MASTER'S THESIS

# INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH AS L2/FL.

## ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS



Alba Pardo Martínez

FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS

MASTER'S DEGREE IN SPANISH AND ENGLISH AS
SECOND LANGUAGES / FOREIGN LANGUAGES

June 2023

Supervisor: Dra. María Martínez Lirola

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**Abstract**

Inclusive language and more specifically gender-inclusive language is a topic of the present as it is gaining more recognition through social media, especially among young generations. This topic has been researched in the teaching field, however, a few studies have focused on foreign languages. In order to observe whether there is a positive mindset towards its use as well as teachers' predisposition towards receiving training on it, in this dissertation, attitudes and perceptions of students and teachers of English and Spanish as foreign languages have been explored. The study follows a mixed-method method that was conducted at the Università degli Studi Suor Orsola Benincasa in Naples with 16 teachers and 84 students of English and Spanish as foreign languages. The results indicate that all participants show awareness of the topic, optimistic attitudes towards its use as well as teachers' propensity to receive training on inclusive language.

**Keywords**: gender-inclusive language, inclusive language, English as Foreign Language (EFL), Spanish as Foreign language (SFL), language teaching, attitudes towards language, training.

**Resumen**

El lenguaje inclusivo y, más concretamente, el lenguaje inclusivo de género neutro es un tema de actualidad, ya que está adquiriendo un mayor reconocimiento a través de las redes sociales, especialmente entre las nuevas generaciones. Este tema se ha investigado en el ámbito de la enseñanza, sin embargo, pocos estudios se han centrado en las lenguas extranjeras. Con el fin de observar si existe una actitud positiva hacia su uso así como la predisposición del profesorado a recibir formación sobre el mismo, en este Trabajo de Fin de Máster se han explorado las actitudes y percepciones del alumnado y profesorado de inglés y español como lenguas extranjeras. El estudio sigue un método mixto que se llevó a cabo en la Università degli Studi Suor Orsola Benincasa de Nápoles con 16 profesores/as y 84 estudiantes de inglés y español como lenguas extranjeras. Los resultados indican que los/las participantes muestran conocimiento del tema, actitudes optimistas hacia su uso, así como propensión del profesorado a recibir formación sobre lenguaje inclusivo.

**Palabras clave**: lenguaje inclusivo de género neutro, lenguaje inclusivo, inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL), Español Lengua Extranjera (ELE), enseñanza de idiomas, actitudes hacia el idioma, formación.

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Subject matter

Inclusive language has always been linked to respect, values, and diversity (American Psychological Association, 2021). Being considerate of others and promoting equality in our daily lives are principles that are taught at home and school since the early years. Regardless, sometimes the language we use to show respect is less accurate than we may believe it to be. This is where inclusive language is born (Bengoechea Bartolomé, 2009; Blaubergs, 1980; García Meseguer, 1976; Papadopoulos, 2022b; Schulzke, 2014; Tosi, 2019; Weinberg, 2009).

Inclusive language is gaining importance and has been the subject of much research, especially in the last few years (Parra & Serafini, 2021). The majority of studies have focused on the first language (L1) and their speakers' perceptions (Cremades & Fernández-Portero, 2022; Patev *et al*., 2019; Pichardo Nieves & Sánchez Hernández, 2022; Rodríguez Arcos & González Díaz, 2021; Speyer & Schleef, 2019). However, those studies have been limited in regard to foreign languages, hence, the need to further explore this growing field (Lohe, 2022). That being taken into account, teaching or not teaching inclusive language in the L2 classroom is one of those questions that seem to be left to teachers' personal decisions. Furthermore, many university teaching programs do not offer or focus in their curricula on specific training for future teachers of English Foreign Language (EFL) and/or Spanish Foreign Language (SFL). Consequently, they know little about its use, how to teach it, at which level, as well as a lack of rigorous criteria to reflect and decide on adequate teaching materials.

Teachers who are proficient in the language make decisions about its use, but the situation is different when the potential users are not native speakers. Additionally, without linking it to a specific context, does their perception of inclusive language depend on their mother tongue? Their ideology? Or rather their personality? There are a variety of determining factors in their understanding of inclusive language with the only unchanging element being the teachers themselves.

The aim of this Master's Thesis is to analyse students' and teachers' awareness of inclusive language, examine their attitudes towards its use, in their foreign languages, as well as to explore teachers' approach towards its training in order to bring it into the classroom (see Section 2). This will be accomplished through the analysis of perceptions of both

students and teachers with a focus on English and Spanish as there are currently no bilingual studies of this kind either. This could be due to the different structures and origins of the languages, which is challenging, but also make them more engaging to explore.

## 1.2. Rationale

Language is a powerful vehicle for educating and shaping the world as we see it. As teachers, we are undoubtedly fully responsible for what we share in our classes and how we do it. Recently, inclusive language has been the subject of intense scrutiny in our daily lives, especially in social media. The situation among English speakers seems to be a novelty but quite accepted (Schulzke, 2014; Speyer & Schleef, 2019). However, regarding Spanish, there seems to be a lot of disagreement and controversy (Castillo Sánchez & Mayo, 2019; Parra & Serafini, 2021; Pichardo Nieves & Sánchez Hernández, 2022).

In terms of colloquial speaking, it seems to be extended especially among the LGBTQIA+ community (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersexual and Asexual) and young people (see Section 3.2). Regardless, in academic or formal language, there is no clarity. As a teacher with experience in teaching Spanish for several years, the question of how to incorporate inclusive language into my teaching practices was always at the forefront of my mind. The fact that as Primary teachers, we have a very important role in our students' education and perceptions of reality is an important responsibility. Bearing also in mind that some of our (future) learners may feel not included regarding our language. Therefore, in order to feel confident and be ready for today's reality, such influence needs to have a strong basis to bring it confidently to the class.

Increasingly, the topic of inclusive language has gained importance and has been often discussed during our Master's lectures but in a symbolic way, without stating any concrete rules or being the main focus (Guerrero Salazar, 2020; Lohe, 2022; Nitti, 2021; Tosi, 2019). Among us students we engaged in debates, asking each others' opinions and looking for alternatives to masculine generic or other examples that do not seem entirely inclusive. That is to say that any decision that we as future teachers want to introduce and/or apply in our lessons is left to our own criteria. Likewise, many authors agree on the importance of self-reflection as well as discussion on the topic in order to gain awareness, change perspectives, explore prejudices and deconstruct gender stereotypes (Castillo Sánchez & Mayo, 2019; Cremades & Fernández-Portero, 2022; Erdely Ruiz & García Chávez, 2023;

Lohe, 2022; Tosi, 2019). Furthermore, Kaufmann and Bohner (2014) "strongly recommend the conscious and consistent use of gender-aware language in every possible context" (p. 14).

The question of whether or not *teachers need training in inclusive language for foreign languages* shed light on this Master's Thesis. If we also contemplate the fact that thanks to the present Master's students are offered a double profile as language teachers of both English and Spanish, the situation gets more complicated. They are two completely different languages: their structures differ, the strategies to be used and consequently, the need to be more proficient in inclusive language. That also leads to more questions regarding attitudes: *Are teachers and students aware of inclusive language? If so, do they consider one language more feasible than the other?* that will be addressed hereunder.

### 1.3.    Area of research

The main area of research of this dissertation is Linguistics, more specifically, the field of English and Spanish as foreign/second languages. The central topic is inclusive language or gender-inclusive language. Therefore, the whole study has been conducted from the point of view of university students of both languages and their corresponding teachers, to explore their awareness, beliefs, willingness and disposition towards its training.

### 2.    Hypothesis, research questions and objectives

Before developing the theoretical framework of this Master Thesis, this section will be dedicated to establishing the main objectives and hypothesis that will designate a starting point in the current research. There is a central objective that will be addressed and in order to conduct this dissertation three specific ones have been formulated on the basis of some research questions.

The main hypothesis that led to the present research is that students and teachers have positive attitudes towards inclusive language. However, before proposing that hypothesis, it is important to examine the background of the context and its participants. In order to establish a coherent start, the following research questions have been formulated:

- *How aware are students and teachers of inclusive language?*
- *What are the beliefs of students and teachers towards inclusive language in English and Spanish?*
- *How likely are teachers to have training on inclusive language?*

Consequently, once the basis is clear and the characteristics of the group are confirmed. The main objective of the study is established: to explore the attitudes and perceptions of inclusive language in students and teachers of English and Spanish as a foreign language. Having set the main objective, on the basis of the research questions, three specific objectives are established:

- to analyse students' and teachers' awareness of inclusive language,
- to examine students' and teachers' beliefs on inclusive language and more specifically in English and Spanish and
- to explore teachers' willingness towards training on inclusive language in the classroom

All in all, according to the aforementioned approach, the present study will shed light on whether or not the previous hypotheses on the field of inclusive language in foreign languages are confirmed, as well as explore whether the issue is gaining importance in university education. To this end, this research will be conducted among university students of languages and their corresponding teachers.

## 3. Theoretical framework

### 3.1. What is inclusive language?

The concept of inclusive language *(lenguaje inclusivo/incluyente[1])* has been recently used around in social media, the press or at university (Bengoechea Bartolomé, 2009; Guerrero Salazar, 2020; Nitti, 2021). However, it was unclear or misused in many cases due to the evolution of the term and the new nuances acquired throughout the years (Tosi, 2019).

In order to clarify the different meanings of the umbrella term "inclusive language" and establish a starting point, Barcena *et al*. (2020) define it as a language that:

is free from words, phrases or tones that reflect discriminatory views of particular types of people or groups, [...] expressions that reflect stereotypes, prejudices, or are alienating on the basis of sensitive stigmatized human features, such as physical and psychological conditions, ethnia, or sexual orientation, to name but a few (p. 39).

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[1]*Lenguaje inclusivo* in Spain, *l. incluyente* in Latinamerican Spanish-speaking countries.

Regarding the benefits that inclusive language presents to the speakers, The American Psychological Association (APA) defends that it helps to promote equity, diversity and inclusion. Hence, they have designed guidelines that "aim to raise awareness, guide learning, and support the use of culturally sensitive terms and phrases that center the voices and perspectives of those who are often marginalized or stereotyped" (2021, p. 1). Their guide *Equity, Diversity and Inclusion* focuses on language regarding Age, Disability Status, Race, Ethnicity, and Culture; Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity, and Socioeconomic Status.

Once the concept has been broadly defined, it is important to highlight that this term is frequently misused or associated with non-sexist language or gender-inclusive. That is because women are becoming more visible in our society and consequently, sexism in our language and daily lives has drawn more attention than ever and become more noticeable (Alonso Torío, 2016).

### 3.2.  Inclusive, gender-neutral, gender-inclusive, non-gendered, non-sexist? What term should we use?

The concept of inclusive language is subject to change as society evolves, consequently, the idea of language is evolving simultaneously. For example, due to the feminist movements and a bigger presence of women in society, starting in the 1970s, Anglo-Saxon countries developed the first guidelines to promote non-sexist language encouraged by anti-sexist language policies (APA, 1975; Bengoechea Bartolomé, 2009; Cremades & Fernández-Portero, 2022; McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1974; Papadopoulos, 2022a; Weinberg, 2009). However, it was not until the end of the 1980s that other countries (including Spain) started to adopt and promote those kinds of guides. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was the main vindicator of a language in which women were explicitly acknowledged (Bengoechea Bartolomé, 2009; Guerrero Salazar, 2020).

According to the inequalities and discrepancies in language exposed previously, non-sexist language was born as a strategy to bring more visibility to women in society. Concerning the English field, as mentioned before, around the 1970s, different institutions started promoting guidelines for inclusive language. According to Blaubergs (1980) two of the first guidelines arose in the United States. Those were *Guidelines for Equal Treatment of the Sexes* by McGraw-Hill in 1974 and *Guidelines for nonsexist use of language* by APA in 1975 (APA, 1975; McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1974).

In the case of Spain, the main institution promoting guidelines to foster the use of non-sexist language was El Instituto de la Mujer (Women's Institute), created in 1983 (Guerrero Salazar, 2020). The main aim was to promote equality and raise awareness about the need to eliminate sexist uses of language, especially from the Spanish Administration. Consequently, different terms have been used in Spanish to refer to this phenomenon: *"lenguaje no sexista, lenguaje igualitario, lenguaje paritario, lenguaje neutral, lenguaje de género, lenguaje inclusivo, lenguaje no discriminatorio"*, etc. (Guerrero Salazar, 2020, p. 203).

Regarding the Spanish learning and teaching sphere, the most representative institution is Instituto Cervantes (Cervantes Institute). For the first time in 2011, they created a guide called *Guía de comunicación no sexista* in which they expressed that the non-sexist language's objective is to promote equal linguistic treatment between men and women as to avoid and eradicate sexism in the language.

More recently,, especially in the last ten years, thanks to the evolution of the feminist movement and the notable visibility of the LGBTQIA+ community (see Section 3.4.3) and the queer movement, a new conception of inclusive language arosen (Erdely Ruiz & García Chávez, 2023). This new vision helps to promote lexical or grammatical alternatives that consider a broader representation of identities outside the gender binarism that are becoming more visible in our society, according to the social reality of *Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming* individuals (TGNC) (Gutiérrez Conde, 2022; Patev et al., 2019; Rodríguez Arcos & González Díaz, 2021; Sánchez Ibáñez et al., 2019). To be more specific, that is often referred to as inclusive language regarding gender, gender-inclusive language, gender-neutral language, gender-fair language, non-gendered language or *lenguaje no binario, lenguaje inclusivo de género, lenguaje de género neutro* in Spanish.

In a few words, inclusive language aims to include all social groups and collectives that have historically been discriminated against or excluded. The objective of non-sexist language is to raise the visibility of women in society, paying attention to the dichotomy of men-women. Last but not least, gender-inclusive language strives to promote gender diversity and avoid the traditional binary conception of society. All of them are compatible and coexist to a greater or lesser extent in today's society. However, due to the newness of the last concept, there is more controversy involving it and it is less accepted than the rest (Castillo

Sánchez & Mayo, 2019; Parra & Serafini, 2021; Pichardo Nieves & Sánchez Hernández, 2022).

Due to the fact that gender-inclusive language is becoming more present in today's society and because of the great potential that it might hold, especially among the youth, in this dissertation, we will focus on this concept. Consequently, the terms "inclusive language", "gender-inclusive" and "gender-neutral" will be used indistinctly throughout the Master Thesis to refer to the language that promotes gender-neutrality and the inclusion of all genders.

### 3.3.    Grammatical gender and social gender

In addition to the influence in society, gender also has a significant impact on grammar. That is why it is important to differentiate between grammatical and social gender as English and Spanish are two languages mainly determined by their linguistic structures and their use of grammatical gender.

On the one hand, Oxford English Dictionary (n.d.) defines grammatical gender as:

> In some (esp. Indo-European) languages, as Latin, French, German, English, etc.: each of the classes (typically masculine, feminine, neuter, common) of nouns and pronouns distinguished by the different inflections which they have and which they require in words syntactically associated with them; similarly applied to adjectives (and in some languages) verbs, to denote the appropriate form for accompanying a noun of such a class.

On the other hand, Real Academia Española (RAE) *[Royal Academy of Spanish]* defines it as "*categoría gramatical inherente en sustantivos y pronombres, codificada a través de la concordancia en otras clases de palabras y que en pronombres y sustantivos animados puede expresar sexo*" (n.d.). In addition, drawing attention to the definition of social gender, the Merriam-Webster dictionary defines it as "the behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex" (n.d.-a).

Once the difference between grammatical and social gender is clear, it is important to bear in mind the structure of the languages, in order to understand their nature and grammar. They are classified according to . (2007) into three different categories. Firstly, Genderless Languages (GL) such as Turkish or Iranian that "have neither grammatical gender in the noun

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system nor sex-differentiated personal pronouns", consequently, all nouns and pronouns can be used for any gender (p. 166). Secondly, Natural Gender Languages (NGL) such as English (as well as Scandinavian languages) which do not have grammatical marking of gender in nouns and they mostly refer to both genders (e.g., "student", "doctor"), whereas personal pronouns reflect the gender of human beings. Last but not least, Grammatical Gendered Languages (GGL), that is the case of Spanish, in which gender is a grammatical category as every noun is either feminine or masculine, and nearly all personal nouns, adjectives, and pronouns carry gender markers. Therefore, the reference to gender is very frequent. Despite being derived from Latin, which also had the neuter gender, this has been lost over time (Kaufmann & Bohner, 2014; Papadopoulos, 2022b; Parra & Serafini, 2021).

