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# Identifying Key Concepts of the Language of Desire and the Language of Ethics in Dialogic Literary Gatherings

Garazi López de Aguilera<sup>1</sup>, Víctor Climent- Sanjuán<sup>1</sup>, Adriana Aubert<sup>1</sup>, Alba Crespo-López<sup>2</sup>, Lena de Botton<sup>1</sup>, Carme Garcia-Yeste<sup>3</sup>, Marta Soler-Gallart<sup>1</sup>

- 1) *Department of Sociology, University of Barcelona, Spain*
- 2) *Department of Theory and History of Education, University of Barcelona, Spain*
- 3) *Department of Pedagogy, University of Rovira i Virgili, Spain*

## Abstract

Given the high prevalence of gender violence among adolescents and youth, research has underscored the importance of preventing it from an early age. The literature has clarified that the prevention of gender violence requires the union of the language of desire and of ethics to promote egalitarian relationships as desirable. Nevertheless, there is a need for a more in-depth and extensive analysis of the key concepts that emerge in DLG, implemented in diverse contexts to better understand their potential as a space for the prevention of gender violence. To contribute to filling this gap, this study explores key concepts of desire and ethics that adolescents surface in DLG implemented in 5 Learning Communities have in common. To that end, 26 observations in 9 different DLG groups with students aged 10-15 and 45 interviews with students and teachers were conducted. Results show one key concept of desire and ethics in these DLG: many students reject violence and peer pressure. Implications of these findings for the prevention and overcoming of gender violence are discussed.

## Keywords

Language of desire, language of ethics, dialogic literary gatherings (DLG), coercive dominant discourse (CDD)

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**Corresponding author(s):** Marta Soler Gallart

**Contact address:** marta.soler@ub.edu



## Identificación de los Conceptos Clave del Lenguaje del Deseo y del Lenguaje de la Ética en las Tertulias Literarias Dialógicas

Garazi López de Aguilera<sup>1</sup>, Víctor Climent- Sanjuán<sup>1</sup>, Adriana Aubert<sup>1</sup>, Alba Crespo-López<sup>2</sup>, Lena de Botton<sup>1</sup>, Carme Garcia-Yeste<sup>3</sup>, Marta Soler-Gallart<sup>1</sup>

1) *Departamento de Sociología, Universidad de Barcelona, España*

2) *Departamento de Teoría e Historia de la Educación, Universidad de Barcelona, España*

3) *Departamento de Pedagogía, Universidad Rovira i Virgili, España*

### Resumen

Dada la alta prevalencia de la violencia de género entre adolescentes y jóvenes, la investigación ha subrayado la importancia de prevenirla desde edades tempranas. La literatura ha aclarado que la prevención de la violencia de género requiere la unión del lenguaje del deseo y de la ética para promover relaciones igualitarias como deseables. Sin embargo, es necesario un análisis más profundo y extenso de los conceptos clave que emergen en la TLD, implementados en diversos contextos para comprender mejor su potencial como espacio de prevención de la violencia de género. Para contribuir a llenar este vacío, este estudio explora los conceptos clave de deseo y ética que tienen en común los adolescentes que emergen en TLD implementadas en 5 Comunidades de Aprendizaje. Para ello, se realizaron 26 observaciones en 9 grupos diferentes de TLD con estudiantes de entre 10 y 15 años y 45 entrevistas a estudiantes y profesores. Los resultados muestran un concepto clave del deseo y la ética en estas TLD: muchos estudiantes rechazan la violencia y la presión de grupo. Se discuten las implicaciones de estos hallazgos para la prevención y superación de la violencia de género.

### Palabras clave

Lenguaje del deseo, lenguaje de la ética, tertulias literarias dialógicas (TLD), discurso dominante coercitivo (DDC)

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**Correspondencia Autores(s):** Marta Soler Gallart

**Dirección de contacto:** [marta.soler@ub.edu](mailto:marta.soler@ub.edu)

Some theories on love, attraction, and choice of sexual-affective relationships consider gender violence to be biological and inherent, dependent on factors including chemistry, physical similarity, or fertility (Kuna & Galbarczyk, 2018; Lindová et al., 2016; Żelaźniewicz et al., 2021). Other theories talk about love and attraction as something instinctive, mysterious, which happens just like that and escapes each person's understanding or will (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 1995). What these different theories have in common is that persons cannot be free to choose who they feel attracted to and fall in love with, and therefore, having a violent or egalitarian relationship is a matter of luck, chemistry, or destiny. These theories leave little to no agency for human beings to decide who they desire and are attracted to.

