

THE USEFUL WORDS WE NEED IN ENGLISH

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Abstract: *have you ever found yourself struggling to find the perfect word? You have an experience that feels so...so...but no words exist. You want to insult someone but can't find a word vicious enough. You want to speak words of tender affection to your partner but no such words exist in the English language. Thankfully, there are other languages we can turn to in our time of need. Here are amazing foreign words that don't exist in English. Use these words when English fails you. We're going to start with our favorite Spanish words and then move onto other countries.*

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Sobremesa (Spanish). You know that delicious moment when you're eating dinner and all the food is gone but the conversation (and probably the wine) is still flowing? That, my friends, it *sobremesa*.

Estrenar (Spanish). You know that feeling when you wear something the first time? Maybe it fits you like a glove. Maybe it's too scratch or tight on the shoulders. Maybe you feel so swag you can't help but strut. The experience of wearing something for the first time is *estrenar*.

Pena Ajena/Verguenza Ajena (Spanish). It's that feeling when someone completely bites it in front of a crowd of people. When the singer totally botches the national anthem. When your

kid totally chokes at their piano recital. It's that feeling of embarrassment on behalf of someone else. When the waiter dumps hot soup on your boss and you're mortified for the waiter? That's Pena Ajena.

Antier/Anteayer (Spanish) Can we all agree that saying, "The day before yesterday," is a complete waste of words? So many words for such a simple concept. Those who speak Spanish have a much simpler version: "Antier". When did you last talk to your mom?

Antier.Desvelado (Spanish) Insomnia. The tossing. The turning. The inability to fall asleep. That feeling of being sleep deprived is called "desvelado" in Spanish. It's that feeling of exhaustion that comes after a terrible night's sleep. You need five cups of coffee. Why? Because desvelado.

Tuerto (Spanish) What do you call a man with one eye who isn't also a pirate? Tuerto. It seems like this word would have rather limited usage unless you work in a BB gun factory or something. But you do have to admit, have a single word to describe someone with one eye is pretty fantastic.

Friolento/Friolero (Spanish) You walk outside and immediately feel freezing cold even though it's a balmy 60 degrees. You layer up Summer nights because you can't handle the chill. You get seriously chilled just from eating a bowl of ice cream. You, my friend, are friolento, a person who is extremely sensitive to the cold. This word could also work well as an insult if necessary.

Te quiero (Spanish) It's that awkward stage in a relationship when you really like a person but aren't quite ready to tell them you love them. Or, perhaps, when that friend asks you out on a date and you don't feel the same way about him. That awkward situation is te quiero.

Merendar (Spanish) We have brunch for the meal between breakfast and lunch, but what about in the afternoon? You could call it, "Linner" but that just sounds stupid. Spanish speakers figured this out and came up with a word for it: merendar. Granted, most of us don't have the free time to hang with friends

in the afternoon but it's a good word to have in your back pocket nevertheless.

Tutear (Spanish) This is how you greet one of your close buds. It means to greet someone informally, like you're close to them. Perhaps an English equivalent would be something like, "Yo," or, "What's up?" This is NOT how you greet your grandmother.

Iktsuarpok (Inuit) You suddenly discover that you have a long-lost brother. After a series of feverish phone calls, he agrees to meet you at your house. You're so excited that you're lips are numb and your palms are sweating. Because of your excitement, you keep going outside to see if he's arrived. That act of going outside is iktsuarpok. It could also be used when you're really excited for the pizza guy to arrive.

Faamiti (Samoan) Have you ever known someone who has that weird ability to make a loud whistling noise by sucking air past their lips? They usually use it to get people's attention or to call their dog. It's ear piercing and incredibly effective. It's also called faamiti.

Pelinti (Buli, Ghana) Literally translated, "to move hot food around in your mouth," this is the experience of biting into something only to discover that it's approximately 1,000 degrees. As the skin in your mouth melts, you let out a loud scream, drop the food, and curse the day you were born. Okay, that may be a bit extreme, but you get the point. That's pelinti.

Greng-jai (Thai) Have you ever asked someone to help you move? You feel bad for asking them and don't really want them to do it because it will be pain for them. You really don't want to ask them to help you move, especially since you have a vast weight collection. That feeling of not wanting to ask is Greng-jai.

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