INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE IN MEXICO AND SPAIN: INSTITUTIONAL LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY

by

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ABSTRACT

MIRNA GARCÍA. Inclusive Language in Mexico and Spain: Institutional Language Ideology (Under the direction of DR. CONCEPCIÓN B. GODEV)

This study analyzes the current positions on inclusive language in Mexico and Spain's macro sociopolitical structures that hold far-reaching influence in matters of language ideology. Given the influx of inclusive language manual publications in the last decade, such as the *Orientaciones sobre uso no sexista del lenguaje administrativo* (Spain, 2007); *Manual del lenguaje: Integrador no sexista* (Spain, 2013); *Manual de comunicación no sexista: Hacia un lenguaje incluyente* (Mexico, 2015); *Guía para el uso del lenguaje inclusivo desde un enfoque de derechos humanos y perspectiva de género* (Mexico, 2017), the study, in part, examines the use of the so-called generic masculine. In addition, the research analyzes legislative initiatives for inclusive language and responses from nationally ranked language institutions, including the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) and the Mexican Language Academy (ALM) that either support or oppose inclusive language models. This study seeks to unravel the ideologies that support or discourage inclusive language practices based on the recommendations of the language authorities that operate in each of the two countries. The research findings indicate that inclusive language initiatives in both Mexico and Spain have permeated politics and legislation and continue to be highly polemic as government entities and national institutions prescribe the use of certain language structures over others.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AML	Academia Mexicana de la Lengua (Mexican Language Academy)
ASALE	Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española (Association of Spanish Language Academies).
CDHCM	Comisión de Derechos Humanos de la Ciudad de México (Commision of Human Rights of Mexico City)
CDHDF	Comisión de Derechos Humanos del Distrito Federal (Commision of Human Rights of the Federal District)
CONAVIM	Comisión Nacional para Prevenir y Erradicar la Violencia Contra las Mujeres (National Commission for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women)
DRAE	Diccionario de la Real Academia Española (Spanish Royal Academy Dictionary)
IMIO	Instituto de la Mujer y para la Igualdad de Oportunidades (Institute of Women and Equal Opportunitites)
Nafin	Nacional Financiera S.N.C. Institución de Banca de Desarrollo (National Mexican Development Bank)
SFP	Secretaría de la Función Pública (Secretariat of the Civil Service)
SNA	Sistema Nacional Anticorrupción (National Anticorruption System)
RAE	Real Academia Española (Royal Spanish Academy)

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW 1. LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS

In 1987 the Council of Europe Program for Equal Opportunities for Women embarked on a legal journey in which all documentation citing guidelines and regulations in the workplace came under scrutiny regarding discriminatory linguistic discourse. The following year, Spain's Ministry of Education and Science (Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia) published a series of recommendations promoting non-sexist language in Spanish for publishers, writers, and educators. Although it was concerned primarily with content, it addressed other linguistic practices, particularly the generic masculine, that could eliminate the use of discriminatory language. In 1991 the urge for inclusive language became a mainstream issue after Spain's Ministry of Public Administration and Social Affairs (Ministerio para las Administraciones Públicas y Asuntos Sociales) published a linguistic style guide. This guide paved the way for a rise in opposing ideas surrounding sexist discourse and the implementation of gender inclusive language that persists to this day in Spanish speaking countries (Stewart 31).

As gender equality and sexism continue to be a pressing issue among politicians, feminists, and social justice activists, language serves as an interesting point of reflection, especially when considering how communication mediated by a natural language contributes (or not) to the marginalization of women. This study aims to put into perspective the theories supporting and influencing the use of inclusive language, the conflicting postures for and against the implementation of inclusive language, and the methods proposed for combating discriminatory linguistic practices from the perspective of institutional (e.g., government departments and national organizations) and public spaces (e.g., news media) in Mexico and Spain.

Language in its simplest form is a system of symbols and signs that is governed by rules to produce meaningful structures (Chaika 3). Through language, humans can express their emotions, tell jokes, commit to plans, and spread awareness. Language can also transmit and reinforce ideas and beliefs of a given institution, political organization, or religious group. Alternatively, one of language's most veiled roles is perhaps what Sally McConnell-Ginet refers to as 'identity work' or simply identity. Before delving into the topic of identity work, it is fitting to overview how language functions. According to McConnell-Ginet, language functions at two distinct levels of meaning: 1) basic/simple message and 2) style/attitude of the message or *social meaning* (6).[1] In other words, a simple message refers to the content of a message (morphemes, words), while the social meaning denotes the attitude a message (phrases, sentences) evokes.

When we socialize, both levels of meaning are active. We engage with others not only by understanding the words expressed in a given sentence, but the style in which someone says the words. One major aspect of language is asserting your own personal identity as well as the identities of others. This can be achieved via social meaning and simple meaning (McConnell -Ginet 16). The present study will closely analyze the ways in which simple meaning can assert and establish someone's identity.

Identity can be defined as "the social positioning of self and other" (Bucholtz and Hall 18). Recent scholarship by Bucholtz and Hall anchors identity in discursive practices (27). That is, identity emerges from verbal interaction. For example, when a language requires its users to use indexical elements, such as third person singular pronouns in

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[1] For the purpose of this study, the two concepts will be referred to as 'simple meaning' and 'social meaning' respectively.

English (i.e. he, she), speakers are employing gender morphology (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 64-65). This occurs when a speaker indexes a referent's gender either through deictic (pronoun with no antecedent) cues (*she* is smart) or anaphoric (pronoun with antecedent) cues (e.g. Mary thinks highly of *herself*). English third person singular pronouns, which are simple meaning-based words, agree with social gender (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 66). Social gender will be more thoroughly discussed below. Gender morphology is most visibly present in Indo-European languages, including English and Spanish. These languages contain a relationship between grammatical gender and social gender in which the use of a gendered pronoun can ascribe sex and/or gender to an individual. Gender in language has been at the center of heated debate since the early 1970s, with the use of the generic masculine or 'he/man' language at the center of the debate. Many efforts against sexist language have surged since then, especially in regard to pronominalization, which feminists have argued have "subliminal influence on perception" (Cameron 117). In more recent decades, gendered pronouns have been targeted as being non-inclusive with respect to non-binary conformists and genderfluid individuals, particularly in the field of queer linguistics (Motschenbacher and Stegu 525).

1.1 Gender vs Sex

Ordinary usage of terms 'gender' and 'sex' are often misconstrued distinctions, in which female and male are typically considered the exhaustive choices that imply biological classification, partly due to traditional views and the idea that they are inherently 'interconnected' phenomena (Cameron and Kulick 4-5). In recent years, gender theorists, feminists, and the like have reconfigured the meaning of gender. Modern approaches would regard gender as a socially constructed idea that outlines

"sociocultural practices, conventions, and ideologies clustering around the biological

classification" (McConnell-Ginet 6). Traditionally gender and sex were understood as

two distinct concepts in which one stems from the other; biological sex acting as the basis

for determining how an individual of a particular sex is expected to act. A more "radical"

approach to gender is Judith Butler's poststructuralist theory of gender, which centers on

performativity. Butler describes performativity of gender as an arbitrary construction

based on repeated performative acts that are responsible for creating polar genders in

which the male gender is afforded privilege. Consequently, individuals are compelled to

think of gender performativity as a natural, corporeally regulated concept rather than as a

construction. Gender-fluid individuals or non-binary conformists, who do not fall under

the white male cisgender construction of gender, tend to be marginalized, given that

gender has traditionally been conceived as a binary concept (Butler 522). Butler's

performativity theory provides a means for interpreting gender as it pertains to

grammatical features of the Spanish language. Spanish language users typically identify

referents based on how an individual "performs", and then they label the referent

accordingly – either female or male – through gendered markers in Spanish. Using

traditional gender markers in Spanish, however, can oftentimes lead to concealing gender

identities (generic masculine) and misgendering an individual's identity when using the

incorrect pronoun to address them (3rd person pronominalization). For example, if an

individual identifies as non-binary and is addressed with traditional feminine

(she/her/hers) and/or masculine (he/him/his) pronouns versus their preferred pronouns

(they/them/theirs), the individual would be misgendered.

