

STUFF *for* **SPANISH** **CLASS**

*Written and illustrated by
by Bryce Hedstrom*

Copyright © 2011, Bryce Hedstrom
All rights reserved. No part of this text may be reproduced, stored on a retrieval system,
or transmitted in any form by electronic, recording, or photocopying without the written consent of the author.

Hedstrom Language Resources
Loveland, Colorado
(970) 290-4228
e-mail: Hedstroms@aol.com

Order other books by Bryce Hedstrom on-line at:
www.Brycehedstrom.com & www.Benslavic.com

Bryce Hedstrom's Spanish Materials

Up-to-date materials for effective instruction

Student-tested for lasting acquisition of Spanish at all levels

Available at: brycehedstrom.com & benslavic.com

Songs for Spanish Class

A collection of catchy songs to help students of all levels; these are easy to read and easy to sing songs from all over the Spanish-speaking world. It contains children's songs and traditional folk songs with historical and cultural commentary so that students can understand the meaning of the lyrics and the significance of the song in Spanish-speaking culture. Also has grammar songs, vocabulary songs and holiday songs. Each song has easy guitar chords and is in a key that is easily singable for a group. Contains an exhaustive grammatical index, a complete subject index, a geographical and cultural index, and notes and teaching tips for the teacher. Illustrated by the author. 63 pages. Also available as a pdf download to show songs on an overhead in class!

Stories for Spanish Class

This is a compilation of original winner stories for beginning Spanish classes. Each story can be used as a framework to either tell in your classroom or as material for extended readings. In this collection you will find simplified adaptations of authentic legends (*La Llorona*) and history (*Christopher Columbus*, *La Batalla de Puebla*), as well as expansions of jokes into stories (*¡Eso sí que es!*) and popular culture told as stories. Students like these stories because many of them deal with real teen issues in a funny and exaggerated way. The stories are presented in order of difficulty, so that the teacher can follow them through the school year or use them as supplements to any existing curriculum. The stories parallel the vocabulary and structure development of Blaine Ray's *Look I Can Talk!* book. For example, there is an extended reading version of the famous *Cuento del Gato*, and the urban legend known as "The Mexican Pet" has been adapted to parallel the vocabulary found in *La Vaca y el Mono*. 73 pages.

Conversational Spanish, Course 1

This book is the backbone of a basic Spanish course that can be taught in one college semester, or one year in high school. It includes stories, songs, mnemonic devices, activities and a thorough level I and II Spanish-English dictionary. The stories are student-tested and are original or adaptations of Hispanic folktales and urban legends.. They advance in vocabulary and structures throughout the course. There are also many communicative activities that support beginning subjects like foods and numbers. This course can be used alone or coordinate with Blaine Ray's early Spanish I readers *Pobre Ana*, *Patricia Va a California*, and *Casi Se Muere*. The dictionary includes all of the words in Blaine Ray's level I and II readers as well as vocabulary for beginning levels. 174 pages.

The Power of Cognates

Learning to speak a new language well requires our students to acquire hundreds of words, and unfortunately there are very few short cuts. To become reasonably fluent students must commit these new words to memory. But there is a shortcut. Since up to one third of the words in Spanish and English are cognates, students can exponentially increase their Spanish vocabulary once we teach them to recognize and use cognates. This book contains over 6,000 cognates in 28 English/Spanish cognate groups, plus two lessons on the most common (and entertaining!) false cognates. Each section begins with the most frequently used Spanish words in that cognate group. Teachers and authors have said this feature is particularly helpful in picking the most high frequency words to use with their students. The book includes tests, practice assessments and tips to help students acquire these amazing vocabulary boosters. 120 pages. 120 pages.

El Alquimista Student Support and Glossary

One of the best ways to learn Spanish is simply to read for pleasure. If we can find books that hook kids with a captivating story, the content itself will compel them to read. *The Alchemist* is that type of book. Besides the engaging story, the setting and the historical allusions are rooted in Iberian culture and imagery. Through the journeys of Santiago, the main character in the story, students will absorb Hispanic culture and history. One problem with *El Alquimista* however, is that the author assumes a high level of literacy: the content is so deep and rich that students may have difficulty understanding the text. The Student Support and Glossary was written to help students to understand the vocabulary and the historical, cultural, geographical and religious elements in the novel. With this support, students in Spanish 2 have been able to read the novel in Spanish. 82 pages.

