CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND NEW MASCULINITIES: PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN THE FL CLASSROOM

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This paper sheds light on some gender issues in literature in the language classroom with a special focus on equality. Schools' resources that reflect on positive males' behaviour is very limited in young learners' education and we ought to consider that children's attitudes are formed at very early stages. It is of paramount importance, then, to endow teachers with all the necessary tools to select unbiased stories which contribute to children's human flourishing. In this sense, we have analysed popular LGTBQ+ tales as well as gender-variant male books to assess the level of diversity and acceptance of new masculinities. To do so, we have delved into queer theory and outlined Norton's (1993) research questions on Early and Primary Education literature characteristics. Likewise, the methodology carried out in this work has been interpretative with discourse analysis notes about the gender-variant male's representation in children's literature. The main results show that many books are stereotyped, gender-variant males achieve acceptance through heteronormative conversions (by winning a football match, for example) or performing heroic acts, sending a biased message to children. To conclude, we highlight the essential role of education in nourishing healthy relationships and positive behavioural patterns as well as the importance of using all-inclusive literature while promoting students' language acquisition.

1. INTRODUCTION

Children's literature is known as the first step that young boys and girls make into the world of reading for pleasure and literature. In the same way, reading supports different types of intelligence through picture books, oral storytelling, and dramas, between others. In addition, it cultivates children's greatest talents such as *speaking skills, written skills, imagination,* and *rhetoric* usually hidden between children's inner selves (Hunt, 1994). Likewise, literature can absorb, engage and empower both children and adults. Moreover, it shapes our cultural identity and, at the same time,

art of it, for example: 'The Evil Queen', 'Aurora', 'Prince Charming', 'Peter Pan' The Wicked Witch of the West' are settled characters in our psyche, which not evoke our childhood or its narratives, but also its myths and basic archetypes m).

vertheless, children's literature –including literature focused on learning and g for pleasure– has not been considered a proper branch inside the polysystem rature, being placed in an inferior status as the result of the social conception at it means to be a child (Shavit, 1996). In this sense, children's literature had still has– to bypass social, economic and cultural barriers, as it is catalogued as and ordinary. According to Ursula Le Guin (1975) –a mayor reference due to uvres in which she mixes reality and fantasy, as in the book series *The Wizard* thsea–, the adult world is configured to degrade the power of imagination.

our context, taking into consideration the country of Spain, children's literatu- a rooted patriarchal ideology, reinforced by a past totalitarian regime (Franco's orship). Hence, gender oppression emerged from masculine supremacy autho- by the patriarchal structure which is still a burning issue in today's society r, 2014). According to Pastor's metanarratives (ibid.), the occidental culture ped by the predetermined patriarchal myths; 'men' (masculinity) and 'women' ninity). Therefore, in order to break the binary system out, new meanings are d to both concepts (Pastor, 2014).

cewise, Pérez Valverde (2002) states that the use of literature in the classroom ses students' cognitive development, intellectual skills, as it amplifies emotio- cabulary and promotes socialization. In the same way, Pastor (2014) emphasi- e importance of teaching gender equality, as well as respect and diversity from Childhood stages. Additionally, according to Kortenhaus & Demarest (1993) gh literature and storytelling we can instil values and positive social patterns. terature system ought to suppress stereotypes (such as the binary idea of 'good' vil', for example) in order to create future adults with a sense of cosmovision, justice, fairness and human rights (Pastor, 2014; Leiva, 2011).

rthermore, literature's role is highly important as the vehicle between school ng and language acquisition (including native languages and/or foreign lan- s). It could seem that the use of literature in the classroom might only contri- o the linguistic subcompetences so it is essential to stress the enrichment made e use of literature to the five competences (Canale & Swain, 1981):

Linguistic competence: narratives and stories increase vocabulary, reinforce grammatical structures and can serve as writing models.

Sociolinguistic competence: literature diversity exemplifies multiple registers and language functions. Moreover, literature reflects different communicative situations, and the proper language to be used in them (models of *question- answer*, for example).

- Strategic competence: reading and listening to stories boost language com-munication strategies as students will learn synonyms and to express an idea with other words (paraphrase).

- Sociocultural competence: literature mirrors traditional and cultural aspects while contributing to develop children's intercultural competence and sense of understanding the plural world in which they live in.

