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Inclusive Language Use and Instruction in Spanish: A Community-Informed Approach to Implementing Linguistic Changes in Education

Cristina Sherer

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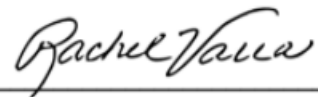
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**Inclusive Language Use and Instruction in Spanish: A Community-Informed Approach to
Implementing Linguistic Changes in Education**

Completed in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts with a
Major in Interdisciplinary Studies: Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Concentration at
The College of William & Mary

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Abstract

Transgender and nonbinary people are becoming more and more visible in the United States and around the world and with this recognition come many changes. One major change is the explosion of support for inclusive language in Spanish which, though not initially created to make trans identities possible, can be used to create welcoming, affirming, and inclusive spaces for trans people, particularly nonbinary individuals who do not identify with the standard masculine and feminine morphological characteristics of Spanish. The present study evaluates the current prevalence of and attitudes towards multiple forms of inclusive language in Spanish among both native speakers and language learners at The College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA. The study finds that though Spanish learners are more likely to both know of and use inclusive language in Spanish, the native speaker population is nearly as familiar with the practice and overwhelmingly supportive of use. The study concludes that the “x” ending is the most popular among both groups and suggests that professors include inclusive language, emphasizing the “x.” in their curriculum in order to reflect the diversity of the college community as well as the will of interviewees. Suggestions for incorporation are also offered.

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1) Introduction

As transgender populations become increasingly visible within LGBTQ communities and greater society, members of the community and allies are demanding changes and accommodations to countless existing societal structures in order to promote trans equity. While some easily visible battles over bathroom usage, gender marker policies, and health insurance coverage are highly publicized, other fronts of trans inclusion and equity are harder to encapsulate in news clips. One of these fronts is language. Because gender constructions are integral to human understanding of both self and others, gender is implicated and integrated in language in multiple and interacting ways. This is especially true for individuals who identify outside of the gender binary for whom ‘standard,’ ‘correct,’ or ‘traditional’ grammar can be invalidating, uncomfortable, and impolite.

Many individuals who identify outside of the gender binary have begun to adopt and adapt pronouns and other gender-correlated morphology in order to honor their self-identification. One key example of this among nonbinary English-language users is the adoption of the third person pronoun “they” as a singular third person pronoun as opposed to “he” or “she.” While this adoption is in many cases intuitive (in fact, singular they was the norm in English until Victorian-era grammarians shifted language towards the now accepted he and she gender divide), debates about the grammaticality of “they” as a third person singular pronoun are ongoing (Berger).

In contrast, Spanish does not have a gender-neutral third person singular or plural subject pronoun. The third person subject personal pronouns “*ella*” and “*él*” are inextricably linked to their respective gender connotations, feminine and masculine. In addition, standard Spanish

grammar utilizes binary grammatical gender in the pronoun system as well as with respect to determiners. With respect to nouns and adjectives, the system is overwhelmingly binary (most words being marked for either ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’ suffixes. This means that nonbinary Spanish speakers face heightened linguistic barriers to self-expression and gender identification by others. In response, some Spanish speakers have begun to use *lenguaje inclusivo* (inclusive language) in order to make political and personal statements about personhood, agency, and inclusion.

In this study, the term nonbinary will refer to any gender identity not within the gender binary such as nonbinary, genderfluid, agender, or bigender identities. Because binary transgender people are often comfortable using the *él* or *ella* option, this study focuses on nonbinary individuals. It is important to note that many nonbinary individuals identify as transgender, but not all so though the diversity and intricacies of these identities are by no means negligible, nonbinary is a useful umbrella term in the context of this study to describe any individual who does not identify within the gender binary.

As nonbinary individuals become increasingly visible in all realms of life, the need for a way to respectfully talk to and about people with these identities becomes increasingly urgent. In Spanish, the work of creating a third gender or neuter system of language is formidable due to the pervasiveness of grammatical gender within the language. As a result, though inclusive language is gaining in popularity in some languages (notably English and Swedish), it is relatively uncommon in Spanish-speaking communities, especially outside of academic settings (Guerra & Orbea).

This presents a problem for the Hispanic Studies department at the College of William & Mary which, following in the university’s expectation of diversity and inclusion, must address

how nonbinary individuals will be discussed and referred to in classes and at departmental gatherings. The college's Diversity and Inclusion mission statement describes the core goal of "creating a university community that is representative and inclusive of individuals with different backgrounds, talents, and skills... where all faculty, staff, and students feel supported and affirmed" ("Diversity & Inclusion"). Currently, information about inclusive language is only sporadically incorporated into William & Mary Hispanic Studies courses, depending greatly on the professor and the subject of the course. This approach, however, leaves nonbinary students, as well as students who wish to refer to their nonbinary friends, family, and loved ones in Spanish, without the tools to do so and does not reflect the desire to make students feel supported and affirmed.

The present investigation attempts to address the current state of familiarity with and use of inclusive language among Spanish speakers in the William & Mary community. Through interviews with both native speakers and Spanish learners, the study identifies current trends in use, gaps in knowledge, and perspectives on inclusive language use in Spanish. With this data, the study proposes a unified path forward for the Hispanic Studies department, offering insights about factors influencing inclusive language use, recommendations for introduction of inclusive language into the curriculum, and considerations specific to the William & Mary community.

Particular questions for this investigation are:

- What forms of inclusive language are Spanish speakers in the William & Mary community familiar with and using?
- What are Spanish speakers' opinions about inclusive language in Spanish? What barriers and incentives to use of inclusive language in Spanish exist?

- How can inclusive language be incorporated into educational contexts? Do speakers believe it should be incorporated?

The results of this study will enable professors in the Hispanic Studies department to create a more welcoming and inclusive classroom environment for all students. In addition, the study provides important insights into disjunctures between the native speaker community at William & Mary and the majority Spanish-learner Hispanic Studies department.

This work is organized as follows: Chapter Two is a review of literature addressing the current global state of inclusive language which introduces the three main forms of inclusive language in Spanish that were utilized in interviews. This chapter also addresses the importance of creating safe environments for transgender and nonbinary students in institutions of education.

Chapter Three describes the methodology for this investigation. This will be followed by an overview of the results of the interviews in Chapter Four. The fifth chapter analyzes and discusses these results in more detail and concludes with the recommendations for implementation at William & Mary. Finally, Chapter Six highlights the most important ideas presented in the paper along with suggestions for future research.

2) Literature Review

2.1 Gender Identity and Discrimination

Though a number of studies have attempted to estimate the prevalence of transgender individuals, figures vary drastically, likely based on difficulties defining gender, unrepresentative sampling, and barriers to study participation (Dawson et al. 300). Estimates generally range from 0.3% to 1.0% of the population, though studies with less restrictive samples often identify higher percentages (0.6% to 0.8%) (Dawson et al. 295). Additionally, the youngest age groups (13 to 24 years old) register the highest rates of transgender identification, indicating that the population estimates may increase as the public becomes more familiar with and more accepting of transgender people (Herman et al.).

These estimates suggest that though the overall proportion of transgender people is small, it is not insignificant. This is especially true because transgender individuals face multiple and specific sources of rejection and discrimination in various realms of life. 36% of respondents to the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey reported that their family was not supportive of them due to their gender identity (James et al. 6). 30% of respondents reported being mistreated, fired, or

denied a promotion at work due to their gender identity (James et al. 2). Additionally, 33% of respondents reported having a negative experience with a health care provider in the last year (James et al. 8). Respondents also reported police violence, housing discrimination, high rates of unemployment and homelessness, and extremely high rates of verbal, physical, or sexual harassment or violence (James et al.).

Testa et al. (2015) developed a Gender Minority Stress and Resilience Measure (GMSRM), based on Meyer's Minority Stress Model in order to determine the effect of these immense stressors on transgender individuals' health (Testa 66). Meyer's model identifies discrimination, rejection, violence, fear of victimization, and internalized negative self-beliefs as sources of stress for lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) individuals (Testa 66). The GMSRM identifies all of the above as stressors for transgender individuals and adds that transgender folks experience much higher rates of nonaffirmation than LGB individuals (Testa 65). Experiences of nonaffirmation include the need to repeatedly explain one's gender identity and correct pronouns, difficulty being perceived as one's gender, having to work hard to be perceived accurately, the need to become "hypermasculine" or "hyperfeminine" in order to be accepted, or having one's identity disrespected or misunderstood (Testa 76).

These stressors do not, however, just make life harder for transgender people, they have real and measurable impacts on their health and wellbeing. Transgender individuals have a much higher (70.4% vs 40.9%) lifetime prevalence of diagnosis of ADHD, depression, and anxiety (Dawson et al. 298). In addition, transgender individuals are more likely to be diagnosed with anxiety or depression before adulthood, which generally leads to worse overall outcomes than adult diagnoses (Dawson et al. 300). One recent study of transgender youth in Canada found that fully one-third had attempted suicide in the past year (Veale et al. 213). As such, it is evident that

decreasing behaviors which act as stressors for transgender individuals is a matter of life or death.

The situation can be even more dire for nonbinary transgender people because, in contrast to transgender people who identify on the gender binary, their identities challenge a tacitly accepted and endorsed organizing principle of many societies. Testa et al. (2015) suggests that nonbinary individuals likely face much higher levels of nonaffirmation because many people are unwilling to refer to them with gender-neutral language (65). In addition, many nonbinary people's failure to conform to normative gender presentations may serve as a form of stigma visibility and "shift one's status as transgender from concealable to conspicuous" (Miller & Grollman 813). Gender nonconforming adults face higher rates of major and everyday discrimination than their more conforming peers (Miller & Grollman 818). The stress of this additional discrimination can have deadly consequences: gender nonconformity is significantly and positively associated with attempted suicide among transgender adults (Miller & Grollman 821). This suggests that nonbinary individuals are a particularly vulnerable subgroup within the already stigmatized transgender population.

These negative effects, however, are not a certainty for all transgender people. When transgender youth have supportive family and educational environments, the negative effects of stress are mitigated (Veale et al. 214). For transgender individuals, this likely means that they do not have to repeatedly explain their gender identities, correct pronouns, or change their appearance in order to be addressed and understood as the gender they identify as (Testa 76). Though the GMSRM did not investigate protective factors, Meyer's Minority Stress Model identified connection to transgender communities and identity pride as additional protective factors (66). These protective factors indicate the importance of using inclusive language. When

used correctly, inclusive language not only can make transgender and nonbinary individuals visible in language, but also relieve them of the responsibility of explaining their gender identities, pronouns, or appearance to conversation partners. This indicates that the use of inclusive language is a possible protective factor for transgender individuals.

2.2 Inclusive Language Worldwide

The need for inclusive language is evident in many languages, not just Spanish. In 2019, *The Washington Post* published “A Guide to How Gender-Neutral Language Is Developing around the World,” describing the myriad ways in which languages are changing to make space for new identities and invisibilized communities (Berger). For instance, activists with the Nonbinary Hebrew Project have created a third gender in Hebrew based on the Talmud and the Torah (Berger). Though the Academy of the Hebrew Language has declined to consider these and other adaptations to the language, other language changes have experienced much greater levels of endorsement.

In English, use of “they” as a singular pronoun has become quite popular. In 2019, the Merriam-Webster dictionary, one of the most well-known American English dictionaries, added “they” as the pronoun to use for a “single person whose gender identity is nonbinary” (Berger). In 2015, Sweden officially added the gender-neutral pronoun “hen” to the Swedish Academic Glossary, which sets the norms for Swedish language (Berger). The addition received support from LGBT activists as well as early childhood educators, who argued that “hen” could help children grow up without feeling the effects of gender biases (Berger).

Inclusive language is not only officially endorsed in Sweden, it is also supported by the general public. In 2012, 56.5% of Swedes viewed “hen” negatively, but by 2015 when it was added to the dictionary, this number had shrunk to only 9.6% with 68.9% voicing their support

(Gustafsson et al. 6). In 2015, 99.5% of participants in the study had heard of “hen,” meaning that it not only had the support of over two-thirds of the population, but that the term was widely known and acknowledged (Gustafsson et al. 6). Notably, Swedes still use “hen” quite infrequently, indicating that attitudes change much faster than behavior (Gustafsson et al. 8).

2.3 Inclusive language in Spanish

In Spanish, there are a variety of ways to implement inclusive language, most of which focus on gendered word endings. The video *GÉNERO NEUTRO Y LENGUAJE INCLUSIVO (2ª Generación) - Guía Práctica* [Neutral Gender and Inclusive language (2nd Generation) - Practical Guide] outlines two main ‘generations’ of inclusive language. The first generation, which is understood to have arisen out of the feminist movement and post-dictatorial progressive periods in Spain and Latin America at the end of the 20th century, is concerned solely with the inclusion of women (Álvarez Mellado). As such, the linguistic innovations that come out of this period solely challenge the practice of using the “os” masculine word ending to describe a group of both men and women (Difracción Transfemenista 1:33). This generation of inclusive language led to the “@” ending, the “a/o” ending, and verbal duplication, all of which would change the word *todos* (everyone) to *todos y todas* (everyone in both the feminine and the masculine form). Another form of inclusive language that came out of this generation is the use of the “as” ending in situations where there are more women than men.

