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EDUCATION FOR EQUALITY
GOING BEYOND GENDER STEREOTYPES

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Output 4

LANGUAGE LABS

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TEACHERS LANGUAGE LAB: SELF-REFLECTED TEACHERS

Learning language

Cognitive psychology and brain research provide insight on how our brains, psyches and bodies operate aligned and holistic while we learn.

Language learning activates complex learning processes. It means to learn grammatical and semantic mental concepts and at the same time to interconnect those mental concepts. It means to learn phonetic and phonological expression.

And last but not least it means to learn abstracting from the immediate experience: to transfer old experience (packed into mental concepts) to new experience.

Remember that babies first learn by touching, taking things into their mouth, hearing, seeing, sensing without attaching words to those experiences.

And then as soon as humans learned mental concepts, words, phrases, meanings, verbal expression they become almost unable to perceive the world desisting from this; namely from automatic (unconscious) and controlled (conscious) transferring concepts. Those concepts interpret the experience while having it and even before: they are prototypical and stereotypical patterns to perceive and interpret the world.

Exercise:

Name: Clench a fist

Purpose: Understand that doing/feeling on one hand and thinking/formulating what we experience are different processes; but inseparably interwoven.

What to do: Clench a fist and direct your awareness towards what you sense, feel, perceive in your fist, in your arm.

Questions: What/how do you sense? What/how do you feel? Describe exactly what you do while clenching the fist.

Reflect from a meta-perspective: What/how is immediate experience? How is connecting experience to words/mental concepts, what happens while doing that? Where is your awareness while you act? Where is your awareness while you describe?

Competencies: The exercise requires the ability to discern between the going through, the mere description and the interpretation of an experience. To train this ability is also a target of the exercise.

Country context: Clenching a fist might have different prescribed connotations in different contexts.

How to facilitate: Doing the exercise in a group or in pairs.

Language learning means to learn systems of representation – words represent "reality", they are not the experiential reality. They create another reality. Representations (thoughts, mental concepts, inner pictures and inner movies, words, sentences, scripts) are connected to our emotions – to what we sense and feel. That makes them so "real".

Developing this cognitive and psychic interpretation and reaction system it becomes almost impossible for us humans to experience and perceive uninfluenced by it: **I do not perceive reality as it is, but as I am.**

Language and cognitive schemes and concepts enable us to understand, to order and evaluate our perceptions and experiences. We need them to survive after being a baby protected by adults. The concepts enable us to survive by transferring what we already learned to actual situations, to the here and now.

The cognitive schemes are affiliated with emotions and behaviour patterns. In our here and now we react to what we have learned before in ways we trained before. This happens most of the time automatically and unconsciously within a second.

The way we learn interpreting and transferring is shaped by the environments in which we grow up. What do our environments show us, offer us, or force on us?

Our mind and brain become informed by available languages, dialects, sociolects; but also by images respectively visual representations (visual language).

The specific language we learn with its history, grammar, words, semantics and pragmatics shapes and even determines our cognitive schemes and our mind.

Language and cognitive schemes determine and also limit what we are able to experience and perceive, to understand, to express, to decide and how we are able to re/act. And we are also actively participating in the creation process. Through language, mental schemes and concepts we construct our reality and we influence the realities around us. We live in a permanent process of mutual influencing and changing. And we permanently produce our own distinctive mental amalgam.

To grasp this ongoing process social sciences, use the term "doing": doing gender, doing masculinity, doing femininity, doing culture, doing class …

Language produces reality – Gender Talk

Exercise

Name: Doing gender

Purpose: Becoming aware that being woman*man is – at least to some extent – my own decision; that I actively design myself with regard to gender.

What to do: Remember: What did you do this morning to convince other people that you are a woman*man?

(E.g. what did I do in the bathroom? How did I dress? How did I move? Talk to people? …)

Questions for participants: Reflection: What did you find out about doing gender?

Competencies: The exercise supposes the ability to observe oneself, to observe what one thinks, feels, does from a meta-position. It supposes the disposition to question habits and probably deeply internalized certitudes. That means to stand insecurity and fear.

Country context: The idea of doing gender might be more or less accepted in different countries respectively environments.

How to facilitate: It will be helpful to do this exercise in a group.

"Doing" means to understand gender, culture, class not as facts or as fixed characteristics of a person. But it is something that we permanently do and realize – we produce it by the way we perceive, express and act ourselves and embody our mental schemes and concepts. We socialize ourselves influenced by the "doing"-models of our environment – we train how to go, to stand, to sit, to laugh, to use our voice and so on. This training starts at a very early time in our lives and what we learn is transformed into deeply habited mind sets, feeling patterns, behaviour patterns, as well as relationship and interaction practices. To be how we are then feels natural to us and self-evident. We are mostly not aware of it.

The concept "doing gender" steers our attention towards our performing, our acting out gender.

Exercise

Name: What is gender sensitive language good for?

Purpose: Working through the discussion on gender sensitive language. Understand different positions, explore the different arguments; experience how the arguments affect oneself. No matter what one's original opinion is one has to develop also arguments pro gender sensitive language. That opens up the possibility to approach the pro position; because if one is not pro it will be difficult to work on gender sensitive language with the children.

What to do: Take a big sheet of paper (flip chart size) and draw three circles. Write arguments on cards/small sheets of paper – with pencils of different colours for the three following positions:

- pro gender sensitive language
- contra gender sensitive language
- "I am emancipated but do not need gender sensitive language."

Collect the arguments in the circles. Read the arguments loud acting as a representative of each position – discuss with yourself. You do not have to stick to the written arguments you can react to the other arguments freely.

What is needed: One paper in flipchart size, a number of small papers, pencils of three colours.

Questions: Evaluate your experience: How was it to take every position, where did you feel most comfortable,

where least comfortable? What do you understand now from the positions which are not your original ones? Did something change in your mind? What is the sense and the target of gender sensitive language?

Strength: Allows changing fixed mind sets in a playful way; allows exploring the pro position.

Pitfalls/weaknesses key competences: People do the exercise by themselves, it is unclear what they will find out. Self-reflection without feedback requires the ability to think different positions.

How to facilitate: Choose an object in the room, regard it from different perspectives and distances and describe it from each perspective/distance. From where could you recognise most of the object or least of the object? What results from collecting the experience and knowledge from the different observant position?

Patriarchal language

The term patriarchy originates from ancient Greek. It refers to pater = father and to arche = origin or leadership.

Literally understood the term patriarchy claims that the father is the origin and that the father is the leader. The implementation of this supposition in many societies meant that patriarchs (mostly upper class males) became owners of land, property and people. They got the power to dispose of people, land, animals, resources, goods. This power was (and is) habitually and legally defined and frequently enforced and maintained violently. In the feminist tradition the term patriarchy is used to criticise systems of male dominance in societies.

Languages in patriarchal systems correspond to the mind sets and structures.

Patriarchal languages expressing male dominance reflect, maintain and reconstruct:

- The polarisation of male and female: Human states and experiences are divided into a bipolar order and identified with male or female. In Western societies this basic order follows a bipolarisation of spirit and matter, nature and culture, brain and body, intelligence and matter.
- Male and female with their ascribed attributions are constructed as complementary or adversarial:
    - Complementary: They need each other, depend on each other because they supply substantially different and essentially necessary potentials.
    - Adversarial: The female endangers the male (like according to this mind set nature endangers culture, matter endangers spirit/brain/intelligence). The male has to control its opposite because otherwise it will be overwhelmed, weakened, degenerated, destroyed by it.
- The polarisation is basically not meant to be horizontal (like Yin and Yang) but vertical. The real male (however it is defined), the real intelligence makes up the top of a hierarchy; the female is placed on the bottom (not necessarily the concrete persons but the principle, stereotype female). It is not even part of the hierarchy.
- The male is identified with mind, spirit, intelligence, culture and therefore has to dominate, to guide, to support the female which is identified with matter, nature, emotion, body. Matter is thought as not

reasonable; it does not have an own will or an own target. Also in cases in which male and female are constructed as complementary the male eventually owns and rules the female.

