

I. Introduction to *Puntos en breve*

Puntos en breve: A Brief Course is a first-year program that is true to the approach and goals of the full-length *Puntos de partida: An Invitation to Spanish* program. *Puntos en breve* emphasizes the four language skills—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—in a communicative approach to language learning. The goal of *Puntos en breve* is to help students learn to communicate in Spanish—converse with others, express their own ideas in writing, and read and understand what others have written. The authors assume that effective communication depends on practice, so they have included meaningful, communicative exercises and activities as well as contextualized practice. Learning about Hispanic cultures is assumed to be an integral part of the language learning process.

The textbook's sixteen main chapters are preceded by a two-part preliminary chapter, **Ante todo**, which introduces students to the Spanish language, the text format, and the program overall. The sixteen main chapters have a user-friendly structure that introduces and practices vocabulary and grammar, as well as a wealth of cultural information.

A popular feature since the First Edition of *Puntos en breve* is the format of the *Instructor's Edition (IE)* of the textbook. The extensive annotation system for instructors using *Puntos en breve* has always been a matter of utmost pride and care for its authoring team. This edition of the *Puntos en breve IE* retains the design that allows room to include all notes for each section on the margins; the enlarged trim size permits the notes to wrap around the Student Edition text. These marginal annotations include suggestions for introducing vocabulary and grammar, preparatory activities, follow-up or extension activities, activity variations, and other useful suggestions for the **Nota cultural**, **Nota comunicativa**, and other features of the Student Edition. Experienced users of the *Puntos en breve IE* will find the Second Edition a comprehensive instructional resource, and new users will rapidly learn to navigate the wealth of annotations and other materials now offered by the *Puntos en breve* program.

Specialized annotations include the following:

- Resources: an at-a-glance listing of the *Puntos* ancillaries available in each chapter
- National Standards: these notes highlight some of the activities that fall into the five National Standards, also known as the Five C's: communication, communities, cultures, comparisons, and connections
- Heritage speaker annotations: specific notes in Spanish that address issues of importance for those students in class who come from homes in which Spanish is/was spoken
- Multimedia: notes that offer suggestions for out-of-class activities involving Internet resources, in addition to suggestions for integrating the *Puntos* video and other media resources
- Culture: additional notes that further enhance the cultural content
- **Refrán**: a common Spanish proverb or saying that is directly related to the grammar point or vocabulary theme found on the corresponding Student Edition page
- Bright Idea!: annotations that offer specific suggestions submitted by an instructor currently using *Puntos en breve* in the classroom

Special care has been taken to clarify and standardize all notes. Annotations are color and design coded, and are positioned in a regular pattern with regard to the text. For instance, Multimedia and National Standards annotations always appear at the bottom of the text, whereas annotations related to explanations of material and exercises are always on the side.

The *Puntos en breve IE* format, with its extensive annotation system, is designed to provide instructors—especially those who are just starting to teach—with all the assistance and resources they

need to offer students an input-rich, diversified experience learning Spanish. The *IE* should be used in combination with the “Chapter-by-Chapter Supplementary Materials,” Section VIII of this Manual, which unifies all resources for each chapter under one heading.

Each chapter is organized around a cultural or practical theme, with grammar, vocabulary, and culture working together as an interactive unit.

The opening page of each chapter establishes the chapter theme with a photograph that highlights an aspect of the theme. The photograph also reflects the target country, or one of the target countries, of the chapter. Marginal annotations in the *IE* offer suggestions for using this photograph in class. The **Conozca...** section includes a small map of the targeted country or countries of the chapter, accompanied by a photograph of the interviewee featured in the **Entrevista cultural** portion of the video. When two countries are targeted, there are two interviewees. Note that all interviewees are native speakers of the targeted country. Furthermore, each interviewee discusses a topic directly related to the chapter theme. Thus, language and culture are seamlessly united in the video.

The **Vocabulario: Preparación** section presents theme-related vocabulary (family, shopping, and so forth). As most of the chapter vocabulary is introduced in this first major section of the chapter, the focus on vocabulary is separate, to a large extent, from the study of grammar. Once students are familiar with the theme vocabulary, they will find most of the grammar exercises to be based on situations related to the chapter theme and therefore conducive to natural and meaningful language practice.

The theme is also reentered in the **Notas culturales** and **En los Estados Unidos y el Canadá...** boxes. Extensive use of photographs and realia provide realistic and informative glimpses of Hispanic cultures.

Cognate vocabulary and real language are used throughout the text.

The extensive use of cognate vocabulary, especially in the early chapters, increases students’ ability to communicate in Spanish while making minimal demands for new vocabulary memorization. This use of cognates helps students cope with their linguistic limitations as beginning language learners and encourages them to make linguistic predictions.

In all sections of the text, even in the more mechanical activities, an attempt has been made to present students with “real-world” language. In activities, this means that individual items help students form sentences that they might want to say in real-life situations. Usually the activity directions or setup will establish this context. In dialogues and readings, unfamiliar vocabulary and structures are glossed or translated at the bottom of the page (in the case of minialogues) rather than avoided. In realia, language is minimally glossed and has not been altered (although some—but not all—typographical errors have been fixed), and in this Manual, instructors will find suggestions for using realia in ways appropriate to students’ language levels at different stages of the course. Thus natural language input is provided, but great care has been taken to ensure that students need not *produce* unfamiliar vocabulary or structures.

Receptive skills provide the basis for the development of productive skills.

Throughout *Puntos en breve*, attention is paid to the development of all four language skills. Most sections of the text offer students opportunities to work with new vocabulary and grammar concepts in a receptive mode (listening and reading) before having to produce them actively (speaking or writing). The *Instructor’s Edition* contains abundant suggestions for listening comprehension activities and listening-based follow-ups to text activities.

