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INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE IN LANGUAGE CLASSES

ABSTRACT

The goal of this article is to draw attention to the importance of introducing inclusive language (IL) in second language classrooms. While there is an extensive literature on the topic of IL, there remains a gap in research focusing on its application in educational settings, particularly in second language teaching. After providing a brief overview of definitions and debates about IL, the article will offer recommendations for implementing IL in three languages: English (natural gendered), Spanish (grammatical gendered) and Hungarian (genderless). Finally, a few activities designed for these languages will be presented with the aim of encouraging second language teachers to integrate the topic of IL into their teaching practice with the purpose of developing students' language skills and fostering reflection on the sociocultural implications of IL.

Keywords: second language classroom, inclusive language, linguistic sexism, gendered languages

ABSTRAKT

JĘZYK INKLUZYWNY NA LEKCJACH JĘZYKA OBCEGO

Celem artykułu jest podkreślenie znaczenia języka inkluzywnego (IL) na lekcjach języka obcego. Chociaż na temat IL napisano już wiele, znacznie mniej jest badań na temat jego wykorzystania na lekcji, a jeszcze mniej dotyczących jego obecności na zajęciach z języka obcego. Po krótkim przedstawieniu definicji i opinii na temat IL, podane zostaną pewne zalecenia dotyczące jego stosowania w nauczaniu trzech języków: angielskim (z rodzajem naturalnym), hiszpańskim (z uwzględnieniem rodzaju gramatycznego) i węgierskim (bez rodzaju). Na koniec przedstawione zostaną ćwiczenia, które mogą być zastosowane w jednym lub kilku z tych języków. Mają one na celu zachęcenie nauczycieli

do stosowania tych wytycznych podczas prowadzenia zajęć, by rozwijać umiejętności językowe uczniów i umożliwić im podjęcie refleksji nad społeczno-kulturowym tłem danego języka.

Słowa kluczowe: zajęcia z języka obcego, język inkluzywny, seksizm językowy, języki z uwarunkowaniem rodzajowym

1. Introduction

Teachers today face significant challenges in adapting to recent changes in language. One notable shift is the evolving role of the teacher. A growing trend among students is the preference for autonomous learning and self-teaching, which has led to the assumption of tasks that were traditionally managed by teachers.

Other noteworthy changes involve the language used in the classroom and how students are addressed. The increasing visibility of feminism and the growing presence of the LGBTQ+ community in society have contributed to a demand for their representation in both everyday language and formal communication. This shift has led to the rise of inclusive language, a topic that is increasingly debated in media and academic circles, and is gaining importance in educational settings.

Inclusive language (IL) is now an undeniable reality in many English and Spanish-speaking countries. Regardless of individual opinions or official stances, students learning English or Spanish as foreign languages are likely to encounter IL in interactions with native speakers. Therefore, it is crucial to introduce its use and the sociocultural context behind it, while avoiding imposition.

2. What is Inclusive Language?

Inclusive language (IL) is often used as a synonym for non-sexist language. Therefore, it is essential to understand the nature of sexism and its various types.

"Sexism is prejudice or discrimination based on sex or gender, especially against girls and women"[1].

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[1] *Britannica*, [online], https://www.britannica.com/topic/sexism [accessed: 26.06.2024].

Gender stereotypes, such as the belief that women are less rational, more emotional, and better caretakers, are reflected in everyday language use. "As a consequence, language subtly reproduces the social asymmetries of status and power in favour of men, which are attached to the corresponding social roles". As a result, the male prototype often serves as the default human model. This phenomenon appears in the structure of many languages, though its intensity may vary, regardless of the grammatical system of the language[2].

The Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) identifies several types of sexism, including labor and economic sexism, political sexism (encompassing disparities in voting rights, access to political and administrative positions, and wage gaps), social sexism (manifested through abuse, rape, discrimination, and acts of revenge), family-related sexism (involving inequities in roles), advertising sexism (depicting women as sexual objects), and linguistic sexism[3].