- The hierarchy works with valuation and devaluation. Everything, everyone that does not match the stated male ideal of the Western cultures (white, heterosexual, rich, educated, healthy) brings one closer to femaleness or to a state which is labelled as more childish, closer to the violent and dangerous nature, to mere mindless animally instincts.
- In this hierarchical context the dominating male claims the right to own everything else and to use it for its aims: nature, the body, emotions, children, women and other men who are not classified as really male. The hierarchical context works with a system of devaluating classifications.
- Western patriarchal mind sets are now inseparably interwoven with capitalistic mind sets. The actual neoliberal capitalism follows the target of profit maximization. In this context male and female and trans and homo – everything tends to become a mere sellable good without content. Male and female finally only play a role as something that sells and not anymore as something whose essential difference has to be defended at all costs.
- Language and iconic pictures mediate this processes, shape peoples mind sets and their unconscious automatic perceiving, experiencing, thinking, feeling, behaving, acting, self-expressing.

When we develop ways to express diversity verbally we should be aware of these processes. Otherwise we run the risk to promote the conversion of qualitatively diverse experience into sellable goods. Diversity language should be rooted in concrete experiencing, subtle sensing, and personal relating to each other

Gender- and diversity sensitive language therefore contains two implications:

- Making audible, visible what has been labelled as female; making women audible, visible. Making their contributions to what is boxed as mind, spirit, intelligence, culture, politics, economy etc. audible and visible. Using the available possibilities of our languages to do so and inventing possibilities as far as they are not available. This endeavour aims at making clear that our world has been and is created by the contributions of all human beings, to change the habit that those at the upper steps of hierarchies claim the results of what those on the lower levels of the hierarchy have done, produced and achieved.

  Because: to conceal and not mentioning is as powerful as stereotyping and labelling to construct society structures of inequality, to build and maintain hierarchies.
- Inventing and using a diversity friendly language – not just a neutralising language. Because mere neutralising entails the risk of reinstalling male dominance by concealing the contributions of groups of people who are not labelled male.

The profit of gender sensitive language

Our cognitive concepts and the connected language systems abstract, construct and influence reality. We behave, act, communicate and treat the environment accordingly. Language models how we perceive and treat our world.

Doing and talking gender is part of this reality production. Language expresses and produces polarisations and hierarchies – connected to polarising and hierarchical mind sets. To open up to diversity, recognise and estimate people as who and how they are we have to adjust our language.

A democratic, diversity sensitive language is needed and has to be trained to influence and amplify cognitive concepts. Gender and diversity friendly language strives towards representing the human beings that are there in their variant experiences and identity doings. I work with – like gender sensitive pedagogy – adding (not with eradicating). The profit is that people start to exist, their situations, experiences, self-concepts start to exist. The profit is further that it is easier to express who did and achieved what. It makes it harder than that the merits of many, many people are hierarchically pocketed by those on top of society hierarchies who are represented linguistically: through the so called generic masculine.

Exercise:

Name: Happy diversity: Rewriting texts

Purpose: Gender and diversity sensitive language more and more has become a subject of public debates. Some guidelines have been published on how to use gender and diversity sensitive language. But it is not used by the majority of men*women. In contrary frequently people argue that it is too complicated and complicates life.

What to do: Select a newspaper article or a little text passage of a book. Rewrite the text diversity friendly.

If you work with a group: Read your texts and reflect on your work. Is it possible to formulate the text even more diversity friendly? Out of your experience with the rewriting, your findings and inventions: Produce a list of suggestions for diversity friendly writing and verbal expression.

What is needed: Newspapers, paper and pencil.

Questions for participants: Was the task easy/difficult? What did you find out?

Competences: It will be difficult to do this task if one has no practice in gender sensitive formulating or never read guidelines therefore some competence on this has to be acquired.

Country context: Different languages offer different suppositions and conditions for gender sensitivity.

How to facilitate: Studying guidelines for gender sensitive language before doing the exercise.

Four countries – four languages

The comparison of the E4E partner country languages provides us with valuable insights into their traditions of understanding, expressing and doing gender.

How are those languages shaped by patriarchal world views?

What possibilities do our different languages offer for gender and diversity sensitive expression?

Our languages use different numbers of articles to express or represent genders: 3 in German, 1 in Swedish, 2 in Spanish and Italian. 1 is used in English by the way.

German foresees neutral, female and male nouns. In German in most cases female nouns end with **-e** (some exceptions are neutral), neutral and male nouns end with consonants.

In Swedish it is difficult to find markers to recognize if a noun is female or male, you have just to learn which is what.

In Italian and Spanish, the endings of the nouns indicate in many cases the gender (with a few exceptions male **-o**, female **-a**).

In English the situation seems to be unclear: some nouns of Latin origin are gendered (sun, moon) as well as animated beings.

These different habits to express or not express gender point to different mental concepts and to different gender traditions.

Following you find more clues about the gender structures of the four partner country languages and their specific ways to overcome linguistic gender biases.

German

Gender hierarchies in German

Reflect on the following questions:

- "Die Taucher retteten die Fußballmannschaft aus der überschwemmten Höhle." („The divers safed the soccer team from the flooded cavern") "Ärzte ohne Grenzen" ("Doctors without borders"): What is your inner image when you hear this phrase? Whom do you imagine? (In German Taucher and Ärzte are clearly male.)
- How would it be if you could speak to somebody in a gender-neutral way?
- Is our language sexist – do you know how to change it in a gender sensitive way?

The German language offers to express grammatically if a male or a female person is addressed by using the respective form of a noun and the dependent form of an adjective. The generic masculinum is habitually used if male beings are referred to, if male and female beings are referred to (regardless if there are more males or more

females in a group) and often also if only female beings are referred to.

The automatic perception and interpretation of what we hear probably stimulates mind sets and immediate cognitive pictures of males when we hear male forms of nouns. Consequently, females become eradicated in our inner world of cognitive representations. And consequently again the contributions of females to what has been achieved, produced or done becomes forgotten in many contexts. In German women themselves usually use to speak about themselves in the male form – e.g. *"Ich arbeite als Trainer." "Ich bin ein schlechter Verlierer." („I work as a trainer." „I am a bad looser.")*

Grammar

Definite and indefinite articles are gendered – masculine, feminine, neutral: der, die, das; ein, eine, ein; pronouns are gendered. Nouns are gendered. Adjectives are not adjusted to the gender of the nouns: das schöne Haus, die schöne Bank, der schöne Baum.

Nouns are neutral, female or male: das Kind, die Frau, der Mann; das Haus, die Brücke, der Baum.

German foresees to express femaleness of animated beings by adding the suffix –in to the male basis: der Hund, die Hündin, der Wiener, die Wienerin, der Bäcker, die Bäckerin. In a number of cases male and female words are forseen e.g. Kuh, Stier (cow, bull), Stute, Hengst (mare, stallion). Still in the 19th century it was usual to add the –in to the second name of the women: e.g. Josef Schweighofer und Anna Schweighoferin.

