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Culture

## This Young Girl Explains Why “Les” Is an Important Gender Neutral Pronoun In Spanish



Photo by valentinrussanov / E+



By [Remezcla Estaff \(https://remezcla.com/author/remezcla/\)](https://remezcla.com/author/remezcla/) | 2 years ago



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In recent years, we've seen how the efforts of the LGBTQ+ community to make Spanish more inclusive of gender non conforming individuals has been met with resistance in the United States. While the word "Latinos" encompasses both males and females, it prioritizes the masculine and excludes those who fall outside of this gender binary. That's why words like Latinx have come into prominence. The opposition to making Spanish more inclusive of different gender identities isn't isolated to the US, however. In a powerful video that TKM recently shared, a young girl explains that all her teachers have corrected her for using the word "todes" (instead of todas or todos) and changing the pronoun "los" or "las" into "les," which much like Latinx, embraces gender neutral language.

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"[My teacher] tells me that "todes" doesn't exist," the young Argentine girl tells her mother. "And I explained it, explained it, explained it, and la seño says: 'No, it doesn't exist, it doesn't exist.' But regardless of how many times she tells me 'it doesn't exist,' it's still a part of my vocabulary. And she said, 'OK, what does it mean?'"

She went on to explain that the words los y las do not sufficiently define every trans person. "There are some trans people who identify as men," she continued. "There are trans people who identify as women. But there are algunos y algunas y algunas that don't identify as either man or woman... Nosotras, nosotros, and nosotres respect how we want to be called. We also need to respect how ellos, ellas, and elles want to be called."

The unnamed girl says that when she uses elles, todes, and les, one friend teases her and dismisses her for using "her little words again." "But it's not a little word," she added. "It's a right. I'll keep saying it. I'll continue saying todos, todas, and todes... [I told my teacher] I'm not a lawyer, but I don't necessarily need to be a lawyer to defend others' rights."

Check out the video below.

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Posted by TKM

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*H/T TKM Mundo (<https://www.mundotkm.com/genero/2018/06/01/todos-todas-y-todes-la-chica-que-le-hizo-frente-a-su-maestra-para-utilizar-lenguaje-de-genero/>)*

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Update, June 8 at 11 a.m.: This piece has been updated to add more information about the video.

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