

## Hablando seriamente: Textos y pretextos para conversar y discutir (3rd Edition)

*Rubn Bentez Professor Emeritus, Paul C. Smith*  
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**Rubn Bentez Professor Emeritus, Paul C. Smith : Hablando seriamente: Textos y pretextos para conversar y discutir (3rd Edition)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hablando seriamente: Textos y pretextos para conversar y discutir (3rd Edition):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. GoodBy AddieThe first vocab list was incredibly pathetic - comida, comer, bebida, beber... I got worried. But the lecturas are good, and the vocab discussions (ex: comida vs. Alimento vs. Alimentacin vs. Alimentario) are helpful, too. I bought this book to supplement my studying for the DELE C2 exam to help boost my vocab.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great!By Maria VelezI had to buy this book for my Advance Spanish Conversation class and so far I have no complaints. This book was practically new!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book is unique in that it selects words in its lectures and introduces a

list of other words for each one of those that have the same definitions, but are used differently in different situations. Explaining those words and in what context they're used is a great vocabulary builder. As it states in the Preface, the book is intended for use in third or fourth year Spanish conversation courses at the college level.

This advanced Spanish conversation book features a series of essays on a broad range of important, substantive, and interesting contemporary topics, together with vocabulary notes and explanations. A variety of exercises test readers' comprehension of the essays and encourage them to express a statement of personal opinion or interpretation about the issues raised in, or related, to the essay. Topics progress from the most easy subjects to the most abstract, and include: Costumbres alimenticias en el mundo actual. El dinero, la inflación y el desempleo. El estrés y sus consecuencias. El alcohol y las drogas. La desigualdad social entre los sexos. La destrucción del medio ambiente. Diversidad étnica y discriminación. La presencia hispana en los Estados Unidos. La revolución tecnológica. La influencia de la televisión. Consideraciones sobre la amistad. La búsqueda de la felicidad. For anyone wanting conversational practice in advanced Spanish.

From the Inside Flap Preface *Hablando seriamente: Textos y pretextos para conversar y discutir* is a textbook intended for use in third- or fourth-year Spanish conversation courses at the college level. With imaginative guidance from the instructor, classes based on this material involve students in a structured, creative effort that leads to a higher level of conversational proficiency. This third edition of *Hablando seriamente* incorporates a number of important revisions. Overall, users of this book will now find that these revisions and other changes made in the text provide a more tightly structured set of materials for organizing an intermediate or advanced conversation class. The most important changes derive from the authors' desire to create more group and interactive communicative activities than were included in the first and second editions. The two new chapters, "La presencia hispana en Estados Unidos" and "La revolución tecnológica," add important topics of current interest, as does the revised chapter, "El estrés y sus consecuencias," reintroduced from the first edition at the request of users and outside reviewers. Moreover, the chapter in the second edition called "La riqueza étnica de los Estados Unidos" has been rewritten as "Diversidad étnica y discriminación." The chapter, "La desigualdad social entre los sexos," has also undergone rewriting and factual updating. In general, all the chapters have been revised, updated and, when necessary, shortened. Each chapter begins now with a *Prelectura*. It is important that this brainstorming conversational activity be done as group work in the class prior to the one in which the essay and accompanying exercises are assigned as homework. The *Prelectura* exercises are intended to get students talking by introducing them through a number of simple opinion questions to the thematic concerns reflected in the essay and to the exercises assigned for the following class. A number of *Palabras tiles* have been listed for each *Prelectura*, but the instructor will surely want to augment it by brainstorming and board work in which the students contribute further vocabulary. To speak fluently about a subject, we need to know something about it. Therefore, the *Lectura* following the *Prelectura* in each chapter presents considerable factual information about topics of interest to most students. Following the *Lectura* is an *Expansión de vocabulario* that gives extensive explanations of the vocabulary for the *Ejercicios* which follow. These exercises, some tightly controlled and focused and others open-ended, improve reading comprehension, lexical expansion, vocabulary use, and the ability of students to express and defend their ideas and feelings about the issues discussed in each chapter. Finally, each chapter concludes with *Tareas complementarias*, four topics for discussion that may be assigned as group work for three or more students. The *Tareas complementarias* permit student participation that reflects their personal experience or professional goals. Since today's college students study Spanish for many different reasons, the topics in this text cover a broad range of social, political, environmental, health, entertainment and philosophical issues of considerable importance in their lives. The *Lecturas* complement each other, but are nevertheless sufficiently independent to be studied as individual units. This text presents more material than some instructors may wish or be able to include in a one-quarter or one-semester class. In such cases, we have found that students appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with the instructor in organizing the class and selecting the chapters to be studied. For example, Chapter 2, "El dinero, la inflación y el desempleo," could help economics or management majors improve their lexical proficiency in these areas of special interest. Similarly, sociology majors or future social services workers might be most interested in "La desigualdad social entre los sexos," "Diversidad étnica y discriminación," and "El alcohol y las drogas." Science majors, on the other hand, might have a preference for "La revolución tecnológica," "El estrés y sus consecuencias," or "La destrucción del medio ambiente." Indeed, students with different interests and backgrounds can enrich class discussion of their preferred subjects. The instructor and users of *Hablando seriamente* will also find some chapters "Costumbres alimenticias en el mundo actual" and "El dinero, la inflación y el desempleo," for example to be intellectually less complex and/or controversial than others, such as "Diversidad étnica y discriminación," "La amistad," or "La felicidad," which are philosophically more involved and incorporate a great many points of view. The notes in the *Expansión de vocabulario* discuss important lexical distinctions not always made clear in dictionary entries. Words are treated in semantic categories or families, and are studied in terms of being synonyms, antonyms, cognates or false cognates of