Semantic

Compare: Tanzberger, Renate/Schneider, Claudia (2016): *Auf dem Weg zur*

Chancengleichheit. Didaktische Anregungen zum Unterrichtsprinzip „Erziehung zur Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern", ed. Kammer für Arbeiter und Angestellte für Wien, Wien. https://aws.arbeiterkammer.at/assets/uploads/Auf_dem_Weg_zur_Chancengleichheit_fertig6.pdf [14.07.2018]

Irmtraud Voglmayr (2010): *Leitfaden für diskriminierungsfreie Sprache, Handlungen, Bilddarstellungen*, ed. Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, Wien.

https://static.uni-graz.at/fileadmin/Akgl/4_Fuer_MitarbeiterInnen/leitfaden_diskrim_2010_web011.pdf [14.07.2018]

- Certain invectives are male/female and express characteristics subscribed to males or females: Waschweib (washer women – somebody who is gossiping a lot), Waschlappen (washclouth – a man who is kind of cowardice, in English: Pussy).
- Certain adjectives are used frequently together with e.g. professional women to point out their femininity, reduce them to their appearance: Die zierliche Ministerin (the delicate minister).
- Women are frequently mentioned depending from men: Herr Schmid und seine Frau (Mister Schmid and his wife).

- Only the male form is used e.g. in job offers: Gesucht wird "Technischer Zeichner" (Wanted: "Technical drawer").
- Asymmetric mentioning of males and females: Autoren sind Professor x und Fräulen y (Authors are professor x and miss y).
- Comparisons with animals/images: Mit Herrn Meier kamen zwei kesse Bienen auf die Bühne. (Together with Mister Meier two cheeky bees entered the stage).
- Objectification – making less human – indicating ownership: *"Nicht nur Bälle auch die Frauen liegen dem Stürmer zu Füßen". ("Not only football also women lie at the feet of the striker.")*
- Arguments which refer to nature: *„Frauen sind aufgrund ihrer Gebärfähigkeit von Natur aus anders." ("Women are different from nature because of her ability to give birth.")*
- Not naming violence/belittle violence: Familientragödie (to call what happened a "family tragedy" instead of a "violation").
- Not naming the perpetrator and the act concretely: *"Frau wurde Opfer einer Gewalttat" ("Women became victim of an act of violence"* – instead of *"Anatol Regen murdered Ingrid Regen.")*

Links to guidelines on gender and diversity sensitive language in German

A series of guidelines has been published with recommendations on the gender sensitive use of the language:

Especially for schools find the guidelines:

https://www.schule.at/portale/gender-und-bildung/materialien/gendersensible-nichtdiskriminierende-sprache.html [12.07.2018]

More links:

https://www.imst.ac.at/app/webroot/files/GD-Handreichungen/handreichung_gender_diversit%C3%A4tssensibler_sprachgebrauch_.pdf [12.07.2018]

http://www.landesfrauenrat-sachsen-anhalt.de/files/sprache.pdf [12.07.2018]

Spanish

Exercise

Name: What is not named does not exist

Purpose: Self-reflection about consequences of gender in the sexist language and learn what the gender sensitive language means. As you can see, women are not visible in many roles, and also in our language. The reason why we should start changing the language including women to make a better society is:

If women are not named that means that women do not exist or women are not included.

What to do:

As every word has a gender in Spanish, just think about the things that are around you, think about the gender of the things and imagine a world where you can use only the things that have masculine gender. **Could you really have a normal life?**

You cannot use the libraries (f) to order the books (m), you cannot use the trash (f) to leave things, and you cannot switch on the light (f) or the computer (m) because it needs electricity (f).

Take any of your dynamics or role-playing that you normally use (for instance

https://blog.jobandtalent.com/como-es-una-dinamica-de-grupo-en-la-entrevista-de-trabajo/). You have to:

a. Read only the sentences that are a woman or women (so do not read the sentences which are for man or men). Do you have any role in the dynamic or role-play?
b. Relate the situation generated by eliminating masculine nouns with the invisibility of women by using masculine nouns or using the masculine plural as a generic form.
c. Write the dynamic or role-play in the way that the women are also included.
d. Analyze which are the difficulties that you have had to include women rewriting the exercise. Was it so difficult?

Questions for the teacher: Now you have to think about the things or activities that for the society are good for boys and the ones that are good for girls.

In a sheet of paper write down the answer for the question Why are there things or activities for boys and ones for girls?

Think about the question: Why cannot change?

In your sentences just change boys for girls and vice versa. Does that make sense?

In our world think about why are not women playing in mixed football teams in the champions league, or why are there no women in Formula-1, bicycle rides or motor-bicycle rides? Is it fair to have only teams consisting only of women or only of men in sports?

What is needed: Relaxed environment, no disruption, paper, pen and around 50 to 60 minutes.

Strength: It can be done by oneself, but also in a group. It is interesting to create a discussion in a group.

Competences: As there is no trainer to lead the exercise the conclusions could be not the right ones. It needs self-reflection. The theoretical explanation should be understood.

Everyday examples:

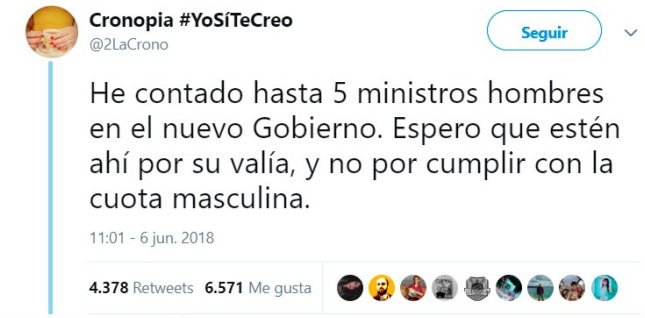
Every word has a gender in Spanish (male or female) and we usually use masculine nouns or masculine plural nouns for both genders, so there is a gap which does not really include women. For instance:

1. One company does not pay their female worker because the collective agreement indicates only the salaries of workers (m) http://www.publico.es/sociedad/empresa-no-paga-trabajadoras-convenio-especifica-trabajadores.html

When a woman gets a good position she is always questioned. Does the same thing happen to men?

2. What do people think about a government (Spain) with 65% women?

"I have count 5 ministers who are male in the new government. I hope they are there because they are worth it, and not for having a male quote."



Why should we use gender sensitive language?

Language regulates behavior and thoughts and structures the reality we perceive. It is a social product that expresses the experience or history of a society, **therefore transmits and maintains stereotypes and asymmetric or unequal relations**.

There are two possibilities to eliminate the sexism in society:

1. Eliminating prejudices, so that sexist language would be left unused.

2. Using an inclusive language, so that many stereotypes would disappear.

Language is not a biological fact, it is a cultural product so it can be changed and adapted to new realities. By changing the perception of reality, we eliminate stereotypes.

The language is in constant evolution incorporating the evolution and advances of the society. For those reason new words, expressions, different grammatical uses arise (e.g. new technologies, emoticons, slang for chatting ...)

How is the language changed to be inclusive?

We must bring out the stereotypes. Stereotypes are socio-culturally learned ideas that allow categorizing the reality and they work automatically so that we can respond quickly to the environment. The problem with this

process is that it works unconsciously and it does not allow us to assess whether it generates a situation of discrimination.

To make the person aware of their stereotypes and the reactions produced by their use it is important to analyze specific situations.

How is in the Spanish language maleness and femaleness expressed or how hidden or neutralized?

