



An A-Z of Bullfighting Language

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INTRODUCTION

I am one of those aficionados who believe that a full appreciation of bullfighting cannot be obtained without grappling in some depth with the Spanish language. Nevertheless, it's the case that, for many English-speaking aficionados, and for a variety of reasons, this is too much of an ask, and for newcomers to the world of the bulls, it feels like a mountain to climb.

This A-Z consequently explains a number of Spanish words to do with bulls and bullfighting which it may be helpful to understand, for instance when looking at taurine websites or publications in the Spanish language.

This is not intended to be a comprehensive listing (descriptions of passes, for instance, will not be found here), but rather a collection of words I think it useful to know of, or words that just strike me as curious.

My chief source is the excellent *Diccionario Espasa Términos Taurinos*, written by Luis Nieto Manjón and originally published by Espasa in 1987. At the same time, I am conscious that the meanings and significance of language can change over time, just as the corrida develops; so sometimes, in addition to defining a word, I will comment on it too.

A

acoso y derribo – A means of testing calves in the countryside. Horsemen (*garrochistas*) armed with poles (*garrochas*) chase a calf and trip it up, then judge its reactions.

adentros – A reference to *las tablas*, the outer terrain of a bullring beside the barrera. Because of its nearness to this fence and the burladeros that break it up, this area is traditionally regarded as terrain where the torero has an advantage, being more able to escape and consequently at least risk. However, if a defensive bull adopts a *querencia*, i.e. makes a stand, in this area and the torero then opts to base the *faena* there, the risk is greater.

adorno – An action taken by a torero to accentuate a moment, e.g. touching a bull's horn or draping the *muleta* over the back of a dying animal.



afeitar – To shorten a bull’s horns – a fraudulent practice that involves restraining the bull. It assists the matador psychologically.

afuera – ‘Outwards’. A pass in which the bull is sent away outwards, i.e. further away from the side of the torero as well as behind him, *descargando la suerte*. This is essentially a defensive recourse, making linking impossible.

afueras – A reference to *los medios*, the terrain towards the centre of the bullring. Traditionally regarded as ground where the bull has most freedom of movement, while the torero is furthest away from safety or assistance, this is considered to be the area where the bullfighter is at greatest risk and the area where, ideally, a *faena* should be performed.

agotarse – A bull’s losing of its initial strength and energy. Other words with the same meaning are *apagarse* and *aplomarse*.

alarde – ‘Display’. Another word for ‘adorno’ or ‘desplante’.

aliño – Passes that have the sole aim of tiring the bull’s head in preparation for the kill. A *faena de aliño* summarises a situation where the matador has decided, early on, that such passes are all that can be achieved (or all he is prepared to achieve) with a particular bull.

alternativa – The ceremony marking a novillero’s progression to the status of matador de toros. At the start of the *faena* to the first bull of the afternoon, the senior matador on the cartel (the *padrino*) will present the new matador with sword and muleta in exchange for the latter’s capote whilst the third matador on the cartel (the *testigo*) looks on.

andar – ‘To walk’. This verb can be used to describe a banderillero’s initial approach towards a bull before placing the sticks, the action of a bull that comes forward meekly to the lure rather than charging, or a torero’s facility to ‘walk with the bull’ in taking it to the picador or from *las tablas* to the centre of the ring for the *faena*.

apartado – The act of moving bulls from the *corrales* into individual stalls prior to a bullfight.

apendice – The bull’s ear or tail, cut off and awarded to a torero after a good performance. The maximum award, for an outstanding performance, is both ears and the tail.

aplomado – The last of the three stages a bull goes through in the bullring, when it becomes tired, its charges more difficult to procure, and defensive.

apoderado – ‘Manager’ or ‘representative’. Several *apoderados* are former matadors. Others are bullring *empresarios*. Indeed, many *apoderados* are tied to particular *empresas*, a situation that enables stultification when it comes to organising *carteles* for the main *ferias*.



apretar – This verb can be used to describe a bull charging strongly or a banderillero or picador slamming their implements into the animal.

apretarse – The action of passing the bull closely, summed up in the phrase *apretarse los machos*, referring to the tassels that tighten a torero's trousers and which equates being well-dressed with being determined to succeed.

arrancar – To charge from a distance.

arrastre – The dragging of the bull's carcass from the arena.

arreglado – The effect of altering a bull's horns. Manjón comments: "What was, in the beginning, a means of achieving the optimum presentation of a fighting bull developed later into *afeitado* [shortening the bulls' horns], considered to be fraudulent". Article 49 of Spain's 1992 taurine regulations allowed for horns that had been damaged on the ranch to be altered and made fit for the lidia, but this latitude was done away with in the current regulations adopted four years later.

arrimón – The act of standing very close to a bull to achieve passes. It is often employed to enliven faenas with weak bulls that are reluctant to charge.

asomarse – To raise one's arms over the bull's head in order to place banderillas.

atravesar – When the bull's body is at a right angle to the spine of a picador's or rejoneador's horse as a suerte is performed (Nanjón bluntly comments: "This is the incorrect way of performing the suerte".) An *estocada atravesada* is a swordthrust that penetrates the bull crosswise from right to left of the bull's body, indicating that the sword has been placed from a relatively safe position at the animal's side. An *estocada atravesada del lado contrario* penetrates the bull from its left to its right and (assuming the matador is right-handed) tends to be more accidental than deliberate.

aviso – 'Warning'. A near-goring by a bull or a notice issued to advise of a change of cartel. More commonly, the word is used to refer to the trumpet sound that is made when a torero has still to kill his bull 10 minutes after the faena has begun; three minutes after that; and two minutes after that. After the third *aviso* sounds, all toreros in the ring must return to the callejón and the bull is either sent back to the corrales or despatched with a *puntilla*. To receive three *avisos* is regarded as a disgrace, although matadors have been known to incur them because they've felt their bull had defective vision or had been fought previously, or because they've been seeking an *indulto*.

ayuda – The fake sword that the torero carries for the bulk of the faena.

B

bajonazo – An excessively low swordthrust or *rejón de muerte*. It may kill the bull, but aficionados will not petition for an ear after such poor positioning has occurred.



banderilla – The instrument – a wooden stick covered in paper decorations and ending in a metal hook – placed in the bull in pairs in the second tercio.

banderillas negras – Sometimes referred to as *banderillas de castigo*, these are *banderillas*, decorated in black with extra-large hooks, that the president can order to be used on bulls whose behaviour has meant they have not been adequately picced.

banderillero – The peón who places *banderillas* in the bull. Each tercio de *banderillas* involves two *banderilleros*, assuming the matador or novillero is not placing *banderillas* himself.

barbear – When a bull walks alongside the barrera, brushing it with its snout, as if sniffing it. Usually an indication that the animal is manso and looking for a way out of the arena.

barrenar – A picador screwing in the puya or the matador the sword in an effort to make the weapon penetrate deeper into the bull. An abuse in either instance.

barrera – The fence dividing the ring from the callejón.

becerro – An animal that is less than two years old, often very young. A *becerrista* is someone who faces these animals frequently, intending to become a novillero.

boyante – A bull that is easy to torear, coming forward eagerly, not cutting in and showing little desire to hook and gore.

bravucón – A fainthearted bull, one that is hard to bring forward, then jumps at the lure or stays in the cloth rather than passing it.

