

Speak Spanish Now for Medical Professionals

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**A Customized Learning Approach
for Doctors, Nurses, Nursing
and Medical Assistants**

Brian K. Jones

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Preface

A Customized Learning Approach to Language

The purpose of this text is to assist those in the medical profession with effective, immediate communication with Spanish-speaking patients. Therefore, this book's approach is to teach straightforward, oral communication that requires the learner to verbally produce while relying little on listening skills. It is intended primarily as one-way communication and does not require the learning of grammar or the development of written communication. However, certain anticipated responses have been included for you. Even if the speaker does not use the exact answer, you will be able to recognize fragments and then take control of the conversation. Upon successfully mastering the phrases of the text, the learner will be able to attend to the common needs of patients they encounter on a daily basis, explain to them routine procedures, ascertain patient information and interact with patients in a culturally sensitive manner.

Using This Text

This text has been designed to encompass four groups of medical professionals: doctors, nurses, nursing and medical assistants. This is not to say that other professionals in the medical community will not find this text practical, however, the focus is on those persons who would find themselves interacting most with the patient. Furthermore, not all sections of the text may be specific to each group's job duties. The text allows you to pick and choose what you will learn and concentrate on those areas that are most beneficial to you and your respective medical profession. The pages have been perforated so you can easily remove sections you will not use in order to customize the book or make the most used pages more portable. The options are left open to you.

In learning the words and phrases in this text, you will be concentrating on oral communication. You will only write in Spanish when preparing notecards or preparing phrases to be used during an activity unless your curriculum requires it. Grammatical explanations are not necessary for any of the information you will be learning. Your instructor will lead you through a wide variety of communicative exercises that will help you internalize these phrases and their meanings and get away from the daunting task of rote memorization. The accompanying CD will enable you to listen to the phrases and practice their pronunciation. Your instructor may also choose to provide you with strategies that will make the CD more beneficial to you as a study aid. The CD may be used in class but is also highly recommended as an independent study aid.

The sections have been designated titles to help you manage the selection of the material you will choose to learn. However, make sure to glance through all of them for miscellaneous phrases you may find beneficial in your interactions with Hispanic patients. Feel free to mix and match phrases from various sections in order to tailor the information you will need to convey to and/or obtain from your patients. Most of the time, the phrases follow a logical order for their delivery. However, there is no prescribed order that must be followed each time they are used.

Immediately before each set of phrases, when appropriate, you will find a section titled BEFORE YOU BEGIN. These sections present pertinent information that will enable health care professionals to better understand the cultural differences between Hispanic and American patients and be able to provide them with an atmosphere more conducive to the doctor/patient rapport with which they are most comfortable. Current statistics and important health-related information that focuses on the Hispanic population have been included.

Finally, at the end of most chapters, you will find a NOTES section followed by a PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES section that includes activities and specific questions about the respective chapter and its content. Where applicable, an optional cyber-investigation exercise (Internet search activity) meant to build upon cultural information presented in the BEFORE YOU BEGIN section has been included.

Pronunciation

The purpose of the pronunciation patterns found directly above each Spanish phrase is to immediately generate proper or nearly proper pronunciation. By following these easy guidelines, communication becomes instantaneous. The words and sounds used in the pronunciation patterns are based on those used in English, so say what you see. Practice exercises to aid you in interpreting the pronunciation patterns and to prepare you for making those sounds correctly follow these brief explanations. Be sure to follow them in the prescribed order.

Instructions for reading the pronunciation patterns:

1. The separation of words has been indicated by one or more spaces. Example:

bway-nohs dee-ahs. (two word phrase)
Buenos días.

2. The separation of syllables has been indicated by a *hyphen*. Example:

bway-nohs dee-ahs. (both words have two syllables)
Buenos días.

3. Syllables written in *bolded letters* are emphasized when spoken. Example:

***bway**-nohs **dee**-ahs.* (emphasis on *bway* and *dee*)
Buenos días.

4. Syllables written in *unbolded letters* are not emphasized. Example:

bway-nohs dee-ahs. (no emphasis on -nohs and -ahs)
Buenos días.

