Systematic review of studies about the use of language with sexist connotations in fairytales and nursery rhymes of Early Childhood

Revisión sistemática de la investigación sobre el uso del lenguaje con connotaciones sexistas en los cuentos de hadas y las canciones infantiles en la educación infantil

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Abstract:

The use of language through popular children's fairytales and nursery rhymes expresses ideas about what is expected of girls and boys based on the gender. These literary studies are consequences of the oral poetic tradition and cultural aspects of different contexts and times. Likewise, it is possible to demonstrate how such productions come to show traditional beliefs and customs related to the feminine and masculine ideal that, at the same time, stand as a social value. This is why the aim of this study is to identify the use of language with sexist connotations, such as gender roles and gender stereotypes, in nursery rhymes and fairytales. For this purpose, a systematic review has been carried out following the methodology PRISMA 2020 Statement, using high impact databases such as Eric, Scopus and Google Scholar. Also, Artificial Intelligences were included in the systematic review: Consensus IA, Elicit.org and Copilot. The analysis of the scientific production based on the use of language with sexist connotations in nursery rhymes and fairytales in Early Childhood education has been identified a total of 22 documents. The results show that the gender relations represented in children's fairytales and nursery rhymes from a perspective of inequality that favours the figure of traditional male dominance, as opposed to the submission of women, reiterated in the oral and written tradition. This is clear evidence of the social separation of male and female roles, which constitutes a challenge for current education, that of influencing children's nursery rhymes and fairytales to overcome these traditional gender stereotypes.

Keywords:
Early childhood education Language, fairytale, nursery rhymes, sexism.

Resumen:

El uso del lenguaje a través de los cuentos y canciones infantiles populares expresan las ideas limitantes sobre lo que se espera de la niña y el niño en función del género. Estas obras literarias, a su vez, son consecuencias de la tradición poética oral y de aspectos culturales de los diferentes contextos y épocas. Asimismo, es posible evidenciar cómo tales producciones llegan a mostrar creencias y costumbres tradicionales relacionadas con el ideal femenino y masculino que, al mismo tiempo, se alzan de valor e ideal social. Es por eso por lo que la finalidad de este estudio es identificar el uso del lenguaje con connotaciones sexistas, tales como los roles y estereotipos de género, en las canciones y cuentos infantiles. Para ello, se ha llevado a cabo una revisión sistemática siguiendo la Declaración PRISMA 2020, realizada en bases de datos de alto impacto: Eric, Scopus y Google Scholar, y bases de datos con Inteligencia Artificial: Consensus IA, Elicit. org y Copilot. El análisis de la producción científica en base al uso del lenguaje con connotaciones sexistas en canciones y cuentos de Educación Infantil ha arrojado un total de 22 documentos. Los resultados obtenidos muestran las relaciones de género representadas en los cuentos y canciones infantiles desde una perspectiva de desigualdad que favorece la figura de dominancia tradicional del hombre, frente a la sumisión de la mujer, reiterada en la tradición oral y escrita. Esto es una clara evidencia de la separación social de los roles masculinos y femeninos, lo cual constituye un reto para la educación actual, el de incidir en canciones y cuentos infantiles que superen estos estereotipos de género tradicionales.

Palabras claves:
Educación infantil, canción infantil, cuentos de hadas, lengua, sexismo.

1. Introduction

Gender is one of the most relevant social problems worldwide, as it is a social, cultural, political and historical construction that refers to a set of characteristics associated with people based on their biological sex, which traditionally favours males (Guil, 2016; Ortega, 2005; Pitch, 2010). Over time, this has had a number of consequences, as stereotypes constitute a wide range of social beliefs, the function of which is the construction of social identity. Likewise, gender stereotypes are defined as cognitive patterns that facilitate the homogeneous characterisation of a group of people and, at the same time, differentiate it from another group, thus causing an assignment of prejudices around the group (Garduño et al., 2015; González-Anleo et al., 2018; Rodríguez et al., 2013). The use of gender stereotypes is justified on the basis of the presence of certain behaviours by some sexes and tends to negatively qualify the same behaviour in the opposite sex. A clear example of the adjectives commonly attributed to the male gender is: dominance, bravery, impulsiveness, and their counterparts associated with women: kind, submissive, dependent, etc. (Adukia et al., 2022; Gento, 2017; González, 2005; Mante-Estacio et al., 2018).

