RESEARCH ARTICLE

FILIPINO ESL STUDENTS ANDROGYNY TRAIT, AWARENESS AND ATTITUDE IN GENDER-FAIR LANGUAGE

*Arlene D. Talosa

Cagayan State University, Philippines

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The study generally aimed to assess ESL students' gender trait, level of awareness and attitude of gender fair language. It used the descriptive-correlational research design that specifically described the androgyny trait score and investigated the relationship between their androgyny, awareness and attitude of gender fair language. One hundred five tertiary students from the College of Teacher Education were utilized as the respondents of the study. A survey instrument composed of IV parts served as the main data gathering of the study. Part I dealt with the demographic profiles of the students while part II determined the Androgyny Trait score. The instrument was adopted from the psychological instrument developed by Bem (1975) but was modified to fit it to the context of the study intended for Filipino audience. The level of awareness in Part III was self-constructed but was pilot-tested for validation. Questions were patterned from the study of gender stereotyping of the students in language developed by Dr. Jane Bluestein (2013). Part IV assessed the attitude of the students toward gender fair language. It was adopted from the 21 items Inventory of Attitude towards Sexist and Non-Sexist language developed by Parks and Roberton, (2004). The data gathered were analyzed through frequency, percentage counts, percentage distribution, means and standard deviations. Meanwhile, Pearson Product moment correlation was employed to determine if the androgyny and awareness of the students is related to their attitude towards gender-fair language. Furthermore, t-test was used to determine the association of difference between the awareness and attitude of the students. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was also used to determine the difference on the awareness and attitude towards gender fair language when grouped according to age, mother tongue, and year level. The data gathered were analyzed with the use of Statistical Software at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that most of the ESL students are female, 17 years old, Iloco and fourth year level. Most of them are androgynous and are generally aware of gender fair language. Moreover, as to attitude towards Gender Fair language, findings revealed that the students are indeed aware that sexist language disregard or belittles either men or women but were found to be limitedly aware of sexist terms yet are utmostly willing to change sexist words. Students from the higher year level were found to have better awareness in gender fair language as compared to the lower ones. Further, students' belief on sexist language and age relates to students awareness in gender fair language. It was then concluded that the more positive ESL students' attitude in gender fair language is, the higher their awareness.

INTRODUCTION

Language, being an instrument to voice out ideas and emotions is the core of humanity. It is generally, a part of what makes man fully human and thus cannot be separated to becoming human. Language not only grows out of society's values and its "reality," it also helps form those values and reality. The "Sapir-Whorf" theory of language and thought--so named for Edgar Sapir, a scholar of American Indian languages, and his student Benjamin Lee Whorf--addresses this reciprocal nature of language. Whorf taught that every language not only serves as an instrument to reproduce and voice ideas but also as a way of shaping the ideas, assumptions, impressions, and guidelines of an individual's mind.

As language evolves and people now come with different perspectives and personality, so is the need to consider linguistic sensitivity. There are growing issues on the need to exemplify sensitivity to the language. The long struggle to achieve gender equality is actually accompanied by efforts to introduce gender-fair language. Gender-fair language is on the use of lexical and syntactic choices that does not privilege, belittle or highlight a particular gender. Language is seen as an important tool for determining gender like if something is being perceived as feminine or masculine where gender most often imposes a dichotomy, (Ansara and Hegarty, 2014). This implies that language also could be used as a tool for establishing gender-equality and to challenge gender perceptions as most literatures suggest. Communication being the widest vehicle use for language and though transmission is a dynamic interactive process. English as a language of

Corresponding author: **Arlene D. Talosa,**
Cagayan State University, Philippines.

diplomacy promotes harmony and intercultural understanding of race, ethnicity, color and gender. The global concern along the struggle to achieve gender equality is accompanied by efforts to introduce gender-fair language. Ansara and Hegarty, 2014 argued that language is seen as an important tool for determining gender like if something is being perceived as feminine or masculine where gender most often imposes a dichotomy.

In the Philippines, the Civil Service Commission made actions to introduce gender-fair language however the importance of such language is something that not everyone including officials and faculty, was able to comprehend and the process of having the entire university populace to fully understand GAD is and its core messages took a great deal of time and effort, (Tuscano, 2014). Cognizant to the need to contribute to the body of literature on gender-fair language as a social responsibility, and the empirical observations on the incidences of non-gender sensitivity on the academic writing of students who are English in specialization in Cagayan State University, a higher tertiary education in the Northern Philippines which is a melting pot of different linguistic variations and where English is used as the second language, this study was embarked.