Hence, grammatical gender, which is often confused or directly linked with social gender in languages like Spanish, is not necessarily associated with social gender or biological sex (Alonso Torío, 2016). The main reason why that might happen according to García Meseguer (2001) is because grammatical genders are called feminine and masculine rather than "gender F" and "gender M" (or any other alternative to the social gender/sex). Furthermore, the fact that the masculine is considered the "unmarked" gender in Spanish, especially related to people, leads to situations which are considered sexist or discriminatory (Kaufmann & Bohner, 2014; Tosi, 2019).

Djavadghazaryans (2020) also defends that "grammatical gender has great influences on perceptions of social gender and affects our mental impression on our worldview through stereotypical assumptions of gender. Grammatical and social gender can therefore not be viewed as two separate, disconnected entities" (p. 274). Thus, teachers need to recognise and bear in mind the influence of grammatical gender on social gender and how this can impact gender-nonconforming students.

By and large, grammatical and social gender are two different concepts that are or might be, interrelated and the first has the capability to influence the latter. If *sex*, understood as *biological sex* is introduced into the equation, it is only referred to biological forms and that should not lead us to misunderstandings when considering students' social gender. Thus, according to Djavadghazaryans (2020), it is very important to ask students how they would like to be addressed to support their identities (see Section 3.5).

### 3.4. Characteristics of gender-inclusive language (GIL)

Before delving deeper into the characteristics of gender-inclusive language, it is relevant to emphasise that as described before, English and Spanish languages have very different natures and therefore, they are languages that are structured in two separate ways ., 2007). However, they also share some similarities regarding grammatical and social gender.

The main common characteristic of both languages is the objective to avoid the use of generic masculine forms such as *mankind* in English or *el hombre* (as a synonym of human or humanity) in Spanish by providing alternatives that include everyone inside and outside the binarism. For example, they could be substituted by *humanity* or *el ser humano*, respectively (APA, 2020; Instituto Cervantes, 2021).

Another important point is to avoid stereotypes of any kind and perpetuate traditional roles through language. The main case arises in the names of job positions. Many jobs are still associated with a specific gender, that is the case of care and cleaning work usually held by women whereas men still are represented in more physical or intellectual jobs such as truck drivers, directors or researchers (Morales-Vidal & Cassany, 2020; Speyer & Schleef, 2019). One of the most common examples is the assumption of *doctor* and *nurse*, in which the former is usually considered a man and the latter a woman. Therefore, to prevent unnecessary bias and discrimination, UN Women (2017) suggests using gender-neutral forms and avoiding unnecessary references to gender by adding female or male to the occupation (e.g. *male nurse*). A good example that applies to both languages is *flight attendant* (EN) and *asistente de vuelo* (ES) as alternatives to the traditional gendered forms *stewardess* or *azafata* (Trask, 1999). However, Spanish is not as plausible as the language does not have as many gender-neutral forms as English but there are alternative strategies to be more inclusive (see Section 3.4.2).

Hereunder, in order to facilitate and more easily identify the strategies on how to make a more inclusive use of the language, some of the main characteristics are detailed. They will be developed for both English and Spanish as despite their different nature they share some commonly recommended procedures regarding the neutralization of gender. One representative example is the gender-neutral pronoun *they* and *elle(s)*.

### 3.4.1.  The gender-neutral pronoun *they / elle*

Probably, the most representative characteristic of gender-inclusive language is the use of gender-neutral pronouns like *they/their* in English or *elle(s)* in Spanish. The first one gained a new meaning in 2019 being the word of the year by the Merriam-Webster dictionary (n.d.-c), whereas the Spanish analogue, due to new incorporation is stirring controversy.

Historically, singular *they* was widely used between the 14th and 17th centuries. However, this situation changed in the 18th century when it was viewed as ungrammatical and poor style by prescriptive grammarians (Speyer & Schleef, 2019). Thereafter, in the 20th and 21st centuries, its use became more frequent in order to avoid the masculine *he* as a norm and include everyone outside and inside binarism.

In the case of Spanish, the inclusion of the term *elle(s)* is more recent as it does not originally belong to the language, therefore it could be considered a "neologism". The first proposal of the gender-neutral pronoun is from García Meseguer (1976) but it did not become present until the last years when TGNC individuals promoted them in order to defend the importance of their identities. In contrast to English, the use of *elle(s)* is still non-entirely accepted and is surrounded by controversy.

That being said, the Royal Academy of Spanish (RAE) is the main institution that compiles the uses of the language. On their website, there is a section called *Observatorio de palabras* destined for those uses of Spanish that are present and generate doubts but are still not recognized nor necessarily implying to be included in the future. The pronoun *elle* was included for the first time in 2020 (Clarín.com, 2020) as "*el pronombre elle es un recurso creado y promovido en determinados ámbitos para aludir a quienes puedan sentirse identificados con ninguno los dos géneros tradicionalmente existentes. Su uso no está generalizado ni asentado*". However, less than five days later it got deleted due to the amount of confusion generated, leaving the door open to future valuations according to a broader diffusion of its function. Nonetheless, Instituto Cervantes (2021) suggests the use of the neutral suffix *-e* as "another formal alternative" for the designation of non-binary persons or as a new generic that does not imply gender (instead of masculine or feminine morphemes). Its use in oral speech does not pose a problem for speakers and in spite of its unextended use, they affirm that there are some important advances in countries like Argentina and Chile where some universities accept academic essays that use the *-e morpheme*.

In the case of English, the use of *they/them* does not suppose a big linguistic effort as it is a Natural Gender Language (NGL) and it only implies the substitution of a gendered pronoun for a neutral form (Kaufmann & Bohner, 2014). Regardless, in Spanish, due to its nature, the pronouns *elle(s)* imply a change in grammatical gender and consequently, the effort for the speakers is bigger as there is a need for concordance with the pronoun in gender and number (see Section 3.4.3).

### 3.4.2. Strategies to include everyone in our speech

Most guides agree on certain practices to use inclusive language to promote the visibility of every gender and avoid the masculine generic (APA, 2021; Instituto Cervantes, 2021; Marimón-Llorca & Santamaría-Pérez, 2011; ONU Mujeres, 2017; UN Women, 2017). Hereafter the main strategies will be detailed, some of them have common characteristics in both English and Spanish, whereas others are different due to the nature of the language.

Before delving deeper into the strategies, is important to emphasise that the United Nations (UN) has created the 2030 Agenda which pursues the completion of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a universal call  to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity (United Nations, n.d.-b). The 5th goal is Gender Equality and its main aim is consequently, to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. For that reason, among other resources, the UN has designed guidelines for gender-inclusive language in more than five languages, including English and Spanish (Parra & Serafini, 2021). Hence, due to their similar structure and resources suggested, they will be used as the main model to analyse the linguistic strategies offered (ONU Mujeres, 2017; UN Women, 2017).

Following the guidelines of UN Women for English and Spanish, the former has three main principles: "A. Use gender-neutral expressions, B. Use inclusive language and C. Use both feminine and masculine forms (as separate words and through the use of slashes)" (UN Women, n.d., p. 1). In the latter, the guide is divided into four principles: "A. Gender-neutral expressions, B. Changing the structure of a sentence, C. Feminine and masculine pairs, D. Typography for adding gender: the use of slashes" (ONU Mujeres, n.d., p. 1). Hereunder, the most representative strategies for both languages are detailed:

- **Gender stereotype-free expressions**: referring to people without assuming stereotypical roles based on gender. Expressions such as *the cleaning lady (la señora*

*de la limpieza)* should be avoided and *the cleaner or cleaning staff (el personal de limpieza)* should be used instead. Another example would be *The Conference participants and their **wives** are invited* could be replaced by *The Conference participants and their **spouses/partners/guests** are invited.* A similar case with the Spanish form: *Al vino de honor están invitados **los profesores**, que pondrán venir acompañados de sus **mujeres*** that should be substitued by *Al vino de honor está invitado **el profesorado** que podrá acudir con **su pareja*** (Marimón-Llorca & Santamaría-Pérez, 2011, p. 53).

- **Gender-neutral, collective or epicene** nouns whenever gender is not necessarily applicable in the context. There are different categories:
    - **Gender-neutral or non-gender-marked nouns:** present the same form for all genders, in Spanish only the article marks the difference. For example: *parent* in English would refer to both *father* and *mother* whereas in Spanish *el/la estudiante* in the sentence *Cada estudiante necesita un bolígrafo,* the omission of the article avoids the unnecessary designation of gender whereas *cada alumno/a,* inherently implies gender.

    - **Collective nouns**: refer to a group of people without implying gender. It is more evident in Spanish, for example: *el profesorado de la universidad* instead of *los profesores de la universidad* to refer to the whole teaching staff. In the case of English, most of the words are gender-neutral, however, expressions such as *guys* to refer to *all* (genders) should be avoided. Therefore, in a sentence such as *Guys, is everything all right?* it could be changed by *Everyone/All of you, is everything all right?*

    - **Epicene nouns[2]**: they have a single grammatical gender to refer to both genders. They do not exist in English as there is no grammatical gender. That is the case of *la víctima*, *la persona* or *el personaje*. For example: *la persona encargada de la cocina es mi padre* or *el personaje principal es una escritora famosa.*

- **Slashes** *(dobletes de género)* to mention both gender forms. In the case of English, it refers to the feminine and masculine pronouns (she/he), for example, *she/he is a great student.* Whereas in Spanish it affects all sentence elements: *el/la alumno/a nuevo/a.*

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[2] Also known as *sustantivo genérico* (Marimón-Llorca & Santamaría-Pérez, 2011)

Both guides advocate that excessive use of this strategy may affect the readability of a text and they recommend using it on occasions when there is limited space, for example when filling forms.

- **Restructuring the sentence**: due to the structure of the sentence, sometimes masculine generic is used and/or gender is explicit. Hence, there are different strategies to rephrase the discourse to avoid gender bias.

  - **Passive voice**: the subject is not mentioned and the sentence is impersonal. The example *"The student must submit **his** assignment by Monday* would be replaced by *Assignments must be submitted by Monday"* (p. 3). This strategy is also valid for Spanish for example in the case of *Listado de empresas en las que se podrán realizar/podrán ser realizadas sus prácticas* instead of *Listado de empresas en las que **el alumno** podrá realizar sus prácticas* (Marimón-Llorca & Santamaría-Pérez, 2011, p. 42).

  - **Neutral pronouns (Spanish):** the use of indefinite and *[pronombres indefinidos (nadie, alguien, la mayoría…)* and relative pronouns *(quien, a quien…)]* could be used to avoid gender in the sentence. For example, ***Los estudiantes no aprobaron el examen*** could be rephrased as ***Nadie aprobó el examen.***

Thanks to the guides from the United Nations, it is possible to draw a big idea of the common lines to use inclusive language in both English and Spanish. Furthermore, Table 1 shows a summary of the most commonly used strategies with their corresponding examples (APA, 2021; Instituto Cervantes, 2021; Marimón-Llorca & Santamaría-Pérez, 2011; ONU Mujeres, 2017; Parra & Serafini, 2021; UN Women, 2017).

| English | Spanish |
|---|---|
| Neuter pronouns (they/their) *("Each student must say their name" instead of "Each student must say his name")* | Pronombres neutros elle/elles *("Elles son inteligentes")* |
| Gender stereotype-free expressions *("The cleaner/cleaning staff" instead of "The cleaning lady")* | Expresiones libres de estereotipos de género *("El personal de limpieza" por "La señora de la limpieza")* |
| Gender-neutral expressions *("Partner" instead of "Boyfriend/girlfriend")* | Empleo de sustantivos colectivos y abstractos *("Alumnado" por "Los alumnos")* |

| | |
|---|---|
| Omitting the (masculine) gender reference *("Each professor should send one (of his) assistants to the conference.")* | Palabras sin marca de género: sustantivos *(docente)*, pronombres *(alguien, nadie)*, adjetivos *(brillante)* y determinantes invariables *(cada, tal)*. |
| Using both feminine and masculine reference words *("Each professor should send his or her assistant to the conference.")* | Desdoblamientos o duplicaciones *("maestros y maestras", "niños y niñas")*. |
| Slashes *("He/she or s/he is a good student. That is important to him/her.")* | Dobletes de género *(paréntesis: "niños(as)" o barras: "niños/as")* |
| Using the passive voice *("The test must be submitted" instead of "The student must submit his test")* | Modificación de voz activa a pasiva *("El test debe ser presentado" por "El solicitante debe presentar el test")* |
| Alternate pronouns *("Whoever she is. Wherever he lives. Every child deserves a childhood.")* | - |
| | Uso de -@, -x o -e *("tod@s, todxs, todes")* |
| | Epicenos *(sustantivos con único género: la víctima, el personaje)*. |
| | Estructuras impersonales *("Si usted quiere…" por "Si el solicitante quiere…")* |
| | Expresiones metonímicas *("España acogerá las olimpiadas" por "Los españoles acogerán las olimpiadas")* |
| | Incorporación de una frase explicativa que clarifique la mención tanto de hombres como mujeres. |

Table 1: Strategies for inclusive language in English and Spanish[3]

Generally, throughout the guides, there is a common disposition to recommend a moderate use of certain strategies to favour clarity and readiness of the message. To learn more about strategies, Instituto Cervantes (2021) details the different possibilities, alternatives and uses that speakers of Spanish could follow in order to avoid sexism in language. In the case of English, The APA (2021) develops the entire use of inclusive language in all the different fields, including gender diversity.

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[3] All tables and figures have been prepared by the author.

### 3.4.3. The use of @/-x/-e (in Spanish)

The previous strategies are mostly acknowledged and recommended by the majority of inclusive language guides and linguistic institutions (Parra & Serafini, 2021). They are widely accepted and applied, however, there is a common alternative that is gaining more presence among the LGBTQIA+ community, especially among TGNC individuals to refer to a third gender or form that includes any gender.

The use of endings such as -@, -x and -e, along with the pronoun "elle" is mostly widespread on social media. That strategy is only used in Spanish as it implies the avoidance or absence of gendered word endings. Nevertheless, in English, it has also been applied in the word *Latinx* which has been incorporated for the first time by Merriam-Webster's dictionary (n.d.-b) in 2018 defined as "of, relating to, or marked by Latin American heritage" as well as *Latine* which both are used as gender-neutral alternatives to *Latina* or *Latino*".

The strategy of using the neutral suffixes *"-@", "-x"* or *"-e"*, fulfils the same function but is different in each particular case. In the first case, in the early 2000s, the adoption of @ was the initial alternative suggested in order to include the masculine and the feminine, (Tosi, 2019). It is used in gendered words such as *amig@s (amigos/as)* or *compañer@s (compañeros/as)*. Likewise, the use of the ending *-x* was further extended on social media in recent years, fulfilling the same exact function with a non-binary approach *(amigxs or compañerxs)* and therefore substituting the "@". Sometimes, the symbol "*" was also used in the same way (Bengoechea Bartolomé, 2009). Those two forms (the @ and *x*) are highly criticised and not completely accepted since they are not readable and therefore, not suitable for oral speech as they cannot be pronounced. Consequently, its use could also affect people with learning disabilities such as dyslexia or those with visual impairments using electronic communication systems as it does not recognise these formats. For those reasons, La Fundación del Español Urgente (Fundéu, 2019), 2019), which advises about correct Spanish use, does not recommend it in general texts as it does not belong to the formal language. However, they claim that it could be accepted as a graphic resource or in creative manifestations.

In the case of "e", which emerged as a form to replace the masculine generic, so that everyone inside and outside binarism could feel included and made visible; it started to gain recognition in 2018 (Tosi, 2019). In contrast to the "@" and "x", it can be perfectly pronounced. Regardless, as mentioned before, its use implies a change in the inflection of

nouns, pronouns adjectives, referring to human beings. As in the previous example, *amigues* or *compañeneres; les compañeres de clase son muy simpátiques* (Kaufmann & Bohner, 2014). Despite being more convenient for oral speech, it still stirs controversy among speakers of Spanish as in Pichardo Nieves and Sánchez Hernández (2022), where participants showed a common discomfort towards its use claiming that it "is an abrupt change in language", "it is difficult to adapt to this current language that we have been using for years" and "it makes no sense as it does not exist in the rules of Spanish".

