Preferred Gender-Inclusive Language used by Spanish Speakers in the United States

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Attitudes Towards Gender Inclusive Language. A Multinational Perspective
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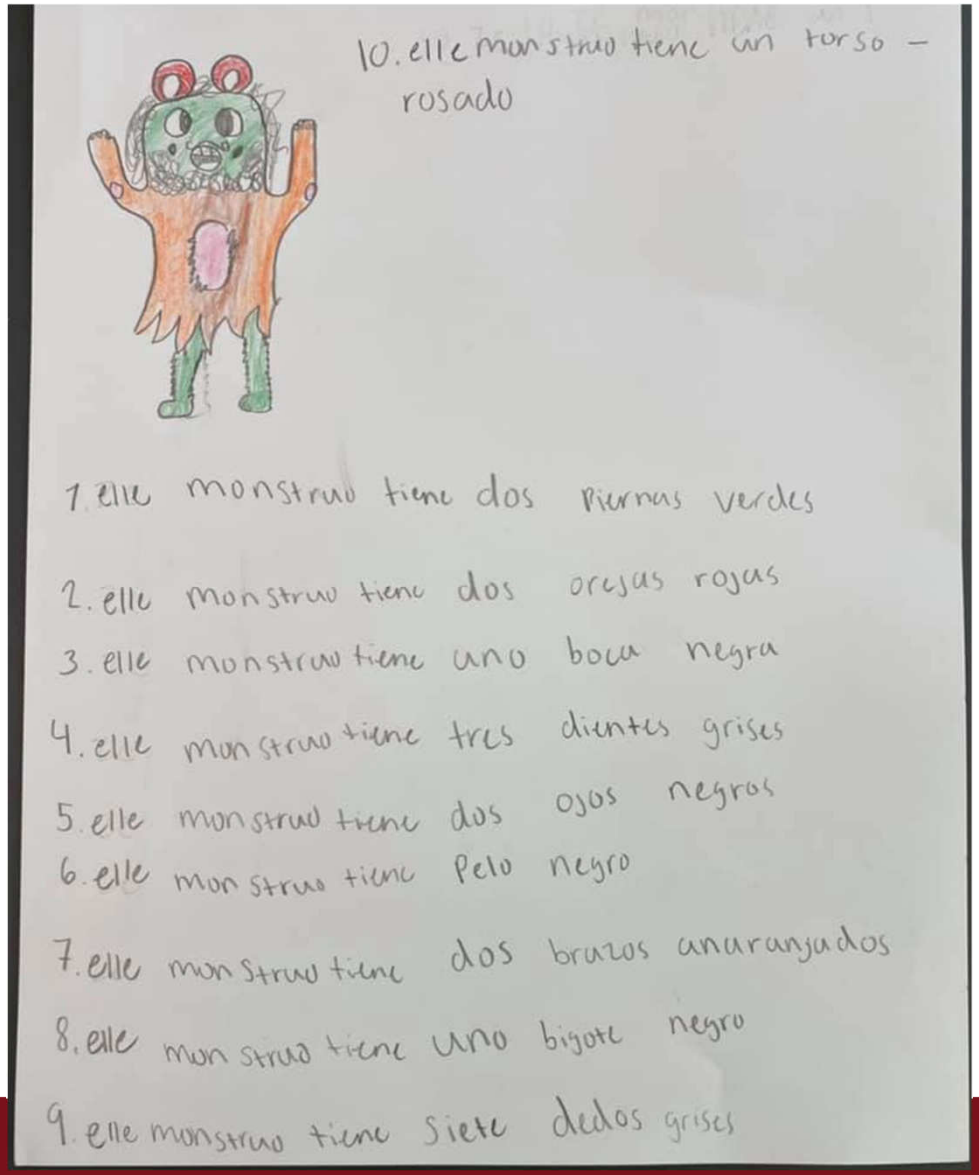
Introduction

Even though the concept of gender inclusive language can be traced back many years, it has indeed gain a significant visibility in many countries around the world. In languages like English, preferred pronouns and the use of “they” has become very mainstream and a safe way for gender non-conforming individuals to express their gender identity. In other languages like Spanish and French, such adaptations have not been very welcomed. This study will try to shed light on the use of gender inclusive language in Spanish speakers in the United States.

Spanish Language

Spanish has a binary grammar gender system, differentiating masculine and feminine. The concept of agreement is very important in Spanish. The gender of nouns has to agree with determinants and adjectives, which means that gender is a very persistent feature in Spanish. EVERY noun has gender; from a grammatical point of view, there are no gender-neutral nouns. Masculine is often marked with the suffix -o, and can be easily changed to feminine by replacing it by a, as in "*amigo/amiga*," or by adding the suffix if the masculine form ends in consonant, as in "*juez/jueza*."