3. In Spanish, maleness or femaleness is expressed through grammatical gender, and it is a characteristic of nouns, pronouns, determinants, adjectives, adverbs and participles. The general rule is to add the suffix -**a** for the feminine and the suffix -**o** for the masculine. The suffix -**e** is also used to indicate both genders, although it is mainly used for the masculine gender. In the Spanish language many uses and grammar rules reflect the andro-centrism and sexism of the society.
4. An evidence of the influence of andro-centrism in Spanish as a language is the use of masculine grammatical terms as generic forms, and feminine terms to refer to the particular. These masculine forms have traditionally been presented as neutral and inclusive. But the reality is that this use reflects the idea that the masculine is the measure of the human, and therefore excludes and invisibilizes women within that category. This use of the language influences the construction of the identity of girls and boys. It prevents girls from having female referents who are agents of the actions. On the other hand, boys always see themselves as protagonists of the actions, which can generate an excess of security that does not allow them to assess the risks.
5. Another example of the influence of andro-centrism in the Spanish language is the phenomenon called "semantic leap". It occurs when the male is used as a generic form and then is used to refer exclusively to men. (Example: "There are many other rules in the Koran that serve to structure the life and customs of believers ... They can marry several women; the woman is subject to man ...")
6. There are also many grammatical forms in Spanish that reflect sexism in society. The "apparent duals" are words formulated in masculine. They have a positive connotation, but in feminine they have a derogatory meaning, for example the word fox. In Spanish when this word is used in the masculine gender it refers to astute men, whereas if it is used in the feminine gender it refers to promiscuous women.
7. The lexical gaps are words that do not have a feminine form and indicate positive qualities (for example chivalry), or that do not have a masculine form and refer to negative qualities (for example maruja, which is a term used in a derogatory way and refers to women dedicated exclusively to housework and who like to know and talk about the details of the lives of others).
8. Other examples of sexist uses in language are the names of many professions in which their use in feminine is not recognized, or courtesy treatments that place women in a lower social hierarchy (for example: referring to women by the surname of their husbands).

Are there grammatical possibilities to express diversity and change in the Spanish language?

- Use of collective names (alumnado, vecindario ...)
- Use of abstract names (jefatura, dirección...)
- Use of the two grammar gender: Double forms. It is not a repetition to use the two grammatical genders when referring to mixed groups, since there are different realities and it is important to make them visible. In these cases it is important to take care of the alternation so as not to give more importance to one gender with respect to the other. The grammatical concordance of gender between articles, nouns and adjectives must also be taken into consideration. A proposal is to accord with the last article or substantive.
- Use of determinants and pronouns without gender
- Use of neutral adverbs
- Formulate sentences with the omitted subject, impersonally (third person singular verb preceded by "se"), passive reflex or periphrastic sentences.

Links to guidelines on gender and diversity sensitive language in Spanish

Collection of guides on inclusive language in different areas:

http://www.inmujer.gob.es/servRecursos/formacion/GuiasLengNoSexista/docs/Guiaslenguajenosexista_.pdf

Collection of web resources, articles, awareness-raising documents, guides and didactic materials on inclusive language: https://www.nodo50.org/mujeresred/IMG/pdf/recopilatorio_lenguajenosexista.pdf

Italian

The gender in the Italian language

The Italian language, like the Spanish one, has only two genders, the masculine and the feminine: there are female articles (una – la – le) and male articles (un – uno – gli), masculine adjectives and feminine adjectives, male nouns and female nouns. Neutral gender does not exist.

Usually:

- nouns in **-o** belong to the masculine gender **(m.)**

- nouns in **-a** belong to the female gender **(f.)**

The "grammatical" gender of names that indicate people or animals correspond to their "natural" gender: the names that refer to male beings belong to the male gender and the names referring to female beings belong to the female gender.

il ragazzo/ the boy (m.) – la ragazza/the girl (f.)

il gatto/the male cat (m.) – la gatta/the female cat (f.)

However, there is not always a correspondence and there are some cases where the "grammatical gender" does not correspond to "natural gender": (e.g. la guardia/the guard (m.), il soprano/the soprano (f.)).

In the case of names of things that indicate objects, actions or abstract concepts, the gender is only a grammatical category. For this category of nouns the gender – male or female – has been defined over time with the development of the language. The distinction of masculine or feminine in these cases represents a mere convention and has an exclusively grammatical value. It is therefore essential to know what grammatical rules are established in order to avoid errors when we use articles, adjectives or past participles.

While names that indicate objects, actions, or abstract concepts have only one grammatical gender (feminine or masculine), names that indicate people or animals may have both the masculine gender and the female gender.

In most cases the basic form is the masculine one, indicated as the main form in the dictionaries, and from this one the female noun is formed.

The transition from the masculine form to the feminine form is always possible according to the rules of Italian grammar.

Depending on the way they create the feminine, the nouns of animate beings can be divided into four groups:

independent names (those with two different forms)

e.g. l'uomo (m.)/la donna (f.) (the man/the woman); il toro (m.)/la mucca (f.) (the bull/the cow)

names of common gender (those that present a single form valid for female and male and that need articles or adjectives to specify their gender)

e.g. **il** cantante (m.)/**la** cantante (f.) (the singer/the singer)

names of promiscuous gender (names with the same form that applies to both sexes: these are names that indicate animals and that have a single form, either female or male, that is used for the male as well as for the female)

e.g. il leopardo femmina (f.)/il leopardo maschio (m.) (the female leopard/the male leopard)

mobile names (names that change the male gender to the female gender and vice versa changing the ending)

e.g. il figli**o** (m.)/ la figli**a** (f.) (the son/the daughter); il pittor**e** (m.)/la pittric**e** (f.) (the male painter/the female painter); il pastor**e** (m.) / la pastor**a** (f.) (the male shepherd/the female shepherd).

Actually, the existence of two different grammatical genders does not mean, as we could think, that in Italian there is an equal treatment between male and female.

In fact, the Italian language is a strongly androcentric language, rich in grammatical and semantic dissymmetries between male and female gender.

Regarding the grammatical dissymmetries, the androcentric nature manifests itself, for example, in the fact that

in the Italian language the masculine has become the reference gender used for both sexes, carrying out a function that in Italian grammars is defined as "masculine", "unmarked" or "male neutral".

E.g. "L'uomo (m.) (man) è un essere dotato di ragione." – "Man is a being provided with reason." (and woman?!?)

Another issue is the "inclusive masculine", the use of the masculine plural as a generic term including the feminine. In Italian, in the plural the masculine terms include grammatically the two sexes.

E.g. "Giorgio e Maria sono due bambini." (m.) – "Giorgio and Maria are two children."

Also the accordance of adjectives and participles with the nouns that they refer to, makes clear that the Italian is an androcentric language, as concordance is always in masculine, even if reference is made to masculine and feminine names together.

E.g. "Giorgio e Maria sono felici." (m.) – "Giorgio and Maria are happy."

A final aspect to consider reflecting on the grammatical dissymmetries present in the Italian language concerns the frequent use of the masculine when we speak about professions or institutional roles performed or covered by women.

Il ministro (m.) "Maria Bianchi ha presenziato all'evento." – "The Minister Anna Bianchi attended the event."

In all the cases described above what is realized is the concealment of the female gender and therefore of women!

In addition to these grammatical dissymmetries, the Italian language also presents a series of dissymmetries linked to the different semantic value attributed to words depending on if they refer to a female or to a male subject (for example, the word governante (governing), referred to a man, refers to the semantic sphere of power and command, but connected to a woman, it indicates that she takes care of the house on behalf of others) or at the different meaning, positive or negative, that the same word can have if we are talking about a woman or a man (e.g. uomo libero vs. donna libera – free man: a strong man, who lives on his own way vs. free woman: a promiscuous woman)).