Nowadays, those alternative forms are generally used among social media users, the new generations and the LGBTQIA+ community to promote diversity and inclusion. Regarding the formal language, they are still not generalised due to their newness and lack of agreement from the major linguistic authorities like the RAE (2022), who expressed through their Twitter account to solve linguistic doubts that:

> #RAEconsultas El uso de la @ o de las letras «e» y «x» como supuestas marcas de género inclusivo es ajeno a la morfología del español, además de innecesario, pues el masculino gramatical ya cumple esa función como término no marcado de la oposición de género.

### 3.5.    Asking for our students' pronouns

Another important aspect to consider when teaching is bearing in mind our students' identities. Therefore, according to Djavadghazaryans (2020), a technique of utmost importance would be asking students' preferred names and pronouns before starting a course in order to show respect for them and their identities. Regardless, The APA (2021) suggests the use of the term "pronouns" or "identified pronouns" instead of "preferred pronouns" as it implies a choice about one's gender.

Continuing with Djavadghazaryans' strategies to address students, they suggest that students should be contacted privately as they might not feel comfortable sharing their gender identity with the class. The author suggests sending an email prior to starting the course with a few questions such as:

> (1) *"please write your name as it appears on the roster, the name you would like me to call you, as well as the pronouns you would like me to use.",* (2) *"Do you anticipate that the gendered nature of the language may affect you and/or your gender identity? If yes, do you anticipate this to cause you discomfort and/or to affect*

*your performance in class?"*, (3) *"If you answered yes to the questions above, would you like to meet with me to discuss possible solutions?"*, (4) *"Are you interested in learning about gender-neutral options available in the [...] language?"* (2020, p. 15).

In addition to the questions, as an example, the author suggests including the teacher's name, what they would like to be called and their pronouns in order to show that they are a part of the classroom community.

That simple action would help teachers anticipate any potential challenges and contact students individually if needed. However, it is important to bear in mind that not all students might want to share their identity, neither with the class nor privately. By approaching students beforehand to address this matter, they can feel the teacher's commitment and respect. Moreover, Djavadghazaryans (2020) defends that regardless of whether students show interest or are personally affected by social gender, all materials need to be inclusive.

### 3.6. Other recent studies on the topic

Currently, inclusive language is crossing social borders and starting to be present in the learning-teaching fields (Gutiérrez Conde, 2022; Lohe, 2022; Parra & Serafini, 2021; Speyer & Schleef, 2019). Nowadays, studies regarding teaching inclusive language and/or non-sexist at the university level are growing in number, as mentioned before, they are one of the main institutions (including trade unions and regional and local governments [Bosque, 2012]), that promote its use. However, most of them either refer to the perceptions of inclusive language in their first language (L1) or in the case of foreign languages, they purpose a didactic approach to the topic for language teachers to encourage its reflection in the classroom. Due to the novelty of the topic, its use in the teaching of English and Spanish as foreign/second languages seems to be an unexplored field.

In the field of EFL, Lohe (2022) explored and highlighted the need to introduce the topic of inclusive language into language teaching. The study analyzed the attitudes of university students towards gender in the classroom and throughout the research; the author drew two main conclusions. On the one hand, there is a need for systematic training for teachers on how to implement gender-inclusive language in the classroom. On the other hand, the attitudes of students are broad. That is to say that, some of them are aware of the situation whereas another group does not show any interest or awareness of the topic. Regarding the teachers' field, Lohe states that "by thinking about alternative performative options, teachers

positively gain new awareness and deconstruct their stereotypes" (p. 77), hence, debate and reflection need to be present and promoted in the class in order to raise awareness among the education community (Lohe, 2022).

Pichardo Nieves and Sánchez Hernández (2022) already researched the attitudes of Mexican university teachers and students from the Faculty of Languages towards inclusive language, in this case in their L1. The study showed divided opinions among participants. On the one hand, some teachers think that it is a momentary fad and therefore considered it unnecessary, whereas others believe that it has an impact on their learning by fostering reflection and the construction of their cultural, social and emotional identity. On the other hand, some students agree with teachers on the irrelevance of teaching as the language itself is enough to designate both genders. The other group has a more empathetic vision and believes that its use should not be ignored as it promotes the inclusion of gender non-conforming students and future linguistic growth. In conclusion, attitudes are highly divided and there is a big need to continue researching and bringing the topic to the table, especially among language learning students.

The study conducted by Cremades and Fernández-Portero (2022), continuing with the L1, analysed the attitudes towards inclusive language in university students from Spain and Italy. One of the conclusions was that the differences between men and women are decreasing exponentially. Therefore, its reflection, debate, and use may help to build a path towards gender equality. However, the perception of the need for debate about inclusive language seems to be lower in Italian students.

Paying attention to TGNC individuals, Patev *et al.* (2019) examined the connection between the perceptions of gender-inclusive language and the attitudes towards TGNC individuals in college students. The study showed that a positive attitude and a better understanding of gender-inclusive language would promote its use. Furthermore, participants admitted that they did not use gender-inclusive language or put a conscious effort into their day-to-day. However, there is a tendency to use this language in written texts as there is more time to think and reflect.

Regarding gender and linguistic sexism in the Spanish Foreign Language classroom (SFL), Alonso Torío (2016) investigated and introduced the current situation that teachers may encounter in a class. In the study, the author with help from García Meseguer (2001, p. 32) exemplified the different perceptions or attitudes towards sexism that speakers could

present in certain situations. Thus, according to their reactions, there are "traditional sexism", "non-traditional sexism", "A-type feminism" and "B-type feminism". Alonso Torío concludes that sexism in language generates confusion among speakers. However, language itself is not necessarily sexist, though the way in which speakers use it, is. For that reason, teachers need to clarify the difference between grammatical and social gender as well as sex, in order to avoid unnecessary confusion.

In light of a review of previous research on the topic, it can be concluded that there is still an unexplored field in the L1 and therefore, foreign languages are just starting to become a matter of study. Furthermore, most of the revised studies had a focus on the Spanish language and that might be due to the nature of the language and the high alteration in the discourse that inclusive language requires. Consequently, this caused a major controversy among Spanish-speaking countries.

### 3.7. The need for teachers' awareness and training

Numerous studies researching the perspectives of teachers in their L1 showed positive attitudes and willingness to use it. They also felt a lack of formal education or specific training (Cremades & Fernández-Portero, 2022; Djavadghazaryans, 2020; García-Holgado *et al*., 2021; Lohe, 2022). One of the main reasons is to promote "the visibility of the women, equity, diversity and a more inclusive society" in educational institutions and consequently, the creation of specific "training courses for the transformation of contents, educational guides and resources for a more inclusive teaching" would help its development (García-Holgado *et al*., 2021, p. 1685).

In the case of Spain, since 2007 when the law on effective equality between men and women was approved (Pastor Gosálbez *et al*., 2019), most universities started counting with a department dedicated to promoting equality among students and within the educational institution. They are also the ones responsible for creating specific guidelines to promote inclusive language in the academic community. Most of those guides, as well as Instituto Cervantes (2021), are centred on non-sexist rather than gender-neutral language. Consequently, there is still a lack of concordance between education and the real needs of society.

A good example of this is the absence of a realistic representation of society in coursebooks. Those teachers willing to include a broader and more inclusive vision of the

world in their classes may struggle with finding adequate materials (Goldstein, 2021). Nevertheless, despite the controversy of including the LGBTQIA+ community and the lack of freedom in some editorials, there is a movement to promote those values, as well as individual publishers that are stepping forward to publish inclusive materials, especially online (Goldstein, 2021; Morales-Vidal & Cassany, 2020).

The inclusion of real representation in coursebooks seems to be growing slowly but there is a good intention. Opposite, despite the inclusion of those materials, there are no official guidelines on how to address students in an inclusive way, how to modify the speech or how to teach and include that satisfactorily into the classroom. For that reason, in the case of Spanish, due to the present movement, Parra and Serafini (2021) designed their article with the main purpose of *"proporcionar herramientas conceptuales y pedagógicas para integrar el tema del lenguaje inclusivo (LI) en el currículum de las clases de español LE/L2 y de español como lengua de herencia (ELH)"* ("to provide conceptual and pedagogical tools for integrating the topic of inclusive language (IL) into the curriculum of Spanish FL/L2 and Spanish as a heritage language (SHL) classes"), (p. 1).

Several authors who researched inclusive language awareness in language classrooms agreed on the need for education on the topic. Patev *et al*. (2019) concluded that there is a need for clearer and simpler regulations that would make inclusive language easier to use on a regular basis. Nitti (2021) determined the need for greater sensitivity to the relationship between language and the construction of self-identity. To this end, greater investment in actions to improve synergies between academic research, teaching staff and language teaching practices is proposed. Furthermore, the most recent study conducted by Lohe (2022) raises awareness of the need for systematic training and education regarding gender in the ELT classroom.

Nonetheless, the lack of representation of social reality in language materials as well as former education in the field of inclusive language, both teachers and students feel that there is a need for specific training and materials to promote the widespread use of this type of language (Cremades & Fernández-Portero, 2022). If that is already a significant topic in L1, the actual need to address this matter in the foreign language class seems to be even more necessary (Lohe, 2022).

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1. Design of the study

The present study aims to explore the perceptions and attitudes towards gender-inclusive language of students and teachers of English and Spanish as a foreign language. For that reason, a mixed-method research was conducted. That is to say, that the results are both qualitative and quantitative. Consequently, different types of questions were designed in the questionnaire: open-ended questions for the qualitative and single as well as multiple-choice questions for the quantitative data. The following sections detail the context and participants, research instruments, and procedure.

### 4.2. Context and participants

The context of the study was at the Faculty of Human Sciences of the Università degli Studi Suor Orsola Benincasa in Naples, Italy in April 2023. This university offers a Bachelor's degree in Modern Languages and Culture *(Lingue e culture moderne)* as well as a Master's degree in Modern languages for communication and international cooperation *(Lingue moderne per la comunicazione e la cooperazione internazionale)*. In those studies, Italian students can choose to learn two modern languages among English, French, German and Spanish. The average number of students per class is around 15 students and the majority of the students are women. The teaching staff of these studies comprises Italian professors and native lecturers of each language respectively.

For the purpose of this research, participants were divided into two groups: students and teachers. The first group is composed of Italian university students of English and Spanish as a foreign language from the Bachelor's degree in Modern Languages and Cultures and the Master's degree in Modern Languages for communication and international cooperation. All of them are enrolled in the courses of *Lingua e traduzione inglese* (English language and translation) and *Lingua e traduzione spagnola* (Spanish language and translation). A total of 84 students participated in the study, aged between 19 and 36: 76 women (90,5%), 5 men (6%), 2 non-binary (2,4%) and 1 person whose gender was not listed (1,2%). Their language level according to CEFR is between B1 to C2 for English and A1 to C2 for Spanish.

The second group is formed by the language teachers of both languages: English and Spanish. The group comprises 16 participants with ages between 24 and 72: 1 professor of

Spanish whose native language is Italian and 15 native teachers of which 8 speak and teach Spanish and 7 English. Regarding their level of language competence, all participants had an English level between A1-C2, except one person that did not speak the language. Concerning Spanish, it is a bit more heterogeneous, most participants had a level between B1-C2 except for 5 participants who did not have any knowledge of it.

### 4.3. Research instruments

In order to explore the attitudes and perceptions of students and teachers about inclusive language, two different questionnaires were designed. The structure of the questionnaire is identical for both groups, however, one extra section was designed with specific questions for the teachers' group. There are three main common sections: the first one is named "Initial questions" in which participants were asked to choose a personal pronoun or find gender-neutral terms; the second one is "Inclusive language" in which several questions about their knowledge of the topic were posed and the third one is "Perceptions and attitudes" to explore their opinion and predisposition towards inclusive language. The extra section designed for teachers is intended for "Training", in order to analyse the existing situation about inclusive language. The typology of the questions was diverse: open-ended questions, single and multiple choice (see Appendix).

### 4.4. Procedure

Regarding the methodological process, after having set the objectives of the research, the main common questionnaire was designed in order to give answers to all common perceptions and attitudes. Thereafter, the complementary part for the teachers -regarding training on inclusive language-, was added. Once the questionnaires were developed, they were administered to the different classes of the Bachelor's and Master's degree during the course of *Lingua e traduzione spagnola*, as all participants were students of both English and Spanish.

### 5. Results

Since the project revolves around three research questions, the results will be presented in three different subsections. Accordingly, the first subsection will be dedicated to students' and teachers' awareness towards inclusive language. The second subsection presents beliefs on inclusive language and in the third one, the focus will be on training for language teachers.

## 5.1.    Students' and teachers' awareness of inclusive language

In order to analyse participants' awareness of the topic, they were asked about different aspects. By answering those questions, it seems possible to recognise whether participants use the different language strategies as well as how familiarised they are with inclusive language. Firstly, they were asked to complete some sentences with a pronoun or an article (if necessary) in order to observe their tendencies towards gender stereotypes. Secondly, participants had to find a gender-neutral form for the given gendered words. Thirdly, participants were asked to indicate any word or expression that they considered discriminatory against women or the LGBTQIA+ community and lastly, they had to indicate whether they knew and used the different strategies to use inclusive language in both languages.

With the first task, choosing a pronoun or article (if necessary), it was open-ended to favour creativity and the possibility to find more inclusive alternatives. As language structures in English and Spanish are different, the examples offered were intended to be as similar to each other as possible. The first statement was *"My boss should improve ___ ethical practices"*. In this case, the expected answers would be one single pronoun *(his, her, their)* or the different combinations of them *(his/her or his/her/their)*.

In Figure 1 below, students' answers show a tendency towards the masculine pronoun *him*, almost half of the group (46,4%) considered that to be the missing answer. Moreover, the second most chosen answers were *his/her* by 13,1% of the students and *Not pronoun required* by 11,9%. On a lower scale, the neutral pronoun *their* was chosen by 7,1% of participants.
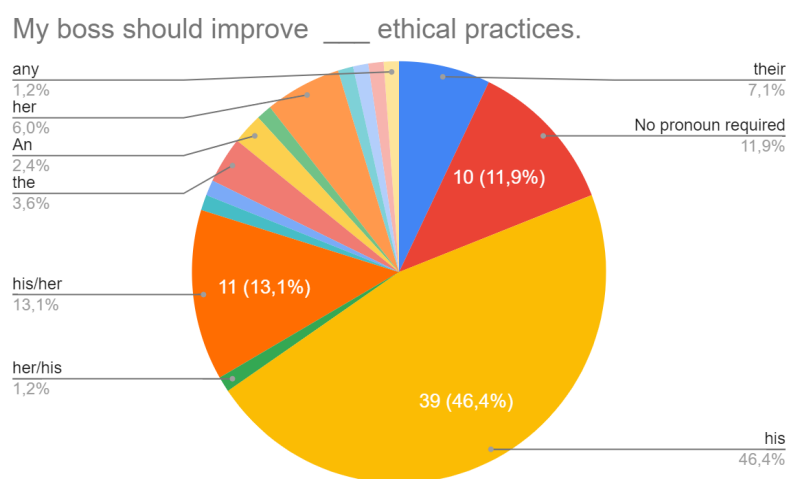


Figure 1: Students' answers to *My boss should improve ___ ethical practices.*

In Figure 2, the same example with teachers shows a predominance of the neutral pronoun *their* which happens to be the most repeated answer with 31,3% of responses whereas the combination *his/her* and the feminine pronoun *her* occupy the second position with 25% of votes. A total of 12,5% of the participants were not able to answer this question due to their lack of knowledge of Spanish. Furthermore, the last valid example is the combination of *her/his* pronouns by setting the feminine in the first position (6,3%).
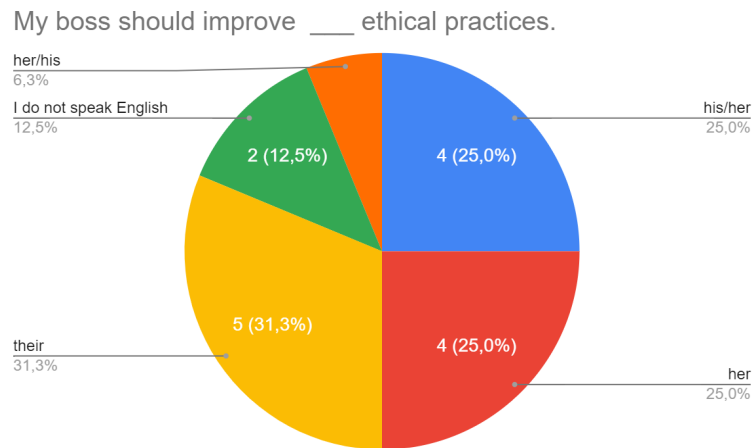


Figure 2: Teachers' answers to *My boss should improve ___ ethical practices.*

In the following case, there is a similar statement in Spanish. Here, the structure of the sentence varies as the possessive pronouns are not gendered. Therefore, they were asked to add a definite article or pronoun, to the sentence *"Rodríguez como líder es ___ mejor"*, if needed. As in the previous example, the possible or expected answers were single definite articles such as *el* or *la* as well as a combination of them *(el/la, la/el)*. However, the neutral pronoun *lo* was also a possibility in order to avoid gender and the meaning of the sentence would remain the same.