Statement of Problem and Gap



10. elle monstruo tiene un torso – rosado

1. elle monstruo tiene dos piernas verdes
2. elle monstruo tiene dos orejas rojas
3. elle monstruo tiene uno boca negra
4. elle monstruo tiene tres dientes grises
5. elle monstruo tiene dos ojos negros
6. elle monstruo tiene pelo negro
7. elle monstruo tiene dos brazos anaranjados
8. elle monstruo tiene uno bigote negro
9. elle monstruo tiene siete dedos grises

RAE
@RAEinforma
Replying to @mercederien
#RAEconsultas Esta institución no avala el llamado «lenguaje inclusivo», que supone alterar artificialmente el funcionamiento de la morfología de género en español bajo la premisa subjetiva de que el uso del masculino genérico invisibiliza a la mujer.
Translate Tweet
8:32 AM · Oct 23, 2019 · Hootsuite Inc.
RAE @RAEinforma · Dec 3
Replying to @RAEinforma and @arieljunes
#RAEconsultas Salvo que la mención explícita de ambos géneros sea un factor relevante en el mensaje, esos desdoblamientos son innecesarios, pues el masculino gramatical «todos» engloba en la referencia a todas las personas, con independencia de su sexo/género. 2/2
18
104
RAE
@RAEinforma
Replying to @DarwinToledo19
#RAEconsultas El uso de la @ o de las letras «e» y «x» como supuestas marcas de género inclusivo es ajeno a la morfología del español, además de innecesario, pues el masculino gramatical ya cumple esa función como término no marcado de la oposición de género.
Translate Tweet
4:12 AM · Sep 21, 2020 · Hootsuite Inc.
RAE
@RAEinforma
Replying to @santyman29
#RAEconsultas Esta institución no avala el llamado «lenguaje inclusivo», que supone alterar artificialmente el funcionamiento de la morfología de género en español bajo la premisa subjetiva de que el uso del masculino genérico invisibiliza a la mujer.
Translate Tweet
3:57 AM · Jul 1, 2019 · Hootsuite Inc.
RAE @RAEinforma · Dec 3
Replying to @arieljunes
#RAEconsultas El uso de la «x» y la «e» como supuestas marcas de género inclusivo es ajeno a la morfología del español, además de innecesario (e impronunciable la «x»), pues el masculino gramatical ya cumple esa función como término no marcado de la oposición de género. 1/2
6
76
375
RAE
@RAEinforma
Replying to @SoyElQueMenos
#RAEconsultas Lo que comúnmente se ha dado en llamar «lenguaje inclusivo» es un conjunto de estrategias que tienen por objeto evitar el uso genérico del masculino gramatical, mecanismo firmemente asentado en la lengua y que no supone discriminación sexista alguna.
Translate Tweet
2:12 AM · Sep 2, 2021 · Twitter Web App
RAE
@RAEinforma
Replying to @EddyRodriguezT
#RAEconsultas El uso de la letra «e» como supuesta marca de género inclusivo es ajeno a la morfología del español, además de innecesario, pues el masculino gramatical ya cumple esa función como término no marcado de la oposición de género.
Translate Tweet
5:12 AM · Jul 7, 2021 · Hootsuite Inc.
RAE
@RAEinforma
Replying to @Honaell
#RAEconsultas El uso de la «x» como supuesta marca de gén. inclusivo es ajeno a la morfología del español, además de innecesario e impronunciable; el masculino gramatical ya cumple esa función como término no marcado de la oposición de gén.: «Los chicos están felices».
Translate Tweet
3:37 PM · Jun 17, 2020 · Hootsuite Inc.
RAE
@RAEinforma
Replying to @DeyAstra and @Scarlet_Beg
#RAEconsultas El llamado «lenguaje inclusivo» supone alterar artificialmente el funcionamiento de la morfología de género en español bajo la premisa subjetiva de que el uso del masculino genérico invisibiliza a la mujer.
Translate Tweet
8:44 AM · Dec 7, 2018 · Hootsuite Inc.

Purpose of Study

To gain a better understanding of current practices among Spanish speakers living in the United States when it comes to the use of gender neutral pronouns in Spanish and the general perceptions that Spanish speakers living in the United States about inclusive language in Spanish.

Literature Review

- Bonnin, J. E., & Coronel, A. A. (2021). Attitudes toward gender-neutral Spanish: Acceptability and adoptability. *Frontiers in Sociology*, *6*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2021.629616

- María Luisa Parra & Ellen J Serafini (2021) "Bienvenidxs todes": el lenguaje inclusivo desde una perspectiva crítica para las clases de español, Journal of Spanish Language Teaching, 8:2, 143-160, DOI: 10.1080/23247797.2021.2012739

- Pérez, S., and Moragas, F. (2020). "Lenguaje inclusivo: malestares y resistencias en el discurso conservador," in *Apuntes sobre lenguaje no sexista e inclusivo*. Editors S. Kalinowski, J. Gasparri, S. I. Pérez, and F. Moragas (Rosario: UNR Editora), 69–95.

- Romero, M. C., and Funes, M. S. (2018). Nuevas conceptualizaciones de género en el español de la Argentina: un análisis cognitivo-prototípico. *RASAL-Lingüística.* 2018, 7–39.

- Kalinowski, S. (2020a). Lenguaje inclusivo en usuarios de Twitter en Argentina: un estudio de corpus. *Cuarenta Naipes.* 2 (3), 233–259.

Literature Review

- The first innovations consisted in replacing the binary morphemes -a and -o by -x or -@. The “@” was progressively abandoned because of its binarism (as it evokes an “a” and an “o”), while the “x” became very widespread; even in English the term “latinx” became popular, at least in college campuses and academic settings.

