(3) Is the question of sociolinguistic (particularly register) differences, including lexical, phonological and morphological, explained to students in a clear and meaningful manner?

(4) Does the textbook provide exercises that incorporate variation in addition to giving an explanation of the dialectal and sociolinguistic traits of Spanish as it is spoken today?

(5) Does the text refer to historical facts of Spanish where appropriate?

(6) Does the textbook take into account the special needs of heritage speakers in our introductory Spanish language classes?

It is important to note that in our evaluation, we did not consider ancillary materials. There are several reasons for this. First, instructors are often left to their own discretion regarding the use of such materials. Second, at times, the materials are not written for a specific book. For example, McGraw-Hill use the same video for Puntos de partida as they do for Dos Mundos. Third, instructors do not usually have time to incorporate all of these materials into the curriculum. Finally, relegating the discussion of variation to ancillary materials indicates both to the instructor and to the student that it is not an important aspect of Spanish as it is spoken today. Given this caveat, the following three sections present a point-by-point analysis of these three first-year college-level textbooks, in alphabetical order. The upshot of our review is that each book has different strengths.

6.16.2 Impresiones

In our view, of the three books that we are considering, Impresiones is the one that makes dialectal variation the most meaningful. When explaining the conceptual basis for the text (Preface: xv), its authors make reference to the three lines along which it has been created: (i) the teaching and learning of culture, (ii) the development of sociolinguistic skills, and (iii) the teaching and learning of grammar. The text has a language-in-culture orientation, and cultural similarities and differences are contrasted and analyzed. This is done not only to bring students to understand the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries, but also to comprehend the way in which language reflects cultural norms in many instances.

With respect to the first question given in (31), Impresiones excels. Popularly, the cover-term 'Hispanic' is erroneously thought to represent all cultures where Spanish is spoken. Impresiones dispels this notion by focusing on the variety of the Spanish-speaking world. The authors dedicate the Enfoque cultural section of each chapter to a specific Spanish-speaking country (or countries, grouped together in a way that represents
the macro-dialectal divisions of Spanish). Even the sequence in the presentation of the countries in question is not random, for it starts with those countries with more direct contact and influence in the United States, given its intended audience of North American students learning Spanish as an L2 in this country.

As we have argued before, our students live in a multicultural society, where the presence of Hispanics, from varying origins, is increasing every day. Their language is not uniform, but rather represents the variety of dialects of the Spanish language. Acknowledging this fact, Impresiones explicitly focuses on the appropriateness of a language form in a given region. The activities designed for students include all sorts of contexts, and are on a variety of topics. More importantly (from the perspective that we have adopted in this book), Impresiones addresses key dialectal differences explicitly, having the students actively manipulate the linguistic characteristics of different regions. In other words, they are not merely exposed to language variation, say, in a footnote or Appendix, but rather actively acquire a great deal of linguistic knowledge of the pluricentrism of Spanish.

An introductory overview of Hispanic dialectology, therefore, is one of the cornerstones of this textbook. The first chapter provides a brief explanation in English about the meaning of dialectal variation. It further gives a practice exercise related to lexical variation specifically, both in English and in the Spanish-speaking world. In the exercise related to the Spanish language, students work in pairs. Each pair of students is assigned ten countries, and is responsible for discussing in Spanish the lexical variants that are common in those areas for three words ('boy,' 'bus' and 'blond'), Impresiones (32, 522):

(32) **Lexical variation in Spanish**

**Student A**

1-30 ¿Cómo se dice ‘bus’ en tu región?

**Student A**

Paso 1. AB. With your partner, find out as many variations as you can for the Spanish equivalents of the following words: Little boy, bus and blond.

MODELO: E1 ¿Cómo se dice ‘bus’ en México?

E2 Se dice camión.

**Student B**

¿Cómo se dice ‘bus’ en tu region?

Paso 1. Estudiante B. Busca información sobre Cuba, Guatemala, El Salvador, México y Panamá.
The exercise is visually enhanced by the maps on page (32) and page (522), which provide information on which lexical variants are found in the above countries. Although the exercise is given to students very early in their learning process of L2 Spanish, they can nonetheless do the activity in Spanish, exchanging the relevant dialectal information as directed.