In Figure 3, once again there is a big tendency to choose the masculine definite article *el* by 75% of the participants. Followed by the combination of *el/la* (8,3%) and the feminine definite article *la* (7,1%). As mentioned before, a small group of participants also considered the neuter pronoun *lo* to be suitable (6%) as well as the combination of *la/el* (1,2%) in which the feminine pronoun takes the first position.
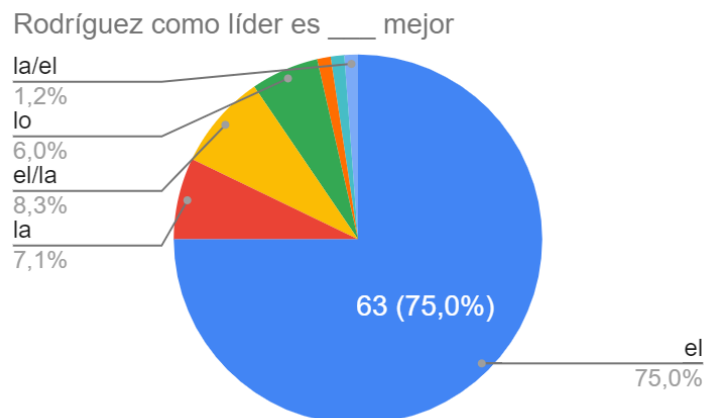
Figure 3: Students' answers to *Rodríguez como líder es ___ mejor.*

Regarding the teachers' group, there is a bit more heterogeneity in their answers. In this case, as seen in Figure 4, also 31,3% of the participants claimed not to speak Spanish. However, the election of the masculine pronoun *el* continued being the tendency by another 31,3% of teachers, followed by *la/el* (12,5%) and in the third place, by the rest of the participants with 6,3% different alternatives being chosen, *lo*, *el/la*, *la* and *No pronoun required.*
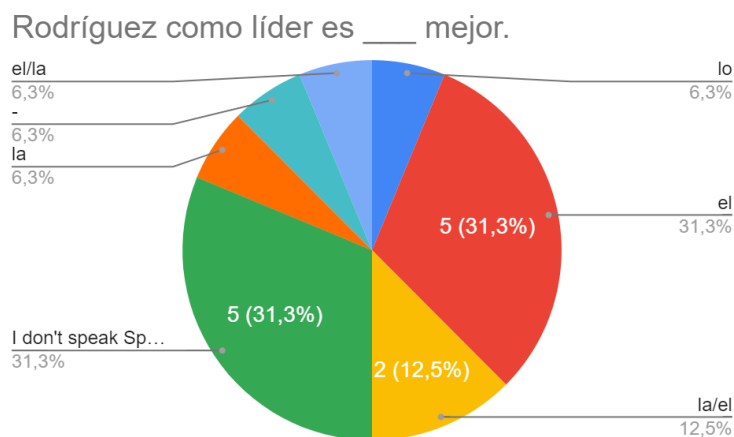


Figure 4: Teachers' answers to *Rodríguez como líder es ___ mejor.*

Another similar example was given with the sentence *"____ finished cleaning before I came back home".* In this case, the expected answers were *she, he, they* or a combination of them based on the previous example. However, due to the structure of the sentence, any personal pronoun could be correct. In Figure 5, the results show a predominance of *he* (26,1%) and *she* (21,7%) followed by *I* (15,9%), *they* (14,5%) and *you* (13%) among other single valid answers.

finished cleaning before I came back home.

My mother
1,4%

You
13,0%

They
14,5%

I
15,9%

He
26,1%

She
21,7%

18 (26,1%)
15 (21,7%)
11 (15,9%)
10 (14,5%)
9 (13,0%)
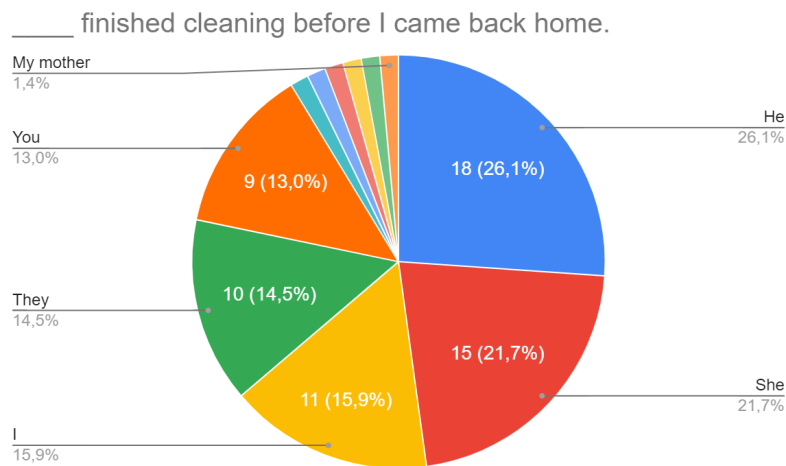
Figure 5: Students' answers to _____ *finished cleaning before I came back home.*

Additionally, the responses from the teachers' group are also quite heterogeneous. As shown in Figure 6, the most chosen answer with 25% was *they*, directly followed by 18,8% *he* and with 12,5%, *she* as well as the combination of *he/she*.



finished cleaning before I came back home.

You/He/She/They
6,3%
I
6,3%

I do not speak English
18,8%

He/She
12,5%

They
25,0%

He
18,8%

She
12,5%

4 (25,0%)
3 (18,8%)
3 (18,8%)
2 (12,5%)
2 (12,5%)
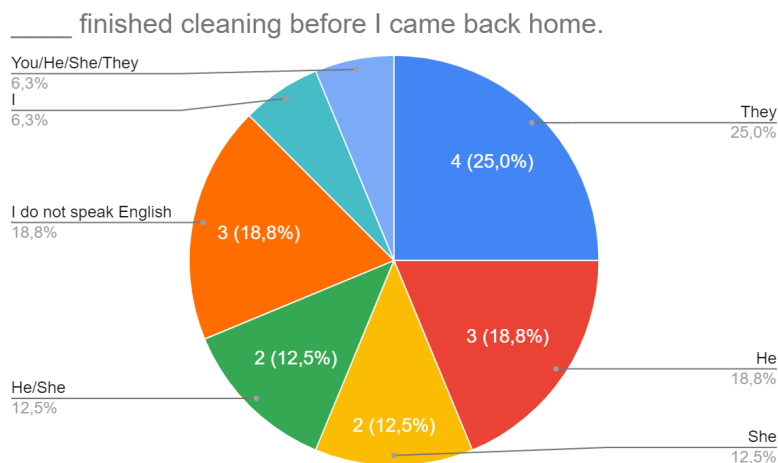
Figure 6:  Teachers' answers to _____ *finished cleaning before I came back home.*

Hereunder, Figure 7 presents the equivalent example in Spanish with the sentence *"_____ terminó de limpiar antes de que yo volviera a casa"*. For this example, the possible answers are different. Any third-person singular pronouns *(él, ella, elle, usted)* and their combination, as well as a blank space as in Spanish the subject may be omitted in this case. The results show that both pronouns *(él* and *ella)* were chosen equally by 28,6% of the students, followed by the combination *él/ella* with 20,2%. Only 6% considered that no pronoun was required or that it could be omitted.

26
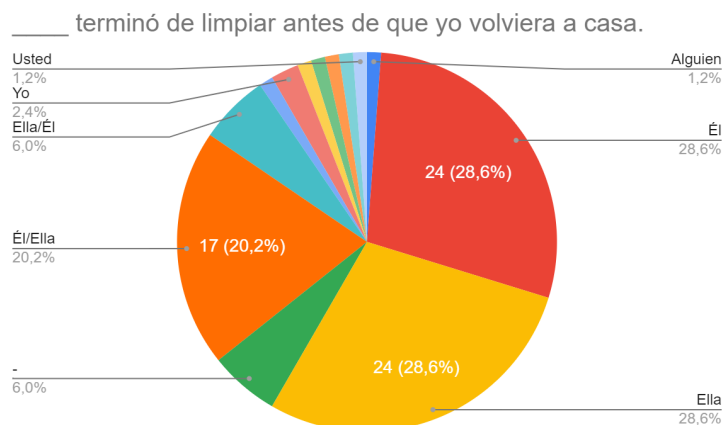
Figure 7: Students answers to ____ *terminó de limpiar antes de que yo volviera a casa.*

In the teachers' group, the results displayed in Figure 8 are more dispersed. Among the teachers that spoke Spanish, the most chosen answer was *él* by 18,8% of participants directly followed by *ella* and the combination *él/ella* by 12,5% of teachers. The rest of the valid answers (6,3%) were the neuter pronoun *lo*, a male name *Pedro*, *No pronoun required* as well as a combination of the third person singular pronouns *Él/Ella/Usted*.
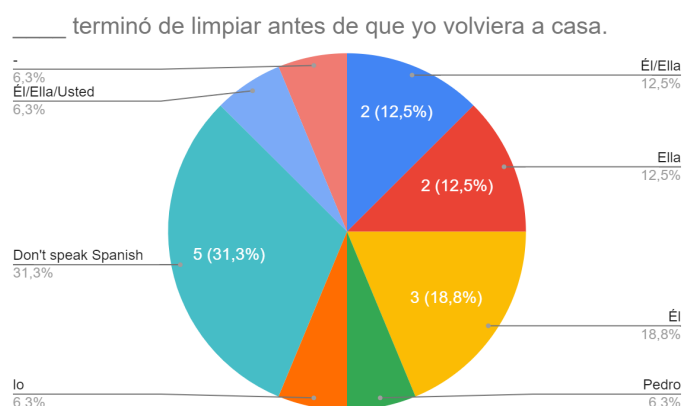


Figure 8: Teachers' answers to ____ *terminó de limpiar antes de que yo volviera a casa.*

Furthermore, in the category referring to gender-neutral forms or words that do not imply gender, the presented words were *boyfriend/girlfriend (novio/novia)*, *men/woman (hombre/mujer)*, father/mother *(padre/madre)* and *cleaning lady (señora de la limpieza)*. For the first example, the most expected answers were *partner* and *pareja* whereas for the second one were *person* and *persona*. In general, at least 50% of students (S) were able to find the expected gender-neutral forms for both languages, as well as suggesting the term *human being*/*ser humano* as proposed by Marimón-Llorca & Santamaría-Pérez (2011) and UN

Women (2017). Nonetheless, not all participants were able to give full answers, therefore they either found a term in a single language or no answer due to their level or lack of knowledge (see Table 2 below).

| Word | Both languages | | In English | | In Spanish | | None of them | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | S | T | S | T | S | T | S | T |
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| Boyfriend/Girlfriend - Novio/Novia | **50** | 25 | 26,2 | **37,5** | 11,9 | 25 | 11,9 | 6,3 |
| Man/Woman - Hombre/Mujer | **51,2** | 25 | 9,5 | **43,8** | 11,9 | 18,8 | 27,4 | 12,5 |
| Father/Mother - Padre/Madre | 4,8 | 0,0 | **70,2** | 62,5 | 3,6 | 12,5 | 21,4 | 25,0 |
| Cleaning lady - Señora de la limpieza | 19 | 31,3 | 26,2 | **37,5** | 23,8 | 18,8 | **31** | 12,5 |

Table 2: Terms offered to find a gender-neutral form and the percentage of answers given by language

The two last pairs of words were a bit more difficult. The first one, *father/mother - padre/madre* was mostly answered in English (70%) due to the fact that in Spanish there is not a proper gender-neutral word like *parent*. The same exact thing happens among teachers (T) with 62,5% of right answers. In the case of *cleaning lady - señora de la limpieza*, 31% of students encountered difficulties to find a gender-neutral and consequently, free of stereotypes term, for example, *cleaner, cleaning staff* or *persona(l) de la limpieza*. In the group of teachers, the majority were able to find a term in English (37,5%).

Being inclusive in language is not only a matter of usage but should also reflect and create  of the vocabulary and expressions as well as their meaning or connotations. Therefore, participants were asked about their knowledge of any specific words or expressions in English and Spanish that could be considered to discriminate against women or the LGBTQIA+ community.

In general, participants could offer different examples of daily expressions or words, especially teachers (T). However, their answers were only given in their native language. In general, most of the answers from the participants were considered insults. In the case of students (S), the results found were more divided as almost half of the sample (41 out of 84) was not able to recall or give any example despite their competence level and 11 of the answers were considered non-valid[4] (see Table 3). That means that only 32 students, less than half of the sample were able to answer this question satisfactorily.

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[4] Due to a lack of understanding of the premise or confusing answers.

| Response to the question | Students (*n*=84) | Teachers (*n*=16) |
|---|---|---|
| Valid answer | 32 | 11 |
| Non-valid answer | 11 | 2 |
| No answer | 41 | 3 |

Table 3: Total of answers of discriminative words and expressions

As seen in Table 4, participants offered a few expressions and the total amount of identified terms was 31 of which 16 were explicitly against women, 8 against homosexual men, 5 for any gender but directly discriminating against women (*"nenaza"* and *"gallina"* as synonyms of 'coward', "*maruja*" as well as "*son of a bitch/hijo de puta*"), one for the LGBTQIA+ community in general, *"queer"* and the last one more specifically to TGNC individuals *("tranny")*.

| Word | S | T | Word | S | T |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Marica | 23 | 3 | Marimacho | 1 | 0 |
| Faggot | 15 | 1 | Machorra | 1 | 0 |
| Zorra | 4 | 2 | Levis | 0 | 1 |
| Dyke | 5 | 1 | Lagarta | 0 | 1 |
| Puta | 6 | 0 | Gallina | 0 | 1 |
| Perra | 3 | 2 | Maruja | 1 | 0 |
| Lesbiana | 4 | 0 | Sissy | 1 | 0 |
| Whore | 4 | 0 | Queen | 1 | 0 |
| Bitch | 3 | 0 | Reina | 0 | 1 |
| Bollera | 2 | 1 | Joto | 0 | 1 |
| Poof | 2 | 1 | Homo | 1 | 0 |
| Pussy | 3 | 0 | Pansy | 1 | 0 |
| Slut | 2 | 0 | Son of a bitch | 1 | 0 |
| Nenaza | 1 | 1 | Hijo de puta | 1 | 0 |
| Tranny | 2 | 0 | Hostess | 1 | 0 |
| Queer | 2 | 0 | | | |

Table 4: Discriminating words by frequency

Despite the disparity of the examples, on the one hand, the most repeated answers were those referred to homosexual men in both languages, being the Spanish variations of the

word *"marica" (mariquita, maricón, mariconazo)* the most recognised among all participants by a total of 26 times followed by its form in English *"faggot"* with a total of 16 times and in a lower scale, *"poof"* (3 times). On the other hand, the rest of the examples were discriminating against women and their sexual orientation. The most recalled terms were of a sexual nature such as *"zorra"* (6 times) and *"perra"* (5 times) in Spanish and their comparable alternatives in English *"whore"* (4 times), *"bitch"*, *"pussy"* (3 times) and *"slut"* (2 times). Furthermore, regarding homosexual women, the most repeated answers were *"dyke"* (6 times) in English and *"lesbiana"* (4 times) and *"bollera"* (3 times) in Spanish. The rest of the words mentioned with less frequency were *"nenaza"*, *"tranny"*, and *"queer"* (2 times) in addition to *"lagarta"*, *"maruja"*, *"gallina"*, *"homo"*, *"sissy"*, *"queen/reina"*, *"levis"*, *"pansy"*, *"joto"*, *"son of a bitch/hijo de puta"*, *"machorra"*, *"lezzie/lezzer"* and *"hostess"* (1 time).