Pobre Ana Teacher's Guide

This book has everything a teacher needs to teach through *Pobre Ana* and have the students enjoy and understand it. There are maps, activities, advice for acting out chapters in class, reading tips, a listening activity for the movie, and final assessments. There are also short quizzes for each chapter, as well as longer sets of questions that can be used as sample oral questions (or to copy and hand out to the students on the days your voice isn't there). These questions often go beyond the text to prompt students into using their own lives and background knowledge to engage them in meaningful discussions (in Spanish!). It also contains extended readings written especially for this novel. Ana's pitiful letters to Dear Abby and Dr. Oprah (and their responses) are particularly popular with students. The final assessments for the book are differentiated. Students can pick their level of complexity and way of showing that they have learned the content and vocabulary. 73 pages.

Casi se Muere Teacher's Guide

I love this novel and this guide will help your students understand it. I lived in Chile as an adolescent and I love the culture. I have tried to infuse this guide with that passion. The guide includes maps and background readings. There are notes to accompany an optional lecture (in easy Spanish, of course!) about the culture, history and geography of Chile. There are short quizzes and scores of sample oral questions for each chapter. There is also an activity in which to put the major events of the story in order to check for understanding. The card game contains 30 questions from the novel about the history, geography and culture of Chile, which keeps students reviewing and showing off their knowledge with each other in a fun way. Students can show their understanding of the text via three differentiated assessments. I also include lots of reading advice for new instructors and veterans alike. 117 pages.

Activities and Readings for El Día de los Muertos COPY MASTERS

My students love the Day of the Dead. If it is presented in a comprehensible and interesting way, even students at the beginning of level I can read and discuss the holiday in Spanish. This is a packet of student-tested materials that I use at all levels to help students learn about *El Día de los Muertos* and to demonstrate what they have learned. This packet contains 20 copy-ready handouts for your classroom and authentic cultural stories that have been differentiated into four ascending levels. It has authentic and fun songs with easy guitar chords, a word search, differentiated quizzes, an extensive vocabulary list and cultural/language projects with rubrics. 29 pages.

Contents

Introduction	5
 <u>BECOMING A BETTER TEACHER</u>	
All I Really Need to Know about Teaching I Learned in Cycling Class	6
The New Bloom's Taxonomy and FL Instruction <i>(Input-based teaching addresses them all)</i>	10
Checklist for Observing a Foreign Language Classroom <i>(Use it to help you improve)</i>	11
Reminders of Good Teaching Practice <i>(Poster ideas and explanations)</i>	13
Socrates and Teaching Foreign Language <i>(An old Greek models C.I.)</i>	19
Tiered Questioning <i>(Simple structure to organize your oral questioning)</i>	20
 <u>GETTING CLASS STARTED and KEEPING IT GOING</u>	
Fun Spanish Nicknames for Students	22
Funny Place Names for Stories <i>(Help to make stories even more fun)</i>	25
Rejoinders to Keep the Conversation Going <i>(Expansion of the Posters and Cheat Sheets)</i>	28
Study Partner Maps <i>(Use them to pair up students quickly)</i>	
Explanation	30
Amigos de Sudamérica	31
Amigos de Centroamérica	32
Amigos de España	33
 <u>READING HELP</u>	
ACTFL Reading Levels and Specific Books	34
Bookmarks—How to Read in a Foreign Language	38
How to Choose a Book Mini-Poster	39
SSR Mini-Poster	40
Explanation of SSR	41
Motivational Reading Quotes	42
Language Acquisition and Reading	43
Reading to Students: Kindergarten Reading	44
Favorite Spanish Picture Books to Read to Students	45
Summer Reading List for Levels 3, 4 and AP	47
Verifying Reading <i>(How do we know they are actually reading?)</i>	54
 <u>READING REPORTS</u>	
Book Report for a Novel in Spanish	55
Book Report for a Novel in English	57
Reading Report Form for News in Spanish	59
Poster Book Report with Rubric	60
Dual Entry Journal Reading Form for Lower Levels	62
Dual Entry Journal Reading Form for Upper Levels	63
Reading Log in Spanish	64
Self-Selected Reading <i>(Print this on the back of the Reading Log)</i>	65

NUMBERS *(Contextual use of #'s for all levels)*

Los Números Notes	66
Preguntas los Números #1 <i>(Combines #'s 1-30 with background knowledge)</i>	68
Preguntas los Números #2 <i>(Combines #'s 20-100 with background knowledge)</i>	70
¿Sabes las Fechas? <i>(Paired activity with common dates)</i>	72
¿Sabes las Fechas? Worksheet <i>(Questions with common dates)</i>	74
Los Números Wordsearch <i>(Ordinal #'s, cardinal #'s 0-million)</i>	75
¿Entiendes las Estaciones? <i>(#'s applied to seasons of the year)</i>	77
¿Cuánto Gana la Chica? <i>(Math story problem, simple Spanish, present and past)</i>	79
Starship Battle Game <i>(Letters and big #'s used to play a game)</i>	81
Gastos para el Prom <i>(Questions about prom expenses for class discussion)</i>	82
Años Importantes <i>(List of important years in the Spanish-speaking world)</i>	83
Años Importantes <i>(Input-based test for Spanish 2)</i>	84
Años Importantes <i>(Card Game for review or PAT)</i>	86