1.2 Grammatical Gender in Nouns

According to Maria Bejarano Franco, "El género grammatical es la categoría grammatical basada especialmente en la concordancia que afecta a nombres de objetos, adjetivos, atrículos, numerales, pronombres, etc. y expresa el sexo masculino y femenino" [grammatical gender is the grammatical category based on agreement that affects the names of objects, adjectives, articles, numerals, pronouns, etc. and expresses the male or female sex] (81).[2] Grammatical gender in Spanish is implicitly rooted in all nouns and, consequently, in any corresponding grammatical forms that require concord (i.e. adjectives, determiners). In the Spanish language, grammatical gender primarily takes two exclusive forms– feminine and masculine. Typically, feminine words end in -a(s) and masculine words end in -o(s) in animate (living entities) and inanimate (non-living entities) nouns.[3] The following two nominal phrases demonstrate how gender functions in concord with corresponding grammatical elements:

1) La$_{\text{def article (fem.-appearing)}}$ casa$_{\text{fem. singular (inanimate) noun}}$ es$_{\text{verb}}$ amplia$_{\text{adj (fem.-appearing)}}$

2) El$_{\text{def article (masc.-appearing)}}$ apartamento$_{\text{masc. singular (inanimate) noun}}$ es$_{\text{verb}}$ amplio$_{\text{adj (masc-appearing)}}$

Example 1 reveals the feminine forms of a definite article (*la*) and an adjectival ending for most adjectives(-a) when modifying a singular feminine noun in a nominal phrase. Example 2 shows the corresponding masculine definite article (*el*) and adjectival ending (-o) for a masculine noun. In both examples, the nouns end with "typical" gendered endings (i.e. -a and -o). However, noun endings vary and, therefore, the examples shown above cannot be generalized when discussing grammatical gender as it pertains to

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[2] All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.
[3] It needs to be noted that, while in words referring to living entities, such as *niña* the -a is a morpheme of gender because it can alternate with -o (*niño*), the "a" in words referring to non-living entities, such as *mesa* is not a morpheme of gender because it cannot alternate with -o.

Spanish.

There are several exceptions, like in the case of the noun, *la mano*, a feminine word despite it ending in -o. The noun, *el mapa*, which may appear to be feminine, given its ending, but is actually a masculine word. An even more rare case, which does not correspond to the previous example, but shows the complexity of gendered words in Spanish is the noun, *el agua*, which is feminine, but is preceded by a masculine article when it is singular due to euphonious reasons that date back to Latin origins. Alternatively, words deriving from Greek that end in -ma, -ama, -ema, -ima, -oma, -uma, such as *la broma* are feminine (Muñoz-Basols et al. 150). Other words that tend to be feminine, but do not end with -a have the following suffixes, -ción (*la acción*), -dad (*la verdad*). Spanish words that end in consonants, -e, -i, or -u vary in grammatical gender without a fixed system of gender determination (e.g. *la sal* vs *el corral*; *el espíritu* vs *la tribu* etc.). Nouns ending in -aje (el maquillaje), -ambre (el alambre), - án (refrán), -or (el pavor) tend to be masculine (Muñoz-Basols et al. 151). Some nouns vary in gender as a result of geographic and/or sociolinguistic variation (e.g. *el arte* vs *las artes* (plural form is only in the feminine gender); *el mar* vs *la mar* (plural form is only in the masculine gender)) (Muñoz-Basols et al.152). Additionally, certain lexical groupings share the same gender; days of the week and colors are masculine nouns, while names of islands and roads are feminine nouns (Muñoz-Basols et al. 150-151). All in all, grammatical gender in Spanish takes many forms.

The gender feature in words is not usually linked to an extralinguistic substance, except in the case of animate nouns or sexed referents (i.e. people and certain animals). Thus, when indexing humans, grammatical gender becomes more complex. Unlike

inanimate nouns, language classifies human subjects as either female or male via gender morphology based on non-linguistic realities concerning biological sex. Therefore, if a referent appears male, they will be identified with masculine grammatical markers and if a referent appears female, they will be identified with feminine grammatical markers. Gender morphology expresses the sex of a referent through inflectional gender morphemes that modify the gender of nouns (-a(s) or -o(s)), subject pronouns (*él/ellos* or *ella(s)*), direct object pronouns (*la/o(s)*), and indefinite pronouns (*todas/todos*), to mark a distinction based on the sex of a referent. Concurring grammatical elements, such as determiners and adjectives, that form part of the nominal phrase takes the gendered form of the corresponding nouns or pronouns. Table 1 demonstrates gender marker forms by word class:

TABLE 1. Grammatical forms showing gender marker by word class

Word Class	Gendered Form	Example
Nouns	a(s)/o(s)	alumn*a*, alumn*o* maestr*as*, maestr*os*
(Personal) Pronouns	ella(s)/ él, ellos	él es… ellas van…
Adjectives	a(s)/o(s)	amistos*a*, amistos*o* simpátic*as*, simpátic*os*
Articles	Definite: la(s) / el, los	*la* bebé, *el* bebé *las* estudiantes, *los* estudiantes
	Indefinite: una(s)/un, unos	*una* atleta, *un* atleta *unas* colegas, *unos* colegas

Although many nouns are capable of expressing gender through gender morphemes (see noun examples in Table 1), that is not always the case. Some masculine nouns have alternative forms that do not coincide with the common masculine gender morphemes. For example, heteronym nouns express sex through different lexical forms: *hombre*, *mujer*; *madre*, *padre*. Certain nouns, typically relating to a profession, that end with a consonant and are masculine require an -a be affixed to its ending for it to be feminine (e.g. *el profesor*/*la profesora*, *el instructor*/ *la instructora*). Feminine noun endings, such as -esa, -ina, -triz, and -isa are either added or modified to the ending of masculine forms (e.g. *el actor*, *la actriz*).[4] Like with inanimate nouns, animate nouns possess an array of

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[4] Feminine noun forms with these endings may be considered pejorative when labeling females, given that many of these terms possess "colloquial overtones" or were traditionally used to refer to the wives of male incumbents (e.g. *el alcalde*/*la alcaldesa*) (Stewart 33).

endings that do not always end with gender morphemes or possess any alternating

gendered forms. For example, nouns (also relating to professions) that end with the suffix

-ista (e.g. *el/la artista*) generally refer to both females and males without an ending

modification. Similarly, certain nouns ending in -a, -e, -o, or a consonant can be

invariables (e.g. *el/la representante*) (Muñoz-Basols et al. 153-154). In these cases,

determinants and concurring modifiers signify the sex of a person.

However, some nouns ending in -e are masculine without variability and require a

suffix change (-e > -a) (e.g. *el presidente*, *la presidenta*). Changes like these have surged

overtime and were eventually deemed standard in attempts to be more inclusive and

reflect societal changes, given that some professions were previously held exclusively by

men. Nevertheless, words like *soldado* and *miembro* continue to exist without any

grammatical gender variation, requiring a determinant to signify sexual differences (e.g.

el/la testigo) (Muñoz-Basols et al. 150).

Epicene nouns or generics (e.g. *la policía, el personaje, la criatura*) are

genderless or neutered forms, despite being preceded by feminine or masculine

determinants, that can index individuals of any gender and/or sex. These nouns can refer

to a person ambiguously without discerning their sex. For example, the noun, *la criatura*

(child) in the sentence, *la criatura tiene fiebre* does not distinguish whether the child is

female or male. Comparably, collective nouns, such as *el alumnado*, *la gente*, and *el*

equipo refer to groups of people without designating sex (Muñoz-Basols et al. 154).

With that said, gender markers for sexed referents are in no way static. Other than

generic and/or collective nouns, gender is explicit in nouns via gender morphemes (see

example 3). Alternatively, nouns with variable gender assignments designate sex via

determinants and modifiers when applicable (see example 4).