Literature review

Gender-fair Language: The Executive Order 273 (Philippine Plan for Gender Responsive Development) envisions a society to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, as enunciated in UN Fourth World Conference Platform for Action, through various Gender and Development programs and activities like Gender Sensitivity Program. Gender- fair language is a focus of Gender and Development. In general, gender fair language is thought of as grammatical correction for gender inequalities in language, assuming that language and society reflect one another (Redfern, 2013). Gender-fair language aims at analyzing and changing the elements of language which cause misinterpretation and misunderstanding about sexual identifications. Two particular sources of these misunderstandings, which are at the focus of gender-fair language, are "Man" as a generic form used in the English language and the ambiguous use of the pronoun "He". They are problematic because they very often support a male dominated reception of language and undermine a gender inclusive use of language. Even today, the use of words like mankind, salesman or definitions like average working man are being used, regardless if male or females are meant. The use of words like mankind, salesman or definitions like average working man, man on the street and so on are used and accepted by the majority of the English speech community. Interestingly, the language of Old English was in some respect more gender-fair as modern English from the time of the eighteenth century had been, when the narrow sense of "Man" referring to males only had been established. In seventh-century the word "Man" originally included and was applied to both sexes In Old English. "Man" as a term meant "person" or "human being" and could not be used to identify a male person per se, Council of European Union, (2008) Man, up to this date, remained unchanged and was attached to male identification but also still used for generalizations for both sexes. Although the term man in combinations such as mankind or workingman is meant to be gender inclusive, studies with college students and school children suggest that the predominant interpretation of sex identification tends to be male oriented. Thus, critics such as Swift and Miller (2001) assume, that the gender-fair definitions are not fully operative and that unfair and un-inclusive definitions seem to be predominant. Sentences like "Every man on this subcommittee is for public works" or "Man can do several things which animal cannot do." can guide the reader into misunderstanding the meaning of man to refer to the male human beings only and thus exclude females from these generalizations. The use of pronouns such as "He", "His" and "Him" referring to persons of either sex is common practice in English language. Since the 1970's, the notion of gendered language as being sexist has been highly debated, Mucchi-Faina, 2005. Sexist language excludes, trivializes or diminishes either gender. Despite efforts by many professional bodies to encourage the use of gender fair alternatives, sexist language use persists across many languages. Hence, with the growing desire for equality, gender fair language use is widely encouraged. Informed by such finding from the psycholinguistic research, there has recently been an effort to introduce gender fair language.

The use of such language is strongly promoted and recommended in the guidelines published by numerous professional organization, publishing companies and even governmental organizations (APA, 2009; Duden, 2006; E.U, 2008). The utmost important principle of gender fair language (Duden, 2006) is the avoidance of generic masculine. Indeed, a finding which coherently emerges from both sociolinguistic and social psychological research is that when both sexes are explicitly stated by using pair forms rather than masculine generics. There already exists a large body of evidence, showing that the masculine form used as generic yields a cognitive male bias (Stahlberg *et al.,* 2007). Regarding the mental representation, the use of gender-fair language forms, which explicitly address men and women, such as word pairs, is hence desirable, as they are thought to support gender-equality. However, there lacks evidence of the effects of gender-fair language on other cognitive processes, which are related to gender-equality. First studies have shown, that gender-fair language can also have negative effects, hampering women's persuasiveness (Mucchi-Faina and Barro, 2001) Many scholars reason that sexist language perpetuates the existing patriarchy. They argue that adoption of inclusive terms advance equality of the sexes, (Kleinman, 2002). Further, sexist language deconstructs unequal power relationships, as posited by Shaw and Hoeber, (2003). A generation or so ago, English language usage standards used to tell people to use "man," "he," etc., when speaking about any unspecified individual. This standard has changed for several reasons: one of which is that it inaccurately represents individuals who are female or groups who are partly or wholly female; and it misleadingly focuses on the sex of the individual rather than what they are doing; and it indicates bias even when there is no intention of doing so.

Linguists claims that language is fundamental to gender inequality and this have been supported by empirical data showing, for example, that when reading masculine forms intended as generic, readers tend to associate them predominantly with men (Gygax *et al.,* 2008;). Alternatives aimed to minimize assumptions regarding the gender of human referents have therefore been suggested since the 70s, such as firefighter instead of fireman; they or s/he instead of the generic he. Although language use has somewhat changed over time, gender-fair language is not yet generally accepted

and its use is far from being the norm, Mucchi-Faina, 2005. Resistance to the use of gender-fair alternatives can take the form of refusal to change the language, but also of denial that women can be discriminated against through language. Ongoing arguments against gender-fair language include its perceived inelegancy, cumbersomeness and long-windedness, its difficulty to read and comprehend, as well as its ineffectiveness. Such language use has long concerned researchers, largely motivated by the feminist argument that it reflects gender bias in society and women's exclusion from important social roles (Stahlberg, Braun, Irmen, and Sczesny, 2007). A growing body of research validates this concern. For example, when people hear masculine generic language, they predominantly visualize pronoun referents as being male (Gygax *et al.,* 2001). Other research suggests that sexist language perpetuates male privilege (Kleinman, 2002), influences children's gender schemas limits the perception of vocational choices for women influences perceptions of status and competence, and even makes women feel ostracized (Stout and Dasgupta, 2011). Although sexist language could also be used to diminish, trivialize or exclude men, it is women who predominantly bear the brunt of its effects. Following these findings, the American Psychological Association and other professional bodies now prohibit the use of gender biased pronouns and terms in articles submitted to their journals and encouraged gender fair forms (American Psychological Association, 2009). However, despite these efforts, typically referred to as initiatives to make language gender-inclusive or gender-fair, the use of sexist language persists across many languages, Hellinger and Bußmann, 2001. Manifestation includes observation that many job advertisements in France and Germany use masculine generic plural forms of nouns, essentially excluding women from employment opportunities (Garnham *et al.,* 2012). Although said to be decreasing in English academic writing, sexist language is still widely used in the popular press and other media (Carlin and Winfrey, 2009). Programs designed to promote the use of gender fair language have also failed to document "shortterm influence" on either women's or men's language use. Given the persistence of sexist language, it is therefore surprising that little research has examined exactly why people use it (Stahlberg *et al.,* 2007). One reason they found was that it is simply easier to use sexist language such as masculine generics to describe people in general. For example, terms such as "they" and "their" to talk about individuals may be more cumbersome grammatically than masculine generics. However, research that consistently demonstrates a gender gap in support for nonsexist language suggests that other factors must be at play.