Communication is an integral part of each grammar section.

The opportunity for student self-expression is integrated into each grammar section. The **Práctica** activities are more controlled, form-focused activities. Even here, however, activities are set into contexts that infuse them with meaning: a general, “umbrella” situation, a logical sequence of actions, a story, and so on. Many **Práctica** exercises permit some student input within controlled situations. Others are accompanied by brief comprehension activities (in the student text or in the *Instructor’s Edition*) that

focus students' attention on the meaning of the activity they have just completed. One particular type of **Práctica** activity is called ¡**Anticipemos!**. This special activity is often the first activity after a grammar point has been introduced. It is carefully designed to ease students into the use of the new grammar point by requiring only *recognition* of the targeted grammar, rather than *production*. The activities that follow will then require that students produce the grammar point in question.

Práctica exercises are followed by the **Conversación** section, in which activities encourage students to use the newly learned structures to talk about personally meaningful topics. Thus, students do not have to wait until the end of the chapter or the end of the book to begin expressing themselves with new structures. Many of the **Conversación** exercises consist of interviews or partner/pair and small-group work, providing students an opportunity to share ideas and use Spanish in a natural, relaxed conversational setting.

Chapter and text organization provide for built-in review.

In each chapter, the sections called **Vocabulario: Preparación, Pronunciación, and Gramática** provide a carefully controlled introduction and practice of new materials. The ¡**Recuerda Ud.?** sections, at the beginning of some **Gramática** sections, review earlier concepts on which new grammar is based. Finally, the new **Autoprueba** feature found at the end of many **Gramática** sections lets students instantly review and check their comprehension of that specific grammar point.

A variety of material and exercises provides flexibility.

The exercises and activities in *Puntos en breve* encourage the development of all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Many exercises lend themselves to either oral or written practice; individual course goals and instructors' preferences will determine how they will be used.

Additional activities provided in many sections of the *IE* and in this Instructor's Manual and Resource Kit provide supplementary or alternative classroom practice, and individual instructors may select those activities that best meet the needs of their students.

Ancillary materials—the Workbook/Laboratory Manual, the CD-ROM, and the Video on CD—provide additional out-of-class practice. Because the answers to many exercises are provided in the student text, Workbook/Laboratory Manual, and Audio Program, students can check their answers at home and in the laboratory, saving class time for conversation practice. Most ancillary materials also offer many exercises and activities (of a more creative or open-ended nature) for which answers are not provided. Instructors may wish to collect these exercises to read and/or grade as a way of monitoring students' progress.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SECOND-YEAR PROGRAMS

The choice of an intermediate text to use in second-year courses, after using *Puntos en breve* in the first year, should be determined by the goals of your second-year program. If a focus on grammar is desired, you will want to select a text that has a strong grammar emphasis. If your intermediate program is highly communicative in nature, a text that de-emphasizes grammar in some way may meet your needs.

The following intermediate titles published by McGraw-Hill are appropriate for use in the intermediate sequence following *Puntos en breve*. McGraw-Hill also publishes a wide variety of cultural and literary readers for use as supplements to a text-driven course. Please contact your local McGraw-Hill sales representative for more information on these and other McGraw-Hill titles.

¡*Avance!*: *Intermediate Spanish* (Bretz, Dvorak, Kirschner, Brandsdorfer, Kihyet: 2004). This exciting new program is for second-year students of Spanish. In response to requests from many users of the highly acclaimed *Pasajes* series, McGraw-Hill has published this single-volume version, which distills the very best of *Pasajes: Lengua, Cultura, and Literatura*. The result is a comprehensive yet manageable program that enriches students' language foundation in thematic vocabulary and grammatical structures with a broad selection of literary and cultural readings.

¿*Qué te parece?* Media Edition (Lee, Young, Wolf, Chandler: 2003). Appropriate for any communicative or proficiency-based intermediate course, ¿*Qué te parece?* Media Edition offers students and instructors a refreshing change from the traditional topics of first- and second-year texts. Highly

interesting and thought-provoking topics provide the framework for a complete grammar review with many task-based activities.

Punto y aparte: Spanish in Review: Moving Toward Fluency (Foerster, Lambright, Alfonso-Pinto: 2003). This program is the ideal bridge for students who have completed first-year or beginning Spanish and plan to go on to upper-division course work in the language. It focuses on seven major communicative functions: describing, comparing, reacting and recommending, narrating in the past, expressing likes and dislikes, hypothesizing, and talking about the future.

Al corriente: Curso intermedio de español (Blake, González Pagani, Ramos, Marks: 2003). This one-volume intermediate grammar review offers vocabulary development, grammar presentations, and many communicative activities. Authentic readings from journals and literature help students build reading skills.

Pasajes: An Intermediate Spanish Program (Bretz, Dvorak, Kirschner, Bransdorfer: 2002). This popular component program for intermediate Spanish offers instructors great flexibility. Any of the three volumes—*Lengua*, *Cultura*, and *Literatura*—can be used alone or in conjunction with each other. Each chapter in the three-volume set shares a common theme, grammar focus, and vocabulary. The Workbook/Laboratory Manual is coordinated with *Pasajes: Lengua* and offers additional practice with vocabulary and structures as well as listening comprehension, pronunciation practice, and additional readings.

¡De viva voz! Intermediate Conversation and Grammar Review (Thomas: 2001). This second-year communicative text concentrates on conversation, and emphasizes the thematic and lexical structures necessary to support oral changes.