In that question, insults and slurs were the most common answers, however, a few participants were also able to share some discriminating expressions. On the one hand, the tendency went towards women and their bodies: *"Are you on your period?"* (mentioned twice), *"She is probably on her period"* or *"Menopause, is it?"* as well as their capabilities or "duties": *"That's not a job for women"*, *"Women are supposed to have children, look after them and take care of their home"*, *"You're a girl so you're not good as a boy to drive"*, *"You are good to be a woman"*, *"lazy cow"* and *"trophy wife"*. On the other hand, the LGBTQIA+ community is also considered discriminated against by using the euphemism *"alternative lifestyle"* or questioning their sexual identity with expressions such as *"Si no te gustan los hombres, ¿por qué andas con una que se viste come uno?"* [If you don't like men, why do you hang out with a woman who dresses like one?]. In fact, homosexual men are once again the target of vulgar expressions in Spanish such as *"Mariconadas las justas"*, *"¡No seas maricón!"* (*Don't be a pussy!* - possible translation according to participants for both terms) and *"Tener pluma"* (to be effeminate).

Insults, slurs and discriminating expressions are incompatible with inclusive language, as it not only consists of inclusion but of respect towards every person. Nonetheless, other few participants considered to be discriminating those words referring to job titles with "man" suffix, like fireman or policeman (instead of the gender-neutral form firefighter or police officer) as well as words such as *"hostess"* in which the suffix "-ess" changes the original meaning or *"housewife"* that perpetuate traditional gender roles.

Paying attention to the strategies to have a more inclusive speech, participants were asked which ones they were familiarised with and if they made use of them in their discourse. Each strategy was exemplified to help its understanding (see Appendix), as some participants could recognise the example and confirm their use but not be aware that this was a strategy. In the first graphic, the answers of students regarding strategies for English are displayed (see Figure 9), whereas the second one stands for the teachers (see Figure 10 below). In blue, are those strategies that are known by participants and in red are the ones that are used.

In the case of English, in general, the majority of the students recognised the different listed strategies (see Figure 9). The most known among the students' group is "Gender stereotype-free expressions" *("The cleaner/cleaning staff" instead of "The cleaning lady")* with a total of 71 responses followed by "Neuter pronouns *they/their*" *("Each student must say their name" instead of "Each student must say his name")* and "Omitting the (masculine) gender reference" *("Each professor should send one (of his) assistants to the conference.")* both with a total of 69 students. On the contrary, the least known by students is "Alternate pronouns" *("Whoever she is. Wherever he lives. Every child deserves a childhood.")* with a total of 55 participants. Furthermore, this last one is also the second least used, marked by 33 students after "Omitting the (masculine) gender reference" with 32.



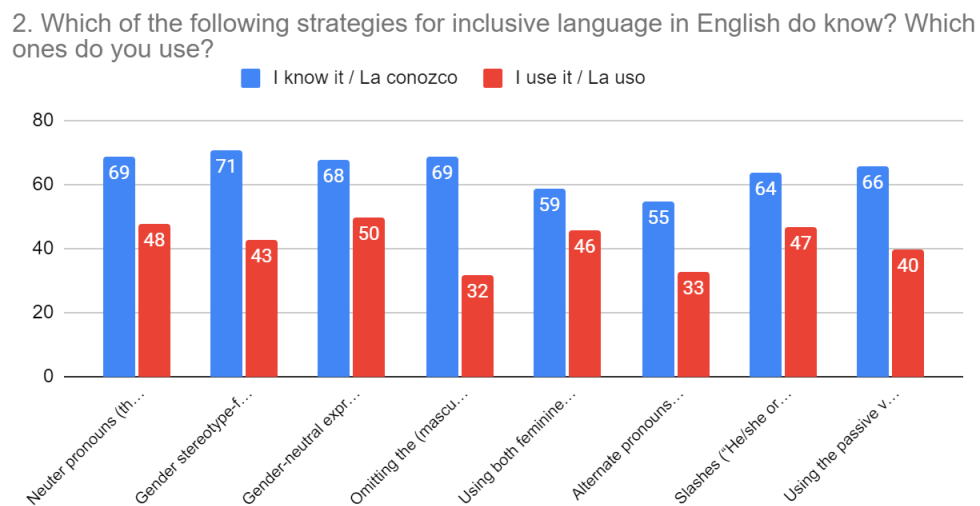Figure 9: English strategies for inclusive language known and used by students

In the teachers' group, strategies are also well-known by the majority of them (see Figure 10). In this case, "Omitting the (masculine) gender reference" appears to be the most known strategy for English by 13 participants. Regarding the least known, as well as students, it happens to be "Alternate pronouns" *("Whoever she is. Wherever he lives. Every*

*child deserves a childhood.")*. Consequently, it is also the least used by the teachers with only 3 participants.
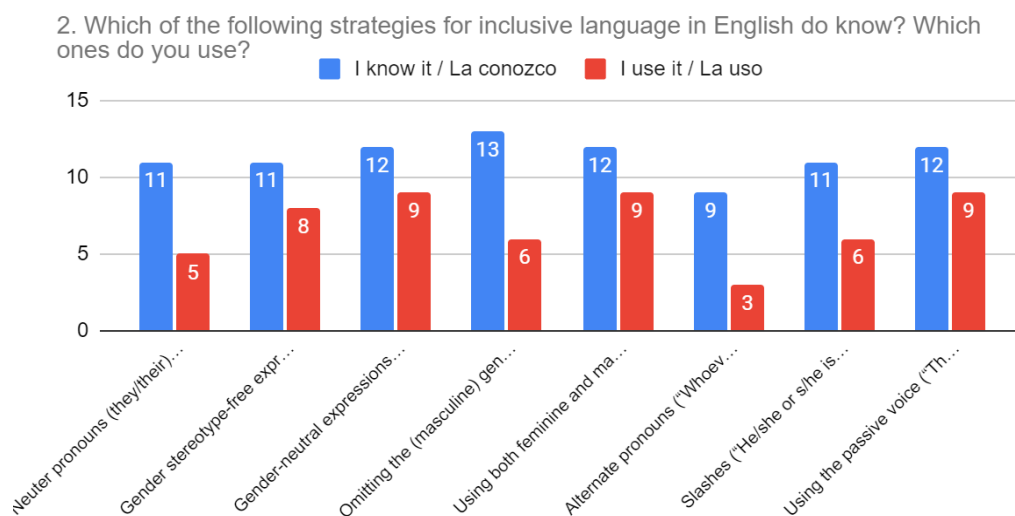


Figure 10: English strategies for inclusive language known and used by teachers

Hereunder, the results from the strategies of inclusive language in Spanish are displayed. Figure 11 presents the answers for Spanish strategies from students and Figure 12 is from teachers. In this case, due to the nature of the language, the amount of strategies is higher than in English. Once again, the first graphic refers to students and the second one to teachers.

In the case of strategies for the Spanish language, most of them are recognised by students (see Figure 11). Regarding the most known strategy, "Uso de -@, -x o -e" *("tod@s, todxs, todes")* it was the most marked with a total of 68 participants. However, it is also situated between the lesast used ones. Moreover, the strategy "Empleo de sustantivos colectivos y abstractos" *("Alumnado" por "Los alumnos")* has a similar impact as it happens to be the second most known as well as one of the least used ones. Moreover, according to Figure 11, the students' group considers "Expresiones metonímicas" *("España acogerá las olimpiadas" por "Los españoles acogerán las olimpiadas")* to be the least known strategy (59 out of 84) despite presenting an average use of it (45 out of 84).
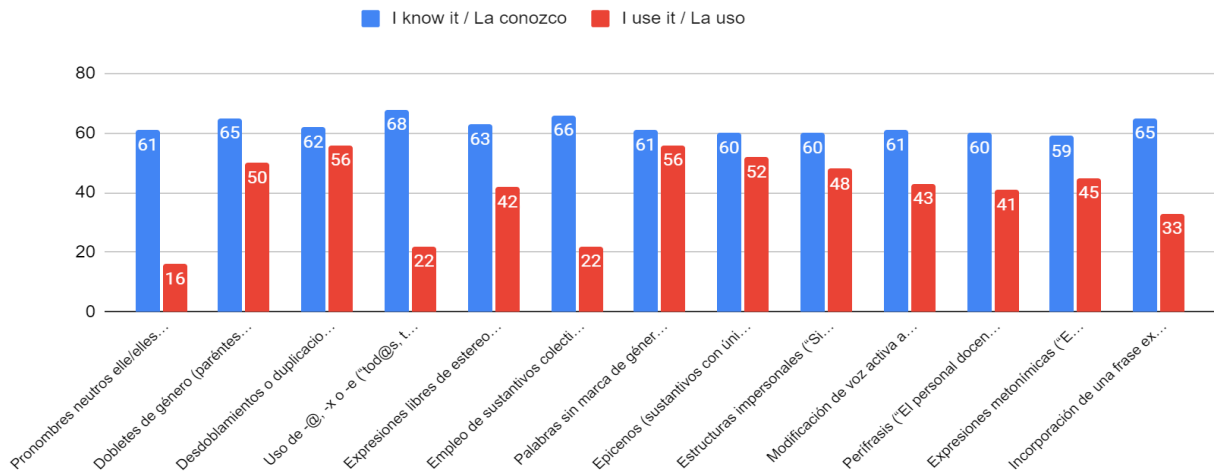
Figure 11: Spanish strategies for inclusive language known and used by students

In the case of teachers, due to the fact that some of the participants did not speak Spanish, the average of known strategies is lower. However, the most known strategy, by all speakers of Spanish is "Uso de -@, -x o -e" *("tod@s, todxs, todes")*. Once again, it is also situated among the least used ones, following "Pronombres neutros elle/elles *("Elles son inteligentes")"* with a total of 0 teachers who use it. Concerning the least known strategies, teachers find "Estructuras impersonales" *("Si usted quiere…" por "Si el solicitante quiere…")*, "Modificación de voz activa a pasiva" *("El test debe ser presentado" por "El solicitante debe presentar el test")* and "Incorporación de una frase explicativa que clarifique la mención tanto de hombres como mujeres" to be the least known ones. Those strategies, despite being not well-known, seem to be used by half of the participants (see Figure 12).
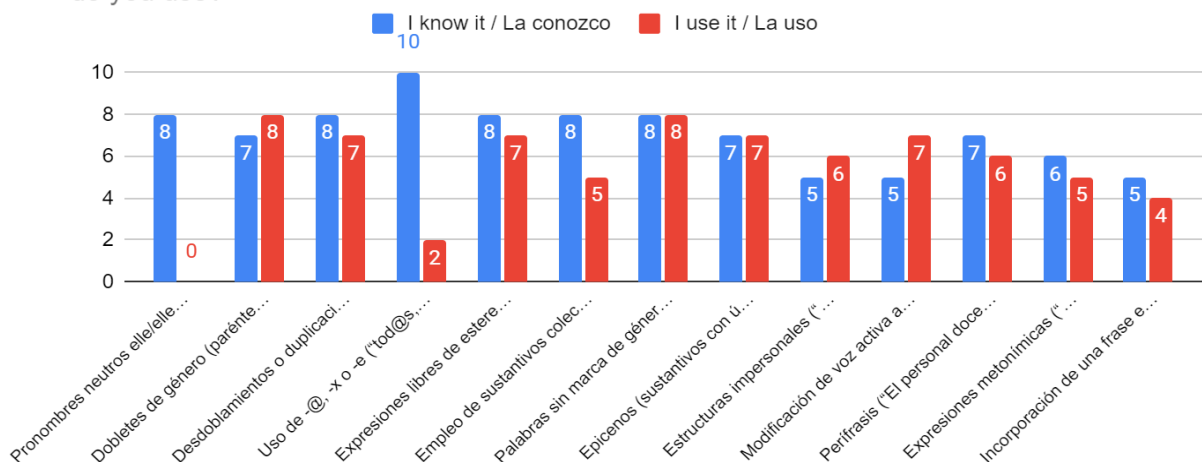


Figure 12: Spanish strategies for inclusive language known and used by teachers

## 5.2. Students' and teachers' beliefs on inclusive language

In order to explore participants' attitudes towards the topic, they were asked a few questions regarding their opinion and perceptions towards inclusive language in both languages. This subsection will develop the results of participants' perspectives on different aspects such as their approach to inclusive language, sexism in language and whether there is a language (between English and Spanish) in which its use seems to be easier.

Firstly, participants were asked to share their opinion on the topic, the answers from both groups were similar with almost 70% of them agreeing with the statement, "Not only do I think it is necessary in today's society, but I also believe it should be promoted and used as much as possible." That opinion is followed by "I know it and respect it but I don't use it" by 21% of students and 25% of teachers. Furthermore, 9,5% of students and 6,3% of teachers believe "I do not have an opinion about it yet". Lastly, only 1% of the teachers agree with the statement "I think it is a trend and soon will be forgotten." (see Figure 13).
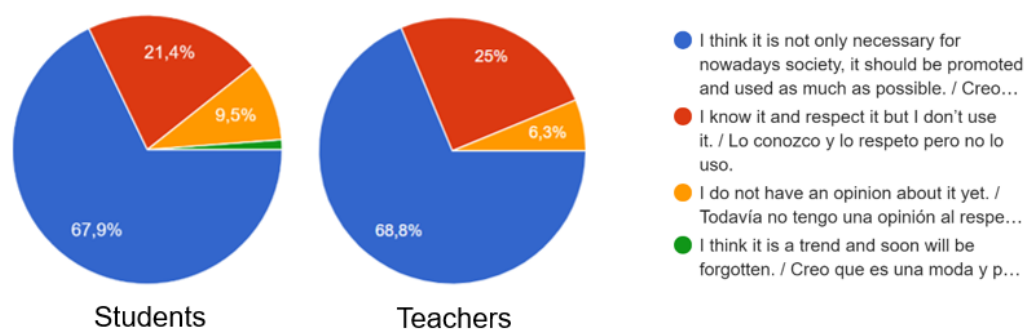


Figure 13: Participants' opinion on inclusive language

After having asked about their approach towards inclusive language in general, participants were asked more specifically about their perception towards English and Spanish as sexist languages. The majority of both groups (73,8% of students and 87,5% of teachers) agreed that English with "No, it not sexist but we occasionally make use of words and expressions that are discriminatory (on the basis of sex/gender)". In the case of students, 21% of them agree with "No, it is not sexist nor reflects the patriarchal culture" and the last 4,8% declare that "Yes, it is a language whose lexical and grammatical structure discriminates women and does not make them visible". Regarding teachers, there is a 6,3% of agreement with both of the other statements as seen in Figure 14.