bregar – To perform passes with the cloth throughout the bull's lidia. Nanjón comments: "The work of the brega the *banderilleros* realise is of great importance. They must bring the bull to a stop as soon as they can once it comes into the ring, ensure it doesn't leap into the callejón, keep useless charges to a minimum... For a matador, it's of fundamental importance that his cuadrilla includes a fine *bregador*, someone who has a perfect knowledge of each bull's condition and carries out his task as briefly and effectively as possible" so that the matador's subsequent performance is not prejudiced. Carrying out the brega during the tercio de *banderillas* is particularly important, as the bull must be turned and positioned for the *banderilleros* with as few passes as possible in order for the bull's energy to be conserved for the faena.

brindis – A torero's dedication of their faena to the president or other individual or, in a *brindis al público*, to the spectators as a whole.

bronca – When the spectators as a whole noisily express their extreme disappointment with the performance of a torero, ganadería, empresa or president.

bullidor – A torero who is notably diligent and active over the course of a bull's lidia.



bulto – An object presented to the bull other than the cloth, e.g. a torero or the picador's horse. A bull that *hace por el bulto* is one that ignores the cloth and opts to charge towards the torero instead.

burladero – Barriers erected in front of gaps in the barrera that act as refuges for the toreros during the lidia of a bull. A bull is often kept in front of a burladero whilst picadors enter the ring or while a torero makes a brindis.

burriciego – A bull with defective vision.

C

cabecear – A bull's shaking of the head from one side to the other. This consequently makes uncertain the beginning of a charge or its hooking. *Calamochear* has the same meaning.

cacho – The terrain that's within a bull's reach. *Fuera de cacho* refers to a torero who is passing a bull at a safe distance (some aficionados would narrow this down to a torero positioning himself outside the bull's line of charge).

caída – A bull losing its footing. An *estocada caída* is a swordthrust that penetrates the bull off-centre, but not sufficiently low to be considered a *bajonazo*.

callejón – The gangway between the barrera and the spectators' seats, where the toreros base themselves when not in the ring. It often contains protected areas for apoderados, the empresa, local authority representatives, the mayoral and other functionaries.

cantar la gallina – The action of a bull that initially appears to be aggressive but, particularly during the tercio de varas, proves to be manso.

capea – An event in which a calf or bull is let loose into an enclosed space for people to cape or dodge.

capitalista – An ironic term for the men who carry toreros out of the plaza after successful appearances and who are paid, or given food and lodging, as a consequence.

capote – The cloth used by peones throughout a bull's lidia and used by the novillero or matador in the initial tercio. It is usually pink on one side and yellow on the other.

capotazo – Any pass with the cape.

capote de paseílo – The decorative cape that each torero wears for the paseílo (often with a religious motif) and which is often draped at the back of the callejón for the remainder of the bullfight.

cara – The frontal part of the head. A bull that *tiene cara* is one with impressive horns, the opposite being *tiene poco cara*. *Meter la cara* refers to the act of a bull being repeatedly lowering its head to the ground in passes. *Perder la cara al toro* refers to a torero's failing to keep a bull in his sight, disregarding the danger this involves.



cargando la suerte – ‘Giving weight’ to a pass or making it more profound. The matador Domingo Ortega took a narrow view that this involved advancing the exit leg at the beginning of a pass (something that is only possible with the opening pass of a linked series). A more general view is that *cargando la suerte* involves shifting one’s weight on to the exit leg during a pass, which helps to extend the pass and curve the bull’s charge.

carioca – The act of a picador turning his horse to the right when the bull is in the peto, to the extent that the bull’s natural exit from the suerte is blocked and the bull, captive between the horse and the barrera, can be picced longer. Originally a recourse for piccing toros who would otherwise leave the horse quickly, it was later adopted as a widespread abuse with all kinds of bulls.

cartel – This can refer to a poster advertising a bullfight or to the event’s participants in terms of the ganadería and the matadors, rejoneadors or novilleros involved. A matador, rejoneador or ganadero who *tiene cartel* is someone who is thought highly of and whose presence draws the crowds.

casta – Nanjón defines this as “the organic constitution, structure and functionality of each bull, comprising all the hereditary factors of its antecedents”. The word also refers to pedigree toros bravos, with *cruzar las castas* the act of crossbreeding one encaste with another. A torero *de casta* is someone regarded as a true, honourable, professional.

chiqueros – Another word for the toriles.

citar – To do something that brings the bull forward.

claro – A bull with a clean, straightforward charge and no bad habits.

clavar – Placing banderillas in a bull’s hide, or (in *clavar las zapatillas*) standing firm and keeping one’s feet immobile during a suerte.

cobardía – ‘Cowardice’ (of man or bull).

cocear – To kick.

codicia – ‘Eagerness’ – a bull charging keenly in its efforts to catch the lure.

codillear – To give passes purely with the hands and forearms, with the elbows kept close to the body. Originally considered to be inappropriate, the great Juan Belmonte fought in this way and it was a common approach post-Belmonte as it enabled bulls to be fought more closely. However, many aficionados continue to regard this as a defect.

cogida – When a torero is caught by a bull.

cojo – Lameness. This is not necessarily a permanent condition; on occasions, a bull will exhibit temporary lameness because it’s been lying on one of its legs prior to its entry to the ring. Matadors will sometimes be keen to keep a bull that is cojo from being returned to the corrals, as its condition facilitates it being passed with temple, albeit at the cost of reduced transmission to onlookers of the animal’s inherent danger.



colada – A bull's cutting in on the torero during its charge or as it turns at the end of a pass.

comerse – To show extraordinary eagerness to charge, a bull coming in quickly to try and catch the lure.

compás – Passing a bull with one's legs apart as opposed to keeping the feet together (*con pies juntos*).

contraria – A swordthrust that, from the matador's perspective, enters left of centre of the bull. *La suerte contraria* refers to killing in which the man heads towards the centre of the ring as he comes out of the suerte (the opposite form of killing being *la suerte natural*).

cornada – A goring. A *cornadón* refers to a large and particularly serious wounding.

corrales – The part of a bullring where the bulls are kept prior to the sorteo and apartado.

correr la mano – 'To run the hand'. To prolong a pass to its fullest extent by lowering the cloth, moving it in time with the bull, stretching the arm out and giving a remate with the wrist once the pass has reached its limit.

corrida – 'Bullfight'. A *corrida mixta* is an event featuring participants at different levels or disciplines, i.e. matadors appearing together with novilleros or rejoneadores.

cruz – The highest point of a bull's back, where the bones of the upper forelegs meet with the spine. A sword that penetrates the bull in this area is praiseworthy and said to be *en la cruz*, while *hacer la cruz* ('to make the cross') refers to the action of killing with the right hand while the left hand holding the cloth sweeps across below to guide the bull away from the matador's body (or vice-versa in the case of left-handed swordsmen).

cuadrilla – A team of toreros acting under the instructions of a matador, novillero or rejoneador.

cuajado – A bull at its physical best or a torero at the peak of his powers.

cumbre – A torero, toreo or faena considered to reach the heights artistically.

