

Basic Peace Officer Course | Chapter 26 | Introductory Spanish

Instructor Note: The learning objectives for this section ask for demonstrations of skills. Document the student's mastery of the learning objectives. The Commission's licensing examination will not cover these materials. The student may use a book, card, or other aid to recall the words that they are to recite. It is expected that the demonstration of these skills might also be used in practical exercises and scenarios in other parts of the course. The amount of time allocated for this unit may be used in conjunction with time for demonstration activities. You may add additional materials as local needs require.

Unit Goal: Hispanic culture and demonstration in proficiency of selected phrases in Spanish.

26.1. List reasons for Spanish training of law enforcement officers.

Hispanic Americans are residents of the United States who belong to a Spanish speaking ethnic group. The total number of Americans of Hispanic origin continues to climb.

The 1990 census reported:

- the national increase to have passed 22,350,000 or 9% of the U. S. population
- in Texas, persons of Hispanic origin number 4,294,120 (25% of a total of 16,986,510)
- an expected increase of approximately 21% going into the 21st century

Most of this population is of Mexican birth and ancestry. Mexican Americans are a mixture of both cultures – Mexican and Anglo. Their concentration is to the Southwest, especially in California and Texas.

Hispanic Culture and Police-related Issues for the Basic Peace Officer Course

26.2. Discuss Hispanic culture.

Language and Communication

Due to the profound importance of family and community in Hispanic American culture, law enforcement officers need to be aware of common group identification styles. Under questioning, for instance, a Hispanic American family member may “eye-check” family members before coming up with a question, and may follow this action up with what seems to be an inappropriate use of the pronoun “we” when the officer expects to hear an “I.” This behavior may seem to be evasive or misleading to some officers, but it often simply reflects the fact that no individual in the family can separate his or her affairs from the family's larger concerns.

Language Limitations

When under stress, as in police interview situations, Hispanic Americans with limited English skills often begin to speak Spanish in response to English questions. Law enforcement officers need to keep in mind that this is not necessarily an attempt to hide information. In fact, when a Hispanic American interviewee turns and speaks Spanish to family and friends during an interview, he or she may well be gathering information. Officers also need not assume a lack of comprehension when in contact with a Hispanic American who does not speak English well; listening and reading skills often far exceed those required in speech.

Law enforcement officers do need to be patient with Hispanic Americans whose English skills are extremely limited, and make sure that relevant information is gathered despite the language barriers involved. Historically, the Hispanic American community has suffered from

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inadequate law enforcement at times because officers were unwilling to summon the time and resources to listen.

Establishing Trust with the Hispanic American Community

Throughout their history, Hispanic Americans have suffered much prejudice and discrimination at the hands of the white majority as well as at the hands of many Latin American dictatorships. Trusting law enforcement officers and other officials, then, is not easy for many Hispanic Americans. On the other hand, as has been discussed above, many Hispanic Americans are taught to show respect for figures of authority in the family and community. Law enforcement officers do well to distinguish between demonstrated respect for their authority and trust. Trust must be established through caring and consistent community policing.

Communicating Context during Contact with Hispanic Americans

Because of a strong emphasis placed by many Hispanic Americans upon the personal quality of communication, law enforcement officers can greatly enhance their policing skills by taking care to establish the context of their inquiries. Most interviews will benefit from a friendly greeting and a handshake. An interviewing officer might explain why the information is needed and what kind of work he or she does; any bond or common interest he or she shares with the people being questioned; and the legal and procedural background of the interview. Providing relevant background information and sincerely demonstrating common interest signifies goodwill and cooperation between law enforcement officers and the Hispanic American community.

Issues in Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication presents many challenges for law enforcement officers making contact with Hispanic Americans. When interviewees avert their eyes, for instance, officers may interpret the action as dishonesty, but many Hispanic Americans are taught to avert direct eye contact with figures of authority as a sign of respect.

Native Spanish speakers often use a great deal of body language. For example, many native Spanish speakers point with their lips (especially in Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Cuba, and Mexico). Another way to point is to tilt the head and/or raise an eyebrow. Also, a common way to say "no" without speech is to shake the index finger.

A common misunderstanding occurs when Hispanic Americans exhibit fear for no apparent reason, claim not to speak English, and balk at presenting identification. In some Latin American countries, being stopped by a law enforcement officer is indeed a fearsome thing. Latin American governments notorious for "death squads" and random brutality against citizens produce people who are terrified of the police. Also, it is common for law enforcement officials in Latin American countries to ask for identification and to not return it to the owner.

Instances where an officer has no reason to believe that a fearful Hispanic American is a threat, it can rarely hurt to reassure the person, through word and deed, which the information requested would not lead to their being harmed.

