

Appendix II

Words that are often confused

Most of these words cause difficulties for native English speakers; indeed, some of them are more likely to be problematic for native speakers than for Spanish speakers. Words that are often misinterpreted due to the influence of Spanish are listed in the next appendix, *False friends*.

DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
ABILITY, CAPACITY	
<i>Ability</i> : power or competence to do something	<i>The brain's plasticity gives it the ability to adapt after focal damage.</i>
<i>Capacity</i> : ability to contain or amount contained	<i>The combined capacity of the third and lateral ventricles is about 20 ml in normal adults.</i>
ABSORPTION, ADSORPTION	
<i>Absorption</i> : incorporation of gas, liquid, light, heat, etc.	<i>Some drugs interfere with calcium absorption.</i>
<i>Adsorption</i> : collection of gas, liquid, dissolved substance on a surface in a condensed layer	<i>Adsorption by hemofiltration devices must be taken into account when dosing some drugs.</i>
ACCURACY, PRECISION	
<i>Accuracy</i> : degree of closeness of a measurement to the true value	<i>This test always yields the correct results: its accuracy is 100%.</i>
<i>Precision</i> : degree to which the correctness of quantity is expressed	<i>In well-reported results, the number of digits after the decimal point tells us the precision (but not the accuracy!) of the measurement.</i>
ADMINISTER, ADMINISTRATE	
<i>Administer</i> : to deliver treatment	<i>Administer the drug subcutaneously if intramuscular injection is contraindicated.</i>
<i>Administrate</i> : to manage or direct the affairs of a business, institution, etc.	<i>The university administrates the laboratory's funding.</i>
AFFECT, EFFECT	
<i>Affect</i> : Normally a verb meaning to produce a change in; sometimes a noun meaning feeling or observed emotional response	<i>Different types of antibiotics affect different types of bacteria in different ways.</i>
<i>Effect</i> : Normally a noun meaning result or consequence; sometimes a verb meaning to bring about	<i>The effects of antibiotics are both concentration-dependent and time-dependent.</i>

Continue

DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
AFFECTION, AFFECTATION	
<i>Affection</i> : fondness; rarely, disease	<i>He shows great affection for his daughter.</i>
<i>Affectation</i> : behavior, speech, or writing that is not genuine and aims to impress	<i>Her British accent is an affectation.</i>
ALTERNATELY, ALTERNATIVELY	
<i>Alternately</i> : in an alternating sequence or position	<i>The product was purified by alternately centrifuging and re-suspending in ultrapure water.</i>
<i>Alternatively</i> : as an alternative	<i>We could use RT-PCR; alternatively, we could use NASBA.</i>
ALTHOUGH, WHILE	
<i>Although</i> : in spite of the fact that	<i>Although they rewrote the manuscript, it was rejected.</i>
<i>While</i> : standard use expresses simultaneity of actions; when used to mean although, <i>while</i> can generate confusion	<i>While they rewrote the manuscript, the authors suspected it would be rejected.</i> (In this case, <i>while</i> can be interpreted as both time-related and whereas.)
AMONG, BETWEEN	
<i>Among</i> : used for the relationships between one element and two or more others	<i>Lower respiratory tract infections are the leading cause of death among all infectious diseases.</i>
<i>Between</i> : used for the relationship between two elements or between more than two elements considered individually	<i>No differences in mortality were found between the experimental subjects and controls.</i>
AMOUNT, CONCENTRATION, CONTENT, LEVEL	
<i>Amount</i> : total quantity measured	<i>The amount of cerebrospinal fluid drained from the experimental animals was lower than the amount drained from the controls.</i>
<i>Concentration</i> : relative quantity of a substance in a quantity of another substance	<i>There is a positive correlation between the plasma concentration of β-lactam antibiotics and the response of bacterial infections.</i>
<i>Content</i> : total quantity of a substance in a quantity of another substance	<i>The malignant liver lesions had higher fat content than the benign lesions.</i>
<i>Level</i> : position on the vertical axis; position on a scale; sometimes used to mean <i>amount</i> , <i>concentration</i> , or <i>content</i>	<i>Retinol binding protein-4 circulating levels were higher in patients with nonalcoholic fatty liver disease.</i>
AMOUNT, NUMBER	
<i>Amount</i> : uncountable quantity	<i>We recorded the amount of fluid drained in 24 h.</i>
<i>Number</i> : countable quantity	<i>We recorded the number of SNPs identified.</i>

DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
ANESTHESIOLOGIST, ANESTHETIST, ANAESTHETIST <i>Anesthesiologist:</i> (US English) a physician specialized in anesthesiology <i>Anesthetist:</i> (US English) a nurse, technician, or physician trained to administer anesthetics <i>Anaesthetist:</i> (UK English) a physician specialized in anesthesiology	<i>Anesthesiologists usually complete a four-year residency program after obtaining their MD or DO.</i> <i>The anesthetist asked the patient to count backward from one hundred.</i> <i>The anaesthetist was responsible for perioperative care.</i>
AS, LIKE <i>As:</i> a conjunction, used before a clause with a subject and a verb <i>Like:</i> a preposition, used before a noun	<i>As Smythe et al.¹² reported,...</i> <i>Like Smythe et al.¹², we also found...</i>
ASSURE, ENSURE, INSURE, REASSURE <i>Assure:</i> to affirm something is right to reinforce belief <i>Ensure:</i> to make sure <i>Insure:</i> to contract insurance to cover possible losses <i>Reassure:</i> to restore confidence	<i>They assured me that the reagent would arrive today.</i> <i>Please ensure that the door to the laboratory is locked when you leave.</i> <i>We need to insure this equipment against theft.</i> <i>The negative results of the RT-PCR reassured the patient.</i>
ATRIUM, ATRIAL, AURICLE, AURICULAR The noun <i>atrium</i> (plural, <i>atria</i>) and the adjective <i>atrial</i> (adjective) usually refer to the upper chambers of the heart. The noun <i>auricle</i> and the adjective <i>auricular</i> refer to the outer projecting part of the ear or to the ear-shaped appendage projecting from each atrium in the heart.	<i>Atrial flutter is caused by a reentrant rhythm in either atrium.</i> <i>The left auricle serves as a decompression chamber when left atrial pressure is high.</i>
BECAUSE, SINCE <i>Because:</i> used to give the reason for something <i>Since:</i> from a point of time in the past; also used to mean because, but this use can generate confusion	<i>She needs to inject insulin because she has diabetes mellitus.</i> <i>Since she was diagnosed with diabetes mellitus, she always carries sweets in her purse.</i> (In this case, <i>since</i> can be interpreted as both time-related and casual.)
BESIDE, BESIDES <i>Beside:</i> next to <i>Besides:</i> moreover, in addition to	<i>The operating room is beside the emergency room.</i> <i>Besides the residents, a staff physician is always present.</i>

Continue

DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
BOTH, THE TWO	
<i>Both</i> : the two together	<i>Both groups improved after treatment.</i> (In this case, <i>the two</i> would also be correct.)
<i>The two</i> : is used to differentiate between or to compare	<i>No differences in age, sex, severity of disease, or comorbidities were found between the two groups.</i> (In this case, <i>both</i> would be incorrect.)
CAN, MAY	
<i>Can</i> : to be able to; used for ability and general possibility	<i>Breast cancer can affect men as well as women.</i>
<i>May</i> : to be possible; used for possibility in a specific case	<i>In light of his symptoms and the results of the physical examination, this man may have breast cancer.</i>
COMPETENCE, COMPETITION	
<i>Competence</i> : having the necessary skill, knowledge, etc.	<i>We hired her because of her competence in statistical analysis.</i>
<i>Competition</i> : rivalry or contest for desired goal	<i>The competition between the two research teams was fierce.</i>
COMPRISE, COMPOSE, CONSIST OF, INCLUDE	
<i>Comprise</i> : include (exhaustive), contain, consist of, or constitute; considered by many to be incorrect in the passive voice	<i>The zygomycoses comprise a diverse group of rare mycotic diseases.</i>
<i>Compose</i> : to make or form by combining things, parts, or elements; often used in the passive	<i>These clusters are composed of paralogous genes, which are probably the products of local gene duplications.</i>
<i>Consist of</i> : to be composed of	<i>Teratomas consist of cells from the three main tissue layers of an embryo.</i>
<i>Include</i> : nonexhaustive	<i>Early warning signs of schizophrenia include social withdrawal; hostility or suspiciousness; oversleeping or insomnia; and inappropriate laughter or crying.</i>
CONTINUAL, CONTINUOUS	
<i>Continual</i> : occurring regularly or frequently	<i>The patient's reflexes were continually monitored (a neurologist tested him every 3 hours).</i>
<i>Continuous</i> : nonstop	<i>The pH in the perfusate was continuously monitored throughout the experiment.</i>
DISCREET, DISCRETE	
<i>Discreet</i> : prudent	<i>Health is a private matter; medical professionals need to be discreet.</i>
<i>Discrete</i> : distinct; defined only for an isolated set of points	<i>Genotypic data support the existence of six stable discrete typing units (DTU) in <i>Trypanosoma cruzi</i>.</i>

DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
DOSE, DOSAGE	
<i>Dose</i> : quantity of medicine taken at one time	<i>The maximum daily dose of acetaminophen is 4000 mg in adults.</i>
<i>Dosage</i> : administration of medicine in doses; determining the quantity, frequency, and number of doses	<i>He asked for information about the dosage of acetaminophen for children on CRRT.</i>
DOUBLE, DUPLICATE	
<i>Double</i> : twofold	<i>When asthma control deteriorates, clinicians may instruct patients to take a double dose of their inhaled corticosteroid medication for a short period.</i>
<i>Duplicate</i> : an exact copy of	<i>The region of mRNA that encodes the protein is a duplicate of the exon region of the DNA since the introns are removed from the mRNA.</i>
DURING, FOR	
<i>During</i> : preposition used before a noun; it does not tell us how long something took or lasted	<i>During my postdoctoral fellowship, I discovered an enzyme that...</i>
<i>For</i> : preposition used with a period to say how long something took or lasted	<i>I worked under Dr. Diamond for three years.</i>
EAR TUBE, EAR CANAL, AUDITORY TUBE	
<i>Ear tube</i> : tympanostomy tube	<i>An ear tube creates an airway that ventilates the middle ear and prevents the accumulation of fluids behind the eardrum.</i>
<i>Ear canal</i> : external auditory meatus	<i>Due to its relative exposure to the outside world, the ear canal is susceptible to diseases.</i>
<i>Auditory tube</i> : Eustachian tube	<i>The auditory tube links the nasopharynx to the middle ear.</i>
<i>e.g., i.e.</i>	
<i>e.g.</i> : abbreviation of the Latin term <i>exempli gratia</i> , which means "for example"	<i>Signs of overdose (e.g., slow heart beat, blue lips or fingertips, deep snoring or gurgling) require immediate action.</i>
<i>i.e.</i> : abbreviation of the Latin term <i>id est</i> , which means "in other words"	<i>Hypoglycemia (i.e., fasting glucose <4.0 mmol/l) is a medical emergency.</i>
Note: both abbreviations are mostly used within parentheses	
EXCISE, RESECT	
<i>Excise</i> : to remove (e.g., a tumor) by cutting	<i>The tumor was excised, and the patient remained free of disease until death from unrelated causes 22 years later.</i>
<i>Resect</i> : to remove part of an organ or structure	<i>We resect the tissue that contains the cancer from the lungs.</i>