2. Theoretical Framework

From birth, children have contact with literary culture through stories and/or popular songs of children's tradition. This entire literary repertoire forms part of an artistic-cultural repertoire that is currently considered an educational and socialising resource in infant schools, the aim of which is to develop linguistic and social skills (Pascual, 2010). In this case, the school aims to transmit the customs, behaviours, traditions and values of the society of which it is a part. However, it is important to remember how in some cases the language used through its letters implicitly represents ideas that do not benefit the achievement of gender equality.

Indeed, Fernández (2006) argues that most songs and even fairytales depict a particular social system that does not reflect the values of today's society. Even so, such ideas come to mediate children's behaviours and values, starting with their first fairytales or their first lullabies in the family environment. According to Hidalgo (2011), this is precisely where the risk often lies, since, due to this lyrical cultural rootedness, a patriarchal and sexist message is transmitted. Likewise, Márquez-Guerrero (2016) argues that, although the Spanish language should not be considered sexist, it is the use made of it that endows its writings with this characteristic. In this way, Infant Education pupils continue to be exposed to traditional songs and stories wrapped in literary compositions and melodies.

Currently, some gender roles and stereotypes that support linguistic schemes or models of behaviour to imitate continue to prevail, as well as reinforcing sexual roles belonging to times that are far from gender equality. Some recent research (Encabo et al., 2014; Suberviola, 2023) agrees that many traditional literary works use sexist language when they present messages that, due to their form, are discriminatory on the basis of gender and sex. In fact, they have stated that in their use, the non-recognition, concealment and even the low valuation of women in society is a priority (Márquez-Guerrero, 2016). Therefore, the presence of non-neutral language and the use of sexist content, present in many literary works, must be recognised by the educational community. Likewise, this interest should be based on a concise and careful selection, knowing that fairytales and songs should not only be a means of communication and even entertainment, but should rather be a pedagogical resource that allows the values of an equitable and inclusive society to be represented.

In this line, the school, due to its educational and socialisation interest, should create learning environments where there is awareness of the sexism present in many of these works, with the aim of reducing its incidence, through reflective analysis and constructive criticism. This does not consist of dispensing with such literary resources because they convey stereotypical aspects, but rather it has to do with reinventing them in order to guarantee this perspective of equality. Following Castaño (2013), one could: modify the spaces for the action, have other characters or invert present characteristics, add or transform the key objects related to the characters if they are stereotyped; change the functions assigned to the protagonists; change the register of the language, using generic words; or even invert the ending of the story or rhyme. That is why the main purpose of this study is to carry out a systematic review of existing studies that analyse the use of language with sexist connotations, such as gender roles and stereotypes, in nursery rhymes and stories.

3. Methodology

An analysis of the scientific production has been carried out based on studies on the use of language with sexist connotations in songs and stories in Early Childhood Education, applying the PRISMA Statement (Page et al., 2021). The search focused on articles found with artificial intelligence.

3. 1. Previous search

The first search, prior to the systematic review, started in January 2024 using the terms 'nursery rhymes' and 'sexism' in the following databases: Scopus and ERIC. One study on sexism in nursery rhymes was obtained.

Firstly, the searches for the systematic review were carried out by combining the terms in Spanish: 'canciones infantiles', 'sexismo'; and in English: 'earlychildhood songs' and 'sexism' in the following databases: Scopus, Google Schoolar and Eric. Secondly, we made use of the Thesaurus search engine to use the appropriate descriptors, obtaining as a result: 'canciones infantiles', 'género', 'roles de género', 'estereotipos de género', 'nursery rhymes', 'gender', 'gender roles' y 'gender stereotypes'. Also, the search for fairytales was expanded, as articles dealing with children's literature appeared, so the terms 'fairytales' and 'fairytales' were included. Despite using the terms recommended by Thesaurus, the databases only found 10 articles in Scopus, 60 in Google Scholar and 5 in ERIC, so it was decided to include three specific artificial intelligences for scientific literature reviews: Consensus AI, Copilot AI and Elicit AI.