Regarding second language acquisition, in addition, the Common European Fra-mework of Reference (Council of Europe, 2018) highlights the importance of language learning as a means of communication between people from different countries as well as the competences and skills students have to acquire in order to communicate effectively. Literature is mentioned in the CEFR (2018), chapter 4, as an extraordi-nary communicative channel.

2. MAIN OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this paper is to provide a framework concerning new masculinities linked with children's literature and language learning.[3] To do so, we have included a state of the matter about queer theory, new masculinities, and reading skills.

3. STATE OF THE ART

According to Pérez Valverde (2002), children's literature represents a keystone in future adults' education. Therefore, literature should provide models in which characters are represented without a heteronormative standard (Sciurba, 2017). In line with Butler's gender contribution (1990), we know that *heteronormative* and *heterosexuality* do not manifest what is to be and act like a 'man'. We also agree with Britzman (1999) as she assumes that gender is a social, cultural and historical construction, and that heterosexuality is neither natural, normal, unchangeable nor universal. This cultural background is settled in our occidental society and the school context, should provide input about how to change this biased state (Rolli & López Curyk, 2018). In 2011, LGTBQ teachers revealed feeling unsafe and one third of them highlighted being stressed about may losing their jobs if they came out to students or school staff (GLSEN, 2011). Worryingly, a quarter testified being bullied in their schools on account of their gender identity and/or sexuality (ibidem). Furthermore, this research confirmed that 8 out of 10 students experienced harassment (like phy-sical violence and biased language) because of their gender expression...
the research highlight...

In parallel, studies showed that the most frequent and invisible bullying (70% the cases) is carried over 'gender variant' children, especially boys (GLSEN, 2014). is type of bullying is frequently motivated over children who do not achieve a teronormative behaviour or gender expressions (for example, boys play football d girls do not) and/or sexual orientation. Unfortunately, this bullying applies to y children who do not achieve the quintessential expectation of what it means to "male" or "female" and therefore are considered *queer* even if they do not show ongoing pattern of behaviour (Naidoo, 2012; Sciurba, 2017). Moreover, Sciurba ecifies that "boys are held to stricter expectations than girls regarding gender nformity and experience more intense backlash from their communities, including eir own families, if they deviate from 'traditional' patterns of masculinity" (Sciur- a, 2017, p. 279). In addition, boys who do not identify with the stereotyped male haracter in stories tend to feel more pressure as they do not feel like fitting in, we gree then that children's literature counts with limited opportunities of elaborating healthy and an unbiased male identity (Pastor, 2015).

Foucault (1976), in his studies about sexuality, coinciding with the last feminist vave, as defined by Julia Varela (2013), includes *Queer studies* and criticizes cate- jories never mentioned before such as sex, gender and sexuality. According to the :ultural construction, being a 'man' implies not being a woman, not being ethnic, and not being homosexual (Segal, 1990). In line with this way of thinking, Judith Butler stated that the sexual-affective categories are not natural but cultural heri- tage (Butler, 1990).

Considering the statements of Butler (1990, 2007) and the hypotheses on new masculinities as well as Foucault's works, queer theory is of paramount importance: as it allows to represent gender dichotomy in diverse ways outside the heteronormati- ve and binary system. The word *queer* is an Anglo-Saxon term that may refer to both female and male entities, thus, every gender expression is acceptable. So, it does not only cover lesbian and gay people but also other expressions such as transsexuals, transgender, bisexual, etc. (Córdoba, 2007). Also, the letter Q, short of *queer*, has already been included in the acronym LGTBQ+, which means that every gender ex- pression is included, appreciated, respected, cherished and valuable, even if you are not gay, lesbian, transgender or bisexual. Besides, no one came out as heterosexual, though the very same condition is assumed and evidenced in every environment (Rolli & López Curyk, 2018).

We, as educators, should provide students with tools and contents –and hence, literature– in order not to perpetuate the current economical, social and cultural or- der that is cisgender, heterosexual and patriarchal system as it reproduces hierarchies and gender disparities. Moreover, studies affirm that this power structure undermines other sexual-affective variants such as bisexuality, homosexuality and even excludes other sexual-affective variants such as bisexuality, homosexuality and even excludes transsexuals and transgender people (Rolli & López Curyk, 2018). Then, we need new

