



SPANISH PHONEMIC INVENTORY¹

	Bilabial		Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar		Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar		Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p	b			t	d				k	g			
Nasal		m				n			ɲ					
Trill						r								
Tap or Flap						ɾ								
Fricative			f		s					x				
Affricate							tʃ							
Glides (Approximant)		w							j					
Liquid (Lateral Approximant)						l								

¹ Chart based on information gathered from the following:
Goldstein, B. (2000). *Cultural and linguistic diversity resource guide for speech-language pathologists*. San Diego, CA: Singular.

Facts on Spanish Phonology

- The following consonant clusters are used in Spanish; these do not occur in word final position¹:
/pl/ /pf/ /bl/ /bf/ /tʃ/ /dʃ/ /kl/ /kf/ /gl/ /gf/ /fl/
/ff/
- There are five consonants used in word final position²: /l/, /ʎ/, /d/, /n/, /s/.
- In intervocalic environments the allophonic variations for /b, d, g/ are /β, ð, ɣ/³.
- Dialectal variations in Spanish phonology exist. It is important to recognize this when assessing a Spanish speaker.
- By age 4, normal developing monolingual Spanish speakers acquire most sounds of the language except for: /g/, /f/, /s/, /ɲ/, /r/, and /ʎ/⁴.
- Phonemes in English that do not occur in Spanish include:
 - /ŋ/, /v/, /ð/, /θ/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /h/, /dʒ/, /ɹ/
- The Spanish vowel system is much smaller than that of English; they are similar to the short vowels of English. Spanish vowels include: /i/, /ε/, /a/, /u/, /ɔ/⁵
- Spanish developmental norms⁶

3:3	3:7	3:11	4:3	4:7	4:11	5:7	>5:7
/p,b,t/	/k,w,m,n/	/j,l/	/f/	/tʃ,d,g,ʎ/	/x,ɲ/	/s/	/r/

Data normed on 120 Spanish-speaking children of Mexican descent living in California. Spanish reported as primary language. Data reflects 90% accuracy of phoneme production..

¹ Bedore, L. (1999). The Acquisition of Spanish. In Taylor, O. & Leonard, L., Language Acquisition Across North America: Cross-cultural and cross-linguistic perspectives. San Diego: Singular Publishing Group.

² Bedore, L. (1999). The Acquisition of Spanish. In Taylor, O. & Leonard, L., Language Acquisition Across North America: Cross-cultural and cross-linguistic perspectives. San Diego: Singular Publishing Group.

³ Jimenez, B.C. (1987). Acquisition of Spanish consonants in children aged 3-5 years, 7 months. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 18*, 357-363.

⁴ Acevedo, M. (1993). Development of Spanish consonants in pre-school children. *Journal of Communication Disorders, 15*, 9- 15.

⁵ Langdon, H.W., & Cheng, L.R.L. (1992). *Hispanic children and adults with communicative disorders: Assessment and prevention*. Rockville, MD: Aspen Publishers, Inc.

⁶ Jimenez, B.C. (1987). Acquisition of Spanish consonants in children aged 3-5 years, 7 months. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 18*, 357-363.