3) La maestra habla rápidamente

4) El atleta corre rápidamente

In sentence 3, the noun *maestra* is feminine, ascribing the sex of the referent as female, and singular; the inflectional morpheme -a and feminine article *la* implicate the feminine gender. Thus, if the teacher were male, the morpheme -a would be modified to -o and the article would change respectively. This ascription to the female sex bears a default association with the feminine social gender or feminine gender identity. Sentence 4 deals with an invariable noun form that has no inflection. In this case, the sex of the referent is expressed with the masculine article *el*. If the athlete were female, the nominal phrase would read as *la atleta*, in which the noun form remains static and the article changes to *la*. Whether a noun form is gendered or is modified with a determinant, referents are susceptible to being identified with one of two sexes reflecting a societal view of sex and, consequently, gender. That said, having two linguistic gender markers not only seems to limit how a person can choose to identify, but it may perpetuate the view that upholds the duality of gender, also known as gender binarism.

1.3 Pronominalization

In addition to nouns, gendered pronouns ascribe sex and establish identity in the 3rd person singular or plural with the exception of possessive pronouns (*suyo(s)/a(s)*),[5] reflexive pronouns (*se*, *sí*) and indirect object pronouns (*le(s)*), which are neutral pronouns. Pronouns are frequently used to address an individual or a group of people

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[5] Possessive pronouns in the 3rd person singular or plural, while featuring masculine and feminine morphemes, are not indexed to the possessor but to the thing possessed. For instance, in *El libro es suyo*, the possesor may be female or male. The reason for the -o in *suyo* is because of *libro*. Replacing *libro* with a feminine noun, causes the -o in *suyo* to be replaced with -a; e.g. *La casa es suya*.

either deictically or anaphorically. Spanish pronouns take many forms based on context. As mentioned above, pronouns can be personal (subject), indefinite, etc. Pronouns, like nouns, generally consist of two exhaustive options, which circumscribes how a person can identify or be identified by others. The following sentences illustrate gender marking in accordance with a sexed referent using pronouns:

> 5) *Ella* es inteligente y responsable

> 6) *Juan* está muy bien. *Lo* vi en la tienda ayer por la tarde

> 7) *Todos* los invitados bailaron en la fiesta

Sentence 5 assumes the sex of the referent as female using the feminine subject pronoun *ella*; the alternative option being the masculine pronoun *él*. Third person subject pronouns designate two gendered form possibilities, which indicate the sex of the referent as either female or male. Sentence 6 demonstrates the usage of a direct object pronoun *lo*, which ascribes the object of the sentence as a singular male referent. Like with subject pronouns, the only grammatical alternative is the feminine direct object pronoun *lo*. Furthermore, sentence 7 illustrates the masculine plural form of an indefinite determiner. The term *todos* can refer to a group comprised of multiple sexes, a group of unknown or unspecified referents, or a group made up of solely males. The former known as the generic masculine. Although some arguments against the generic masculine center on issues of ambiguity, context will generally eliminate any form of confusion as to whom the pronoun is referring. The following section will discuss additional issues relating to the generic masculine.

1.4 Generic Masculine

Feminist scholarship has frequently characterized the generic masculine as a form

of linguistic sexism or 'he/man' language (Cameron 117). The so-called generic

masculine refers to the employment of the masculine grammatical form to refer to a

person or a group of people in general regardless of the presence of other sexes or

genders – it is the default option, which is considered the neutral or unmarked form.

Cameron suggests the masculine gender is as a form of 'codification', or the 'engraving

of linguistic norms' (112). The generic masculine has been cited as a source of linguistic

discrimination due to its asymmetry in discerning gender via nouns and pronouns and

their corresponding grammatical constituents, such as determiners and adjectives.

However, some scholars, such as Orlando Alba, argue that the generic masculine form

has dual roles in language: referencing a group comprised of one gender and 2)

referencing a group comprised of 'both' genders (4). Alba explains grammatical gender

as a morphological binary concept in which the masculine form functions as the non-

marked gender (-) and the feminine as the marked gender (+), comparing it to the use of

singular (-) and plural (+) forms in Spanish (3). Thus, the sentence, *El perro es el mejor

amigo del hombre*, is not signaling a specific man or dog, rather all dogs and humans (4).

Figure 1 illustrates the use of the standard grammatical structures of the generic

masculine in Spanish.

Singular: *el alumno* =

Sex-unknown/sex-unspecified referent

Male referent

Plural: *los alumnos* =

Sex-unknown/sex-unspecified referents
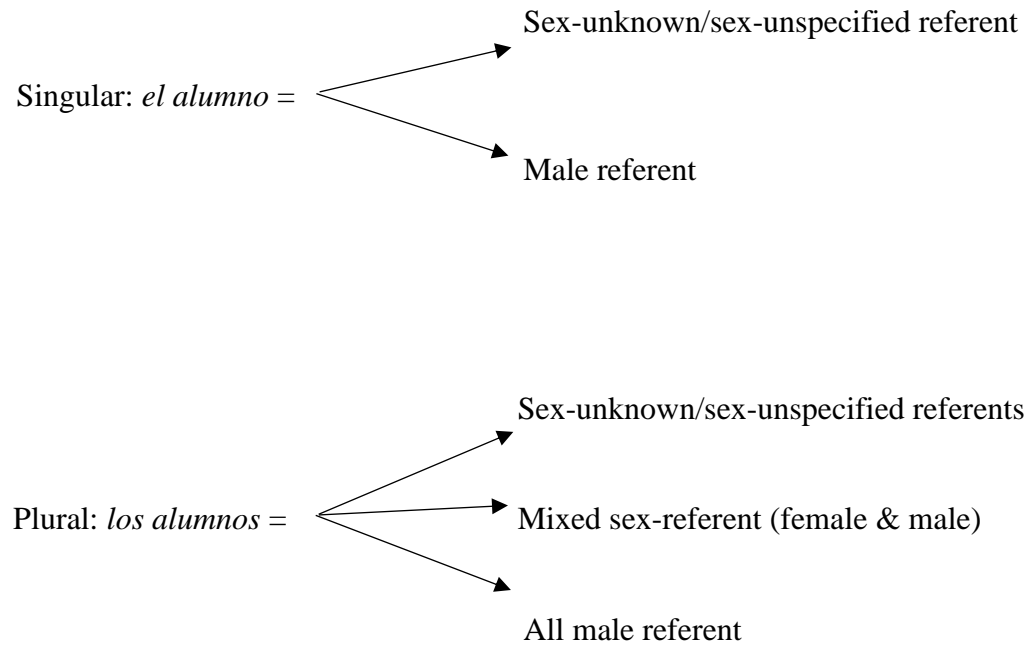
Mixed sex-referent (female & male)

All male referent

FIGURE 1. Standard forms of the generic masculine in nouns

Figure 1 shows the way the generic masculine materializes via noun forms. The generic masculine can also manifest using pronouns as discussed in section 2.3. The generic masculine is currently the only form considered grammatical or standard when referencing unknown sex referents or a collective group comprised of females and males.

Stewart claims the generic masculine, a form of sexist discourse, leads to the obscurity or invisibility of women (32). Von Flotow uses the term 'patriarchal language', which refers to "the language forged and used by institutions largely ruled by men" (Von Flotow 8). This notion implies that language can function as both a communicative and manipulative tool. Therefore, language can be viewed as a means to suppress the presence of the female gender in language and to potentially shape our thinking of gender in society. Considering the latter, if one gender presides over another in language, it is plausible for that hierarchical relationship to affect our perspectives of gender in society.

Miller and Swift argue that this type of standard linguistic practice ranks men as the 'species' and women as the 'subspecies' (4). The relationship between language and perception will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Similarly, linguistic sexism is the discrimination of sex based on the use of non-inclusive language structures that accentuates the male presence in language over other genders- for instance, the use of the generic masculine (morphological sexism). Sexism in language exists when a speaker uses a term (lexical sexism) or phrase that results in the discrimination against females (García 29). Cameron suggests linguistic sexism occurs in two different contexts – "regulated" (professional and/or institutionalized settings) and "unregulated" (social settings) (112). Linguistic sexism in the Spanish language tends to take three different forms: 1) generic masculine, 2) asymmetrical reference to women, and 3) professional terms referring to women (Stewart 32). This thesis will focus on the interconnection between social gender and the generic masculine.

Prior to the 21st century, scholars, such as Hellinger, advocated for the implementation of gender-neutral language (or nonsexist language, inclusive language, anti-sexist language, gender-fair language), such as the generic strategy and the visibility strategy[6], as a means to generate the discernibility of women in languages used in Western cultures. In recent years, however, neutral linguistic strategies have been geared not only to combat linguistic asymmetries between women and men, but to challenge the heteronormative binarity of languages that exclude non-binary conformists, which has transformed the inclusive language planning initiative into an even larger venture.