D

defenderse – When a bull that is manso or exhausted bases itself beside the barrera or in its querencia, doesn't move towards the lure but stands and waves its horns.

derrote – A hook with the horn.

desahogar – To give a bull a rest during the lidia.

desarme – The capote or muleta being caught on a bull's horn and taken out of the torero's hands.

descargando la suerte – See 'afuera'.

descolgado – Insufficiently penetrating swordthrust or banderillas, can also be described as *desprendido*.



descompuesto – A bull that is unsettled, hooking with its horns and not charging smoothly.

desecho – Cattle that perform poorly in *tientas*. The calves may be sent to the slaughterhouse or retained for *novilladas*, when they should be advertised as *desecho de tienta y defectuosos* or *desecho de tienta y cerrado*.

desengañarse – A bull changing its behaviour during the *lidia*, whether for better or worse.

desgarrar – When a *picador* slashes the bull's hide with the *puya*.

deshilvanada – A *faena* consisting of single, rather than linked, passes.

desigual – A bull or *torero* that behaves irregularly during the *lidia*. It can also be a descriptor of a *corrida* or a string of bulls where the appearance or behaviour of the animals varies greatly.

desmayarse – The action of a *torero* when he passes the bull confidently and very relaxedly, creating beauty and emotion.

despacio – 'Slowly'.

despegarse – When a *torero* is failing to pass a bull closely, reflecting a lack of domination.

desplante – *Manjón* states: "An act full of arrogance, carelessness or tastelessness." Examples are kneeling in front of a stationary bull or throwing away the *muleta* and sword whilst standing in front of a bull.

devolver – To return a bull to the corrals, either because it's defective or because it has not been killed within the allotted time.

diestro – Someone who is skilful, or an expert – another term for a *matador*.

distraído – An animal that's distracted, particularly by movements in the *callejón* or *tendidos*. *Manjón* comments, "The *diestro* should ensure that this type of bull comes forward fixed on the lure, otherwise he will end up being caught."

doblarse – The act of turning the bull sharply with the lure. At its best (although rarely seen these days), a *matador* will do this with a bull that's still showing a lot of strength at the start of the final *tercio*, improving its condition for the *faena* and emphasising which of the two is in charge. At its worst, a *matador* will resort to this when he has concluded (for whatever reason) that a decent *faena* is impossible and the bull needs to be prepared rapidly for the kill.

dormirse – A bull staying in the *peto* after it has charged the *picador*.

duro – In yesteryear, this adjective referred simply to a bull that continued behaving strongly after being heavily punished by the *picador*. Nowadays, the word is more commonly used to describe animals that the *figuras* generally avoid because they have



a reputation for being difficult to torear and consequently hard to achieve success with. When the estoque hits bone, it can be said to be *en duro*.

embarcado – A bull that charges eagerly towards the lure with its head lowered. The animal that displays such behaviour can also be described as *embebido*.

embestida – The bull's charge.

embolar – To cover a bull's horns, whether with *fundas* on the ranch, or sheathing the horns in preparation for the bull's lidia by forcados or rejoneadores, or putting something on the horn tips before a bull is run in street events.

emborracharse – 'To become drunk'. When a torero is so confident in his abilities and performs so well that he loses his sense of time and risk. Some toreros have described this as a frequent factor in gorings occurring.

embrocado – When a torero enters the bull's terrain and vice-versa.

empapado – A bull that is so fixed on the lure it appears to be the only object of its attention.

empitonado – Caught on the bull's horns. *Empuntado* and *encornado* have the same meaning.

emplazarse – When a bull positions itself in the centre of the arena and does not respond to being cited.

emplearse – To charge eagerly and strongly – most often used when describing the bull in the suerte de varas.

empresa – An organisation that puts on bullfights.

empujar – When the bull has its head in the protective mattress of the picador's horse, pushing strongly against the object.

encastar – To look to improve a herd through embarking on crossbreeding with other animals from different *encastes* or from different branches of the same *encaste*.

encaste – A distinct bloodline as recognised by la Unión de Cridadores de Toros de Lidia (UCTL), the leading association of bull-breeders. To be awarded the status of *encaste*, there should be a history of 30 consecutive years of breeding without the introduction of another bloodline to the herd; a defined morphological appearance to the adult animals, both male and female; and a selection orientated at achieving determined characteristics of comportment.

encelado – A bull that charges strongly and determinedly towards the horse, whether of a picador or rejoneador.



encerrona – Traditional meanings have been a private event, usually a capea, and also an event in which a matador faces particularly difficult animals and does not achieve success. Nowadays, the word is usually used to denote an event in which a novillero or matador faces six bulls on their own.

encunarse – To launch oneself between the bull's horns in the act of killing.

enganche – When a bull's horn catches the capote or muleta.

engaño – 'Trick' or 'delusion' – a word that can be used to describe the lure, whether cape or muleta.

enjundia – Profound toreo that involves artistry and linking.

enmendarse – To alter one's position during a suerte.

entera – A swordthrust that penetrates to the hilt.

entero – A bull that maintains its strength and faculties throughout its lidia.

entregarse – A word that can have three meanings – a bull charging tirelessly to the lure; a torero bringing off suertes in their pure form whilst ignoring the danger that can involve; or a public that is captivated by a torero's performance.

eral – An animal that is no more than two years old.

escalafón – The ranking of toreros. This is done primarily on the number of contracts a torero obtains over the course of a season, the one with the most contracts heading the table. Matadors, novilleros con picadores and rejoneadors each have their own listing.

escarbar – To paw the ground: views are divided as to whether this denotes timidity on the bull's part.

escobillado – A damaged horn whose tip has been opened up into brush-like fibres.

espantarse – To flee repeatedly from the lure – an action that indicates a toro manso.

espejo – 'Mirror'. A *torero de espejo* is one that is more concerned with composing his body in passes than to giving a bull its appropriate lidia.

estocada – A swordthrust at the end of a faena in which the sword enters the bull's body and is left there (although, if a descabello is needed later, the sword is best removed beforehand). A *media estocada* refers to half the sword's length having penetrated the bull.

estoque – The killing sword.

estribo – The strip running along the bottom of the side of the barrera facing the arena and used by toreros as an aid to vaulting the fence. A matador will sometimes sit on this whilst performing one or more passes with the muleta.

estropeado – 'Spoilt'. A bull that's been given a poor lidia or which has been ruined by the picador.

exprimir – 'To squeeze a fruit'. *Exprimir al toro* means to get the most out of a bull.



fácil – ‘Easy’. The word can be applied to a manageable bull or to a torero who brings off passes seemingly without much effort.

faena – The main part of the third tercio, when the matador or novillero, carrying a muleta, is alone with the bull. His performance is primarily judged on this part of the lidia and the kill.

fajarse – A torero positioning himself so close to a bull that its horns brush his *faja*, the sash around the torero’s stomach.

fiero – A bull that displays enormous aggression and strength.

figura – A top bullfighter, one who is recognised for his artistry and his ability to draw the crowds. He will be able to choose the dates of his appearances and the ganaderías involved, and sometimes who else is on the cartel (which can also put him in the position of vetoing rivals).

fijado – ‘Fixed’. When a bull has reached a state in its lidia where it ceases to charge wildly and concentrates its charges on the lure. Nanjón comments: “This is the most propitious point for achieving brilliant passes, for, although still strong, the bull is not as mobile as it was.”

fijar – To bring the bull to a stop so that it can be cited, or, during a sequence of passes, to ensure its attention is retained on the lure.

fijeza – A bull’s ability to charge strongly and straightforwardly towards the lure.

firme – A torero who performs with exceptional bravery, technique and dexterity.

flojo – ‘Weak’.

forcados – A team that temporarily restrain a bull, with one man meeting the bull’s charge head-on (the bull’s horns are padded) and the remainder then climbing on to the animal, then climbing off, leaving one man holding the bull’s tail. The spectacle is popular in Portugal, where it originated, and in Mexico.

franco – A bull that is straightforward, keen and noble.

frenarse – To stop charging at the point of reaching the lure – dangerous behaviour by the bull for the torero.

fuera – ‘Out’. Can be said of a bull that tends to swerve away from the lure in its charge or of a torero’s passes where the bull is sent out and away from the man rather than around his body. Can also be shouted at a torero who has attracted the crowd’s ire, meaning “Get out!”.

fuerza – ‘Strength’ or ‘vigour’.



fundas – The sheathes that some ganaderos put over their animals' horns to protect them whilst they are on the ranch. Other ganaderos eschew the practice, believing the restraint involved while they are put on and eventually removed is psychologically damaging to the toro bravo.

furioso – A bull whose courage grows during its lidia.