However, the theory of preventive socialization of gender violence provides a different rationale. According to this theory and the empirical evidence supporting it, love and attraction have a social basis, and it is through social interactions that we construct, develop, learn and internalize certain patterns of love, attraction, and desire (Gómez, 2004). Although there are multiple and diverse patterns of love and attraction that different individuals are socialized in, this research line has identified a traditional socialization pattern that unites attraction and violence (Puigvert et al., 2019). This pattern can be learned through direct or indirect experience, and research has found that adolescents are particularly vulnerable to such socialization (Racionero-Plaza et al., 2018).

This socialization pattern is reproduced and reinforced through a coercive dominant discourse (CDD) that is present in many of today's media, movies, TV shows, music, commercials, books, etc., as well as peer interactions (Ríos Gonzalez & Peña Axt, 2021; Rodrigues de Mello et al., 2021; Villarejo et al., 2020; Villarejo-Carballido et al., 2022). Framed within the patriarchal imbalance in current societies, the CDD shapes many individuals' socialization into linking attractiveness to people with violent attitudes and behaviors: "people with violent attitudes and behaviours are socially portrayed as attractive and exciting (...) [whereas] people and relationships with non-violent attitudes and behaviours are portrayed as less exciting" (Puigvert et al., 2019).

The CDD is not internalized only by engaging in disdainful and violent relationships but also through interactions around them (López de Aguilera et al., 2021). Research has shown that many adolescents only engage in such relationships for the first time due to peer pressure (Puigvert-Mallart et al., 2023) and many of them acknowledge they had feelings such as disgust, disappointment, and lack of pleasure when they did (Torrás-Gómez et al., 2019). However, having shared those feelings with their peers would make them look bad, as if they were not good or experienced with sex (Torrás-Gómez et al. 2022). Instead, many feel they have to reproduce the narratives dictated by the CDD, telling their peers that they felt pleasure and that the boy was handsome. Telling those narratives over and over to their friends and themselves leads many adolescents to internalize and assimilate them as their memories, feelings, and desires (Flecha 2022; Racionero-Plaza et al. 2022). In this way, their sexual desire becomes associated with stimuli related to disdain and violence, increasing their likelihood to subjugate to relationships where there is violence or disdain (López de Aguilera et al. 2021). The CDD is therefore a risk factor for gender violence victimization (Ruiz-Eugenio et al. 2020).

In this regard, Dialogic Literary Gatherings (DLG) are an educational action which have shown evidence on preventing the impact of CDD and therefore gender-based violence, also

among adolescents (Racionero-Plaza 2015; Ruiz-Eugenio et al. 2023). By reading and dialogue the best universal literary works (Flecha & INCLUD-ED Consortium, 2015), the Language of Desire (LoD) in combination with Language of Ethics (LoE) emerge among the dialogues on the construction of the characteristics that make a character desirable and transform the collective construction of meaning on existing and new realities contributing to the socialization in egalitarian and desired relationships (López de Aguilera et al. 2020).

This study provides an in-depth analysis of the key concepts of desire and ethics that commonly emerge in the Dialogic Literary Gatherings (DLG) to gain a better understanding of their potential as a space for preventing gender-based violence among adolescents.

### Methodology

This study is framed within the communicative approach (Gómez et al., 2011, 2019; Puigvert et al., 2012). The Communicative Methodology (CM) is based on an intersubjective dialogue between researchers and research participants aimed at co-creating new knowledge and reality agreed upon by all subjects (Munté et al., 2011; Valls-Carol, 2014). Through an egalitarian dialogue in which researchers provide knowledge from research evidence and participants provide knowledge from their lifeworld and experiences, new knowledge is created. This methodology also includes and captures non-verbal dialogue and cues such as voice tones, glances, or corporal language (Joanpere et al., 2023).

This methodology has been selected for this study given the relevant role of dialogue in DLG and how the dialogic approach guides this methodology. Through the CM, scientific knowledge is co-created in the gatherings through egalitarian dialogue and is oriented towards transforming social reality (García-Carrión et al. 2020).

Due to its egalitarian foundation and transformative orientation, the CM has achieved scientific, political and social impact (Ramis-Salas, 2020; Redondo-Sama et al., 2020; Vieites Casado et al., 2021), especially with vulnerable populations, by including all voices throughout the whole research process (Gómez et al., 2019). For instance, the European Commission now requires that all research projects funded by it be conducted in co-creation and oriented towards achieving social impact (Horbach et al., 2022).

### Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted in five schools from the Learning Communities movement located in Spain.

The main criteria to select these five Learning Communities were: 1) having implemented DLG successfully for at least five years; and 2) providing a diverse sample of schools in terms of geographical location and student background. Table 1 provides a summary of the schools' main characteristics.

**Table 1***Summary of participating Learning Communities*

<b>School</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Years DLG</b>
Escolaica	Cullera (Valencia)	Mostly Spanish, middle class	11
Joaquim Ruyra	L'Hospitalet de Llobregat (Catalonia)	Mostly immigrants, low SRS	12
Mediterrani	Tarragona (Catalonia)	Mostly Roma, low SES	13
Montserrat	Terrassa (Catalonia)	Mostly immigrants, low SES	23
Soloarte	Basauri (Basque Country)	Mostly immigrants, low SES	13

Furthermore, Table 2 provides a summary of all the groups that participated in the study.

**Table 2***Summary of Participating DLG Groups*

<b>School</b>	<b>Groups</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Nationalities</b>	<b>Age</b>
Escolaica	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	17 female, 6 male	China, Honduras, India, Morocco, Romania, Spain, Ukraine, Venezuela	11-12
Joaquim Ruyra	5 <sup>th</sup> grade A, B	28 female, 23 male	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Georgia, Honduras, India, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Paraguay, Perú, Philipines, República Dominicana, Spain, Venezuela,	10-11
Mediterrani	1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> high school	32 female, 28 male	Ecuador, Morocco, Peru, Spain (Roma ethnicity)	12-15
Montserrat	5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> grade	18 female, 27 male	Morocco, Romania, Spain	10-12

School	Groups	Gender	Nationalities	Age
Soloarte	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade high school	8 female, 6 male	Colombia, Honduras, Morocco, Pakistan, Peru, Spain	15-17

Overall, 193 students and 8 teachers who facilitated DLG participated in the observed DLG. Of these, 51 students (32 female and 19 male) and six teachers (all female) also participated in the interviews. Three of the teachers interviewed are also the schools' principals. Some of these students have attended their Learning Community all their lives, so they are used to participating in DLG. For others, this was the first time in which they participated in a DLG.

### ***Data Collection***

Data collection took place from January to December 2023. Two methods were used: DLG observations and communicative interviews.

First, the school principals and one of the teachers were contacted via email or WhatsApp to inform them of the research, its objectives and its methods, and asked them whether they would like their school to participate. Once the school principals agreed, we decided which classrooms would participate. The criteria for the classroom selection were age (adolescence) and the principals' or teachers' understanding of which classrooms would fit better due to the classroom dynamics. The classroom dynamics considered were that students always or almost always respected the DLG principles, that there were no conflicts among students and they got along with each other, and that they made contributions to the gatherings that the principals or teachers considered interesting related to the study goals. The principals then distributed the informed consent forms to the students, their parents, and the teachers who were in charge of each DLG. After they signed the consent forms, one of the researchers went to the schools to observe the DLG and conduct interviews.

In all, 26 DLG sessions were observed across the 9 groups. The observations took different forms and were conducted at different times. All of them were observed in person except for the ones from Soloarte and Escolaica. In Soloarte, the first 5 DLG sessions were observed via zoom and the last one in person. In Escolaica, the DLG teacher audio-recorded the first 4 sessions, and the last one was observed in person. Some of the observations were audio-recorded, whereas on others field notes were taken on the most relevant things students said related to the study objective.

In order to complement the data collected from the observations, 45 interviews were also conducted, 39 with students and 6 with teachers. Interviews took various forms and were conducted at different times. In Montserrat's 6th grade, 5 individual student interviews (3 boys and 2 girls), 3 focus groups (two with three girls and one with three boys) and 1 interview with the teacher were conducted. In Soloarte 1 individual interview with a female student, three mixed focus groups formed by three students each, and 1 teacher interview were conducted. In Joaquim Ruyra 20 individual student interviews were conducted (6 boys and 14 girls), as well as one with the teacher. In Escolaica 7 individual interviews (3 boys and 4 girls) were

conducted with students and 1 with the teacher. In Mediterrani 2 interviews were conducted with two teachers. All interviews were audio-recorded. Interviews lasted from 5 to 25 minutes. Table 3 provides a summary of the numbers of observations and student interviews in each group and the books they read in the DLG.