A distinction must also be made between linguistic sexism and sexism in discourse. Sexism in discourse is exemplified by statements such as, "You are really smart for someone so pretty!" told by a man to a female colleague. Linguistic sexism, on the other hand, originates from the language system itself. A frequently cited example is the use of the masculine generic in Romance languages, though it remains a subject of considerable debate[4].

Since IL is a still an evolving phenomenon, there are several definitions for it:

Language that avoids the use of certain expressions or words that might be considered to exclude particular groups of people, especially gender-specific words, such as 'man', 'mankind', and masculine pronouns, the use of which might be considered to exclude women[5].

Using gender-inclusive language means speaking and writing in a way that does not discriminate against a particular sex, social gender or gender identity, and does not perpetuate gender stereotypes. Given the key role of language in shaping cultural and social attitudes, using gender-inclusive language is a powerful way to promote gender equality and eradicate gender bias[6].

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[2] *Oxford Research Encyclopedias*, [online], https://oxfordre.com/communication/display/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228613-e-470 [accessed: 26.06.2024].

[3] Real Academia Española, *Sobre sexismo lingüístico, femeninos de profesión, y masculino genérico*, Madrid 2020, p. 490.

[4] Ibidem, p. 491.

[5] *Collins Dictionary*, [online], https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/inclusive-language [accessed: 26.06.2024].

[6] United Nations, *Gender inclusive language*, [online], https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/ [accessed: 26.06.2024].

Inclusive communication that respects and includes all communities is free from sexist, racist and other discriminatory language. It does not inadvertently exclude groups, and it avoids stereotypes, loaded words and patronising descriptors"[7].

IL aims to show respect towards minorities, members of the LGBTQ+ community, individuals with disablilities, and women.

In this context, IL will be treated as synonymous with non-sexist language.

The primary objective of non-sexist language is to increase the visibility of women, who, for centuries, were confined to domestic roles and household tasks. However, the social transformations of the 20th and 21st centuries necessitated corresponding changes in language. A common example is the evolution of professional titles. In English, terms such as *flight attendant* have replaced *stewardess*, and *chairperson* is now used instead of *chairman*. Similarly, in Spanish, the emergence of feminine forms like *abogada* (lawyer), *jueza* (judge), and *fontanera* (plumber) reflects a shift from traditionally masculine forms (*abogado*, *juez*, *fontanero*), which were previously used exclusively due to male predominance in these professions. In response to this shift, the RAE has been increasingly incorporating feminine forms into its dictionary.

In Spain, non-sexist language began to emerge in the late 1970s. This period coincided with the adoption of the Spanish Constitution and the publication of early studies on linguistics from a gender perspective. The primary advocate for non-sexist language was the Instituto de la Mujer (Women's Institute), established in 1983. Its main objective was to eliminate the sexist use of language, particularly within administrative practices in Spain[8]. Another prominent institution, the Instituto Cervantes, committed to the promotion and instruction of the Spanish language, published "Guía de comunicación no sexista" (Non-sexist communication guide) in 2011, which offers "a set of guidelines and suggestions to achieve more egalitarian linguistic treatment, which views men and women equally, as well as to avoid and eradicate language sexism"[9].

In the 1960s and 1970s, second-wave feminism highlighted the androcentrism in English grammar, exemplified by the use of *he* as a generic pronoun[10]. Saul,

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[7]   University of Victoria, *Section 5. Inclusive Language*, [online], https://www.uvic.ca/brand/story/style/inclusivity/index.php [accessed: 26.06.2024].

[8]   A. Pardo Martínez, *Inclusive Language in English and in Spanish as L2/Fl. Attitudes and Perceptions of Students and Teachers*, Alicante 2023, p. 6.

[9]   Instituto Cervantes, *Guía de comunicación no sexista*, 2012, [online], https://hispanismo.cervantes.es/libro-de-la-semana/guia-comunicacion-no-sexista [accessed: 26.06.2024].