3.3. Systematic review

For the systematic search, the following databases were used: ERIC, Google Scholar and Scopus, and artificial intelligences, such as: Copilot IA, Consensus IA. The search was conducted using the search patterns: 'gender and nursery rhymes', 'gender roles and nursery rhymes', 'gender stereotypes and nursery rhymes', 'gender and fairytales', 'gender roles and fairytales' and 'gender stereotypes and fairytales'. The search strings used for the different databases are shown below:

• Scopus
"Gender" OR "gender roles" OR "Gender Stereotypes" AND (AND TITLE-ABSKEY ("Fairytales").

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- Google Scholar
"Gender" (All Fields) OR "Gender roles" (All Fields) OR "Gender Stereotypes" (All Fields) AND "Fairytales".

- ERIC
"Gender" OR "Gender roles" OR "Gender Stereotypes" AND "Fairytales".

Subsequently, the first inclusion and exclusion criteria for register screening were established.

Inclusion criteria

- Scientifically rigorous articles in Spanish and English.
- Research in the field of education.
- Research focused on the Early Childhood Education stage.
- Research on fairytales and songs.

Exclusion criteria

- Studies carried out in a language other than English or Spanish.
- Studies that deal with musical dimensions.
- Studies carried out in educational stages other than Early Childhood Education.
- Studies without access to full text.
- Documents that are not scientific articles.
- Studies that refer to textbooks.

With regard to the exclusion criteria, the decision has been taken to exclude research that covers characteristics of musicality, given that it does not provide relevant information in terms of the study presented. Also, studies analysing textbooks, i.e. school material, have been excluded, as their analysis focuses on activities and contents of language and literature books. Finally, research that is not aimed at children's education has been excluded, since nursery rhymes are designed for that stage. The aim of this study is to find research that specifically analyses the text of nursery rhymes and stories with sexist connotations.

Consensus AI, Copilot AI and Elicit AI have been used as artificial intelligences, so they are considered useful tools for scientific research (Forero-Corba and Bennásar, 2023). Their use is supported by various research studies, which show that artificial intelligences play an important role and are effective in identifying studies of high scientific impact. In this line, their inclusion in research helps in the accuracy of the results (Arbeláez-Campillo et al., 2021; Andrade Gontijo et al., 2021; Lopezosa, 2023). The search carried out in these artificial intelligences totalled 16 documents and 6 documents from databases (2 documents from Scopus, 2 documents from Google Scholar and 2 documents from ERIC).

2.4. Manual search

Two new studies were manually included. These articles were extracted from Google Scholar, using selected research references, making a total of 22 studies in the systematic review.

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Figure 1. Flow Diagram
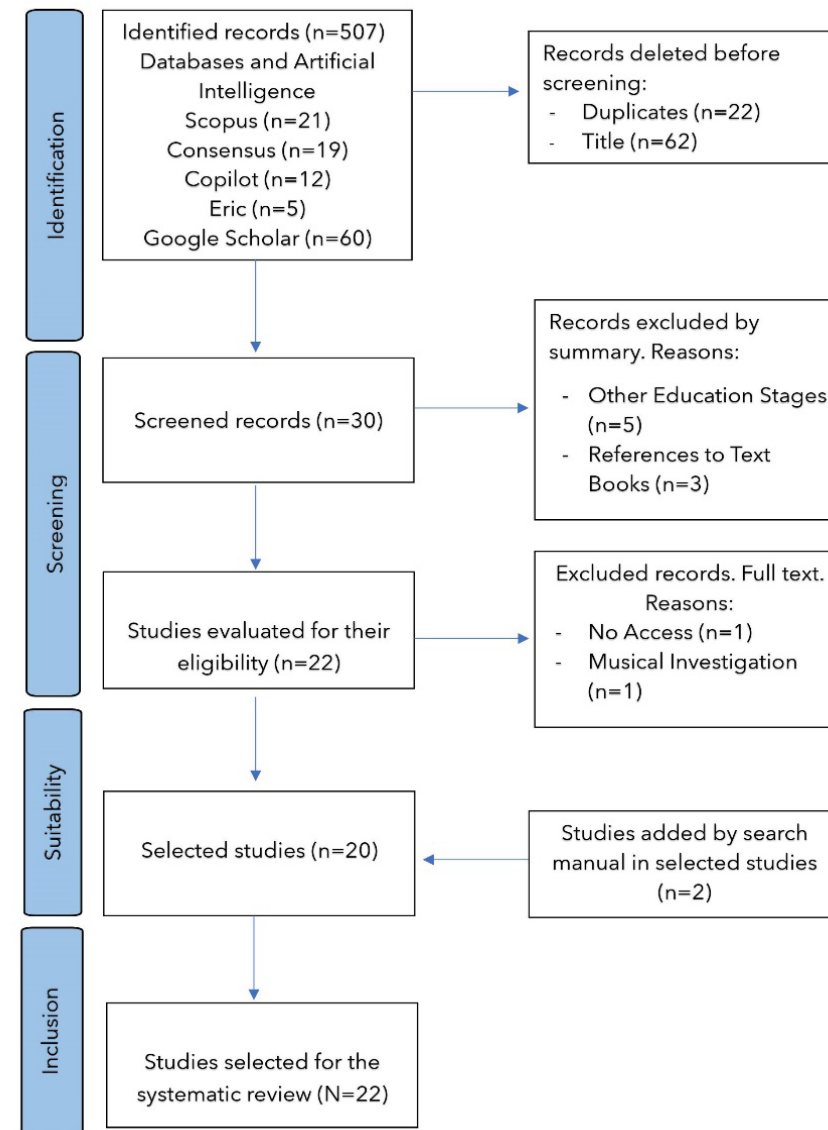
Source: own elaboration