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[6] According to Marlis Hellinger, the generic strategy refers to the "systematic use of morphologically unmarked" forms (e.g. use of singular *they* in lieu of so called generic *he*) (139). Alternatively, the visibility strategy is "the consistent and systematic use of feminine terms" (e.g. los niños y *las niñas*) (143).

Efforts that seek to impugn linguistic sexism are typically referred to as instances of language planning. More specifically, language planning is a "conscious and systematic interference with the dynamic processes of a language" that assumes the "identification and analysis" of a communication issue (Hellinger 136-137). Communication conflicts emerge as a result of nonlinguistic social, political, and/or cultural changes (Weinstein 57). Successful implementation of language planning initiatives typically weighs on the nonlinguistic issue being understood and analyzed in addition to having access, control and/or support of authoritative powers, such as the media, press, government entities, and academic institutions. Cameron refers to these authorities as 'gatekeepers', which simultaneously function as political institutions and, therefore, are in no way neutral. 'Gatekeeping institutions' form part of a regulated "linguistic free market" in which any and all language planning innovations are assessed by said 'gatekeepers' resulting in either their endorsement or denunciation (Cameron 113-114).

As new research emerges, multiple strides toward neutralizing language are prompting change in sociopolitical spaces in attempts to make language inclusive for all identities who do not choose to identify with the heteronormative paradigm of gender. Some groups striving for inclusive language choose to employ linguistic features that not only recognize the presence of traditional binary genders but also advocate for using a neutral component in order to address non-binary conforming identities. These features will be further discussed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW 2. LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT

Previous research on gender and language has primarily addressed sexual inequities in discursive practices toward women as two-fold: how women speak and how women are spoken of. The latter manifesting through the so-called generic masculine, which contributes to "women's relative *psychological invisibility*" (McConnell-Ginet 169). Modern scholarship in the field, however, has targeted linguistic sexism as a source of invisibility not only for women, but other marginalized groups of people who do not identify with gender binary labels. Thus, the discourse on linguistic discrimination is no longer a matter of men vs women, but, rather, men vs Other.

Since the 1970s, debates over sexist language in academia have surged across Western contexts with the objective to eliminate the production of sexist language in official settings (Hellinger 136). For example, Mary Daly argues for novel semantic interpretations or reappropriations of older word forms traditionally used to degrade women (e.g. *sisterhood* as "an authentic bonding of women" instead of a "subordinate min-brotherhood") (8). Similarly, Muriel Schulz discusses the pejorative and "dysphemistic" use of English degenerative terms to talk negatively about women (e.g. *hussy*, *whore*) (66, 69, 72). Some attempts to eliminate the use of discriminatory language have been successful while others have not. In the twenty-first century, there has been a significant reduction in the use of the generic masculine in English, for example (i.e. use of *he* to refer to an unknown sex referent); the same cannot be said about other languages. In Spanish, the generic masculine remains widely used in the language. Secondly, the Spanish pronominal system has become a source of controversy regarding parity among genders in several languages. How we embed 3rd person pronouns, for instance, with

extralinguistic meaning (biological sex assignment of an individual) and what that says about our society's outlook of sex is of interest to social activists, gender theorists, and the like. As a response to sexist claims, inclusive social justice advocacy groups have urged macropolitical structures to implement changes into official political discourse by publishing language style guides and encouraging the use of inclusive language features in public forums. Although some changes have been integrated into macropolitical spaces, not everyone is open to neutral language approaches, given the assortment of ideologies held by opposing parties. For instance, Alba claims non-sexist language models, such as doublings and/or unfoldings, produce cumbersome syntactic constructions that limit the expressive capability of speakers (4-5). In order to understand the interconnectedness between linguistic meaning, thought, and sex and gender, it is pertinent to question how language norms are established, examine how beliefs on language are influenced, and analyze the 'sexual politics of discourse' associated with a specific language (McConnell-Ginet 171).

As mentioned in chapter 2, linguistic meanings are situated in social contexts and, therefore, are not given, but produced and reproduced in acts of communication. When producing or reproducing meaning, speakers and writers are dependent on others' knowledge and experiences with certain linguistic forms (McConnell-Ginet 171). McConnell-Ginet claims these meanings are negotiable, which is problematic where asymmetrical power relations exist, and consensus over attitudes and beliefs is unattainable. Dominant groups have a hegemonic advantage over marginalized or muted

groups when producing meaning,[7] given their social power and breadth of influence over others (181). Consequently, if a dominant group's interpretation of gender is binary, this feature is likely to be reflected in the language structure and underpin binary gender thought (e.g. pronouns *he/she* in English; pronouns *él/ella* in Spanish).

2.1 Language Ideology

The term 'ideology' is a broad term whose definition escapes an easy to grasp neatly packaged notion. The senses of the word are as multifarious as the users who try to define it. Kathryn Woolard's take on the term ideology centers around four prototypical characteristics based on a subset of literature surrounding the topic: 1) Ideology is based on something conceptional and ideational relating to consciousness, beliefs or ideas, 2) Ideological concepts originate from, respond to, or reflect the experiences or interests of a social stance, which can be posited as universally valid, 3) Ideology concerns distortion, falsity, mystification, or rationalization, and 4) Ideology interrelates with power and legitimation. As stated above, dominant groups are afforded advantages; ideology functions as a "tool or property" for dominant groups in contrast to inferior groups who reside in a society where dominant groups discount their conceptions as non-ideological or even null (237-238). Moreover, Michel Foucault's interpretations of ideology is foundational to the understanding of ideology. In short, ideology is considered "the nostalgia for a quasi-transparent form of knowledge" (59). He outlines three key concepts surrounding the topic of ideology. First, ideology lies in "opposition to something else which is supposed to count as truth". Second, ideology refers to the "order of a subject".

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[7] McConnell-Ginet defines the production of meaning as the process in which a speaker or writer means something by what they say or write and in which a listener or reader interprets what is said or written (171).

Finally, ideology comes second to "something which functions as its infrastructure, as its

material, economic determinant, etc." (60). Additionally, he discusses the significance of

truth, under which each society functions, labeling it as a phenomenon that "induces

regular effects of power" (73). He offers his account on the significance of truth and

power in the following excerpt:

> Each society has its regime of truth, its "general politics" of truth: that is, the
>
> types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms
>
> and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means
>
> by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the
>
> acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts
>
> as true (Foucault 73).

Alternatively, language or linguistic ideology refers to "sets of beliefs about

language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived structure

and use" (Silverstein 193).[8] Silverstein suggests that rationalization serves as a means to

"understand" and potentially modify linguistic forms that are institutionalized and

functionally distorted (Silverstein 233). Many researchers' analyses of linguistic ideology

have correlated social context, ideology, and language production, asserting that these

correlations may constitute legitimate grounds for language change. Furthermore, 'social

conditioning' of language ideologies are linked to various instances in which language is

acquired, such as child acquisition periods and formal educational settings, the latter

being a primary purveyor of prescriptive norms (Woolard 240). Prescriptivism is "the

ideology by which the guardians of the standard language impose their linguistic norms

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[8] The terms *language ideology* and *linguistic ideology* will be used interchangeably throughout the work,
but it is important to note that some areas of research attribute two separate concepts to these terms.

on people who have perfectly serviceable norms of their own" (Kroch and Small 45). A popular belief regards standard language forms as being "logically superior" compared to nonstandard forms. Standard superiority is typically rooted in "the accuracy in the use of inflections, precision of vocabulary, and the richness of derivational morphology" (46).

Recently, neutral linguistic forms are challenging conventional standard noun and pronoun forms that reflect binary genders, which somewhat differs from previous attempts to make the feminine gender more visible in Spanish. The emergence of gender-neutral neologisms (e.g. *latinx*, *ellxs*, etc.) and forms (use of generics in some contexts; *el alumnado* vs *los alumnos*) have caused both macrosocial and microsocial structures to question the validity of said novel gender-neutral elements.