G

gacho – A bull with horns that have grown downwards.

galería – Manjón states: "This term is applied to that sector of the public that is ignorant of the rules of tauromachy and finds more merit in dramatic passes than those that are realised artistically. So it is said, 'That torero fought *para la galería*.'"

gallardía – Moving one's body in a gallant, comely and self-confident way. Manjón comments, "It is one of the qualities a diestro must have."

gallear – Moving with the bull and using the capote or one's body to dodge it.

gallina – Literally 'hen', although the word can also mean 'coward'. *Cantar la gallina* refers to a bull that flinches from the lure and is manso.

ganadería – A bull-breeding ranch.

ganadero – A breeder of bulls.

gañafón – Hooking brusquely and violently with the horns.

garapullo – Another word for a banderilla.

garrochista – See 'acoso y derribo'.

gatear – The action of a bull that retreats from the picador's horse and whose charge is little more than a crawl.

gato – 'Cat'. Used pejoratively to describe a bull of poor appearance.

gazapear – The action of a bull that comes forward uncertainly at a walking pace, without stopping.

genio – Displaying an uncertain and uneven charge.

golletazo – A pinchazo, estocada or rejonazo delivered to a bull's neck.

gordo – A bull that looks fat or overweight.

grupa – A horse's hindquarters. Banderillas that are placed by a rejoneador as the bull nears these are less meritorious than those placed as the bull nears the forequarters.

guarismo – The brand on a bull which indicates the year in which it was born.

guasa – An animal that *tiene guasa* is one that behaves irregularly and riskily, albeit not in a very obvious way.

gurrupina – Passes given violently that ignore the dictum 'parar, mandar y templar'.



H

habilidad – Said of a torero who displays competence, intelligence and skill throughout a bull's lidia.

hecho – A bull in prime physical condition.

hierro – Brand.

hilar or *hacer hilo* – When a bull focuses on the man and pursues him rather than the lure. *Al hilo* or *en hilo de las tablas/de la barrera* describes a bull positioned near and parallel to the tablas or fence.

honda – An estoque or rejón de muerte two-thirds of which penetrates the bull.

hoyo de las agujas – The highest part of a bull's back.

hueso – Bone. An animal described as having *mucho* or *poco hueso* is one of large or little volume.

huído – Said of a bull that eludes encounters with the lure and looks for a way out of the bullring.

huir – To run away from an animal.

humillar – The action of a bull lowering its head. Doing this when following the lure is an attribute much prized by ganaderos and toreros alike.

I

incierto – A bull that looks around at various objects in the ring without concentrating on any one in particular, impacting negatively on its charges.

incómodo – A bull that presents a difficult lidia, whether because of its physical characteristics or its behaviour or both.

indulto – The sparing of a bull's life, heralded by the president showing an orange handkerchief. The bull should have been exceptional, both in terms of its looks and its performance throughout its lidia, and the indulto (requested by a majority of spectators) agreed to by the matador and the ganadero or mayoral, the bull's anticipated future being as a semental. In practice, however, indultos can be sought by matadors as they are good publicity and avoid the suerte of killing, while ganaderos appreciate the publicity too. Spain's taurine regulations limit the possibility of indultos to first and second-class rings, but in reality they occur elsewhere too.

infumable – Literally 'unsmokeable', this can describe a festejo or string of bulls of poor quality.

irse – A bull whose condition worsens during the lidia can be said to *irse abajo* or *ir a menos*. This can also be said of a torero whose domination weakens, or of a faena in which quality deteriorates. *irse arriba* or *ir a más* can be said of a bull whose condition



improves, of a torero who overcomes initial difficulties posed by his bull, or of a faena that grows in quality.

jalear – “To animate the public with clapping, shouts and gestures.” This can be done by individuals placed in the tendidos or by those in the callejón or behind a burladero and can occur during the lidia or as an attempt to gain trophies after the bull has been killed. The practice is almost always annoying and should be viewed with suspicion.

juego – Literally ‘game’, but the word can refer to a bull’s comportment (as in ‘*el toro ha tenido buen juego*’) or to a torero’s handling of his cape. *Una corrida con juego desigual* is one in which the bulls’ comportment varied greatly.

jugar los brazos – To move the lure in such a way that the bull’s horns do not catch it.

jurisdicción – The bull and the man each have their own terrain. *El terreno de jurisdicción* is the point at which the two terrains come together and the man has no option other than to pass the bull with his cape or be caught.

K

L

ladrón – A bull that is defensive, slow in coming forward and dangerous, an animal with which it is almost impossible to triumph.

lance – A pass given with the capote.

latín – A bull that *sabe latín* is one with sentido, posing danger to its lidiadores.

legionario – A very brave torero who habitually appears with bulls from the more difficult ganaderías.

levantado – The first of the three stages a bull goes through in the bullring, when it possesses all its vigour and strength and holds its head high, its head and horns obscuring its morrillo when viewed from the front.

lidia – The treatment a bull receives from the time it comes into the ring up until its death. The *lidiadores* are all the toreros responsible for that treatment, most particularly the matador, novillero or rejoneador.

ligar – To link passes.

ligazón – A series of linked passes, the one flowing on to the other.

ligereza – ‘Agility’.

lío – When a torero achieves a superlative triumph, it is said that *el arma un lío* (literally, ‘he assembles a package’).



listo – A bull that quickly learns to charge at the man rather than the lure.

llavero – ‘Keyring’. A term for a small bull.

llenazo – A bullring that is full with spectators and has no more tickets for sale – ‘*no hay billetes*’.

lote – The bulls drawn in the sorteo for each torero.

lucimiento – A particularly noteworthy performance of a pass or a faena or complete lidia. The words *lucida* or *deslucida* attached to a pass, faena, or lidia denote whether a torero has executed them well or badly.

M

machetear – The action of a torero who looks to weaken a bull by presenting the lure in rapid succession to one horn and then the other.

manada – ‘Herd’.

mandar – To control the bull with the lure, bringing the animal forward, taking it past and sending it away in accordance with the torero’s wishes.

maneras – Manjón states: “The aficionado who says that a torero *tiene maneras* regards him as having sufficient positive aspects to be assured of a triumphant career.”

mano – ‘Hand’ but can also refer to a bull’s foreleg. A bull that *pierde las manos* is one that falls. *Mano a mano* refers to a bullfight in which two matadors, novilleros or rejoneadors compete against each other.

manso – A timid animal, one that flees the lure rather than attack it. *Mansurrón* refers to an exceedingly timid bull.

marmolillo – A bull that is reluctant and slow to come forward.

marronazo – A failed suerte, e.g. a picador failing to give a bull a puyazo or a banderillero not managing to place the sticks.

matador – A professional killer of bulls who has taken the alternativa.

mayoral – The person in charge of day-to-day activities at a bull-breeding ranch and who represents the ganadería at the bullring.

medios – See ‘afueras’.

meter – ‘To let fall’. *Meter los brazos* is the action a banderillero makes as he places his implements. *Meter la cabeza* or *la cara* refers to a bull lowering its head as it follows the lure.

metisaca – A sword thrust in which the estoque penetrates the bull but is taken out again, still in the torero’s hand.

miedo – ‘Fear’.

mirón – Said of a bull which looks a lot at the torero rather than the lure.



modesto – A matador who is not in the upper reaches of the escalafón.

monopuyazo – The single puyazo, an all-too-common feature of today's corridas, particularly in Spain and Mexico. It prevents the tercio de las varas from being a true test of the bull's bravery and risks leaving the bull under or over-picked for the faena that follows. To be deplored.

morrillo – The hump of muscle behind a bull's neck.

mosquear – A bull's nervous movement of its ears, as if warding off mosquitos.

mulillas – The mules that are used to drag out the bull's corpse in the arrastre.

muleta – The red cloth used during the faena.

muletazo – Any pass with the muleta.