Emotional Expression

Law enforcement officers dealing with Hispanic Americans may be taken aback by what they perceive as over-emotional speech, tone of voice, and gesture. These officers may feel compelled to calm or confront Hispanic Americans when, in fact, nothing is wrong. In many Latin American countries, emotional expression tends to be viewed as permissible, and extreme emotional restraint may even strike them as alarming. Officers who recognize this fact and adjust their behavior accordingly when in contact with Hispanic Americans, will find that their job is easier.

Derogatory Language

Law enforcement officers who adhere to negative stereotypes of Hispanic Americans may feel tempted to use derogatory language - such as “spik,” “wetback,” “greaser” - in private communication with acquaintances and colleagues. For law enforcement organizations wishing to establish trust and open communication with the Hispanic American community, such language is completely unacceptable. Officers and their organizations must be vigilant in fighting the use of such language through education and development of internal policy. When in doubt about what Hispanic Americans should be called, officers are well advised to be sensitive to acceptable forms of naming used in particular communities, and even to ask Hispanic Americans what they would prefer to be called when identified as a group.

Differential Treatment of Hispanic Americans by Law Enforcement Officers

Underreporting of crime is currently one of the biggest challenges facing law enforcement officers trying to serve Hispanic Americans. Sometimes the failure to report criminal activity is due to internal community pressures, such as a fear of retaliation or a desire not to harm extended family members who are connected in some way to the criminal activity. Other factors include a perceived indifference on the part of law enforcement authorities, a lack of positive experience with and hence a lack of confidence in law enforcement, a belief that law enforcement in the community will probably be either ineffective or harmful, and prior experience of discrimination against Hispanic Americans by law enforcement officers.

Hispanic Americans from countries with politically repressive governments - such as El Salvador, Guatemala, Chile, and southern Mexico - will often be hesitant to report crime, because they may fear police officers more than they fear criminals. As suggested earlier, officers need to go out of their way to reassure such people that they need not fear the police. Underreporting of crime can aggravate already sluggish or cynical efforts by law enforcement agencies to serve the Hispanic American community. Law enforcement officers working for such agencies need to work with their colleagues through education and community outreach to reverse such negative tendencies and affirm the desire of most Hispanic Americans for effective law enforcement.

Victimization

In 1990, the Bureau of Justice Statistics published a report on victimization in the Hispanic American community. The study covered an estimated 100,000 persons aged 12 or older, in 50,000 households, interviewed twice a year. Its findings should provide incentive for

conscientious law enforcement officers to serve the Hispanic American community in a more vigorous and caring manner.

For the period 1979 to 1986, Hispanic Americans experienced more victimization from violent crime than other American populations. For every 1000 Hispanic Americans aged 12 and over, there were 12 aggravated assaults and 11 robberies (compared to 10 aggravated assaults and 6 robberies for all other populations).

Hispanic Americans suffered a higher rate of household crimes (such as burglary, household larceny, and motor vehicle theft) than all other populations: this came to an annual average of 266 household victimizations per 1000 households headed by a Hispanic American (compared to 205 crimes per 1000 households for all other populations). The street was the most common place for violent crimes to occur, 45 percent of the robberies of Hispanic Americans occurred on the city streets. This crime rate would necessarily be lower with increased police patrol activity. Hispanic American victims of violent crime were more likely to be accosted by a stranger (65 percent) than were black American victims (54 percent) or white victims (58 percent). Hispanic American and black American victims were more likely to face an armed offender (57 percent for each group) than were white victims (43 percent). (Shusta, Levine, Harris, and Wong, p. 208)

Increasing Community Policing Services for Hispanic Americans

Among many possibilities for improved community policing in the Hispanic American community, a particularly effective approach may be the use of bilingual community service officers (CSOs), uniformed and badge-holding non-sworn officers. Spanish-speaking CSOs, with their insight into the language and culture of Hispanic Americans, can help law enforcement agencies provide essential “informational, referral, educational, and crime-reporting services” (Shusta, Levine, Harris, and Wong, p. 209). Law enforcement officers who lack Spanish skills but who have frequent contact with Hispanic Americans may become jaded and resigned after ineffective crash-courses in Spanish that leave them with little more than useless practice phrases. Some rudimentary knowledge of Spanish can go a long way toward helping officers do their jobs, however: using courteous everyday Spanish phrases such as greetings (“Buenos días”) and terms of honor for individuals (“señor, señora”) will probably be appreciated as signs of respect and goodwill.

Source: Blanco, Jose (2007). Tactical Spanish for law enforcement (1st edition). Charlottesville, Va. Matthew Bender & Company, Inc. a member of the Lexis Nexis Group. ISBN: 1-4224-4229-2

26.3. List common Spanish words and phrases that would signal danger or impending danger.

Body Language: Why is it important?