The second and more recent generation of inclusive language in Spanish is not concerned with making women visible in the language, but rather neutralizing it (Difracción Transfemenista 2:15). The inclusive language forms most associated with this generation are the “e” ending, the “x” ending and the “*” ending, all of which, if they are pronounced, would likely change *todos* to *todes*. Choosing neutral words also became more popular during this

generation, meaning that some might choose the neutral *estudiantes* instead of the masculine generic *alumnos* to address a group of students. This generation explicitly embraces genders outside of the binary, as the narrator of the video explains: “¿Por qué usar el género neutro? Porque es una falta de respeto hablarle a alguien en un género que no es el suyo” (Why use the neutral gender? Because it is disrespectful to talk to someone using a gender that is not their own) (Difracción Transfemenista 3:16).

These options are not all equally prevalent nor are they all appropriate in the same contexts. The symbols “@,” “x,” and “*,” for example, are largely unpronounceable and thus are relegated solely to written mediums. Additionally, “@,” because of its association with the internet and texting, is often viewed as less formal than “a/o” (Tosi 8). In addition, these changes to word endings are only used in situations where the gendered grammar ascribes sex or gender to an individual (Garcia 3). This means that there would be no change to the feminine grammatical gender in the sentence *la casa es bonita* (the house is beautiful), but that inclusive language would be appropriate for nonbinary referents or individuals whose gender is not yet known to the speaker.

2.4 Factors Influencing Use of Inclusive Language in Spanish

Though there are a variety of options for inclusive language use in Spanish, the majority of Spanish speakers do not use inclusive language. Sczesny et al. (2015) suggests that whether people use inclusive language depends largely on the deliberate decision to do so and to a lesser extent habitual past use (948). So, if people must choose to use inclusive language, why aren't they doing so? Previous studies have posited several reasons why this may be the case. Garcia (2019) provided the following reasons:

- 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. (Garcia 21)

Nissen (2013) supports these claims that incidences of gender bias do not depend on the type of grammatical gender used in a text (109). In this study, students were given a fill-in-the-blank exercise which utilized either masculine word endings, neutral word endings, or duplicate word endings (masculine and feminine) and told to fill in a name (Nissen 106). The study supported the idea that the Spanish language is not sexist and does not make women less visible because students filled in traditionally feminine names when prompted with the masculine generic just as often as they did when prompted with the neutral and duplicate forms (Nissen 109).

These arguments based on the neutrality and nonsexist nature of standard Spanish grammar are endorsed by the *Real Academia Española* (Royal Spanish Academy, RAE), a centuries-old organization which seeks to establish and maintain ‘proper’ Spanish grammar not only in Spain but throughout the Spanish-speaking world (“La Institución”). In 2012, RAE member Ignacio Bosque wrote “*Sexismo Lingüístico y Visibilidad De La Mujer*” (Linguistic Sexism and Women’s Visibility) which argues that though Spanish can be used in a sexist way, it is not inherently sexist (Bosque). Bosque argues:

No creemos que tenga sentido forzar las estructuras lingüísticas para que constituyan un espejo de la realidad... o pensar que las convenciones gramaticales nos impiden expresar en libertad nuestros pensamientos o interpretar los de los demás. (Bosque)

(‘We do not believe that it makes sense to force linguistic structures to become a mirror of reality... or to think that grammatical conventions prevent us from expressing our thoughts or interpreting those of others.’)

These justifications hinge on the belief that the generic masculine in Spanish is unmarked, meaning that it carries no gender connotation and equally represents men and women, as was the case in the Nissen study (Tosi 7).

With this in mind, the RAE views inclusive language not only as unnecessary, but as detrimental to the interpretation of Spanish. These beliefs have been echoed throughout the organization, exemplified in RAE director Santiago Muñoz Machado's 2020 statement: "*Tenemos una lengua hermosa y precisa. ¿Por qué estropearla con el lenguaje inclusivo?*" ('We have a precise and beautiful language. Why should we ruin it with inclusive language?') (Peiró). The RAE has also frequently referenced the economy of the generic masculine, reasoning that inclusive language forms which require duplication break the rhythm and flow of Spanish while adding no significant meaning (Figuerola & Gillon 17:07).

However, Tavits & Pérez (2019) found that among English-speaking college students, individuals who use gender neutral pronouns in their speech are less likely to apply traditionally masculine names to fictional characters, indicating that use of gender-neutral language does decrease mental bias toward men. Notably, neither this study, Nissen (2013), nor the RAE address whether gender-neutral language makes nonbinary individuals more visible in language. Decreasing male bias, while a worthwhile goal, does not guarantee that nonbinary people will be affirmed by the language form.

Garcia's proposed reasons against using inclusive language and the RAE's justifications are constrained to arguments about language itself, but there are many more factors at play. Sczesny (2015) found that participants with more sexist beliefs were less likely to use inclusive language and more likely to express a number of barriers to doing so (951). As this suggests, inclusive language is not a merely linguistic battleground, it is also deeply sociopolitical. In the

case of the Swedish “hen,” left-wing political beliefs and an interest in gender issues and gender equality were associated with more positive views of inclusive language (Gustafsson 7).

In the United States, one quintessential example of the political nature of inclusive language is the debate about the word “*Latinx*.” Because the words *Latino* and *Latina* reference masculinity and femininity respectively, many people have embraced *Latinx* as a gender-neutral way to refer to mixed groups and nonbinary individuals (Santos 7). Because the term references both an ethnic identity and gender, some have embraced *Latinx* as a “symbolic representation of the fight against intersecting oppressive forces affecting diverse Latinx individuals” (Santos 7). However, the term is clouded by significant controversy in both English- and Spanish-speaking communities.

One popular category of critique is the idea that *Latinx* represents a form of imposition from English, the United States specifically, or both. Many argue that use of the “x” constitutes an anglicization of the Spanish language which disregards long histories of struggle to maintain Spanish in the United States (Sopo). Not only does *Latinx* anglicize Spanish, but it also implicitly labels standard Spanish, and by extension Spanish speakers, as inadequate in the U.S. context (Sopo). Some go as far as to label inclusive language a form of “linguistic imperialism” (Guerra & Orbea). For some, inclusive language is exclusively associated with the U.S., as demonstrated by one comment in response to a defense of inclusive language: “*esto es asunto de los gringos, y como te interesa tanto muestra que eres uno de ellos y no nosotros. Viva La Raza*” (‘This is a matter for the Gringos, and your interest in it shows that you’re one of them and not one of us. Long Live the Race’) (Viva La Raza). Justifications such as these demonstrate the deep social, political, and cultural divides that *Latinx* both brings into focus and likely deepens.

Rightfully, arguments in this category often take issue with the need to label all people from Latin America with one word, noting that it was French colonists who first labelled inhabitants of what is now Central and South America “Latin” Americans as a way to distinguish this group from other colonial projects (Hernandez). Identifying inclusive language as another form of imperialism and unjust imposition, one opponent of the change commented “*¡Yanquis basta ya! ¡Fuera de my idioma natal!*” (Yankees, enough already! Get out of my native language!) (Consuelo Reyes). However, Google Trends suggests that use of the “x” dates back at least 18 years in Latin America, suggesting that its popularity within the United States may not necessarily mean that it originated here (Santos 10).

Even within Spanish-speaking communities, many argue that *Latinx* is an elitist “fashionable identity” which fails to actually address larger issues in Hispanic communities (Nuño-Pérez). This is likely because inclusive language is much more popular among those in academia, especially young people (Schmidt). In Argentina, for example, recent college graduate Natalia Mira has become the face of the inclusive language movement after she used it in a televised interview about abortion and reproductive health in 2019 (Schmidt). In the U.S., critics of inclusive language are quick to point out that working class immigrants rarely use inclusive forms, indicating that the change is not only U.S.-specific, but also unrepresentative of broader trends in language use (Hernandez).

These critiques do not, however, address the root problem of truthful and respectful identification of nonbinary individuals in Spanish. As one commenter puts it, “This whole openness about sexuality that has come about in recent years seems like it is demanding that we change what has always been. Why??? No matter what classification you identify with, the truth of the matter is that EVERY human being of Hispanic descent was born either a Latino or a

Latina. If you choose to call yourself something else, that's on you" (Joanne Mendoza). Both the invalidation of trans identities and the idea that being transgender or nonbinary is a choice are exemplified by this comment. This type of critique of inclusive language demonstrates the importance of creating an accepting and inclusive environment in schools, because outside of these, there is no guarantee that students will be met with support elsewhere.

2.5 The Role of Inclusive Language in Education

In order for schools to serve as a protective factor for transgender youth, policies must be in place which establish a culture of respect, support, and inclusion. As of 2015 GLSEN National School Climate Survey, the majority of LGBT youth in the United States reported that they were verbally harassed in school as a result of their sexual orientation (70.8%) or gender expression (54.5%) (GLSEN). Over one-fifth (20.3%) of LGBT students reported being physically harassed because of their gender expression and almost a tenth (9.1%) reported physical assaults on the same basis (GLSEN). Though not all of these students are transgender or nonbinary, these extraordinarily high rates of harassment and assault are indicative of inadequate supports for any student with non-normative gender expression.

In addition to instances of assault and harassment on the basis of gender expression, the vast majority of students reported explicit transphobic behaviors in their schools. 85.7% of the survey respondents said that they had heard terms like "tranny" or "he/she" used in school (GLSEN). These comments are not only used among students, as 63.5% of students said that they had heard a teacher or other school staff member make negative comments about transgender individuals (GLSEN). On top of the culture of transphobic language in schools, 50.9% of transgender survey respondents reported that they were prevented from using their correct name or pronouns (GLSEN). This means that students entering college, by and large,

come from educational backgrounds which were dismissive and invalidating of transgender individuals.

Even within the classroom, transgender students can feel othered. Transgender students describe their education as overwhelmingly both heteronormative and cisnormative (Bradford et al. 94). The absence of positive portrayals of transgender individuals in class materials in combination with school cultures of transphobia not only negatively affects self-identified transgender students but can also prevent other students from fully and safely developing their gender identities (Bradford et al. 94). At schools where LGBT content is included in the curriculum, students report much less frequent negative comments about gender identity and transgender people (GLSEN). Less frequent exposure to these kinds of negative comments contributes to lower levels of stress and mental health concerns for transgender students (Veale et al. 214).

Implementing inclusive language in Spanish classrooms is just one way to ensure that all students understand the validity and importance of transgender and nonbinary identities. Regardless of whether school staff are aware of the gender identities of their students, inclusive language can make students feel more comfortable and affirmed in education spaces and thus serve as a buffer for stress and negative mental health outcomes (Veale et al. 214). Because prior work has found that homophobia is partially rooted in perceived gender role violations, inclusive language could address stigma not just affecting transgender students, but all LGBT students (Tavits & Pérez).

As Ignacio Bosque explains in “*Sexismo Lingüístico y Visibilidad De La Mujer*” (Linguistic Sexism and Women’s Visibility),

“La enseñanza de la lengua a los jóvenes constituye una tarea de vital importancia. Se trata de lograr que aprendan a usar el idioma para expresarse con corrección y con rigor;

de contribuir a que lo empleen para argumentar, desarrollar sus pensamientos, defender sus ideas, luchar por sus derechos y realizarse personal y profesionalmente.” (Bosque)

(‘Teaching the language to young people is a vitally important task... It is about getting them to learn to use the language to express themselves correctly and rigorously; about helping them use it to argue, develop their thoughts, defend their ideas, fight for their rights and fulfill themselves personally and professionally.’)

Though Bosque uses this as an argument against inclusive language, it can be one of the most important arguments in support of it. When inclusive language is brought into the classroom, students are exposed to one of the most important global debates about language (Figuerola & Gillon 54:10). Inclusive language not only emphasizes the importance of using the correct name and pronouns to address transgender people, but can also be a useful pedagogical tool to discuss normativity, homogeneity, transgression, and linguistic privilege (Tosi 14). In short, inclusive language opens students up to the world, to each other, and to themselves; to not include it in Spanish language education would be a disservice to all students, including and especially transgender students.

3) Methodology

3.1 Data Collection Tools

Data for the study was gathered via semi-structured interviews with both native Spanish speakers and Spanish language learners (See Appendices B and C for Interview Protocol and Questions.) The semi-structured format allowed the interviewer to probe participants or rephrase questions when participants' answers did not match the intended sentiment of the question. As a result of the increased flexibility, the researcher was also able to create a welcoming, nonjudgmental environment, which is crucial to obtaining accurate data.

Due to restrictions on in-person gatherings as a result of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, all interviews were conducted remotely through Zoom or over the telephone. Restrictions on in-person gatherings also limited the possibility of recruiting Spanish speakers from the greater Williamsburg community, because the researcher was not in Williamsburg to post flyers, talk to patrons at local restaurants, or perform other common recruiting techniques. As a result, the vast majority of participants are students, alumni, or friends of students at the College of William & Mary.

All participants gave informed consent via web signature prior to study participation (See Appendix D and E for Participant Informed Consent Form). Participants were recorded with consent through either Zoom or Google Voice. After the verbal interview, the researcher sent each participant a copy of a demographic information short response form which they filled out on their own without researcher mediation (See Appendix F and G for Participant Demographic Information Form). Participants received payment upon return of the demographic information sheet.

The demographic response form consisted of seven prompts and participants were completely free to answer in whatever manner they felt best represented their identities. This freedom, despite hindering analysis of data trends by group, ensured that participants were fully able to express their identities as they understand them. Given the nature of this study, the opportunity to self-identify was important to the research environment, as the researcher does not believe that a drop-down list could adequately encapsulate the breadth of respondents' gender identities.

The verbal interviews ranged in length from 8 and a half minutes to 40 minutes. Generally, individuals who indicated that they did not use inclusive language in Spanish had much shorter interviews, because they did not answer the questions in section B1 about usage contexts.