N

nervio – A bull's having an irregular charge accompanied by hooks of the horn.

nervioso – A bull that is quick to use its horns and is unsettled throughout its lidia, posing particular danger for the toreros.

nobleza – A bull's ability to charge straightforwardly and keenly towards the lure. What toreros dream of and the 'Holy Grail' for many of today's ganaderos: however, unless this is accompanied with strength and spirit, the impression given can often be one of a docile animal that offers no threat to its matador.

novillero – Someone who has set out on the path of becoming a matador de toros, but who has not yet reached that point (indeed, the majority never do). A *novillero sin picadores* faces erales with no tercio de varas involved, the next step being that of a *novillero con picadores*, when novillos will be fought in a complete lidia with picadors present.

novillo – A three-year-old bull.

O

obediente – Manjón reports: "This is said of a bull that is very noble, straightforward and classy." But see my previous comment above.

obligada – A suerte that the lidiador hasn't prepared for, but has to make to accommodate a bull's unexpected charge.

obsequio – An ironic term to describe a blow of the horn resulting from a bull lifting its head.

ofensiva – 'Offensive', the natural state of a toro bravo in charging towards a lure with the aim of catching and destroying it.



oficio – Profession. A torero who is said to *tener oficio* is one who is considered to have mastered the technique of *toreo*.

oleada – A charge that is sudden and puts a torero in danger.

oligopolio – A term used to describe a situation where a lot of bullrings are run by a small number of *empresas*.

olivo – *Tomar al olivo* (colloquially 'to beat it') is to escape from a bull by leaping over the *barrera*.

oreja – 'Ear'. A good performance by a *novillero*, *matador* or *rejoneador* will be rewarded by one or two ears from the animal just killed. The first ear should be demanded by a majority of spectators, while the second ear is determined by the president. When a bull is *indultado*, any award to the torero will be symbolic.

orejero – A torero who takes note of, and acts upon, the advice of his manager and *cuadrilla* from the *callejón* or *burladeros*. The word is also used to describe a pair of *banderillas* or a swordthrust ending up near a bull's ears.

ortodoxo – *Toreo* performed, or a torero who performs, in accordance with the classic *cánones* (principles) of *tauromaquia* – 'parar, templar y mandar'. In modern times, some have argued that these should be augmented by *cargar la suerte* and *ligar*.

P

paletazo – A blow received from the lower part of a horn.

palitroque – Another word for 'banderilla'.

palo – The wooden pole used by *picadors* and *garrochistas*. *Echar* or *tirar el palo* refers to the *picador's* putting the pole forward to attract the bull's attention and then meet its charge. *Palo* (or *palotazo*) can also refer to a blow a torero receives from one or more *banderillas* in a bull during a *faena*. *Banderillas* can also be referred to as *los palos*.

panza – The central part of the *muleta*. A pass realised with a bull's head in this part of the lure (and the bull consequently closer to the man) is regarded as more meritorious than a pass based on the corner of the cloth furthest from the torero (the *pico*).

pañuelo – 'Handkerchief'. Used by spectators to press for the award of a trophy and also by the president of a *festejo* who will employ white to signify the start of an event, a change in *tercio*, *avisos* and the concession of awards; green to indicate a bull should be returned to the *corrales*; red to permit the use of *banderillas negras*; blue to order that the carcass of a particularly good bull should be taken around the ring before leaving the *plaza*; and orange to allow an outstanding bull to leave the ring alive.

papada – A bull's dewlap.



papeles – ‘To lose one’s papers’ (*perder los papeles*) is said of a performance in which a torero is out of sorts, insecure and, being unable to dominate his opponent, at a bull’s mercy.

paquete – Literally ‘package’. *Hacerse el paquete* describes the action of putting on the capote de paseíllo. *Tragar paquete* refers to a torero calmly putting up with the charges of a difficult animal.

parado – The second of the three stages a bull goes through in the bullring and the most propitious for toreo, the bull having ceased to run wildly and unfocused, but, retaining its strength and energy, now concentrates its charges on particular objects.

parar – To stand still. Possibly once referring to the merit of citing a bull once the animal had come to a stop and thereby controlling its charge, nowadays the verb is generally used to describe a torero keeping his feet still in passes.

pararse – To attempt a pass but not bring it off for one reason or another. *Pararse en el viaje* is the action of a bull that halts in the middle of a pass, posing danger to its lidiador (Manjón notes this can occur because the bull is lacking strength or has sentido).

pareja – This can be said of a corrida in which all the bulls look similar. It can also refer to the empresas’ pairing of toreros where this encourages ticket sales – this can occur with novilleros (e.g. the pairing of Miguel Báez *Litri* and Julio Aparicio in 1949 and 1950) or matadors (*El Tato* and Pepín Liria, for instance, had a run of contracts together in the 1990s after a particularly successful afternoon together in Sevilla’s Feria de Abril).

parte facultativo – A description of an injury a torero has suffered and the actions taken to treat it.

partir – The action of a bull charging directly towards an object that has caught its attention.

pasado – Used to describe banderillas, sword thrusts or rejones placed further back than they should be. A *toro pasado* describes a suerte of banderillas or a swordthrust given when a torero is outside the area in which he could be caught by the bull. *Pasado de faena* refers to a bull that has been given an over-long faena and consequently is more difficult to line up for the kill.

pasarse de faena – A torero going on too long in the faena given the condition of his bull.

paseíllo – The parade of bullfight participants at the start of the event. In a typical cartel with three main protagonists, the matadors or novilleros will parade with the most senior (depending on the date of their alternativa or, with novilleros, their debut with picadors) standing on the left and the junior torero in the middle.

pastueño – A bull that charges honestly and smoothly.



pavo – Literally ‘turkey’, this can be said humorously to describe a large, fat, well-horned bull.

pegado – A bull that *pegarse*, showing a tendency to seek refuge by the barrera because it is cowardly or tired out.

pegajoso – Applied to a bull that returns time and time again to attack the lure – an excellent quality.

pegapases – The action of putting quantity above quality when it comes to passing a bull.

pegar – To pic a bull. The word can also describe forcados’ action of bringing a bull to a halt simply by using their hands and bodies.

pego – Manjón’s definition: “Fraud by a torero on the public because he takes advantage whilst giving passes or makes them with bulls that do not have the trapío the aficionado demands. (The word is derived from cheating by gamblers.)”

pelea – ‘Fight’: can be said of the behaviour of a torero or a bull (in the latter instance, particularly during the suerte de varas).

peleón – A torero or bull that is fervently aggressive throughout the lidia, or a bull that fights with other herd members.

peligro – ‘Danger’ or ‘risk’.

pellizco – A torero who *tiene pellizco* is one who executes passes with particular gracefulness or artistry.