Types of Gender-fair Language: Women's historical lack of prominence in Western culture has been the subject of much debate and research in recent years. In the service of equality between the sexes,, it is crucial to demonstrate that "generic" masculine words are indeed interpreted as generic (equally inclusive of men and women) by language users, (Sniezek, 2006). Gender fair language aims at reducing gender stereotyping and discrimination. Two principle strategies have been employed to make language gender fair and to treat men and women symmetrically. These types of gender fair language according to literature as cited by Sczesny, (2015) pertain to feminization and neutralization. Feminization implies the use of gender-appropriate forms, and is more often used in languages with grammatical gender, for example by adding feminine versions to masculine titles. For example for a

poet word, poetess would be use for feminization. Feminization is based on the explicit conclusions of women. Thus, masculine generics are replaced by feminine. Feminization has been recommended for grammatical gender languages such as German, Spanish, Czech and Italian (Mosser *et al.,* 2011) usually in combination with neutralizing in order to avoid overly complex sentence structure.

Neutralization on the other hand is more commonly employed in so called 'natural gender languages' and implies that gender-neutral forms are preferred over gendered forms. Neutralization is achieved for example by changing or replacing male-masculine form (Policeman) with gender unmarked form (Police Officer). In the framework of neutralization, gender marked terms is replaced by gender indefinite nouns. In grammatical gender language, gender differentiated forms are replaced. Neutralization has been recommended especially for natural gender languages, Hellinger and Bubman, 2001) and genderless language (Engelberg, 2002) as it is fairly easy to avoid gender markings in these languages. Neutralization has been fairly easy to adopt and implement.

Androgyny: Psychologically, androgyny refers to a person's ability to be at the same time nurturing and time aggressive, rigid and sensitive, and submissive and dominant. This ability can be experienced by both men and women. Some experts claim that this term is often used to explain someone whose behavior go down somewhere in between the characteristics that are connected with males and females. The development of the society proposes new requirements for the gender role of the female i.e. the formation of psychological androgyny. The psychological research shows that an individual with psychological androgyny has more favorable psychological quality, and has more flexibility and stronger adaptability on social role to playing with psychological health level obviously higher than other gender role stereotype, Yuan, 2011. Interesting studies denote that a sizable fraction of the inhabitants shows personality traits that on the whole are not associated with gender. Some traits that were characterized as feminine and others were included as being masculine. The main explanation for the improvement of psychologically androgyny is offered by Sandra Bem (1975) who is an American Psychologist recognized for her works in gender and androgyny studies. Her approach is based on gender schema theory wherein children have functioning schemas. These schemas are categorized gender information and help them interpret new situations. According to her studies, male tend to have masculine schemas if they take information and trait of their own gender. Females, on the other hand, are more likely to be schematically diverse in gaining information of feminine, masculine and neutral types. The gender schema theory tries to explain the cognitive process that happens as people learn and internalize gender roles. This theory denotes that gender becomes a core lens through which people learn to see the world, recognize people, things and characteristics as being inherently masculine and feminine. The two concepts, psychologically, androgyny and gender schematicism, sparked a furry of psychology research into gender and how it affects intellectual health. Experts claimed that androgyny was linked with positive psychological results, especially in women. Sandra Bem (1975) states that if a person takes on both feminine and masculine personality traits in profusion, he or she becomes mentally androgynous. It means that they can pick personality traits as they want and people are not

inhibited by cultural stereotypes symbolizing their sex. In her study, she revealed that sex-types individual favored stereotypical activities even if it cost them to do so. She also claimed that androgynous individuals were also more capable of showing a minority opinion and having greatest flexibility in approaching situations. These traits are psychologically vicarious for them. Psychologists explain that there are some things that men do that are completely considered as feminine. The typical examples of these are cooking and crying. Similarly, there are traits that are considered as masculine which can be used to identify some women like tough or strong. Some degrees of masculine characteristics in women and feminine attitudes in men are considered normal. In studying the implementation process of gender-fair language reforms and the consequences on population attitudes and use, it is important to consider variables traditionally associated with negative attitudes toward gender fair language. Previous research has identified a number of predictors of attitudes to gender-fair language and the following section could provide an overview of these.

Awareness: Linguistic theorist provides an intuitively logical view of the relationship between language and culture. Using the moderate version of the Sapir/ Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativity, they have argued that language is powerful because of the meanings people ascribe to it - these meaning affect world perceptions and worldviews. Consequently, sexist meanings may distort women's and men's view of reality and ultimately their personal and professional aspirations, Park and Roberton, 2004. For this reason, both scholars and practitioners have pointed out the need to replace sexist language with gender fair ones, both in the workplace and in the classroom, (Redfern, 2013). Language and society reflect one another, so it is important for communicators to recognize and respect change in the meaning and acceptability of words. Concern about the use of sexist language is part of the increased awareness that the perceived meanings of some words have changed in response to the changing roles of men and women in the society. For example youth indicated only a young man during the old days but now youth refer to young persons of either sex. Just as one would not use youth with its outdated meaning, one should not use other words connoting gender that do not accurately represent the people behind them, Park and Roberton, 2001. If one writes with nonsexist language, he or she writes to represent with fairness the gender identified in many words. Gender-fair language minimizes unnecessary concern about gender in the subject matter, allowing both the writer and the reader to focus on what people do rather than on which sex they happen to be. For example, the practice of using he and man as generic terms poses a common problem. Rather than presenting a general picture of reality, he and man used generically can mislead the audience. Researchers have shown that the average reader's tendency is to imagine a male when reading he or man, even if the rest of the passage is gender-neutral. Therefore, one cannot be sure that his or her reader could see the woman on the job if the person refers to every technician as he, or that your reader could see the woman in the history of man. On the other hand, replacing every "he" with he or she attracts even more attention to gender and defeats purpose. Gender-fair language is often implemented over several years. It commonly starts with activist movements who propose a change. Since people have a preference for status quo (Crandall *et al.*, 2009), and a preservation of traditional gender arrangements (Jost *et al.*, 2008), new linguistic gender word forms may be negatively

