

Here we are the women.

Inclusive toponymy in the linguistic landscape of university campuses in southern Spain and its connection to the environment

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Introduction

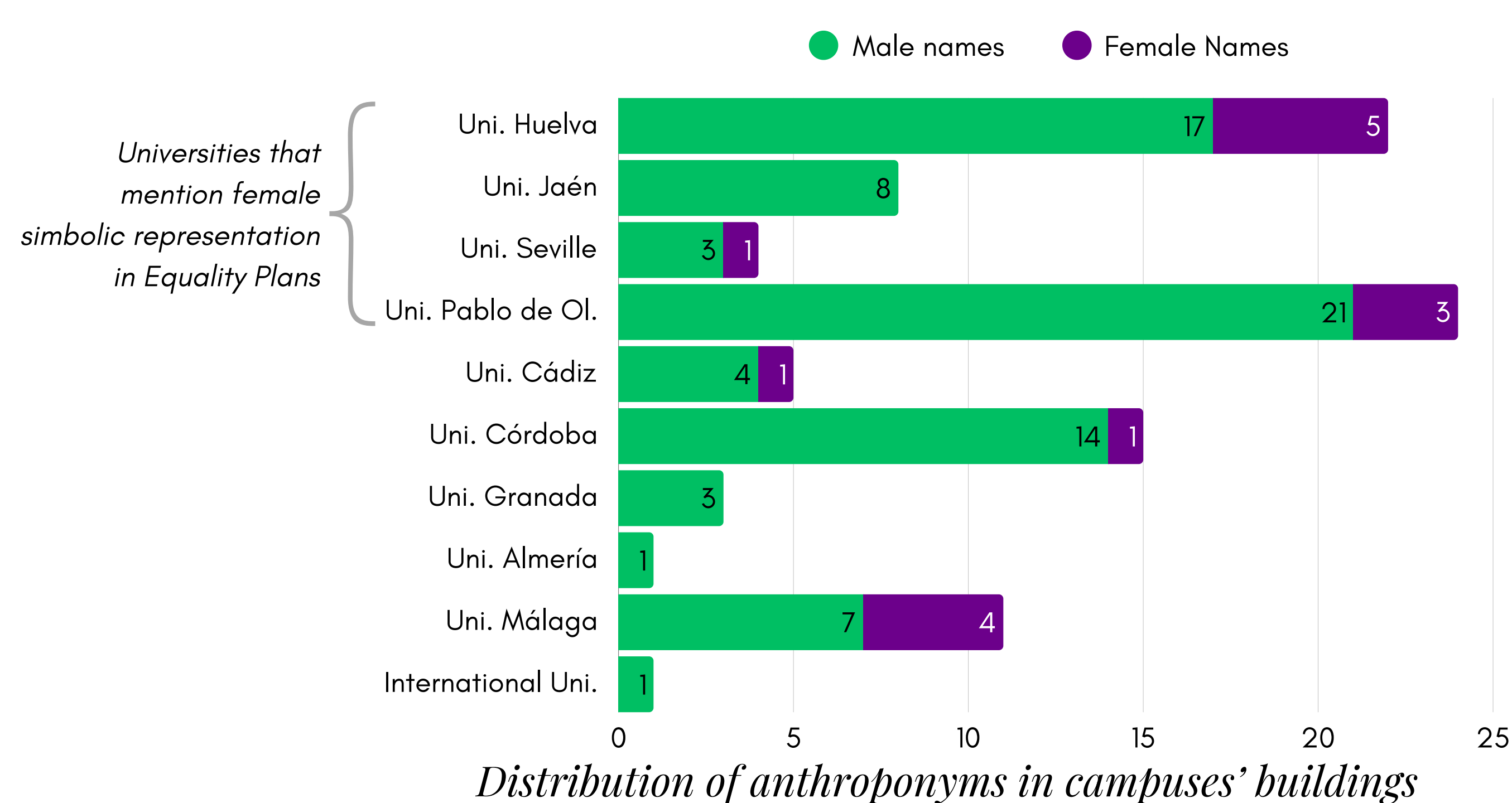
Toponymy is the field of onomastic studies that analyses places' names. Thus, toponymy is a **key indicator for interpreting the landscape** of a given territory: how is a name represented, what does a name embody, who is represented through a name and, even more important, why (Riesco-Chueca, 2010). Names are important symbols of **cultural heritage and identity values** and, as He, Ismail, Ariffin and Yang affirm in the case of universities "are the outer expression of their inner cultural tradition" (2024, p. 1244). As an **expression of power**, in the case of commemorative names -those given honoring a person- it is worth questioning where are the women. Considering that, historically, power has always been an **alleged male prerogative** and the commemoration naming politic was chosen for men by men (Felecan & Felecan, 2021), it is interesting to focus on the **commemorative representation of women** in the university linguistic landscape, as an expression of **feminist thinking in place-naming** and to relate this to **Equality Plans and policies** in universities' environment.

Aims and Methodology

This poster proposal aims to **quantitatively and qualitatively** analyse the **female anthroponyms** present in the linguistic landscape of the **building names at public universities in Andalusia** and, additionally, it will examine **whether there is any explicit mention of symbolic representation of female names in each university's Equality Plans** and how this pragmatically relates to their university context, including the **level of representation among students and faculty**.

Results and Discussion

There are **ten public universities** in Andalusia. They all have Equality Plans but just four of them have an explicit mention of female representation in place names: University of Huelva (*Eje 3, Objetivo 3.1*), University of Jaén (*ID02.L5.A4*), University of Seville (*Eje 3, Objetivo 3.1, M3.6.03*) and Pablo de Olavide University (*Eje 2, Objetivo 2.3, Acción 2.6*).



On average, with almost eight buildings named after men and **less than two buildings named after women**, the use of these anthroponyms transmits **specific values** to those who move in the campuses' context: **toponymic commemoration is just for one sex**. Place names are places of memory reflecting ideas and values that institutions wish to exalt, and there is scant place for women in academic spaces.

Although there are **four universities with specific policies** regarding toponymic inclusion, this does **not appear to lead to any form of feminist thinking** in place-naming. Nevertheless, it is worth noting the fact that this policies do exist and **the importance of being implemented** with the support of a Equality Plan.

This specific form of linguistic landscape perpetuates the **stereotypical separation** of men-Science and women-Humanities, as the majority of men commemorated are scientists or politicians, while women commemorated are writers, artists or philanthropists. This does not contribute to the **establishment of female models in STEM fields** within the university community and those possible members.

Even though the **majority of university students are women -74.3 %-** the **scarcity of female toponyms** reflects a different reality: the **scarcity of women also in faculty** with just 43.06 % of female presence (Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades, 2025). The necessity for a revision on toponymic commemoration is in line with the **precepts postulated by the UNESCO Chair in Inclusive Toponymy**, which among several recommendations states that "toponymic landscape [...] has a cultural and social value through its commemorative role, and an educational value through its edifying, demonstrative and formative dimension" (Giraut, 2024, p. 5). Names in building express a **pragmatic vision of who deserves to be remembered**, and in the case of higher education institutions **women have no place**.



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