

# **Speak Spanish Now for Public Safety Officials**

**A Customized Learning Approach for Law Enforcement and  
Department of Corrections Staff**

**Brian K. Jones**

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Durham, North Carolina

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*This book is dedicated to my family for all of their love and support.*

# Contents

<b>Preface</b>	ix
<b>Chapter 1 · Getting Started: Greetings, Courtesy Expressions and Goodbyes</b>	3
Practical Activities	7
<b>Identifying Yourself and Preliminary Scene Assessments</b>	9
Practical Activities	13
<b>Chapter 2 · Multipurpose Interview for Personal Data and Information</b>	15
Practical Activities	21
<b>Chapter 3 · Physical and Personal Descriptions</b>	23
Practical Activities	29
<b>Clothing, Accessories and Colors</b>	31
Practical Activities	37
<b>Chapter 4 · Useful Commands</b>	39
Practical Activities	43
<b>Chapter 5 · Parole and Probation Specifics</b>	45
<b>Identifying Clients and Confirming Appointments</b>	45
Practical Activities	49
<b>Routine Office Procedures for Parole and Probation Officers</b>	51
Practical Activities	55
<b>Conditions of Probation - English/Spanish and Phonetics</b>	59
<b>Chapter 6 · Drug/Alcohol Inquiries and Procedures</b>	65
Practical Activities	69
<b>Narcotics, Stimulants and Other Drugs</b>	71
Practical Activities	77
<b>Administering a Urine Test</b>	79
Practical Activities	81
<b>Chapter 7 · Threats, Dangers and Alerts</b>	83
<b>Dirty Words and Insults</b>	89
<b>Weapons</b>	91
Practical Activities	93
<b>Chapter 8 · Routine Traffic Situations</b>	95
<b>Traffic Stops and Violations</b>	95
Practical Activities	101
<b>Driving While Impaired/Under the Influence</b>	103
Practical Activities	107
<b>Administering an Alcohol Test/Breathalyzer</b>	111
Practical Activities	115
<b>Traffic Accidents and Calling for Emergency Assistance</b>	117
Practical Activities	123
<b>Chapter 9 · Miranda Rights</b>	127
Practical Activities	129

<b>Chapter 10</b>	<b>· Acts of Aggression and Assaults</b>	131
	Practical Activities	137
	<b>Rape, Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence</b>	139
	Practical Activities	145
<b>Chapter 11</b>	<b>· Criminal Activity</b>	147
	<b>Dealing with Juveniles/Minors</b>	147
	Practical Activities	153
	<b>Misdemeanors and Felonies</b>	157
	Practical Activities	163
	<b>Bookings and Releases</b>	165
	Practical Activities	171
<b>Chapter 12</b>	<b>· Hispanic Gang Related Slang</b>	173
	Cyber-Investigation	181
<b>Chapter 13</b>	<b>· Managing Phone Calls in Spanish</b>	183
	Practical Activities	187
<b>Chapter 14</b>	<b>· The Basics</b>	189
	<b>The Spanish Alphabet</b>	189
	<b>Numbers</b>	190
<b>Chapter 15</b>	<b>· Family and Friends</b>	191
<b>Chapter 16</b>	<b>· Expressing the Location of People, Places and Things</b>	195
	Practical Activities	199
<b>Chapter 17</b>	<b>· Telling Time . . . The Easy Way</b>	201
	Practical Activities	205
	<b>Days, Months and Dates</b>	206
<b>Chapter 18</b>	<b>· Parts of the Body</b>	209
	The Organs	212
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>Metric Conversion Quick Reference</b>	215
	Quick Reference Height Chart	215
	Length/Speed	215
	Weight	216
	Nationalities/Countries	216
	Major Religious Affiliations	218
<b>Bibliography</b>		221

## Preface

# A Customized Learning Approach to Language

The purpose of this text is to assist those in the public safety sector with effective, immediate communication with Spanish-speaking persons. 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 manage situations they commonly encounter on a daily basis, give instructions and commands, ascertain personal information and interact with Spanish-speaking persons in a culturally appropriate manner.

## Using this text

This text has been designed to promote communication in Spanish for professionals in the field of public safety, with primary focus on law enforcement officials and department of corrections staff. However, professionals in closely related fields, such as security, court officers and social workers, may find this text practical. Since 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 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.

In learning the words and phrases in this text, you will be concentrating on oral communication. You will only write in Spanish when preparing note cards or preparing phrases to be used during an activity unless it is a requirement of your curriculum. 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 Spanish-speaking persons. 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 the other person. 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 public safety officials to better understand the cultural differences between Hispanic and non-Hispanic persons and thus manage a situation more effectively. Current statistics and important relevant information that focus 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 that concentrate on 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 designated order.

### Instructions for reading the pronunciation patterns:

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

Example: **boo<sup>^</sup>ay-nohs dee-ahs**. (two word phrase)

Buenos días.

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

Example: **boo<sup>^</sup>ay-nohs dee-ahs**. (each word has two syllables)

Buenos días.

3. Syllables written in bolded letters are emphasized when spoken.

Example: **boo<sup>^</sup>ay-nohs dee-ahs**. (emphasis on **boo<sup>^</sup>ay** and **dee**)

Buenos días.

4. Syllables written in letters not bolded are not emphasized.

Example: **boo<sup>^</sup>ay-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 (one sound).

Example: **boo<sup>^</sup>ay-nohs dee-ahs**. (**boo<sup>^</sup>ay** is one sound)

Buenos días.

6. The double r you will see indicates a rolled or trilled “r” sound.

Example: *r-ray-goo-lahr*. (rr of r-ray 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 Spanish *v* has been represented as the letter *b* in the pronunciation patterns throughout the text and may be pronounced as such.

### Introduction Exercise:

With a partner or as a group, randomly select phrases from the text, analyze them and identify each of the above elements from the pronunciation patterns explanations. Do not practice pronunciation yet. Just become

familiar with how to interpret the pronunciation patterns. You must practice the following 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 your 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, in small groups, then in 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**

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

### *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. Remember to make letters linked with the upward pointing arrow (^) one syllable (one sound).

<b>#1</b>	<b>#2</b>	<b>#3</b>	<b>#4</b>	<b>#5</b>	<b>#6</b>
<i>stah</i>	<i>boo^ay</i>	<i>tree</i>	<i>ahr</i>	<i>nahs</i>	<i>tahr</i>
<i>chah</i>	<i>stay</i>	<i>skree</i>	<i>ayr</i>	<i>nays</i>	<i>tayr</i>
<i>grah</i>	<i>poo^ay</i>	<i>moo^ee</i>	<i>eer</i>	<i>nees</i>	<i>teer</i>
<i>blah</i>	<i>tray</i>	<i>ghee*</i>	<i>ohr</i>	<i>nohs</i>	<i>tohr</i>
<i>trah</i>	<i>goo^ay</i>	<i>flee</i>	<i>oor</i>	<i>noos</i>	<i>toor</i>

\* 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. Once again, remember to make letters linked with the upward pointing arrow (^) one syllable (one sound).

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