According to researchers, the majority of students from early childhood schools have rigid sexual stereotypes (Gooden & Gooden, 2001; Turner-Bowker, 1996) and are conscious of the roles assigned to men and women (Weitzman et al., 1996). Literature allows children to learn about how other boys and girls behave and live adventu- res or experiences outside their immediate environment or comfort zone (Gooden & Gooden, 2001; Kortenhaus & Demarest, 1993). It appears that reading literature has a bigger impact on their behaviours as well as long-lasting references rather than movies and/or tv series due to the personal inversion that reading requires (Pastor, 2015). Additionally, children's literature –and hence, stories and characters– have the potential to influence children's perceptions about gender roles and social values (Kortenhaus & Demarest, 1993). Also, according to Leland, Lewison and Harste, lite- rature can shed light on what children are feeling:

> We worry that kids who are struggling with issues of racism, gender identification, violence, physical abuse, verbal abuse, or religious persecution may not have access to books that can provide images of other kids who are in similar circumstances to their own. In other words, those students who are most vulnerable have the least chance of reading books that could be helpful in dealing with difficult issues that are present in their lives. (2013, p. 173).

However, children's literature has prioritized the male heteronormative way of life. Nodelman (2008) criticizes that "to be appropriately male, you must be triumphantly animal-like [...] in doing so, you will have to be punished for defying civilized va- lues, and you will have to take your punishments like a man" (2008, p. 6). We could argue that boys in literature are heroic leaders, brave and adventurous, rescuing girls and assertive, tending to professional roles in which leadership skills are required (Hamilton et al., 2006). In the same way, although children's literature has a lot of male characters, there is not enough academic research about how to represent properly male characters in children's books, being a recent investigation matter (Pastor, 2015).

Cooper and Foster highlight that hegemonic masculinity refers to "the socially exalted form of being a 'real man'" (Cooper & Foster, 2008, p. 5). In this sense, the excluded groups are those who have a lack of 'manhood', or a different ethnic, social status and/or sexual orientation (Pastor, 2015; Connel, 2005; Morrell, 1998). In view of that, all of the masculinities are affected and marginalised by the patriarchal do- mination, especially the young community (Pastor, 2015). Greer (2007) argues that males' childhood and youth are elided as they present boys as incomplete men, which ought to pursue 'manly' rituals as pre-requisites to finally become a 'complete man'.

This hegemonic point of view is misunderstood because we, as a society, have not comprehended the notion of gender (Pastor, 2015), for example, girls achieve matu- rity by learning through their lives, but boys must forgive their past to be reborn as males (Groth, 2007). On the contrary, girls have a lot of literature and a variety of characters to identify with (Pastor, 2015). Nevertheless, boys only have a quintessential

ildren are witnessing that boys have limited opportunities to become themsel-
side the cultural hegemonic construction of masculinity (Wannamaker, 2008).
der, as it is argued by Butler (2007), is constructed by repeated actions inside
t framework that mirrors the self as something innate and natural. For this
, it is used to classify people by certain characteristics, such as the way of be-
r for a female and/or a male. As a consequence, this system highlights a binary
y, outcasting every dissenting voice.

deed, there are many ways of being a woman or a man (Mishra, 2018). Before
trialism (19th century) gender expressions and roles were diverse with no con-
on between men and strength nor women and passiveness (Indian literature, for
ple, has many traditions about androgyny and same-sex eroticism). However,
l societies began to impose certain roles and, at the end of the century, women
men were reified, coinciding with the Victorian period of the industrial revo-
n (Mishra, 2018; Raisin, 2017). As men continued to work outside the home,
-sports based on toughness and male-bonding became popular, alike football,
to the risk of young boys being "feminised" by their mothers because they were
ding more time together (Raisin, 2017).

4. RESULTS

1. Criteria for selecting a book

Language teachers, for both, Early Childhood and Primary stages, ought to use
cture books and storytelling resources which are listed as the most didactic and
rsatile books, given their multiple uses during the learning-acquisition processes
 well as in the development of the four language skills and the communicative
ompetence (Pérez Valverde, 2002).

Material selection criteria depends on each teacher, who values the socio-educa-
ive needs of her/his students. In order to develop a good sense of choice, Norton
 Norton (2010) collect syllabuses for each level of education. In parallel, Norton
1993) highlights several questions that teachers have to consider when selecting a
ook, among them we can find:

- Is it a good story?
- Are the story and the dialogue likely to happen?
- Does the rhythm of the story naturally flow? How do the main characters deal
 with the central issue? Have the book developed secondary issues?
 learn something? Do they have a deep personality as well as

- When I read it aloud, do the dialogues sound natural?
- Does the book perpetuate stereotypes? Does it go beyond them and transgress them?
- Is the book showing diversity? Does it display people like they really are? Does it contain proper pictures?
- Does the book develop plan and simple the story without oversimplification of characters' choices?
- Do the characters have the same skin tone? Are coloured people excluded or bullied?
- Does it work gender equality without relying on any gender or sexual identity?
- Are the characters presented as individuals instead of representations of a group?