**Table 3**

*Summary of Observations and Student Interviews*

School	Group	Observations	Interviews	DLG book
Escolaica	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	5	7	Romeo and Juliet
	Teacher		1	
Joaquim	5 <sup>th</sup> A	2	9	Don Quixote
Ruyra	5 <sup>th</sup> B	2	11	Don Quixote
	DLG teacher		1	
Mediterrani	1 <sup>st</sup> grade	1	0	Mar i Cel
	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	1	0	Oliver Twist
	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	1	0	Romeo and Juliet
	Teacher		1	
	Teacher		1	
Montserrat	5 <sup>th</sup> grade	2	0	The Aeneid
	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	6	8	The Iliad
	Teacher		1	
Soloarte	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	6	4	Pride and Prejudice
	Teacher		1	
TOTAL		26	45	

The interviews were semi-structured and served as complementary to the observations, having a list of main themes researchers wanted to focus the dialogue on, but the interview questions changed based on what participants were sharing and on the scientific evidence related to it (López de Aguilera et al., 2021). In this regard, conducting the interviews following the communicative orientation was also especially relevant for participants, as they felt they were in a safe space to share personal accounts, feelings and desires as they wanted to in light of scientific evidence. The interviews with students started by asking them whether they had ever felt any pressure to do something they did not want to do. Interviews also revolved around whether the DLG provided them with a space to talk about these issues and, if so, how that helped them personally.

### ***Data Analysis***

In order to analyze the data, all audio-recordings were transcribed with the help of the Box automatic transcription feature in their original language (all interviews were conducted in Spanish, some DLG were conducted also in Spanish and others in Catalan). The analysis was conducted in two main steps, the first one being a thematic analysis in which all interactions



on issues related to love, sexual-affective relationships, violence, or coercion were identified, and the second one in which those identified interactions were analyzed in order to understand whether they were said from the language of ethics or from the language of desire.

In the first step, after reading all transcriptions several times, different categories were made based on the themes that were common across the different DLG sessions and interviews. This led to three main categories: friendship, CDD, and love, which were then broken into more specific subthemes. For the purposes of this article, only the analysis and findings of the data categorized within CDD will be presented.

In the second step, all those interactions categorized as CDD were re-analyzed paying attention to language, specifically whether they were said a) from the language of desire only or b) from the language of desire united with the language of ethics (Flecha et al., 2013). The former included those interactions in which participants talk about characters, relationships, or situations in terms of the values they represent (i.e. good, bad, wrong, etc.) in a way that does not portray them as attractive. The latter included interactions in which participants portray characters, relationships or situations that are good or ethical as attractive and reject those that are not good as non-attractive or non-desirable.

Table 4 shows the final conceptual matrix with the subthemes within the CDD category.

**Table 4**

*Data Analysis Categories*

CDD				
Language of ethics	Identify coercion	Understand	the	Reject CDD and
Language of desire		influence of CDD		violence

### *Ethical Considerations*

The study followed ethical standards included in the Declaration of Helsinki. All personal data about participants were anonymized, all personal names used in this article are pseudonyms, and only one of the researchers has access to each participant's personal information. All parents, students and teachers were provided with an information sheet about the study goals, the methods, and the implications of participating, including the benefits and potential risks. All teachers and students who participated, as well as their parents, signed the informed consent forms. This study received approval from the Institutional Review Board at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Approval number is 2022-1444.

After collecting the data, the school principals or teachers were asked whether they wanted the school's name to appear published or not. They discussed these issues in their schools' committees, assemblies or councils, in which all members of the communities participate. All schools agreed to have their name appear, stating they felt proud of their actions.



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## **Results**

In most cases, students use the language of ethics to discuss issues related to the CDD. However, there are also several instances in which they use the language of desire to reject the coercive discourse as non-attractive. This section presents some of the most common interactions around the CDD.

### ***Rejecting Violence and the Coercive Dominant Discourse***

Coercion or pressure and violence are a central theme on which the dialogues throughout the DLG and interviews revolve. In some gatherings, especially with younger students, they ask questions about whether certain types of behaviors are considered violence or not:

If they force you [to do something] is that violence? (Habib, Montserrat 6<sup>th</sup> grade, DLG)

Yes, because they're forcing you to do something you don't want to do, they're pushing you. If they're forcing you and you don't want to do it, why would you do it? (Nadia, Montserrat 6<sup>th</sup> grade, DLG)

In this interaction event, Habib is unsure about whether pressure or coercion can be considered violence (line 1), and Nadia replies with confidence that it is indeed violence. Moreover, she finishes with a rhetorical question that shows her unwillingness to do something others pressure her to do, inviting others to think about why anyone should do it.