- The morpheme -e was introduced in 2012 by LGBTTIQ + activists M. Wayar and Lohana Berkins as the most suitable innovation, since it is a non-binary vowel that can be used both in written and oral discourse

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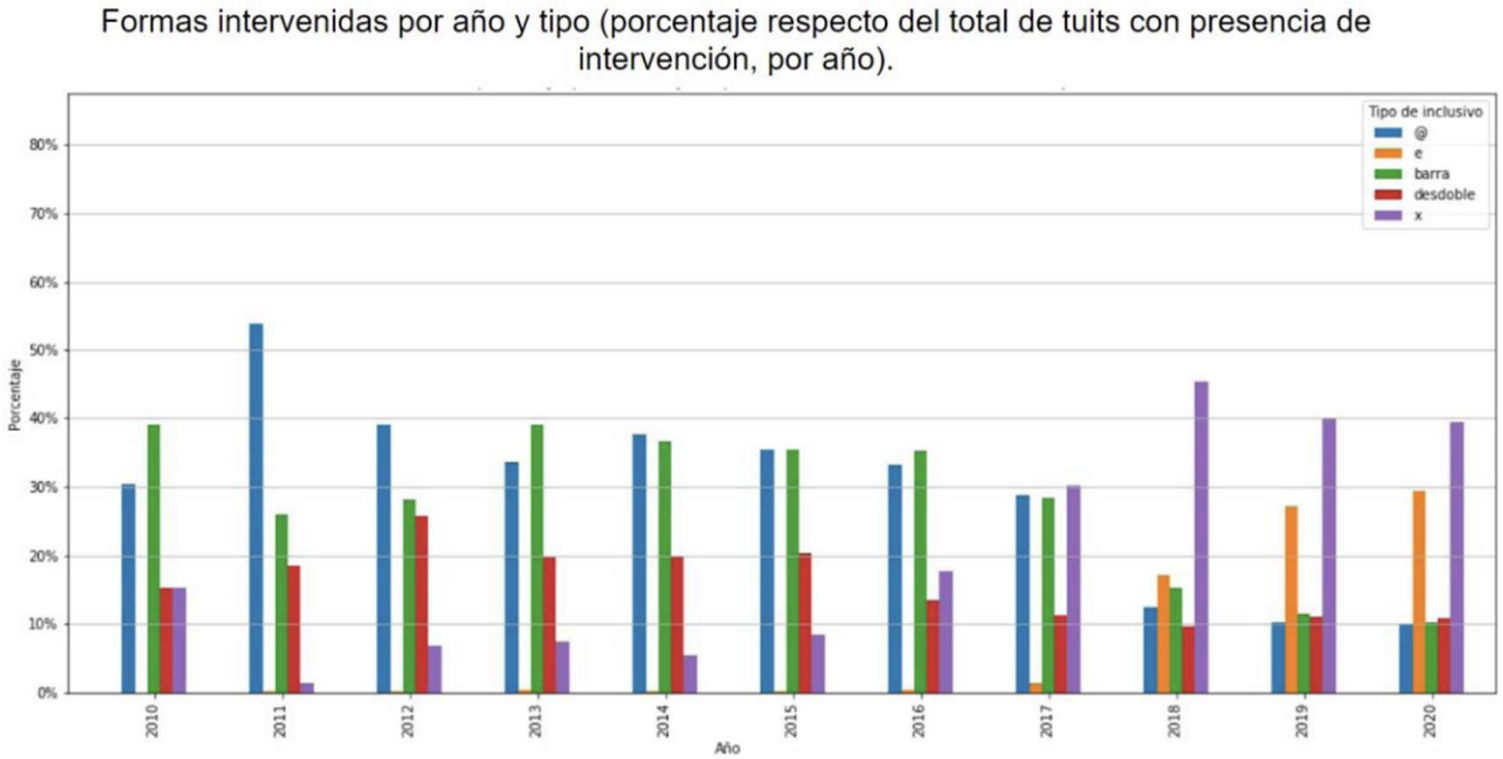
Corpus Results



- Kalinowski, S. (2020a). Lenguaje inclusivo en usuarios de Twitter en Argentina: un estudio de corpus. *Cuarenta Naipes.* 2 (3), 233–259.

Research Questions

- What are the preferred pronouns used by Spanish speakers living in the United States of America?
- What are the preferred gender markers used by Spanish speakers living in the United States of America?
- What are the perceptions of Spanish speakers living in the United States of America regarding the use of the work latinx?

Theoretical Framework

- Gender Binarism
- Queer and Gay Liberation
- Sexism & Language
- Lavender linguistics / LGBTQ Linguistics / Queer Linguistics
- Anticolonialism

Data Collection

In order to collect data to answer the three questions, A survey was sent via unpaid advertising on Facebook. The posts was advertised to facebook groups of individuals who lived in the United States and identified as hispanic (latino) or Spanish speakers.

