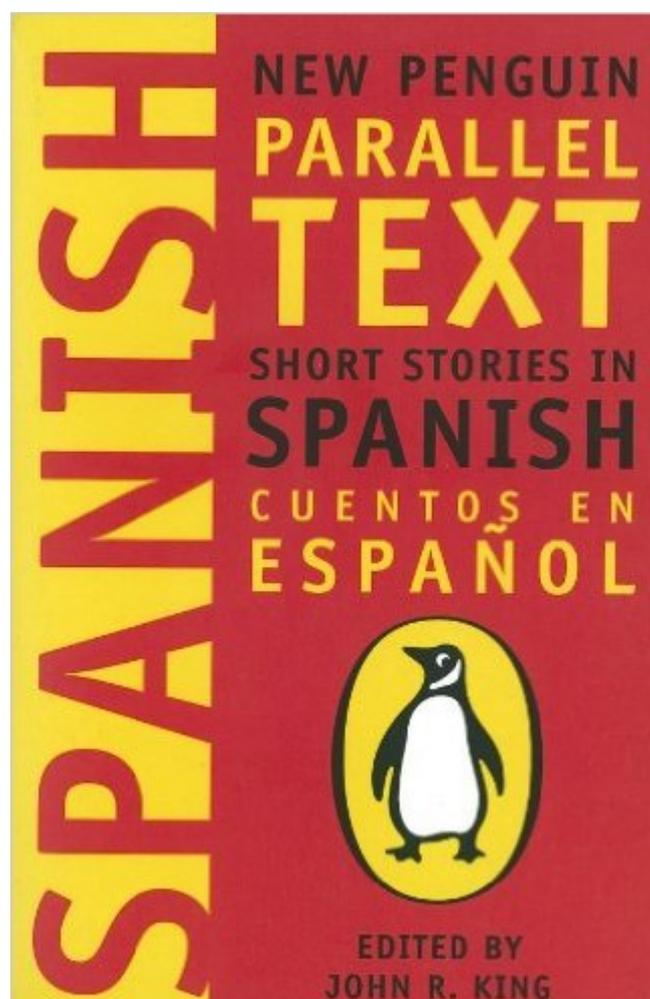


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# Short Stories In Spanish: New Penguin Parallel Text (New Penguin Parallel Texts) (Spanish And English Edition)



## Synopsis

Reflecting the variety of modern Spanish literature, these stories range from the sharp insights of Gabriel García Márquez's "María y los Tres Pájaros" to Isabel Allende's powerful evocation of the oral traditions of the Amerindian "Walimai," the deceptive simplicity of Javier Marías's "On the Honeymoon," and the philosophical speculation of Laura Freixas's "Absurd Ending."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Definitely not a beginners book. Probably comes in at the intermediate level & above. Assumes you know the complete verb system...the stories throw pretty much everything at you in terms of sentence construction. The more advanced you are, the less you need to depend on the English translation and just read the stories in Spanish, which even by themselves are treasures (I. Allende, G. Garcia Marquez, C. Fuentes among the estimable authors included). The translations are a joy to read, because you notice right away that there's not this word-for-word transliteration that you get with many attempts at parallel texts. The translators (each credited in their own right) really try to bring across in English the feeling and emotion that the writer intended when they penned the original Spanish. It's eye-opening. On top of that, the book's editor John R. King has added about 20 - 30 or so footnotes per story that really take your understanding to a new level. A great example: in the first story, he adds a footnote to denote when the two characters in the story slip from using formal verb construction into informal. It would have slid right by me, had it not been for the footnote.

And it does mark a definite change in the direction of the story. Really good stuff.

This book begins with easy stories, mostly in present tense. It progresses to more difficult stories. The stories are by Latino authors, so you have the additional bonus of Latino culture with the stories. The back of the book gives brief information about the authors. It includes exercises, some to be answered orally and others written, and a Spanish glossary. It's a good tool to have in your "bag of tricks" for learning and improving your Spanish.

Short Stories in Spanish improves one's language skills through enjoyable stories and excellent linguistic explanations. These stories come from many different Spanish-speaking countries, which allows the student to be exposed to different style and slang. Not only are the stories translated correctly, but certain words, names, and phrases are explained in depth relating to culture or history. Furthermore, the difficulty of this book is from advanced beginner to expert.

