

Spanish Empathy for the Non-Speaker
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I exist as a creature of diaspora, in consistent pride of my Sudanese culture. The more I learn about it, the more I learn to appreciate it. My love for the Arabic language has sent me hurdling towards heavily influenced Spanish.

As I went about learning Spanish while in Madrid, within the classroom setting, my professor went over a chapter called “Empatía” on how to show empathy to a person speaking to you and respond accordingly. Throughout the chapter, we were given many situations when a character was expressing a problem they faced while learning Spanish and we were asked to think about what they said, respond empathetically by saying *te entiendo* (I understand you) or *me pasa lo mismo* (the same thing happens to me) and give a reasonable solution to their problem. During that time I kept wondering if Spanish speakers are given the same lesson we are. Are they taught verbal empathy? Is the importance of understanding, analyzing and responding to another's plight as highlighted to them as they were to us non-speakers? The language of empathy is as important, if not more, as the feeling of empathy. While learning how to become an empathetic person in a global world, one should consider the utterances that come out of their mouth and how they make them more or less considerate of the person or people in front of them.