Participants were prompted to not complete the survey if:

- they did not live in the United States of America
- they were under 18 years old
- they reported that they did consider themselves “not fluent at all” when it came to speaking Spanish

Participants

#	Field	Choice Count	
1	Cisgender female/woman	82.53%	274
2	Cisgender male/man	12.05%	40
3	Genderqueer, gender non-binary, or gender fluid	3.61%	12
4	Transgender female/woman	0.30%	1
5	Transgender male/man	0.30%	1
6	A gender not listed here	1.20%	4
			332

Showing rows 1 - 7 of 7

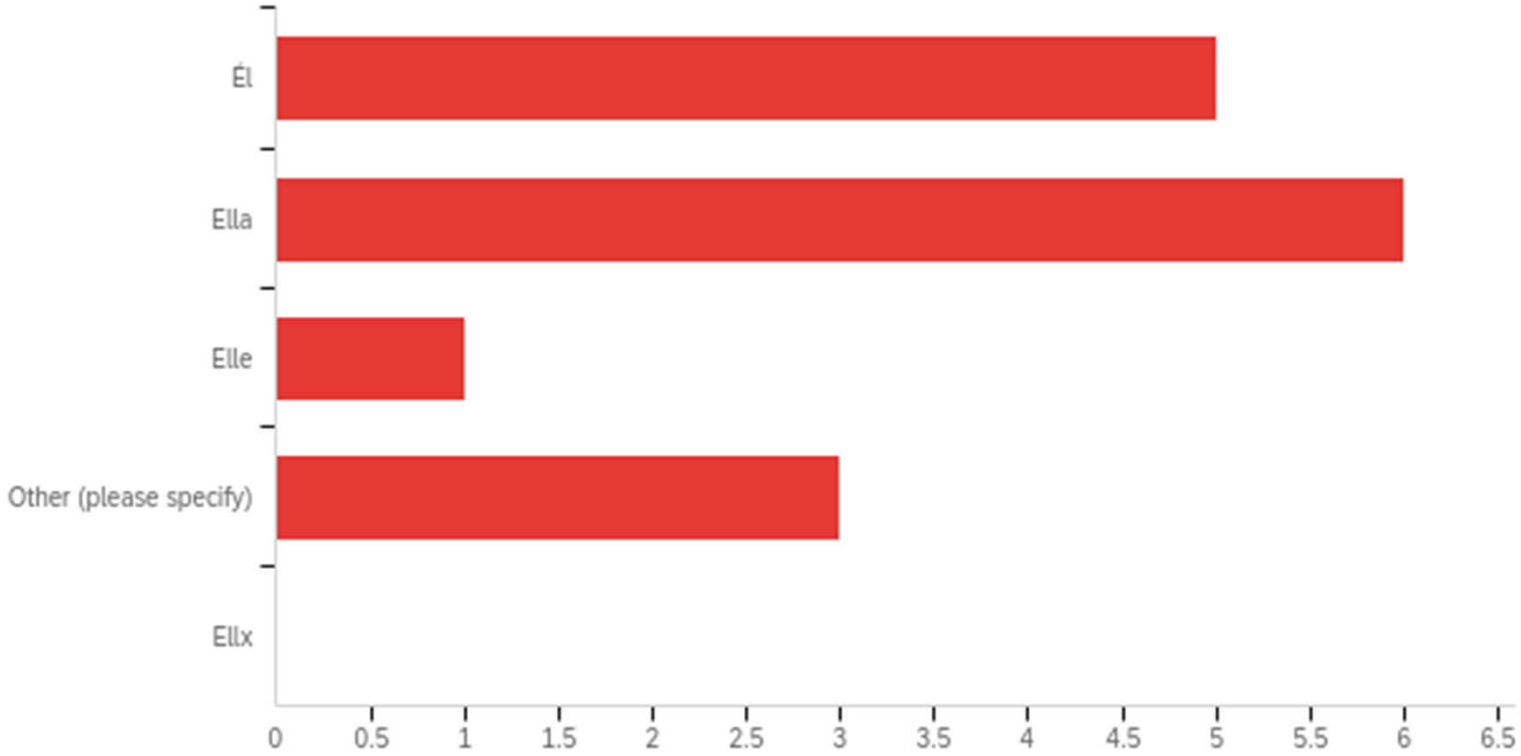
Participants

#	Field	Choice Count	
1	Asexual	2.58%	9
2	Bisexual	10.89%	38
3	Gay/Lesbian	7.74%	27
4	Heterosexual/Straight	72.49%	253
5	Pansexual	1.15%	4
6	Queer	4.58%	16
7	A sexual orientation not listed here	0.57%	2
			349