[10] A. Bodine, *Andocentrism in Prescriptive Grammar, 'They', Sex Indefinite 'He', and 'He Or She'*, "Language in Society" 1975, 4/2, pp. 129–146.

Diaz-Leon and Hesni[11] illustrate this phenomenon through the example: "Man breastfeeds his young", arguing that *man* and *his* are not gender-neutral terms; and sentences like "Man is a primate" contribute to the invisibility of women. Feminist scholars pointed out the biased character of language, emphasizing that these biases were both damaging and discriminatory for women, and "their activities targeted the uncovering of the gendered nature of many linguistic rules and norms"[12]. Another important initiative aimed at addressing sexism focused on highlighting its presence in dictionaries. However, the most transformative achievement of this group of women was the creation of their own linguistic standards, simultaneously breaking and establishing norms[13].

3. Debates about Inclusive Language

Inclusive language often generates significant debate and evokes strong, sometimes violent, emotions. These reactions occur across various contexts, including media, everyday interactions, and educational institutions, involving both experts in the subject and the general public.

The media frequently presents the issue in an oversimplified manner, which, rather than easing tensions, tends to exacerbate them.

Recommendations for IL are not universally well-received. This resistance arises for various reasons, including linguistic factors; however, it is primarily due to social and political considerations. Despite this, many activists and linguists advocate for the use and promotion of IL. According to its proponents, IL can contribute to fostering tolerance and open-mindedness within society[14].

Opponents of IL argue that it is artificial and potentially harmful. They contend that it fails to address issues of gender equality effectively and instead diverts attention from the broader social struggle for equality[15].

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[11] J. Saul, E. Diaz-Leon, S. Hesni, *Feminist Philosophy of Language*, [in:] *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, E.N. Zalta, U. Nodelman (eds.), Stanford 2022.

[12] A. Pauwels, *Linguistic Sexism and Feminist Linguistic Activism*, [in:] *The Handbook of Language and Gender*, J. Holmes, M. Meyerhoff (eds.), Oxford 2003, p. 551.

[13] Ibidem.

[14] A. Farias, I. Petkova, *Nuevas realidades en la clase de lengua: el lenguaje inclusivo en el aula*, [in:] *Contributi alle recerche romanze*, L. Németh, I. Petkova, E. Salamon (eds.), Pécs 2023, p. 270.

[15] M. Parra, E. Serafini, *"Bienvenidxs todes": el lenguaje inclusivo desde una perspectiva crítica para las clases de español*, "Journal of Spanish Language Teaching" 2021, 8 (2), p. 7.

Some perceive the issue of gender to be a transient trend, engaging only those directly interested in it. For others, the problem appears overstated, particularly among individuals who do not feel personally affected[16].

Certain perspectives acknowledge the existence of gender inequality in society and its reflection in language. However, these viewpoints reject the proposals of IL, citing concerns over its perceived lack of grammaticality, necessity, and naturalness. Critics argue that IL alters the aesthetic and correctness of the language and does not align with its organic development[17].

It should be remembered that language significantly shapes thought processes and perceptions of reality. The terms used to refer to individuals impact both their self-perception and how they are perceived by others[18].

Kalinowski[19] argues that IL generates significant indignation and concern among certain conservative groups as it is perceived to challenge the established patriarchal political and social order.

Attitudes toward IL vary across languages and countries. While heavily gendered nouns can sometimes be challenging to avoid, British society tends to be less openly hostile to IL compared to other contexts, such as France. In the French language, which contains a high prevalence of gendered nouns, the government has banned the use of inclusive language in official documents and schools[20].

In Spain, despite decades of feminist efforts to reform language, the campaign to revise the Spanish Constitution using IL forms faced opposition from the conservative RAE[21].

In the context of second language classes, identifying attitudes toward IL is more challenging as these attitudes depend on factors such as the learner's first language, cultural background, the teacher's approach, and the classroom environment[22].

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[16] S. Kalinowski, *Lenguaje inclusivo: configuración discursiva de varias luchas*, [in:] *Apuntes sobre lenguaje no sexista e inclusivo*, S. Kalinowski, J. Gasparri, S. I. Pérez, F. Moragas (eds.), Rosario 2009, p. 19.