4.2. Data analysis

Literature is considered an important pedagogical tool as it develops children's self gender identification and, simultaneously, it helps them discover colleagues' gender expressions. The main objective of using inclusive literature in the classroom, according to Enguix & Lopez (2014), is to overcome canonical and stereotyped books in order to produce literature in which the young characters live a fairly and an equal life. Historically, children's literature has been addressed from a patriarchal approach, where hegemonic masculinity is overrepresented, contributing to gender discrimination and sexism throughout its narratives (Méndez, 2014).

Nonetheless, literature has multiple functions, such as the value and study of poetic devices, reading for pleasure, developing language acquisition, providing positive roles and models... but most importantly, literature transmits different messages in which every character and situation matter.

We are going to focus the analysis over the representation of new masculinities as books considering boys' gender variant representation are almost non-existent, even taboo, while the use of feminist books is widely extended among children along with its benefits inside the literature system (Sciurba, 2017), which is, fortunately, wider than before.

As we can elucidate, the use of the books will boost communicative competences, as it is implicit in every reading activity. For this reason, we are only going to pay attention to gender performances instead of foreign language acquisition as all the material examined have the power to develop language skills.

After reading several articles, we are going to create a table in which we will include the book and author(s), main topic, and an analysis of the book content regarding the accurate use of male-diversity portrayal:

Book and author(s)	Theme/topic	Analysis of the male-diversity representation
colás tiene 2 papás, Les- Nicholls & Ramón Gó- ez. 2014.	Homoparental families; new masculinities; se- xual diversity	The family is presented as a perfect one without any deep psychological layer or deep personality, tending to oversimplify male non-heteronormative behaviour. The story does not flow with a natural rhythm and neither the dialogues are likely to happen.
'aula tiene 2 mamás, Les- a Newman. 1989	Homoparental families; sexual diversity	The use of different families is well achieved and show an accurate diversity without over-simplification.
El vestido de mamá, Dani Jmpi & Rodrigo Moraes. ?011	New masculinities	Male wearing codes are presented as the main issue. A boy must deal with the rejection of his family because he likes to wear dresses. The story does not perpetuate stereotypes because the main character goes beyond them as he likes playing football, presenting an uncommon preference in *queer* literature. This opens plenty of questions about desires, traditions, wearing codes, and gender constructions. The characters are presented as individuals instead of representations of a group. Moreover, the story shows the personal growth of every persona.
Camila Caimán, Melina Montaño. 2011	New masculinities; transgender character	The book starts by rejecting and banishing Rigoberto as he identifies as Camila. However, Camila comes back from the exile because the town needs to be saved, being her the heroine. This kind of plot confuses the reader as the story has not dealt with the bullying issue, the town accepts Camila because of her rescuing actions and not for who she really is. We cannot expect children to understand that by making a heroic action, society will accept you.
The Boy with Pink Hair, Pe- rez Hilton. 2011	New masculinities	Although the story is presented as a male-variant gender, the main character does a heroic action to win the affection of his relatives. The use of miracles as an inhibitor for changing others' perceptions about you, represents a wrong information and pattern of behaviour to gender-variant male children.
The Only Boy in Ballet Class, Denise Gruska. 2007	New masculinities	The main character uses his ballet abilities to win a football match which makes his father proud, so he has to succeed in a "quintessential" masculine sport to win relatives' affection. Also, an unclear message and pattern of behaviour to gender variant-male children.
The Story of Ferdinand, Munro Leaf. 1936	New masculinities; new femininities	Ferdinand is a bull who declines to fight, being himself all the time. This character is relevant as girls can also feel identify with Ferdinand's story. In this story, the ones that flourish are the other characters as Ferdinand loves and accepts his own persona. In addition, time and space are adequate, the book shows diversity as well as develops the central issue and secondary ones while the characters are learning.
I Am Jazz, Jessica Hertel & Jazz Jennings. 2014	New masculinities; transgender character	Jazz is comfortable with her gender expression and does not care about what others think. The characters are presented as individuals instead of representations of a group. Moreover, the story shows the personal growth of every persona.