Showing rows 1 - 8 of 8

Results - Gender Non-Conforming Participants

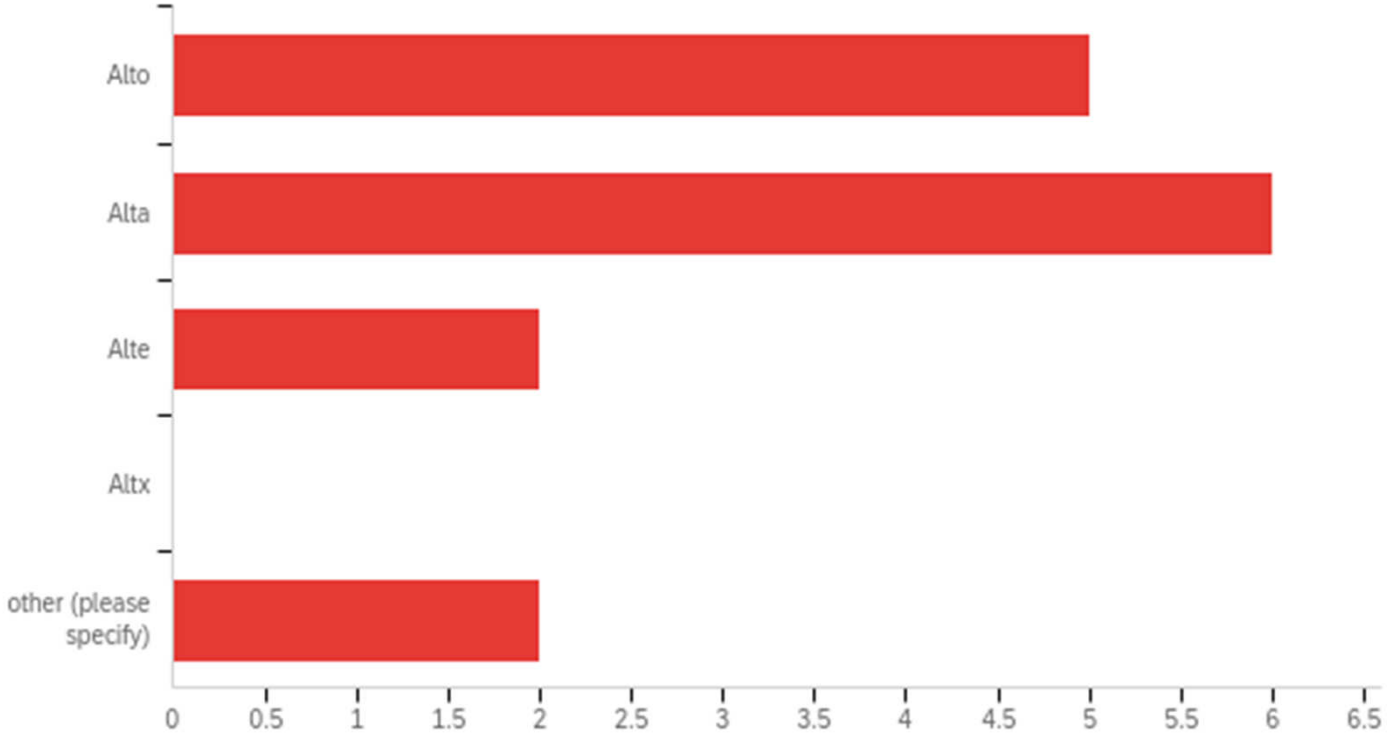
When speaking in Spanish, what personal pronoun do you prefer people to use when referring to you?



*Note: 2 participants reported that they were ok with the use of both: ella and/or elle

Results - Gender Non-Conforming Participants

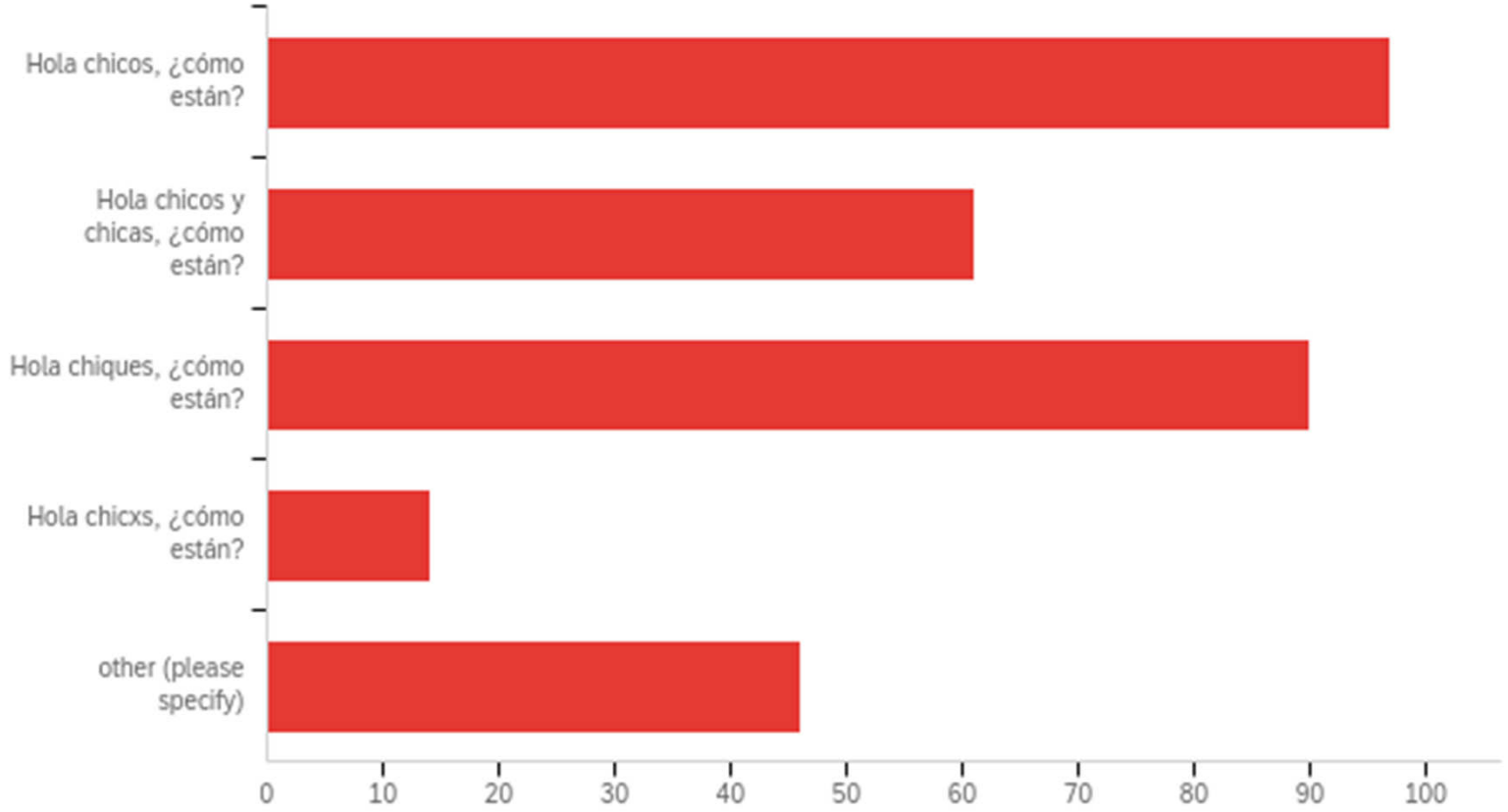
If you would need to use the adjective tall to describe yourself in Spanish, which of the following options would be more appropriate?