In our view, this manner of presentation is very logical and accessible, since it starts with something that the students know and leads them to explore what they do not know. The design of the exercise is to have students work in a collaborative manner, manipulating diverse forms of the target language from the first chapter of the text. While we believe that the exercise in (32) above is excellent, we have a suggestion for a follow-up exercise. Students could also be instructed to create a chart similar to the one we presented in Chapter 4, borrowed from Azevedo (1992). This table, once completed, could look like (33) below:

(33) Regional variants for 'little boy,' 'bus' and 'blond' in 10 Spanish-speaking countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>little boy</th>
<th>bus</th>
<th>blond</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>México</td>
<td>chamaco</td>
<td>camión</td>
<td>güero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>patojo</td>
<td>camioneta</td>
<td>canche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El salvador</td>
<td>cipote</td>
<td>camioneta</td>
<td>chele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panamá</td>
<td>chico</td>
<td>chiva</td>
<td>fulo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>chico</td>
<td>guagua</td>
<td>rubio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>pelado</td>
<td>autobús</td>
<td>mono</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>cabro</td>
<td>micro</td>
<td>rubio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>pibe</td>
<td>colectivo</td>
<td>rubio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>niño</td>
<td>ómnibus</td>
<td>rubio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>España</td>
<td>niño</td>
<td>autobús</td>
<td>rubio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear that the involvement of the students in the activity is the most important aspect of the introductory exercise in (32). By actively using the regional terms themselves, presented to them in the context of the whole Spanish-speaking world, textually enhanced with maps, students are more likely to become aware of how extensive dialectal variation is in the Spanish-speaking world. This kind of exercise is far more effective, in
our opinion, than if students were passively presented with the dry facts, for example, with a table like (33) above already completed for them.

Phonological and morphosyntactic dialectal differences are also presented to students. After the introduction that we have mentioned, every chapter contains a sub-section Diferencias dialectales, included within the Comparaciones culturales section of the chapter. The dialectal differences addressed are of all kinds, and are always related to the geographical area that is the protagonist of the Enfoque cultural section of the chapter.

For example, when Spain is the focus, distinción/ceceo is presented, as is the term of address for second person plural vosotros. When Argentina and Uruguay, in turn, are at the center of the Enfoque cultural, the use of vos and the pronunciation of /j/ and /s/ are discussed and practiced. The use of vos is revisited when Costa Rica and Nicaragua are addressed. When Cuba and the Dominican Republic are the cultural focus, the lack of inversion in questions is the topic treated and practiced. Lexical and pragmatic information/variation is often addressed, both within this specific section and throughout the text.

Now let us consider what the presentation of the lexicon is in Impresiones, specifically considering our second question, which asks if dialect-neutral lexicon forms are given. Again, Impresiones is largely successful in this regard. The choice of words that should become active vocabulary, presented at the end of every chapter, seems to reflect an unmarked variety. In some occasions, the lexical forms seem to favor Latin American usage. Some examples are the choice of the words videocasetera 'VCR,' enojado 'angry,' lindo 'pretty,' contador 'accountant,' pachanga 'fun,' durazno 'peach,' cola 'buttocks' and licencia 'license.' For these terms, the Peninsular counterparts would be video, enfadado, guapo, contable, jarana, melocotón, culo and carnet.

Quite often, however, Impresiones offers several options, from different standards, for some common words. For example, it lists marrón or café for 'brown,' fontanero or plomero for 'plumber,' camiseta, playera or remera for 't-shirt,' chaqueta, chaqueta or saco for 'jacket,' vaqueros, jeans or pantalones mezclillas for 'jeans,' la pijama or el pijama for 'pajamas,' and mamá or mami for 'mom.' Other examples include papá or papi for 'dad,' esposa or mujer for 'wife,' camarones or gambas for 'shrimp,' champiñones or hongos for 'mushrooms,' habas, frijoles, habichuelas or porotos for 'beans,' and legumbres or vegetales for 'vegetables.'