4. Results

After reading and analysing the data provided in the 22 articles finally selected, we used the following information to compile the results: authorship, year of publication, objective, methodology used and results obtained. Two tables with the results of the systematic review are shown below. The first table lists the studies found on the use of language with sexist connotations in children's nursery rhymes (table 1) and the second table on the use of language with sexist connotations in children's fairytales (table 2).

Table 1. Studies on the use of language with sexist connotations in children's nursery rhymes

Author/year	Aims	Results
1. González (2005)	To analyse Spanish children's nursery rhymes from a gender perspective (1900-1950).	The contents of the nursery rhymes present children's themes, animalistic, related to trades, etc. Relationships between genders are presented from the perspective of inequality, which appears in a large number of nursery rhymes, approached from different perspectives and situations: marriages, abductions and captives, courtships and courtships, nuns, disappointments, separations, reunions, jealousy, rejection, rivalries, etc.
2. Fernández (2006)	To analyse pedagogically the messages and meanings conveyed by traditional children's nursery rhymes. used in schools on men and women, and gender relations.	Women are portrayed with poverty and the role of men as saviour prince charming is idealised. There is a reiteration of the need for marriage, passed down from mother to daughter. Women show a deep maternal vocation, they are homely and hard-working. Men are portrayed as vicious, smokers and drinkers, lazy and lazy, absent from the family and irresponsible in their parenting. Gender violence as well as polygyny are represented.
3. Pascual (2010)	Analyse the use of lexis and syntax in Spanish lullabies in order to interpret the social role of the participants depending on their gender.	The results obtained show a marked separation that reflects social inequality. The separation of roles depending on gender is evident: active roles for male characters contrast with passive roles for female characters. Through the lullabies, the female sex receives messages of devaluation and subordination that could be internalised during the years that are fundamental for their social development.
4. Nasiruddin (2013)	Analyse some Pakistani children's nursery rhymes taught formally in schools and informally at home.	The knowledge transmitted through children's nursery rhymes is stereotypical. It does not project or transform the perception of gender roles in society. Women are portrayed in the role of wives and sisters. Sometimes, she is portrayed as ugly and nagging. The idea of men's misfortune in getting married is conveyed. Men are attributed economic stability and women are attributed the position of emotional dependence and immaturity. The belief is conveyed that women with higher education argue more than those without.
5. Al-Ramahi (2013)	To present the different linguistic forms and patterns that help to construct the sexist facets of complete rhyming texts.	It shows as a finding the representation of sexism in the language of children's nursery rhymes, the result of implicit beliefs in gender stereotypes. This view stems from the codification of reality from a male point of view. The language of rhymes expresses male superiority through the attribution of certain linguistic units. Inequality is revealed in these rhymes, perpetuated in ideas of male power over women. The sexist aspects in these rhymes contribute to obscuring the real experiences of women.
6. Olayemi (2020)	Identifying conceptions ideological and possible meanings conveyed in some English nursery rhymes to pupils.	In the children's nursery rhymes analysed, women are portrayed as incompetent, uncaring and indifferent. Fathers are portrayed as being in a hierarchical position superior to mothers, so that motherhood is denigrated. The female figure is portrayed as weak, weak, economically deprived and inexperienced as a mother figure; and the male figure is shown as strong and worthy of respect.

