



Gender as a Criterion for Analysing Verbal Exchanges between Teachers and Students in Physical Education Lessons

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Abstract

Language, or more specifically linguistic uses and contents, express a way of seeing and understanding reality. Consequently, language is used whether consciously or not to convey and reproduce beliefs, values and ideologies which reveal how female and male roles are interpreted, acceptance or otherwise of contemporary stereotypes about what it means to be a man or a woman, and the value assigned to what is considered to be befitting of one or other gender.

Starting from this premise, this thesis studied the language used during physical education lessons from the gender perspective. It examined the characteristics of the verbal exchanges present in the communication processes in the classroom in terms of the frequency of verbal exchanges between teachers and students, the contexts in which they take place, the prominence of the role of the person conveying or receiving the message, etc. Likewise, it addressed study of the content of the exchanges in terms of the existence of male chauvinist features with respect both to the messages that female and male students receive and also those that they convey.

The research analysed verbal exchanges during physical education lessons teaching body expression and introduction to sport units of study, both of which are curricular contents that have traditionally had an unambiguous gender attribution. An interpretative methodology was used based on a case study, a teacher and their students. The data derived were analysed using Nvivo software (10 and 11 Pro).

The results concerning the features of the verbal exchanges reveal greater participation by female students as senders and receivers of messages. However, there are some nuances to this when analysed in terms of the aspects defined by the learning settings and units of study. The results derived with respect to the content of the teaching discourse include the fact that female students received more feedback in the introduction to sport classes while male students did so in the body expression classes, and moreover its type was also different. As for the analysis of the male chauvinist traits in the teaching discourse, the results show the presence of androcentric uses such as using the masculine gender as a purported generic, semantic leaps, erroneous male usage, etc. With regard to male chauvinist contents and uses, the analysis discloses expressions which imply contempt for the feminine, subordination of women to men, asymmetrical treatment for male and female students and heteronormativity.

Keywords: gender, physical education, language, androcentrism, male chauvinism

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