pelo – ‘Skin’. The phrase *tocar pelo* is used to indicate that a torero has cut one or more ears.

peón – A torero who is part of a matador’s, novillero’s or rejoneador’s cuadrilla.

pera – ‘Pear’. An extraordinarily noble bull may be described as *una pera* or *una pera en dulce*.

percance – A torero’s tossing or being bumped into by a bull.

percherón – A French breed of horse commonly used for piccing. Manjón makes the point that previously lighter and more agile Spanish horses were used for the suerte de varas.

perder – ‘To lose’. *Perder los manos* refers to a bull losing its footing; *perder terreno* is said of a bull that gives ground, walking backwards or turning and fleeing, or of a torero who retreats from the point of jurisdiction with a bull; and *perderle pasos* refers to a torero stepping back at the end of passes.

perfil – ‘Profile’: *toreo de perfil* is toreo in which a matador stands profiled to the bull, parallel to its charge, as he takes it past him. This contrasts with *toreo de frente*, in which the matador stands frontally to the bull, or the three-quarters position in which the



matador is angled with his chest towards the bull, but it is regarded as the easiest stance for linking passes.

perseguir – A bull's action in chasing after its lidiador, most commonly seen in the suerte de banderillas.

pesar – *Pesa el toro* describes when a bull takes up a defensive position in the ring, is reluctant to move from it and is particularly dangerous when it does come forward.

petacos – Extraordinarily long horns.

petardo – 'Fraud'. *Dar un petardo* refers to a particularly disastrous performance by a torero.

peto – The protective mattressing worn by picadors' horses.

picante – Describes a bull that charges uncertainly but quickly.

picador – A cuadrilla member employed to wound the bull with a lance from on horseback.

pico – See 'panza' above.

pies – A torero that *tiene pies* is one who is lithe and agile on his feet. A bull described as having *mucho pies* is one that moves rapidly.

pinchaúvas – A matador or novillero who repeatedly fails with the sword.

pinchazo – A swordthrust that wounds the bull without penetrating very far, usually because the blade has hit bone.

pingüí – An adorno that has no merit.

pinturero – Literally 'dandy' – a torero who produces good-looking passes.

pitón – A horn's pointed end.

pitos – Whistles: a sign of disapproval.

planchada – Describes a muleta that is proffered spread out and frontally to a bull.

platillo – The central area of the ring.

plaza de toros – A purpose-built bullring.

poderoso – 'Powerful'. Can be said of a torero whose lidia is particularly accomplished or of a bull that charges strongly and keenly.

ponedor – Someone who contributes to the organisation of a bullfight in order that a particular torero appears in it.

porfiar – To insist on continuing with the lidia despite the poor qualities of the bull concerned.

portátil – A temporary bullring with tendidos that can be put up and taken down and transported from location to location.

postín – Is said of a torero who has great qualities. Manjón says the word is particularly applied to novilleros.



posturas – Can be said of a torero who is more concerned with composing his body than with the lidia.

potable – Describes a bull that has positive elements in its behaviour.

prender – The act of a bull catching its lidiador or of banderillas attaching to a bull.

prestar – A bull that *se ha prestado* is one whose behaviour is regarded as contributing to a torero's success.

probar, probarse – To test the qualities of an animal or of oneself.

probón – A hesitant bull.

profundo – Manjón comments: "This is said of a torero who, or toreo which, taking account of the classic rules, achieves purity and beauty without unnecessary adornos or desplantes."

prontitud – A bull's ability to charge quickly when cited.

puesto – A bull's horns may be described as *buen* or *mal puesto* – well or poorly formed – depending on their size or formation.

pujanza – Strength in the charge.

pundonor – An honourable person.

puntas – Horn tips; a bull described as being *en puntas* is one whose horns have not been manipulated.

puntazo – An insignificant wound caused by a bull's horn; *un puntazo corrido* is one with some length – a scrape or scratch.

puntear – To hook quickly and repeatedly.

puntero – An extraordinary bull, or a ganadero or torero who stands out from the rest.

puntilla – The dagger used to finish the bull off once it has fallen to the ground.

puntillero – The torero charged with ending things with the puntilla. This is usually one of the banderilleros, although in some bullrings the puntillero is a plaza functionary.

puñalada – A badly delivered and poorly placed sword.

purista – A torero considered to realise suertes *con pureza*, which Manjón describes as in a way the technical rules of toreo demand.

puya – The metal blade at the end of the picador's lance.

puyazo – A wounding of a bull by the picador.

Q

quebrantar – To weaken a bull – a verb traditionally applied to the beginning of a faena when a matador makes use of low or cutting passes with this aim in mind.

quedarse – When a bull, through its temperament or tiredness, stands immobile rather than charging.



querencia – A bull's favoured spot in the bullring, frequently an area near the toriles or a place where it has overturned a horse or caught a torero, although it can also be a part of the ring that's in the shade or (particularly in the latter stages of a faena) adjacent to the barrera. A knowledgeable matador will make use of the fact that the bull charges more keenly towards its *querencia*, although he will not always want it to run on to there, preferring to keep it in the lure. A bull can have more than one *querencia* during the course of its lidia.

quietud – A torero keeping his feet still whilst executing a pass.

quite – The action of taking the bull away from the picador's horse or from a torero who is on the ground (if someone does the latter by attracting the bull away with his body rather than a cape or muleta, it is *un quite a cuerpo limpio*). The word can also be used to describe a series of capotazos given between or after a bull's entries to the picador.

R

rabia – 'Fury'. The emotion a torero can show when he returns to cape a bull that has just tossed him or snatched the lure out of his hands.

rabo – 'Tail'. The award of the bull's tail symbolises an exceptional triumph by the matador, novillero or rejoneador.

rajarse – When a bull shrinks back from the lure rather than coming forward towards it.

rama – Literally 'branch'. A word applied to a particular lineage of an encaste.

ramas – Another word for a bull's horns.

raya – The circular lines in the ring that are used to denote piccing areas. Their purpose has changed over time; these days, the line nearest the barrera denotes the point at which a picador should, ideally, not allow his horse to move over towards the ring's centre, while the other line indicates the minimum distance at which a bull should be placed from the horse before it is cited for a vara. Where there is proven difficulty in piccing a bull, these lines can be ignored.

raza – 'Breed'. The word is used as a synonym for *casta*, i.e. a bull's spirit or hereditary characteristics. *Un toro enrazado* is one that has characteristics that correspond with the appearance and/or behaviours of the ganadería or encaste it represents.

reata – A string of animals.

rebozarse – The action of a torero and bull getting mixed up because the bull has been passed too closely.

rebrincar – To charge in a way that includes the bull's leaping in the air.

recelarse – A bull getting worse during its lidia by becoming less impulsive and more cautious in its charge.



receloso – A bull that delays in responding to cites and comes forward defensively.

rechazados – Bulls that have been rejected by the veterinarians.

reconocimiento – The veterinarians' examination of bulls that have been sent to the plaza, checking their fitness and suitability.

recorrido – The length to which a bull will pursue the capote or muleta – largo (long), medio (medium) or corto (short).

rectitud – A straight charge: also the line of charge between a bull and a lure.

regular – The action of a bull stepping backwards.

recursos – Manjón comments: "The word refers to the intrinsic qualities of each diestro that are used to resolve the technical problems arising during the lidia."

redondear – Manjón again: "Figuratively, to execute a faena, keeping to the classic rules and topping it off with beauty and grace. It's applied to a performance as a whole, in which case it's said [the torero] *redondeó la tarde*."