3.2 Variables

Though there are a great number of possible factors which affect inclusive language use, the main independent variable this study focuses on is native speaker status. This variable is integral to the investigation because of differences of differences in accessibility to, acceptability of, barrier to, and sources of inclusive language in Spanish between native Spanish speakers and Spanish language learners.

Dependent variables included familiarity with, use of, and opinion of inclusive language in Spanish. These variables were measured using open-ended questions. For example, in order to ascertain a participant's familiarity, they were asked "Have you seen this form before? In what context?" and "What does the use of (form) communicate?". For use, participants were asked "Do you use this type of language?" and for opinion participant answered "What would you think of someone else using this type of language?".

Other dependent variables included comprehensibility of a form and contexts for use, both of which were measured using Likert scales from 1 to 5. For comprehensibility, participants answered the question “How easy is this sentence to understand in comparison to standard grammar (‘o’ and ‘a’ endings)?” and received a verbal and written reminder through the chat of the meanings of the numerical scale. For comprehensibility, they were reminded that a 1 would be easy and a 5 would be very hard or impossible to understand with each prompting.

3.3 Participants

The participants for the research were gathered through social media posts and emails to students who have taken Hispanic Studies or Hispanic Studies cross-listed courses at the College of William & Mary. There were 42 participants in the study: 21 native speakers and 21 Spanish learners. The participants range in age from 18 to 30. All but two of the participants are either current undergraduate or graduate students or recent graduates of these programs. The majority of the participants identify as women (n=31, 73.8%) while the remaining participants (n=11, 26.2%) identify as men. The participants come from a range of socio-economic and religious backgrounds. About half (n=23, 54.8%) identified as some denomination of Christian or Christian-affiliated. Another 16 participants (38.1%) identified as atheist, agnostic, or no religious affiliation. In addition, most of the participants identified as middle (n=24, 57.1%) or upper-middle (n=8, 19%) class. The vast majority of the participants (n=32, 76.2%) identified as straight or heterosexual, while 7 (16.7%) identified as bisexual and 2 (4.8%) identified as queer.

The participants also self-identified their political affiliations, which yielded a wide array of terminology. Notably, 21 participants (50%) reported that they were Democrats or Progressive Democrats, while another five (11.9%) said they were liberal. Only one participant identified as a Republican, with one other participant identifying as a right-leaning moderate. Of the

remaining participants, eight (19%) identify as some form of left or left-affiliated, three (7.1%) said they were neutral or had no political affiliation, and two (4.8%) identify as independent. This demographic set, though certainly not representative of the greater US population, likely more closely resembles the gender, economic, religious, and political makeup of the Hispanic Studies department at the College of William & Mary.

The majority of participants joined the study through a direct link from the researcher, though nine participants (21%) were referred to the study by friends or family members who had already participated. These nine individuals are the only participants who are not current or former William & Mary students. Most (6 of the 9) are either undergraduate or graduate students at other universities across the U.S. Two more participants are residents of Argentina who were referred to the study by a William & Mary student who lived with them during a semester abroad. The remaining participant is an ESL teacher in New Jersey who attends the researcher's church and joined the study after a private conversation rather than through a Facebook post or email containing the link to sign up.

3.4 Data

Data for this study consisted primarily of short answers and Likert scale ratings which were obtained from sociolinguistic interviews. Interviews were transcribed and common words, phrases, and lines of reasoning were highlighted in order to identify possible themes. The researcher utilized naturalized transcription because the topic was relatively new (or at least rarely discussed) for the vast majority of participants, meaning that interpretation of reasons for pauses and stutters would be very difficult.

Using the transcriptions as a foundation, the researcher extracted themes. Examples of themes include respect, freedom, and inclusion. Themes were identified via a note-taking process

such that once an interview was transcribed, key words from each response were entered into an excel spreadsheet to determine rates of prevalence. Similar keywords (for example, if some participants mentioned “men and women” and some mentioned “the gender binary”) were grouped together to identify trends. These words represent explanations for inclusive language use, interpretations of the meaning of inclusive language, and assumptions about inclusive language users which reflect broader ideas about inclusive language as a whole or specific type of inclusive language.

Likert scale scores also provided quantitative insight into participants’ usage of and attitudes towards inclusive language. This data was also entered into an excel spreadsheet. For example, for the different contexts in which someone might use inclusive language, the rates of potential use were averaged in order to determine potential factors which might inhibit use of inclusive language.

3.5 Data Analysis

Basic statistics allowed the researcher to determine correlations of specific identity traits with patterns in inclusive language use, knowledge, and perceptions.

In addition to word and phrase patterns, the verbal interviews also utilized Likert scales in multiple sections (See Appendix B and C for a list of questions). Participants used a Likert scale to express how easy (1) or difficult (5) they thought each form of inclusive language was to understand in comparison to standard Spanish grammar. Participants who indicated any use of inclusive language also used Likert scales to indicate the frequency with which they would use inclusive language in a variety of contexts. These ratings also provided information about differences in understanding and use within and across identity groups.

4) Results

Results are discussed separately for Spanish language learners and native Spanish speakers in this section because the differences between these groups will be integral to the analysis and discussion of the interview data. For both groups, the data reported will include short answers about use, attitude, and perception of the three forms as well as information about the place of inclusive language in education. This chapter also addresses participants' perceptions about barriers to using inclusive language and their opinions about future use.

4.1 Spanish Language Learners

Of the 21 interviews conducted with Spanish learners, three interviews were not included for in-depth analysis because of lost or corrupted audio. For these interviews, basic data on knowledge, use, and ease of understanding of the three Spanish example forms is available and included in initial analyses, but all analysis of themes and the English example will exclude these three interviews.

4.1.1 Prior Knowledge

Figure 1: Learner Knowledge, Use, and Comprehension of Forms (n=21)			
Form	Know form	Use form	Avg. Comprehensibility Rating (1 to 5)
@	19	12	2.14
x	19	8	2.00
e	13	6	2.20

The three forms of inclusive language included in the interview were the “@” ending, the “x” ending, and the “e” ending. Of the three forms of Spanish inclusive language presented, learners indicated greatest familiarity with the “@” and “x” endings, with 19/21 participants (90.5%) indicating knowledge of each of these forms. The “e” endings were much less familiar, with only 13 participants (61.9%) indicating familiarity. Language learners indicated much

higher rates of usage for the “x” ending, with 12 participants (57.1%) indicating usage of “x” in comparison to only 8 participants (38.1%) and 6 participants (23.8%) who used “@” and “e” respectively.

Participants also rated “x” the easiest to understand, with an average rating of 2.00 out of 5. In comparison, participants rated the “@” 2.14 out of 5 and the “e” 2.20 out of 5. Thus, though “x” is the easiest form of inclusive language in Spanish to understand on average, the disparity between difficulty ratings appears to be minimal.

Overall, 16/21 participants (85.7%) indicated use of at least one kind of inclusive language. Of these 13, eight used only one type of inclusive language, six used two types of inclusive language, and two used all three types of inclusive language given as examples. On the other hand, 5/18 (27.8%) participants indicated no use of inclusive language in Spanish.

Of the 18 participants whose interviews were transcribed, 13 (72.2%) said they had not heard of any inclusive language in Spanish beyond the three examples in the study. 4/18 (22.2%) mentioned the pronoun “*elle*” as an alternative to *él* (‘he’) and *ella* (‘she’). All 4 participants mentioned that they had only heard of this pronoun recently and 3 of them said it would work in tandem with the “e” endings. One other participant mentioned avoidance of gendered nouns as a form of inclusive language in Spanish “like using *estudiantes* or something specific that would not necessarily have to rely on a gender instead of using ‘*ellos*’ or ‘*chicos*.’”

4.1.2 Interpretation of Inclusion

Form	Binary	Nonbinary	No Indication
@	10	3	5
x	2	10	6
e	9	1	8

Learners interpreted each example presented in the interview differently, associating different aspects of inclusion and different connotations with all three. Differences in interpretation largely surround who participants believe is included with each ending.

With respect to the “@” ending, ten of 18 participants (55.5%) said that the “@” ending only included men and women, rather than explicitly including all genders, including those not on the binary. 3/18 (16.7%) said that all genders were included under the “@” ending or that the “@” is gender neutral. Participants disagreed about the appropriateness of this ending, with 3 participants calling this form “progressive” and 2 participants associating it with the past, expressing greater support for newer and more inclusive forms of alternate word endings. One participant commented “I saw it mostly in high school classes, but not since I’ve been at William & Mary in Spanish classes since I think it is less common than other types now.”

For the “x” ending, only 2/18 (11.1%) participants said that the form only applied to men and women. In comparison, 10/18 (55.5%) explicitly mentioned the inclusion of nonbinary identities or said that the “x” includes all genders.

The “x” carries an additional connotation of being associated with the United States for 3/18 participants (16.7%). Of these three, one said that they would not use any inclusive language (“@,” “x,” or “e” endings) with Spanish speakers outside of the United States because non-U.S. Spanish speakers would not understand. An additional participant expressed a belief that inclusive language in Spanish was not used anywhere outside of the United States:

“When I studied abroad, I never heard this so I think its more of a thing that latinos do here and no one outside of the US does it. So, if I’m talking to someone and if I find that they’re not from the US or haven’t spent a lot of time in the US, they’re less likely to be

familiar with inclusive language. So, with them, a lot of the time it makes more sense to say “todos” or “todas” because otherwise they won’t know what I’m saying.”

For the “e” ending, 9/18 participants (50%) said that all genders were covered under this form, including nonbinary identities. Only one participant associated this form with men and women exclusively. The proportion of participants who view “e” endings as inclusive of all genders closely reflects the proportion of participants who believe this for “x” endings. This is supported by the 9/18 participants (50%) who explained that the “e” ending is either an evolution of “x” or similar to “x.” Of these 9, 3 described the “e” ending as the pronounceable version of “x” and 1 explained that the “x” ending is pronounced with an [e] sound, erasing a distinction in the oral realization of the two forms.

4/18 participants said that they would need someone using the “e” to explain the meaning or inclusive context to understand this form. For example, one participant expressed that “even though you can understand it pretty easily, you can kind of be like ‘well is that a spelling error?’ So, I think the context of inclusive language is necessary to understand the e a little bit more, even though it is more intuitive to read and to pronounce.” In comparison, only 1 participant expressed this need for the “@” ending and no participants expressed it for the “x” ending. This uncertainty is likely related to the much lower levels of familiarity with the “e” ending among learner participants.

4.1.3 Issues with Inclusive Language

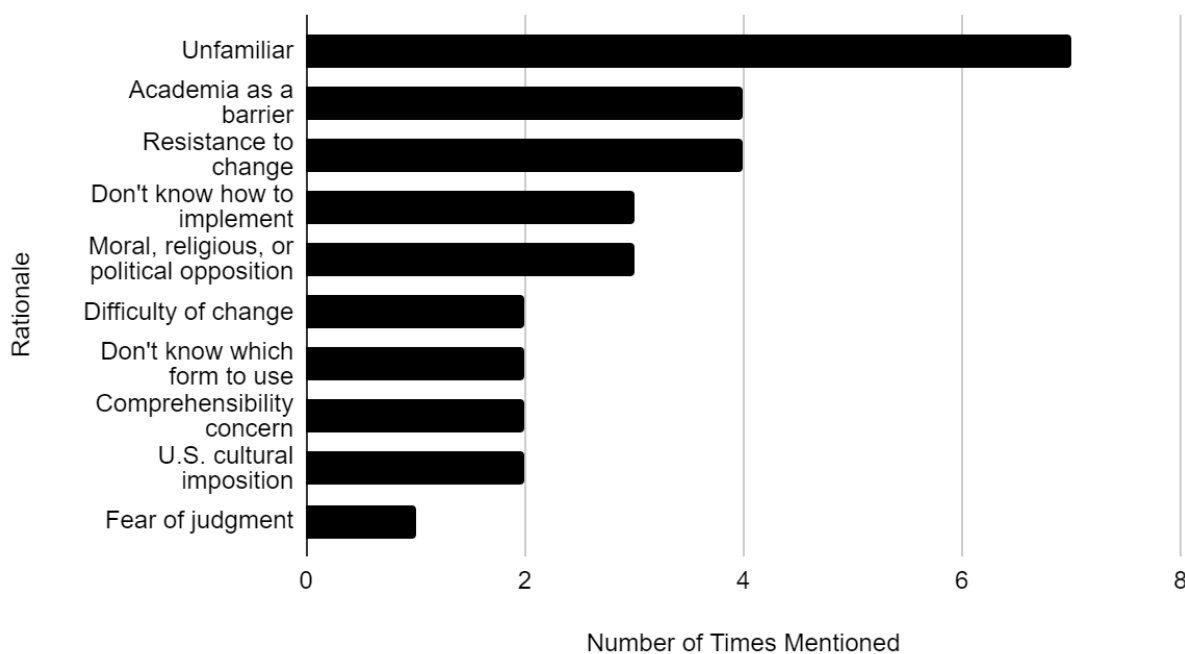
Five participants did not use any inclusive language in Spanish. These individuals gave reasons why someone might use inclusive language. 3 of these participants described age as a major factor influencing use, describing younger people as much more likely to use inclusive language. For speakers who did use inclusive language, on a scale of 1 (always) to 5 (never), the

average frequency of use with adults was 3.64, the highest average of all of the contexts assessed. Inclusive language users were also less likely to use inclusive language with someone religious, which received an average score of 3.45. In comparison, participants expressed a much greater likelihood of using inclusive language with someone their own age, providing an average frequency of 2.41. As one participant with Spanish-speaking family members described:

“Inclusive language has come about really recently so there is this generational gap between my dad and my grandma and me with how familiar we are. Once it became a thing, they were already out of academia and I see that for a lot of people and there is a conservatism aspect that's part of some cultures in some countries too. So, I think that definitely would be a reason for them not using certain inclusive language and a reason why people don't use it with adults because it is just uncomfortable. You don't know if they will be offended or upset by it.”