Three Main Types of Body Language:

- Look up – Thinking about it
- Look down – sad
- Look Side to Side – embarrassed

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Eye contact with Family or Friend (separate to interview)

These are some of the words and phrases that may alert or warn the officer of aggressive acts being considered or about to be initiated by the individual:

Danger Words:

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
Disarm Him	desármalo		
Jump Him	bríncale		
Shoot Him/Her	despárale tírale		
Beat Him Up	golpéalo (golpéala)		
Take His/Her Gun	quíale la pistola agárra el armá el cohete		
Hit Him/Her	pégale chingaso		
Kick Him	pataléalo (pataléla)		
Run	córrele dále gas arráncate		
Stab Him	pícalo (pícala) córtalo (córtala)		

Weapons:

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
Pistol	pistola cohete arma quete		
Rifle	rifle	(rih'-fleh)	
Shotgun	escopeta		
Scissors	tijeras		
Shoot	dispára tira		
Knife	cuchillo navaja filero		
Bottle	botella		

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26.4. Recite common Spanish words or phrases that would assist an officer in the investigation and identification of suspects and witnesses.

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
What?	¿Qué?		
How?	¿Cómo?		
Why?	¿Por qué?		
When?	¿Cuándo?		
Where?	¿Dónde?		
How many?	¿Cuántos? or ¿Cuántas?		
Which?	¿Cuál?		
Who?	¿Quién?		
Whose?	¿De quién? or ¿De quienes?		

Family:

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
Aunt	Tía		
Boyfriend	Novio		
Brother	Hermano		
Brother-in-law	Cuñado		
Children	Hijos		
Daughter	Hija		
Father	Padre		
Fiancé	prometido (prometida)		
Girlfriend	novia		
Grandson/ Granddaughter	nieto / nieta		
Husband	esposo		
Wife	esposa		
Mother	madre		
Parents	padres		
Relatives	parientes		
Sister	hermana		
Sister-in-law	cuñada		
Son	hijo		
Stepfather	padrastra		
Stepmother	Madrastra		

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Adults:

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
Male	Señor		
Female, Married, Divorced, Widowed	Señora		
Unmarried Female	Señorita		

Numbers:

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
0 (Zero)	Cero		
1	Uno		
2	Dos		
3	Tres		
4	Cuatro		
5	Cinco		
6	Seis		
7	Siete		
8	Ocho		
9	Nueve		
10	Diez		
11	Once		
12	Doce		
13	Trece		
14	Catorce		
15	Quince		
25	diez y seis		
17	diez y siete		
18	diez y ocho		
19	diez y nueve		
20	veinte (y ...)		
30	treinta (y ...)		
40	cuarenta (y ...)		
50	cinquenta (y ...)		

Colors:

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
Black	Negro		
Blue	Azul		

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Beige	Beige		
Blonde	Rubio		
Brown	café, pardo		
Brunette	Moreno		
Dark	Oscuro		
Gold	Dorado		
Gray	Gris		
Green	Verde		
Light color tone	Claro		
Orange	Naranja		
Pink	Rosado		
Red	Rojo		
Silvery	Plateado		
Silver (the metal)	Plata		
Yellow	Amarillo		
White (the color)	Blanco		

Clothes:

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
Blouse	blusa		
Jacket	chaqueta		
Coat	saco		
Overcoat	abrigo		
Hat	sombrero		
Cap	gorra		
Shirt	camisa		
Pants	pantalones		
Socks	calcetines		
Shoes	zapatos		
Gloves	guantes		

Instructor Note: Below view some additional background information that may apply to your geographic area:

Calo'

- Calo' (also known as Pachuco) is an argot or slang of Mexican Spanish which originated during the first half of the 20th century in the Southwestern United States. It is the product of zoot-suit Pachuco culture. The following are examples of Caló/Spanish slang/Spanglish-

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Zoot Suit Riots- Dress- Language

- Mexican and Mexican American youths who wore these outfits were called zoot-suiters. These individuals referred to themselves as Pachuco's, a name linked to the Mexican American generation's rebellion against both the Mexican and American cultures. Most importantly was the language that was used to detour police officers.

The following are just a few words to get started:

- Orale- sounds good, in agreement
- Trucha chota- be careful cops
- Chota- cops
- Filerio- knife, blade
- Wisa- girlfriend
- Chapete- girl/guy on the side
- Chuete, Cuete, Cohete- gun
- Mota- pot, marijuana
- Aguila- watch out
- Bolillo- white boy or white guy, anglo
- Poli- Police officer
- Ranfla- car or truck
- Carnal- brother, close friend, homeboy
- El Chuco- El Paso
- Juaritos- Juarez
- Guey- homeboy, close friend, dude
- Jura- Police
- La neta- the truth
- Lana- Money
- Chingasos- fight, throw punches
- Naranjas- no, not
- La pinta- jail, prison

26.5. Recite common Spanish phrases that will assist the officer conducting field interviews and traffic stops.

Field Interviews:

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
Who called the police?	¿Quién llamó á la policía?		
Did you call the police?	¿Usted llamó á la policía?		
Who is the victim?	¿Quién es la víctima?		
Calm down	Cálmese		

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Who saw what happened?	¿Quién vió lo que pasó?		
I speak only a little Spanish?	Hablo sólo un poco de español		
Do you speak English?	¿Habla usted inglés?		