Continue

DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
<p>EXPERIENCE, EXPERIMENT</p> <p><i>Experience</i>: knowledge gained from what you have observed</p> <p><i>Experiment</i>: a test, trial, or tentative procedure aimed at discovering something unknown</p>	<p><i>Our experience shows that nosocomial infection rates can be improved through an educational program.</i></p> <p><i>This experiment investigated whether immunostimulation with TLR-2 agonists under conditions of sterile inflammation affects the immune response and remote organ inflammation.</i></p>
<p>EXPOSITION, EXPOSURE, EXHIBITION</p> <p><i>Exposition</i>: expounding or explaining</p> <p><i>Exposure</i>: being exposed</p> <p><i>Exhibition</i>: displaying or showing</p>	<p><i>Her exposition of the role of reverse transcriptase in DNA sequencing was helpful.</i></p> <p><i>Exposure to ionizing radiation during pregnancy can result in miscarriage or malformation.</i></p> <p><i>The authors of the best posters in the exhibition were invited to publish their work in the society's journal.</i></p>
<p>EXTENSION, EXTENT</p> <p><i>Extension</i>: the act or state of extending</p> <p><i>Extent</i>: the degree to which something extends</p>	<p><i>The extension of disease through the bowel wall indicates a poor prognosis.</i></p> <p><i>It is crucial to determine the extent of disease.</i></p>
<p>FEWER, LESS</p> <p><i>Fewer</i>: less in number (used with countable nouns)</p> <p><i>Less</i>: less in amount (used with uncountable nouns)</p>	<p><i>Women reported fewer adverse effects than men.</i></p> <p><i>Less fluid formed in the pleural space of treated animals.</i></p>
<p>FARTHER, FURTHER</p> <p><i>Farther</i>: to a greater distance</p> <p><i>Further</i>: additional</p>	<p><i>The experienced colonoscopist was able to reach much farther than the trainee.</i></p> <p><i>The trainee made further progress in the succeeding weeks.</i></p>
<p>FROM, OF</p> <p>These two prepositions have many, sometimes overlapping meanings. Read them in a good dictionary and pay attention to how they are used</p>	<p><i>Copying of an article = copying the entire article</i></p> <p><i>Copying from an article = copying parts of the article</i></p>
<p>GENDER, SEX</p> <p><i>Gender</i>: a social construct</p> <p><i>Sex</i>: a biological concept</p>	<p><i>Masculine and feminine are gender categories.</i></p> <p><i>Male and female are sex categories.</i></p>

DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
<p>HEAR, LISTEN TO</p> <p><i>Hear</i>: perceive with the ears</p> <p><i>Listen to</i>: direct the attention of the ears to</p>	<p><i>I heard on the radio that a hospital in Barcelona had made an exciting discovery.</i></p> <p><i>I listen to the radio while I'm setting up my experiments.</i></p>
<p>HUMAN, HUMANE</p> <p><i>Human</i>: related to people</p> <p><i>Humane</i>: characterized by compassion for people and animals</p>	<p><i>The Declaration of Helsinki outlines guidelines for research on human subjects.</i></p> <p><i>The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare guarantees the humane treatment of animals used for research.</i></p>
<p>IF, WHETHER</p> <p><i>If</i>: introduces conditional (yes or no), cannot be used before infinitives or after prepositions</p> <p><i>Whether</i>: (yes or no), can be used with infinitives and prepositions</p> <p><i>Whether or not</i>: in most cases, <i>or not</i> can be omitted. However, when we want to express the idea "both if or if not" we need to use <i>whether or not</i>.</p>	<p><i>We did not know if/whether the animals would survive.</i></p> <p><i>We did not know whether the animals would die after the first dose or after the second dose (only two possibilities).</i></p> <p><i>We did not know if the animals would die after the first or second dose (three possibilities—maybe the animals would not die).</i></p> <p><i>We cannot decide whether to include the chief as an author.</i></p> <p><i>I would like to talk about whether you should apply for the fellowship.</i></p> <p><i>Call me if you can come to my talk in Salamanca. (Conditional.)</i></p> <p><i>Call me whether or not you can come to my talk in Salamanca. (Both if and if not.)</i></p>
<p>INCIDENCE, PREVALENCE</p> <p><i>Incidence</i>: the number of new cases of a disease in a population in a specified period of time</p> <p><i>Prevalence</i>: the total number of cases of a disease in a given population at a specific time</p>	<p><i>The incidence of AIDS in Spain is about 2.0 cases per 100,000 population per year.</i></p> <p><i>The estimated prevalence of AIDS among adults in Spain is 0.4%.</i></p>