Another semantic dissymmetry is due to the fact that in Italian some words are used only for female subjects, while they are never referred to male subjects, contributing to transmit a heavily stereotyped vision of the woman.

E.g.: weak, naive, unselfish, fragile, mild, hysterical

Gender sensitive Italian

The way of representing women through the language and the importance of the role that all this has in the process of constructing the female image in Italy has been a subject of discussion for many years, ever since the question was brought to light. The first book worked out on the question the first time in a systematic and critical way has been written by the well-known linguist Alma Sabatini: Sexism in the Italian language (1987).

In this work Sabatini denounced the androcentric approach of the Italian language and suggested a series of

recommendations for a non-discriminatory use of the language, a use that would enhance the female presence and recognize it through a correct use of the female grammatical gender (in order to recourse neutral or unmarked masculine and avoid the use of masculine for jobs, professions and institutional roles covered and exercised by women, for example).

Sabatini's proposals can be summarized in the following points:

- avoid the use of the neutral masculine: avoiding the words connecting men with universal value (**NO** "the right's men" - **YES** "human rights"); avoiding the use of masculine gender always and exclusively, speaking of peoples, categories and groups (**NO** bambini (male form for children) – **YES** bambini e bambine (boys and girls); avoiding to tie the past participle to the masculine when the names are predominantly female (**NO** "Carla, Maria, Francesca, Sandra and Giacomo sono arrivati" (male form for have arrived) – **YES** "Carla, Maria, Francesca, Sandra and Giacomo sono arrivate" (female form for have arrived));
- avoid the dissymmetric use of surnames and titles (**NO** La Boldrini and Mattarella - **YES** Boldrini and Mattarella);
- avoiding the use of masculine names of trades, professions, positions referred to a female subject (**NO** "Maria Rossi is il direttore" (male form for the director) - **YES** "Maria Rossi is la direttrice" (female form for the director); avoiding the use of masculine articles and concordances with names that have the same form for men and women (**NO** Il Parlamentare (male form The parliamentarian) Maria Rossi – **YES** la parlamentare (female form for parliamentarian) Maria Rossi) and avoiding the use of masculine nouns with the addition of the modifier "woman" (**NO** L'architetto donna (the architect woman) Maria Rossi - **YES** La architetto (female form for architect) Maria Rossi).

At Sabatini's recommendations, however, did not follow an official stance, nor general guidelines that took them into account were adopted (this was done by individual municipal or regional administrations) and even today, thirty years after the publication of Sexism in the Italian language, the dissymmetries shown by Sabatini have not yet been eliminated, neither in the spoken language nor in the written one.

Among all the uses of language with discriminating effect the most widespread is the use of masculine forms to indicate institutional roles or professional titles referred to women. This is surprising if we think that it is in contrast with the rules of Italian grammar which normally requires the female grammatical gender for everything that has a female human referent.

Despite the fact that from the first recommendations in this direction there have been many discussions, also through the media, and despite the fact that important new works have been published – among all the work carried out by the linguist Cecilia Robustelli, in collaboration with the Accademia della Crusca, Guidelines for the use of gender in administrative language. Project gender and language. Words and images of communication (2012) – the hesitation to use the female form of professional titles and institutional roles referred to women is still strong in Italy.

It should be emphasized, since not meaningless, that the terms that cause so much resistance for their feminine declination are those related to a handful of professional titles and institutional roles, such as architect, councillor, chancellor, surgeon, deputy, director, official , judge, engineer, inspector, magistrate, doctor, minister, notary public, prosecutor, rector, auditor, mayor etc., while there are no obstacles to the use of the female form for terms indicating "common" work, such as clerk, teacher, worker, hairdresser etc.

Recently, however, there has been a real official position in Italy in favour of a gender sensitive use of the Italian language: reflections on the use of gender in Italian language inaugurated by the pioneering work of Sabatini and continued through the work of Robustelli, have been transferred into the Guidelines for the use of gender in administrative language, adopted in 2018 by the Ministry of Education, University and Research.

The Guidelines for the use of gender in administrative language is a document that (re-proposing the recommendations of Sabatini and Robustelli concerning the abolition of the inclusive male in favour of the use of both genders and in favour of the substitution of the names of professions and roles covered by women with masculine correspondents) wants to be an instrument for overcoming the grammatical dissymmetries inherent in the Italian language (and the consequent obscuring of women in the language).

All this with the premise explicitly stated in the preface to the document signed by the Minister of Education, University and Research Valeria Fedeli that "…favouring a correct use of the gender is very important, because it is primarily through the language that we represent the reality in which we live, and through this representation we help to consolidate it as it is or, on the contrary, to modify it. In other words, language is the means by which we can confirm sex-based stereotypes or fight them. If we do not begin to say la direttrice (female form for director) or la ministra (the female form for minister) when a woman performs these tasks it will be very difficult to overcome the prejudice for which this kind of position is purely male. Likewise, starting to say studente (male form for student) and studentessa (the female form for student) is a very concrete and simple way to strengthen and spread a culture of inclusion and respect for differences ".

Literature

- Sabatini, Alma (1987): *Il sessismo nella lingua italiana*, place of publication
- Robustelli, Cecilia (2014): *Donne, grammatica e media. Suggerimenti per l'uso dell'italiano*, place of publication
- Robustelli, Cecilia, in collaborazione con l'Accademia della Crusca, Linee guida per l'uso del genere nel linguaggio amministrativo (2012): *Progetto genere e linguaggio. Parole e immagini della comunicazione*, place of publication
- Linee guida per l'uso del genere nel linguaggio amministrativo del MIUR (2018) – Download website?

Link to a guideline on gender sensitive language in Italian

http://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/0/Linee_Guida_+per_l_uso_del_genere_nel_linguaggio_amministrativo_del_MIUR_2018.pdf/3c8dfbef-4dfd-475a-8a29-5adc0d7376d8?version=1.0

Swedish

How do we in Swedish express gender in our language?

Sweden as any other country has a male norm that is visible in both our language and the usage of it. However Swedish is not gender coded in nouns and adjectives.

One of the largest language based gender changes that have ever happened in the Swedish language was the introduction of the gender neutral pronoun "HEN", (in English often represented by "one" or "ze". There are multiple alternatives in the English language and there is yet no consensus on which to use. But the most common in the queer community is probably "ze". And for example in 2015 Harvard University allowed students to select a gender-neutral option like "ze" "e" and "they" on registration forms. For more information see: https://genderneutralpronoun.wordpress.com/ or https://www.citylab.com/life/2015/09/ze-or-they-a-guide-to-using-gender-neutral-pronouns/407167/). In 2012 the publishing house Olika released the first book to use a gender neural pronoun instead of "she" or "he": *Kivi and Monsterdog* by Jesper Lundqvist and Bettina Johansson. The word however was first used in the 1960's in the academic world, but it did not get publicly known or widely used. It was mostly used in the queer community. But the children's book and the debate it led to changed that. Now the word is not only used in books and various media like news papers and radio – but it also got it's validity by entering the Swedish Academy's National Dictionary and the National Encyclopaedia. Now you have in Swedish the possibility to talk about someone without giving them a gender. This is useful when gender is not important or when it is not known, but it is also a significant human rights issue in that people that are not comfortable in the division of "she" or "he" now have a well-known word to use for their gender identity.

