

The study of inclusive language in written Spanish: A prototype-based approach

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In this research we will depart from the hypothesis that if we are taught when we are youngsters that the plural is made by the generic masculine, we are going to tend to use it more even when you make the decision to use inclusive language because that is the knowledge we have acquired. For that reason, we will study inclusive language from a theoretical approach based on prototypes. As it is known, such theory explains the categorization of things in our brain depends on human cognition and therefore it postulates that some members are more representative than others (Croft & Cruse 2004; Serrano 2011) and we believe it is the case for inclusive language in written Spanish. We have come to this hypothesis while analyzing the examples from our corpus and realizing that in many of them the use of inclusive language is not complete, as concordances are not categorical. This is the reason why we aim to explain the use of some of the concordances when it is used and also the word order of the different variants in order to explain why these uses are not maintained in the discourse. For example, in (1) and (2) we observe the plain variant -a/-o in one sentence but the used of inclusive language is not detected in “los difamadores” or “veteranos, locutores” when it could be used, and it should be used if we try to have a complete use of inclusive language. It is also the example (3) because there is not a reduplication of the word and it is also our aim to explain this variant.

- (1) En estos días he recibido tanto apoyo que **los difamadores** deberán redoblar su esfuerzo para tapanlo. ¡Gracias a **todas y todos!** Me siento verdaderamente abrumada. Con cosas así una piensa que todo este viaje ha valido la pena, pese a todos los pesares. ¡Les mando un fuerte abrazo!
'These days I have received so much support that the slanderers will have to redouble their efforts to cover it up. Thanks to all of you! I feel truly overwhelmed. With things like that one thinks that all this trip has been worth it, despite all the regrets. I send you a strong hug!'
- (2) Por los estudios han pasado **alumnas y alumnos** de distintos cursos y han sido entrevistados por nuestros, ya **veteranos, locutores**
'Students from different courses have passed through the studies and have been interviewed by our, now veterans, presenters'
- (3) Ser **culto/a** no tiene que llevar aparejado tener sentido común, bondad, racionalidad ni ninguna otra característica positiva en el ser humano. La acumulación de conocimientos es un arma y las armas se pueden utilizar bien o mal.
'Being educated does not have to come with having common sense, kindness, rationality or any other positive characteristic of a human being. The accumulation of knowledge is a weapon, and weapons can be used for good or bad.'

We will also explain the reluctance of some linguists to the use of inclusive language in Spanish (RAE 2020; Guerrero Salazar 2022). For this purpose, we analyze real examples in the written language extracted from a linguistic corpora from social media and newspapers samples. These examples are analysed by the Rbrul (Johnson 2009) program which helps us achieve the quantitative and qualitative methodology.

The results obtained will show that the generic masculine is still prototypical in the uses in Spanish, and, even when it is used in the inclusive language, the concordances in the whole discourse are not correct and tend to pass to generic masculine.

References

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