4 of the 5 participants also said that people might use inclusive language because they are in an academic environment. 2 participants referenced the possibility of a departmental guideline directing professors to use inclusive language in Spanish classes. One of these, the participant opposed to all inclusive language, suggested that professors are forced to use inclusive language “because I know William & Mary tries to be inclusive and they try to be politically correct and they expect their professors to follow it, so even if the professor didn't agree with using it, they might have to do it to keep their job.” Other reasons mentioned included meeting student needs, a belief in inclusivity, and the influence of the United States cultural context. For instance, one participant said “I think part of it comes from the cultural context of the United States and being in academic space and I think that kind of space just in general outside of Spanish tends to promote more gender inclusive language.”

Figure 3: Learner Rationales for Lack of Use of Inclusive Language (n=13)



The 13 participants who used some kind of inclusive language were asked to provide reasons why others do not use inclusive language. The most common reason offered (7/13, 53.8%) was that people are simply not familiar with inclusive language in Spanish. Of these 7, 4 participants specifically attributed the lack of familiarity to the inaccessibility of inclusive language outside of academic spaces.

Four participants (30.8%) mentioned resistance to change and another 2 participants explained that change is very difficult, suggesting that Spanish speakers may not be opposed to change, but find making the change too big of a barrier to implementation. As one participant described, “most Spanish speakers didn't grow up speaking inclusive language so it's a mindset that has to change and that is really difficult because its their whole language, their whole lives they have to go back and unlearn.

Another three participants (23.1%) offered the justification that people may be familiar with inclusive language, but not know how to use it. In addition, 2/13 (15.4%) said that people

might not know which form of inclusive language to use or understand the difference between the forms. 3/13 participants (23.1%) also offered moral opposition on a religious, cultural, or political basis as possible reasons.

Other reasons for avoiding inclusive language included concerns about comprehensibility, fear of judgment, and resistance to imposition of United States cultural values. Two participants mentioned a lack of normalization, which could indicate a large array of barriers to use. One of these said “they watch the news, they all have social media and so I’m sure that they've encountered it, but I don't think it's as normalized and that makes things more complicated.”

Participants perceived additional barriers to use for the “e” ending. 3/18 participants said that “e” endings are not immediately recognizable as Spanish, raising concerns about comprehensibility and judgment. 2 of these participants said that “e” endings initially appear to be French and 1 participant interpreted words with “e” endings as Portuguese. 3/18 participants also said that they struggled to interpret the meaning of the “e” ending because it was very unfamiliar.

4.1.4 Pronunciation

The ability to pronounce certain forms of inclusive language was another obstacle many participants mentioned. Of the 18 participants, 11 (61.1%) explicitly mentioned that they did not know how to pronounce the “@” ending. 10/18 (55.6%) had the same concerns about the “x.” In comparison, 7/18 (38.9%) mentioned that the “e” endings are easy to pronounce. Participants also mentioned digital formats at much higher rates for the “@” and “x” endings (7/18, 38.9%) than for the “e” ending (3/18, 16.7%). This is likely due to the difficulty of pronouncing the “@” and “x” endings in face to face interactions. 4 participants added that they are less likely to use

inclusive language across all contexts when they are required to speak instead of write because of uncertainties surrounding pronunciation.

4.1.5 Sources of Inclusive Language

Spanish language learners described three main sources of information about inclusive language in Spanish. 7/18 (38.9%) said that they had learned about inclusive language through conversations or class discussions about the term “Latinx.” 6/18 (33.3%) participants mentioned social media as a source of information about Spanish inclusive language.

School was the greatest source of information about inclusive language for language learners. 14/18 participants (77.8%) described school as one of the main places they heard and learned about Spanish inclusive language either by explicitly listing academic contexts as a source of information, mentioning the class they learned it in, or saying they would assume someone using it was a teacher or in academia.

4.1.6 Inclusive Language Education

Though the majority of participants (17/18, 94.4%) knew of at least one type of inclusive language, 11/18 (61.1%) said they had not heard of gender inclusive language in Spanish until college. An additional 4/18 (22.2%) first encountered inclusive language in their last two years of high school. 2/18 (11.1%) never encountered inclusive language during their education. Since all but one of the Spanish learners began learning Spanish during middle or high school, these first encounters are relatively late in their Spanish educational careers.

Of those who reported seeing or hearing inclusive language in previous educational contexts, 3 participants (18.8%) said that inclusive language was used in the classroom, but never actually taught. This form of presentation represents an additional barrier to inclusive language use.

11/18 participants (61.1%) gave explicit support for the inclusion of Spanish inclusive language in Spanish courses. Of these 11, 6 participants (54.5%) specifically said that lessons on inclusive language should be included early in the learning process. Participants offered various reasons for this, including increased familiarity, time to practice, normalization of inclusive language, normalization of nonbinary identities, and the ease of adding inclusive language early in comparison to trying to make a major change later in the learning process.

Only one participant opposed the inclusion of inclusive language in Spanish language courses. This participant stated “I don't necessarily think I would have wanted it to be included in my education because I think I would have been very confused as a young person trying to figure out why it was necessary to include because I was raised in a very conservative environment.” In contrast, one participant asserted that the only way to promote real change and inclusion was to introduce inclusive language early on and promote habit formation.

4.1.7 Inclusive Language in English

Overall, Spanish language learners were more familiar and comfortable with inclusive language in English than Spanish. 17/18 (94.4%) participants had heard of the use of singular they as a form of inclusive language and all but one of those (n=17, 94.1%) said that they use singular they for inclusion purposes.

Participants gave a wide array of reasons for using inclusive language in English. The most common reason was out of respect, which 9/18 (50%) mentioned. In comparison, only 2/18 participants offered respect as a reason why someone might use inclusive language in Spanish.

Other reasons included not knowing the gender of the person they are referring to (9/18, 50%), not assuming someone's gender (8/18, 44.4%), and openness (3/18, 16.7%). When asked why others might use singular they, the participant who opposed using inclusive language said it

was because others are nice, sympathetic, respectful, and open-minded. Other words associated with singular they include affirm, safe, kind, supportive, thoughtful, and conscious. Several participants expressed frustration with people who do not use singular they because “I generally assume that whoever is using they has some information that that is how the person likes to be referred to, so why would I not refer to them that way? Like just be kind, it isn’t that hard.”

Some participants did see using inclusive language as “hard” though since 2/13 participants (11.1%) said that if they noticed someone using singular they, they would think they had put in time and effort to be inclusive. An additional participant said that using singular they meant others were “working as hard” as the participant was to be inclusive. These responses indicate that some Spanish learners view using inclusive language as something difficult or laborious even in English.

4.2 Native Spanish Speakers

Of the 21 interviews conducted with native Spanish speakers, 2 interviews were not included for in-depth analysis because of lost or corrupted audio. For these interviews, basic data on knowledge, use, and ease of understanding of the three Spanish example forms is available and included in initial analyses, but all analysis of themes and the English example will exclude these three interviews.

4.2.1 Prior Knowledge

Figure 4: Native Speaker Knowledge, Use, and Comprehension of Forms (n=21)			
Form	Know form	Use form	Avg. Comprehensibility Rating (1 to 5)
@	15	4	1.60
x	18	10	2.41
e	9	2	2.38

Rates of overall familiarity with inclusive language in Spanish were high; only one (4.8%) of the 21 participants was unfamiliar with all of the examples of inclusive language in Spanish. Among native speakers, the “x” ending was the most familiar form of inclusive language in Spanish. 18/21 participants (85.7%) indicated familiarity with the “x” ending. In comparison, 15/21 participants (71.4%) indicated familiarity with the “@” ending and 9/21 participants (42.9%) indicated familiarity with the “e” ending.

This means that native speakers were nearly as likely as Spanish learners to be familiar with the “x,” but slightly less likely to be familiar with the other two examples. Native speakers’ inclusive language use rates were also lower than those of language learners. Among native speakers, the “x” was the most commonly implemented form of inclusive language with 10/21 participants (47.6%) indicating that they used the “x.” For the “@” and the “e” endings, 19.0% and 9.5% of participants indicated use respectively.

Though native speakers were most familiar with the “x” ending, the average difficulty rating of the “x” was the highest of all three examples. Native speakers rated the “x” 2.41 out of 5 in comparison to 1.60 for the “@” ending and 2.38 for the “e” endings. This indicates that the “@” ending is the easiest to understand, while the “x” and “e” endings are slightly more difficult and of roughly equal difficulty to understand.

In total, 12/21 participants (57.1%) used some kind of inclusive language. Of these, 8 (66.7%) used one form of inclusive language in Spanish while 4 others (33.3%) used two forms. None of the native speakers used all three forms of inclusive language and 9/21 participants (42.9%) did not use any inclusive language.

Of the 19 participants whose interviews were transcribed, 16 (84.2%) had never heard of any forms of inclusive language in Spanish aside from “@,” “x,” and “e.” 3/19 (15.8%)

mentioned duplication (for example, saying “*todos y todas*” instead of simply “*todos*”) and the “a/o” word ending as a very simple form of inclusive language in Spanish.

4.2.2 Interpretation of Inclusion

Figure 5: Native Speaker Interpretation of Inclusion of forms (n=19)

Form	Binary	Nonbinary	No Indication
@	12	6	1
x	3	15	1
e	3	7	9

Participants viewed each form of inclusive language in Spanish presented in the interview as distinct, identifying different groups who were encapsulated within each form.

12/19 (63.2%) participants indicated that the “@” ending was only applicable to men and women while 6/19 (31.6%) said that the “@” is gender neutral or includes all genders. For 3/19 of the participants, the “@” carries the additional connotation of being out of date or decreasing in use. However, 2/19 said that the “@” is currently used in their Spanish language family group chats. One of these participants explained “I’m in a group chat with my entire family in Mexico and the oldest person in that group chat is 85 years old and there’s me and my younger cousins are in it too and I see the *arroba* [at sign] there and if all they’re able to communicate that way, I think it’s just like very normalized thing.” Thus, there seem to be discrepancies about the timeliness and current relevance of the “@” ending.

In contrast to the “@” ending, only 3/19 participants (15.8%) restricted the application of “x” to only men and women. 15/19 participants (78.9%) said that “x” was either gender neutral or applicable to all genders. The remaining participant did not indicate which gender groups they believed were included. Native speakers were much more likely to explicitly identify the “x” ending as inclusive of all genders than the Spanish learner group. The “x” ending carries the

additional connotation of being specific to the United States for 2/19 participants (10.5%). One participant compared the “e” to the “x,” saying “I think it’s the same as the x, just an adaptation, but it definitely doesn’t have the same U.S. context. When people use “e” it comes from that place of being fully committed to having inclusive language and also using it in a context that is a little bit more accessible to people in Latin America or in non-academic spaces.”

Overall, the “e” ending was much less familiar to the participants and elicited far fewer certain responses. 2/19 participants said that they were too unsure of what the “e” ending would signify to give a definite answer. For the “e,” 7/19 participants (36.8%) described the form as gender neutral, appropriate for all genders, or appropriate for people who identify outside the binary. The same 3 participants (15.8%) who said that the “x” was only applicable to men and women stated that the “e” ending was only appropriate for men and women.

5/19 participants (26.3%) described “e” as similar to or an evolution of “x,” one of whom stated that the “x” is pronounced as an e, thereby merging the two forms into one in spoken contexts. In contrast to the idea of the “e” as an evolution of “x,” 2 participants saw the “e” as a regression to more standard grammar that they assumed might be more common among older people. One described the “e” as a professional alternative to “x” that they use to signal inclusivity. “It’s like ‘hey, we’re inclusive! We recognize gender identity,’ but we don’t want to conform to the “x” yet, you know the “x” is too radical for us.”

Small groups of participants expressed that they would only understand inclusive language if the context or motivation were explained to them for all forms. 2 participants expressed this need for the “@” ending, 1 for the “x,” and 2 for the “e”. These levels of uncertainty are likely related to native Spanish speakers’ lower levels of familiarity with Spanish inclusive language in comparison to Spanish learners.