The male as neutral

Human aspect is considered to be the same as the male aspect. So if you want to talk about your self in a language that means "me and others" you use the Swedish word "MAN" that comes from the word "man" as in human. In our language the gender movement has started to create change by using the word "EN" as in "one" instead. I.e.: *One could say that I am wonderful!*

Some words still are gender influenced, like human is called "MÄNNISKA" as in "MAN". But this is more of an exception than the rule. Most words are in themselves gender neutral. However, the male norm is visible in how we use the language and see the world. For example, if you see a person at distance, or an animal – and don't know the sex you say: "Look at him" rather than "her" or the gender neutral new word "HEN". However, this is changing. Since 2012 when "HEN" was introduced children are more aware than older people and change in those situations probably will come.

Gendered professions

Mostly our professions are gender neutral by language, but there are some exceptions and there has also been some change over time. For example, we used to have "LÄRARE" (teacher-man) and "LÄRARINNA" (teacher-woman). Now "LÄRARINNA" is not wrong to say – but is not used. The fact that the female version has been taken out of the used language is a sign of the man as the norm.

Other professions that are gender bound are for example "BRANDMAN" (fire fighter) but more and more people use the gender neutral word "BRANDSOLDAT" (fire soldier). The profession of being a nurse is called "SJUKSJÖTERSKA" and the ending of the word "-ERSKA" implements a female. As men go into the profession they too are called with the same word, which many see as progress.

Historically there has been more males playing football/soccer, and the word "football player" has been seen as synonymous with a man. But since more and more girls are playing we are no longer accepting the usage of "football player" as equal to a man, and the usage of "female football player" to underline the breaking of the norm. Now people say both "female" and "male" as a prefix (if gender is needed) to implement that "football player" is neutral. The same has happened with things like "rock band".

The value of having a word

Another visible sign of gender in the language is the fact that up until the "SNIPPAREFORMEN" – "the vagina reform" starting in 1998, there was a natural word that everybody was comfortable to use about boy's penises – "SNOPP". But there was no equal word for girl's vaginas. Many people said "front but" and families made up their own words. So, kindergarten-teachers did a national votation and decided that the word "SNIPPA" should be the word equal to "SNOPP". This made it easy for all to talk about all parts of their body and the stigma of not having one decided word about your genitals was taken away. Of course, there has been a debate regarding the fact that the female word derives from the male.

Gender hierarchy

The gender assumptions and the hierarchy are also visible in the usage of the language. For example, some words are never used about males. Like "FÖRTJUSANDE" that means "sweet and lovely" in a special way. Since there is not only the division but also the hierarchy the opposite is less common. All "male words" are possible to use for both males and females, but to use a female word about a man is to emasculate him and move him down the hierarchy. An example of that is the word "POJKFLICKA" that is a positive description of a girl being more like a boy, like "tomboy". The opposite word does not even exist.

The gender is also visible in what words are chosen to describe an action, and how it is regarded. While boys "laugh", girls "giggle". While boys run, girls "SKUTTAR" – like a more indirect way of running, less focused.

In the end of 2018 a new gender language based debate came to surface. The Fredrika Bremer society (Fredrika Bremerförbundet) and The Equality Agency (Rättviseförmedlingen) developed a new lettering alphabet. Since 1891 agencies like the police, the rescue services or the military used only male names to emphasize letters (like Adam for A, Bertil for B). The new alphabet is now representing names for all genders.

Existing possibilities

The Swedish language has both a lot of gender neutral words, but also a modern history of changing words to fit the values at hand. The change with the gender neutral pronoun is an inspiring example, now you can use a gender neutral way to talk about people when gender identity is not of interest or is unknown. There is also a growing awareness of the importance of language and how we use it.

For most words there is a gender neutral version, like "FLICKA" – "girl" / "POJKE" – "boy" / "BARN" - "children" and there is also a strong movement for implementing a gender neutral usage of the language. I.e. instead of saying "KOM NU, TJEJER" – "Come on girls", many now try to say "KOM NU, KOMPISAR" – "Come on friends". In this way people try to step away from the idea that the most defining thing about the group is that they are girls, and that this is so important that it is needed to be pointed out.

It takes some practice, but it is easy to change your language to be more inclusive and less gender bias. Instead of using:

SHE / HE use ONE or ZEI (In Swedish HEN)

GIRL / BOY use CHILDREN or FRIENDS

MOTHERS / FATHERS use PARENTS or CAREGIVERS

GIRLFRIEND / BOYFRIEND use PARTNER or LOVED ONE

Literature on gender sensitive language

- Henkel, Kristina; Tomicic, Marie (2009) *Ge ditt barn 100 möjligheter istället för 2, (Give children 100 possibilites instead of 2)*. Olika förlag
- Milles, Karin (2008) Jämställt språk: en handbok i att skriva och tala jämställt (Gender Equal Language: a handbook in writing and speaking gender equal) Norstedts Akademiska Förlag
- Nordenstam, Kerstin (2003) *Genusperspektiv på språk* (Genderperspective on language), Högskoleverket
- Salmson, Karin; Ivarsson, Johanna (2015) *Normkreativitet i förskolan – om normkritik och vägar till likabehandling (Normcreativity in Preschools – on Normkriticism and Ways to Equality)*, Olika förlag

Links to studies and resources on gender and diversity sensitive language in Swedish

- Adamberit.se Genusneutralt bokstaveringsalfabet, Rättviseförmedlingen och Fredrika Bremerförbundet: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1HvyrAcQPig&feature=youtu.be
- Genusperspektiv på språk (Genderperspective on language), Kerstin Nordenstam, Högskoleverket: https://docplayer.se/387986-Genusperspektiv-pa-sprak-kerstin-nordenstam.html
- I love språk: Språk och genus (I love language; Language and gender), Utbildningsradion: https://urskola.se/Produkter/158717-I-love-sprak-Sprak-och-genus

Language mediators – children's books and school books

Schoolbooks and children's books are contributing to the socialisation of children. The way gender – men*women, boys*girls – is portrayed verbally and iconographical influences mind sets and related emotion patterns. Books that present gender stereotypically contribute to the naturalization of bipolar stereotypes, confirm and strengthen the habit to perceive and interpret bipolar stereotypical.

Consequently, perceptions that contradict this stereotypical habit irritate people, make them feel uncomfortable, maybe even anxious.

To be able to catch up with unfamiliar perceptions people have to rattle their mind sets, to stand uncomfortable, frightening feelings. They have to be ready to broaden and change mind sets. And they have to train the new mind sets; because the old ones will not disappear but exist side by side with the new ones. The more often the new ones are activated the stronger they become and the more comfortable and familiar they feel.

Therefore, the gender sensitive and diversity friendly composition of school books and children's books is crucial in the process of changing mind sets respectively adding cognitive schemes. Young children love to watch their favourite books over and over again.

Diversity friendly children's books and school books add possibilities, perception patterns, amplify the cognitive horizon.

They train the ability to broaden mind sets and emotional reaction patterns to new perceptions; not just to assimilate perceptions into the existing sets and patterns.

Representing all gender, ages, people of different origin, different bodily appearance equally valuable and normal in books means to contribute to social justice.

Gender and other difference markers are used to construct and maintain social power relations.

Analysing our library and amplifying it diversity sensitive

To analyse the existing school or pre-school library with regard to diversity issues and as a support for the selection of diversity sensitive books the following tool, which we also present in the Gender Culture Model, can be used:

By counting we take a first step of creating a representative book shelf that includes the modern society's diversity.