4. Do you consider English to be a sexist language? ¿Consideras que el inglés es un idioma sexista?
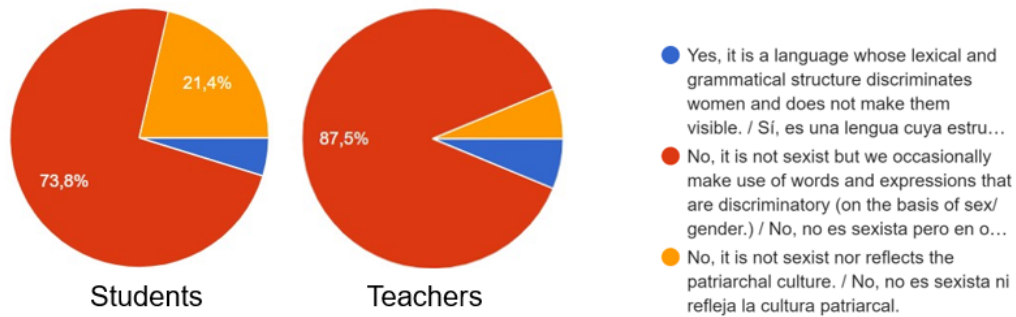


Figure 14: Participants' considerations towards English as a sexist language

There were similar results for Spanish language, as seen in Figure 15, with the majority of the group of students (67,9%) agreeing that "No, it is not sexist but we occasionally make use of words and expressions that are discriminatory (on the basis of sex/gender.)" followed by 17,9% of "Yes, it is a language whose lexical and grammatical structure discriminates women and does not make them visible" and 14,3% of "No, it is not sexist nor reflects the patriarchal culture". Regarding the teachers' group, there are two strong opinions. Half of them declare that "No, it is not sexist but we occasionally make use of words and expressions that are discriminatory (on the basis of sex/gender.)" and the remaining 43,8% think "Yes, it is a language whose lexical and grammatical structure discriminates women and does not make them visible". Lastly, 6,3% of the teachers declare that "No, it is not sexist nor reflects the patriarchal culture"

5. Do you consider Spanish to be a sexist language? ¿Consideras que el español es un idioma sexista?
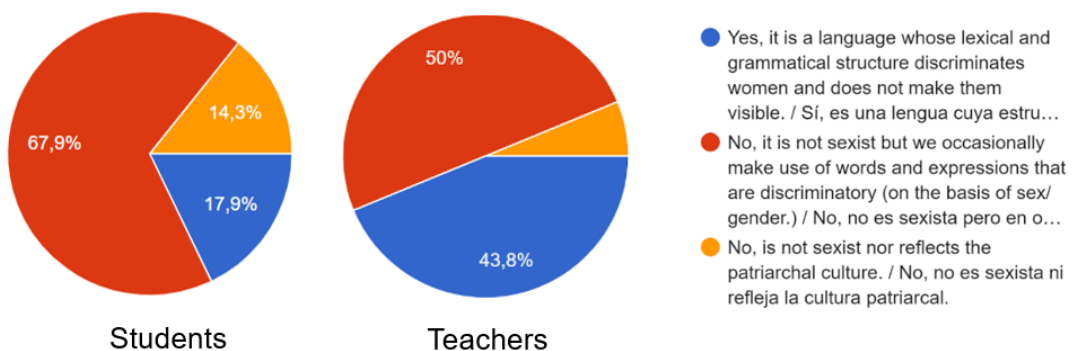


Figure 15: Participants' considerations towards Spanish as a sexist language

Last but not least, continuing with their perceptions towards both languages, participants were asked whether they consider either English or Spanish to be easier to use inclusive language. Regarding students, in Figure 16, the majority of the sample (64,3%) considered English to be easier than Spanish. The most common reasons were the lack of gender or the biggest amount of gender-neutral forms compared to Spanish. That opinion was followed by 13,1% that considered that "None of them" was easier than the other. Concerning Spanish, 10,7% of students believed that it is easier than English whereas 8,3% are not sure about it.
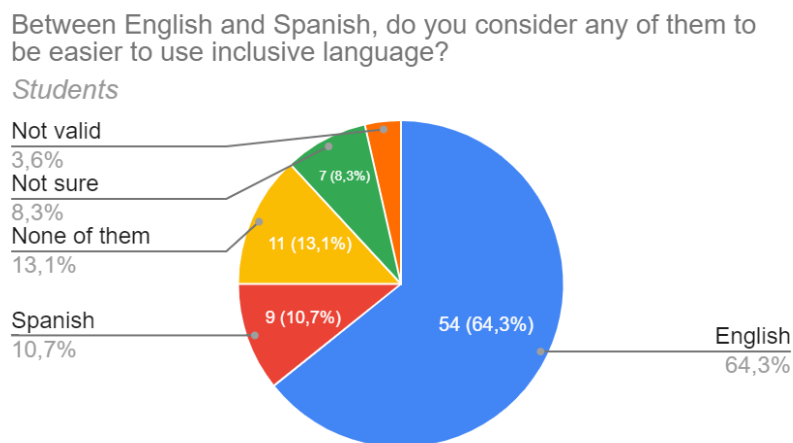


Figure 16: Students' considerations of whether it is easier to use inclusive language in English or Spanish

This same question for the teachers' group also showed a majority of participants who agreed on English (62,5%) to be easier than Spanish due to the lack of gendered forms despite the use of personal pronouns (see Figure 17). That answer was followed by "Not sure" (18,8%) due to the fact that not all teachers had enough knowledge about both languages to have an opinion. Furthermore, 12,5% believed that "None of them" to be easier and only 6,3% considered Spanish.
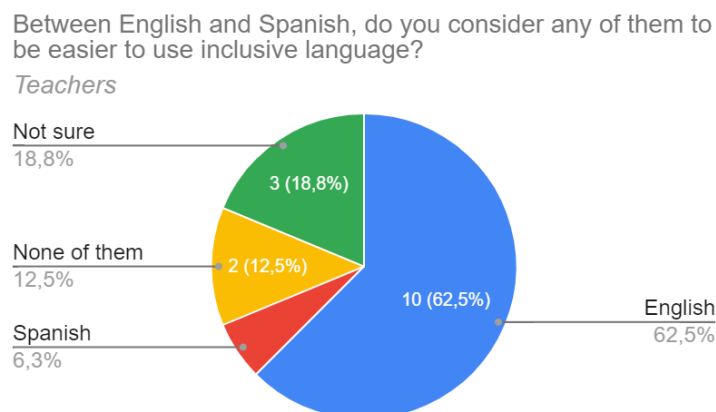


Figure 17: Teachers' considerations of whether it is easier to use inclusive language in English or Spanish

## 5.3.    Training on inclusive language

Following the purpose to explore teachers' willingness towards training on inclusive language, the present subsection will develop their attitudes on the topic. In the beginning, they were asked about their use of inclusive language in a personal setting and their disposition to use it in the classroom. Furthermore, the questions regarded the matter of training and their willingness to receive it in order to apply it in their teaching practices.

Table 5 shows the attitudes towards inclusive language. Firstly, regarding their personal use in their mother tongue, the majority of them declared to use it sometimes (75%) and daily (18,8%) whereas 6,3% do not use it or include it in their speech. On foreign languages, 50% of the participants declared to use it sometimes, whereas 18,8% do it every day, another 18,8% do not use it and the remaining 12,5% are eager to do it. Additionally, when asked about their support of inclusive language in the classroom, the majority welcomed inclusive language in their teaching practices (87,5%) whereas 12,5% do not approve of it.

| Teachers' attitudes towards inclusive language | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Question | Yes | Yes, sometimes | No, but I would like to | No |
| Do you use inclusive language in your mother tongue? | 18,8% | 75% | 0 | 6,3% |
| Do you use it in any second language? | 18,8% | 50% | 12,5% | 18,8% |
| Do you support the use of inclusive language in the classroom? | 87,5% | - | - | 12,5% |

Table 5: Teachers' attitudes towards inclusive language

Since the teachers' attitudes towards inclusive language are explored, the following question presented in Figure 18, referred to their conscious use of it during their language lessons. In general, the majority affirmed to use, half of the participants claimed to do it sometimes whereas 18,8% declare that they use it regularly. Furthermore, 6,3% of the sample do not use it because they do not know how to do it whereas the other 6,3% are reluctant.

19. Do you consciously use it in your classes? ¿Lo usas conscientemente en tus clases?
16 respuestas



Legend:
- Yes, on a regular basis / Sí, con regularidad
- Yes, sometimes / Sí, a veces
- No, I do not know how to / No, no sé cómo
- No, I do not want to / No, no quiero

68,8%
18,8%
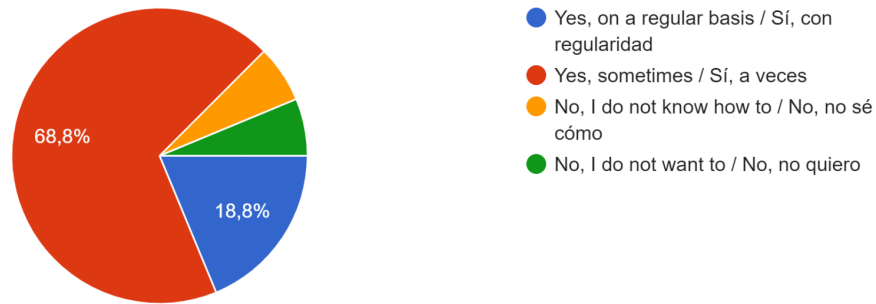
Figure 18: Teachers' conscious use of inclusive language in their classroom

Table 6 presents teachers' answers regarding the training on inclusive language. As seen in Table 6, only 5 of the 16 teachers (31,3%) had received any instruction on the topic either by themselves or through formal education. Additionally, the percentage of teachers willing to receive training on the topic is the big majority of 81,3% versus 18,8% who are not interested. Lastly, at the end of the questionnaire, they were asked about their eagerness to use inclusive language after having participated in the survey. Here, opinions were highly divided. On the one hand, 37,7% said yes, they will be more likely to use it whereas another 37,7% does not know. On the other hand, still, 25% of the teachers do not feel like they would likely use it.

| Teachers' attitudes towards training on inclusive language | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Question | Yes | I do not know | No |
| Have you ever received training on teaching inclusive language? | 31,3% | - | 68,8% |
| In case you have not received any training, would you like to have it in the future? | 81,3% | - | 18,8% |
| Are you more likely to use inclusive language after this survey? | 37,7% | 37,7% | 25% |

Table 6: Teachers' attitudes towards training on inclusive language

## 6. Discussion

In view of the research questions presented above, in this study, the discussion will be limited to confirming the objectives proposed in Section 2 of this Master's dissertation and observing whether, with the results obtained, they favour the previous theories or not. In order to contribute to the clarity of the information presented, the discussion will follow the same

structure as the previous section of Results by discussing each of the research questions proposed.

- **Research question 1:** *How aware are students and teachers of inclusive language?*

In the Results section, different tasks from the questionnaire were presented to students and teachers in order to explore their awareness of inclusive language. There were four different kinds of tasks: choosing a pronoun for a sentence, finding a gender-neutral term, giving examples of discriminating expressions towards women and the LGBTQIA+ community and recognising strategies of inclusive language. The tasks were designed following several inclusive language guidelines such as ONU Mujeres, (2017), UN Women (2017) as well as Valenzuela Sanz and Alonso Vinués (2020).

The first type of question was intended to illustrate whether participants reproduced gender stereotypes in their language or not. Considering the guidelines of ONU Mujeres (2017) and UN Women (2017), the sentences for both English and Spanish were implying stereotypical and traditional gender roles in the job field for men and women respectively, the boss (or leader) and the cleaner (Tosi, 2019). However, the statements were formulated in a way that participants could choose any possible answer free of bias. Regarding the boss-related tasks, the clauses were *"My boss should improve ___ ethical practices"* and *"Rodríguez como líder es ___ mejor"*. On the one hand, the majority of students chose the masculine form *he* (46,4%) or *el* (75%) for each language respectively (see Figures 1 and 3). On the other hand, the answers from the teachers differed between languages. For the English example, the most answered pronoun was *their* (31,3%) followed by the combination *his/her* as well as *her*. On the contrary, in Spanish, the tendency was the masculine form *el* (31,3%) again (see Figure 4). Those previous answers still indicate how gender stereotypes are present in language, as the words *boss* or *líder (leader)* are still highly associated to male roles (Morales-Vidal & Cassany, 2020; Patev *et al*., 2019).

Following the guidelines of ONU Mujeres, (2017), UN Women (2017) as well as Valenzuela Sanz and Alonso Vinués (2020) to avoid gender-stereotyped expressions, the sentences are *"____ finished cleaning before I came back home"* and its equivalent in Spanish *"____ terminó de limpiar antes de que yo volviera a casa"*. Despite the fact that gender roles are slowly changing, care work is still associated with women on many occasions (Kuzmanović Jovanović & Đuričić, 2015; Morales-Vidal & Cassany, 2020), for that reason, participants were asked to choose a pronoun if needed. In the case of English,

although any pronoun was suitable, there is a slight predominance of the masculine pronoun *he* (26,1%) over the feminine pronoun *she* (21,7%) among students, whereas teachers' predominant answers were *they* (25%) and *he* (18,8%). Those answers could be interpreted as a result of stereotypical gender roles vanishing among new generations and society moving towards gender equality.

In line with the results of the questionnaire conducted by Speyer and Schleef (2019) on "Processing 'Gender-neutral' Pronouns", it seems that "the singular *they* is not yet regarded as a third-person pronoun by all participants" but this conception seems to be expanding (p. 804). That can be clearly more appreciated among teachers' elections of pronouns. That could be either due to more sensitivity among teachers or their proficiency in the language, that students might have not yet acquired. Nevertheless, the singular *they* is considered to be more accepted than the Spanish form *elle(s)* as it is not an 'invented word' and it belongs to the language (Pichardo Nieves & Sánchez Hernández, 2022).

The next task related to finding a gender-neutral term for different words suggested by different guidelines such as ONU Mujeres (2017), UN Women (2017) as well as Valenzuela Sanz and Alonso Vinués (2020) caused a bit of confusion among participants but generally, the results were positive. As presented in Table 2, for the pairs *Boyfriend/girlfriend - Novio/novia and Man/Woman - Hombre/Mujer*, participants were familiarised with a gender-neutral form or could easily find an alternative. However, in the case of *Father/Mother - Padre/Madre*, as there is no such term in Spanish to refer to *a parent* without specifying their role, the task became harder so they needed to reflect and try to go beyond. Some of the examples offered were: *familia, familiares, familiar de primer grado, parientes* or *sistema parental* which are not completely equivalent alternatives but depending on the context, could fulfil the same function (Valenzuela Sanz & Alonso Vinués, 2020). The same exact case could be reflected in words such as *son/daughter - hijo/hija* that could be replaced by *child* or *kid* in English but again, do not have a gender-neutral equivalent in Spanish (Papadopoulos, 2022b). That is a small example of how speakers might consider that English grammar favours and/or facilitates the process to be more inclusive than in Spanish.

Equally important, the last example "*Cleaning lady - Señora de la limpieza*" -which inherently is one of the jobs most associated with women- (Kuzmanović Jovanović & Đuričić, 2015; Morales-Vidal & Cassany, 2020), was chosen to see how participants could refer to that job position when that person is unknown to avoid falling into unnecessary

gender stereotypes and continue perpetuating them. As mentioned before in the Results, the most expected answers were *Cleaner-Cleaning staff/person* or *Persona(l) de limpieza* according to UN Women (2017) and ONU Mujeres (2017), respectively. In this case, students encountered more difficulties finding a term in both languages despite the existence of it, unlike the previous example. That could be due either to a lack of competence in the language or an absence of self-reflection regarding their speech.

The task related to finding possible discriminating words or expressions in both languages was totally open-ended so that they could share their perspective on the topic without being restricted as the possibilities are infinite. In general, as presented in the Results, almost half of the students (48%) were not able to recall or give a single example and 11% were considered invalid. That seems to be interesting since most of the students who did answer, provided insults which are generally used amongst young people. However, it is not as surprising that they were not able to offer frequently used expressions, since those might be more difficult to remember or be familiarised with, despite being common in many languages (i.e. *runs like a girl, corre como una niña*).

Since self-awareness and reflection on the language are paramount to constructing a more inclusive mindset, participants had to review their own personal inventory of words and expressions that they might consider discriminatory against women and LGBTQIA+ people. Nevertheless, before discussing the examples, it is important to point out that as remarked before, not all participants were able to recall any term in either language, especially among students. That response could have three different interpretations: their language register is mostly academic and therefore, they are not familiarised with colloquial words and expressions -that are usually the most discriminatory, as exemplified previously on Results-, their foreign language contexts are respectful and thoughtful, hence, there is an absence of such terms or they have not yet reflected on the topic to identify linguistic discrimination in their foreign languages. In fact, these last two hypotheses could be considered invalid as some participants referred to using job titles with the suffix "man" to be discriminative, lexical content that is learned in a formal academic context.

With regard to the examples identified by the participants, the results show a greater familiarisation with discriminative slurs and insults rather than frequently used expressions like the ones discouraged in the guidelines of Naciones Unidas (n.d) and United Nations (n.d.-a). In the first place, regarding words which refer to the LGBTQIA+ community,

participants seemed to be significantly more familiarised with those concerning homosexual men as *"marica"* and *"faggot"* were the two most repeated words and on a lower scale, also *"poof"*, *"queen"* and its equivalent *"reina"*, also referred several times as *"reinona"* in Spanish (Fernández Martín, 2011). Whereas, for homosexual women, -*"lesbian/lesbiana"* and *"dyke/bollera"*- were less frequent. In the second place, the words discriminating against women according to Fernández Martín (2011) are mostly related to sexual activity, "either insults intended to degrade them, or they focus on the sexual act from a male perspective" (p. 77). For instance, *"bitch/perra"*, *"slut/zorra"* and *"whore/puta"* are the most representative ones. The first pair denotes how in both languages the meaning of the masculine form *(dog/perro)* differs from the feminine, as this last has gained a pejorative connotation whilst the first one remains unchangeable. Consequently, participants seem to be aware of that fact.