Oftentimes, arguments against inclusive language styles center on grammatical efficacy and preservation of the standard variety by prescriptivists. However, the goal of inclusive language advocates is to modify a language system in which all beings have a space to identify. That said, each group justifies their position of the use of language differently; the former group prioritizes the traditional structures of grammar, while the latter values the users and their ability to identify and use it. That is not to say that one group deliberately disregards the other's viewpoint (although they might). It is possible that their priorities concerning language functions may rank differently or their linguistic ideologies prevent them from accepting another view. That said, inclusive language supporters and opposers sustain varying justifications for why they choose to accept or reject the use of inclusive language features. The following taxonomies consist of an array of linguistic and extralinguistic interpretations and are in no way comprehensive of all the arguments against inclusive language use. Those who oppose may subscribe to one

or more of the following positions: 1) the "standard" form of the Spanish language must be maintained and preserved; 2) the Spanish language is not sexist; the generic masculine is not a discriminatory linguistic tactic; 3) the generic masculine is already used as a neutral form; there is no need to create new ones; 4) The Spanish language should not recognize any identity outside of the gender-binary paradigm and/or should only recognize two genders.

CHAPTER 3: LANGUAGE INCLUSIVITY IN MEXICO AND SPAIN

3.1 Introduction to Study

As gender equality and the eradication of sexism continue to be pressing issues among politicians, feminists, and social justice activists, language serves as an interesting point of reflection, especially when considering how communication mediated by a natural language contributes (or not) to the marginalization of women. Sexist language (e.g. generic masculine in Spanish) has frequently been cited as a means to further perpetuate and underpin a sexist society. Neutral language proponents have advocated for the implementation of inclusive linguistic features in professional settings (i.e. academia, business, government, etc.) as a means to increase the visibility for women and, in some cases, afford non-binary conforming individuals and/or queer-identifying individuals to have a space to identify. For example, third person gender neutral pronouns, such as 'zie' preferred by some English speakers and 'hen' among Swedish users enable non-binary conforming individuals to identify (Ansara and Hegarty 261; Gustafsson et al. 2). Modern approaches in queer and gender research have recently gained traction and expanded the inclusive language venture as a topic concerning not only cisgender women, but other underrepresented identities who do not identify under traditional binary classifications of gender; although research and breath of influence from that research camp is still limited. Spanish, being a heavily gendered language, is of primary interest in this study due to the extent of gender-marked elements that would have to undergo change to conform to the proposals put forth by inclusive language supporters.

3.2 Purpose

This study aims to put into perspective the theories supporting and influencing the

use of inclusive language, the conflicting postures for and against the implementation of inclusive language, and the methods proposed for combating discriminatory linguistic practices from the institutional perspective (e.g., government departments and national organizations) in Mexico and Spain[9]. The study will focus on the positions held by institutions that have been at the forefront of the usage of inclusive language in addition to the groups opposing inclusive discursive practices from a historical and linguistic standpoint. Furthermore, this study aims to identify the ideologies underpinning the use of inclusive language. The study will analyze viewpoints from institutional and public discourse in Mexico and Spain. This paper neither intends to advocate for any particular language change to be implemented among Spanish speakers nor does it assume that the speakers hold any sexist intentions when using so-called sexist structures. Rather it looks to unravel the reasons why a Spanish speaker should or should not opt to employ more inclusive language practices. When analyzing linguistic ideology relevant to inclusive vs non-inclusive linguistic structures, this study will extract ideologies from two schools of thought; those who seek the implementation of gender-neutral linguistic features and those who do not consider the language to convey sexist rhetoric and, therefore, do not think reformation of the language is necessary.

3.3 Materials

The analysis will review linguistic style guides, statements that have been published in the public domain, studies on linguistic ideologies from academia and

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[9] Mexico and Spain possess rich histories in terms of intercultural communication and influence. Spain's cultural institutions are known for their visibility regarding the standardization of the Spanish language throughout the majority of Spanish-speaking countries. Mexico, on the other hand, neighbors the U.S. geographically and has significant intercultural contact with bordering states (i.e. California, Texas, Arizona, etc.). Given the number of speakers in both countries and their intercultural projection, it is likely that language attitudes in these communities may take root in other Spanish-speaking communities.

carried out by sociopolitical activist groups from various linguistic ideological domains within Mexico and Spain. In large part, the materials were extracted from governmental, academic, and national organization sites. The following lists and its items are divided based on the country of origin.

Spain

1. "Sexismo lingüístico y visibilidad de la mujer". Report by Ignacio Bosque on behalf of the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE, Real Academia Española).

2. *Libro de estilo de la lengua española, según la norma panhispánica*. Style guide by the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) in collaboration with the Association of Spanish Language Academies (ASALE, Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española).

3. *Guías para el uso no sexista del lenguaje* by the Ministry of Health, Social Services, and Equality (Ministerio de sanidad, servicios sociales e igualdad, Government of Spain).

4. *Guía para el uso inclusivo del lenguaje en el ayuntamiento de Madrid y sus Organismos Autónomos*. Language guide published by Madrid's city council.

5. "El español y la igualdad real de los sexos". Article featured on *El Cultural*, by Inés Fernández-Ordoñez.

6. Europa Press a la Cadena Ser interview with Vice President Carmen Calvo of Spain following the appointment of the RAE to review the inclusivity of Spain's Constitution.

Mexico

1. Federal Code of Ethics for Public Servants, (Código de ética de las personas

servidoras públicas del gobierno federal)

2. *Manual para el uso del lenguaje incluyente y con perspectiva de género*. Language manual featured on the Mexican's national government site (www.gob.mx)

3. "Observaciones de la Academia Mexicana de la Lengua sobre 'el sexismo en el lenguaje'". Observational Note, Mexican Language Academy (AML, Academia Mexicana de la Lengua),

4. "Roles sociales y géneros gramaticales. El feminismo ante el lenguaje"- Article on social roles and grammatical gender by Raúl Dorra.

3.4 Research Questions

The following research questions are at the center of the present study:

1. What are the current positions on inclusive language in Mexico and Spain's macro sociopolitical structures?

2. What are key arguments against inclusive language strategies in each country, if any, and who holds these arguments?

3. What language planning initiatives have been implemented by each country, if any?

These questions will guide the analysis of various inclusive language planning efforts endorsed and/or discouraged by Mexico and Spain's nationally recognized institutions and organizations whose influence is far-reaching.

3.5 Analysis Part 1: Spain

Scholarship from the 1970s in Western countries propelled language policy changes in the industrial sector in the 1980s with an influx of language guides

publications. Spain, particularly the autonomous communities of Catalonia and Valencia,

being at the forefront of the Spanish language movement (Stewart 31). In 1987, the

Consellería de Cultura, Educación y Ciencia de la Generalitat Valenciana under the

Departamento de la Dona published *Recomendaciones para un uso no sexista de la*

lengua. The following year, the Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia based in Madrid

issued their own language manual. In 1989, the Instituto de la Mujer under the Ministerio

de Asuntos Sociales published the manual *Propuestas para evitar el sexismo en el*

lenguaje. These sets of language manuals would be the first of many of their kind to

provide a method for combating the use of sexist language. More recently, the Ministry

of Health, Social Services, and Equality (Ministerio de Sanidad, Servicios Sociales e

Igualdad) in association with the Institute of Women and Equal Opportunities (IMIO,

Instituto de la Mujer y para la Igualdad de Oportunidades) released a rather

comprehensive list of language guides published in Spain for the last 30 years that are

digitally available to any public official, public servant, and/or citizen without cost. The

list is comprised of 120 guides, some of which are written in other regionally recognized

languages (e.g. Catalan, Galician), that have been released for the use of higher-ranking

organizations and departments in Spanish sociopolitical structures (academia;

government; sports culture; publicity; law; health; disability services; civil societies;

technology, sciences, and environment; employment and labor relations; online media).

The publication of the list serves as a response to "II Plan para la Igualdad entre Mujeres

y Hombres en la Administración General del Estado y en sus Organismos Públicos",

resolution E. 33 (2015) [10].