4.2.3 Issues with Inclusive Language

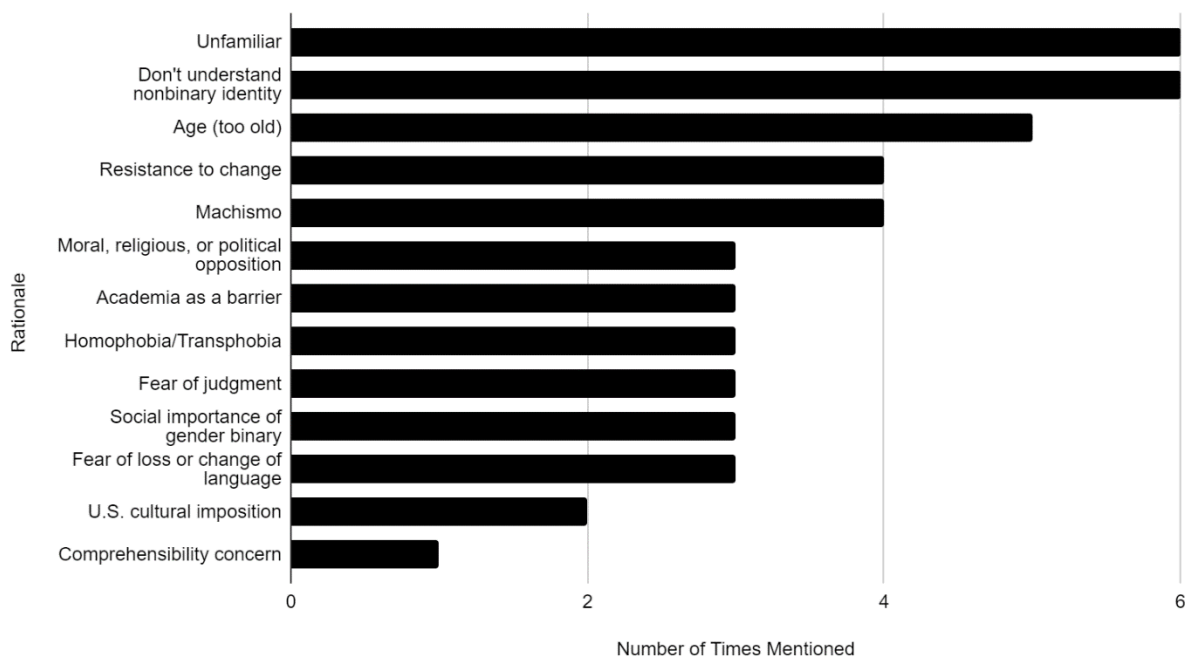
Though the 9 participants who did not indicate any use of inclusive language were asked to explain why someone might use inclusive language, 3 of these participants instead explained reasons why they and others do not use inclusive language. For the 6 participants who gave reasons why someone might use inclusive language, there were no clear trends in their answers. Possible reasons included influence from the United States cultural context, influence from the prevalence of “latinx,” social media influence, academic contexts, the influence of English, and to be politically correct. Other words associated with using inclusive language were ‘nice,’ ‘welcoming,’ and ‘diversity.’

One participant explained that the diverse and accepting college environment can make space for inclusive language innovation in a way that less progressive communities do not:

“My first interaction with someone that uses inclusive languages was when I went off to college. It was a lot bigger of an environment, a lot of different people that have a lot bigger of a space to actually, you know, display their identity their gender identity and everything, whereas I’m from a very rural town. So, I think that's a big part of why I’ve never really seen it or around my community before college, because there just wasn’t the diversity in gender to the freedom for people to express it.”

Explanations like this one point to environmental and communal, rather than individual, rationales for the inclusive language use.

Figure 6: Native Speaker Rationales for Lack of Use of Inclusive Language (n=13)



Of the 13 participants who gave reasons why people might not use inclusive language, 6/13 (46.2%) mentioned a lack of familiarity with inclusive language. Similarly to language learners, 3 of these 6 described the lack of accessibility to information about inclusive language outside of academia as a core contributing factor to this lack of familiarity.

Age was also a common explanation for why people do not use inclusive language. 5/13 participants (38.5%) said that older people were less likely to use or accept it. One participant expressed a fear not only that older adults would not accept inclusive language, but that he would be deemed less legitimate as a Spanish speaker if he were to use inclusive language with an older adult. “Maybe there's like a part of me that's like ‘these old people don't already use this language, they're gonna think I'm weird’ or they might just be like ‘what did you say?’ also like I am a native Spanish speaker, but I have a little bit of an accent so I always just try to go with the flow so people don't come for me. I don't want adults to jump on me like that with questions.” Interpretations of adults as less accepting of inclusive language are consistent with the average

frequency of use expressed by participants who use inclusive language. On a scale of 1 (always) to 5 (never), the average frequency of use with adults was 3.45. In contrast, inclusive language users indicated an average use of 2.2 for people their own age.

Native speakers also introduced the possibility that people who do not use inclusive language do not understand what it means to identify outside of the gender binary and thus do not understand the need for inclusive language. 6/13 participants (46.2%) offered this justification for inclusive language avoidance. In addition, 4/13 participants (30.8%) mentioned the influence of *machismo*, a topic which Spanish learners did not mention. This was listed as a reason not only why people would reject inclusive language in the first place, but also why someone who occasionally uses inclusive language would avoid it in certain situations. One participant explained “I think because of *machismo* and patriarchal values that are very much embedded in Hispanic society, when I’m with my family I would never use this language because I would feel fearful of what they would say and how they would treat me.”

Other reasons for avoiding inclusive language, as can be seen in figure 6, included resistance to change (4/13), fear of loss or change of language (3/13), fear or expectation of judgment (3/13), homophobia or transphobia (3/13), religion (3/13), the societal importance of the gender binary (3/13), resistance to the imposition of English (2/13), and comprehensibility concerns (1/13).

An additional barrier to use for the “e” ending was native speakers’ difficulty immediately recognizing it as a form of Spanish. 3/19 participants (15.8%) said that they would mistake Spanish using the “e” ending for another language (Catalan, Italian, or French). An additional participant said that they would assume it was a regionalism, saying “I would honestly

think they're like Spain or something because the “x” is a symbol or it's like kind of known it could be used as a symbol, but the “e” is foreign to me.’

4.2.4 Pronunciation

Slightly fewer native Spanish speakers mentioned pronunciation as a barrier to use than Spanish language learners. 6/19 participants (31.6%) and 8/19 participants (42.1%) expressed concerns about pronunciation for the “@” and the “x” endings respectively.

Native speakers described the “e” ending as easier to pronounce at similar rates to their language learning counterparts. 8/19 native speakers (42.1%) mentioned the pronounceability of the “e” ending. In addition, 4/19 participants (21.1%) explicitly referenced that the “e” ending works better with existing Spanish pronunciations and grammatical structures.

4.2.5 Sources of Inclusive Language

Native speakers mentioned three main sources of information about inclusive language in Spanish. The most common source of information was the prevalence of the term “Latinx” and conversations or discussions relating to the term. 12/19 participants (63.2%) mentioned the prevalence of Latinx as a contributing factor to knowledge about inclusive language.

The second most common source of inclusive language information were academic contexts, college, or the College of William & Mary specifically. 8/19 participants (42.1%) mentioned these contexts. 3/19 participants (15.8%) also specifically mentioned the Latin American Student Union at the College of William & Mary.

In addition, 6/19 native Spanish speakers (31.6%) noted that information about inclusive language was available on social media platforms like Instagram and Twitter. One participant explains that “I’ve always seen this on social media posts because I think when it comes to our language and culture, it's more progressive online than it is in person.”

4.2.6 Inclusive Language Education

Of the 19 participants, 10 (52.6%) said that they had not heard of inclusive language until college. 7 of these 10 participants (36.8%) said that although they had taken Spanish classes, they were not familiar with inclusive language in Spanish until college. In addition, 4/19 participants (21.1%) said that they had heard inclusive language mentioned in a college class, but that it had never been officially taught. Only 1 participant said that they learned about inclusive language in Spanish through a high school class.

Despite their late introduction to inclusive language in Spanish, all 16 participants (84.2%) who gave an opinion about whether or not inclusive language should be included in Spanish language classes said that it should be included. The remaining 3 participants did not have strong opinions about its inclusion.

6/16 participants (37.5%) emphasized the importance of including inclusive language education early in the learning process, noting that this could help make inclusive language more normal and address the barrier of transition late in the learning process. As one participant described, “I guess there's no such thing as too late but I think like the only way for it to actually change the way a lot of people speak is if it happens early.” 3 of the participants also cited the possibility of using inclusive language as a tool to bring up important cultural topics, such as reliance on the gender binary, colonialism, and sexuality. One participant also cited the importance of using inclusive language to foster identity development for students in elementary, middle and high school.

Two participants emphasized the importance of adding inclusive language as an option, rather than replacing standard grammar with it. In contrast, one participant said that grammatical gender serves no purpose in Spanish and suggested that inclusive language should entirely

replace the standard structure. This participant said “there are only benefits from moving away from binary language, especially for people who are learning because gender shouldn’t be this big issue.”

Finally, two participants said that using inclusive language is even more necessary when someone is in a position of power, such as a teacher or administrator.

4.2.7 Inclusive Language in English

Only 17 native speakers were asked about their familiarity with inclusive language in English because 2 of the native speakers were monolingual Argentinians.

100% of the native speakers indicated familiarity with singular they in English. Of these, 16 (94.1%) said that they use singular they in their own English. The most common reasons given for use were respect (7/17, 41.2%), normalized nature (4/17, 23.5%), showing care or support (4/17, 23.5%), and not assuming someone’s gender (3/17, 17.6%). Other words associated with use of singular they include ‘open,’ ‘political,’ and ‘aware.’ One participant explained that they actively try to affirm people by using singular they because “when you force them to explain their gender or pronouns to you, that can be a really uncomfortable situation. So, I just use they to make people feel safe and comfortable and so they don’t have to explain anything to me.”

For native speakers, the proportion of participants who mentioned respect as a reason to use inclusive language in English (7/17, 41.2%) and the proportion who mentioned it as a reason to use inclusive language in Spanish (6/19, 31.6%) was much more comparable for native Spanish speakers than for learners. This is consistent with the very high average frequency of use for the 10 speakers who use inclusive language. On a scale of 1 (always) to 5 (never), native Spanish speakers gave an average frequency rating of 1.05 for conversations with individuals

who identify outside the gender binary. This suggests a high level of respect for nonbinary identities.

5) Analysis & Discussion

In order to understand the current state of education on inclusive language, it is important to compare the experiences of Spanish language learners and native Spanish speakers.

Discrepancies between the ideas, attitudes, and proclivities of the two groups demonstrate places where education for current language learners are not in step with the Spanish speaking community.

Centering Native Speakers

Tailoring second language instruction on inclusive language to the habits and opinions of native speakers in the community is integral for a number of reasons. First, it is not the job of language instructors to determine what appropriate language use should look like for a community of which they are not a part. By and large, the professorship in Hispanic Studies are not from the Williamsburg area and many of them are not native Spanish speakers. While these characteristics do not infringe on their ability to be effective educators, they do place with instructors the additional responsibility of remaining in contact with local communities of Spanish speakers when discussing linguistic change to ensure they are not speaking for others.

In addition, native speakers, due to their more extensive attachments with Spanish speaking communities (both on campus and through their families and home communities), are much more likely to be able to effect change in their communities. As multiple Spanish language learners expressed in their interviews, learners do not want to dictate to native speakers how they should speak their own language. One stated that they would in many cases not use inclusive language until corrected because “I don’t wanna preach where I shouldn’t.” Native speakers with inclusive language proclivities can use their identities as native speakers to legitimize their arguments about linguistic innovation where Spanish cannot.

Though inclusive language use in Spanish was much less frequent with native Spanish speakers, 16/19 participants (84.2%) expressed a desire for inclusive language to be included in Spanish language education. The remaining 3 participants in the native-speaker group gave no opinion on the incorporation of inclusive language. This strong preference for inclusive language among native speakers supports the importance of creating a set of informed guidelines for the College of William & Mary Hispanic Studies department.

Comparison of Native Speakers and Learners

Across all three examples of inclusive language in Spanish, Spanish language learners indicated higher rates of familiarity and usage. There are many factors which could influence this discrepancy, including several that participants mentioned in their interviews, such as experiences in Spanish classes, inclusive language culture at William & Mary, and the influence of the US cultural context.

The simplest explanation for the discrepancy between learners' and natives' familiarity and usage index is that because language learners are enrolled in Spanish classes at much higher rates than native Spanish speakers and both learners and native speakers associate inclusive language with academic contexts, the language learners have been exposed to more inclusive language and thus have had more opportunities to incorporate it into their own Spanish. Across both groups of participants, 7/37 participants mentioned that the inaccessibility of information about inclusive language outside of academic contexts was a barrier to use. The elitism of inclusive language is a common critique the practice faces who believe "the term is used mostly by an educated minority, largely in the U.S." (Hernandez).

Though all of the native Spanish speakers interviewed are college students either at William & Mary or another university, far fewer of them are taking Spanish classes at their

higher education institutions than the Spanish language learners, so they would likely have to independently seek out conversations about inclusive language. Language learners are more likely to have these conversations built into class discussions.

As several participants noted, inclusive language is widely used in the Hispanic Studies department at the College of William & Mary. As such, not only the general academic context, but the specific educational context of William & Mary may be a factor contributing to higher levels of familiarity and use for language learners. 8 of the Spanish learners specifically referenced professors or emails from professors as forums where they had heard or seen inclusive language used in Spanish. Additionally, one of the learners, a Teaching Assistant in the Hispanic Studies department, said that they used the “x” ending in emails to his students. This means that even when inclusive language is not an official part of the curriculum in a class, Spanish learners still have the opportunity to hear and see inclusive language.

Higher levels of exposure for Spanish language learners could be critical because one study of inclusive language has suggested that women use inclusive language more frequently after reading texts which utilize it (Koeser et al. 350). For men, inclusive language use increased only after being made aware of the presence of inclusive language in a text (Koeser et al. 351). Koeser et al. (2015) did not investigate changes in inclusive language use among nonbinary individuals after exposure, but the findings do suggest that the simple presence of inclusive language in the environment can be a key step for women to embrace its use, which provides one explanation for the use and familiarity discrepancy between native speakers and learners.

Another possible explanation for the discrepancy is the United States cultural context. Conversations about inclusive language are becoming increasingly common within the U.S., as evidenced by the high rates at which both native speakers and learners were familiar with and

used inclusive language in English. In English, for example, singular they has gained recognition the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a respected source of information on language, which added the pronoun to its pages in 2019 (Berger).