Throughout the different DLG there are many interaction events about the coercion or violence that some characters from the books use. However, in some of them, in addition to identifying and criticizing such violence in the books, students once again make connections with the real world:

I think that the nurse shouldn't pressure [Juliet] not to marry Romeo, because if she truly loves Romeo, she should go with him. And I think that even though this happened a long time ago, we have seen that many times people pressure others, for instance if someone says that another person is very cool or fun and at the end the person to whom they're saying this will end up believing it (Ainara, Escolaica DLG)

Here, Ainara again rejects the nurse's advice for Juliet to marry Paris instead of the person she is in love with, calling such advice "pressure". However, in this quote, she goes a step further and connects that passage with the real world. She compares the pressure in the book

to the CDD, or in her own words, to the pressure that many people use to make others believe certain people are fun or cool. In this particular DLG session, coercion and peer pressure are a main topic, sparked by the pressures Juliet suffers from her family, who tell her that if she does not marry Paris, they will kick her out and no longer consider her their daughter. Many students debate whether those pressures might influence someone's decisions when choosing sexual-affective relationships or not:

I think that pressure has a big influence when choosing someone to marry, because if the nurse says that she doesn't think [Romeo] is good and the nurse is someone Juliet trusts, right? Then maybe Juliet, fortunately it doesn't happen, but she could have chosen what the nurse says. (Ariadna, Escolaica DLG)

In this case, even though she talks specifically about the book's example, Ariadna's reflections about how some people's pressures might influence others to choose certain partners or relationships go beyond fiction. She acknowledges that, although it has not happened in Romeo and Juliet's case, peer pressure can have a big influence when making important decisions. A similar interaction event can be found in the DLG on *Pride and Prejudice*, when students debate whether Lidia's decision to run away with Wickham is her own decision or is influenced by his, her family's and society's pressure:

I think here we shouldn't blame the family, the only one responsible for making that decision is Lidia, as she is old and mature enough to make such a decision, and that's what she did. Because she wanted to, right? Well, and we don't know whether Wickham pushed her to make that decision. So I wouldn't blame the family nor the mother (Maria, Soloarte DLG)

I would. As Maria says, she's the one who made the choice, and she's the one who run away. But as Ibtissan says, it's also the family pressure, the mom, like she has taught them that they can only live to get married (Alicia, Soloarte DLG)

Here they have already realized, after something bad has happened, that they were supporting, or forcing her to do something bad. But before that they were telling her "you need to get married, what a shame", but after it's happened, now they feel guilty (Ibtissan, Soloarte DLG)

Whereas Maria blames only Lidia and Wickham for the decision to run away, Alicia and Ibtissan consider that the family's pressure to get married is an influential factor that might have led her to make that decision. In line 6, Ibtissan reminds them of the constant pressure the family, especially the mother, has put on Lydia and her sisters to get married. Although in this example students are focused on the book, there are many instances in which their reflections on peers or society's role in pushing someone to make certain decisions are connected to the non-fiction world. In many of those interaction events, some students show a clear rejection towards this kind of pressure: "If you see that someone might be alone you can try to be with them, and don't join the ones who tell you not to be with the person who is alone" (Samira, Montserrat 6<sup>th</sup> grade, DLG).

Here, Samira advises her classmates not to listen to the coercive discourse that tells them who they should and should not be with. In addition to showing that she would not listen to what they say, she states she would reject them and not be their friends. Whereas Samira's quote does not show a rejection from the language of desire, in some cases students use the language of desire to express that they consider that rejecting the coercive discourse is attractive and desirable. The DLG on *Pride and Prejudice* sparks many interactive events in which some students view Elizabeth's attitudes against the pressures from her mother, from Collins and from Lady Catherine as attractive:

I liked it, I really liked it, as I have said in previous sessions, she is very determined. She has a very determined personality, and she is very self-confident. And whenever someone is pressuring or vulnerating her, she stops them (Alicia, Soloarte DLG)