[17] N. Gutierrez Conde, *Sexismo lingüístico y lenguaje inclusivo en el aula de español lengua extranjera*, 2022, p. 3.

[18] M. Parra, E. Serafini, *"Bienvenidxs todes": el lenguaje...*, p. 7.

[19] S. Kalinowski, *Lenguaje inclusivo: configuración...*, p. 27.

[20] Weida K., *Your Guide to Inclusive Language Around the World*, 2022, [online], https://medium.com/@kazweida/your-guide-to-inclusive-language-around-the-world-22dc1b2cb221 [accessed: 24.06.2024].

[21] Ibidem.

[22] A. Pardo Martínez, *Inclusive Language in English…*, p. 1.

Debates surrounding IL are also influenced by the morphological structure of languages. Three distinct types of languages are particularly relevant in this context: genderless languages, natural gendered languages, and grammatically gendered languages[23].

Genderless languages, such as Turkish or Hungarian, do not distinguish gender in their grammatical structures. In these languages, IL is not a central topic, not only for grammatical reasons but also for political ones. However, this does not imply the absence of sexist linguistic forms; on the contrary, such forms exist, though IL is not a frequently addressed issue.

In natural gendered languages, such as English, nouns and adjectives do not have grammatical gender, with pronouns being the primary site of gender distinctions. Consequently, IL in these languages focuses mainly on the appropriate use of pronouns, while issues with nouns are generally semantic.

Grammatically gendered languages, such as Spanish or French, are characterized by heavily gendered structures, where nouns and adjectives are marked as either masculine or feminine. In these languages the masculine form is considered unmarked. For example, in Spanish, if there are 20 girls in a room, the feminine forms *las estudiantes* (the students) or *ellas* (they) are used. However, if one boy enters the room, the language shifts to the masculine forms *los estudiantes* or *ellos*. Advocates of IL argue that this linguistic feature renders women invisible. To address this, they propose solutions such as using both articles – e.g., *las y los estudiantes* – or employing abstract nouns like *alumnado* (student body), depending on the context.

The socialization of gender norms from a young age reinforces such linguistic practices. If children are raised within heteronormative frameworks, such as teaching girls to play with dolls and boys with cars, or expecting girls and women to feel included in the generic masculine, these norms become naturalized. Similarly, the categorization of literature by male authors under "Literature" and works by female authors under "Women's Literature" perpetuates this normalization[24]. Martin Barranco observes that it is unsurprising for women to feel represented by the generic masculine, as this is instilled in them from childhood[25].

In general, more conservative or older individuals tend to be more resistant to using IL. In contrast, younger generations, women, and members of the LGBTQ+ community show greater interest in its adoption.

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[23] Ibidem, pp. 6–7.

[24] A. Farias, I. Petkova, *Nuevas realidades en la clase…*, p. 273.

[25] M. Martín Barranco, *Punto en boca (Esto no es un manual de lenguaje inclusivo)*, Madrid 2022, p. 11.

4. Approaches to Using Inclusive Language in Different Languages

The following section outlines basic recommendations for employing IL in English, Spanish, and Hungarian, representing the three primary morphological types of languages.

4.1. Inclusive Language in English

Beare[26] provides a clear explanation of IL usage, highlighting the distinctions between linguistic forms used in the past and contemporary preferred expressions.

Examples of gender-biased language used in the past.