Several factors could impact the influence of the U.S. cultural context on the participants. Though all of the participants except the two Argentinian native speakers are United States residents, many of the native speakers are first- or second-generation immigrants to the United States, which might mean that they do not identify as strongly with the United States as Spanish learners who have longer family histories of living in the United States. In addition, native Spanish speakers may be disillusioned with the United States as a result of linguistic or ethnic discrimination they, their families, or their communities have influenced.

Though Spanish learners are not automatically exempt from ethnic or linguistic discrimination, they are less likely to experience Spanish-specific linguistic discrimination and/or Hispanic-specific ethnic discrimination. As such, learners might be more likely to embrace cultural trends of inclusion without the same hesitance, cynicism, or guardedness as their native speaker counterparts. This could help explain much higher rates of use of inclusive language among Spanish learners.

For both native speakers and language learners, the “x” ending was the most familiar and the most commonly used form of inclusive language in Spanish. This is also likely related to the U.S. cultural context, within which the “x” ending, and specifically the word Latinx, has been a topic of constant debate for the last several years (Santos). The importance of societal context is demonstrated clearly by the two Argentinian native speaker participants, both of whom strongly favor the “e” ending as a result of the prevalence of conversations about that form in Argentina

(Schmidt). Several Spanish learners also cited their experience studying abroad in Argentina as either a factor in or the only reason for their familiarity with or use of the “e” ending.

This shared exposure also likely contributes to the stable interpretation of who was included in each form of inclusive language across both groups. Overall, 22/37 participants (59.4%) understood the “@” ending to be inclusive of only men and women. Ten participants pointed out that the “@” visually appears as an a within an o, citing the presence of the binary gendered word endings as evidence that the “@” also remains within the binary. A smaller proportion (8/37, 21.6%) said that the “@” included all genders or was gender neutral.

Similarly, 25/37 participants (67.6%) interpreted the “x” ending as specifically including all genders both within and outside the gender binary. Only 5/37 participants (13.5%) stated that the “x” ending was only applicable to men and women. Though lower levels of familiarity with the “e” ending resulted in fewer assertions about the characteristics of this form, 16/37 participants (43.2%) understood the “e” ending as applicable to all genders, whereas 10.8% (4 participants) said it was only appropriate for men and women.

The stable interpretations of who the forms apply to across groups suggest that the majority of participants had similar ideas about what each form of inclusive language represented and these ideas were in line with the explanations of inclusive language offered in Difracción Transfemenista’s practical guide to Spanish inclusive language. This means that, whatever the failures of the current system of education around inclusive language may be, Spanish learners are learning the meanings behind the forms which native Spanish speakers using inclusive language intend (Difracción Transfemenista). The similar interpretations across groups were echoed in participants’ explanations of why many people do not use inclusive language.

Participants in both groups mentioned many of the same justifications for not using inclusive language: lack of familiarity, lack of access outside of academia, moral or religious objections, concerns about comprehensibility, fear of judgment, age, resistance to change, resistance to U.S. imposition, and difficulty with pronunciation. The only explanation offered by language learners which was not echoed by the native speakers was the idea that speakers might be familiar with inclusive language, but not understand how to implement it.

In addition to these shared rationales, the native speaker participants provided additional justifications which likely reflect their greater understanding of and contact with Spanish-speaking communities. Several native speakers mentioned the influence of *machismo*, a cultural phenomenon of masculine pride among Latino men. Relatedly, native speakers introduced the justification that people avoid inclusive language because of the social importance of the gender binary. These reflections on gender in a specifically Latinx or Latin-American context provide important insights that Spanish learners were either unaware of or unwilling to name.

Native speakers also referenced homophobia or transphobia within Latinx communities as a possible explanation for avoiding inclusive language. In comparison, only one language learner listed transphobia as a probable reason why others do not use inclusive language. Language learners also failed to mention a lack of understanding of trans identities as motivation to reject the use of inclusive language. Among native speakers, this was tied with lack of familiarity as the most popular explanation given. These cultural phenomena would likely be uncomfortable for language learners to discuss due to fear that they would be seen as racist or judgmental. This is an understandable fear given that some critics of inclusive language insist that its use implies that standard Spanish grammar and the people who use it are inadequate

(Sopo). Thus, native speakers are not only more familiar with Latinx culture, but are also more able to discuss that culture's flaws without the same sense of stigmatization.

One theme which was prevalent in both groups was the idea of using inclusive language to show respect for trans or nonbinary identities. Among native Spanish speakers, respect was mentioned in roughly equal measure regarding both English (7 times, 41.2%) and Spanish (6 times, 31.6%) inclusive language. In contrast, Spanish learners mentioned respect 9 times (50%) in relation to English inclusive language, but only twice (11%) in relation to Spanish inclusive language.

This could indicate that while native Spanish speakers living in majority English speaking contexts understand inclusive language in both languages in terms of its cultural necessity, Spanish learners conceptualize inclusive language in English as a cultural issue and Spanish as a cultural *and* grammatical issue. This is supported by the higher frequency at which Spanish learners indicated trouble pronouncing the “@” and the “x” forms. Learners referenced difficulty with pronunciation 61.5% of the time for the “@” and 55.6% of the time for “x,” while native speakers only referenced this issue 31.6% and 42.1% of the time respectively.

In addition, the only justification for avoiding inclusive language given by Spanish learners which was not also given by native speakers was that people might know of inclusive language, but not be sure about how to use it in their own Spanish. This justification supports the idea that language learners are more likely to view inclusive language as an additional grammatical structure to learn how to use, rather than a transition related to their specific historical and cultural positioning.

These data demonstrate that there are several points of disconnect between Spanish learners and native Spanish speakers (particularly in relation to the role of culture in informing

inclusive language use), indicating that current education about inclusive language for language learners does not reflect actual trends of use and attitudes in Spanish speaking communities.

However, the considerable points of connection regarding reasons for use and interpretation of which identities and groups are included within each form of inclusive language demonstrate a common basis of understanding upon which future efforts in inclusive language education can be built.

Factors That Affect Use

In order to understand how best to teach inclusive language in Spanish, educators must first understand factors that contribute to the decision to use or not use inclusive language in Spanish. There are some factors which educators cannot control. For example, Gustafsson Sendén et al. (2015) found that in Sweden, women were far more likely to use the gender neutral “*hen*” though they do not directly benefit from its use (4). Other factors affecting use might include political affiliation, family background, and age, but this section will focus on the effect of factors which can be addressed in the classroom.

Personal connection with people who identify outside of the binary is one possible motivation for using inclusive language. In the native speaker group, 15/19 participants (78.9%) indicated that they knew someone who identified outside of the gender binary. Of these, 60.0% used inclusive language, compared with 52.6% of the overall native speaker group. 9 of the 10 native speakers who use inclusive language (90.0%) also knew someone who identifies outside of the gender binary. Thus, though knowing a nonbinary person does not ensure that someone will use inclusive language, the vast majority of native speakers who used inclusive language did know someone who identifies outside of the binary.

Among Spanish learners, the 10/18 (55.5%) said that they had a personal connection with someone who identifies outside of the gender binary. Of these, 8 participants (80%) used inclusive language while 14/18 participants (77.78%) in the overall learner group used inclusive language. This indicates that for learners, knowing a person who identifies outside of the gender binary does not have a significant impact on inclusive language use in Spanish. This difference may be due to the contrasting environments in which learners and native speakers are likely to use Spanish. Unless learners have a nonbinary individual in their learning space, they are much less likely to have the opportunity to talk about a nonbinary person in Spanish than a native speaker would be.

However, knowing a nonbinary person was associated with a slight increase in familiarity with inclusive language in Spanish for Spanish learners. 100% of the participants who knew a nonbinary person were familiar with at least the “@” and “x” endings and 70% knew all three endings. Participants in the learner group who knew a nonbinary person also gave lower average difficulty scores than the overall group. On average, these learners gave difficulty ratings 0.33 points lower on the 5-point scale.

All of the participants who knew a nonbinary person also indicated use of inclusive language in English whereas only 88.9% of the overall group used inclusive language. Because the number of participants who did not use inclusive language in English was so small, there is insufficient evidence to say whether avoiding inclusive language in English correlates with avoidance in Spanish.

Notably, however, the only participant who was blatantly transphobic in their interview also stated that they do not know any nonbinary people (in their own words, “I’ve never met a

their”) and would not use inclusive language in either English or Spanish. When describing a transgender person they had met, the participant, a Spanish language learner, said

I know there is a trans person in my high school who for the first two years she was female and then I hadn't talked to her since high school, but as of now I believe she's living as a male so I would use her male pronouns when talking about... him um... or really just talking to him because I needed to respect her wishes.

The inability to use the correct pronouns to refer to this person and the invalidation of their identity in the phrase “she’s living as a male” suggest that this participant, though recognizing the need for respect, does not offer transgender individuals respect through validation or affirmation of their identities. Patev et al. (2019) found that holding negative views about transgender people is strongly associated with reporting increased barriers to using inclusive language (345). Thus, though knowing a nonbinary person does not ensure inclusive language use, it is possible that negative attitudes toward transgender and nonbinary people influences one’s decision not to use inclusive language.

While educators have no control over the presence of nonbinary students in the classroom, they can make an effort to create more opportunities for students to talk about nonbinary people. This can include reading nonbinary authors, including nonbinary individuals in example problems or questions, and watching media that includes nonbinary individuals. A quick google search for “Mexican nonbinary authors” or “*artistas no binarias*” (nonbinary artists) reveals several results which can lead educators to class content which not only enriches their curriculum, but also introduces unique perspectives. This gives students incentive to utilize inclusive language as well as time to practice.

When considering the implementation of inclusive language education in the classroom, it is important to create an environment within which inclusive language is normalized. In total, 12 participants (32.4%) emphasized the importance of integrating inclusive language early in the learning process to make it a normal part of communication. While this may not be possible at the college level, where many students enter the classroom with several years of Spanish language education behind them, normalization is likely to facilitate inclusive language use at all levels of education and all stages of the learning process. As Sczesny et al. (2015) reveals, inclusive language use is dependent on explicit intentions as well as historical use (951). Thus, to ensure future use, educators must create space for students to build the habit of using inclusive language.

The perspective that the two Argentinian participants have on inclusive language demonstrates that normalization plays a significant role in inclusive language use. One of the participants is politically active and referenced the social and cultural debates in Argentina surrounding inclusive language throughout the interview. Though they describe Argentina as *“muy dividida en lo que es quienes apoyan el lenguaje inclusivo y quienes lo ven como una deformación del español”* (very divided between those who support inclusive language and those who see it as a deformation of Spanish), certain branches of the government have begun to endorse inclusive language as an official form of communication (Schmidt).

It is within this context that the second Argentinian adopts inclusive language. This participant was much less eager to share all of their in-depth thoughts about inclusive language, its development, and its implications. They did share, however, that they began using inclusive language to tease a conservative friend: *“sólo lo había utilizado inicialmente como un modo de broma. Eso es la manera de incorporarlo: un día bromeando y al final lo termino usando sin*

darse cuenta.” (I had only used it at first as a kind of joke. That is the way to incorporate it: one day I’m joking and then I end up using it without even realizing).

Inclusive language became a part of this participant’s vocabulary simply because it was present in their environment. As debates about inclusive language increased, so did its presence in the media and thus, inclusive language became a culturally relevant touchpoint for this speaker and his peers. This participant also said that when others use inclusive language, he uses inclusive language to respond respectfully, a sentiment echoed by three other participants. Thus, in an environment where inclusive language is normal, even individuals who would otherwise not seek out information about inclusive language may be more likely to use inclusive language.

Recommendations for Teaching Spanish Inclusive Language

As has been clearly outlined in the results and earlier sections of the discussion, there is no one unified way that Spanish speakers engage with inclusive language. Speakers have different levels of familiarity, use, and attitudes toward inclusive language both within and between primary language groups. Even when native speakers’ tendencies are prioritized, there is no simple answer to which forms should be taught, how, or when. The only thing that is abundantly clear is that speakers across groups want inclusive language to be a part of Spanish language courses. Among all participants, 27/37 voiced their support for inclusive language in Spanish language courses, with only one dissenting voice.

Because all three forms mentioned in the interview were used by at least one participant, the first step for incorporating inclusive language into the learning process is to introduce the “@,” “x,” and “e.” In order to effectively prepare students for participating in Spanish-speaking spaces, educators must ensure that students have the skills to at least recognize, if not immediately understand, inclusive language in Spanish. It is becoming increasingly clear that the

“moment” of inclusion for LGBTQ folks in the United States and abroad is not passing, so inclusive language is likely to become an even more common phenomenon in the coming years (Berger).

Based on the interviews with both native speakers and language learners, the “x” ending is the most commonly recognized (37/42 participants, 88.1%) and used (22/42, 52.4%) of the three forms used for this study. Since the “x” is the most popular type of inclusive language, educators should encourage their students to use and practice this form of inclusive language in their courses. The “x” ending seems most appropriate for all genders, as 25/37 participants (67.6%) whose interviews were transcribed said that the “x” included all genders, whereas the “@” and “e” endings were described this way by only 16 participants (43.2%) and 10 participants (24.3%) respectively.

The “@” ending could theoretically be appropriate for situations in which only men and women are being addressed since 22/37 participants (59.4%) said that the “@” ending maintains the gender binary. However, it is integral for both students and professors to remember that nonbinary students do not have to look a certain way in order to identify as nonbinary. Likewise, while someone may not be openly nonbinary, that does not mean that they automatically identify with whatever gender one assumes they are. Therefore the “@” ending should generally be discouraged, unless an individual indicates that they personally identify with and use this ending, because there is no situation in which speakers can be absolutely sure that everyone they are addressing identifies within the gender binary.