The text does not commit the error of using a 'cafeteria approach,' by which we mean randomly selecting vocabulary words from widely divergent dialects for active presentation. Books following such a method present students, for example, a vocabulary word such as lentes 'glasses,'
a term used in Latin America (Peninsular *gafas*), while presenting the lexical item *piscina* ‘swimming pool,’ from Spain (Latin American *alberca*). Unfortunately, the presentation of dialectal variation with respect to the lexicon is not entirely satisfactory in *Impresiones*. The text gives more than one option for widely used terms, as mentioned above. Yet no mention is made of the regions in which a given term is used. How to work with them is left to the instructor’s discretion.

In summary, the dialectal coverage in *Impresiones* is excellent. Yet with few exceptions, there is little discussion of sociolinguistic variation. There are a few isolated notes to the instructor, such as the following (34):

(34) Point out that – as is the case in English – the use of formal–informal language is not necessarily reciprocal. This is most obvious in relations such as that of a boss with an employee, in which the latter may use *usted* to address his/her boss but the former may prefer to use *tú* to address the employee. The same rule applies to English, although the formal–informal dimension is represented by the contrast between titles and first names. For example, your boss may address you by your name (e.g. Robert), whereas you may address your boss as Mr Smith or Dr Smith.

In the student text, no mention is made of the difference of formal/informal on this page. One problem with the note itself, in our view, is that it has little or no relation to the students’ lives. A better example would have been the relationship between a professor and a student. After all, the likelihood that they are going to be an employee in a Spanish-speaking country is quite low. Moreover, the note itself is simplistic. There are sharp dialectal differences regarding the non-reciprocal use of *tú* and *usted*. Mexico, for example, tends to use the formal in many settings where Spain would use the informal. Finally, raising the question of the non-reciprocal forms of address on page six of the student text is not ideal. In our opinion, what needs to be stressed at this point is how not to insult native speakers by choosing the wrong register (i.e. use *tú* instead of *usted* in a formal exchange).

With respect to our fourth question, whether or not the text provides exercises that incorporate variation, the answer with respect to *Impresiones* is unequivocally ‘yes,’ at least where dialectal (not sociolinguistic) variation is concerned. Indeed, as far as *Impresiones* and dialectal variation go, the key word might be ‘practice.’ Students are never simply passive recipients of dialectal information; rather, they always have the opportunity to manipulate the language. The activities have the ultimate goal of increasing the students’ awareness about dialectal variation, and we believe that
this goal is achieved. Below we offer two concrete examples taken from this text, one morphological/pragmatic (the use of vosotros as the informal plural way of address in Peninsular Spanish) and one regarding syntactic variation (the formation of questions in some Caribbean dialects).

As mentioned above, when Spain is the cultural focus of the chapter, the terms of address in Peninsular Spanish are discussed. As (35) shows, students work actively with the forms that correspond to the present, and they are exposed, passively, to the imperative forms. It is an inductive presentation, and we see how in step 2 students have to predict what the verb endings for the three verb conjugations are likely to be:

(35) Introducción a vosotros (Impresiones 214)

Diferencias dialectales

In most regions of Spain the pronoun vosotros/as is used to convey familiarity and informality in place of the pronouns ustedes (you all, you guys). Like the nosotros/as forms, the vosotros/as forms of verbs do not change stem either.

¿Cuánto sabéis vosotros sobre vosotros?