Not all of Spain's institutions have been accepting of the vast amount of inclusive language initiatives that have been developing. One of its most vocal opponents is the RAE [11], a cultural institution based in Madrid, Spain, which currently comprises 46 members who have achieve prominence as writers or scholars within the humanities. Since its foundation in 1726 by Juan Manuel Fernández Pacheco, the RAE has taken on the initiative to maintain a standardized variety of the language in order to ensure stability across Spanish-speaking regions. Many consider the RAE to be a dominant point of reference in terms of language usage, evolution, and adaptation in professional and educational settings. In 2012, Ignacio Bosque Muñoz, a member of the RAE since 1997, published "Sexismo lingüístico y visibilidad de la mujer" as a response to the publication of a number of inclusive language guides that offered strategies to cope with the traditional use of the generic masculine. In it he acknowledges that women do, in fact, face discrimination and, in some cases, certain discursive practices can convey discriminatory or sexist intentions (3). However, he questions the limits and extent of language reformation as proposed by inclusive language initiatives. He points out the fact that linguists have not participated in the production of the manuals, and he questions the efficacy of the proposed language strategies. The following excerpt from the Bosque Muñoz's report outlines the beliefs the RAE holds in regard to the implementation of inclusive language:

No creemos que tenga sentido forzar las estructuras lingüísticas para que

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[10] Resolution E. 33: "El Ministerio de Sanidad, Servicios e Igualdad llevará a cabo la elaboración y difusión a través de intranet de un Manual de uso del lenguaje no sexista." [The Ministry of Health, Social Services, and Equality will produce and disseminate a manual for non-sexist language use online.]

[11] The Royal Academy of the Spanish Language is a cultural institution whose mission, among others, is to prescribe how the Spanish language should be used, from its grammar to its vocabulary.

constituyan un espejo de la realidad, impulsar políticas normativas que separen el lenguaje oficial del real, ahondar en las etimologías para descartar el uso actual de expresiones ya fosilizadas o pensar que las convenciones gramaticales nos impiden expresar en libertad nuestros pensamientos o interpretar los de los demás (Bosque Muñoz 16).

[We do not see a point in modifying linguistic structures to fit reality, impulse policy change that separates official language use from real language use, study the etymology of fossilized expressions to discard them, or think that grammatical conventions prevent us from expressing our thoughts or interpreting others.]

Days after Bosque Muñoz's report, Inés Fernández-Ordóñez, the youngest member at the time of the RAE, published an article for the online Spanish magazine, *El Cultural*, regarding equality in the Spanish language. Although her writing revealed her support for the continued use of the generic masculine, she states the following regarding individual use of the language:

…es un hecho consustancial a la existencia histórica de las lenguas que los hablantes promuevan innovaciones lingüísticas, con independencia de que esas innovaciones cundan, prosperen y se adopten o no por parte de toda la comunidad lingüística. Están en su derecho (Fernández-Ordóñez).

[…it is a known fact in the history of languages that speakers promote language innovations whether or not said innovations disseminate, prosper and are adopted by the linguistic community. They have the right to.]

This sentiment sustains the idea that language users are capable of promoting language innovations and linguistic change whether or not language authorities choose to universally support them. That said, despite being a member of the RAE, Fernández-Ordóñez signals a degree of dissent within the RAE membership by acknowledging the possibility of successful language initiatives that may not enjoy the support of institutional prescription.

In 2018, the RAE, in concert with the ASALE, published the *Libro de estilo de la lengua española según la norma panhispánica,* which aims to "mejorar" [improve] oral

and written use of the Spanish language (Real Academia Española y Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española). The text discusses the use of the generic masculine as follows: "En español el género masculino, por ser el no marcado, puede abarcar el femenino en ciertos contextos…Desde un punto de vista lingüístico, no hay razón para pensar que este género gramatical excluye a las mujeres en tales situaciones" [The generic masculine in Spanish, being the non-marked form, can encompass the feminine form in certain contexts… From a linguistic point of view, there is no reason to believe that this form excludes women] (Real Academia Española y Asociación). The RAE's statement claims that the role of the generic masculine is merely linguistic and does not exclude women.

Additionally, the book reviews linguistic forms that function as a means to avoid the use of the generic masculine. For example, it advises against the use of unnecessary unfoldings (*alumnos y alumnas*), the use of neutral symbols in gendered words *(niñ@s*, *niñes*, *niñxs*)*, variation of epicene nouns (*testiga*, *miembra*). However, the text deems the use of slashes and parenthesis to be effective and at times necessary when conveying certain messages in writing (e.g. *queridos(as)* or *queridos/as*) (Real Academia Española y Asociación).

Even though, from a scientific point of view, the RAE's linguistic prescription may have limited effect on how Spanish is colloquially used by its speakers, the RAE's position maintains its status as a prominent reference where formal language is used. For example, the same year as the RAE's book publication, Carmen Calvo, Spain's Vice President and Minister of the Presidency, Relations with the Courts and Equality, commissioned the RAE during an appearance at the Commission for Equality from the Congress of Deputies (Comisión de Igualdad del Congreso de los Diputados) to conduct a study on the Constitution and its inclusivity of women, so that it is reflective of a

democracy comprised of men and women. Following the appointment, Calvo discussed

the terms of the study in an interview with Europa Press a la Cadena Ser:

> Se trata de evaluar el lenguaje de la Constitución en términos democráticos. Luego cada cual hace lo que quiere con sus declaraciones. Todos los grupos lo entendieron y consideré que la RAE era suficientemente importante para respetarla y pedirle asesoramiento (Calvo).

> [It has to do with evaluating the Constitution's language in democratic terms. Then, everyone can do what they want with their assertions. All groups understood it and I thought the RAE was important enough to be respected and asked for counsel.]

Although the RAE's position on inclusive language has remained static over the years,

Calvo admits a degree of respect for the prescriptive organization affording it privilege

and authority as a linguistic point of reference as it relates to official and professional use

of language in Spain.

This next section will analyze one of the guides featured in the collection of

manuals from Madrid's Department of Equity, Human Rights, and Employment (Área de

Gobierno de Equidad, Derechos Sociales y Empleo de Madrid). The *Guía para el uso*

inclusivo del lenguaje en el Ayuntamiento de Madrid y sus organismos autónomos is

available on the official website of the city of Madrid and is intended for government-

specific communication with citizens and other government bodies. [12] Although the

manual is brief and somewhat limited to language in the workplace, the objective is

clearly stated:

> …este Manual es muy escaso en el análisis del uso sexista del lenguaje que conlleva la exclusión o invisibilidad de las mujeres, y que no es más que una discriminación hacia éstas que ni se puede ni se debe mantener. Por ello, la presente Guía pretende corregir esta omisión para una mejor comunicación del Ayuntamiento de Madrid y sus Organismos Autónomos (Spain, Área de Gobierno de Equidad, Derechos Sociales y Empleo de Madrid 3).

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[12] www.madrid.es

[…this manual contains a brief analysis of the use of sexist language that excludes women and renders them invisible, which is discriminatory and cannot and should not be continued. Thus, the guide intends to correct this type of omission to improve the communication in the Madrid City Council and its independent agencies and organizations.]

According to the guide, inclusive language is useful for many reasons. First, the language does not discriminate against women, and second, it does not function as a vehicle for perpetuating androcentric thoughts, which promote a male-centered society (9). Thus, the guide functions under the belief that language, if used non-inclusively, helps foster a sexist environment. According to the guide, the following linguistic concepts are or can be considered non-inclusive or sexist based on contextual use: false generics (*el hombre* or *los hombres* as a synonym to humanity), false duals (*secretario* vs *secretaria*), word order/ranking (*los padres y las madres*) (10). In response, the guide presents various strategies and techniques for the use of the Madrid City Council and its independent agencies/organizations (Ayuntamiento de Madrid y Organismos Autónomos) in the workplace: generic and collective nouns, periphrases, metonyms, use of the imperative verb form, passive voice, impersonal or passive reflexive structures, use of non-gendered determinants or omission of the determinant, unfoldings, slashes, use of relative pronouns (See table 2 for examples) (Spain, Área de Gobierno 13-17).