In Alicia's quote, we can see the language of desire when she says she "really like[s]" her attitude of not letting anyone pressure or coerce her using words such as "determined" and "self-confident" to describe her. Other students also view this attitude as brave, stating that it is not always easy to say no to coercion: "I think it's very brave that she has rejected that, that situation. I mean it's not always easy to reject things" (Ibtissan, Soloarte DLG)

The word "brave", which also indicates the language of desire, is heard several times when referring to Elizabeth's stance against the pressures, as can be seen in yet another example: "I think Elizabeth is brave, she knows what she is worth and she makes others know her worth. (...) Many people here, well, here and everywhere, wouldn't be able to be like Elizabeth" (Claudia, Soloarte DLG)

All these examples show that many students admire Elizabeth's attitudes not only for her goodness when rejecting something that is not right, but for her bravery and the self-worth she shows when doing so, which are described as attractive. As Claudia states, it is not always easy to reject the coercive discourse; only the people who know their worth are able to do it. Conversely, there are also several interaction events in which students reject the people who pressure Elizabeth and other characters in the book. Many students particularly reject Lady Catherine, Darcy's aunt, who did not want Elizabeth and Darcy to get married, and who seemed to decide over everybody else's lives:

The second dash. "[reads the passage he selected]". Like... she's a bitter and rude woman and she comes here to, I don't know what for. I don't know, I completely dislike this lady (Martin, Soloarte DLG)

(...) her buffoons. Franco's first cousin (Claudia, Soloarte DLG)

she thinks she's superior to others, this old bitter lady (Mikel, Soloarte DLG)

the witch, she's missing the broomstick (Martin, Soloarte DLG)

but Mikel, you've said that "she treats everyone as if they were inferior" (Andrea Teacher, Soloarte DLG)

as if they were supposedly inferior to her, as if she's superior because she's married, because she has money, because she says so (Mikel, Soloarte DLG)

because she's Tutankhamun (Claudia, Soloarte DLG)

so she decides who is inferior, right? (Andrea, Soloarte DLG)

inferior in her way, according to her point of view (Mikel, Soloarte DLG)

economically (Amagoia, Soloarte DLG)

according to social status (Claudia, Soloarte DLG)

but for me she's inferior to me, I mean... (Mikel, Soloarte DLG)

The words that these students use to refer to Lady Catherine are charged with a rejection from the realm of desire, describing her as a "witch" (line 20), "bitter" (line 5), "Franco's [Spanish dictator] first cousin" (line 18) and even "Tutankhamun" (line 23), therefore removing attractiveness from an authoritarian and coercive figure. They particularly reject her feeling superior to everybody else and her will to decide who should marry whom.

These interaction events do not always remain in the gatherings, but they may transcend and help them make certain decisions or act in certain ways in their own lives. In the interviews, a few students express that when some of their friends or classmates experienced these types of pressures, they helped them reject the coercion:

have you or any of your friends ever felt pressured to have relationships? (Interviewer, Escolaica Interview)

I haven't, but I think that some friend has (Andreu, Escolaica Interview)

and what type of pressures did he receive? (Interviewer, Escolaica Interview)

I don't know, there were many people telling him to do something and he didn't want to do it. But in the end me and other friends from class convinced him not to do things he didn't want to do (Andreu, Escolaica Interview)

very well. What types of pressures were those, what did they tell him to do? (Interviewer, Escolaica Interview)

they wanted him to talk to a girl, I don't know if she wanted to, but he didn't want to do it, we were in a school trip and Jon felt pressured. And in the end nothing happened, because a few of us impeded it (Andreu, Escolaica Interview)

When asked about peer pressure, although Andreu does not identify any coercion towards him, he quickly remembers a case in which a friend of his was coerced to talk to a girl. He clearly states in lines 4 and 6 that his friend did not want to do that thing which he was being pressured to do, which was to talk to a girl, and he is even unsure whether she wanted to talk to him. As he explains, instead of joining the people who were coercing his friend, Andreu and other classmates felt the need to support him in not doing what he did not want to do, and they helped him resist and reject the peer pressure.

## Discussion

The purpose of this study is to identify key concepts of desire and ethics that adolescents surface in nine different DLG implemented in five schools from the Learning Communities movement. As the findings show, a key concept found across all the DLG groups is the rejection of violence and CDD. The review of the scientific literature on gender violence confirms that it is a key concept in its prevention and overcoming.

