

FROM **THEY** **TO** **ELLE**

**The translation of nonbinary
pronouns from English into Spanish**

Luna Pérez - Abela Maldonado

**StuTS 68
20 November 2020**



BASIC CONCEPTS

Singular they

1. Everyone forgot to bring their jacket.
2. The client should bring a bag with them.
3. Milo is my best friend, they always try to help me.

Non-binary language

- Direct vs. Indirect

Non-binary pronouns

- Across languages
- Not all are new



**A BRIEF
HISTORY OF
SINGULAR
THEY**

1375

“Hastely hized **eche** . . . **pei** neyzped so neizh .
.. pere william & his worpi lef were liand
i-fere.”

“**Each man** hurried . . . till **they** drew near . . .
where William and his darling were lying
together.”

SINGULAR THEY IN CLASSIC LITERATURE

- William Shakespeare: *Comedy of Errors* (1591)

"There's not **a man** I meet but doth salute me
As if I were **their** well-acquainted friend".

- Samuel Richardson: *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1790)

"I beg you will look over my poor matters, and let **every one**
have what belongs to **them**".

- Jane Austen: *Pride and Prejudice* (1813)

"To be sure, you knew no actual good of me, but **nobody** thinks
of that when **they** fall in love".

THE CASE OF SPANISH

- Generic masculine: *él/ellos*
- Existing alternative: *ello*
- Problems with splitting the gender

“Los/as alumnos/as pueden venir juntos/as”
pronoun noun adjective

(The students can come together)



**THE
NON-BINARY
ALTERNATIVE:
ELLE**

- Sometimes written *éll*e
- At least **1976**
- Other alternatives: *ell@*, *ellx*
- Opposition from *Real Academia de la Lengua*
- Modification of articles, nouns and adjectives
 une **niñe** **cansade**



TRANSLATIONS

LITERATURE

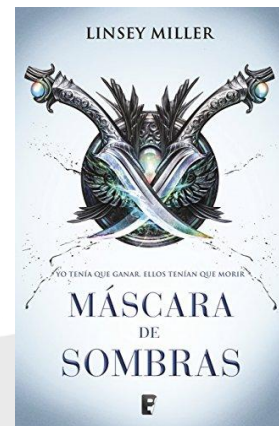


Linsey Miller: *Mask of Shadows* (2017)

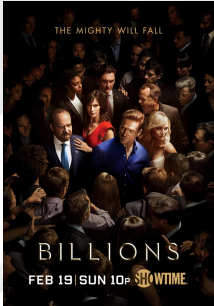
“You can call me ‘she’ when I dress like this [...] –
And if you dress like neither? [...] – They”

Máscara de sombras (Translation: C. Martín)

“Cuando vaya así vestido podéis dirigiros a mi como si fuera mujer. [...] –¿Y si no te vistes ni de lo uno ni de lo otro? [...] –En ese caso soy neutro”



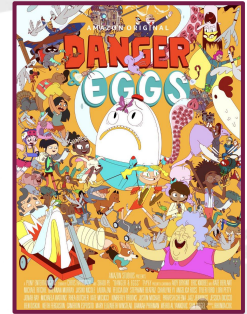
TV SHOWS



Billions *Dead Cat Bounce* (2017)

Taylor: “My pronouns are they, theirs and them”
“Mis palabras son ellos, de ellos”

Danger & Eggs *Lost & Found* (2017)



“The lost and found administrator [...] that he, she or they see fit”
“Quien administre [...] tal como a él, a ella o a elle le parezca”



One Day at a Time *Locked Down* (2018)

“They are walking away from my meal?”
“¿Elle ha abandonado mi cena?”

VIDEOGAMES



Borderlands 3 (2019)

EN: They/them
ES: Él, [-o]

Apex Legends (2019)

EN: They/them
ES: Ella, su



Temtem (2020)

“Choose your pronoun: he / she / they”
“Elige tu pronombre: él / ella / elle”



**ORIGINAL SPANISH
WORKS**



Rocío Vega: *La Compañía Amable* (2018)

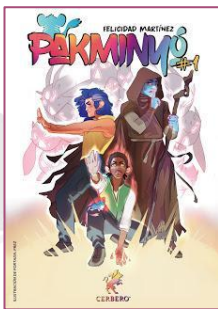
“Bebió por cortesía mientras elle cerraba el barril”

“Rael, ¿estás segure?”

Guillermo Jiménez: *El Demonio en el Interior de Sirel* (2019)

“¿soy le niñere de estos dos?”

“Algunes vienen muy mentalizades”



Felicidad Martínez: *Pakminyó* (2019)

“Replicó Min Puan, y a elle se unieron Chu Gon, [...]”

“Le iba a resultar difícil escabullirse entre tantes asistentes”



FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Nonbinary pronouns in other languages
- Rise in popularity of neopronouns and noun-self pronouns
- Efforts made by LGBT community to make languages more inclusive



“

*“Time changes all things; there is
no reason why language should
escape this universal law”*

Saussure



THANKS!

Any questions?

 @lunaperezabela  lunaperezabela@gmail.com



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