5. The *upward pointing arrow*, or the (^) sign, indicates a combination of sounds to be pronounced as one (1) syllable. Example:

grah-see^ahs. (*see^ahs* is one sound)
Gracias.

6. The *double r* you will see indicates a rolled or trilled "r" sound. Example:

rray-goo-lahr. (*rr* of *rray* is rolled/trilled)
Regular.

The double r, or "rr" in Spanish, is represented by "rr" in the pronunciation key. Do the best you can to imitate the sound but do not get frustrated, as long as you are making the effort you will be understood. Keep practicing and it will come with time. Likewise, anyone who has any prior knowledge of Spanish pronunciation may know that the *Spanish v* is often pronounced as a soft *English b*, although some dialects of spoken Spanish do pronounce the *Spanish v* the same as the *English v*. However, for the sake of consistency and simplicity, the *Span-*

ish v has been represented as the *letter b* in the pronunciation patterns throughout the text and may be pronounced as such.

Introductory Exercise: With a partner or as a group, randomly select phrases from the text, analyze them and identify each of the above elements of the **pronunciation** patterns. Do not practice pronunciation yet. Just become familiar with how to interpret the **pronunciation** patterns. **You must practice the pronunciation exercises thoroughly before attempting to read the pronunciation patterns for the phrases!**

Lingual Aerobics (so to speak) . . .

Getting started: Just like any other muscle in your body that is not accustomed to certain motions and actions, the tongue and mouth are no different. These exercises will help you warm up these muscles and form the correct positions with you mouth and tongue to produce relatively authentic Spanish pronunciation from the very beginning.

Pronunciation Exercise 1: This oral exercise is to help you become used to the basic sounds you will use and see throughout this text, all of which are based on the five basic vowel sounds of the Spanish alphabet - A, E, I, O, U. Though they are the same five vowels found in English, their sounds are rather different. In order to facilitate their production, in practicing this exercise, say exactly what you see as you would in English. Start by saying the words and sounds, going column by column (in sequence according to numbers) together as a group, then row by row, individually, small group, pairs, etc. Remember, the sounds **bolded** in the first column should be applied to the combinations you will practice in each column that follows. These bolded sounds are the actual sounds of the corresponding Spanish vowel.

Spanish

Vowel	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9
A	hah	ah	bah	kah	lah	mah	sah	tah	yah
E	day	ay	bay	kay	lay	may	say	tay	yay
I	see	ee	bee	kee	lee	mee	see	tee	yee
O	oh	oh	boh	koh	loh	moh	soh	toh	yoh
U	food	oo	boo	koo	loo	moo	soo	too	yoo

Pronunciation Exercise 2: The second practice exercise builds upon the previous one by introducing you to sound combinations you will use and see throughout the text. Practice these in the same manner as the first set.

#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
stah	bway	tree	ahr	nahs	tahr
chah	stay	skree	ayr	nays	tayr
grah	pway	mwee	eer	nees	teer
blah	tray	ghee*	ohr	nohs	tohr
trah	gway	flee	oor	noos	toor

* This g is like the g sound in the word *get* but pronounced with the *long ee* sound.

Pronunciation Exercise 3: Starting with column 1, make sure to emphasize the bolded letters according to the pronunciation key. Beginning in column 4, start to incorporate the ^ sign indicating the combination of sounds pronounced as one syllable.

#1	#2	#3	#4
gah -nahs	ah- sayr	tee^ ay -nay	nah-see- mee ^ayn-toh
dohn -day	ay-spah- nyohl	kee^ ay -rayn	sah-rahm- pee ^ohn
pah -gahn	r-ray-spee- rahr	kee-see^ ay -rah	dee^ah- bay -tays
ah -nyoh**	door- meer	ee- stoh -ree^ah	ee-payr-tayn-see^ohn
kwahn -toh	r-ray-say- tahr	see^ ayn -toh	see- ghee ^ayn-tay

* This *g* is like the *g* sound in the word *get* but pronounced with the long *ee* sound.

** The *ny* is pronounced like the *ni* in the English word *onion*.

Pronunciation Exercise 4: Look through the text paying attention only to the pronunciation key and practice random examples as a class then in pairs.