GAMES & ACTIVITIES

Homographs <i>(Nerdy word awareness builder for all levels)</i>	93
Palindrome Brainteasers <i>(Nerdy mindbenders for all levels)</i>	95
Upside-down Numbers as Letters <i>(Nerdy amusement for all levels)</i>	102
Famous Movie Quotes Game <i>(Students beg for this game as a PAT activity)</i>	104
Songs All Spanish Students Need to Know <i>(Song titles with corresponding YouTube videos)</i>	123
Explicame las Formas <i>(Communicative game for upper levels)</i>	127
Nuestra Escuela <i>(example of an input-based survey you can actually use to measure attitudes)</i>	134
Cinquain Poetry	135

ASSESSMENT & RUBRICS

Group Oral Presentation Rubric	136
Levels of Language Performance for a Story Re-Tell <i>(Helps to grade speaking)</i>	137
Speaking Rubric	138
Writing Rubric	139
Comparison/Contrast Essay Organizer <i>(Help students to write essays)</i>	140
Story Assessment Form <i>(For written stories)</i>	141
Differentiation Ideas for Quizzes	142
Story Board <i>(For drawing and writing a story)</i>	144
Supreme Court Ruling on Student Grading <i>(It's OK)</i>	145

ADMINISTRATIVE HELP FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Regular Attendance and Your Grade	146
Placing Native Speakers in Language Classes	147
Which Class Should I Take?	148
Alternative Learning Plan for Disruptive Students	149
College Admission Standards and Foreign Language	150
Interview Questions for Teacher Applicants	151

INTRODUCTION

This book is a continuation of the **For Spanish Class** series (**Stories for Spanish Class** and **Songs for Spanish Class**, so far). It has grown out of years of successful teaching in the classroom, mixed with a lot of mistakes along the way. Many of these mistakes have been rectified and the methods and materials have been refined. The result is the product you hold in your hands, or are viewing on the screen.

These are ideas and activities that have worked for me. Many have been shared in my reading workshops and conference presentations. There are assessments and forms that have made sense to students and parents. There are games that we have had fun with in class. There are also forms and advice to help administrators understand what we are trying to accomplish in Spanish class. All have really helped me and my colleagues to make our Spanish classes run more smoothly. The materials attempt to address some of the most common concerns and problems that Spanish teachers deal with based upon personal correspondence as well as responses on the benslavic.com blog, the [moretprs listserve](mailto:moretprs@listserve.com) and elsewhere.

Some of the materials are serious, others less so, but all have worked with me and my students. In a typical year, I will use every single one of these materials and refine them after we have used them. The materials that I have used almost every day over the years have been the **Amigos de...** partner pair-up maps, the **Reading Quotes** and the **Rejoinders**. My students keep their partner maps in the front of their notebooks and are trained to pair up within 10 seconds a couple of times every class period. I like it because this also serves as a brief brain break and gets them up and moving. The Reading Quotes are posted on the wall above my whiteboard. When kids whine about reading (which some still do despite my best efforts over all these years), I just shine the laser pointer on the appropriate quote and gently smile. Students use the Rejoinders scores of times daily in class and so do I. Rejoinders posters are displayed prominently both in the front and in the back of the classroom for easy visibility. Observers are amazed how much spontaneous talk goes on in our classes. Much of it has to do with the Rejoinders posters.

The core of my classroom instruction is comprehensible input-based teaching, much of which is based on Blaine Ray's methods, but you do not have to be a TPRS expert for the ideas and materials in this book to work for you. They will work in any Spanish classroom. In fact, I don't always tell stories every day. When my voice is tired or when I am too exhausted to teach I often use the materials and games in this book.

I hope this will help you and if you have any questions, comments or advice please let me know at:

hedstroms@aol.com, brycehedstrom.com

Gracias y buena suerte, mis amigos,

Bryce

ALL I REALLY NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TEACHING

I LEARNED IN CYCLING CLASS

(Reflections on running an effective classroom from group cycling class)
by Bryce Hedstrom, with apologies to Robert Fulghum

To misquote the first line of Robert Fulghum's wonderful little book *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, most of what I really need to know about how to treat my students, how to teach and how to pace my classes, I see in my group cycling class. Good teaching technique, it turns out, is not only to be found in workshops, professional journals and the latest books by brain scientists, but also in the classes at my local gym.

Group cycling is a form of indoor aerobic exercise where the participants pedal or “spin” on stationary bicycles to music. An instructor leads the class. A good instructor can make the participants work hard and have fun. Time flies and everybody gets a good workout.