refrescar – To select bulls pertaining to the same encaste, but making use of different branches. Also, a torero interrupting the lidia in order to rest an animal or make changes that will stimulate it more.

regalito – An ironic term for an animal that is difficult and dangerous.

rehilete – Another word for 'banderilla'.

rehuir – A bull's action in avoiding engagement with the cloth or the picador's horse, fleeing instead.

rejón de castigo – The implement used in rejoneo that is intended to replicate the effects of a puya. Modelled on the Portuguese farpa, so that when the handle comes away from the blade a small flag is shown, it has a bigger blade than a banderilla.

rejón de muerte – The final, long-bladed rejón used to kill a bull from on horseback.

regonazo – The placement of a rejón in a bull.

rejoneador – A professional who fights and kills bulls from on horseback. S/he will have a team of horses they can put to use for particular suertes. Good horsemanship is prized in *rejoneo* almost as much as the performance with a bull, and it attracts its own particular audience. It is the main form of bullfighting in Portugal (where the bull is not killed in the ring).

rematar – The action of completing a pass. Manjón quotes Amós Salvador: "It involves leaving the bull at a convenient distance, withdrawing the cloth and bringing it back to the position most appropriate to protect its holder and prepare for another *lance*." The verb can also be used to describe the action of the puntillero in finishing off the bull.

remate – A torero's ending of a pass or series of passes, or the bull's ending of a charge.

repararse – When a bull stops short or alters its charge defensively.



repetir – When an eager bull charges towards the lure time and time again.

reposado – A torero or bull being calm and gentle.

res – A term used to describe any bovine.

resabiado – A bull that has developed bad habits during its lidia.

reservón – A bull that shows no willingness to attack the lure.

respetable – Used humourously, as in *el respetable*, to describe the spectators.

respingar – When a bull flees wildly, usually as a result of punishment inflicted during its lidia (from puyazos, banderillas or the estoque).

reventa – Selling tickets over and above the ticket price. In Spain, official (legal) reventa applies a 20% mark-up, but there is also a reventa black market where prices will depend on individual carteles and demand.

revolverse – When a bull turns back quickly at the end of a charge to the lure.

riñones – 'Kidneys'. *Meter los riñones* refers to a bull that charges forcefully in the suerte de varas, pushing against the peto with all its might.

robar – 'To rob.' *Robar pases* is a term used to describe a torero's action in achieving passes with a difficult bull at some exposure to himself.

rodeo – A round-up of cattle.

romanear – When a bull lifts picador and horse with its horns.

romper – A bull or torero is said to romper when they display their positive qualities.

S

sacar – *Sacar al toro* refers to the act of bringing a bull away from a querencia or the picador's horse.

salida – 'Exit'.

salir – The action of a torero in removing himself from the bull's terrain at the end of a series.

salón – *Toreo de salón* is an important form of training, the torero practising passing an imaginary bull.

saltar – 'To leap', e.g. the action a bull takes when it tries to escape from the arena.

saludos – The action of a torero in acknowledging the crowd's applause at the end of a faena. A disappointed torero may opt to do this from the callejón; the further into the ring the torero goes to acknowledge the applause, the more weight he is giving to the faena he has just performed.

sartenazo – A poorly-administered or placed estocada.

seco – 'Dry'. Can be said of a bull with a rapid, powerful charge, but is also used to describe a skinny bull or one with poor horns.



semental – A seed bull, used for breeding.

sencillo – A straightforward bull.

sentido – A bull's seeking the body of the torero instead of the lure.

sentirse – The action of a torero passing a bull artistically and well. Also a bull's reacting to the puya.

serio – A large, well-formed bull with significant horns.

sitio – 'Place'. *Estar en el sitio* is said of a torero who is positioned well in terms of terrain and distance from the bull to conduct passes with merit. *Perder el sitio* refers to a torero being unable to achieve decent toreo or an individual pass.

sobrero – 'Substitute' – can refer to a substitute bull or to the reserve picador positioned near the toril during the tercio de varas.

sobresaliente – The reserve torero in a mano a mano who is on hand to face the bulls should both matadors be injured. An additional sobresaliente can sometimes be on hand for an encerrona.

solera – 'Traditional nature'. Classical toreo, or a veteran torero, can be described as *con solera*.

someter – The action of a torero in dominating a bull, making it lower its head in passes.

son – A bull that *tiene bien son* is an animal that is in good condition for the lidia, charging smoothly and not too rapidly.

sorteo – Placing the bulls in lots and then drawing the lots, determining which bulls each matador will face later that day.

soso – Describes a bull that is worn-out and loathe to charge, or a torero who realizes suertes poorly.

suave – Describes a bull that doesn't hook and charges into and out of passes smoothly and straightforwardly.

subalterno – Another word for 'peón'.

suelto – When a bull leaves a suerte on its own initiative rather than continuing to focus on the lure – a bad indicator, particularly in the suerte de las varas.

suerte – An action by a torero in making the bull pass by him or killing the animal, or by a picador in attracting a bull forwards and placing the puya, or by a banderillero or rejoneador placing their implements. *Colocar* or *poner en suerte* refers to placing the bull in position for a subsequent suerte. The word is also used to wish a torero good fortune before a corrida.

T

tabaco – Literally 'tobacco'. A term given to a huge goring.



tablas – The area of the ring nearest the barrera. A torero who *toma las tablas* is one who, being chased by a bull, opts to leap over the fence into the callejón.

taco – A torero who *ha formado un taco* is one who has obtained a notable success.

talanquera – A temporary bullring. Historically, one that was put together with ‘fences’ consisting of carts and suchlike.

tanda – A series of passes.

tantear – To give a bull passes at the start of a faena that are aimed at assessing the animal’s condition and behaviours.

tapar – ‘To hide’ or ‘cover up’. A picador who *tapa la salida* is one who has turned his horse in such a way that it prevents the bull’s natural exit, thereby prolonging the piccing.

taparse – The action of a bull in preventing the matador from seeing where he needs to place the sword (e.g. by raising its head).

taquilla – A place where tickets for bullfights are sold. This may be part of a bullring or a purpose-built office or a local shop or bar.

tardear – The act of a bull hesitating before charging.

tauromaquia – Manjón states: “The word is used to describe the art of fighting bulls, as well as the concept of rules that establish the art.” It can also be referred to as *toromaquia*.

temeridad – Recklessness.

temeroso – A bull that doesn’t charge much, preferring to stand still, paw the ground, or retreat from the lure.

templar – To move the lure in such a way that it is perfectly attuned to the power and speed of a bull’s charge and possibly even sweetens and slows it. This is to *torear con temple*.

temporada – The annual bullfight season. In Spain, this traditionally runs from March–October, although events may take place outside this period.

tendida – An estocada or rejón that is placed shallowly, almost horizontally.

tendido – The main seating area in a bullring, divided up into sun (‘Sol’), shade (‘Sombra’) and sun and shade (‘Sol y Sombra’) sections.

terciado – A bull of average size, neither small nor large.

tercio – One of the three stages of a bullfight – the first being las varas, the second las banderillas and the third the faena and death of the bull. A *cambio de tercio* is the point at which one or more trumpets sound to mark the end of one of the first two tercios. *Los tercios* refers to the area of the ring between the raya nearest the barrera and los medios.

terna – The combination of novilleros or matadors appearing at a bullfight.