AREA: Sex

Count the number of books that have

___ Protagonists who are a she

___ Protagonists who are a he

___ Protagonists who are nor a she, neither a he

AREA: Family

Count the number of books that have

___ Fathers who are present and care giving

___ Mothers who are present and care giving

___ Children who have two moms or two dads

___ Children who have one parent

___ Children who have a mother and a father

___ Children living in one place all the time

___ Children who live in several locations, for example each other week

AREA: Love

Count the number of books that have

___ Love between two girls/women

___ Love between two guys/men

___ Love between a girl/woman and boy/man

___ Love of more than one person

___ Love where the person is not mentioned as a he or she

AREA: Friendship

Count the number of books that have

___ Friendship between boys playing in a group

___ Friendship between boys playing only two with each other

___ Friendship between girls playing in a group

___ Friendship between girls playing only two with each other

___ Friendship between girls and boys

AREA: Gender expression

Count the number of books that have

___ Boys who are empathetic and caring

___ Girls who are empathetic and caring

___ Girls who take initiative, solve problems or are brave

___ Boys who take initiative, solve problems or are brave

___ Boys are described as kind, sweet, good

___ Girls described as kind, sweet, good

___ Boys that are dressed in colours of the rainbow

___ Girls that are dressed in colours of the rainbow

___ Boys crying and feeling sad

___ Girls crying and feeling sad

___ Girls who are angry or show anger

___ Boys who are angry or show anger

___ Girls who are indoors or close to home

___ Boys who are indoors or close to home

___ Girls who are out on adventures in the world

___ Boys who are out on adventures in the world

German

Downloads of lists of gender sensitive children's books and school books

- Zentrum Polis published a brochure with recommandations for non-discriminating schoolbooks: Hladschik, Patricia (2016): *Empfehlungen für nicht-diskriminierende Schulbücher. Fokus gender und sexuelle Orientierung*, Wien (http://www.politik-lernen.at/dl/MpulJMJKomlolJqx4KJK/edpol_2016_Nicht_diskriminierende_Schulbuecher_web.pdf [26.4.2018])

The brochure as a product of the EU-Twinning-project „Fight against Homophobia and Transphobia in Kosovo" has also been published in English, Albanian and Serbian. It contains checklists to analyse books with regard to: Non-discrimination/diversity; gender; sexual identity; didactic and methodical approaches; illustrations.

- Präsidialdepartment des Kantons Basel-Stadt, Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern (2017): *Himmelblau und Rosarot. Kinder- und Jugendbücher ohne Rollenklischees*, Basel

  http://www.bs.ch/publikationen/gleichstellung/himmelblau-rosarot.html [26.4.2018]

- i-Päd. Initiative intersektionelle Pädagogik (o. J.): Intersektionale Kinderbuchliste, Berlin http://www.i-paed-berlin.de/de/Downloads/ [26.4.2018]

- Fachstelle Kinderwelten für vorurteilsbewusste Bildung und Erziehung. Recommendations for prejudice conscious and inclusive children's books for different ages – including also criteria for the selection of books. Brochures of 2018 on books for different ages (up to 3 years; 3 to 6 years; 6 to 9 years; more recommendable books): https://situationsansatz.de/vorurteilsbewusste-kinderbuecher.html [26.4.2018]

- Kompetenzzentrum geschlechtergerechte Kinder- und Jugendhilfe Sachsen-Anhalt offers a Website depicting diversity sensitive books for different ages: http://vielfalt-erfahrenswert.de/ [26.4.2018]

- Recommendations of picture-books for gender sensitive pedagogy https://www.schule.at/fileadmin/DAM/Gegenstandsportale/Gender_und_Bildung/Dateien/Literatur_Einstieg.pdf [26.4.2018]

- Stadt Zürich recommendations of gender sensitive children's books: https://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/prd/de/index/gleichstellung/publikationen/rollenbilder-und-stereotypen/gendersensible-kinder--und-jugendbuecher.html [26.4.2018]

- Zentrum Polis published a brochure on gender sensitive children's books focussing on violence prevention, compiled by Maria Haupt: www.politik-lernen.at/site/gratisshop/shop.item/106405.html [26.4.2018]

- Biographic comic reportages on LGBTI (also in English, Spanish, Russian): http://www.achsoistdas.com/ [26.4.2018]

- A story about two gay frogs (cartoon movie): http://www.meintestgelaende.de/2018/04/auf-dem-sprung/
- Seifried, Ilse M./Geiger, Rainer (2017): *So bin ich*, Verein Internationale Kulturprojekte: Wien

  Subtle non-stereotyping children's book: http://www.begehbare-labyrinthe.de/So-bin-ich-seifried-geiger.pdf [26.4.2018]
- Schmitz-Weicht, Cai/Schmitz, Ka/Dennie, Todd (2016): *Esst ihr Gras oder Raupen? – Do you eat grass or caterpiller?* Viel & Mehr Verlag

  On rainbow families. Also in German – Spanish, German –Turkish.

  http://www.vielundmehr.de/bilderbuecher/esst-ihr-gras-oder-raupen/
- Schmitz-Weicht, Cai/Schmitz (2014): *Traum-Berufe*, Viel & Mehr Verlag

  On professions. Also in Portuguese – German, Polish – German, Italian

  German, Russian – German, Turkish – German http://www.vielundmehr.de/traum-berufe/
- Rabea Jasmin Usling/ Linette Weiß (2017): *Prinz_essin?* Books on demand, Chiliverlag.

  A children's book on transidentity, from age 5.
- Hansson, Gunilla (2008): *Töpfchen, Schnuller, Teddybär: Die schönsten Geschichten von Klara*, Ravensburger Buchverlag.

English

Downloads of lists of gender sensitive children's books and school books

- UNESCO (2009): *Promoting Gender Equality through text books. A methodological guide*, Paris (http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001588/158897e.pdf; 26.4.2018)
- http://bust.com/books/13817-12-empowering-children-s-books-to-add-to-little-girls-bookshelves.html

Italian

Gender sensitive children's books and school books

- Calì, D./Barbanègre, R. (2017): *Cenerentola e la scarpetta di pelo*, EDT
- Ismail, Y. (2017): *Sono una ragazza*, di Yasmeen Ismail, EDT
- Volpari, D. /Miola, S. (2017): *Un compleanno nella giungla*, EDT

- Lacombe, B. (2016): *Lunghicapelli*, EDT
- Banks, K./Bogack T. (2016): *Arriva la mamma!* EDT
- Calì, D./Barbanègre, R. (2016): *Biancaneve e i 77 nani*, EDT
- Volpari, D./Dal Corso, M. (2015): *Amelia che sapeva volare*, EDT
- Puybaret, E.m(2014): *Il grande libro dei mestieri*, EDT
- Zolotow, C./Delacroix, C. (2014): *Una bambola per Alberto*, EDT
- Keraval, G. (2014): *Il pianeta stravagante*, EDT
- Martchenko, M./Munsch R. (2014): *La principessa e il drago*, EDT
- Roveda, A./Domeniconi P. (2014): *Il trattore della nonna*, EDT
- Baruzzi, A./Bossini, F. (2015): *Chi trova un pirata trova un tesoro*, EDT
- Beerli, V. (2004): *Belle, Astute e coraggiose. Otto storie di eroine*, Einaudi Ragazzi
- Bichonnier H. (1994): *Il Mostro peloso*, Einaudi Ragazzi
- Blundell, T. (2002): *Attenti alle ragazze*, Emme Edizioni
- Colli, M./Colli, R. (2006): *Storia incredibile di due principesse che sono arcistufe di essere oppresse*, EdizioniLapis
- Diaz Reguera, R. (2013): *C'è qualcosa di più noioso che essere una principessa rosa?*, Edizioni Settenove Donaldson Julia
- Facchini, V. (1999): *Piselli e farfalline…sono più belli i maschi o le bambine?*, Fatatrac
- Falconeri, I. (2000): *Olivia*, Giannino Stoppani edizioni
- Gay-Para, P./Saillard R. (2013): *Andiamo Papà*, Edizioni Clichy
- Jadoul, E. (2013): *Le mani di papà*, Edizioni Babalibri
- Janisch, H.7Wolfsgruber, L. (1998): *La principessa sulla zucca*, edizioni Arka
- Kemp A./Ogilvie S. (2007): *Principessa ribelle*, Edizioni Nord sud
- Kempter, C. I. (2005): *La principessa con gli stivali da brigante*, Editrice IdeeAli
- Lindgren, A. (1988): *Pippi Calzelunghe*, Editore Salani
- Masini, B. (2006): *La bambina di burro e altre storie di bambini strani*, Edizioni Einaudi Ragazzi
- Naumann-Villemin, C. (2003): *Sono una principessa!*, Il castoro bambini
- Pitzorno, B. (1991): *Extraterrestre alla pari*, Edizione Einaudi
- Rinck, M./Van Der Linden, M. (2007): *Una principessa al bacio*, Edizioni Lemniscaat
- Senoleben, K. (2005): *La principessa che voleva diventare cavaliere*, Editrice IdeeAli