Dennis Baker is a group cycling instructor at Gold's Gym in Loveland, Colorado and he is one of the best. Dennis' classes are so popular that people have to get to his class up to an hour ahead of time to reserve their bikes. If you don't have your towel and water bottle on a bike at least 30 minutes before class starts you probably won't get one. I have seen hopeful exercisers lined up outside the gym before it opens on Saturday mornings in the cold and dark of a Colorado winter waiting to rush in and reserve a bike for one of Dennis' classes.

Why are Dennis Baker's group cycling classes so packed? The general popularity of the activity is one reason -- people just need help staying in shape during the winter -- but I attribute much of the popularity of Dennis' classes to his solid teaching practices. He tells me he has never taken a pedagogy class. He has not formally studied current best practice or theories of brain function as they apply to teaching and learning. As Dennis puts it: “I learned a lot of it from a guy who did classes at my old gym.” So it sounds like he is just observant and has good instructional instincts. However Dennis picked it up, here are some excellent teaching practices that I see in his cycling classes:

- Class starts before it starts
- Everyone is welcome
- There is a routine
- Stick to the basics
- Each class is a story
- There are lots of breaks
- Everyone is encouraged
- Everyone is challenged
- The students do more work than the instructor

Each of these excellent teaching practices that Dennis Baker applies in his cycling classes is a method that workshop presenters and pedagogy professors have been telling us about for years. Many of these practices fit with what noted foreign language teacher trainer Susan Gross has said about running an effective classroom. More recently psychologists like Daniel Willingham in [Why Don't Students Like School?](#) and cognitive scientists like John Medina in [Brain Rules](#) have given scientific evidence supporting how and why these methods work.

Seasoned teachers instinctively know these principles, but sometimes we need to see them acted out for us in a different setting to bring them into focus. Than new perspective can help us to remember just how powerful they are. Let me explain in more detail what I have seen and experienced in Dennis Baker's cycling classes:

#1 CLASS STARTS BEFORE IT STARTS (Use Bell Ringer Activities)

In Dennis' class the music is going before class begins. Spinners are already there getting warmed up. Most are completely ready to go before class starts and the official “warm up” begins. People filter in anywhere between an hour and 15 minutes before the scheduled start of class. And during that time Dennis is walking around with a cup in his hand; taking sips, checking the music, talking, laughing, and helping people adjust their bikes.

Every class starts right on time. He respects the time of every person there. People are encouraged to get to class on time because there is something going on and they miss something when they show up late.

In the classroom, this type of pre-class activity is called a Bell Ringer or a Sponge Activity - students are working at a light activity on their own before the late bell rings and the official class time is under way. This helps them to be mentally prepared. They are focused on the subject matter for the class they are in. They are ready to learn.

#2 EVERYONE IS WELCOME (Lower the Affective Filter)

Dennis greets his people. He may greet them at the door or before the class or during warm-up time, but almost every student is contacted in some way at the beginning of the class. It may be just a look and a nod. Or a few words of encouragement. But everyone knows that Dennis knows that she/he is there. The cyclists know that he sees them and they know he is glad that they showed up. No matter the student's level of conditioning, no matter their experience with cycling, everyone feels welcome and comfortable. Everyone feels accepted and relaxed.

Dennis is friendly, but not overly friendly. He doesn't push himself on people or try to be everyone's buddy. Nevertheless his welcoming attitude is infectious. As Dennis puts it, "It's about getting to know the people. I just love meeting the people that come to this class."

#3 THERE IS A ROUTINE (Teach Procedures)

At the official beginning of every class Dennis introduces himself, even though most of the participants already know him. "My name is Dennis, if don't know me," is the standard greeting. That introduction is the signal that the class is starting. We start off slow and easy for a warm up and then we stretch a little before we begin in earnest.

The class changes, but not too much. Each class is both predictable and different. The music is different each class. The order of fast and slow songs, and long and short songs is different each class. Even the style of music changes each class. But the basic routine stays the same. Once you understand the signals and the pacing, it is satisfying to know when he is going to ask us to "bring it up" and stand pedaling instead of sitting. He obviously has a plan.

#4 STICK TO THE BASICS (Focus on Fundamentals)

Dennis constantly goes over the fundamentals. Every single class is filled with continual gentle reminders: "Think about your form" and "There is not much weight on your hands" and "Find that beat." Even though there are people that have been to cycling classes for years, and even though there are expert cyclists in the class, we still get reminded of the basics. We all need to be reminded of the basics.

We all need to keep reminding our students of the basics. Vince Lombardi of the Green Bay Packers turned the losing franchise around by focusing on the basics. Legend has it that he used to start training camp with the line: "Gentlemen, this is a football...", and he would explain the game to seasoned professionals from the ground up. He did this every year. If it's good enough for Vince Lombardi and Dennis Baker, it's good enough for me.