terrenos – Manjón’s definition is as follows: “The surface area of the bullring in which the offensive action of the bull or the defensive action of the torero is effective. We can say



there are two types of differentiation, bearing in mind the zone in which the action is taking place – inner terrains and outer terrains. Where plazas de toros are circular, the terrains are divided into tablas, tercios and medios.” *Cambiar de terrenos* is when a torero or bull alters position, e.g. when a matador moves himself and the bull to another part of the ring in order to improve the lidia or when a tired bull heads from the centre of the ring to the fence. *Comer los terrenos* is the action of a bull keen to charge to the lure. *Ganar terreno* can be said where a bull’s charges force the torero to cede ground, or when a torero controls the bull’s lidia in such a way that he’s able to cape the animal into the centre of the ring in their initial encounter or, with the muleta, to pass the animal closely, possibly citing from a close distance too. *Perder terreno* refers to a torero backing off from, or stepping back in, passes.

terrorífico – A well-built bull with impressive horns.

tienta – A testing of young animals on a ranch, either in a ring or in the open field. Usually done with female calves to determine which are most suited to breeding toros bravos, it can also be done with male calves with the aim of selecting those most likely to perform well in the bullring or as seed-bulls. The testing can take the form of seeing how the animals respond to capework or cites with branches and to light punishment from a *tentador* (the testing equivalent of a picador), or to how they react to being knocked off their feet in *acoso y derribo*.

tizona – Another word for the estoque.

tocar – To shake the cloth so that it gains the bull’s attention or makes it come forward. *Toques* can be given subtly or strongly and at the beginning or in the middle of a pass, depending on the condition of the bull.

torcerse – A matador or novillero deviating from a straight entry at the kill – an all-too-common sight.

torear – To cape a bull or (in the case of *rejoneo*) to lidia a bull in the ring from on horseback.

torero – Any professional who faces a bull in the ring. *Toreros de plata* refers to peones, their suits being traditionally decorated with silver rather than the gold that matadors are entitled to wear.

torete – A small bull.

toriles – The area where bulls are kept before they come into the ring, divided into stalls. *Toril* is often a term given to the gate through which the bulls enter the ring from that area.

toro bravo – The fighting bull, also known as *toro de lidia*. These are not wild animals, but animals that have been bred for their looks, strength and aggression. Herd animals by



nature, they will not have faced a human being on their own until they enter the bullring. In corridas, toros will be four or five years old.

torpeza – Describes a torero who performs poorly and unprofessionally.

traerse – To bring the bull on with the lure in the middle of a pass.

tragarse – The action of a bull that lifts its head after receiving the estocada and, mouth shut, fights against dying.

tranco – Literally 'stride'. A bull that responds promptly to cites and charges rapidly with its head lowered is said to have *buen tranco*.

transmitir – The action of a torero or bull of enthusing spectators by their performance.

trapío – The physical appearance of a bull as apt for the lidia. *Paquiro's Tauromaquia*, published in 1836, made reference to a bull's skin, legs, joints, hooves, horns, tail, eyes and ears when making a judgement as to the animal's trapío.

trasero – A puyazo, pair of banderillas, rejón or swordthrust positioned behind the foreribs.

traspasado – An excessively crosswise swordthrust.

trastear – To move the lure solely with the aim of repositioning the bull – an action usually associated with preparing the bull for the estocada.

trastos – The muleta and sword.

tremendismo – Manjón states: "A tendency to torear in a messy fashion, without keeping to the classic rules but showing great bravery."

tren – *Coger el tren* (to catch the train) is said when a torero achieves important triumphs that could set him on the path to figura status. *Perder el tren* is said when a torero lets opportunities for success go by.

trompicar – The action of any part of a bull colliding with a torero, sending him off-balance but not knocking him over.

tropezar – The action of any part of a bull buffeting a torero, but not to the extent that he loses his balance.

trote – 'Trot': can be used to denote a bull that moves quickly.

truco – 'Trick'. Manjón's definition: "A sensational gesture, albeit without merit, made by a diestro playing to the crowd." Some aficionados will use the term in a broader manner, e.g. to describe abusive use of the pico.

tuerto – A bull that is blind in one eye. Rather surprisingly, according to Manjón's *Diccionario* (first published in 1987), "These days, any bulls that display problems with their vision are rejected, with the exception of those that can see to one side, which can only be fought as novillos and on condition that they are announced as being defective animals discarded at tientas." Spain's 1996 Taurine Regulations ended this anomaly,



banning such animals from novilladas too, although bulls can occasionally come into the ring with vision problems caused by accidents in transport or in the corrales.

tumbo – The violent fall of a picador or his horse.

turno – *Correr turno* refers to when, after his first bull has been sent back to the corrales, a torero opts to face the second bull he has drawn next rather than a *sobrero*. The term can also refer to a change in toreros' proper order of appearance (in matadors' case, determined by the dates of their *alternativas*) in order, for instance, to accommodate one of the participant's early departure for another contract elsewhere.

U

unipase – A single pass, rather than one that forms part of a linked series.

usía – Literally 'Your Lordship'; another term for 'president'.

V

vaciar – The action of giving the bull its exit with the cloth, particularly in the *suerte de matar*.

vaciarse – When a bull leaves a pass of its own accord.

valentía – Manjón's definition: "A torero conceiving or executing the lidia's different *suertes* with gallantry and a cheerful fearlessness."

valiente – Describes a torero who is energetic, spirited and brave.

vara – The pole used by *garrochistas*, *rejoneadores* and *picadores* (where the full term is *vara de detener*), the word is also used to refer to the act of piccing. *El toro de mucha/poca vara* is one with a large or small bone structure.

varetazo – A blow from the side of a horn.

veedor – The person who, acting on behalf of an *empresa* or torero, visits ranches and chooses bulls for appearances in particular bullrings.

velas – Horns that are high and raised.

vencerse – A bull's action in inclining to one side when it lowers its head to follow the lure.

venirse – The action of a bull in charging promptly towards the lure. *Venirse abajo* refers to the behaviour of a bull that shrinks back from engagement after starting its lidia well, while *venirse arriba* refers to the behaviour of a bull that starts off poorly but then improves. *Venirse de largo* is employed to describe a bull charging from a distance.

ventajista – Manjón: "This is said of a torero who performs *alardes* and *adornos* brilliantly but in an illicit, inauthentic and occasionally inelegant way."

ver – 'To see'. *No querer ver al toro* can be said of a torero who takes precautions and plays safe when *toreando*.



verde – ‘Green’. Describes a torero in the early stages of his career who shows he still has a lot to learn.

vergüenza – ‘Shame’. One of the worst things that can be said of a bullfighter is that he is without shame – *sin vergüenza*.

volcarse – To throw oneself decisively over the bull’s head in the act of killing.

voltereta – Can refer to a bull somersaulting after its horns have dug into the sand, or to a torero thrown into the air as the result of a cogida.

voluntad – The courageous intent to satisfy spectators displayed by a torero.

vuelta – The circuit of a ring taken by a torero after a good performance. A bull that has performed very well can also be awarded a *vuelta en arrastre* by the president.

W

X

Y

yema – Another word for *la cruz* or *el hoyo de las agujas*, i.e. the ideal area, just behind the *morrillo*, in which the sword should be placed.

Z

zambombazo – A notable triumph.

zapatilla – A torero’s shoe. *Buscar las zapatillas* is said of a bull with a tendency to look to catch a toreros’ legs rather than the lure.

zapatillazo – A stamp on the ground a torero gives with his foot to incite a bull to charge.

zapatillear – The action of a torero in moving uncertainly whilst facing a bull rather than keeping his feet planted in the sand.

zarandear – To gore rapidly and repeatedly.