Continue

DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
INCREASE, AUGMENT, INCREMENT, ENHANCE, IMPROVE	
<i>Increase</i> : to make or become greater	<i>His systolic blood pressure increased from 100 mmHg to 120 mmHg.</i>
<i>Augment</i> : to make greater, especially by addition from the outside	<i>We examined whether estrogen withdrawal augments parathyroid-induced IL-6 production.</i>
<i>Increment</i> : to increase by discrete amount	<i>The dose was incremented by 1 mg/kg to reach a final dose of 12 mg/kg on the fourth day.</i>
<i>Enhance</i> : to increase a good quality	<i>All patients reported enhanced self-esteem after the sessions.</i>
<i>Improve</i> : to make better	<i>Cerebral blood flow improved after treatment.</i>
ILLEGIBLE, UNREADABLE	
<i>Illegible</i> : impossible to read because of poor handwriting, faded print, etc.	<i>The pharmacist had to phone the hospital because the prescription was illegible.</i>
<i>Unreadable</i> : impossible to read because of poor writing	<i>Somebody has to supervise her reports: her last report was unreadable.</i>
IMMUNIZE, INOCULATE, VACCINATE	
<i>Immunize</i> : to render immune	<i>Young children are immunized to many diseases through natural contact with microbes.</i>
<i>Inoculate</i> : to introduce serum, vaccine, or antigenic substance to increase immunity; to implant microorganisms or infectious material on a culture medium	<i>We inoculated 15 male Wistar rats with anthrax.</i>
<i>Vaccinate</i> : to inoculate with a vaccine (e.g., modified virus) as a preventive or sometimes curative measure	<i>All personnel dealing with patients must be vaccinated against the flu.</i>
INTERVAL, PERIOD	
<i>Interval</i> : an intervening period of time	<i>Animals' heart rate was measured at ten-minute intervals for a period of 30 minutes after administration of verapamil.</i>
<i>Period</i> : an interval of time characterized by the occurrence of a certain condition, event, or phenomenon	
LOCATE, LOCALIZE	
<i>Locate</i> : determine the location of	<i>We located the foreign body in the ileum.</i>
<i>Localize</i> : confine	<i>We hypothesized we could decrease localized bleeding by using blended current at the end of the sphincterotomy.</i>
LOOK, SEE	
<i>Look at</i> : direct the attention of the eyes to	<i>We looked at the specimen under the microscope, but we couldn't see any abnormalities.</i>
<i>See</i> : perceive with the eyes	

DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
MADE FROM, MADE OF, MADE OUT OF	
<i>Made from</i> : used when the material undergoes an essential change so that it is no longer recognizable	<i>Wine is made from grapes.</i>
<i>Made of</i> : used when the material is recognizable	<i>This heart valve is made of titanium.</i>
<i>Made out of</i> : implies the transformation of an object	<i>Dr. McGyver made a tracheostomy tube out of a ballpoint pen.</i>
MINIMAL, MINIMUM MAXIMAL, MAXIMUM	
<i>Minimal, maximal</i> : adjectives, although minimum and maximum are more common	<i>Decide on the minimal (or minimum) number of samples you can use and the maximal (or maximum) number you are prepared to invest in.</i>
<i>Minimum and maximum</i> : nouns and adjectives	<i>Our goal is to keep complications to a minimum.</i>
MOLALITY, MOLARITY	
<i>Molality</i> : number of moles of solute per kilogram of solvent	Solutions labeled with molal concentration are denoted with a lower case m: a 1.0 m solution contains 1 mole of solute per kilogram of solvent.
<i>Molarity</i> : number of moles of solute per liter of solution	Solutions labeled with the molar concentration are denoted with a capital M: a 1.0 M solution contains 1 mole of solute per liter of solution.
MUCOUS, MUCUS, MUCOSA	
<i>Mucous</i> : adjective	<i>The mucous membranes secrete mucus.</i>
<i>Mucus</i> : noun	<i>Mucus is a viscous mixture of mucins, water, electrolytes, epithelial cells, and leukocytes.</i>
<i>Mucosa</i> : noun, pl <i>mucosae</i> or <i>mucosas</i> = mucous membrane	<i>Grafts from the oral mucosa can be used to reconstruct the urethra.</i>
MULTIVARIATE, MULTIVARIABLE	
<i>Multivariate</i> : refers to a statistical analysis with multiple outcomes	<i>Multivariate models are appropriate for data from longitudinal studies with an outcome measured for the same individual at multiple time points (repeated measures) or for nested/clustered data with multiple individuals in each cluster.</i>
<i>Multivariable</i> : refers to a statistical analysis with multiple predictors	<i>A multivariable linear regression model has a continuous outcome and multiple continuous or categorical predictors.</i>
NOTICE, REALIZE	
<i>Notice</i> : to pay attention to, to take notice of	<i>They didn't notice the flaw in their experimental design.</i>
<i>Realize</i> : to be aware of	<i>When they realized their design was flawed, they understood why their results made no sense.</i>