English. Approximately three-fourths of the lexical items in each chapter should be learned as active vocabulary for use in class conversation. The remaining may be considered as passive or recognition vocabulary needed to comprehend the Lectura and to answer some of the lexical exercises. The line between active and passive vocabulary is a flexible one and should be drawn by the instructor in accordance with the abilities and specific goals of each class. Vocabulary expansion, greater aptness of expression, precision in the use of the Spanish lexicon, and avoidance of excessive interference from English are major objectives of this section. An *ndice de palabras comentadas* at the back of the book lists the words and expressions discussed throughout the *Expansin de vocabulario* sections. Nevertheless, most students will benefit from using a Spanish-English dictionary. More advanced students in the class may wish to use an all-Spanish dictionary recommended by the instructor. The *Ejercicios* in each chapter introduce a series of activities that reflect different levels of difficulty. Multiple-choice questions are presented first and test the student's comprehension of the Lectura. Students will find that they need to pay close attention to the wording of these questions in order to answer them correctly. The three sets of multiple-choice and fill-in questions, under the rubric *La palabra adecuada*, focus attention on lexical expansion and word usage. These exercises are followed by a short set of oral questions that stress the meaning of the Lectura and which can be answered by studying it and the *Expansin de vocabulario*. Finally, as indicated before, the new *Tareas complementarias* require statements of personal opinion about, or interpretation of, an issue raised in or related to the Lectura. These questions constitute the conversational core of the textbook, and experience has shown that this is the part of the class that students enjoy most. We all love to express our own personal opinions about things that interest us. The spontaneous discussion that often develops from these questions, directed as group work, constitutes the creative interchange that is the essence of conversation. Moreover, at this stage in each chapter, students will be able to use the vocabulary and ideas previously studied to express themselves with more confidence and fluency. In this exchange of ideas, students can express their social experience and intellectual competence by discussing important adult issues rather than banalities or topics of little significance. The success of a conversation class depends to a large extent on how well discussions in the class relate to the lives and interests of the students. Rarely a week passes without the news media informing us of an important happening or sensational event that relates to one or more of the Lectura topics. Therefore, classes can actualize and often personalize the topics under examination by relating them to current events. Instructors as well as students can enliven class discussion with magazines, newspaper clippings, and other *realia* related to the subjects of the day. Also, selected students can be asked to prepare one or more questions of opinion or interpretation about these related news events. The conversation questions in this book can, of course, be modified or replaced with others that address related issues. For example, an examination of discrimination based on sex can be extended to the problem of discrimination based on religion, ethnicity or social class. The year-2000 edition of *The Annual Freshman Survey* of some 360,000 college students shows that they feel more stressed than ever before. This finding may be used as a point of departure for discussing the chapter on stress. Indeed, personal experience or special interest in or knowledge about the subjects covered in this textbook can generate questions and commentary that lead to lively discussion. Although the main objective of *Hablando seriamente* is to facilitate the improvement of conversational skills in Spanish, the text takes into account the need to create in college students an awareness of the social and political problems they will encounter in their personal and professional lives.

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From the Back Cover *Hablando seriamente* is intended for use in third or fourth year Spanish conversation and composition classes at the college level. It emphasizes a carefully structured approach to acquiring and retaining vocabulary and achieving a higher level of conversation proficiency. Each of the twelve chapters focuses on an engaging high-interest topic. New pre-reading activities lead into a reading that provides background information on the topic as a basis for discussion. The *Expansi#243'n de vocabulario* section then provides essential vocabulary for comprehending and discussing the essays and for working with the exercises that follow. These exercises will develop reading comprehension skills, build vocabulary, and improve students' ability to express and defend their ideas and feelings.

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