

# Ricardo's Spanish Coaching Dispatch

## **"How Quitting Made Me Tough"**

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You've heard the saying, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going."

Is learning Spanish tough for you?

It's a yes or no question. Well, ok, maybe it's a "sometimes it is, sometimes it isn't" question and answer. The fact is, that for whatever reasons, for some people it is tough. For others it is not. The truth is that it doesn't matter how tough it is or isn't for other people, the point is "Is it tough for you?"

If it isn't then I am happy for you. If it is, then I have some very personal thoughts for you and I invite you to follow along with me.

So, the rest of this coaching dispatch is for you if, at some point in the Spanish learning journey you felt overwhelmed, or wanted to quit, or perhaps quit and you came back. You just plain felt like this was not the walk in the park you thought it would be. You know, *Ay Señor, caminar en el parque*.

This is personal, don't tell anyone. Because when I first went to University. Guess what? I quit after two weeks! I quit! I am ashamed to tell you this but it's the truth. I bought a plane ticket home, shocked my irate parents, had to go get a job working in a factory doing the same movement over 3000 times a night from 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. in the graveyard shift every single day. After a month or so of that, I decided it was time to go back to school. I finished my undergraduate in three and half years and graduated near the top of my class. I hate quitting. Been there, done that, and it pretty much stunk up my life for a few months and that was enough for me.

Sometimes, and you know me, I like keeping things real here. Sometimes, we create our own tough situations just by plain being stupid or not following instructions or by making far too many excuses for ourselves. I've done that plenty of times myself. Do you have a similar story? Most likely you do since that is the story of mankind.

Now, once in a while, stuff just happens to innocent bystanders. Sometimes we inherit genetic challenges, sometimes we are stuck in an environment that is just plain tough and we did absolutely nothing to ask for it. Sometimes an earthquake somewhere triggers a Tsunami, which causes all kinds of other chaotic nuclear events. Sometimes there is absolutely nothing we could have done to avoid the situation. I'm not going to try and sort that out here in the big scheme of life. That's for each person to do with their Maker, I think, to the best of your ability.

However, I do want to sort a few things out for you as it relates to your Spanish learning, specifically as it relates to things being tough for you. So, I always try to keep these somewhat brief so I'll give you some points to consider.

First, let's start with the person who just plain struggles with learning a new language. They have learning challenges and it has nothing to do with them not following the plan or not being consistent or making excuses for themselves. Based on years of experience, I can honestly tell you that this is not the normal situation for our students.

There are, however, some people who physiologically struggle with hearing words correctly or mimicking sounds. There are people who do not process data as quickly as others. This is true. Sometimes, no matter how hard they try or how much they stick with the program, it is just tough for them all the way through. Interestingly enough, these types of people almost never quit the Spanish program. They are used to slugging it through life. Most of their achievements in life have been due to an incredible drive and determination to succeed. Learning Spanish for them is just another challenge and that's exactly how they see it. They didn't enter the program thinking it would be easy and they certainly don't quit because it isn't. Eventually, they reach their goal of communicating well in Spanish. It's not those people I worry about.

You see, the students I worry about are those who struggle because either...

- a. they don't follow instructions,
- b. they don't stay consistent,
- c. they are always making excuses about how busy they are,
- d. they cancel tutoring sessions because, well, because they can,
- e. they complain about how tough it is which only deepens the emotional resistance

they are the one's I worry about.

For the most part, our student body is a very bright group of people. Lots of teachers, physicians, nurses, attorneys, social workers, ministers, etc. Many of them already have accomplished quite a bit. Then they get to Spanish! They get humbled. They begin to realize, "Wow, this takes work." *Esto toma trabajo*. "This isn't as easy as I thought it was going to be." or "I don't want to embarrass myself." or whatever, and they lack the "toughness" necessary to push through the mental and emotional roadblocks they face.

So, coming full circle here, what would it mean for the "Tough to get going" as it relates to your Spanish learning. In my mind, and based on years and years of experience in this field, it clearly means to stop the excuses, stop the complaining, stop canceling your tutoring session unless a real emergency happens, stop the starting and stopping in the program and by all means, stay consistent and follow instructions to the letter. If you really want to succeed in learning Spanish then toughen up and start doing the things that are necessary to achieve the kind of result you told us, and you told yourself, you wanted to achieve when you started this program. Honor yourself, honor your tutor, and honor your purpose.

Ok, so, if you've made it to the end of this little rant of mine without hitting the stop button, thank you. I can tell you this, and I really sincerely mean this, my only goal is your success.

***¡Adelante!***