reacted upon. Proponents of non-sexist language have been attacked, words have been defined as being linguistically wrong or awkward and feminine occupational titles have been evaluated more negatively than their masculine traditional form (Formanowicz *et al.,* 2013). However, familiarity and exposure breeds liking thus the awareness may change the longer gender-fair language have been use (Moreland 2010).

Objectives

The study determined the androgyny, awareness and attitude of English major students on gender-fair language

Specifically, it sought to find answers to the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the students in terms of:
    a. Sex
    b. Age
    c. Mother Tongue
    d. Year Level
2. What is the androgyny trait score of the English major students?
3. What is the level of awareness of the students in Gender-fair language?
4. What is the attitude of the students on gender-fair language?
5. Are there differences on the awareness and attitude of the students when grouped according to profile variables? 6. Is there a relationship between the awareness, attitude, profile and androgyny traits of the students?

METHODS

The respondents of the study were English major students of the Bachelor in Secondary Education at the College of Teacher Education (CTE) of the Cagayan State University, Maura, Aparri, Cagayan for the School year 2015-2016. Cagayan State University-Aparri is one of the satellite campuses of the Cagayan State University situated 2-3 kilometer east of the town proper. Currently, its total enrollment is approximately 5,332 students. CSU is one of the public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Northern part of the Philippines. The main tool used in gathering the data is a survey questionnaire which was divided into three parts. Part I dealt with the demographical characteristics of the students. Part II dole out the androgyny score of the students which lie on their score in the androgyny test traits was lifted from "The measurement of psychological androgyny," on the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology developed by Bem, S. L. Part III assessed the awareness of the students on gender fair language. The researcher constructed the test which was patterned from the study of gender stereotyping of the students in language developed by Dr. Jane Bluestein (2013). Part IV assessed the attitude of the students toward gender fair language. It was adopted from the 21 items Inventory of Attitude towards Sexist and Non-Sexist language developed by Parks and Roberton, (2004). Data gathered were analyzed through the following statistical tools: Frequency, percentage counts, percentage distribution, means and standard deviations were the descriptive statistics utilized to describe the profile variables of the students. The inferential statistics such as the Pearson Product moment correlation was employed to determine if the androgyny and awareness of the students is related to their attitude towards gender-fair language.

Furthermore, t-test was used to determine the difference between the awareness and attitude of the students when grouped according to sex. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was also used to determine the difference on the awareness and attitude towards gender fair language when grouped according to age, mother tongue, and year level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sex: Table 1 shows the distribution of the students in terms of sex. The table reveals that 77 or 73.33 percent of the students are females which comprise the majority while only 28 or 26.66 percent of the students are males. This is supported by the enrollment data of the college that there are more female enrollees as compared to males. Moreover, this finding is also supported by the findings of 2008 functional literacy, Education and Mass media Survey (FLEMMS) on the statistics on Filipino women and men's education which reported that school attendance was higher among females than among males. As exhibited from the data, it can be deduced that the English major students of the College of Teacher Education are predominantly female. This finding means that majority of those who took teaching course are female. As such, this finding implies that there is feminization in the teaching course as it overwhelmingly attracts female. This finding establishes the validity of the finding of a previous researcher Acidera (2015) as he found that teaching is a female dominated course.

Table 1. Distribution of the students in terms of sex

Sex	Frequency (n=105)	Percentage
Female	77	73.33
Male	28	26.66

Age: As per regards to the age of the students, Table 2 evidently shows that majority of the students which constitute a frequency of 52 or 49.52 percent have age ranging from 17 to 19 years old. Forty-three or 40.95 percent of the students have 20-22 age range while nine or 8.57 percent of them are aged 23-25. Only one or 0.95 percent of them has age of 29-31. This finding indicates that most of the addressed students fall into teenage group as concretized by the mean of 19.72 and a standard deviation of 2.03. This finding means that they are generally youngsters. This is in consideration with the description of Republic Act 8044 otherwise known as the "Youth in Nation Building Act" which defined youths as those people whose ages range from 15 to 30 years old. The bottom line according to Eaton *et al.,* 2009 is that younger ones are more subjected to new ideas and to challenge traditional roles, than older people.