- Solotareff, G. (2010): *Lulù*, Rizzoli
- Stephens,H. (2012): Na*scondere un leone*, Nord-Sud, Milano
- Turin, A. (2009): *Rosaconfetto e le altre storie*, Motta junior (collana i Velieri)
- Verita, R. (2000): *Con la testa tra le favole*, Edizioni Erickson
- Boucher, F. (2017): *l libro che ti dice proprio tutto sui maschi e sulle femmine (La fine del grande mistero),* Il castoro
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CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE LAB: DIVERSITY TALK

Exercises and games for gender sensitive language work in classes

Language – talking, verbalizing, conversing, and communicating – happens and acts always and everywhere. It shapes children's cognitive concepts, mind sets and determines emotional and behaviour patterns.

Therefore, it is crucial for pedagogues to be aware of the educational potentials of language and to work consciously with it; to be aware that the own use of language influences children's perceptions and world views.

The following exercises and games are suggested to train conscious verbal expression and the connected cognitive processes.

Those exercises are designed not to stress gender at the outset e.g. by asking: Create male and female images. It should be prevented that the teachers by introducing the gender issue right away pushes the children's perception and mental processing into the bipolarizing direction. The teacher is asked to work with bipolar gender stereotypes as soon as they appear during the exercises; to stimulate processes of adding and integrating diverse perceptions and interpretations then; to be sensitive to such practices of the children and to terms and formulations they use.

Preparing for diversity language

Name: What we have in common – forming different groups every time

Purpose: Children experience that they come together in new groups depending on what feature, attribute, activity is asked.

What to do and questions for children

Children sit in a circle. The teacher asks different questions and the children form different groups according to their answers. Examples:

- Children with blue, green or brown eyes. Questions: Who in your family has also this eye colour?
- Children who like water, coca cola, fruit juice, milk most. Question: How often do you drink it? In which situations? With whom?
- Children who like playing soccer, reading, making music, other activities most. Question: When and where do you play, practice it? How did you start with it?
- .....

Competences: The issues for group building and the characteristics have to be chosen carefully to avoid devaluation or competition.

Age comments: The issues have to be adjusted to the age of the children.

Name: Who am I and what do others understand from me?

Purpose: Children practise to think about themselves, express themselves verbally. They perceive who other children understand what they are expressing – which can be different from what they mean or it can coincident.

What to do and questions for the children: The teacher asks the children to think of:

I am …

I like …

I feel now …

My favourite activities are …

Children are free to paint, to pantomime or to describe without using the respective word.

The other children guess what is meant.

What is needed: Paper and pencils.

Name: Invent diversity stories

Purpose: Children should train diversity oriented thinking and a positive attitude and feeling towards diversity. Children practice free expression, creative use of language.

What to do: Read (primary school) or watch (pre-primary school) gender and diversity friendly books with the children.

The children choose characters from the books and invent stories following a question/situation the teacher suggests them. E.g.: The characters you chose are celebrating a party together. The characters you chose are going for a walk in the forest. The characters you chose are cooking together. The characters you chose are cleaning the house together.

The stories can be written or taped. At the end you can produce a little booklet with the stories, the children can illustrate it.

What is needed: Gender and diversity friendly children's books, paper, pencils, coloured pencils, wax crayons … or a recorder.

Competences: Teachers have to be aware of and trained in gender and diversity friendly language.

Age comments: The books, the questions for the stories, recording or writing have to be chosen according to the age of the children.

Name: Play with fairy tales, rhymes, quotes

Purpose: Train to think and imagine that everything can be different then usually. Train gender and diversity sensitive language.

What to do: Teacher and children play with fairy tales, rhymes, quotes by using characters from gender and

diversity friendly books or by inventing own characters and replacing the characters that are depicted in the fairy tales, rhymes, quotes. The new versions will be written down or taped.

What is needed: Gender and diversity friendly children's books. Paper, pencils, coloured pencils, wax crayons … and/or a recorder

Pitfalls for teachers and key competences: Teachers have to be aware of and trained in gender and diversity friendly language.

Age comments: The books, the questions for the stories, recording or writing have to be chosen according to the age of the children.

Name: Diversity poetry slam

Purpose: Train to think and imagine that everything can be different then usually. Train gender and diversity sensitive language.

What to do: The children produce little stories on their families; on their dream job. The teacher helps them to put them into a rhythmical mode and to recite them (taped with video).

What is needed: Paper, pencil, recorder.

Competences: Teachers have to be aware of and trained in gender and diversity friendly language. Teachers also have to have some experience with producing and reciting poetry slam texts.

Age comments: This exercise might be suitable for children of the last two grades of primary school.

Name: "What will we do when we grow up?"

This exercise here is designed for the Italian context using an Italian children's book. It can also be used in the other countries with respective gender sensitive children's books on professions.

Purpose: Understand that boys and girls can have the same dreams and find out what words we use to talk about our plans for the future.

What to do:

First step: Explain to the children that they are going to be involved in a game of imagination; they must imagine to be in the future and to be adults.

The children of the class are divided into two mixed groups. Each child is assigned a profession from Irene Biemmi's book "What will we do when we grow up?" In this book the professions are declined both in a male and in a female version (actor/actress; male scientist/female scientist etc.).

The same will happen in the class: in each group, in fact, there will be the representative of each profession, in one group a girl and in the other a boy, so each profession will be represented both for women and men. The teams arrange themselves in two parallel lines and the teacher calls in turn a boy or a girl asking them to mimic

the assigned professions. The other children must guess what profession is represented.

Second step: When all the professions have been played and guessed, the teacher will read the book "What will we do when we grow up". This step will be very important to better understand the professional figures that the children have represented. For each profession, boys and girls express if they would like to do it in the future, or if they do not.

Third step: Every child thinks about what he/she would like to do when he/she will be grown up, if the professions indicated by a child are not present in the book, they will try to elaborate other possible pairs of professions, discovering other specific words that indicate jobs for males and females.

Questions for the children: Did you like to represent the professions assigned to you? Was it hard? Did you have any difficulty? Did you ever think that males and females could do the same jobs? In your opinion, does it seem strange that a scientist can be a girl? And that a dancer can be a boy? Do you know male dancers and female bleachers? Do you think all jobs can be done both by males and by females?

What is needed: Irene Biemmi's book "What we will do when we grow up"; paper sheets, pencils, crayon, pens ...

Country comment: In Austria and Sweden this exercise will be done without stressing that professions are tagged male or female. If the children raise the issue the teacher will address it. If not the accessibility of all professions for all gender will be supposed as normal.