2. Paso 1.2. Emparejad las preguntas con las respuestas y prestad atención al contenido.

(1) ___ ¿Tenéis planes para esta noche?
(2) ___ ¿Servís paella de naranja con frecuencia?
(3) ___ ¿Tomáis zumo de naranja con frecuencia?
(4) ___ ¿Estudiáis mucho?
(5) ___ ¿Conocéis al famoso autor Camilo José Cela?
(6) ___ ¿Os gusta la comida española?
(7) ___ ¿Qué vais a pedir para comenzar? o ¿Qué pedís para comenzar?
(8) ___ ¿Sabéis el nombre del restaurante?
    (a) No, no nos gusta mucho el zumo
    (b) Sí la servimos todos los días; la paella es nuestra especialidad.
    (c) Vamos a pedir una tortilla española, unas aceitunas y una sopa de pescado para comenzar.
    (d) ¡Por supuesto que lo sabemos! El nombre del restaurante es El Molino.
    (e) No, no tenemos planes para esta noche.
    (f) Sí, estudiamos todos los días.
(g) Sí, nos encanta. Las tapas de este bar son deliciosas.
(h) Sí, lo conocemos.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRONOMBRE SUJETO</th>
<th>AR-TOMAR</th>
<th>ER-TENER</th>
<th>IR-SERVIR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nosotros/as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uds.</td>
<td>toman</td>
<td>tienen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vosotros/as</td>
<td>toman</td>
<td></td>
<td>sirven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellos/as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In turn, when the cultural focus is Cuba and the Dominican Republic, syntactic variation is addressed, and the typical lack of inversion in question making is presented and practiced, as shown in (36) below (Impresiones 144):

(36) Asking questions in the Caribbean
Diferencias dialectales
4–26 ¿Qué tú quieres?

Paso 1. Usually when Cubans and Domicans form questions, they do not change the order of subject and verb, but rather maintain the same order as in an affirmative sentence. According to this statement, select the questions they usually make (Impresiones 144).

**MODELO**: Quiero ir al parque.
(a) ¿Qué tú quieres hacer?
(b) ¿Qué quieres hacer?

(1) Me llamo Roberto Albornoz Pérez.
(a) ¿Cómo usted se llama?
(b) ¿Cómo se llama usted?

(2) Quiero encontrar un trabajo con un buen sueldo.
(a) ¿Qué quieres tú?
(b) ¿Qué tú quieres?

(3) Vamos a las 9 menos cuarto.
(a) ¿Cuándo ustedes van al cine?
(b) ¿Cuándo van al cine ustedes?

(4) Te recomiendo usar tu traje negro.
(a) ¿Qué me recomiendas usar para la entrevista?
(b) ¿Qué tú me recomiendas usar para la entrevista?
Paso 2. Dominicans tend to use subject pronouns that in other varieties of Spanish are usually dropped. Rewrite the following sentences as if they were used by non-Dominican speakers of Spanish.

MODELO: Cuando tú tienes una entrevista, tú tienes que vestirte bien.
Cuando tienes una entrevista tienes que vestirte bien.

(1) Si tú trabajas mucho tú vas a tener éxito.
(2) Tú tienes un trabajo que tú disfrutas.
(3) Ustedes van al cine porque ustedes no tienen que trabajar.

As we have repeatedly noted, the treatment of the regional variation in this text goes beyond the simple passive reception of information on the part of the student. Students work with the language, contrasting the forms. They are led toward recognition of the regional form. In some cases, students also ‘produce’ sentences based on these dialectal characteristics.

Our fifth question, given in (31), concerns whether diachronic explanations are given. In Impresiones, little reference to earlier forms in the history of the Spanish language is made in this textbook, although some minor points, such as ojalá, are covered in notes to the students called consejitos ‘pieces of advice.’ This is a bit surprising, given its generally excellent integration of variation into both the student textbook and instructor’s manual. It would not be difficult for the authors to add at least a few footnotes regarding the diachronic evolution of Spanish and how it has contributed to the current variability evinced by the language.

Finally, Impresiones does not address heritage speakers in our classrooms, either in the student text or in the instructor’s manual. There is a brief reference to ‘Spanglish’ in the student text (69). The note tells students that it is a combination of the two languages and that it exists because these speakers ‘still prefer to say some things in Spanish,’ although they are English dominant. They conclude the note with a statement that many Hispanics in the United States use Spanish as a sign of their ‘linguistic identity.’ Clearly, such a note does not accurately describe heritage speakers, who have a range of levels of competence in Spanish and English. We next turn to a review of Plazas.

6.16.3 Plazas

This textbook also addresses the topic of dialectal variation in a systematic way. In the presentation of their work, the authors state:

Plazas is comprehensive in its treatment of the Spanish speaking world, yet also recognizes the growing presence and importance of