



## SPANISH NEWSLETTER WEEK 28

March 2, 2018

Buen dia Padres de Plato Academy!

Boy have we been busy in Spanish class. As always our dances and songs are the most popular part of our class and we make sure we choose a variety of songs on a single topic. The reason behind this practice is that our ears get used to listening the same vocabulary in different ways. Listening is not only important but it is a vital skill for language learning.

Research shows that when we communicate, we spend around 40-50% of our time listening, 25-30% speaking, 11-16% reading and only 9% writing (although that last one might have changed in recent years due to the rise in social media).

Children who learn a second language often go through a “silent period” where they don't say anything. Language teachers and researchers haven't totally agreed whether it's a necessary stage of language learning, or how long it should be. But, I personally do agree that many children experience it. One big reason is that speaking can be a quite nerve-racking experience. I find it as stressful as performing on stage. As new learners, we're thinking so much about what we should say next that we don't fully experience what the other person has said. We suffer from “task overload.”

Allowing a student to be silent lets him/her get the most from listening. On that note, due to the coming report cards, if you heard that your son or daughter is going through a silent period, please do not be alarmed, this is very normal and I may say a beneficial stage of language learning.

Some parents have asked me how they can help at home, I'll leave here some tips I've tried myself as an ESL learner:

- Watch cartoons in Spanish. Although I myself do not enforce TV watching, if they're going to do it anyways might as well benefit from it. You can add subtitles if your child is a reader.

- Read a book while also listening along to the audio book version, you don't have to spend any money on this, you can just go to you tube and look for a specific book being read in Spanish. Famous authors like Mo Willem, Dr Seuss, Eric Carle, among others are an easy find. Also, our local library has a good selection of Spanish books.
- Listen to music, many of the links that I post can help you find the target vocabulary that we're studying at school.
- Watch videos, you can find educational videos on you tube. If you want it, there's no excuses.

Since we had a very special birthday, we sang out loud Feliz Cumpleaños/ Happy birthday to one of our favorites authors from all times: Dr. Seuss. We read the book Huevos Verdes con Jamon/gree eggs and ham. Students were very excited to see that this version was in Spanish too! Some students were asked to snap their fingers every time they heard "Huevos Verdes con jamon", some counted the total number of times we read those words, and they came up with 7, others with 14. Either way, we all practiced our numbers one more time.

We finished our class with a question: te gustan los huevos con jamon?/Do you like green eggs and ham? Si, Si me gustan/no, no me gustan- yes I like them/no, I dont like them. That was a good listening and speaking practice.

I am having a blast, and I hope that each student is enjoying Spanish Class as much as I am. See you next week. Hasta la próxima!

Soraya Castro