In my foreign language classes, sticking to the basics often takes the form of quick translations or five second grammar lessons: "What does ___ mean?" "How do you say ___?" "What does the *-ía* on the end of the word do?" These are constant reminders to the students of the simple pieces that make up language and help us to communicate with one another.

These simple, basic questions also let me know that the students understand what I am saying. These questions remind me and my students that they do not need to know ALL of the grammar in Spanish; they only need to know the grammar in the sentence we are using right now.

#5 EACH CLASS IS A STORY (Use the Power of Narrative)

Almost every one of Dennis Baker's cycling classes is a story. The story is not long or complicated, but it lasts the whole hour. He keeps coming back to it throughout the whole session. The stories are about real places where he rides in the summer and fall like Utah, Montana, and Alberta, Canada. The places are limited and the stories are often similar, but they really help to keep the riders focused.

The story usually starts out with something like: "Realign. Close your eyes. This hour is for you." And as we start spinning to a song, he starts in with: "You're in the canyon country near Moab, riding up a slot canyon with a couple of friends." Then we spin and he encourages us and we ride to a song or two. Later, he might say something like: "You look up. The guy you're riding with is gone." And on it goes.

We keep cycling and he coaches us and he encourages us some more and we take a break. But he keeps coming back to the story. Right after the water break he says: "You are a ways behind your friends. You stopped for water and they didn't." He chuckles and adds "They'll pay for that later."

The nature of the story is encouraging because you are slowly becoming the hero in it—I love that--you smile to yourself because you know that your water break will help you out in the end. You know that you won't be as dehydrated as your friends. You know that you will eventually start gaining on them. You may be behind right now, but you will catch up in the end.

The story is a very simple plot line and it may never ever really end. If in the story you never actually get back to the trailhead where you originally parked your car you still have fun along the way as you visualize the journey.

Another important point in Dennis's stories is that you are never the last one at the end. You are not just some slow, struggling loser that is desperately trying to keep up with the group. The story line almost always goes something like this:

You start out slow and you are behind for much of the ride, but you keep gaining on the group. He says stuff like "The peloton takes off; so do you." By the end of the ride you are one of the ones toward the front, not the leader or the winner, but up there.

I love that. It gives me hope that I may be able to improve. Because of stories like that I work harder and I improve my level of fitness more than if I was just pedaling along to random songs.

I want to give that same hope to my students. I want them to believe that they can improve; that they are getting this stuff; that they may not be the best, but that they are learning more all of the time and that they are pretty good at this Spanish stuff.

#6 THERE ARE LOTS OF BREAKS (Brain Breaks; Apply 10:2 Theory)

If you have never been to a well-run group cycling class you may think that it would be incredibly boring to just sit there and pedal a stationary bike for an hour. And it could be, but in a good spin class there is variety. We go slow and fast. We do intervals. We stand and we sit. We work hard and we sweat, but there are also lots of breaks - "Resistance off, quick drink," is a frequent directive after almost every long song.

A similar idea to Dennis' frequent breaks in education is the idea of "Brain Breaks" or 10:2 Theory. In a classroom, students need mental breaks every 10 minutes or so to make sense of new information. Learners will take these breaks even if the teacher doesn't slow down, so we might as well build them into our instruction. We might as well take purposeful, short breaks several times each class period to allow our students to recharge and reorient before moving on. We do not have to stop teaching entirely, just switch gears for a bit, and then start in again.

#7 EVERYONE IS ENCOURAGED ("Nothing motivates like success." — Susan Gross)

I counted Dennis saying the word "Perfect" at least 15 times in spinning class one day. In that same class he also said "Good job" 8 times, "Nice job" 5 times, and "Nice" 6 times (except that he says it like an extremely cool and approving surfer would say it: Niiiiiiiiicce).

Every single class ends with "Nice job" or "Good ride." Dennis is obviously pleased with the overall effort. Even if I didn't push myself as hard as I could have, I leave feeling good about the class and I am encouraged to come back and try harder next time.

Dennis doesn't nag, or plead, or preach at us. He never says anything even remotely like, "You are just lazy and slow, and you need to get your sorry butts in gear." Why? OK, he is just a friendly and encouraging guy — that's just the way he is — but it is also because people choose to come to his class, and not many would come back if he treated them poorly. And I suspect that students will not show up to my classes mentally or emotionally were I to belittle them and not encourage them.

Dennis says "Nice job, man," as he walks around. You always feel like you must be one of the best ones in the class. You feel like he has noticed you, that he can see you are working, and that he approves. "This next one's really good," Dennis says, and we start in on a new song. The whole class feels good. "Feel good about yourself. You are here working out," he says. We spin. We sweat. We work hard. And we do indeed feel good about ourselves. Out in the gym or on the road I may be out of shape, lazy, clueless and uncoordinated, but in Dennis's class I feel like a winner.