*Note: One participant reported that they could use either ella or elle. Another reported that they use “alta” out of habit, but if they would be learning now, they would prefer to use “alte”.

Results - All Participants

Which of the following sentences seem most acceptable for you when addressing a group of people including people that identify as gender neutral.

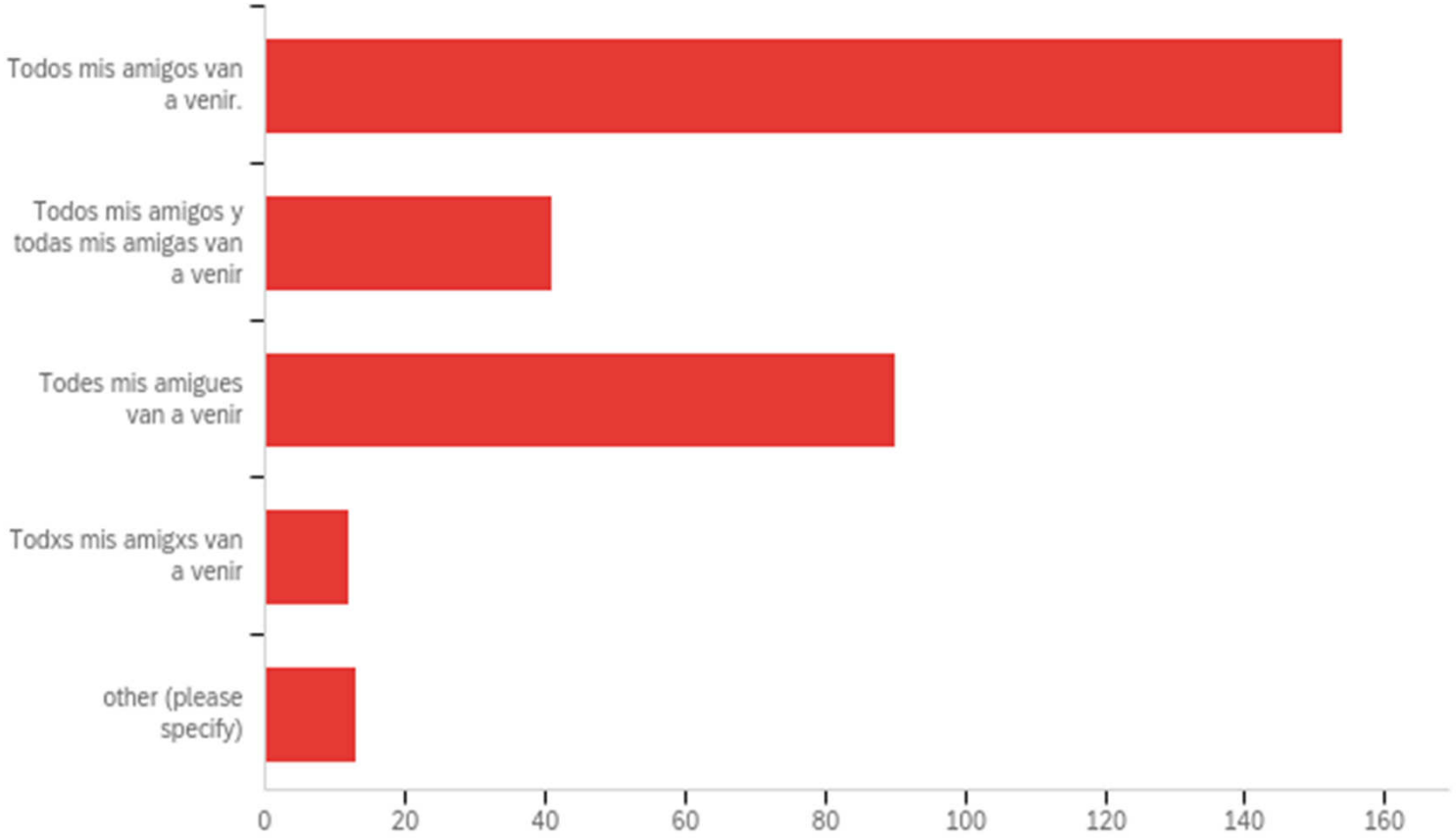


Other responses

- Hola gente
- Hola, ¿cómo están?
- Hola grupo, hola gente
- Hola, cómo están?
- Hola chicos, chicas, y chiques
- I would try to find another word, like gente
- Buenas tardes; hola mi gente; generally avoid using gendered language when possible