TABLE 2. Summary of inclusive language strategies as per the *Guía para el uso inclusivo del lenguaje en el ayuntamiento de Madrid y sus Organismos Autónomos.*

	Recommended	Not Recommended
1. Generics & colectives	Las personas demandantes El empresariado	Los demandantes Los empresarios
2. Periphrases	El personal administrativo	Los administrativos
3. Metonyms	La portavocía	Los portavoces
4. Imperative verb form	Envíe su currículum a…	El candidato debe enviar su currículum a…
5. Voz pasiva	El formulario será presentado el día…	El solicitante debe presentar el formulario el día……
6. Impersonal 'se' form or passive reflexive	Se dictará sentencia judicial…	El juez dictará sentencia…
7. Impersonal verb forms	Es necesario tener en cuenta…	El usuario tendrá en cuenta…
8. Non-gendered determinants and/or omission of determinant	Cada miembro Convocar a sindicalistas y representantes	Todos los miembros Convocar a los sindicalistas y los representantes
9. Unfoldings	Las y los ciudadanos/ los y las ciudadanas	Los ciudadanos
10. Slashes	El/la director/a	El director
11. Relative pronouns	Quienes utilicen los servicios…	El que utilice los servicios…

Table 2 includes various linguistic strategies extracted from the manual for eliminating

sexist language in the workplace. Items 9 and 10 reveal the use of unfoldings and slashes

as a strategy, but the RAE's most current publication advises against them unless

absolutely necessary. Moreover, the manual advises against using the 'at symbol', given

that it is not a spelling symbol supported by the RAE. In total, the manual makes three

references to the RAE citing the Royal Spanish Academy's Dictionary (DRAE, Diccionario de la Real Academia Española) twice in regard to their definition of sex and their use of professional terms in the feminine form. These references afford the RAE a level authority, although the purpose of the guide itself goes against the RAE's views on the use of inclusive language.

3.6 Analysis Part 2: Mexico

On February 5, 2019, the Mexican government released a statement under the Federal Code of Ethics for Public Servants (Chapter 2, Article 15) stating "Las personas servidoras públicas emplearán lenguaje incluyente en todas sus comunicaciones institucionales con la finalidad de visibilizar a ambos sexos, eliminar el lenguaje discriminatorio basado en cualquier estereotipo de género, y fomentar una cultura igualitaria e incluyente" [All public officials are required to employ inclusive language in all government-related forms of communication in order to be inclusive of both sexes, eliminate discriminatory language based on gender stereotypes, and foster an egalitarian and inclusive culture.] (Mexico, Secretaría de Gobernación). Irma Sandoval, director of the Secretariat of the Civil Service (SFP, Secretaría de la Función Pública) stated the changes were in agreement with National Anticorruption System (SNA, Sistema Nacional Anticorrupción) guidelines and international observations. This resolution went into effect the following day in Mexico, which required all government officials and representatives to modify their usage of language to be inclusive toward women when carrying out any and all work-related actions and tasks either with the public or colleagues[13]. The announcement comes years after several strides toward

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[13] Article 15 makes use of the phrase "ambos sexos" (both sexes) indicating a binary view of sex inclusive of women and not of non-binary identifying individuals.

inclusive language implementation became a national urgency among feminists, progressives, and social justice activists. In years prior to the official statement, multiple national ranking organizations published inclusive language manuals in efforts to eliminate the use of non-inclusive language. These manuals emerged as a result of increasing legislation, regulations, and norms drafted by the National Mexican Development Bank (S.N.C. or NAFIN, Nacional Financiera) (2017); National Council for the Prevention of Discrimination (Consejo Nacional para Prevenir la Discriminación), National Institute of Women (Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres) and National Commission for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women (CONAVIM, Comisión Nacional para Prevenir y Erradicar la Violencia contra las Mujeres) (2015); Mexican Social Security Institute (Instituto Mexicano de Seguro Social) (2015); and National Commission for Human Rights (Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos) (2016). Mexico's official governmental website currently provides access to an inclusive language manual (*Manual para el uso de lenguaje incluyente y con perspectiva de género*).[14] The manual and its contents will be discussed further below.

The influx of inclusive language initiatives has had various opponents. Some being international entities, such as the RAE. For this section, the focus will be geared toward the national organizations that have been outspoken about inclusive language strides taking place in higher ranking institutions, particularly the AML.

In 2012, days after Bosque Muñoz's publication, the AML released a statement on their site based on previous works from ASALE, "Observaciones de la Academia Mexicana de la Lengua sobre 'el sexismo en el lenguaje'". The statement presents four

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[14] www.gob.mx

conclusions relating to the use of inclusive language ("Observaciones"):

1. Confusion between grammatical gender and sex causes a misunderstanding, leading some individuals to think language is sexist.

2. The generic masculine in most cases can refer to all animated sexed referents without the need to distinguish between sexes. In some cases, the distinction between sexes is necessary (e.g. "los hombres y mujeres pueden realizar servicio militar")

3. The use of the 'at sign' is considered agrammatical and is cause for confusion when modifying an article.

4. Users should abide by the most common prescriptivist norms when employing feminine nouns denoting profession. Some feminine noun forms denoting profession hold meanings unrelated to profession and instead signify spousal status (e.g. jueza, gobernadora, médica).

In 2018, Raúl Dorra, late member of the AML, wrote "Roles sociales y género gramaticales. El feminismo ante el lenguaje", a report featured on academia.org.mx. Similar to AML's statement in 2012, Dorra's report echoes similar sentiments over the use of inclusive language and in particular the role of the generic masculine. He traces the predominant use of the masculine form back to the original distribution of gender roles or sexual identities in the following excerpt:

> Dado que si se presentan a la vez dos géneros es necesario que uno de los dos incluya al otro, podemos deducir que el predominio del masculino sobre el femenino responde a una distribución original de los roles sociales o las identidades sexuales. Esa distribución ha naturalizado los roles sociales y los géneros gramaticales tal como los hemos conocido. Pero ahora, y seguramente por primera vez en la historia de la humanidad, estamos ante el reclamo –y no sólo el reclamo sino la progresiva conquista– de la igualdad universal de roles sociales e identidades sexuales y, por ello, también progresa el reclamo de una

igualdad en los géneros gramaticales (Dorra).

[Given that it is necessary that one of the genders encompasses the other when two genders are being referenced, one can infer that the predominance of the masculine form functions as a response to the original distribution of social roles or sexual identities. The distribution has normalized our perception of social roles and grammatical gender. But now, and surely for the first time in history, we are witnessing a demand for equality of social roles and sexual identities, and as a result, a demand for the equality of grammatical genders.]

The demand for equality or "reclamo de la igualdad" has manifested through various initiatives. Dorra critiques several of these strategies including the use of the '@' and the 'x' claiming they are ideographic, lack spoken forms, and are limited to writing in social media and text messaging. Additionally, he suggests the use of unfoldings has two major deterrents. First, verbally emitting a message would be difficult without interrupting "buena communicación" [good communication] (Dorra). Second, expressing two genders when employing an unfolding strategy restricts any other identities to express themselves (Dorra). Thus, he believes having one fixed universal grammatical gender form is necessary.

Aside from the use of the 'x' and '@', the use of the 'e' as a neutral grapheme has surfaced as a popular alternative in the realm of inclusive language initiatives. Dorra suggests this option to be linguistically inclined, given that it is a practical method that would not impede the overall functionality of the language. Furthermore, the fight for social equality has revealed an issue with the lack of gender neutrality in language; one that Dorra believes the grapheme 'e' could effectively resolve.

The following section will analyze the inclusive strategies suggested by the *Manual para el uso de lenguaje incluyente y con perspectiva de género*, published in collaboration with the Secretariat for Domestic Affairs (Secretaría de Gobernación), the

Commission of Human Rights of Mexico City (CDHCM, Comisión de Derechos

Humanos de la Ciudad de Mexico), formerly the Commission of Human Rights of the

Federal District (CDHDF, Comisión de Derechos Humanos del Distrito Federal), and

CONAVIM. The author, María Julia Pérez Cervera, describes language as a social

concept in the following excerpt:

> El lenguaje como elemento socializador…genera, distribuye e implanta valores, creencias, formas de relación y de trato así como calificativos, etiquetas, marcas y señalamientos que permean la vida de las personas y le dan forma a una manera concreta de pensar donde está establecido como normal el insulto, el desprecio, el despotismo, el sexismo, el machismo, el racismo que acaba en la violencia física, sexual y psicológica extrema, en el feminicidio" (Mexico, Comisión Nacional para Prevenir y Erradicar la Violencia contra las Mujeres 7).

