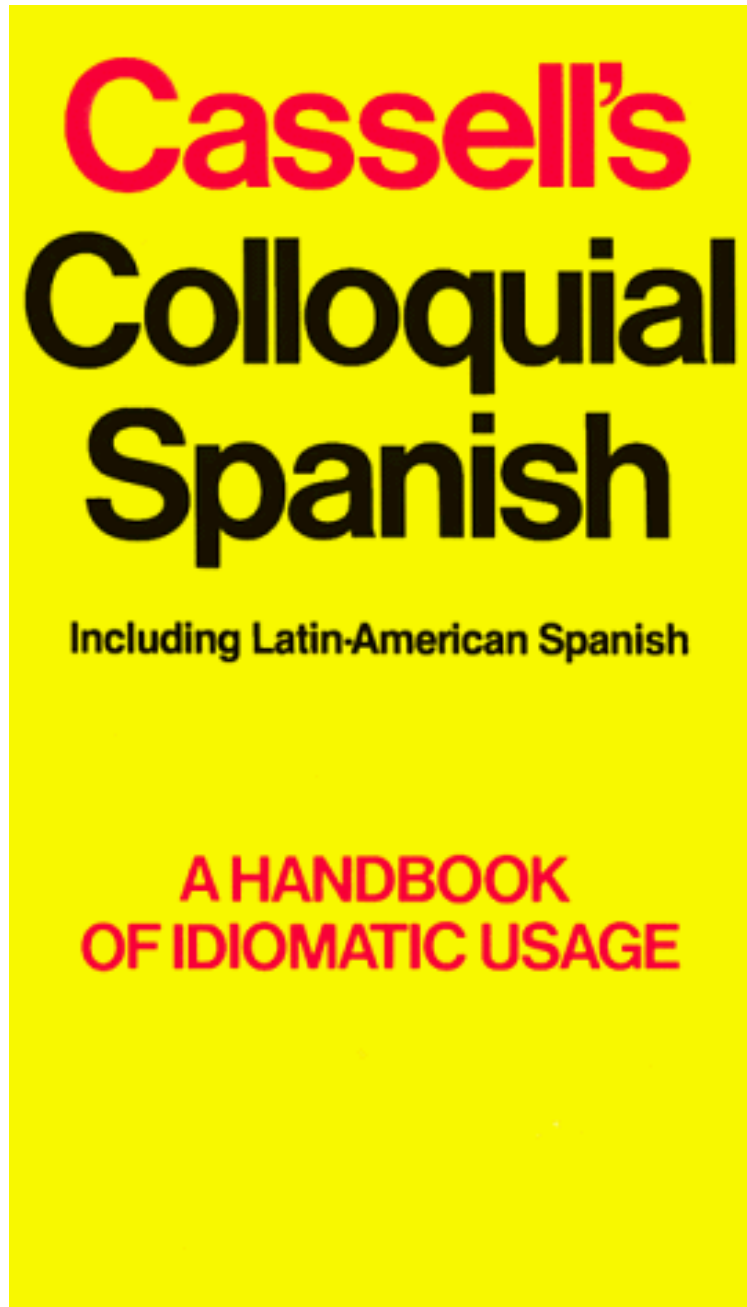


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## **Cassell's Colloquial Spanish: A Handbook of Idiomatic Usage (Including Latin-American Spanish)**

*Arthur Bryson Gerrard*

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**Arthur Bryson Gerrard : Cassell's Colloquial Spanish: A Handbook of Idiomatic Usage (Including Latin-American Spanish)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cassell's Colloquial Spanish: A Handbook of Idiomatic Usage (Including Latin-American Spanish):

36 of 37 people found the following review helpful. Read it from cover to cover. By John P. Rickert This book is really beyond praise -- one of the most enjoyable and yet edifying books I have ever read. You can see clearly that the author has a real knowledge of the whole Spanish-speaking world, from Spain to Tierra del Fuego. (This is one reason why this book is considerably better than Keenan's book, which focuses on Mexican usage almost exclusively.) In addition to sound advice about False, Unreliable, and Good Friends, (words that appear similar in Spanish and English but whose meanings may or may not be the same) he has some absolutely fascinating tidbits of information: e.g., -barra- in music means the vertical bar-line; what we call a musical bar or measure is comps. Speaking of bars, I think he's had a few nights out with these -hispanohablantes-, and thus he understands the culture in a familiar and deeply amicable way. He has a fine sense of humor and insight. I read the book cover to cover and recommend the same without reservation. 34 of 35 people found the following review helpful. Old Title (Beyond the Dictionary) Was Better By John G. Strong It's kind of hard to review a book when you are speechless with admiration. In the US we don't have much of a culture of foreign language learning, so we fail to appreciate the importance of vocabulary. I read a remark by Hemingway once to the effect that when he decided to tackle Spanish he bought a dictionary and began to read, so it lead me to try an experiment. I took a bilingual dictionary and started to read the \*English\* side and I soon discovered that there was hardly a single English phrase in the entire dictionary (bilingual dictionaries have less vocabulary than a big monolingual dictionaries, naturally) that one would not expect a fluent English speaker to know. This was frightening, because it implied that a fluent Spanish speaker would probably know all the words and idioms on the Spanish side! So how should a native English speaker, who wishes to become fluent in Spanish, make a serious effort at expanding his vocabulary in Spanish? The problem with reading a bilingual dictionary (a la Hemingway) is that such dictionaries are notoriously inaccurate and are virtually completely devoid of contextual information that would serve to illustrate how words are actually used. It would be an exaggeration to say that Bryson's book fills the entire gap; it's too small for that, but it does fill quite a few gaping holes, and it is beautifully written with a lot of amusing anecdotes that help one \*remember\* what is being taught. He has also changed the way I think about language. His book has taught me, among other things, to always look for English cognates as a means of alerting myself to how Spanish speakers use different metaphors than English speakers to express similar concepts. Before Bryson I was less conscious of the Spanish I used my mastery was diminished as a result. For that habit of mind, and for the many useful clarifications, I am very grateful. Mr. Bryson thank you so much for this fine book. I only wish there were a few academics who took an interest in offering the kind of service you have offered us. Then perhaps we would have a Colloquial Spanish the size of a Gran Larousse. - John Strong 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very helpful By johnny mnemonic It's like having a helpful, witty professor at your side, putting the words, the source, the background in context. In dictionary format, but readable in a way a dictionary is not: you can simply go through the listings and learn something at each one. I would say this is a good adjunct to an intermediate-advanced learner, filling in the missing bits you might otherwise miss. I have looked at the original version, 'Beyond the Dictionary in Spanish', which some have said is better, but, so far, this version seems preferable, both for the expanded content and for the revision of the rather dated prefix (the other edition is from 1951) -- Highly recommend.

Cassell's Colloquial Spanish is one of a newly revised series of handbooks which provide convenient and fascinating coverage of modern languages, and of the pitfalls and difficulties inherent in colloquial, colourful, or idiomatic usage. Written with knowledge and enthusiasm, each book is not only a valuable source of reference but also an entertaining and absorbing portrait of the current state of the language. Among the areas covered are: common words with no exact equivalent in English: detailed guidance is given false friends: the dangerous words which look similar to an English word but mean something slightly or very different spoken language: common usage which differs from the written forms levels of meaning: including guidance on words you may hear but should only use with care or not at all! special language: including the idiom of polite formalities and telephones, and special vocabularies

Language Notes Text: English, Spanish