I try harder because of that. I work harder and improve more than if he ignored me or belittled me. Don't get the idea that Dennis is running around telling everyone that they are a superstar or that they are potential Olympic material. He doesn't do that. He just encourages us where we are at. He lets me know that he sees the effort I am putting in and he encourages me to work harder and to improve. I feel successful and it motivates me to try even harder.

I want the students in my own classes to feel like that.

#8 EVERYONE IS CHALLENGED (Differentiate your Instruction)

In a typical class there are several levels of participants. Some are newbies and some are old pros. There is always somebody there for the first time who doesn't know how to adjust the bike, doesn't have the right clothing, doesn't know how to pedal smoothly, and doesn't know how to flow along with the group—and its not in shape at all. But there are also those that REALLY know what they're doing. There is an occasional semi-pro bicycle racer. A trainer of Olympic caliber athletes that lives in the area even shows up to Dennis' classes once in a while. Most of us are

somewhere in the middle — we have cycling shoes with cleats and cycling shorts, and we know the routine, but we are not superstars.

So, here is this mix of people with different ability levels who are all in the same class. The music and the bikes are the same, but not everyone is getting the same workout. No matter what our individual levels may be, we all get challenged. We all get pushed. “Make sure you have enough resistance on,” Dennis says. “You have to catch up.”

Dennis is in charge, but he is not commanding us. It is the environment he sets up that is demanding. He sets up the experience so that all levels will challenge themselves. It is the cycling class environment itself that compels us to work hard, not an overbearing personality making us do it.

To bring up the level he might say something funny like: “Bring it up to somewhere between really easy and really hard.” What does that mean? It means you work at an effort level that is challenging FOR YOU. You are cycling at a cadence that YOU can hear. You are working at an effort level that is just a bit tough FOR YOU. It is different for different people. Some may be dogging it, but not too many. The mood, the music, the story, the encouragement and the group carry along even the uncertain, the ill equipped and the unfit. Like me.

#9 THE STUDENTS DO MORE WORK THAN THE INSTRUCTOR (Duh!)

It may come as a surprise, but the students actually do a lot more work more than Dennis does. He is in shape, he is the leader, and he is the model, so isn't it reasonable to expect that he would be working extra hard to encourage us? But in every spinning class the students pedal more and they burn more calories than Dennis does.

Dennis is not pedaling hard the entire class. He is not trying to prove how good he is. He is not there to get a workout; he is there to help his students get a good workout. He realizes that his job is to help his students improve their physical conditioning. So he gets us started, and shows us the pace, but in the middle of many songs he gets off of his bike and walks around while we pedal. While we work, Dennis works the room. He talks to us. He encourages us. He helps people find the beat of the music. He puts in a CD for the next song. He is not breathing hard, we are.

The term we use for this concept in the world of education is “Duh!” (Or at least we should). Obviously the students should be working and not just watching the teacher work. We are there to help the students, not to do the work for them. They are the ones learning and working. The teachers and the students both need to do their 50%, but as instructors, our 50% may have already been done in planning and preparation beforehand. In the classroom maybe we should more often take on the role of walking around and encouraging our students as they sweat out the learning.

How did Dennis Baker learn to lead his spinning classes with such spot-on methods? I asked him and he said, “I learned a lot of it from another guy.” Maybe you need to find that guy. Or go to one of Dennis' classes, or find somebody else like him.

This school year I plan looking out for more Dennis Bakers. I am going to make it a point to observe more excellent instructors in unrelated fields to figure out what they doing and what I can adapt to my classes. I am betting that we can all observe good practice in unorthodox settings and take something back to enrich our students' experiences in our own classrooms.

Bryce Hedstrom is an author, Spanish teacher, teacher trainer and cycling enthusiast. He lives and teaches in northern Colorado. He is a regular contributor to a blog on benslavic.com, a teacher training website. Bryce's books and free materials and books can be found at brycehedstrom.com.

THE NEW BLOOM'S TAXONOMY* & FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

THIS IS WHAT WE DO WITH COMPREHENSIBLE INPUT-BASED TEACHING!