Results - All Participants

Which of the following sentences seem most acceptable for you when addressing a group of people including people that identify as gender neutral.

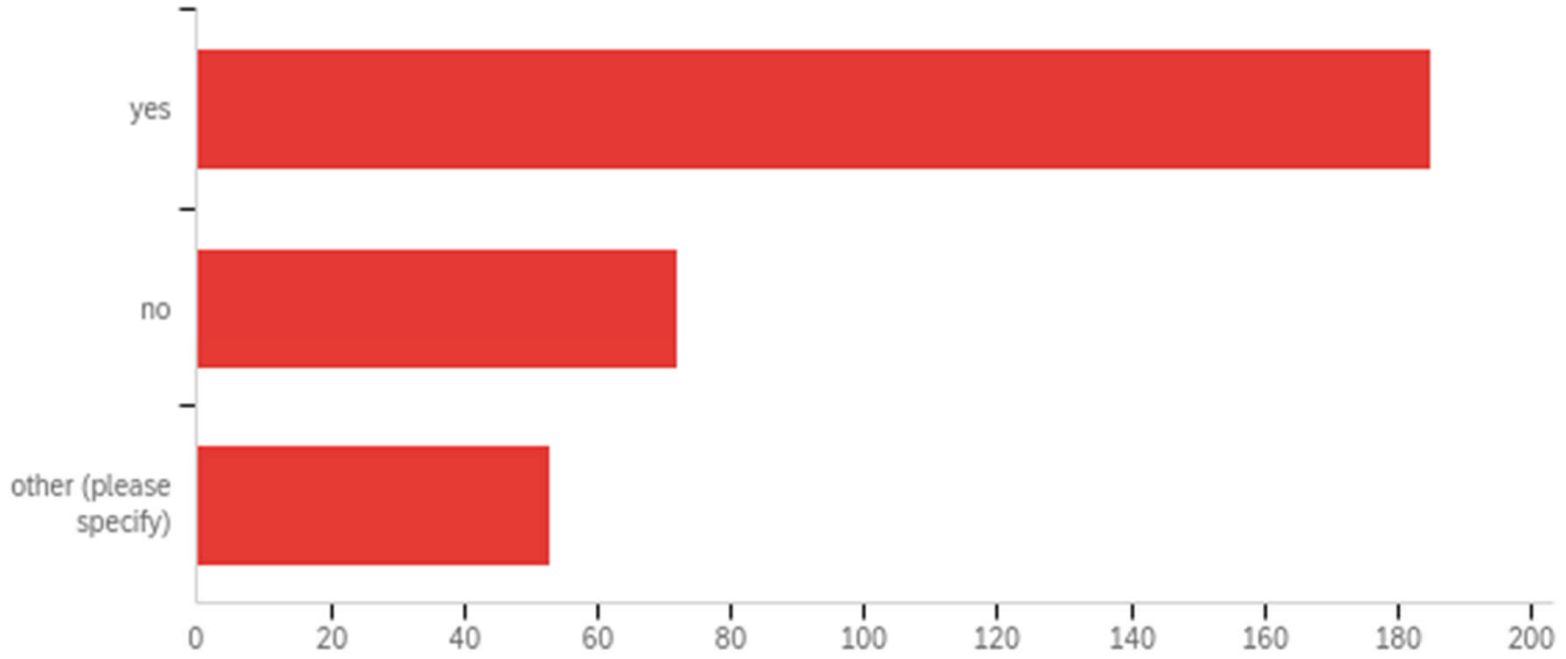


Other responses

- Todos mis amigos y amigas
- Toda mi gente
- Toda la bandota viene
- Digo los nombres de las personas (Van a venir Víctor, Yolanda y Sonia). O "Va a venir toda la pandilla"
- Amigos, But I'd ask for gender neutral folks preferences and go with amigues (just way easier than using x)
- Depends on audience …
- Todas mis amistades
- Depends on my context and intention.