> *A doctor can treat you for a wide variety of diseases. It's important that he understands your health history.*

> *Successful businessmen understand how to negotiate good deals.*

In the first sentence, as Beare explains, "the writer speaks in general about doctors, but assumes that a doctor is a man. In the second example, the term *businessmen* ignores the fact that many successful businesspeople are women"[27]. This is why it is preferred to use non-sexist labels for occupations: *poet*, *flight attendant*, *firefighter* instead of *poetess*, *stewardess*, *fireman*[28]. Another example that Beare provides us of gender-biased use in English shows partiality towards men[29]:

> *A person who lives in the country has many advantages. He can enjoy daily walks and enjoy fresh air. He can live a healthy life and meet with his friends.*

In this example, it is unclear whether the writer is referring exclusively to men or if women are also included as beneficiaries of the advantages of living in the countryside. To avoid this ambiguity, it is recommended to eliminate the generic use of the pronoun *he*. Several strategies can be employed to achieve this, including the use of plural nouns, substituting nouns for pronouns, employing the passive voice, among others. For instance, instead of the possessive pronoun *his*, it is preferable to use the plural form *their* or omit it entirely when possible.

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[26] K. Beare, *Gender Inclusive Language for English Learners*, 2018.

[27] Ibidem.

[28] https://www.apaonline.org/page/nonsexist [accessed: 26.06.2024].

[29] K. Beare, *Gender Inclusive Language for…*

Another significant consideration in IL (applicable not only in English but also in other languages) is avoiding the generic use of *man* as seen in terms like *mankind*. Instead, gender-neutral alternatives such as *person/people* or *humanity* should be used[30].

4.2. Inclusive Language in Spanish

In Romance languages, such as Spanish, the implementation of inclusive language presents significant challenges due to the pronounced emphasis on grammatical gender and the absence of gender-neutral options. Consequently, Spanish speakers have adopted various linguistic strategies, including the creation of the pronoun *elle* as an alternative to *él* (he) and *ella* (she), or the use of forms such as *todes*, *todxs* or *tod@s* to replace *todos* (everybody), which formally defaults to the masculine form despite referring to both genders.

However, several obstacles arise with these approaches. The pronoun *elle* lacks historical precedent, unlike the singular *they* in English, making it difficult for the general population and academics to widely adopt it. Furthermore, forms like *todxs* and *tod@s* are impractical in spoken language due to their unpronounceability.

An alternative approach involves gender-specific splitting, as seen in phrases like *Queridos alumnos y queridas alumnas* (*Dear students* in both masculine and feminine forms, with corresponding gendered adjectives and nouns). While this method can address gender inclusivity for binary identities, its excessive use should be avoided as it increases text length and complexity, and excludes nonbinary individuals.

4.3. Inclusive language in Hungarian

Although Hungarian is a language without grammatical gender forms, this does not preclude the presence of sexist expressions and terms. For instance, in formal introductions it is common to say, *Bemutatnám Kovács urat és feleségét* (*Let me introduce Mr. Kovács and his wife*). Historically, women would often introduce themselves using their husband's surname with the suffix *-né* (meaning "wife of"), as in *Kovácsné vagyok* (*I am the wife of Mr. Kovács*). While this practice is now primarily limited to older generations, it was widespread in the past.

According to Vasvári[31], the non-gendered nature of the Hungarian language can render sexism more subtle and less overtly detectable. Instead of relying on

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[30] https://www.apaonline.org/page/nonsexist [accessed: 26.06.2024].

[31] L.O. Vasvári, *Problémás nyelvi nem a nem nélküli magyar nyelvben*, "Társadalmi Nemek Tudománya Interdiszciplináris eFolyóirat" 2014, 4, pp. 130, 135.

grammatical markers, Hungarian encodes gender employing semantic strategies. For example, words that are theoretically gender-neutral, such as *gyerekek* (children), can be interpreted as masculine. In extreme cases, as might be found in remote villages with traditional norms, a conversation about children might unfold as follows: *Hány gyereked van? – Kettő és egy lány* (*How many children do you have? – Two and one daughter*), where "children" implicitly excludes daughters.

Although such examples are characteristic of conservative and historically entrenched language use, traces of sexism persist in contemporary Hungarian vocabulary. For instance, the term *hisztérika* (*hysterical woman*) has no masculine equivalent. Conversely, professional titles reveal another form of asymmetry. A woman teaching at a university must say *egyetemi tanár vagyok* (*I am a university teacher*) to ensure her role is understood at the appropriate level. Using the feminine form *tanárnő* (*teacher* in the feminine form) would often lead others to assume she teaches at a primary or secondary school[32].