Table 2. Distribution of the students in terms of age

Age (in years)	Frequency (n=107)	Percentage
17-19	52	49.52
20-22	43	40.95
23-25	9	8.57
29-31	1	0.95
Mean = 19.72		S.D. = 2.03

Mother Tongue: The distribution of the students in terms of mother tongue is presented in Table 3. For the respondents' first language or mother tongue, Iloco tops two other languages in the list that includes Ibanag and Tagalog. Iloco is the mother tongue of 84 or 80 percent of the students. Eleven or10.47 percent of them are Ibanags while only ten or 8.52 percent of them are Tagalogs. This finding indicates that the

population of English majors at the College of Teacher Education is dominated by students whose native language is Iloco. The data in this table insinuates that most of the Ilocano parents still transmit the Iloco language to their children by teaching it as first language. This attitude reflects the loyalty of the parents to their language. Moreover, this is further attributed to the fact that Cagayan State University at Aparri does not only cater to students from the place but largely with students from the neighboring towns as majority of the English major students are from Allacapan, Buguey, Camalaniugan, Camiquin Lal-lo, and Sta Teresita which are consensuslyIloco speaking towns.

Table 3. Distribution of the students in terms of mother tongue

Mother Tongue	Frequency (n=105)	Percentage
Tagalog	10	9.52
Ibanag	11	10.47
Ilocano	84	8.41

Year level: Apparent in Table 4 is the distribution of the students in terms of year level. The table exposes that 40 or 38.09 percent of the students belong to fourth year class followed by 38 or 36.19 percent who are third year while only 27 or 25.71 belong to second year. This finding means that majority of the students belong to fourth year class as attributed to the general observation that they are the year level with the highest populace. This further implies that the number of units in linguistic they learned suggest that they have been exposed to either gender fair and gender biased forms of language in grammar text and literary genres hence; they have better critical thinking skill and improved cognition. As such, they have clearer understanding of a linguistic bias that requires them to analyze.

Table 4. Distribution of the students in terms of year level

Year Level	Frequency (n=105)	Percentage
Second	27	25.71
Third	38	36.19
Fourth	40	38.09

Androgyny Score: Table 5 exhibits the androgyny trait score of the students. The table reveals that 85 or 80.95 percent of the students are predominantly androgynous. 18 or 17.14 percent of the students are nearly masculine while 1 or 0.95 percent of them is masculine. One or 0.95 percent of them is nearly feminine while none of them was categorized as feminine. This finding illustrates that most of the addressed respondents are androgynous which means that they possess strong feminine and masculine traits. This finding implies that they are more supportive, flexible and adoptable on social roles. Furthermore, this finding implies that they are more sensitive on the changing roles of men and women in the society. Bem (1975) postulated that People who are androgynous disregard what traits are culturally constructed specifically for males and females, and rather focus on what behavior is most effective within the situational circumstances.

Table 5. Distribution of the students in terms of androgyny trait score

Androgyny Score	Frequency (n=105)	Percentage
Masculine	1	0.95
Nearly Masculine	18	17.14
Androgynous	85	80.95
Nearly Feminine	1	0.95
Feminine	0	0

Legend: Masculine -20 and under; Nearly Masculine -19 to -10; Androgynous +9 to -9; Nearly Feminine +10 to +19; Feminine +20 and over

Awareness Score in Gender Fair Language

The Awareness score of the students in gender fair language is presented in Table 6. The table evidently reveals that 42 or 40 percent of the students got scores ranging from 18-21. Thirty-eight or 36.19 percent of them got scores of 14-17 while 19 or 18.09 percent of them got scores ranging from 10-13. It is sad to note however that only six or 5.71 percent got scores ranging from 22-25. The overall weighted mean of 16.77 and a standard deviation of 3.11 points out that the students are generally aware of gender sensitive or gender fair language. This finding validates that the students have schemas on gender fair language as attributed with their exposure in linguistic activities demanded by their academic curriculums in the teaching course. This finding implies that the College of Teacher Education sets and integrates gender sensitivity with the academic disciplines catered compliant to the PCW Sec. 16 which mandates the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to which CSU belongs being a Higher Education Institution (HEI) to develop and promote gender-sensitive curriculum. This is because gender fair language is integrated in lessons in English specifically in teaching nouns and pronouns and English structures as evinced in the answers of the students during formal interviews.

Table 6. Distribution of the students in terms of gender fair language awareness score

Awareness Score	Frequency (n=105)	Percentage
10-13	19	18.09
14-17	38	36.19
18-21	42	40
22-25	6	5.71
Mean = 16.77		S.D. = 3.11

Legend: Not at all Aware1-5; Slightly Aware 6-11; Moderately Aware 12-16; Very Aware 16-20; Extremely Aware 21-25.

Attitude towards Sexist and Non Sexist Language

Belief about Sexist Language

Table 7 presents the belief of the students towards sexist language. Based on the table, they reported that they agree that although change is difficult, they should still try to eliminate sexist language (4.00) and that most publication guidelines require newspaper writers to avoid using ethnic and racial slurs. So, these guidelines should also require writers to avoid sexist language (3.60), they also favor that the way the English language has traditionally been written and spoken should not be changed (3.58) which is a pretense notion as concern about the use of sexist language is part of the increased awareness that the perceived meanings of some words have changed in response to the changing roles of men and women in the society, American Psychological Association, (2009).

Moreover , the students likewise agreed that the elimination of sexist language is an important goal; sexist language is related to sexist treatment of people in society; and when teachers talk about the history of the Philippines, they should change expressions, such as "our forefathers," to expressions that include women were all regarded with the same mean of 3.50. The students further reported that the English language will never be changed because it is too deeply ingrained in the culture (3.33) as undecided. It was argued that changes to the language system and its use would contribute to the

achievement of equal rights (Leue, 2002).This finding specifies that the students doubt whether language should be made symmetrical or not. The same finding points out that the students manifest disagreement that if the original meaning of the word "he" was "person," there should be a continuity to use "he" to refer to both males and females today. This finding means that the students totally favor the elimination of the generic he as it excludes women. This corroborates with the study of Stahlberg et.al, 2007 that the masculine form used as generic yields a cognitive male bias hence, should be eliminated as it makes women obscure.