> [Language as a social factor… generates, distributes and implants values, beliefs, relationship and treatment forms as qualifiers, labels, markers, and signs that permeate people's lives, thereby providing a concrete way of thinking in which insults, contempt, despotism, sexism, machismo, racism have been normalized resulting in physical, sexual and extreme psychological violence as forms of feminicide.]

Thus, Cervera's belief is that language has many social functions, including the ability to

instill values and beliefs via institutionalized discriminatory linguistic behaviors that can

result in violence against women. This guide provides strategies to avoid the use of the

generic masculine, describes the differences in grammatical gender and sex, discusses the

role of language in socialization, and provides frequently used sample documents for the

workplace.

One of the manual's principle drivers is to deconstruct the use of discriminatory

language that upholds the invisibility of women. The authors of the manual stake their

position early on in their writing claiming identity, values, and communication as

constructions that derive from a patriarchal system.

With regard to the generic masculine, the guide casts the masculine form as a

purported or false generic suggesting that the "masculine is masculine and not neutral" (Mexico, Comisión Nacional 20). The manual offers a comprehensive set of alternatives for avoiding the use of the generic masculine, such as "real generics" to avoid the use of the supposed generic masculine: *la niñez* or *la infancia* for *los niños*; *la población* for *los habitantes*; *la juventud* for *los jovenens; la ciudadanía* for *los ciudadanos*; *la descendencia* for *los hijos*; *el personal* for *los trabajadores*; *el electorado* for *los votantes*; *la humanidad* for *los hombres* (universal form) (Mexico, Comisión Nacional 35). These generics are considered to be multipurpose in that they avoid the use of cumbersome unfoldings (e.g. los profesores y las profesoras), while providing equal representation of females and males. Other examples include modifying a generic noun when a noun form lacks a generic form. For example, when referring to a group of people from Oaxaca, one could say *la población michoacana* instead of *los michoacanos*. The generic term 'población' eliminates the need to use the masculine plural article 'los' and the masculine noun 'michoacano' (Mexico, Comisión Nacional 35).

Additionally, the manual recommends replacing the use of demonstrative pronouns (i.e. aquel/aquella, aquellos/aquellas) for relative pronouns (i.e. quien, quienes) and the substitution of the subject pronoun *uno* for the pronouns *alguien*, *nos*, and/or *cualquiera*. Pronouns like *suyos* and *tuyos* (see example 1) can be replaced by other words that convey similar meanings without gender markings, while gendered quantifiers (i.e. muchos, pocos) can be exchanged with alternative nouns phrases (see example 2) (Mexico, Comisión Nacional 30-31).

Example 1: Tú debes defender a los tuyos.
      Recommendation 1: Tú debes defender a tu gente.

Example 2: Muchos dudan si votarán o no.

      Recommendation 1: Muchas personas dudan si votarán o no.

      Recommendation 2: La mayoría duda si votará o no.

Another strategy is the use of abstract nouns or abstracts, especially when there are unknown sexed referents involved. Some examples include: *asesoría* for *asesores*/*el asesor*; *la coordinación* for *los coordinadores*/ *el coordinador*; *jefatura* for *los jefes*/*el jefe; la redacción* for *los redactores/el redactor* (Mexico, Comisión Nacional 36).

In some cases, altering the subject of the sentence and consequently the verb form from the 3rd person singular to the 2nd person singular or 1st person singular can aid in reducing the use of the generic masculine. See example 3 (Mexico, Comisión Nacional 37).

Example 3: Los lectores del periódico podrán participar en el sorteo.
      Recommendation 1: Si (usted) lee el periódico podrá participar en el sorteo.
      Recommendation 2: Si (tú) lees el periódico podrás participar en el sorteo.

Other grammatical options include the employment of the gerund, specifically when addressing a group of workers (see example 4), the omission of determinants (see example 5) and subject pronouns (see example 6) when possible (Mexico, Comisión Nacional 45-46).

Example 4: Si los diplomáticos tuviéramos más competencias, mejoraría

la gestión.

> Recommendation 1: Teniendo más competencias, mejoraría la gestión
>
> diplomática.

Example 5: Es el portavoz del sector empresarial.

> Recommendation 1: Es portavoz del sector empresarial.

Example 6: Nosotros queremos garantizar la equidad.

> Recommendation 1: Queremos garantizar la equidad.

Furthermore, the manual opposes the use of non-linguistic symbols when

attempting to refer to an unknown sex referent or a group comprised of multiple sexes.

For example: "buscamos un(a) mesero(a)" or "se solicita cocinero/a". The use of the 'at

sign' (e.g. estimad@s colegas) is also discouraged due to "illegibility" and lack of "true

representation" (Mexico, Comisión Nacional 42). That said, the manual makes no

reference to the use of the 'x' or the 'e', two commonly used forms in informal social

settings, as a valid or an invalid neutral form.

3.7 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

This study has aimed at presenting an introductory analysis of the language

ideologies held by influential language institutions (i.e. the Royal Spanish Academy

(RAE) and the Mexican Language Academy (AML)), and government-affiliated

organizations and entities (i.e. Madrid City Council, Secretariat for Domestic Affairs,

Commission of Human Rights of Mexico City, National Commission for the Prevention

and Eradication of Violence against Women) from Mexico and Spain regarding inclusive

language as it relates to grammar. The study circumscribes recent inclusive language

changes and modifications to Mexico and Spain's macro sociopolitical spaces. The research engages with statements and observations from government bodies and nationally recognized institutions and organizations (i.e. language academies, educational organizations, human activist groups). However, this study is limited in that it does not gauge other countries' contributions to the inclusive language debate. Several other Spanish speaking countries have taken different inclusive language approaches either socially, politically, and/or linguistically, Argentina and Chile being two central contributors to the study of inclusive language. Moreover, the study does not address how the discourse on inclusive language within Mexico and Spain may have been influenced by international (e.g. Council of Europe) and global (e.g. United Nations) organizations. Lastly, the study focused on examining linguistic inclusivity at the institutional level and did not discuss microsocial influences, ideas, and receptions. That said, the scope of inclusive language research is abundant and one that currently has ample room for future research in linguistic and gender and queer studies. As social changes continue to guide linguistic changes, the movements will only continue to disseminate among sociopolitical spaces, therefore, the need for research in the field is significant.

3.8 Summary and Conclusion

        In conclusion, the results of this study provide an outline of the current state of inclusive language ideologies in Mexico and Spain in macro sociopolitical contexts based on public information provided on the official sites of each polity, including authoritative linguistic institutions, such as the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) and the Mexican Language Academy (AML), and government affiliated agencies. The research findings indicate that inclusive language initiatives from Mexico and Spain have permeated

politics and legislation and continue to be highly polemic as government entities and national institutions prescribe for the use of certain language structures over others. Both the RAE and the AML have released statements regarding their dissent with government appointments and regulations concerning inclusive language practices, although some representatives have seemed less resistant to changes in the language. For example, Dorra, late member of the AML, expressed his support for the use of the vowel 'e' as a universal gender form, which can serve to refer to "third identities" (e.g. *todes* vs *todos*). Additionally, this study also revealed the variety of lexical, morphological, and syntactic recommendations being advocated for in government sponsored language manuals available to the public. In large part, the examination of the manual guides prompt the elimination of linguistic constructions that may be perceived as non-inclusive, such as the so-called generic masculine. Some of the recommendations are instances of making women more visible or the 'feminization' strategy (employment of feminine-masculine pairs) (e.g. *las y los ciudadanos*) (Stahlberg et al. 465). The language manuals present a variety of generic and collective terms to consider using in lieu of the generic masculine (e.g. *el empresariado* vs *los empresarios*). Aside from Dorra's mention of "third identities" in his statement piece with the AML, the study reveals a void of inclusive language features discerning the existence of non-binary conforming individuals, leaving room to question the state of inclusive language use in microsocial structures among non-binary and/or queer individuals, an important question for future research. Thus, the future of institutional Spanish in Mexico and Spain remains uncertain in regard to the inclusion of marginalized genders outside of the gender binary construct. Nonetheless, both countries have sought to implement inclusive language changes to the point of

enacting legislative policy revealing a drive for social change in the treatment of gender in language.

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