Continue

DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
OPTIMAL, OPTIMUM	
<i>Optimal</i> : adjective	<i>We sought to determine the optimal (or optimum) biologic dose of sirolimus prior to prostate surgery.</i>
<i>Optimum</i> : noun and adjective	<i>They are not functioning at their optimum.</i>
ORTHOTOPIC, ORTHOTROPIC	
<i>Orthotopic</i> : in the correct or normal position	<i>In orthotopic heart transplantation, the patient's heart is always removed.</i>
<i>Orthotropic</i> : showing growth in direct line with the stimulus	<i>Timely orthotropic procedures can often eliminate the need for orthodontic procedures.</i>
OSCILLATE, RANGE, VARY	
<i>Oscillate</i> : to swing back and forth at a regular speed	<i>Basal insulin level oscillates with a regular period of three to six minutes.</i>
<i>Range</i> : to vary within certain limits	<i>The normal range for red blood cells in women ranges from 4.2 to 5.4 million cells per microliter of blood.</i>
<i>Vary</i> : to change, to differ	<i>Concentrations of enzymes involved in both phase I reactions vary significantly between individuals with normal hepatic function.</i>
PARAMETER, VARIABLE	
<i>Parameter</i> : a potential variable to which a particular value can be assigned to determine the value of other variables	<i>Parameters do not relate to actual measurements or attributes but to quantities defining a theoretical model.</i>
<i>Variable</i> : values that vary from individual to individual	<i>The dependent variable is often called the response variable.</i>
PATENT, PERMEABLE	
<i>Patent</i> : unobstructed	<i>After the angioplasty procedure, the stenosed artery was patent.</i>
<i>Permeable</i> : with penetrable pores or interstices, etc.	<i>The walls of capillaries are permeable to ions, water, nutrients, and even whole cells.</i>
PERCENT, PERCENTAGE, PERCENTILE	
<i>Percent</i> : a fraction expressed as a number of hundredths	<i>Eighty-five percent of the patients were men.</i>
<i>Percentage</i> : a rate or proportion	<i>A large percentage of patients developed complications.</i>
<i>Percentile</i> : Any of the 100 equal parts into which the range of the values of a set of data can be divided to show their distribution	<i>His head circumference was in the 95th percentile for his age.</i>

DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
PERIODIC, PERIODICAL	
<i>Periodic</i> : recurring at intervals of time	<i>We investigated whether periodic intra-articular Ctp injections could delay disease progression in patients with osteoarthritis.</i>
<i>Periodical</i> : a journal issued at regularly recurring intervals	<i>He spoke at the International Conference on Biomedical Periodicals.</i>
PHOSPHORUS, PHOSPHOROUS	
<i>Phosphorus</i> : noun	<i>Calcitonin helps control the levels of calcium and phosphorus in the blood.</i>
<i>Phosphorous</i> : adjective	<i>Phosphorous acid is an intermediate in the preparation of other phosphorus compounds.</i>
PREDOMINATE, PREDOMINANT, PREDOMINANTLY, PREDOMINATELY	
<i>Predominate</i> : verb	<i>The 1b genotype, which predominates in Japan, was the most widely distributed genotype and accounted for 58% of all isolates sequenced.</i>
<i>Predominant</i> : adjective	<i>The predominant vacA genotype was s1c/m1b (22/30, 73.3%).</i>
<i>Predominantly or predominately</i> : adverb	<i>Lymphomas predominantly affect men in their second and third decades of life.</i>
PRINCIPLE, PRINCIPAL	
<i>Principle</i> : a fundamental law from which others are derived	<i>The principle that the simplest explanation for a phenomenon is the best one is called Occam's razor.</i>
<i>Principal</i> : main	<i>The principal contraindication for thorazine is depression.</i>
PROSTATE, PROSTRATE, PRONE, SUPINE, RECUMBENT	
<i>Prostate</i> : gland surrounding neck of the bladder in male mammals	<i>Enlargement of the prostate may interfere with urination.</i>
<i>Prostrate</i> : lying face down (strongly suggests submission)	<i>The terrorist made everybody lie prostrate on the floor.</i>
<i>Prone</i> : lying face down	<i>Stereotactic breast biopsy is usually done with the patient in the prone position.</i>
<i>Supine</i> : lying face up	<i>To insert a central line in the internal jugular vein, place the patient in the supine position.</i>
<i>Recumbent</i> : reclining, lying	<i>Patients who spend weeks or months in a recumbent position are likely to develop urinary tract problems.</i>