(Continúa)

Author/year	Aims	Results
Juárez (2020)	To analyse both the lyrics of the nursery rhymes and their audiovisual representation in the selected videos, carrying out an analysis of the representations and gender roles of the main characters in the fairytales.	The female figure is given the role of a passive agent and/or at the mercy of/subordinated to the man/male, reducing, moreover, the purpose of her existence to waiting for the (intelligent) male, made up, perfect and ready for his manly desires or, in other cases, to be protected by him. The male figure plays the role of protecting women, showing intellectual superiority that validates this role and, on numerous occasions, relegates women/females to the domestic sphere and to being discursed by the male.
8. Ajmal et al. (2023)	To explore the importance of nursery rhymes in children's lives and how they contribute to the formation of children's personal identities, especially those of women.	The results of the study revealed that the nursery rhyme reflects the gender expectations and constraints imposed on girls in many traditional societies, and that the nursery rhyme can be seen as a reflection of changing attitudes about gender roles and education in Pakistan.

Source: own elaboration

Table 2. Studies on the use of language with sexist connotations in children's fairytales

Author/year	Aims	Results
1. Murphy (1975)	Critically analyse the representation of gender in children's literature and how roles and stereotypes influence children's behaviour.	Children's literature reinforces traditional gender stereotypes, influencing the formation of children's gender identity and their subsequent development. This also occurs in reverse. These traditional stereotypes are present in society and are perpetuated through children's literature.
2. Pyle (1976)	To analyse the presence of sexism in fairytales aimed at Malaysian children.	The children's fairytales featured stereotypes that reinforce gender roles and stereotypes commonly associated with cultural symbolism. It is suggested that early childhood education and emotional development may be affected by this repetition of gender stereotypes and roles. The importance of addressing sexism from an early age by making a good choice of material for use is underlined.
3. Lehman (1976)	To present criteria for feminist criticism of children's literature.	It focuses on the importance of analysing stereotypes in children's literature and providing reading materials to promote an equitable representation of gender in childhood. The influence of children's fairytales on the development of gender roles and gender identity in children is discussed.
4. Ochoa et al. (2006)	To know the fairytales most used by teachers and pupils in the classroom, in order to detect the types of discrimination based on sex or sexism that are made in them.	Most of the fairytales have the man as the central axis and main image of the plot. A greater degree of significance is assigned to male activities. The possibility for women to develop in other roles is diminished, denying them the right to other responsibilities and reducing them to passive roles. Male characters have dominant roles. These stereotypes mark people and society. They have been associated as innate qualities passed on to women since childhood.

(Continúa)

Author/year	Aims	Results
5. Abad and Pruden (2013)	Investigate whether books really do break down gender stereotypes in children.	Exposure to storybooks with atypical gender information may alter gender stereotypes for girls, but not necessarily for boys. Girls tend to remember more information when the protagonists do not conform to classic stereotypes. Exposure to biographical fairytales about women with non-traditional careers changes career goals relative to those who were not exposed to them. Some studies suggest that children reinterpret and adjust gender stereotypes, and others suggest that both boys and girls remember gender-atypical information that challenges traditional concepts much better because of the novelty effect.
6. Nair and Talif (2013)	To analyse the presence of sexism in a selection of English-language texts aimed at children and young people.	In storybooks, male characters are depicted with greater power, authority and prominence than female characters. Female characters are depicted in secondary roles, assigned domestic tasks or reinforcing traditional gender stereotypes. Male characters use active and productive language, while female characters use passive, negative or emotionally charged language. The findings demonstrate the persistence of sexism in the language of children's literature.
7. Berry and Wilkins (2017)	To determine whether children's picture books with non-human characters offer an alternative in non-stereotypical male and female representations.	The representation of male characters in books is higher. Female characters are mainly associated with nature-related entities. Female characters were more often shown faceless than male characters, lacked leadership qualities and were portrayed negatively, which may deprive girls of positive role models. Exposing children to stereotypical roles is thought to influence later behavioral expectations.
8. Mante-Estacio et al. (2018)	To examine the representation of gender in Filipino children's literature in relation to the verbs used to describe male and female child characters. To analyse the length of nouns associated with their gender and to understand how gender roles are portrayed and their impact on children's perception of gender identities.	Male characters have more active roles and traditional roles are female. For male nouns, a two-syllable structure is followed so that they are easily remembered by the children. Male characters dominated all verb types, from action verbs to agency or control verbs. The study reveals an unequal gender representation in Filipino children's storybooks, with a clear dominance of male characters in associated verbs and assigned names.
9. Lewis et al. (2020)	To conduct a comprehensive analysis of gender representation in a sample of books for children aged 0-6 years.	In the analysis of 247 contemporary books, gender associations were biased and more than half of the words in the corpus were sexist. They were associated with a particular gender and tended to be grouped into stereotypical categories. At the book level, they tended to reflect gender stereotypes, with female characters doing traditionally female tasks. Children were exposed to books that convey stereotypes about their own gender. The bias towards female characters is more pronounced than towards male characters. Books with female characters tend to be chosen for girls and male characters for boys, which influences the perception and assimilation of gender stereotypes.