Table 7. Attitude of the students in terms of belief in sexist language

Statements	Weighted Mean	Descriptive
Women who think that being called a 'chairman' is sexist are misinterpreting the word 'chairman	3.40	Agree
We should not change the way the English language has traditionally been written and spoken	3.58	Agree
worrying about sexist language is a trivial activity	3.40	Agree
If the original meaning of the word 'he' was 'person', we should continue to use 'he' to refer to both males and females today	2.40	Disagree
When people use the term 'man and wife' the expression is not sexist if the users don't mean it to be	3.40	Agree
The English language will never be changed because it is too deeply ingrained in the culture	3.30	Undecided
The elimination of sexist language is an important goal	3.50	Agree
Most publication guidelines require newspaper writers to avoid using ethnic and racial slurs. So, these guidelines should also require writers to avoid sexist language	3.60	Agree
Sexist language is related to sexist treatment of people in society	3.50	Agree
When teachers talk about the history of the Philippines, they should change expressions, such as "our forefathers," to expressions that include women	3.50	Agree
Teachers who require students to use nonsexist language are unfairly forcing their political views upon their students	3.40	Agree
Although change is difficult, we still should try to eliminate sexist language	4.00	Agree

Legend: Strongly Agree 4.20-5.00: Agree 3.40-4.19; Undecided 2.60-3.39; Disagree 1.80-2.59; Strongly Disagree 1.79-1.00

Recognition of the Students in Sexist Language

When asked about the recognition of the students towards sexist language, Table 8reveals that the students regarded all the underscored statements as somewhat sexist. The generic 'he' (4.0), chairman (3.90), 'mankind', and 'old wives' both of which have a weighted mean of 3.60. This finding means that the students limitedly recognize sexist terms. Hence, the finding implies that they are not critically aware of gendered language. Such belief or attitude is critical because unawareness of sexist terms in language results to deliberate use or implementation of such. This finding supports the argument that despite efforts to make language gender fair, the use of sexist language still persists (Hellinger and Bußmann, 2001).

Table 8. Recognition of sexist language

	Weighted mean	Descriptive value
1. People should care about all mankind, not just themselves	3.60	Somewhat sexist
2. The belief that frogs will give you warts is just an old wives' tale	3.60	Somewhat sexist
3. If a child wants to play the piano well, he must practice hard	4.00	Somewhat Sexist
4. Alice Jones should be chairman of our committee	3.90	Somewhat Sexist

Legend: Definitely Sexist 4.20-5.00: Somewhat Sexist 3.40-4.19; Undecided 2.60-3.39; Probably Not Sexist 1.80-2.59; Not At All Sexist 1.79-1.00

Willingness of the Students towards Use of Gender Fair Language: As regards to the willingness of the students in using gender fair language, table 9 unveils that the students are very willing to use the expression "husband and wife" rather than "man and wife" with a mean of 4.20 which suggest their utmost willingness to use hierarchic expression or symmetrical construction. Consequently, as the respondents are English majors, they are highly aware of parallel structures as they study this in most of their subjects which dealt with structures of English. Moreland (2010) posited that familiarity and exposure breeds liking thus the awareness may change the longer gender-fair language have been used. The table further exposes that the students are somewhat willing to use the term "camera operator" rather than "cameraman, and use the title "flight attendant" instead of "steward" or "stewardess" both of which have a mean of 4.10. The title to a married woman as "Ms. Smith" rather than "Mrs. Smith" (3.30) was regarded as undecided .This finding means that they have uncertainty as to whether the title 'Ms' is used to women regardless of marital status. This predicament merits special attention in scientific and technical writing, where any ambiguity is unacceptable.

Table 9. Willingness to use gender-fair language

Statements	Weighted mean	Descriptive mean
1. When you are referring to a married woman, how willing are you to use the title "Ms. Smith" rather than "Mrs. Smith"?	3.30	Undecided
2. How willing are you to use the word "server" rather than "waiter" or "waitress"?	3.7	Somewhat Willing
3. How willing are you to use the expression "husband and wife" rather than "man and wife"?	4.2	Very Willing
4. How willing are you to use the term "camera operator" rather than "cameraman"?	4.10	Somewhat Willing
5. How willing are you to use the title "flight attendant" instead of "steward" or "stewardess"?	4.10	Somewhat Willing

Legend: Very Willing 4.20-5.00: Somewhat willing 3.40-4.19; Undecided 2.60-3.39; Reluctant 1.80-2.59; Very Unwilling 1.79-1.00

Differences on the Awareness when grouped according to sex: The study hypothesized that there is no significant difference on the awareness of the students in gender fair language when grouped according to sex. Table 10 reveals that sex has no significant bearing to student's awareness in gender fair language. This finding means that regardless of sex, there is no difference. This finding implies that both male and female regard balance awareness that language is a neutral vehicle which represents reality. This finding contradicted the findings of Lee, 2007 that there are differences between men and women in awareness towards such language as women opt for gender fair language while men prefer the exclusive, male generic forms.