Field Interviews:

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
I've called for a Spanish-speaking officer	Yo llamé por un oficial que habla español		
I don't understand	No entiendo		
Do you understand?	¿Entiende?		
How may I help you?	¿En qué puedo servirle?		
Let's talk in another room	Hablemos en otro cuarto		
Do you wish to file a complaint?	¿Quiere hacer una demanda?		
Please repeat	Repita, por favor		

Traffic/Pedestrian Stops:

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
Name	nombre		
Place of Birth	Lugar de nacimiento		
Age	edad		
Occupation	ocupación		
Address	dirección		
City	ciudad		
Zip Code	zona postal		
Phone Number	numero de teléfono		
Place of Work	lugar donde trabaja		
Sign Here	firme aquí		
Please	por favor		
Your Signature	su firma		

Traffic/Pedestrian Stops:

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang
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			(Instructor Added)
Insurance	aseguranza / seguro		
Driver's License	licencia de conducir / licencia de manejar		
Are you the owner of the car?	¿Es usted el dueño del vehículo?		
Get out of the Car	Salga del vehículo		
Stop the motor	Apague el motor		

26.6. Recite common Spanish phrases that will assist the officer conducting accident investigations.

English	Castilian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
Is anyone injured?	¿Hay alguien herido?		
Are you alright?	¿Está bien?		
Stay calm	Quédese tranquilo		
Don't move your head	No mueva la cabeza		
Where does it hurt?	¿Dónde le duele?		
Do you need an ambulance?	¿Necesita una ambulancia?		
I'm going to call an ambulance	Voy a llamar una ambulancia		
Turn off the motor	Apague el motor		
Get out of the car, please	Bájese del vehículo, por favor		
Are you the owner of the car?	¿Es usted el dueño del carro?		
Who was driving?	¿Quién venía manejando?		
Were you wearing seat belts?	¿Llevaba puesto el cinturón de seguridad?		
Which way were you going?	¿En qué dirección iba usted?		
How fast were you driving?	¿A qué velocidad venía manejando?		
Which way was the other car going?	¿En qué dirección iba el otro vehículo?		

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Do you want me to call a tow truck?	¿Quiere que llame una grua?		
Do you want me to call someone?	¿Quiere que llame á alguien?		
Have you been drinking or taking any drugs?	¿Ha bebido alcohol o tomado drogas?		

26.7. Demonstrate proficiency using common Spanish phrases for command and control.

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
Police! Don't move	¡Policía! No se mueva		
Drop the Weapon	suelta el arma		
Hands in the Air	manos arriba		
Turn Around, slowly	Voltéese, despaciamente		
Stop!	¡Alto!		
Spread Your feet	sepáre las pies		

26.8. Demonstrate proficiency using common Spanish phrases for arrests.

Commands:

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
Get Up	levántese		
Sit Down	siéntese		
You Are Under Arrest	está arrestado		

Handcuffing Position:

English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
Get on the Floor (Inside)	acuéstese en el piso		
Get on the Ground (Outside)	acuéstese en el suelo		
Arms Straight Out from Your Body	extienda los brazos al lado		
Cross Your Feet	cruza los pies		
Don't Look At Me	no me mire		

Handcuffing:

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English	Castillian (Proper)	Phonetic Spelling	Local ethnic or slang (Instructor Added)
Give Me Your Other Hand	déme la otra mano		
Put Your Hands Behind Your Back	póngase las manos detrás de la espalda		

Practical Scenarios: Have groups of students: practice role-play the following situations and present to class.

- Spanish (only) couple, spousal abuse. 2 officers
- Latino male, possible gang member, presumed drinking and drugs. 1 female officer, 1 Hispanic male
- Young Mexican American gang member (abused) (Calo Only), family violence. 1 male Latino gang member (abuser) 1 officer
- Gang violence, jump in, death, 2 gang members, 1 female and 1 male officers. Code 10? (Use caution)

Lecture Scenario: Have class review and discuss the below phrases. Have them give examples of when each would be used.

1. Quiere que llame una grua?
2. Darse la vuelta, despacio.
3. Acusestese al suelo.
4. Dame la otra mano.
5. Hablo solo un poco de espanol.
6. Quiere hacer demanda?
7. Hija
8. Hijo
9. Hermana
10. Tia
11. Dorado

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