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Author/year	Aims	Results
10. Casey et al. (2021)	To provide an update on the representation of gender in children's literature of the last 60 years (1960-2020) and those featuring a single protagonist.	Significant decline in the proportion of female protagonists in books published between 1960 and 2020. Four significant interactions are identified in a logistic regression model, author, audience age, character type and book gender, suggesting persistent effects on the proportion of male versus female protagonists. Non-human and human characters are represented as male. Authors show improvements with respect to the proportion of female characters, limited to children's books. Female authors portrayed more female protagonists in older books.
11. Conde Miguélez et al. (2022)	Analyse the role of fairy tales in the reproduction of gender stereotypes and inequalities.	Differences have been observed between classic and modern fairy tales. Classical fairy tales reproduce discriminatory gender stereotypes, while modern fairy tales have moved towards breaking down stereotypes, although some still persist. Relevant differences have also been noted in the use of public and private spaces and in the activities carried out by the characters according to their gender.
12. Say (2022)	To demonstrate that structuralist principles can be used to analyse the structure and symbolic elements of the story *The Snow Child*" on the basis of gender stereotypes in fairy tales.	It discusses how feminist criticism provides a different perspective and enables an analysis of how gender stereotypes and discrimination are manifested in children's literature. There is evidence of a perpetuation of gender roles and power relations in male characters over female characters. Fairy tales present stereotypes and power relations that are oppressive and based on patriarchy.
13. Adukia et al. (2022)	To examine and quantify gender stereotypes in a corpus of children's literature.	In children's fairytales, women have been depicted with attributes that relate to physical appearance and family, while men are more associated with masculine skills, professions and business. The association women and families seem to diminish over time. Three collections are analysed: *Diversity, Mainstream and HistWords*. They are identified by a method of detecting stereotypical sentences that associate women, their genitalia or attributes such as hysteria. Highly gender-stereotyped messages continue to appear in children's fairytales.
14. Suberviola (2023)	To analyse how children's fairytales can perpetuate gender stereotypes and transmit ideologies to children who read and listen to them, and how children's literature can be a tool to promote education for equality and the elimination of stereotypes.	Sexist language in fairytales not only involves including both sexes in the masculine gender, but is visualised in situations where women are discriminated against through linguistic use that likens them to animals or objects. The female gender is omitted when talking about a group or collective, or when reality is described through a male vision. It is also evident when a woman is described with some masculine characteristic such as: "*it was the mother who wore the trousers*"; boys *are* insulted with disqualifiers associated with women: "*you're a pussy*". The fairytales contain sexist content and the language is often not neutral.