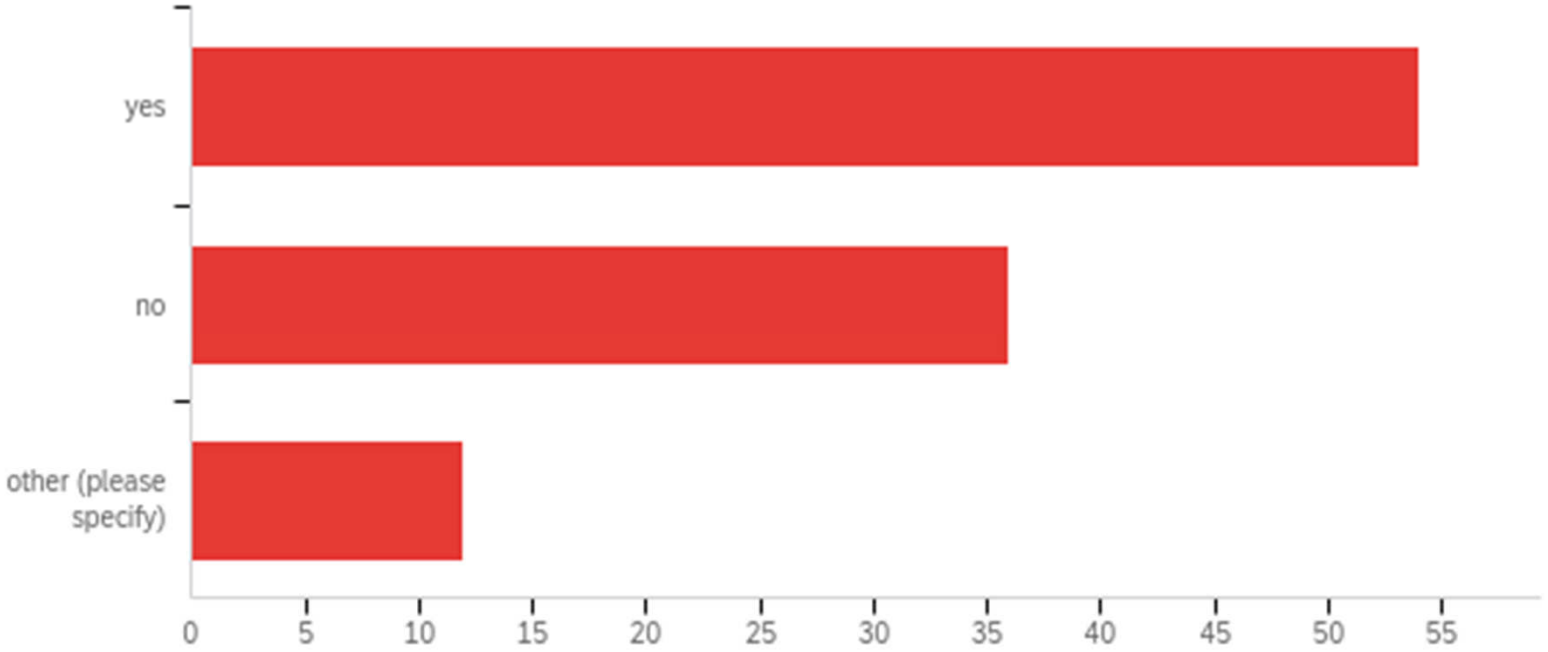
Results - All Participants

Is the term latinx acceptable to you?



Results - Spanish Dominant Language

Is the term latinx acceptable to you?



Other responses

- Latine
- YES, but prefer Latine
- It is hard to pronounce
- Yes, but primarily in English. It prioritizes English pronunciation.
- I accept it, but it seems more like a creation of white people in the US than latinx people that genuinely identify as gender neutral
- I have no problem with it, but I don't use it
- I think it is acceptable when coming from a member of the Latinx community, but it can come across imperialistic for an English speaker to impose that externally
- It’s so complicated, because it also erases our indigenous people.
- I find it annoying.

Discussion

- What are the preferred pronouns used by Spanish speakers living in the United States of America?

the use of gender-neutral pronouns like “elle’ and “nosotres” are becoming more common by Spanish speakers. However, gender non-conforming individuals might also accept the use of traditional binary pronouns. The use of the letter “x” in pronouns is almost non-existent with pronouns, however, participants found the use of the letter “x” as gender markers.

Discussion

- What are the preferred gender markers used by Spanish speakers living in the United States of America?

even though some Spanish speakers still feel comfortable using the design masculine gender to denote gender neutrality, the use of “-e” is becoming more common. Spanish speakers are also finding gender neutral alternatives to address gender neutrality whenever possible. Questions related to the use of gender markers triggered a lot of comments regarding the use of gender-neutral collective names like “gente” or “banda” instead of chicos or chicas.

Discussion

- What are the perceptions of Spanish speakers living in the United States of America regarding the use of the work latinx?

It is seemingly accepted to use the term latinx by Spanish speakers in the United States; however, there is great debate among its uses. This question triggered the biggest discussion among participants. It was expressed that they have adapted to the use of “latinx”, and they are ok with it, but they would not use it. Issues that were brought regarding the use of the term “latinx” were: pronunciation, imperialism, and imposition of English speakers since the term was originated in the United States.

Limitations & Future Studies

- Participants
  - Gender & Identity
  - Education Level
  - Population
- Methodology
  - Data collection design
  - Potential for Mixed Methods

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QUESTIONS?

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