While utilizing the “x” helps make language more gender-inclusive, it also introduces pronunciation difficulties. Of the three inclusive language examples included in the study, participants were most unsure of how to pronounce the “x” ending. Though participants did not

all specify whether they use this form when speaking or writing, difficulties with pronunciation suggest that for many participants, use likely occurs in a majority written format. Overall, 48.6% of participants did not know how to pronounce words with the “x,” 45.9% for words with the “@”, and 0% for words with the “e” ending. While the last syllable of Latinx is often pronounced [eks] in English, this pronunciation does not work within the Spanish phonetic structure. For example, if “x” sound is pronounced [eks], then would the last syllable of the plural Latinxs be pronounced with an extended s sound [eks:]?

It is integral that students understand how to pronounce words with the “x” ending, because nonbinary people are not just a theoretical topic for an essay or class discussion post, they are real people who students should have the skills to address with respect. In the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey, more than one-third of respondents (35%) indicated that they were nonbinary or genderqueer (James et al. 45). If a student cannot speak using inclusive language, that student lacks the vocabulary to describe the complexity of the world around them. In addition, any nonbinary individual in this situation would be unable to talk about themselves using the correct language. Thus, by limiting inclusive language to written forms, speakers erase nonbinary people from spoken language, only amplifying the oppression that nonbinary people are likely to face in other realms of life.

As one of the Argentinian participants explained, in Spanish-speaking countries, many people pronounce the “x” ending as [e]. This pronunciation fits within the standard Spanish phonetic structure while connecting to the “e” ending. Though six participants total expressed difficulty immediately identifying the “e” ending as Spanish, this problem would be circumvented in classrooms where inclusive language is a taught and practiced norm of conversation. While professors may not be familiar with this form of pronunciation, the number

of individuals who openly identify as transgender is steadily increasing in the United States (Herman et al.). As such, professors have a duty to be able to address nonbinary individuals and teach their students how to do the same. In this way, teaching inclusive language can be a learning experience for both teacher and student.

As three native Spanish speakers noted in their interviews, inclusive language does not have to be a purely grammar-based topic. Discussing inclusive language can provide a platform for students to learn about colonialism, sexuality, gender expression, and other important issues in the Spanish-speaking world. These topics are not only important, but are also certain to interest students, as they can incorporate history and current events, and relate to discussions about the same subjects in students' native languages and cultures.

For educators with introductory-level courses, introducing inclusive language early in the course is integral to promoting student trust and comfort in the classroom. While the vast majority of students are likely to feel comfortable using the standard masculine and feminine endings, nonbinary students should not have to wait until a later lesson on inclusive language to be addressed correctly and respectfully. Because the vast majority of information about inclusive language in Spanish is written in Spanish, this information is not accessible for new learners.

Educators also should not wait until a student specifically asks for information about inclusive language to share what they know. This places the burden of inclusion on the student and requires the student to trust the educator with vulnerable information about their identity without any guarantee that the educator will offer support or solutions. Similarly, educators should not expect students with nonbinary friends, family, or loved ones to reach out for specific information. Without the context of inclusive language debates in Spanish, these students may not believe that Spanish has inclusive options.

For these reasons, it is integral not only to introduce inclusive language, but to actually teach students how to use it, just like any other grammatical concept. As interviews with Spanish learners revealed, this population may feel hesitant to use inclusive language because they feel as if they never learned how to implement it across different contexts. If the only time a student sees inclusive language in Spanish is in the greeting of an email (*¡Hola tod@s!*), how would they understand how to use it in verbal communication? Likewise, if a student only ever sees inclusive language in nouns (*chicxs*), how would they understand that it can also be used in adjectives (*chicxs pequeñxs*)?

This is why, unless and until inclusive language becomes standard in high school Spanish courses, the job of teaching inclusive language cannot fall only on the shoulders of professors with introductory courses. 4 native Spanish speakers and 3 Spanish learners said in their interviews that while professors used inclusive language in their Hispanic Studies classes, they never instructed students on how to utilize inclusive language in their own Spanish. Especially because native speakers are unlikely to enter college classes taught in Spanish at the introductory level, teaching inclusive language must be a department-wide commitment.

Discussions do not, however, need to remain within the Hispanic Studies department; the Hispanic community on campus and in Williamsburg is much broader than just one academic building. Since inclusive language is such a current and evolving topic, the extent to which forms are appropriate, used, and preferred is likely to change over the next few years. With this in mind, it is integral that the Hispanic Studies department open up the conversation about inclusive language on campus to native-speaking students so that what is taught in the classroom continues to reflect what native speakers in the area are actually doing with their language as well as how they envision the future of inclusive language.

Considerations for Teaching Inclusive Language

While implementing inclusive language education at William & Mary is in line with the desires of Spanish-speaking students (both native speakers and learners) on campus, there is significant resistance to inclusive language in many Spanish-speaking communities (Sopo, Hernandez, Guerra & Orbea). As many participants indicated in their interviews, Spanish speakers may see inclusive language as an imposition of U.S. cultural values (or in the case of the “x,” English phonetic structure). Others see inclusive language as a deformation of the Spanish language, insisting that binary grammatical gender is an integral and unalterable part of the language (Bosque).

Because students are likely to face resistance if and when they use inclusive language outside of the William & Mary community, education about inclusive language needs to address the reasons why some speakers see a need for inclusive language. The decision to recommend the teaching and use of inclusive language in Hispanic Studies classrooms at William & Mary in this study was reached through an intensive review of the experiences and attitudes of Spanish speakers in the community. Likewise, if and when professors decide to implement these changes, the change cannot be impulsive; it will require immense care and planning. Students deserve to know this background information so that they know why inclusive language is a part of their classes.

When educators introduce inclusive language in Spanish, it might also be helpful to reference the reasons why people use inclusive language in the class’s primary language, in this case English. Educators can emphasize the affirmation, safety, and comfort that nonbinary individuals can gain from inclusive language in English, drawing parallels to a context that is likely more familiar to students. It would make sense, also, to explain that inclusive language can

serve as a protective factor for transgender individuals from forms of stress, discrimination and rejection which may be prevalent outside the classroom (Veale 214).

In order to adequately prepare students to use inclusive language, professors must also honestly tell students that they are likely to face judgment if they use inclusive language outside of the classroom so that they can make informed decisions about how and when to incorporate it into their communication. Professors must also give students the tools to explain why they choose to use inclusive language in Spanish. Emphasizing respect and courtesy upon introduction of the topic provides students with a foundation on which to base their justification. Including a reflection activity in the initial lessons could also help students to identify their own particular reasons for using inclusive language.

Regardless of what caveats and considerations educators include in their lessons about inclusive language, it is important to establish boundaries about the extent to which inclusive language is open for debate within the classroom. This is integral because the school environment must be supportive to act as a protective factor, so if students see inclusive language as a policy but not a facet of the classroom community, they will not reap the same mental health benefits (Veale 215). In order to foster a sense of community within the classroom, educators should set clear expectations about inclusive language use. While educators cannot dictate whether students use inclusive language in their personal life, they can require students to speak respectfully about their classmates, historical figures, and authors of course texts. This would make clear to students that regardless of trends in use outside of the classroom, the class space is one of thoughtfulness, politeness, and acceptance.

If a student opposes the use of inclusive language, they can make the choice not to talk about nonbinary individuals in the classroom and not to use inclusive language outside of the

academic setting. Nonbinary students, however, cannot simply choose to no longer be nonbinary. Their safety and comfort are directly threatened when expectations about inclusive language use are not set or met.

6) Conclusion

The results of this study indicate the need that students have identified for the integration of inclusive language into Spanish language courses at William & Mary. Using inclusive language is a matter of respect, affirmation, and safety which benefits all students, not just nonbinary students.

Of the inclusive language forms currently available, the most popular form with native speakers and Spanish learners alike was the “x” ending, so this is the primary form which should be taught and practiced in the classroom. While using the “x” may open up debates within and outside of the classroom about pronunciation, linguistic change, and inclusion, these debates can serve as a meaningful source of productive dialogue for students and professors alike.

At William & Mary, across the United States, and around the world, there are plenty of possible reasons not to use inclusive language in Spanish. Since one of the main concerns about inclusive language is the imposition of United States cultural ideals or English language phonetic structures, the decision to implement inclusive language use must prioritize the perspectives of native speakers to the extent possible. Among native speakers, the most common explanations for why someone would not use inclusive language were lack of understanding of nonbinary identities and lack of familiarity with inclusive language itself. These are barriers that can be directly addressed by enacting a careful implementation of inclusive language tailored to the William & Mary community as outlined in this study.

Though the work of implementing these changes will not necessarily be easy, straightforward, or intuitive, these difficulties will be far outweighed by the benefits experienced by nonbinary individuals. As one study participant put it, “These trans people and gender non-conforming and nonbinary people have been here for ages. It's not something new, it's just

something that's come to the forefront of our time in history and our societal climate, especially in the United States. It's so simple just to be respectful. It's such a small thing that you can do to really show someone that you're supportive of them.”

Opportunities for Further Research

Because inclusive language in Spanish is constantly evolving, the opportunities for further research on this topic, or even specifically about inclusive language in education, are plentiful.

Since this study was conducted and analyzed within the context of The College of William & Mary, the results are not generalizable outside of this specific context. Though the importance of introducing inclusive language as a way to respect nonbinary identities is not context-specific, the specific way in which this should be carried out will look different at every educational institution. Consequently, there are thousands of opportunities for further research in communities across the United States and throughout the world.

However, because of the specific context in which this study was conducted, two major limitations to the research arise. Firstly, because the study was conducted with college students, the perspectives of older Spanish speakers are lacking. Inclusion of these perspectives will be integral to future research as the participants of this study made several assumptions and assertions about inclusive language use among adults that merit investigation.

Another group whose presence is notably lacking in this study's sample is the nonbinary population. Though many participants knew nonbinary people, none of the actual participants reported that they were nonbinary. The integration of these perspectives to inform future research will be integral for the continued applicability of inclusive language.

Despite high levels of inclusive language familiarity and use among participants, very few reported familiarity with forms of inclusive language other than the main three mentioned in the study. One notable missing element in the plan for educational implementation in this study is the suggestion of a personal pronoun appropriate for nonbinary people. The only option addressed by study participants was the possibility “*elle*” which functions similarly to singular they in English. However, given the very low number of participants who mentioned this form, it could not be recommended as part of the current educational implementation plan. Gender neutral and nonbinary inclusive personal pronouns in Spanish represent a large avenue for future research in the realm of inclusive language.

Additionally, the participants of this study likely use and approve of inclusive language use in Spanish at much higher rates than the overall population. Research which directly engages with individuals who disagree with inclusive language use will be integral to building an understanding of patterns of use. In the present study, the vast majority of information about why people do not use inclusive language was provided by individuals who were not part of that group. For that reason, further research which obtains information about patterns in use should make an effort to seek out individuals who do not use, know of, or approve of inclusive language in order to better understand this population. This information can guide educators, activists, and policy makers both within and outside of the realm of education as society continues to reckon with the visibility of transgender and nonbinary individuals in all spaces.

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8) Appendices

Appendix A: IRB Approval

STATUS OF PROTOCOL StudentIRB-2020-06-24-14378-rvarra set to active Inbox x



W&M Compliance <compli@wm.edu>
to me, rvarra, studentirb

Wed, Aug 5, 9:06 AM ☆ ↶ ⋮

This is to notify you on behalf of the Protection of Human Subjects Committee (PHSC) that protocol StudentIRB-2020-06-24-14378-rvarra titled Sophomore/Junior Monroe Scholar Project: Factors Influencing Inclusive Language Use and Comprehension In Spanish has been EXEMPTED from formal review because it falls under the following category(ies) defined by DHHS Federal Regulations: 45CFR46.104.d.2.

Work on this protocol may begin on 2020-08-05 and must be discontinued on 2021-08-05. Should there be any changes to this protocol, please submit these changes to the committee for determination of continuing exemption using the Protocol and Compliance Management application (<https://compliance.wm.edu>).

Please add the following statement to the footer of all consent forms, cover letters, etc.:

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY WILLIAM & MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (Phone 757-221-3966) ON 2020-08-05 AND EXPIRES ON 2021-08-05.

You are required to notify Dr. Jennifer Stevens, chair of the PHSC, at 757-221-2176 (jastev@wm.edu), toll free line: 1-888-905-0149, if any issues arise with participants during this study.

Good luck with your study.

“This is to notify you on behalf of the Protection of Human Subjects Committee (PHSC) that protocol StudentIRB-2020-06-24-14378-rvarra titled Sophomore/Junior Monroe Scholar Project: Factors Influencing Inclusive Language Use and Comprehension In Spanish has been EXEMPTED from formal review because it falls under the following category(ies) defined by DHHS Federal Regulations: 45CFR46.104.d.2.

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Good luck with your study.”

Appendix B: Interview Protocol and Questions (English)

A. Knowledge and Perception of Inclusive Language

The following sentences are examples of inclusive language. For each type of inclusive language, I will ask you a number of questions about familiarity, usage, and perception of the sentence.

1. Tod@s l@s chic@s van a la tienda.

- a. Have you seen this before? In what context?
- b. Do you use this type of language?
- c. What would you think of someone else using this type of language?
- d. What does the use of '@' communicate?
- e. How easy is this sentence to understand in comparison to standard grammar ('o' and 'a' endings)?