Source: own elaboration

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5. Discussion

5.1. Nursery rhymes

The results of this research are contrasted with the existing literature (Cabo, 2010; Fernández, 2006; González, 2005; Juárez, 2020; Nasiruddin, 2013; Olayemi, 2020), so that the content present in nursery rhymes manifests gender relations from a perspective of inequality, which evidences a very marked social separation in male and female roles (González, 2005; Pascual, 2010). Specifically, the priority role in the songs is given to the male, commonly idealised as the saviour Prince Charming (Fernández, 2006). For his part, the male figure is associated with active roles, responsible for economic stability, whose figure within the family is of a higher hierarchy than that of the mother (Nasiruddin, 2013). In addition to this, the male figure is associated with attributes such as strength, courage and respect, which consistently places the male in a position of intellectual superiority that validates such attributes and relegates women to the domestic sphere, subject to the provisions of the male, to whom the idea of disgrace is attributed upon marriage (Al-Ramahi, 2013; Nasiruddin, 2013). Men are also depicted as vicious, smokers, drinkers, lazy and slackers, with a figure of absence within the family. They are also portrayed as irresponsible in fatherhood, associated with gender-based violence and polygamy (Fernandez, 2006). This, in general terms, shows that the stereotypes commonly associated with the male gender are consolidated, both from a positive and negative point of view.

On the other hand, as for the female figure reflected in nursery rhymes, their roles are passive. As a social reflection, it is possible to observe the association of women with maternal roles, the need to get married, occupy domestic roles and take care of children (Olayemi, 2020; Juárez, 2020). The situations that mention women are linked to marriage, abductions, captivities, courtships, courtship, courtship, religious vocation, disappointments in love, separations, reunions, jealousy or rivalries, relegating women to a marginal role, where dependence on the male figure transmitted from mothers to daughters is reiterated (González, 2005; Olayemi, 2020). When women who have transcended common stereotypes and achieved higher levels of education or position are mentioned, they are discredited, associating female culture with a greater number of family arguments (Nasiruddin, 2013). This attribution of roles is evident from nursery rhymes, in which girls already receive messages of devaluation and subordination that they internalise during their childhood and which affect their social development. In addition, nursery rhymes portray women as incompetent, unconcerned, indifferent and weak (Pascual, 2010).

5.2. Fairytales

In terms of children's literature transmitted through stories, we find a reiteration of what has already been mentioned in nursery rhymes. Gender stereotypes are transmitted from generation to generation, showing male characters as the main characters, who usually carry the main thread of the stories, and giving women secondary roles in them (Guil, 2016; Ortega, 2005; Pitch, 2010; Pyle, 1976). Fairytales reinforce gender roles and stereotypes associated with popular culture, as they come from ancient times and are not adapted to changes in gender in today's culture and society (Pascual, 2010). Clear evidence of this can be found in the names of the male characters, which have two syllables, making them more memorable than the female ones, giving priority again to the male gender. There is a gender bifurcation associated with the typology of stories aimed at boys and girls (Mante-Estacio et al., 2018). Stories are separated by gender, with a male or female main character depending on whether the target audience is male or female, which reinforces traditional gender stereotypes and roles. When the main characters are not stereotyped, children remember the gen-

der-atypical information conveyed in the reading much better, favouring the breaking of traditional concepts through the novelty effect (Abad and Pruden, 2013; Lewis et al., 2020). This information is contrasted with the results presented by Adukia et al. (2022), Casey et al. (2021), Lewis et al. (2020), Say (2022) and Suberviola (2023), who agree on the need for teachers to subject the selected stories to criticism, being aware that this is part of their own hidden curriculum. Furthermore, all of them are mainly committed to offering equality in the expression of feelings and emotions, such as: bravery or fragility, social success or sensitivity, among others, and parity in the presence of a diversity of characters.

6. Conclusions

Exposure to traditional fairytales and songs reiterates the internalisation of common gender roles and stereotypes, making it necessary to search for and include new songs or stories, or even modify them, capable of breaking these classic schemes as shown in the research by Conde Miguélez et al. (2022), educating around the values necessary for life in an egalitarian society that will serve as an example to future generations. According to Berry and Wilkins (2017), boys and girls need to see a variety of characters with a range of personality traits and behaviours, along with multiple activities capable of minimising the belief that there is only one prescribed way to identify as male or female.

Finally, following the review of the literature and the subsequent analysis carried out, it has become clear that there are some studies that have not allowed access to the full texts, which is an obstacle to the compilation and triangulation with other studies. Likewise, the scarcity of published research on this topic in the databases consulted has been highlighted. This is why we consider it necessary to support this type of research in order to contrast, from a diachronic point of view, the content of popular productions with that of the present day. A study of this level could provide us with a great deal of information, since it would be interesting to observe the general tendencies, that is to say, of reform or preservation of the status quo, with regard to sexist language.

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