A QUICK GUIDE TO THE SPANISH LANGUAGE
by Bill Hardy

When you hear Mexican radio stations, you may hear letters, numbers and slogans. If you know a little basic Spanish, you'll be ahead of the game. Spanish pronunciation in Mexico is fairly straightforward. Each vowel has one sound:

a = "ah"   e = between "eh" and "ay"   i = "ee"   o = "oh"   u = "oo"

Consonants mostly resemble their English language counterparts, with some notable exceptions. "H" is silent. "J" sounds like our "h," as in "Jose". "X" may sound like our "x," as in "éxitos," but in Mexican place names such as México (MEH-hee-koh) or Oaxaca (wah-HAH-kuh), it sounds like our "h." "ñ," enya, has the "nyuh" sound of "Señor" (seen-NYOR). Double "l" sounds like "y," as in "Vallarta" (bah-YAR-tuh). "B" and "V" both sound like "b," and that can be confusing.

The sounds of some consonants depend on the next letter. For instance, "g" can sound like the hard "g" sound of "Gomez" (ga, go, gu) or our "h" sound of the Spanish "j" (ge, gi). "C" can sound like "k" (ca, co, cu) or "s" (ce, ci). "Cu" plus a vowel (cua, cue, cui) makes a "kw" sound, as in "frecuencia." "Ch" equals English "ch," as in "mucho." "Qu" (que, qui) sounds like "k."

Accents in Spanish are very regular. Normally, a word ending with a vowel (a, e, i, o, u), or "n" or "s," has an accent on the next-to-last syllable, such as "cinco" (SEEN-koh) or "Variedades" (bah-ree-eh-DAH-dehs). Words ending with any other consonant have an accent on the last syllable, such as "festival" (fes-ti-BAHL) or "Ciudad" (cee-oo-DAHD). But when there are exceptions, an accent mark is shown over the vowel in the accented syllable, such as "éxitos" (EX-ee-tohs). We show these accents when known.

On this page are charts of Spanish letters and numbers. These should help you pronounce station call letters, plus numbers such as "5-70" (cinco setenta) in the slogan column. Note that B and V sound alike, and there are two ways to pronounce W and two ways to pronounce Y. Also note that numbers 21-29 are compound words and not separated by a "y" (and). This combining applies only to the 20's (21-29)

A	ah	R	ER-reh	7	siete	31	treinta y uno
B	bay	S	ES-seh	8	ocho	40	cuarenta
C	say	T	tay	9	nueve	50	cincuenta
D	day	U	oo	10	diez	60	sesenta
E	ay	V	bay	11	once (OHN-say)	70	setenta
F	EF-feh	W	bay DOH-bleh (v doble),	12	doce (DOH-say)	80	ochenta
G	hay		or doh-bleh OO (doble u)	13	trece (TRAY-say)	90	noventa
H	AH-cheh (acheh)	X	EK-kees (equis)	14	catorce (kah-TOR-say)	100	ciento, cien
I	ee	Y	yeh, or ee gree-AY-guh	15	quince (KEEN-say)	200	doscientos
J	HOH-tuh (jota)		(i griega - Greek I)	16	diez y seis	300	trescientos
K	kah	Z	ZEH-tuh (zeta)	17	diez y siete	400	cuatrocientos
L	EL-leh	1	uno, una	18	diez y ocho	500	quinientos
M	EM-meh	2	dos	19	diez y nueve	600	seiscientos
N	EN-neh	3	tres	20	veinte	700	setecientos
O	oh	4	cuatro	21	veintiuno	800	ochocientos
P	pay	5	cinco	24	veinticuatro	900	novecientos
Q	koo	6	seis	30	treinta	1000	mil