

Ricardo's Spanish Coaching Dispatch

“Trabalenguas”

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Everyone loves a good old-fashioned tongue-twister. In Spanish we call them *trabalenguas*. That more or less means a tongue-worker! Trabalenguas, como trabajar. Lengua is tongue. So a tongue-worker. That's what a *trabalenguas* is.

Sometimes to really master something we have to push ourselves beyond our normal limits. Trabalenguas allow us to focus on a particular element of pronunciation, get comfortable and then increase the speed. They work our tongues as the very word tells us.

So, in this coaching dispatch I want to work on three specific *trabalenguas* with you. The first will primarily work the single r, the second will work both the single r and the double rr, and the third one will work primarily the double rr. So two will work on the double rr and the other one with the single r.

I couldn't resist giving you a good challenge here with these r's. I want you to relax for a moment, take a breath, get present, close other computer programs, get here, because you're going to need to focus. That's true in everything in life. When you're focusing on something you're going to get a better result.

By the way, if you haven't yet downloaded the transcript for this and you're just listening to the audio, you really need to download and print that transcript so you can follow along. Of course, if you're just reading the transcript, you're going to need to be working with the audio as well. So today, we need both audio and visual.

So, ready? Listo. Let's work with the first one. I'll start slow and then we'll work up in speed. Stay with me. Force yourself to do this. Be a Spanish warrior for a few minutes here. Ok? It's good for you and it's good for your Spanish. Slowly...

Mírame sin mirar, Myriam,
mírame mientras me muevo;
no me mires Myriam mía,
no me mires que me muero.

Ok, so we're going to do it one more time *aquí* slowly. We'll do it a little faster than we just did but stay with me. You should be looking at it.

Mírame sin mirar, Myriam,
mírame mientras me muevo;
no me mires Myriam mía,
no me mires que me muero.

Muy bien, excelente. Now if you need to pause and go back, and do that again, go ahead and feel free to do so. Now we're going to do this fast. Stay with me.

Just try it ok, just try it alright?

Mírame sin mirar, Myriam,
mírame mientras me muevo;
no me mires Myriam mía,
no me mires que me muero.

Were you able to stay up. I hope. Ok, so let's go really fast. Ready?

Mírame sin mirar, Myriam,
mírame mientras me muevo;
no me mires Myriam mía,
no me mires que me muero.

Perfect. *Excelente*. I hope that brings a smile to your face. Start off slowly, keep working through it and you'll get it. That's the beauty of the *trabalengua*.

Now, let's move on to the next one which is only two lines. This one works the r and the double rr. The beauty of this is you're not really thinking about it so much.

Let's start slow first so you get. Again, a little bit slow, ok? ...

Tan caro es ese carro
que por caro no compro el carro.

Now, you ready, a little bit faster...

Tan caro es ese carro
que por caro no compro el carro.

How did you do? One more time fast. Stay with me. A smile on your face. Relax. A breath. Ok, here we go *rápido*...

Tan caro es ese carro
que por caro no compro el carro.

Excelente. I wish I could hear you now. *Excelente. Muy bien. Ok.*

Now, here's the last one. We're going to start slow, ready?

Curro corre por el cerro tras el carro.

Ok, so now let's do it one more time a little bit slowly here...

Curro corre por el cerro tras el carro.

Excelente. Now let's speed it up. Again, Get yourself present, here, focused.

Curro corre por el cerro tras el carro.

¡Excelente! I love this. Y una vez mas. *Rápido.* Let's do it again fast. It doesn't matter what it means. Don't worry about that, some of you are sitting there trying to figure out "what does that mean?" It doesn't matter. We're just working our tongue. We're not working our mind here. They are not called *trabamantes*, they are called *trabalenguas*. Ready? Listo? Get the breath, you're going to need it.

Curro corre por el cerro tras el carro.

Excelente. You see, that's fun, it's helpful. Enjoy these, come back to these. Work with these. Also, if you find one or two that you want to work with, talk with your tutor about incorporating one into your tutoring session once in a while. Also, you can find these *trabalenguas* all over the internet. Just pick ones you can handle. Don't pick ones that are impossible. Start with short ones that you can manage.

Muy bien, excelente, mi estudiante de español. Enjoy your Spanish!

¡Adelante!