Same or easier than standard grammar	A bit harder than standard grammar	Somewhat harder than standard grammar	A lot harder than standard grammar	Impossible to understand
--------------------------------------	------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	------------------------------------	--------------------------

2. Lxs cocinerxs hablan mientras que cocinan.

- a. Have you seen this before? In what context?
- b. Do you use this type of language?
- c. What would you think of someone else using this type of language?
- d. What does the use of 'x' communicate?
- e. How easy is this sentence to understand in comparison to standard grammar ('o' and 'a' endings)?

Same or easier than standard grammar	A bit harder than standard grammar	Somewhat harder than standard grammar	A lot harder than standard grammar	Impossible to understand
--------------------------------------	------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	------------------------------------	--------------------------

3. Totes les alumnes cantan en el coro.

- a. Have you seen this before? In what context?
- b. Do you use this type of language?
- c. What would you think of someone else using this type of language?
- d. What does the use of ‘e’ communicate?
- e. How easy is this sentence to understand in comparison to standard grammar (‘o’ and ‘a’ endings)?

Same or easier than standard grammar	A bit harder than standard grammar	Somewhat harder than standard grammar	A lot harder than standard grammar	Impossible to understand
--------------------------------------	------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	------------------------------------	--------------------------

4. Do you know of other forms of inclusive language in Spanish? If so, can you describe them?

B1. Usage contexts for subjects who indicate use of inclusive language (otherwise, continue to Part B2):

1. How often do you or would you use inclusive language in the following contexts?

- a. In an email to a professor or boss

Always	Very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
--------	------------	-----------	--------	-------

- b. During an in-class discussion

Always	Very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
--------	------------	-----------	--------	-------

- c. In a conversation with people your age

Always	Very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
--------	------------	-----------	--------	-------

- d. In a conversation with older adults

	Always	Very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
e. When talking to someone who identifies outside of the gender binary					
f. In a group of close friends					
g. Among strangers					
h. In conversation with a religious person					
i. At a formal event					

2. Do you know Spanish speakers who don't use inclusive language?

a. If so, why do you think they don't use it?

B2. Others' Use of Inclusive Language

3. Do you know Spanish speakers who do use inclusive language?

a. If so, why do you think they use it?

C. Personal History with Inclusive Language

1. Was inclusive language (like ending words with 'x', '@', or 'e' instead of 'o' and 'a') part of your Spanish language education?

a. If so, how was it taught?

b. If not, would you be interested in learning about it?

2. In English, one common form of inclusive language is to use "they" as a singular pronoun instead of he or she.

- a. Have you seen or heard this before? In what context?
- b. Do you use this type of language? Why?
- c. What would you think of someone else using this type of language?
- d. What does the use of “they” communicate?

Appendix C: Interview Protocol and Questions (Spanish)

A. Knowledge and Perception of Inclusive Language

Las siguientes oraciones son ejemplos de lenguaje inclusivo. Para cada tipo de lenguaje inclusivo, le haré una serie de preguntas sobre familiaridad, uso y percepción de la oración.

1. Tod@s l@s chic@s van a la tienda.

a. ¿Ha visto esto antes? ¿En qué contexto?

b. ¿Usa este tipo de lenguaje?

c. ¿Qué pensaría de alguien más usando este tipo de lenguaje?

d. ¿Qué comunica el uso de '@'?

e. ¿Qué tan difícil es entender esta oración en comparación con la gramática estándar

(terminaciones "o" y "a")?

Igual o más fácil que la gramática estándar	Un poco más difícil que la gramática estándar	Algo más difícil que la gramática estándar	Mucho más difícil que la gramática estándar	Imposible de entender
---	---	--	---	-----------------------

2. Lxs cocinerxs hablan mientras que cocinan.

a. ¿Ha visto esto antes? ¿En qué contexto?

b. ¿Usa este tipo de lenguaje?

c. ¿Qué pensaría de alguien más usando este tipo de lenguaje?

d. ¿Qué comunica el uso de 'x'?

e. ¿Qué tan difícil es entender esta oración en comparación con la gramática estándar

(terminaciones "o" y "a")?

Igual o más fácil que la gramática estándar	Un poco más difícil que la gramática estándar	Algo más difícil que la gramática estándar	Mucho más difícil que la gramática estándar	Imposible de entender
---	---	--	---	-----------------------

3. Todas les alumnes cantan en el coro.

- ¿Ha visto esto antes? ¿En qué contexto?
- ¿Usa este tipo de lenguaje?
- ¿Qué pensaría de alguien más usando este tipo de lenguaje?
- ¿Qué comunica el uso de 'e'?
- ¿Qué tan difícil es entender esta oración en comparación con la gramática estándar (terminaciones "o" y "a")?

Igual o más fácil que la gramática estándar	Un poco más difícil que la gramática estándar	Algo más difícil que la gramática estándar	Mucho más difícil que la gramática estándar	Imposible de entender
---	---	--	---	-----------------------

3. ¿Conoce otras formas de lenguaje inclusivo en español? Si es así, ¿puede describirlos?

B1. Usage contexts for subjects who indicate use of inclusive language (otherwise, continue to

Part B2):

1. ¿Con qué frecuencia usa o usaría el lenguaje inclusivo en los siguientes contextos?

a. En un correo electrónico a un profesor o jefe

Siempre	Frecuentemente	A veces	Rara vez	Nunca
---------	----------------	---------	----------	-------

b. Durante una discusión en una clase

Siempre	Frecuentemente	A veces	Rara vez	Nunca
---------	----------------	---------	----------	-------

c. En una conversación con personas de su misma edad.

Siempre	Frecuentemente	A veces	Rara vez	Nunca
---------	----------------	---------	----------	-------

d. En una conversación con adultos más viejos

Siempre	Frecuentemente	A veces	Rara vez	Nunca
---------	----------------	---------	----------	-------

e. Al hablar con alguien que se identifica fuera del binario de género

Siempre	Frecuentemente	A veces	Rara vez	Nunca
f. En un grupo de amigos cercanos				
Siempre	Frecuentemente	A veces	Rara vez	Nunca
g. Entre extraños				
Siempre	Frecuentemente	A veces	Rara vez	Nunca
h. En una conversación con alguien religioso				
Siempre	Frecuentemente	A veces	Rara vez	Nunca
i. En un evento formal				
Siempre	Frecuentemente	A veces	Rara vez	Nunca

2. ¿Conoce hispanohablantes que no usan el lenguaje inclusive?

a. Si es así, ¿Por qué cree que no lo usan?

B2. Others' Use of Inclusive Language

1. ¿Conoce hispanohablantes que usan el lenguaje inclusive?

a. Si es así, ¿Por qué cree que lo usan?

C. Personal History with Inclusive Language

3. ¿Fue el lenguaje inclusivo (como terminar palabras con 'x', '@' o 'e' en lugar de 'o' y 'a') parte de su educación en español?

a. Si es así, ¿cómo se enseñó?

b. Si no, ¿le interesaría saber más sobre el lenguaje inclusivo?

Appendix D: Participant Informed Consent Form (English)

Research Participation Informed Consent Form

Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies
William & Mary

Protocol #: StudentIRB-2020-06-24-14378-rvarra

Title: Factors Influencing Inclusive Language Use and Comprehension in Spanish

Principal Investigators: Cristina Sherer and Doctor Rachel Varra

This is to certify that I, _____, have been given the following information with respect to my participation in this study:

1. **Purpose of the research:** The purpose of this research is to determine the relative comprehension and ease of use of inclusive language in Spanish among Spanish speakers in Virginia. It will also examine social and personal factors that influence inclusive language use with the goal of identifying forms of inclusive language that are mutually intelligible and respectful across social lines.
2. **Procedure to be followed:** As a participant in this study, I will participate in a 30-minute interview with Cristina Sherer during which I will describe my perspective and experiences with inclusive language in Spanish (and English, if applicable). I will also be asked to provide information about myself, such as my age and place of birth, among other things.
3. **Discomfort and risks:** There are no known risks associated with this study.
4. **Potential benefits:** There are no known benefits of participating in the study. However, my participation in this research will contribute to the development of our understanding about the nature of the study.
5. **Statement of confidentiality:** My data will be anonymous. My data will not be associated with my name, nor will it be coded so that my responses may be linked to my name in any way.
6. **Voluntary participation:** Participation in this study is voluntary. I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. I may choose to skip any question or activity.
7. **Incentive for participation:** Participants will receive \$15 as compensation for participation in the interview process.
8. I am aware that I must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this project.
9. I may obtain a copy of the research results by contacting Cristina Sherer at csysherer@email.wm.edu or Dr. Rachel Varra at rvarra@wm.edu.
10. **Termination of participation:** Participation may be terminated by the experimenter if it is deemed that the participant is unable to perform the tasks presented.
11. Questions or concerns regarding participation in this research should be directed to: Dr. Rachel Varra at 757-221-1591, rvarra@wm.edu.
12. I am aware that I may report dissatisfactions with any aspect of this study to Dr. Jennifer Stevens, the Chair of the Protection of Human Subjects Committee, by telephone (757-221-3862) or email (jastev@wm.edu).

I agree to participate in this study and have read all the information provided on this form. My signature below confirms that my participation in this project is voluntary and that I have received a copy of this consent form.

Signature

Date

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY WILLIAM & MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (Phone 757-221-3966) ON 2020-08-05 AND EXPIRES ON 2021-08-05.

Appendix E: Participant Informed Consent Form (Spanish)

Formulario de Consentimiento Informado para Participación en la Investigación

Departamento de Estudios de Género, Sexualidad y Mujeres

William & Mary

Protocol #: StudentIRB-2020-06-24-14378-rvarra

Título: Factores que influyen el uso y comprensión de lenguaje inclusive en el español

Investigadoras Principales: Cristina Sherer y Profesora Rachel Varra

Esto es para certificar que yo, _____, he recibido la siguiente información con respecto a mi participación en este estudio:

1. **El propósito de la investigación:** El propósito de esta investigación es determinar la comprensión relativa y la facilidad de uso del lenguaje inclusivo en español entre los hispanohablantes en Virginia. También examinará los factores sociales y personales que influyen en el uso del lenguaje inclusivo con el objetivo de identificar formas de lenguaje inclusivo que sean mutuamente inteligibles y respetuosas a través de las líneas sociales.
2. **Procedimiento a seguir:** Como participante en este estudio, se me pedirá que participe en una entrevista de 30 minutos con Cristina Sherer durante la cual describiré mi conocimiento, comprensión y uso del lenguaje inclusivo en español (e inglés, si es aplicable) También se me pedirá que proporcione información demográfica.
3. **Molestias y riesgos:** no hay riesgos conocidos asociados con este estudio.
4. **Beneficios posibles:** No hay beneficios conocidos de participar en el estudio. Sin embargo, mi participación en esta investigación contribuirá al desarrollo de nuestra comprensión sobre la naturaleza del estudio.
5. **Declaración de confidencialidad:** Mis datos serán anónimos. Mis datos no se asociarán con mi nombre, ni se codificarán para que mis respuestas puedan estar vinculadas a mi nombre de ninguna manera.
6. **Participación voluntaria:** La participación en este estudio es voluntario. Soy libre de retirar en cualquier momento sin penalización o pérdida de beneficios. Puedo elegir omitir cualquier pregunta o actividad.
7. **Incentivo para participar:** Los participantes recibirán \$ 25 como compensación por participar en la entrevista.
8. Soy consciente de que debo tener al menos 18 años para participar en este proyecto.
9. Puedo obtener una copia de los resultados de la investigación contactando a Cristina Sherer en cysherer@email.wm.edu o la profesora Rachel Varra en rvarra@wm.edu.
10. **Terminación de participación:** El experimentador puede terminar la participación si se considera que el participante no puede realizar las tareas presentadas.
11. Las preguntas o inquietudes con respecto a la participación en esta investigación deben dirigirse a Dr. Rachel Varra at 757-221-1591, rvarra@wm.edu.
12. Soy consciente de que puedo informar sobre la insatisfacción con cualquier aspecto de este estudio a la Dra. Jennifer Stevens, Presidenta del Comité de Protección de Sujetos Humanos, por teléfono (757-221-3862) o correo electrónico (jastev@wm.edu). También soy consciente de que la Dra. Jennifer Stevens no habla español, entonces si estoy insatisfecho debo contactar a la profesora Rachel Varra para ayuda de traducción si no puedo comunicar en inglés.

Acepto participar en este estudio y he leído toda la información proporcionada en este formulario. Mi firma a continuación confirma que mi participación en este proyecto es voluntaria y que he recibido una copia de este formulario de consentimiento.

Firma

Fecha

ESTE PROYECTO FUE CUMPLIDO CON LAS NORMAS ÉTICAS APROPIADAS Y FUE EXENTADO DE LA NECESIDAD DE REVISIÓN FORMAL POR PARTE DEL COMITÉ DE PROTECCIÓN DE SUJETOS HUMANOS DE WILLIAM & MARY (Teléfono 757-221-3966) EL 2020-08-05 Y EXPIRA EL 2021-08-05.

Appendix F: Participant Demographic Information Form (English)

Subject's Demographic Information

1. Age:
2. Gender and personal pronouns (ex: she/her, he/him):
3. Socioeconomic status:
4. Sexual orientation:
5. Political affiliation:
6. Religious affiliation:
7. Country (or countries) where you completed your education:

Appendix G: Participant Demographic Information Form (Spanish)

Información Sociodemográfico del Participante

8. Edad:
9. Género y pronombres preferidos:
10. Estatus socioeconómico:
11. Orientación sexual:
12. Afiliación política:
13. Religión:
14. País (o países) donde completó su educación: