



Bilingual Roots Method™

A Level-Based System for Building Active Spanish Use

Our Method

Many children understand Spanish but consistently respond in English. This happens because speaking is not actively developed.

The Bilingual Roots method is designed for children growing up in English-speaking environments who understand Spanish but do not always feel confident speaking it. Our goal is simple: to help children build a strong, positive relationship with Spanish through structure, repetition, play and real-life language.

This is not about rushing children or forcing them to speak before they are ready. It is about giving them the confidence, vocabulary and support they need to use Spanish naturally.

Core Idea

This method is built around three clear stages of language development. Children do not start speaking naturally—they progress through structured levels that guide them from understanding to independent use.

Level 1: Explorers

Children understand Spanish but mostly respond in English. The goal is to activate first words.

- Target: 10–20 active words
- Responses: one-word responses
- Techniques: simple choice-based questions
- Focus: recognition → single word production

Progression Criteria: child consistently responds with single words without relying entirely on English.

Level 2: Builders

- Target: 100–150 active words
- Responses: short phrases using basic sentence structures
- Focus: verbs and sentence patterns
- Session focus: structured phrase building

Progression Criteria: child produces short phrases with minimal prompting.

Level 3: Storytellers

Children begin expressing ideas in Spanish more independently.

- Target: 200+ words
- Responses: simple sentences
- Focus: responding to open-ended questions
- Session focus: sentence expansion

Progression Criteria: child forms sentences and communicates simple ideas.

Example of Progression Within a Session

- Explorers: 'agua'
- Builders: 'quiero agua'
- Storytellers: 'quiero agua fría'

How Interaction Evolves Across Levels

Explorers

- simple choice-based questions
- one-word responses

Builders

- use of basic sentence structures (example: "quiero ___")
- combining words into short phrases

Storytellers

- sentence expansion
- responding to open-ended questions

What a Session Looks Like

Each session follows a clear and predictable structure so children feel safe, focused and ready to learn.

1. **Welcome and review.** We begin by revisiting familiar words and themes and a calendar to talk about days, months and seasons.
2. **New language through play.** Children are introduced to new vocabulary in a meaningful context (6-10 words).
3. **Guided speaking practice.** We use structured techniques such as simple choice-based questions, sentence frames, and guided repetition to support speaking.
4. **Phonics or early reading.** When the child is ready, we introduce sounds, letters and simple reading activities.
5. **Positive closing.** Each session ends with review and encouragement.

Early Reading Approach

Reading is introduced gradually and only when the child is ready.

We begin with sounds, patterns and familiar words before moving into letters and simple combinations.

The goal is not to rush reading.

The goal is to create a positive bridge between spoken Spanish and written Spanish.

Role of Families

Families reinforce learning with short, guided interactions (3–5 minutes daily). This increases repetition and supports progression between levels. Parents do not need to be perfect Spanish speakers to support their child.

Short, consistent moments matter most:

- reading a short story
- listening to a Spanish song
- using simple phrases during routines
- reviewing weekly vocabulary
- creating a positive attitude around Spanish

Consistency is more powerful than intensity.

How Progress Is Observed

- number of words used actively
- ability to combine words into phrases
- reduction of English responses
- increased confidence in speaking

Outcome

The method provides a clear, structured path for children to move from understanding Spanish to using it actively and confidently over time.