Following the same line, students seemed aware of other offensive terms such as *"pussy"*, *"sissy"*, *"nenaza"* or *"gallina"* to denote cowardy and directly related to the traditional idea of courage as essentially masculine (Fernández Martín, 2011). Usually, those words are collocated in expressions such as *"Don't be a ..."* and *"No seas ..."* as a form to discourage the other person. Concerning the expressions recognised by the participants, most of them were common in both languages and also in Italian -as they are sayings rather than expressions-, especially those referred to gender roles and questioning their capabilities or choices. That being said, it can be considered that participants were aware of some expressions, however, less than expected. Consequently, that could mean that they either did not understand the premise or that they have not reflected enough on the topic even in their mother language.

As far as teachers are concerned, their proficiency level states that native speakers are undoubtedly more aware than their students. However, that occurs only in their mother tongue. That is the case of the Spanish expression *"ser un coñazo" [to be boring]* that was only recognised by the teachers' group or the English *"lazy cow"* referring to a woman that *'avoids her duties'*. That response matches the tendency of teachers to be better at finding a gender-neutral word in English. Regardless, awareness of the native language was only analysed among teachers, consequently, students' mother tongue was not considered and their performance was not able to be evaluated. Taking that into account, the fact that the number of valid answers was that low, could be a sign of a possible lack of self-awareness in their mother tongue.

Focusing on the strategies to use inclusive language in English and Spanish (Figures 9 to 12, in general, a big part of the participants claimed to be familiarised with the different strategies. The only group that showed less knowledge of them were the teachers in regard to the Spanish strategies, which might be due to the lack of knowledge of at least 5 of them. In that case, not considering them, more than half of the teachers were aware of the different strategies for both languages despite only being used by nearly half of the sample.

After having analysed the knowledge and usage of strategies, there are some interesting findings. The strategy for English "Omitting the (masculine) gender reference" *("Each professor should send one (of his) assistants to the conference.")* is the most known by teachers and one of the most known by students; regardless, different habits are shown. The teachers' group uses it regularly whereas the students' group indicated to be the least used for them. Furthermore, that same case tends to happen with three of the most representative strategies for inclusive language in Spanish: "Pronombres neutros elle/elles" *("Elles son inteligentes"),* Uso de -@, -x o -e *("tod@s, todxs, todes")* and "Empleo de sustantivos colectivos y abstractos" *("Alumnado" por "Los alumnos").* Those were the most recognised strategies and the least used at the same time, especially among the students' group. On the one hand, in the case of the two first strategies, that could be due to the novelty and relatively recent incorporation -as discussed previously- into the language as well as the controversy that it still raises nowadays as its use is not completely supported by the Royal Academy of Spanish (Clarín.com, 2020; Fundéu, 2019; RAE, 2022). That lack of regularisation leaves its use unclear for both, teachers and students, and therefore, also its formal teaching and learning (Pichardo Nieves & Sánchez Hernández, 2022). On the other hand, the use of the third strategy requires a certain language proficiency that depends on the level of the speaker. Consequently, that could be the reason why it seems to be well-known by both groups but only used regularly by the teachers.

Overall, as a result of the comment of the previous examples, it can be seen that many participants used strategies to promote gender inclusion, in general towards the binarism (man/woman) and/or avoiding genderization. Some of the most used ones for both languages were "Slashes", "Gender-stereotype-free expressions" and "Gender-neutral expressions". Furthermore, the "Gender-neutral pronoun *they/their*" was highly present in the English examples. All in all, participants' outcomes show positive results and reveal certain awareness of inclusive language as multiple of those strategies are being included in participants' daily speech.

- **Research question 2:** *What are the beliefs of students and teachers towards inclusive language in English and Spanish?*

The attitudes of participants towards inclusive language are very important to determine whether they are more likely to include it in their speech and consequently, if they feel that there is a common need to be educated on the topic. Students and teachers were asked about their perceptions and opinions towards inclusive language as a concept and regarding both languages, in order to discover any possible differences.

First of all, the opinion of participants towards inclusive language suggests whether that happens to be or not a matter of importance in their language learning. In contrast to the studies of Lohe (2022) and Pichardo Nieves and Sánchez Hernández (2022) where participants' opinions were divided; the majority showed a positive attitude as 68% stated that "I think it is not only necessary for nowadays society, it should be promoted and used as much as possible." and another 22% that "respect it but do not use it" (see Figure 13). This last opinion coincides with the studies of Cremades and Fernández-Portero (2022) and Patev et al. (2019) as despite participants' positive attitude towards gender-inclusive language, they admitted not using it or putting a conscious effort into their day-to-day due to its difficulty.

Secondly, with regard to whether English and Spanish were considered sexist, in agreement with the studies of Alonso Torío (2016) and Gutiérrez Conde (2022), the general perception is that "No, it is not sexist but we occasionally make use of words and expressions that are discriminatory (on the basis of sex/gender)". However, in both groups, the perceptions are lower towards Spanish, where the opinion "Yes, it is a language whose lexical and grammatical structure discriminates women and does not make them visible." gained more presence, especially among teachers (see Figure 15). Those perceptions could be guided by two possible opinions: on the one hand, the fact that most words in English do not necessarily imply gender and therefore, fewer opportunities for exclusion. On the other hand, the convention in Spanish of the "masculine generic" as a standard for referring to a group consisting of all genders, is often criticised as non-gender-neutral, as well as the fact that inherently almost all words carry gender markers (Kaufmann & Bohner, 2014; Tosi, 2019).

Thirdly and directly related to the perceptions of participants towards English and Spanish as sexist languages, the majority perceive English to be easier to use inclusive language (64,3% of students and 62,5% of teachers). Nevertheless, many participants also stated that either none of them was easier or they were not sure. Those answers are directly

consequent with their own perceptions towards English as less sexist than Spanish. However, once again, that also coincides with Patev *et al*. (2019) as participants encountered difficulties to use gender-inclusive language in general and consequently, determining whether any language is easier than the other. The reason why, could be a lack of regularisation of inclusive language, especially in Spanish and therefore, fewer opportunities for its use.

All in all, according to the results, the attitudes towards inclusive language among participants show a general great reception. For instance, it seems to be a common agreement on the perception of English as more likely to use inclusive language. That is because it seems to be considered less sexist and easier to adapt to a more gender-inclusive speech compared with Spanish.

- **Research question 3:** *How likely are teachers to have training on inclusive language?*

There is no doubt that the teacher's attitude towards inclusive language is a strong determinant in its teaching and therefore, its receptiveness to learners. Few authors researched the topic, nonetheless, in relation to training, it remains an unexplored field (Alonso Torío, 2016; Cremades & Fernández-Portero, 2022; Lohe, 2022; Parra & Serafini, 2021; Patev *et al*., 2019; Pichardo Nieves & Sánchez Hernández, 2022). Hereafter, attitudes towards inclusive language and its training in foreign languages will be discussed.

Teachers were asked about their habits regarding the use of inclusive language in their L1 and L2. As presented in Table 5, once again, in contrast to Pichardo Nieves and Sánchez Hernández (2022) where opinions towards its use among teachers were generally negative, in the present research, the majority were situated on "Yes" and "Yes, sometimes", being the last one the most selected opinion (75% for L1 and 50% for L2). Just a few of them were reluctant to use it (less than 6,3% in L1 and 19% in L2). Thus, attitudes appear to be positive as 87,5% of teachers support its use in the language classroom. Following this, when asked about their conscious use of inclusive language in their lessons (see Figure 18), the general trend continues to be favourable: "Yes, sometimes" by 68,8% of teachers, directly followed by 18,8% who selected "Yes, on a regular basis". Those results reflect a great willingness and openness on the part of teachers to inclusive language and its use as individuals and also as educators.

Bearing in mind the positive attitudes of teachers towards inclusive language, training on the topic would encourage their use as they could be given a solid foundation rather than being limited to self-learning (Cremades & Fernández-Portero, 2022; Patev *et al*., 2019). As shown in Table 6, only 31,3% of the teachers received any kind of training on inclusive language during their career, despite their willingness (81,3%). That coincides with the study of Lohe (2022) in which almost half of the participants had attended any seminar on gender, regardless, none of them were on EFL. Hence, it seems to be a subject that provokes great interest among teachers and requires attention. In fact, in agreement with García-Holgado *et al*., (2021), "this topic should be promoted by the Universities. Also, the creation of training courses for the transformation of contents, educational guides and resources for a more inclusive teaching" (p. 1685). Nonetheless, regarding their likelihood to use that type of language, their opinions were highly divided as 37,7% answered "Yes" and "Not sure" and 25% said "No". Those attitudes seem quite incongruent due to their previous willingness. That could be interpreted as teachers willing to receive training in order to create their self-opinion on gender-inclusive language and afterwards decide whether they would apply it in their classroom.

In line with that, it seems unquestionable that having the opportunity to receive any kind of training on inclusive language to language teachers, would favour its use and self-reflection. As García-Holgado *et al*. (2021) declared, that training could be integrated into the curriculum in different ways by incorporating specific subjects regarding equality that are directly linked to gender-inclusive language. That need seems to be important for those university degrees and masters directly related to linguistics but also for those aimed at teaching at any level (Kindergarten, Elementary, Middle and High school as well as adults) in order to continue perpetuating inclusive education as well as a safe and respectful learning space.

## 7. Conclusions

Throughout this journey of exploring and delving deeper into the field of inclusive language, diverse research and findings have been accomplished. Consequently, during the process of implementation, some general conclusions began to emerge and finally, in the discussion, they were formally corroborated based on the answers of students and teachers.

Following the purposed starting point of exploring participants' attitudes and perceptions, some specific conclusions were drawn. In the first place, regarding students' and

teachers' awareness, it could be seen that most of them were aware of inclusive language in different aspects (pronoun choice, gender-neutral terms, discriminatory expressions and strategies). In that regard, the task of recognising language strategies was the most satisfactory as they show a general knowledge and familiarisation with it. On the contrary, recognition of discriminatory expressions seemed to be the most challenging.

Concerning participants' beliefs on inclusive language, they generally showed positive and open attitudes as they considered its use and promotion to be important. Furthermore, comparing English and Spanish, the common belief is that English is less sexist than Spanish and in case of having to choose one of them as easier to use inclusive language, they would definitely pick it. However, they still showed uncertainty on whether one is more feasible than the other.

Focusing on the teachers, in general, they seem supportive towards inclusive language in both their personal and professional settings as well as its use in the classroom. More specifically, regarding training in gender-inclusive language, just a few had received any kind of education and therefore, they are enthusiastic about receiving it in the future. Nevertheless, their general likeness towards its use after the questionnaire was diverse, which leaves an open door for future research.

In essence, having discussed the main research questions and met the specific objectives, it can be stated that gender-inclusive language seems to be a familiar topic among participants in the majority of the cases and is perceived as an interesting and unexplored topic. That means that the main objective of exploring students' and teachers' attitudes and perceptions of inclusive language in their foreign languages has been satisfactorily accomplished. Having said that, universities and educational institutions ought to adapt to society's needs, therefore, they have an important role in promoting inclusion towards training on inclusive language among the academic community. This way, teachers would have the tools to foster debate and consequently, self-reflection not only on a metalinguistic level but also culturally related. According to Kaufmann and Bohner, (2014), "as long as we face inequalities, discrimination and oppression, we need to stand up against them, we need to reflect our own privileges and practices, we need controversies. And we need language to talk about it." (p. 15). Nevertheless, there is still further research to be done on the subject of foreign and second languages but it seems to be a growing field.

## 8.    Pedagogical implications

After having conducted this research on inclusive language in foreign languages, more specifically English and Spanish, there are some aspects that can help to get familiarised with the topic. Considering the following recommendations to the classroom can raise awareness of both teachers and students as well as encourage its use.

Taking into account that inclusive language seems to be a modern topic in linguistics, that is a good opportunity for engagement and to motivate students into language learning as well as to make connections with the other languages that they speak. That is because gender-inclusive language and its expressions are not particular to a language and are typically perpetuated among cultures. That should be done through debate and fostering self-reflection on the language; the meaning of their expressions, the origin of the terms, and finding alternatives (Castillo Sánchez & Mayo, 2019; Cremades & Fernández-Portero, 2022; Erdely Ruiz & García Chávez, 2023; Lohe, 2022; Tosi, 2019).

Debating in the classroom, more specifically on the language, matches the student-centred education and creates critical individuals. That helps to develop students' critical thinking and their identity in the foreign language, which is linked to the existential competence from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) -which is now also written in gender-neutral language- (Council of Europe, 2020). Furthermore, that reflection would help to have a more real connection with the language beyond the academic field.

Due to the lack of formal training on the topic, some authors such as Coimbra (2023), through the British Council, as well as Parra and Serafini (2021) among others, designed materials to bring into the classroom. Those teaching materials are created for teachers as they are the ones proficient in the taught language and therefore, the first ones who need to be more sensitive (Vizcarra-Garcia, 2021) in order to bring that knowledge into the class. Those are some examples of starting points for teachers of English and Spanish as second/foreign languages to begin raising awareness on gender neutrality and inclusive language in their classrooms.

Nevertheless, despite the responsibility of teachers, it cannot be left to them alone. According to García-Holgado *et al*. (2021), "there are various ways of incorporating the gender perspective into university teaching, (...) specifics degrees focused on gender studies,

(...) specific subjects of equality, (...) integrated into any subject of the curriculum [as well as] guidelines for education in equality and co-education". However, there is still no consistency among educational institutions and further decisions need to be addressed.

## 9.    Limitations and future lines of research

Both the results and the discussion have been favourable regarding this study's research questions. Furthermore, positive results in the field of inclusive language among teachers and students of foreign languages have been shown which leaves the door open to future investigation. Nonetheless, some limitations during the process have been found and show that further efforts should be done in future research.

The first significant limitation lies in the sample obtained for the study. There are three main reasons that support that consideration. In the first place, the number of participants in the study to have a more meaningful picture of the situation, was lower than desirable, especially for teachers (16 participants) as not all of them were able to speak both languages of the study. Secondly, the lack of gender diversity among participants as 90% of students and 87% of teachers were women as observed in Kuzmanović Jovanović and Đuričić, (2015) that teaching roles are rather associated with women. Lastly, the absence of diversity in the social background of the students, as they all belong to the same private university and consequently their answers might not have shown a common real perspective.

The second limitation regards participants' comprehension of some of the premises of the questionnaire. Originally, the utterances tried to be as impartial as possible in order to avoid bias by not giving examples of what they were supposed to answer. However, that might have led to confusion for them in order to understand the aim of certain questions and consequently receive an inexistent or invalid answer.

Once limitations are established, in order to continue researching the field and achieve significant results, it seems important to bear in mind the context of the study by paying careful attention to the sample and the research instruments. Consequently, future research would be encouraged. Firstly, to expand the sample and compare two or more universities with similar studies, in order to find more diversity among participants, their context as well as a larger number of students and teachers. Also, different educational stages apart from university should be considered. Secondly, despite the small amount of research on the topic, it would be recommended to follow other similar studies in order to elaborate more accurate

questions as well as to test the questionnaires on more people before their application. Likewise, due to its importance, research on teaching and learning languages from the gender perspective, especially in the field of foreign languages should be considered.

All in all, great research has been conducted to have a broad picture of the field of inclusive language in English and Spanish as foreign languages. Nonetheless, there is always room for improvement as contingencies and unconsidered factors may arise during the research process.