We can encourage students to do all of these levels of thinking even in beginning courses

Level of Thinking	Key Question / Verb Examples	Examples of Meaningful & Communicative F.L. Activities
<p>1. REMEMBER (lowest level) <i>Retrieving, recognizing, and recalling relevant knowledge from long-term memory.</i></p>	<p>Can the student recall or remember the information?</p> <p>arrange, define, label, list, match, memorize, name, order, recall, recognize, repeat, reproduce, restate, state</p>	<p>*Answer questions that begin with who, what, when, where (if the answer is explicitly given in a story) *Match characters to action/dialogue *Information gap questions *True-False, Either/Or statements *Match L2 vocabulary to English</p>
<p>2. UNDERSTAND <i>Constructing meaning from oral, written, and graphic messages.</i></p>	<p>Can the student explain ideas or concepts?</p> <p>classify, compare, describe, discuss, explain, express, give examples, give main idea, infer, interpret, paraphrase, report, review, select, summarize, translate</p>	<p>*Summarize a story in own words *Restate main idea of story *Explain why a character in a story does/says something (when answer was stated in story) *Describe a person/place in the story *Translate text aloud to English</p>
<p>3. APPLY <i>Carrying out or using a procedure.</i></p>	<p>Can the student use the information in a new way?</p> <p>apply, choose, demonstrate, dramatize, execute, illustrate, implement, interpret, outline, point out, role play, show, sketch, solve, use</p>	<p>*Act out novel commands *Rewrite a story from a different point of view (POV) *Act out a story *Draw a story</p>
<p>4. ANALYZE <i>Breaking material into constituent parts, determining how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose.</i></p>	<p>Can the student distinguish between the different parts?</p> <p>analyze, appraise, attribute, break down, calculate, categorize, compare, contrast, differentiate, , discriminate, dissect, distinguish, examine, organize, question, test</p>	<p>*Answer <i>why</i> or <i>open-ended</i> questions (when answer is indirectly stated or implied in a story) * Break down the main actions of the story *Use a VENN diagram to compare and contrast (characters, situations, countries, cultures, schools, etc.)</p>
<p>5. EVALUATE <i>Making judgments based on criteria and standards.</i></p>	<p>Can the student justify a stand or decision?</p> <p>argue, appraise, assess critique, check, conclude, compare, criticize, defend, estimate, evaluate, judge, justify, predict, rate, select, support, value</p>	<p>*Evaluate appropriate/inappropriate actions of characters *Compare cultures *Predict what will happen next *Make inferences</p>
<p>6. DESIGN (highest level) <i>Putting elements together to form a coherent or functional whole; reorganizing elements into a new pattern.</i></p>	<p>Can the student create a new product or point of view?</p> <p>assemble, combine, compile, compose, create, construct, design, develop, devise, formulate, generate, invent, organize, plan, prepare, produce, propose, reconstruct, revise, rewrite, write</p>	<p>*Create and give novel commands *Write an original story *Compose a class story *Invent new details for a story *Generate / invent answers to hypothetical questions *Rewrite a story adding details &/or characters that were not in the original</p>

* Alan Bloom's classic 1956 learning taxonomy was revised and refined by Lorin Anderson and David Krathwohl in 2000.

Checklist for Observing a Foreign Language Classroom

Report what you observe in my class and help me to become a better teacher
(Original form created by Susan Gross, used by permission)

There seems to be a routine to begin the class

- teacher greets students in the hall as they arrive to class
- students arrive on time
- students are working by the time the late bell rings
- students are on task
- students are prepared

The teacher checks for comprehension

- by asking individuals
- by carefully observing all students in class
- by listening for responses from the whole class
- by asking for translation

The teacher offers opportunity for sophisticated language use

- by embellishing the basic statements
- by asking a variety of questions in a variety of formats
- by inviting students to create in the language

The teacher raises the level of student attention

- by **involving students** in the narration
- by allowing **student input** to direct a portion of the lesson
- by talking **TO** individual students
- by talking **ABOUT** one or two specific students
- by referring to places/locations/people **of interest to the students**

The teacher models pro-active classroom management

- by remaining calm and in control
- by showing genuine interest in the students
- by taking the time to listen to student suggestions
- by looking at individual students with a calm demeanor
- by moving close to potential disruptions
- by using body language to control student behavior non-verbally
- by using facial expressions that are appropriate to the situation
(smiling, not angry, blank expression)
- by offering choices to students who fail to co-operate

The teacher speaks in the target language

- Less than 50% of the time
- 50%-75% of the time
- 75%-90% of the time
- 90%-100% of the time, depending on the activity

The students are actively engaged in the lesson

- by acting or gesturing
- by responding to questions
- by contributing ideas to the lesson

The students are held accountable for the lesson

- by speaking the language when asked
- by helping each other
- by unannounced quizzes
- by retelling the story line in their own words
- by translation when asked

The teacher promotes grammatical accuracy

- by explaining the meaning of unfamiliar or new items
- by using the unfamiliar or new items multiple times, in different contexts
- by asking students to predict correct grammatical usage
- by requiring increased accuracy throughout the year