Proposals to reduce sexism in Hungarian include several strategies. For example, feminizing professional, rank, and title names; adopting split address forms (as seen in Spanish), such as *Kedves Kolléganő! Kedves Kolléga!* (*Dear Colleague!* with the first form feminine and the second masculine); or following the German example of combined gender markers, such as *ProfessorInnen* (rendered in Hungarian as *Kedves KollégaNő* for *Dear Colleague* (*woman*))[33].

5. The Use of Inclusive Language in Second Language Classes

The integration of IL in second language education is particularly significant when training future educators, as they will shape the linguistic and cultural development of future generations. This underscores the importance of addressing IL explicitly within teacher training programs[34].

While it is neither advisable nor appropriate to mandate the use of IL among students, educators can introduce its principles, demonstrate its applications, and highlight its significance, particularly for members of marginalized social groups. This approach empowers students to make informed decisions regarding their own language use.

Teachers, irrespective of whether they work in primary, secondary or tertiary education, face a dual responsibility. On the one hand, they serve as linguistic

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[32] Ibidem, p. 145.

[33] Ibidem, p. 155.

[34] A. Pardo Martínez, *Inclusive Language in English…*, p. 2.

models for their students, requiring adherence to prescriptive grammar rules. On the other hand, they bear the responsibility of fostering a culture of respect, tolerance and inclusivity, which includes teaching students to combat discrimination through respectful language use.

Attitudes toward IL within educational contexts often mirror broader societal debates. In some schools, students are penalized for employing IL, while in others its use is actively encouraged both in daily interactions and within classroom activities.

When students exhibit interest and openness toward the topic, teachers can facilitate its exploration by introducing examples and analyzing articles, reports and diverse opinions. This approach allows for the presentation of multiple perspectives and the promotion of constructive debates on IL and linguistic sexism, always emphasizing the importance of mutual respect and consideration for differing viewpoints.

6. Recommended activities for Developing Inclusive Language Skills

Parra and Serafini[35] suggest that teachers initiate the practice of IL from the very first classes by asking students to specify their preferred names and pronouns. This approach is particularly valuable for students whose native languages lack grammatical gender, such as Hungarian, as it introduces them to the concept of IL in a practical and personal way. Additionally, students can be encouraged to investigate the use of IL in various contexts, including textbooks, family interactions, and conversations with friends, as well as in other languages, enabling them to analyze, compare, and share diverse practices.

Small group discussions can also be employed to explore personal experiences related to language. For example, students can discuss whether they, or someone they know, have ever felt uncomfortable or discriminated against due to specific words or expressions.

Another effective activity involves presenting students with quotes about the significance of language and the act of naming individuals. These quotes can serve as discussion prompts, initially within small groups and subsequently in a full-class setting, fostering deeper engagement with the principles and implications of IL[36].

What is not named, does not exist. (George Steiner)

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[35]   M. Parra, E. Serafini, *"Bienvenidxs todes": el lenguaje...*, p. 9.

[36]   M. Sánchez Vico, A. Magallanés Camón, C. Moreno Arroyo, *IncluidApps*, Canarias 2020, p. 7.

In a world where language and naming things is power, silence is oppression and violence. (Adrienne Rich)

Language not only describes reality but is also capable of creating it. (Mario Alonso Puig)

The limits of my language are the limits of my world. (Ludwig Wittgenstein)

In general, educators are encouraged to avoid presenting examples that reinforce stereotypical roles and scenarios. For instance, sentences such as "Meanwhile, the mother was cooking, the father was reading the newspaper" should be replaced with more neutral or inclusive alternatives[37].

Alonso Torío suggests several activities to raise students' awareness of these issues. One approach is to critically analyse sexist content in cultural expressions, such as proverbs and jokes. Examples like *A man of straw is worth a woman of gold* or *Why does the woman wear white at her wedding? The dishwasher should always match the stove and fridge* can serve as discussion prompts to highlight and challenge gender stereotypes.