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APPENDIX: Questionnaire on Inclusive Language in EFL and ELE for students and teachers

# Inclusive language in EFL/ELE
## Lenguaje inclusivo en EFL/ELE

**This questionnaire has been designed with the aim of carrying out a study on inclusive language in foreign languages (English and Spanish) for a Master's Thesis (TFM). Therefore, the questions will deal with both languages and will be presented bilingually. The estimated time for completion is 10 minutes. The data collected are anonymous, confidential and for educational purposes.**

Este cuestionario ha sido diseñado con el objetivo de realizar un estudio sobre el lenguaje inclusivo en lenguas extranjeras (inglés y español) para un Trabajo Fin de Máster (TFM). Por lo tanto, las preguntas tratarán sobre ambos idiomas y se presentarán de forma bilingüe. El tiempo estimado para su realización es de 10 minutos. Los datos recogidos son anónimos, confidenciales y con fines educativos.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language
ELE: Español como Lengua Extranjera

**Thank you very much for your cooperation!** ¡Muchísimas gracias por tu colaboración!

*Indicates that the question is mandatory

**Age** *
Edad

_____

**Gender** *
Género
*Mark only one oval.*

◯ Woman/Mujer Man/Hombre

◯ Non-binary/No binario

◯ Prefer not to say/Prefiero no decirlo

◯ Not listed/No listado

**What are your pronouns? For example: she/her**     *

¿Cuáles son tus pronombres? Por ejemplo: ella/ellas

_____

**Do you belong to the LGBTQIA+ community?** *
¿Perteneces a la comunidad LGBTQIA+?

*Mark only one oval.*

◯      Yes/Sí

◯      No

◯      Not sure yet/No lo tengo claro

◯      Prefer not to say/Prefiero no decirlo

**Native language(s)** *
Idioma(s) nativo(s)
*(Answer in English, please).*

*Select all that apply.*

☐      Italian / Italiano
☐      Spanish / Español
☐      English / Inglés

☐      Otro:_____

**Languages that you speak** *
Idiomas que hablas

_____

**Language you teach** *
Idiomas que enseñas

*Select all that apply.*

☐      English / Inglés
☐      Spanish / Español

**What level of English do you consider you have?** *

¿Qué nivel de inglés consideras que tienes?

*Mark only one oval.*

◯ A1

◯ A2

◯ B1

◯ B2

◯ C1

◯ C2

◯ I do not speak English / No hablo inglés

**What level of Spanish do you consider you have?** *

¿Qué nivel de español consideras que tienes?

*Mark only one oval.*

◯ A1

◯ A2

◯ B1

◯ B2

◯ C1

◯ C2

◯ I do not speak Spanish / No hablo español

# INITIAL QUESTIONS / PREGUNTAS INICIALES

**The questions are designed for English and Spanish, if you do not speak one of them, leave it blank or answer only for the one you know.**

Las preguntas están diseñadas para inglés y español, si no hablas alguno de ellos, déjalo en blanco o contesta sólo para el que conozcas.

**A.      Complete the sentences with the pronoun (if necessary)**

Completa las frases con un pronombre en cada caso (si es necesario)

   *My boss should improve_____ethical practices.* *

   _____

   *_finished cleaning before I came back home.* *

   _____

   *Rodríguez como líder es_____mejor* *

   _____

   *_terminó de limpiar antes de que yo volviera a casa.* *

   _____

**B.      Could you find a gender-neutral form for the following words?**

¿Podrías encontrar una alternativa que no implique género para las siguientes palabras?

***Please, write them in both languages. There may be more than one option.***

Por favor, escríbalas en ambos idiomas. Puede haber más de una opción.

   **Boyfriend/Girlfriend** *
   Novio/Novia

   _____

**Father/Mother** *

Padre/Madre

---

**Men/Women**     *

Hombre/Mujer

---

**Cleaning lady**     *

Señora de la limpieza

---

**Do you know any specific expression or word (in English and Spanish) that discriminates against women or the LGBTQIA+ community?** *

¿Conoces alguna expresión o palabra (en inglés y español) que discrimine a las mujeres o la comunidad LGBTQIA+?

**Add as many as you can think of.** Añade todas las que se te ocurran.

---

# INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE / LENGUAJE INCLUSIVO

**1. Match the definition with the right concept.**

Relaciona la definición con el concepto correcto:

**A language that avoids the use of certain expressions or words that might be considered to exclude particular groups of people (such as physical and psychological conditions, ethnia, sexual orientation…).** *

Un lenguaje que evita el uso de ciertas expresiones o palabras que podrían considerarse excluyentes para determinados grupos de personas (como condiciones físicas y psicológicas, etnia, orientación sexual...).

*Mark only one oval.*

- ◯ Inclusive language / Lenguaje inclusivo
- ◯ Non-sexist language / Lenguaje no sexista
- ◯ Gender-inclusive language / Lenguaje de género neutro

**A language that does not discriminate on the basis of gender, especially not against women.** *

Un lenguaje que no discrimina por razón de sexo, especialmente a las mujeres.

*Mark only one oval.*

- ◯ Inclusive language / Lenguaje inclusivo
- ◯ Non-sexist language / Lenguaje no sexista
- ◯ Gender-inclusive language / Lenguaje de género neutro

**A language that does not refer to one particular gender.** *

Un lenguaje que no se refiera a un género en particular.

*Mark only one oval.*

- ◯ Inclusive language / Lenguaje inclusivo
- ◯ Non-sexist language / Lenguaje no sexista
- ◯ Gender-inclusive language / Lenguaje de género neutro

**2. Which of the following strategies for inclusive language in English do know? Which ones do you use?**

¿Cuáles de las siguientes estrategias para el lenguaje inclusivo en inglés conoces? ¿Cuáles utilizas?

*Select all that apply.*

| | I know it/La conozco | I use it/La uso |
|---|---|---|
| Neuter pronouns (they/their) ("Each student must say their name" instead of "Each student must say his name") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Gender stereotype-free expressions ("The cleaner/cleaning staff" instead of "The cleaning lady") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Gender-neutral expressions ("Partner" instead of "Boyfriend/girlfriend") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Omitting the (masculine) gender reference ("Each professor should send one (of his) assistants to the conference.") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Using both feminine and masculine reference words ("Each professor should send his or her assistant to the conference.") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Alternate pronouns ("Whoever she is. Wherever he lives. Every child deserves a childhood.") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Slashes ("He/she or s/he is a good student. That is important to him/her.") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Using the passive voice ("The test must be submitted" instead of "The student must submit his test") | ☐ | ☐ |

**3. Which of the following strategies for inclusive language in Spanish do know? Which ones do you use?**

¿Cuáles de las siguientes estrategias para el lenguaje inclusivo en español conoces? ¿Cuáles utilizas?

*Select all that apply.*

| | I know it/La conozco | I use it/La uso |
|---|---|---|
| Pronombres neutros elle/elles ("Elles son inteligentes") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Dobletes de género (paréntesis: "niños(as)" o barras: "niños/as") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Desdoblamientos o duplicaciones ("maestros y maestras", "niños y niñas"). | ☐ | ☐ |
| Uso de -@, -x o -e ("tod@s, todxs, todes") | ☐ | ☐ |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Expresiones libres de estereotipos de género ("El personal de limpieza" por "La señora de la limpieza") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Empleo de sustantivos colectivos y abstractos ("Alumnado" por "Los alumnos") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Palabras sin marca de género: sustantivos (docente), pronombres (alguien, nadie), adjetivos (brillante) y determinantes invariables (cada, tal). | ☐ | ☐ |
| Epicenos (sustantivos con único género: la víctima, el personaje). | ☐ | ☐ |
| Estructuras impersonales ("Si usted quiere…" por "Si el solicitante quiere…") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Modificación de voz activa a pasiva ("El test debe ser presentado" por "El solicitante debe presentar el test") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Perífrasis ("El personal docente" por "Los profesores") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Expresiones metonímicas ("España acogerá las olimpiadas" por "Los españoles acogerán las olimpiadas") | ☐ | ☐ |
| Incorporación de una frase explicativa que clarifique la mención tanto de hombres como mujeres. | ☐ | ☐ |

## PERCEPTIONS & ATTITUDES / PERCEPCIONES Y ACTITUDES

**4. Do you consider English to be a sexist language?** *

¿Consideras que el inglés es un idioma sexista?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ◯ Yes, it is a language whose lexical and grammatical structure discriminates women and does not make them visible. / Sí, es una lengua cuya estructura léxica y gramatical discrimina a las mujeres y no las visibiliza.

- ◯ No, it is not sexist but we occasionally make use of words and expressions that are discriminatory (on the basis of sex/gender.) / No, no es sexista pero en ocasiones hacemos uso de palabras y expresiones discriminatorias (por razón de sexo/género).

- ◯ No, it is not sexist nor reflects the patriarchal culture. / No, no es sexista ni refleja la cultura patriarcal.

**5. Do you consider Spanish to be a sexist language?** *

¿Consideras que el español es un idioma sexista?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ◯ Yes, it is a language whose lexical and grammatical structure discriminates women and does not make them visible. / Sí, es una lengua cuya estructura léxica y gramatical discrimina a las mujeres y no las visibiliza.

- ◯ No, it is not sexist but we occasionally make use of words and expressions that are discriminatory (on the basis of sex/gender.) / No, no es sexista pero en ocasiones hacemos uso de palabras y expresiones discriminatorias (por razón de sexo/género).

- ◯ No, is not sexist nor reflects the patriarchal culture. / No, no es sexista ni refleja la cultura patriarcal.

**6. Which of the following statements best matches your opinion on inclusive language?** *

¿Cuál de los siguientes enunciados coincide más con tu opinión acerca del lenguaje inclusivo?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ◯ I think it is not only necessary for nowadays society, it should be promoted and used as much as possible. / Creo que no sólo es necesario para la sociedad actual, sino que debería promoverse y utilizarse en la medida de lo posible.

- ◯ I know it and respect it but I don't use it. / Lo conozco y lo respeto pero no lo uso.

- ◯ I do not have an opinion about it yet. / Todavía no tengo una opinión al respecto.

- ◯ I think it is a trend and soon will be forgotten. / Creo que es una moda y pronto se olvidará..

**7. Do you consider that inclusive language is linked to a certain ideology, community,...? If so, which one?** *

¿Consideras que el lenguaje inclusivo está asociado a una determinada ideología, comunidad,...? En caso afirmativo, ¿cuál?

**8. Do you use inclusive language in your mother tongue?** *

¿Utilizas el lenguaje inclusivo en tu lengua materna?

*Mark only one oval.*

    ◯    Yes / Sí

    ◯    Yes, sometimes / Sí, a veces

    ◯    No, but I would like to / No, pero me gustaría

    ◯    No

**9. Do you use it in any second language?** *

¿Lo utilizas en alguna segunda lengua?

*Mark only one oval.*

    ◯    Yes / Sí

    ◯    Yes, sometimes / Sí, a veces

    ◯    No, but I would like to / No, pero me gustaría

    ◯    No

**10. Between English and Spanish, do you consider any of them to be easier to use inclusive language? Why?** *

Entre el inglés y el español, ¿consideras que alguno de ellos es más fácil para utilizar el lenguaje inclusivo? ¿Por qué?

**11. Would you like to have any training about inclusive language?** *

¿Te gustaría recibir alguna formación sobre lenguaje inclusivo?

*Mark only one oval.*

    ◯    Yes / Sí

    ◯    No

**12. Would you be more likely to use it in your second language(s) if you were trained or educated in it?** *

¿Sería más probable que lo utilizases en tu(s) segunda(s) lengua(s) si recibieras formación o educación al respecto?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ⬭ Yes/Sí
- ⬭ I do not know / No lo sé
- ⬭ No

**13. What CFER level do you consider appropriate to start teaching/learning about inclusive language?** *

¿Qué nivel de CFER consideras adecuado para empezar a enseñar/aprender sobre el lenguaje inclusivo?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ⬭ A1
- ⬭ A2
- ⬭ B1
- ⬭ B2
- ⬭ C1
- ⬭ C2
- ⬭ I am not sure / No lo tengo claro

**14. Do you consider that the use of "x", "e" or "@" in Spanish makes all genders visible?***

¿Consideras que el uso de "x", "e" o "@" visibiliza todos los géneros?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ⬭ Yes / Sí
- ⬭ No
- ⬭ I do not speak Spanish / No hablo español

**15. Have you ever used "x", "-e" or "@" to refer to a mixed group?**                 *

¿Alguna vez has usado "x", "-e" o "@" para recortar a un grupo mixto?

**For example**/Por ejemplo: compañerxs, compañeres, compañer@s o Latinx.

*Mark only one oval.*

◯　　Yes / Sí

◯　　No

◯　　I do not speak Spanish / No hablo español

**16a. Have you ever been asked for your pronouns in the language class?**              *

¿Alguna vez te han preguntado por tus pronombres en la clase de idiomas?

*Mark only one oval.*

◯　　Yes / Sí

◯　　No

**16b. If not, would you like to be asked?**                 *

Si no es así, ¿te gustaría que te lo preguntasen?

*Mark only one oval.*

◯　　Yes / Sí

◯　　I do not care / Me da igual

◯　　No

**<u>TRAINING / FORMACIÓN</u>**[5]

**18. Do you support the use of inclusive language in the classroom?** *

¿Apoyas el uso de lenguaje inclusivo en el aula?

*Mark only one oval.*

    ◯    Yes / Sí

    ◯    No

**19. Do you consciously use it in your classes?** *

¿Lo usas conscientemente en tus clases?

*Mark only one oval.*

    ◯    Yes, on a regular basis / Sí, con regularidad

    ◯    Yes, sometimes / Sí, a veces

    ◯    No, I do not know how to / No, no sé cómo

    ◯    No, I do not want to / No, no quiero

**20. Have you ever received training on teaching inclusive language? If yes, where?**     *

¿Alguna vez has recibido formación sobre la enseñanza de lenguaje inclusivo? En caso afirmativo, ¿dónde?

*Select all that apply.*

    ☐    University (Bachelor's, Masters…) / Universidad (Grado, Máster…)

    ☐    Teacher training by the organisation (work, university,...) / Formación de profesorado (trabajo, universidad…)

    ☐    Training courses / Cursos de formación

    ☐    By myself / Por mi cuenta

    ☐    No

    ☐    Otro: _____

---

[5] This section is intended only for teachers.

**21. Why did you do that training?** *

¿Por qué hiciste esa formación?

*Select all that apply.*

☐ It was compulsory at my institution/workplace. / Era obligatoria en mi institución/trabajo.

☐ I was interested to develop my knowledge about the topic. / Tenía interés en desarrollar mi conocimiento sobre el tema.

☐ To improve my CV. / Para mejorar mi CV.

☐ Because it affects me personally (a non-binary or acquaintance type of person). / Porque me afecta personalmente (un tipo de persona no binaria o conocida).

☐ I think it is important. / Considero que es importante.

☐ It is a popular/trendy topic. / Es un tema popular/actual.

☐ I have not received any training. / No he recibido ninguna formación.

☐ Otro:

_____

**22. What kind of content did you learn? Were ways to apply them in the classroom taught?** *

¿Qué tipo de contenidos aprendiste? ¿Se enseñaron formas de aplicarlos en las clases?

_____

_____

**23. After the training, did you feel more confident to use/apply it? Did you actually apply it afterwards?** *

Después de la formación, ¿sentiste mayor confianza para usarlo/aplicarlo? ¿Lo aplicaste después?

*Mark only one oval.*

◯ Yes, I felt more confident but I did not apply it. / Sí, sentí mayor confianza pero no lo apliqué.

◯ Yes, I felt more confident and I apply it. / Sí, sentí mayor confianza y lo apliqué.

◯ No, I did not feel more confident and I do not apply it. / No, no sentí más confianza y no lo apliqué.

◯ I have not received any training. / No he recibido ninguna formación.

**24. In case you have not received any training, would you like to have it in the future?** *

En caso de no haber recibido ninguna formación, ¿te gustaría tenerla en el futuro?

*Mark only one oval.*

◯ Yes / Sí

◯ No

**25. Would you avoid teaching inclusive language in any specific situation or context?***

¿Evitarías enseñar lenguaje inclusivo en alguna situación o contexto específicos?

_____

**26. Have you ever asked/thought about asking for students' pronouns in the EFL/ELE class?***

¿Alguna vez has preguntado/pensado en preguntar por los pronombres de tus estudiantes en la clase de EFL/ELE?

*Mark only one oval.*

◯ Yes, I do it on a regular basis / Sí, lo hago regularmente

◯ Yes, I have done it occasionally / Sí, lo he hecho en ocasiones Yes, I have

◯ thought about it / Sí, lo he pensado

◯ No

**27. Would you change your speech if you would have students identified as**     *
**non-binary?**

¿Cambiarías tu discurso si tuvieras estudiantes que se identificasen como género no binario?

*Mark only one oval.*

◯ Yes / Sí

◯ No

**28. Are you more likely to use inclusive language after this survey?** *

¿Es más probable que utilices el lenguaje inclusivo después de la encuesta?

*Mark only one oval.*

◯      Yes / Sí

◯      I do not know / No lo sé

◯      No

Thank you so much for your cooperation!
**¡Muchísimas gracias por tu colaboración!**
**If you think something has been left out or you would like to add, do not hesitate!**
Si crees que se ha olvidado algo o que le gustaría añadir, ¡no lo dude!

**Extra comments**
Comentarios extra

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____