careful here and here are three good reasons why:**

1. If you go too slow you'll lose momentum and when you lose momentum it's really tough to get it back.
2. Slowing down may end up as an excuse to put it in reverse and just gradually back out of your commitment to yourself and to us.

Primarily to yourself, however, and to those people to whom you've committed the ability to speak Spanish. Maybe you haven't done that verbally, maybe you haven't told them, but when you started this course, you had a commitment to a certain level of service, or even outreach.

3. There is some material that simply won't pull together if you go through it too slowly or you don't get enough movement on it.

Think of the difference between a laser beam and a fluorescent light.

They both are lights, correct? Of course. They both have the property of light. One, however, can do intricate surgery while the other barely lights a room well enough to read. So what's the difference? The difference is the compression of light. The more you compress light, the more powerful it becomes. Fluorescent light is diffused light.

So, here's my point, if you go too slow, the material will be so diffused that you'll never progress. You'll never keep that momentum. You'll never get the material to pull together. If you go too fast you just may burn your brain.

So, back to Sponge Bob. Keep your brain moist but not dripping. And by all means, don't let that sponge dry out and shrivel up. That is the sign of a quitter and by all means don't do that. If you do, you'll regret not learning Spanish. You'll regret not completing this course and you're worth more than that and the development of this skill is more important than that as well.

If you need help finding balance, let me know. I would be happy to help you find that *lugar dulce* (sweet spot) of success.

**¡Adelante!**