Continue

DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
REPRESENT, BE	
<i>Represent</i> : to designate, stand for, denote	<i>In this box-and-whisker plot, the ends of the whiskers represent the minimum and maximum of all the data.</i>
<i>Be</i> : to exist, to equal	<i>Methicillin is a narrow-spectrum beta-lactam antibiotic of the penicillin class.</i>
REABSORPTION, RESORPTION	
<i>Reabsorption</i> : reclaiming what is taken	<i>In the intestine, PTH increases reabsorption of calcium and inhibits reabsorption of phosphate.</i>
<i>Resorption</i> : remodeling	<i>PTH increases bone resorption of both calcium and phosphate.</i>
REVIEW, REVISE	
<i>Review</i> : to go over critically	<i>We have revised our manuscript; we are grateful for this opportunity to have the referees review it again.</i>
<i>Revise</i> : to make changes to	
SAFE (SAFETY), SECURE (SECURITY), SURE	
<i>Safe</i> : not dangerous	<i>The drug is safe.</i>
<i>Secure</i> : preventing unwanted intrusion	<i>The database is secure.</i>
<i>Sure</i> : certain	<i>We are sure that the results are valid.</i>
TEMPORAL, TEMPORARY, TRANSIENT, TRANSITORY	
<i>Temporal</i> : relating to or near the temples of the skull	<i>Temporal arteritis is inflammation and damage to blood vessels that supply the head.</i>
<i>Temporary</i> : suggests an arrangement established with the idea of being changed soon	<i>After the disaster, the school was set up as a temporary hospital.</i>
<i>Transient</i> : suggests something in the process of passing by	<i>A transient ischemic attack usually lasts about 24 hours.</i>
<i>Transitory</i> : suggests an innate characteristic by which a thing, by its very nature, lasts only a short time	<i>Transitory oxygen-glucose deprivation induced both apoptosis and necrosis in cerebellar granule cells.</i>
THAT, WHICH	
<i>That</i> : relative pronoun used only in defining clauses; cannot be used after a preposition	<i>The fellowship that was advertised in Molecular Genetics has been filled.</i>
<i>Which</i> : relative pronoun used in both defining and non-defining clauses	<i>The experiment, which has never been repeated, yielded some interesting results.</i>

DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
VARIABILITY, VARIATION, VARIANCE	
<i>Variability</i> : condition of being variable	<i>Homologous recombination is a significant source of variability.</i>
<i>Variation</i> : the act, process, or result of varying	<i>We used custom-designed virulence arrays to try to understand the high genotypic variation in streptococci.</i>
<i>Variance</i> : a statistical term referring to the spread of data from the mean	<i>We compared normalization methods for high density oligonucleotide array data based on variance and bias.</i>
Note: <i>Variability</i> and <i>variation</i> are often used interchangeably.	
VARIOUS, VARYING	
<i>Various</i> : different	<i>Various studies have found a strong association between the two variables.</i>
<i>Varying</i> : changing	<i>The widely varying results reflect methodological differences.</i>
VISCID, VISCOUS, VISCUS	
<i>Viscid</i> : adhering, glutinous	<i>The slime layer forms when the amorphous viscid secretion from the bacteria diffuses into the surrounding media.</i>
<i>Viscous</i> : sticky, with high viscosity	<i>Viscous body fluid samples may result in sampling errors and samples with insufficient volume.</i>
<i>Viscus</i> : an internal organ enclosed within a cavity	<i>The liver is the largest abdominal viscus.</i>
WHEREAS, WHILE	
<i>Whereas</i> : although	<i>Whereas Morton's neuroma is much more common in women, neurofibromas are equally distributed between the sexes.</i>
<i>While</i> : usually implies simultaneity, but can also be used to mean although (this figurative can lead to confusion in some cases)	<i>The orderly restrained the patient while the resident injected the sedative.</i> <i>Blood pressure was recorded by the nurse while heart rate was automatically recorded. (In this case, whereas would be preferable unless the actions took place simultaneously.)</i>