This is James from James Spanish (the learning Spanish blog). If you are at an intermediate level of Spanish, and can understand basic conversations and make yourself understood in most situations then this dual-language book is an enjoyable challenge to your Spanish reading skills. You will need to have a strong grasp of Spanish grammar and verbs to be able to read the stories without checking a reference book each page, but the English translation provides a complete reference. The more advanced your Spanish is, the less you will need to rely on the translation. For this reason the book can be a useful tool in judging how your studies are progressing. Reading the book in one month may prove tedious as you have to look up many words, while a few months later you may discover that you are able to read easily without needing to refer to the English version too much. The stories are by notable authors such as Allende, G. Garcia Marquez, and Fuentes, and the English translations are true to the feeling and overall tone of the original Spanish, even when it is at the cost of providing a less literal translation. This is itself an interesting element to the book, making you think about how context can affect word choice. A variety of Spanish-speaking countries are represented in the choice of authors, so that readers are exposed to a variety of different cultures and styles of language. Historical or cultural references are included throughout the stories to give you a better understanding of the overall context, and there is even a brief bio of each author. At the start of the book, the stories are easier, written mostly in the present tense and in simple straightforward language. The further into the book you read, the more difficult the stories become, using more complex verb tenses and advanced vocabulary. This makes the book an ideal

companion to students who are moving forward in their Spanish language studies, as it caters for many different levels of ability. Each story includes notes to help explain some of the points in the language, which adds an extra level of learning to the book. There are also exercises at the back to practice what you have learned. In closing my review of this product, I'd like to share with you the three products that I have found most helpful in my pursuit to learn Spanish. If you are truly serious about achieving fluency, I'd recommend getting all 3 of them if you can afford it.

1. **Lights, Camera, Spanish (Book + DVD): Learn Conversational Spanish by Watching a Romantic Adventure** This is actually a 90 minute movie for Spanish-language learners. It gives the option to watch the movie with subtitles but I'd recommend not using them to improve your Spanish. This "movie" also includes a workbook so that you can reinforce the Spanish vocabulary words and phrases from the film. The workbook also has lots of exercises to keep you engaged in the film. But be prepared to hear Chilean accents. Although pleasant to the ear, the accents from Chile are very different from most Latin American accents.
2. **Verbarrator Version 1.1 (Windows Version)** This software replaces the traditional verb conjugation books and makes learning how to conjugate Spanish verbs an interactive and fun activity. This should be a required resource for anyone who wants to improve their ability to conjugate Spanish verbs. Especially anyone who is challenged by the drudgery of learning how to conjugate Spanish verbs and who is looking for a new way to make learning how to conjugate Spanish verbs an easy and fun activity.
3. **Diccionario esencial de la lengua española de la Real Academia Española (Spanish Edition)** If you are really serious about speaking the language fluently, then at some point you will need to replace your Spanish-English dictionary and get a pure Spanish dictionary with both the vocabulary words and the definitions entirely in Spanish. I use this one mainly because it was highly-recommended by a friend from Spain who teaches Spanish. According to him, this is the "standard" among university level Spanish professors.

Not quite as simple as I'd anticipated before purchase. If you are a beginner this would be a good book to help practise pronunciation - if you have someone around to correct you. As an intermediate learner this book is quite challenging especially since you translate the Spanish 'literally' and the English version is a proper translation, so after that initial shock it's quite good reading. However, you also have to get over the idiomatic expressions. The stories are quite good otherwise and make a great read in English if the Spanish is too difficult.

I love, love, love the Allende story, but generally found the stories selected for this book dark and depressing. No matter, I'm sure that many won't agree with me. I just want to note that the

vocabulary and sentence structure can be pretty challenging (I'm about intermediate), so this might not be suitable for beginners, but might be just what someone who is more advanced is looking for.

This book is a bit above my level, but I'm close enough that I can get a few sentences in before I have to read the translation on the right page, then a few more sentences, then check the translation. Then I go back and re-read the paragraph and it all suddenly makes sense. This is definitely giving my rusty Spanish skills a good workout. The stories are written by "real" writers, not Spanish textbook writers, so that's a big plus. The translations are not word for word, they capture the meaning of each sentence. That's fine by me as once I get the idea of the sentence and go back to the Spanish, it makes sense. I start to notice a cognate I missed the first time, or some other clue I missed to the meaning. Good practice. Great book.

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