Table 10. Difference on the awareness in gender fair language when grouped according to sex

Sex	Mean	Sd	t-value	Probability	Inference
Female	16.70	3.25	0.032	0.974	Not Significant
Male	16.68	3.02			

Difference on the awareness when grouped according to the select variables: The study assumed that there is no difference on the awareness of the students when grouped according to profile variables. Table 11 reveals that student's awareness in gender fair language is significantly different when grouped according to their year level as reckoned by its computed r- value of 3.65 and a probability of 0.03 lower than 0.05. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected. This finding means that the awareness of the students when it comes to gender fair language is different from the students in the higher years. This finding implies that as a student gets older and reaches higher year level, he or she matures and gains more experiences which make him or her think more critically on gender bias scribbled in texts and stereotype dictions in written or spoken discourses. More so, it implies that when a student becomes mature, he or she has a wider perspective and has a more in-depth analysis of events and linguistic situations.

Table 11. Difference on the awareness when grouped according to profile variables

Age	Mean	Sd	F ratio	Probability	Inference
17-18	15.59		2.57	0.081	
19-20	17.04				Not Significant
21- above	17.30				
Mother Tongue	**Mean**	**Sd**	**F-ratio**	**Probability**	**Inference**
Iloco	16.49		0.96	0.385	Not Significant
Tagalog	17.80				
Ibanag	17.27				
Year Level	**Mean**	**Sd**	**f-ratio**	**Probability**	**Inference**
Second	16.70				
Third	15.74				
Fourth	17.64		3.65	0.03	Significant

Difference of the Student's Attitude in Gender Fair Language when Grouped according to Profile Variables:

Sex: The study hypothesized that there is no significant difference between the attitude of the students in gender fair language and their sex. Table 12 reveals that there is no significant difference between the attitude of the students in gender fair language when grouped according to sex as reckoned by its t –values of 1.04, 1.90 and 0.36 with probabilities of 0.303, 0.06 and 0.717 along the three subscales of the inventory of attitude towards sexist and non-sexist language: belief about sexist language, recognition of sexist language and their willingness towards the use of gender fair language respectively which is higher than the set 0.05 level of significance.

The null hypothesis therefore is accepted. This finding means that sex has no significant bearing with the attitude of the students towards gender fair language. This finding supports the study surveyed by Muchi-faina 2005 as he found that women and men did not seem to care strongly one way or the other about gender-fair language. This finding further contradicted the recent study of Koeser and Sczesny, 2010 as he found that women tend to use gender fair language more often than men and are more easily influenced to adjust to gender fair language.

Table 12. Difference of the student's attitude in gender fair language when grouped according to sex

Belief of the Students in Sexist Language			
Sex	Mean	t-value	Probability
Male	3.46		
Female	3.34	1.04	0.303
Recognition of the Students in Sexist Language			
Sex	Mean	t-value	Probability
Male	3.93		
Female	3.63	1.90	0.06
Willingness of the students to use Gender Fair Language			
Sex	Mean	t-value	Probability
Male	3.91		
Female	2.86	0.36	0.717

Age: The study hypothesized that there is no difference between the students attitude towards gender fair language when grouped according to age. Table 13 exposes that the students recognition of sexist language vary according to age. The probability of 0.04 indicates that there are differences on the recognition of student on varied forms of sexism which implies that as they age, they acquire higher recognition of sexist language which would make them more gender-sensitive. This finding implies that as students reach higher age range, they become more capable of taking the perspective of those affected by sexist language. Thus, they have critical recognition of sexist terms. This finding supports the study of Preacher and Leonardelli (2004) as he found that age has a significant effect on students' attitude towards sexist language. This is further corroborated with the study of Parks and Roberton (2004) that as students become mature, they develop more sensitivity to those who are directly affected by sexist language and are more emphatic to those demeaned by such language. Empathy has been defined by Parks and Roberton (2004) as the reaction of one individual to the observed experiences of another. Collorary to this effect, on a study conducted by Parks and Roberton (2009), their study further revealed that older persons are more interested to gender fair language than were younger persons. Hence, they are more likely able to adjust with gender fair language as compared to the youngsters.

Table 13. Difference of the student's attitude in gender fair language when grouped according to age

Belief of the Students in Sexist Language			
Age	Mean	t-value	Probability
17-18	3.33		
19-20	3.43	0.73	0.485
21-above	3.32		
Recognition of the Students in Sexist Language			
Age	Mean	t-value	Probability
17-18	3.62		
19-20	3.63	3.31	0.04
21-above	4.07		
Willingness of the students to use Gender Fair Language			
Age	Mean	t-value	Probability
17-18	3.79		
19-20	3.92	0.39	0.6778
21-above	3.86		

Mother Tongue: The study theorized that there is no significant difference between the students attitude towards gender fair language when grouped according to mother tongue. Table 14 reveals that mother tongue has no significant bearing to student's belief about sexist language; recognition of sexist language and willingness to use gender fair language.

This is because Tagalog, Ibanag and Iloco are grammatical gender languages as they have designated masculine and feminine terms to most nouns. More so, this finding is attributed to the fact that students on the academic scenario are encouraged to use English language and hence, the use of their mother tongue is restricted to use as they are expected to display and manifests a good command of the English language being their specialization.