The observed DLGs show that the participating students are able to identify violence and the CDD in the books they read, and make connections with the CDD in real life. Unlike the theories on love that Jesús Gómez (2004, 2015) reviewed, which talk about attraction and choice of sexual-affective relationships as being innate or biological, many participants in this study are aware of the social influence when making those choices. Many students in the observed DLGs reject those who pressure them to do things they do not want to and admire those who do not subjugate to the pressure. Identifying, being critical towards and rejecting the CDD aligns with some social impacts of actions such as Dialogic Feminist Gatherings (Ruiz-Eugenio et al., 2020). As reported by the literature, many girls who participate in Dialogic Feminist Gatherings see how the CDD influenced their sexual-affective relationships and choices and make the conscious decision of not letting it govern their lives anymore. Although this study's participants have not expressed whether DLGs have helped them make the conscious decision of not letting the CDD influence their lives, there is evidence on students who do reject and defy it, such as when they help their peers not to subjugate to peer pressure.

Although in many cases, when students in the DLG talk about the CDD, they do so from the language of ethics, there are also several examples in which they use the language of desire united with the language of ethics to talk about it. The use of the language of desire takes many forms, from rejecting people who use coercion as not being attractive to valuing and admiring relationships based on love and away from violence as desirable. The language of desire is often missing in many programs aimed at preventing and overcoming gender violence (Melgar Alcantud et al., 2021; Puigvert, 2016). In that way, they do not overcome the CDD and, even without wanting to, they might actually reinforce it. By talking about non-violent relationships only as good and not acknowledging that desire is a human drive, these programs leave the realm of desire to the CDD, which removes attractiveness from goodness. This dichotomy that the CDD imposes is present in some DLG observed, for instance when some students say they prefer someone good over someone attractive. Without the intention to do so, these interactions not only make it seem that one has to choose between goodness or desire, but also that good people are not attractive. However, some students reject this imposed binary and express that

values, attractiveness and desire can and do actually go together, uniting the language of ethics and the language of desire towards non-violent relationships. Engaging in these dialogues during DLGs provides other students the opportunity to see that relationships different from the single model that the CDD dictates are possible. The plurality of options is freedom, and by engaging in these dialogues that help them see that other kinds of relationships exist, the students from the studied contexts have more freedom to choose goodness and stability and passion and attractiveness in the same person, in the same relationship.

### Conclusion

This study contributes to the scientific literature on the prevention and overcoming of gender violence from schools by providing evidence on DLG, a successful action implemented in more than 15.000 contexts all over the world. The evidence shows that adolescents from 9 DLG implemented in 5 schools from the Learning Communities movement surface key concepts of the language of desire and ethics that coincide with some key factors that the literature has identified as contributing to preventing and overcoming gender violence. One of these key aspects is becoming critical toward the CDD and admiring people who reject it. Most importantly, many of the dialogues and interactions in the DLG unite the language of ethics with the language of desire, contributing to removing attractiveness from violent people and relationships. Nevertheless, some limitations and prospective research must be considered.

On the one hand, this study does not deepen the impact of DLG in promoting dialogues on that element. It remains unknown whether students who engage in those interactions, especially from the language of desire, do so as a result of participating in DLG or as a result of other interactions and socialization. Along this line, all the schools that have participated in this study also implement other successful actions focused specifically on the prevention of gender violence, such as Dialogic Feminist Gatherings and the Zero Violence Brave Club. Therefore, it is hard to assess how much of the findings are influenced by these other actions. Future research should study DLG in the long term in order to identify changes in students' dialogues related to these topics, particularly on whether the language of desire changes throughout their participation in the gatherings. Last, these findings are not generalizable to all DLG. Similar studies should be replicated in different countries and different contexts to see whether these findings are transferable or not.

The findings reported in this study cannot determine what kind of relationships students will choose in the future, and we know that the CDD has a great influence among many adolescents (Puigvert et al., 2019; Gómez, 2004). Yet the literature on the preventive socialization of gender violence has shown that the key element found across these 9 DLG, namely the rejection of the CDD, is a key protective factor against gender violence. Whereas that alone does not mean these adolescents are necessarily protected from gender violence, in DLG they have an alternative socialization free from the CDD. Given that language creates thought and reality (Flecha, 2022), even though many students in those DLG have a strong socialization on the CDD, the dialogues they have had during the DLG are already in these students' chain of

dialogues, they will always be part of them and of their future dialogues, and if they want, they can be part of their future decisions, dreams, desires and relationship.

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