Table 1. Analysis of the gender variant-male representation in children's literature. Source: own elaboration.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Some of these stories tell controversial teachings. On the one hand, some enhance the development of respect, tolerance and social justice, contributing to children's holistic education (Kortenhaus & Demarest, 1993; Pastor, 2014; Leiva, 2011; Pérez Valverde, 2002). On the other hand, an amount of the narratives analysed, perpetuate patriarchal patterns of behaviour as well as the cultural hegemonic construction of being a 'man' (as pointed out by Wannamaker, 2008; Connel, 2005; Sciurba, 2017).

As we can notice, part of stories in which homoparental families are represented, such as *Nicolás tiene dos papas*, are in line with the binary tradition as families are exemplified with zero conflict; a lot of harmony; working-families, responsible and healthy parents. Then, it pictures uncommon families instead of making them visible, which contributes to flatten the story and characters. We can also observe that some

in *Camila Caimán* or *The boy with pink hair*. These notions and perceptions about
nder expressions do not support children's education in healthy environments of
f-expression, sending a wrong message to the child: 'you need to change in order
be accepted' (Gooden & Gooden, 2001; Kortenhaus & Demarest, 1993; Rolli & Ló-
z, 2018).

Nonetheless, there are some stories that contribute to children's human flouris-
ng such as *The story of Ferdinand* and *I Am Jazz*, between others. Up to this point,
cremental changes of sexual-affective diversity and gender representation in
ildren's literature during the last few decades shed light on breaking patriarchal
d prejudiced constructions for all the genders.

Education is a pivotal tool for young boys and girls who do not suit in a gendered
d stereotyped society. In this sense, literature can provide unbiased roles which
ive children wellbeing and self-acceptance (Enguix & Lopez, 2014; Pastor, 2015).
herefore, it is of paramount importance to equip classrooms with resources that
crease students' holistic education and gender equality (Enguix & Lopez, 2014).

Throughout this paper we have reviewed narratives and literature that can in-
rease children's whole education and language learning, as well as highlighted some
uestions to bear in mind when selecting a suitable and an equal story (Norton, 1993;
Jorton & Norton, 2010). The main conclusion is, then, to provide students with tools
o construct a world in which the words *queer* or *other* are not terms of aversion but
he civilized terms of acceptance.

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PROGRAMA DE DESARROLLO EMOCIONAL A TRAVÉS DEL ARTE EN NIÑOS CON DISCAPACIDAD INTELECTUAL

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El *"Programa de Desarrollo Emocional a través del Arte"* está dirigido a niños y niñas de Educación Infantil, y adaptado a los alumnos que presentan necesidades educativas especiales y/o algún tipo de discapacidad. Está estructurado en cinco sesiones con el objetivo de promover el desarrollo de las cinco emociones básicas (alegría, tristeza, enfado, calma y miedo) a través de la realización de actividades artísticas y manipulativas que proporcionan a los niños y niñas un medio para expresarse a través del arte y la creatividad. Además, el programa incluye cuentos específicos para cada emoción adaptados con pictogramas, e identifica cada una de las emociones básicas con un color determinado (alegría-amarillo, tristeza-azul, enfado-rojo, calma-verde, miedo-negro). Este programa ha sido aplicado a seis niños con Discapacidad Intelectual demostrando su eficacia con el aprendizaje de las emociones básicas y la satisfacción del alumnado con su participación.

1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Los seres humanos somos entidades complejas que nos relacionamos con nuestro entorno a través de instrumentos cognitivos y emocionales, los cuales son importantes para nosotros dado que nuestras decisiones y actuaciones dependen por igual de nuestros pensamientos y sentimientos (Ruiz, 2004).

Sin embargo, durante muchos años, las emociones no han sido consideradas como una parte importante de la educación, dándole prioridad a lo cognitivo.

A finales del siglo XX y principios del siglo XXI, se produjo una gran "Revolución emocional" con grandes exponentes como Gardner (2011), Goleman (1996) o Salovey y Mayer (1997). Esta revolución afectó a varias disciplinas como la psicología o la educación, empezando a dar mayor importancia a las emociones de los niños y niñas.

Cuando hablamos de emociones, podemos encontrar una gran variedad de definiciones, de las cuales destacamos dos que nos ayudarán a crear una definición global y más completa.