The teacher demonstrates appropriate correction techniques

- by modeling accuracy: rewarding the student's attempts while acknowledging the content of the student's statement
- by demonstrating the value of accuracy: stating the meaning of the inaccurate construction
- by inviting the student to correct him/herself

The teacher promotes higher-level thinking skills

- by asking students to synthesize the language in a story retell
- by asking students to create imaginative situations
- by asking students to supply motivation for actions in the story

The teacher tailors the tasks to individual student ability

- by asking many types of questions
- by expecting multiple levels of answers to questions (one-word answers, phrases, and whole sentences)
- by requiring longer, more detailed, and more accurate narration from the most able students

There seems to be a routine to end the class

- students are not waiting by the door to leave class
- students are working and/or attentive until the bell rings
- students are not packing up 5 minutes before the end of class
- students wait to be dismissed by the teacher, not the bell

REMINDERS OF GOOD TEACHING PRACTICE

Posters for the Teacher in the Back of the Room and their Explanations

The following phrases are posted in large print at the back of my room. They are for me and my student teachers to see. The posters are reminders of aspects of good teaching that I am working on. I rotate the posters periodically as I perceive a need to focus on a particular skill.

- **Go S-L-O-W, then slow down some more**
- **Focus on the kids.**
- **Teach to the eyes.**
- **Check for understanding.**
- **Stay in bounds.**
- **Interesting/Compelling, Repeated, Personalized & Meaningful, Comprehensible Input**
- **Give them a feeling of success**
- **Praise them. A lot.**
- **5 Second Grammar Lessons**
- **Circling**

Expanded Explanations

The posters are shorthand for bigger ideas. Below are explanations of what these sayings mean.

Go S-L-O-W **What does this mean?**

Learning a language takes time. We teachers already know the language. Our students do not. The teacher is probably also gifted at it. Most of our students are not. Students need to hear a word in context over and over and over again. They need to hear it in different situations, at different rates of speed and in crazy combinations so it sticks. The words to remember here are **SLOW / PAUSE / POINT / SLOW**. The letters in the word SLOW can be thought of as an acronym:

Speak slowly. Then check to see if they get it, and then slow down some more.
Let them catch up by pausing to allow processing time.
Offer help by walking to the board and pointing to the new word written there.
Walk back to where you were and speak slowly once again.

Going slow also refers to the quantity of words you teach. Teach just one to three new words at a time. Don't overwhelm them with too many new words. How many new words are too many? Most people can hold only three to four items in short term memory at one time; think of how telephone numbers are chunked.

Then slow down some more What does this mean?

Once you think you are going slow enough you probably will still need to slow down some more. Our tendency is to go too fast. We almost always do that. We know the language; they don't. We are bored; they are trying to learn a new word. We are focused on getting through our lesson; they are trying to understand what we are saying to them.

The paradox is: **The slower I teach, the faster they learn.** As the old saying goes, "Make haste slowly." It is easy to deceive yourself by looking and listening only to the A+ level students. To see if you are going slowly enough find a couple of students that are at the D+ level and frequently check to see if they are getting it. We are talking about students that are struggling, but who also attend school regularly. Students that do not attend regularly miss so much that it is difficult to use them as a measure of how the class is doing overall.

Focus on the Kids. What does this mean?

We are teaching students, not a curriculum. The students have to get it. They won't get it if they don't pay attention. And they won't pay attention unless it is interesting to them. The most interesting subject to high school age students is THEMSELVES. We talk TO kids to get information about individuals and we talk ABOUT those kids a lot to teach the language and make it interesting to the rest of the class. For silly stories we often talk about situations between boys and girls because that is interesting to them and a developmental task they are working on at this time in their lives.

One important point here is that we are NOT talking about intimate secrets concerning the actual lives of our students. We are not intruding into their personal space. We are "personalizing." To me that means talking about light topics—what they like and what they prefer: silly, quirky, minor, innocuous stuff. We want kids to stand out, but not be laid bare.

We never, ever talk about the intimate details of the personal lives of students. That is too close and offers too much information for the general public. Besides the language, we are also teaching appropriate boundaries—what is OK for close friends to know and what is OK for the general public to know. We are not here to talk about deep aspects of their real lives.

Teach to the Eyes. What does this mean?

The way you can tell if they get it is by looking into their eyes. Do not teach to the back of the room. Do not teach over their heads. Look in to the eyes of individual students. When they get it there is almost always a little smile of understanding. You know that look. It's a good look.

Check for Understanding. What does this mean?

This is educational jargon for teaching to the eyes. We need to continually be checking to see if the students understand. Looking into their eyes helps here. In our classes the students have a signal (fist hits open hand) to indicate that they don't understand what you said. I like this signal because it shows they have "hit the wall" and no longer can keep up. It also wryly reminds me of a