Another recommended activity involves exploring dictionaries to examine and comment on the pejorative connotations associated with certain nouns: in English *bitch, hussy, baggage*[38], in Spanish *zorra, fulana, verdulera,* in Hungarian *spiné, csinibaba, öreg szatyor, bögyös*[39], among many other examples. This task encourages students to critically reflect on language use and its impact on societal attitudes and perceptions.

A further activity includes critically analyzing sentences to identify elements that may be considered sexist or gendered in English. Students can evaluate these examples and propose alternative phrasings that promote inclusivity and neutrality[40].

Every student must have a pencil, and he always should bring it to class.

Is man inherently capitalistic?

For a German, she is pretty accepting of other cultures.

A man should never become too busy to enjoy his children.

Even a girl would know which decision to make.

For an old man, he's pretty quick to guess the answer.

Athletes are welcome to bring their girlfriends to the dinner.

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[37] E. Alonso Torío, *El género y el sexismo en la clase de ELE*, Manchester 2016, p. 22.

[38] https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2019/jul/03/hussy-baggage-bit-filly-dictionary-definitions-woman [accessed: 26.06.2024].

[39] V. Galavics, *A nő elnevezései a közszlengben*, Debrecen 1988.

[40] *Youth Inclusion Workshop Guide: Language and Inclusion*, 2018.

In Spanish, as in many other languages, masculine-feminine word pairs often exhibit asymmetrical connotations, with the feminine form frequently carrying a pejorative meaning while the masculine counterpart remains positive or neutral. Examples include *hombre público* (*a public figure*) versus *mujer pública* (*a prostitute*), *fulano* (a generic term for *someone*) versus *fulana* (a disparaging term for a woman), and *brujo* (*a wizard*) versus *bruja* (*a witch*). To highlight this linguistic phenomenon students can be provided with a list of such word pairs. After researching the definitions of each term, they can engage in group discussions to critically analyze and reflect on the implications of these disparities[41].

Students of any language can investigate instances of sexism by analyzing newspapers, magazines and websites. They can examine article titles, content, and accompanying images, addressing questions such as:

Illustration 1. Daily Mail's 'sexist' Legs-in headline sparks anger… but PM says she doesn't mind. Source: https://news.sky.com/story/daily-mail-legs-it-headline-causes-outrage-mps-brand-it-moronic-and-sexist-10816232 (accessed: 24.06.2024)

Are men and women allocated equal space in the press?

Is their representation and treatment in journalism fair and unbiased?

Does the language used in the article exhibit sexist tendencies?

Are advertisements themselves sexist?

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[41] M. Sánchez Vico, A. Magallanés Camón, C. Moreno Arroyo, *IncluidApps...*, p. 13.

As a culminating activity, students can participate in a project designed to highlight the contributions of significant women throughout history. Names of notable figures, such as Simone de Beauvoir, Clara Campoamor, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Rózsa Schwimmer, can be written on slips of paper and placed in a box. Each student selects a name and researches their contributions, preparing a presentation on their findings. These presentations can then be displayed on the classroom walls, fostering awareness of women's achievements and the discrimination they have faced, thereby promoting visibility and recognition[42].

7. Conclusion

After years of experience as a language teacher, primarily working with Hungarian students but also with individuals from various nationalities, I have come to recognize the significance of how we address our students, how we navigate cultural and linguistic differences, and how we adapt our teaching to the evolving needs of our society.

For me, and for many advocates of inclusive language, it is not a fleeting trend intended to alter language solely to accommodate feminists or members of the LGBTQ+ community. Rather, it is a means of demonstrating respect for all segments of society. Although considerable work remains in adapting linguistic resources to ensure that all individuals feel welcomed, respected and valued across all spaces, situations, and interactions, I am hopeful that this objective can ultimately be achieved.

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[42] M. Sánchez Vico, A. Magallanés Camón, C. Moreno Arroyo, *IncluidApps...*, p. 13.

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