Table 14. Difference of the student's attitude in gender fair language when grouped according to age

Belief of the Students in Sexist Language			
Mother Tongue	Mean	t-value	Probability
Ilocano	3.41	1.51	0.1330
Recognition of the Students in Sexist Language			
Mother Tongue	Mean	t-value	Probability
Ilocano	3.72	0.06	0.9491
Willingness of the students to use Gender Fair Language			
Mother Tongue	Mean	t-value	Probability
Ilocano	3.91	0.97	0.3358

Year Level: The study hypothesized that there is significant difference on the attitude of the students in gender fair language when grouped according to year level. Table 15 reveals that the students' belief about sexist language varies according to year level. As can be gleaned on the same table, the willingness of the students to use gender fair language vary to a great extent as they reach higher level in the academe. This finding means that as the students reach higher year level, they develop diverse belief about sexist language and better willingness to use non-sexist language. This is because as students reach fourth year students have more complex curriculum which deals with higher English structures and structural criticisms which shapes their thoughts, perceptions and attitudes and, thus, play a very crucial role in promoting their gender awareness and consciousness to sexist beliefs which leads to formed willingness to use gender fair language.

Table 15. Difference of the students in terms of in gender fair language when grouped according to year level

Belief of the Students in Sexist Language			
Year Level	Mean	t-value	Probability
Second	3.27		
Third	3.26	5.78	0.042
Fourth	3.56		
Recognition of the Students in Sexist Language			
Year Level	Mean	t-value	Probability
Second	3.60		
Third	3.65	1.25	0.2904
Fourth	3.86		
Willingness of the students to use Gender Fair Language			
Year Level	Mean	t-value	Probability
Second	3.95		
Third	3.56	8.48	0.000
Fourth	4.13		

Androgyny: The study hypothesized that there is no significance difference between the students attitude towards sexist and non-sexist language when grouped according to androgyny. The table reveals that there is no significant difference among students androgyny. The null hypothesis therefore is accepted. It could be therefore inferred that it is not the trait of having a feminine or masculine reconciled as one that matters; it's the attitude in gender fair language that

counts most. This finding implies that more than those traits, it's the attitude that plays a pivotal role on one's belief, recognition of sexist language and willingness to use gender fair language. Yuan 2011 asserted that individuals with psychological androgyny have stronger adaptability on social roles. However, the finding of the study reveals that though one has high adaptability to social role, his or her attitude to like or dislike something directs his or her choice.

Table 16. Difference of the students in terms of in gender fair language when grouped according to androgyny

Belief of the Students in Sexist Language			
	Mean	t-value	Probability
Masculine	3.75		
Nearly Masculine	3.32		
Androgynous	3.37	0.55	0.7005
Nearly Feminine	3.63		
Feminine	3.33		
Recognition of the Students in Sexist Language			
	Mean	t-value	Probability
Masculine	3.25		
Nearly Masculine	3.50	1.09	0.3670
Androgynous	3.74		
Nearly Feminine	4.25		
Feminine	3.75		
Willingness of the students to use Gender Fair Language			
	Mean	t-value	Probability
Masculine	4.00		
Nearly Masculine	4.13		
Androgynous	3.82	1.12	0.3533
Nearly Feminine	3.90		
Feminine	3.20		

Relationship between the Awareness and select variables

The study hypothesized that there is no relationship between the awareness of the students and select variables. The results of the correlation analysis (Table 17) indicate that belief of the students as reckoned by its r- value of 0.2490 and a probability of 0.010 highly relates to their awareness. This finding means that the higher the students' belief on sexist language, the higher their awareness in gender fair language. Moreover, age also relates to students awareness in gender fair language as reckoned by its computed r- value of 0.2812 and a probability of 0.0037. The null hypothesis therefore is rejected. This finding means that the older the students, the better their awareness in gender fair language. This has been supported by the study of Parks and Roberton, (2005) that as individuals move into adulthood, they develop more understanding for those affected by gender- based language. Collorary to this effect, on a study conducted by Parks and Roberton (2009), their study further revealed that older persons are more interested to gender fair language than were younger persons. Hence, they are more likely able to adjust with gender fair language as compared to the youngsters.

Table 17. Relationship between the awareness and select variables

	r-value	Probability	Inference
Attitude			
Belief on Sexist Language	0.2490	0.010	Significant
Recognition of Sexist Language	0.1526	0.120	Not Significant
Willingness to Use gender Fair Language	0.1772	0.0705	Not Significant
Profile			
Sex	1.1305	0.1845	Not Significant
Age	0.2812	0.0037	Highly Significant
Mother Tongue	0.0525	0.5951	Not Significant
Year Level	0.1318	0.1800	Not Significant
Androgyny	0.1094	0.2665	Not Significant

Conclusion

In consideration of the foregoing findings, the researcher hereby concludes that older students in the Cagayan State University in Northern Philippines have higher awareness and attitude in gender fair language compared to younger ones. Further, the more positive their attitude in gender fair language is, the higher their awareness. This therefore manifests that one's awareness is related to his or her inner attitude in gender-fair language.

Recommendations

In the light of the foregoing findings and conclusions, the following are recommended:

1. An enhancement of the tertiary students' awareness in gender-fair language should be strengthened through gender sensitive and gender reflective awareness seminar-workshop.
2. To further enhance the gender sensitivity of the College of Teacher Education and the Cagayan State University, a review of syllabi and all documents should be conducted.
3. Future research should attempt to identify factors that are crucial for deliberate use of gender fair language, it might be worthwhile to determine the content and strength of attitudes in different groups of speakers who use gender fair language regularly compared to speaker who use it occasionally and others who do not use it.
4. This study should be replicated in order to refute or affirm the findings of the present study.

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