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## **Comparing Biases in AI- and Human-Produced Writings**

### **Abstract**

With the current rise of using artificial intelligence (AI) to complete tasks traditionally done by humans, companies began using AI to produce professional communication. Scholars considered topics related to communication bias, algorithmic biases, and technical communicators' and AI's relationship but missed comparing the biases between human- and AI-produced communication. Therefore, this study serves as a textual analysis of a human-produced writing by Google's Chief Diversity Officer to inform the general public of Google's diversity and inclusion initiatives and an AI-produced writing with the same intended audience, purpose, and length that could, theoretically, replace Google's article. The study implemented the APA guidelines for bias-free and inclusive language as its criteria. While the human-produced communication more accurately followed guidelines, the AI-produced communication applied more terms and phrases related to diversity and inclusion and contained fewer instances of cliché language. Regardless, both communications utilized word-choices that still alienate or offend readers. As a result, relying on AI-produced communication could hurt target audiences, preventing the communication from completing its purpose. Technical communicators should implement these findings to develop specific, inclusive, and unbiased communication and prove they supply more value than AI.

## Context and Problem

When OpenAI released ChatGPT, an artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot, on November 30, 2022, organizations changed the way they developed technical communication (OpenAI, 2022). ChatGPT provides users with answers to their inquiries by gathering information from archived websites, textbooks, and other articles to form an answer written within its own words in an academic and professional tone (OpenAI, 2022). For years, science fiction movies, TV shows, books, and other media have depicted robots taking over human jobs; however, with the release of AI chatbots, such as ChatGPT (OpenAI, 2022), Microsoft's BingAI ("Introducing the new Bing," n.d.), Google's Bard ("Bard," n.d.), and Anthropic's Claude ("Claude," n.d.), companies began utilizing AI to complete tasks normally accomplished by a human. In technical communication, for example, managers request AI chatbots to write company announcements and emails, draw branded logos and icons, and design and build websites instead of asking human employees (Sarrion, 2023).

As many companies began employing AI to complete everyday tasks, Congress passed federal regulations on the use of AI, the Algorithmic Accountability Act of 2022. This act requires companies to assess automated decision systems for unfair, biased, and discriminatory decisions (Wyden, 2022). Because the technology is new, we know little about AI's ability to marginalize certain groups. Specifically, we must discover what biases AI writes into workplace communication, including biases based on gender, race, age, sexuality, etc. We do not know what algorithmic biases, (prejudiced results caused by executing mathematical or logical rules to solve a problem), AI causes when writing professional, workplace communications (Baer, 2019). Therefore, we do not comprehend how AI-produced communication can alienate, marginalize, or privilege certain groups of people, all things that must be avoided in workplace communication.

Prior research demonstrated that both humans and algorithms produce biases in communication. Yet no study compares the two to understand the biases' similarities and differences. Therefore, this study aims to solve that problem by inspecting these biases, determining their similarities and differences, and considering whether AI-produced writings can actually replace human-produced writings.

### ***Biases from Human-Produced Communication***

Original discussions on bias in workplace communication began by analyzing human-produced communication. Harold A. Innis (1951) introduced the idea that biases exist in communication and both time and space, as impacted by culture, form biases in communication. Since then, scholars built on his theories. For example, Marshall McLuhan (1964) argued that the communication's media (the method by which a concept is communicated) helps to shape the communication's message meaning that, in addition to time and space, media helps to shape the biases included in the communication. Additionally, every type of communication media contains biases, even in new technologies (Carey, 1967).

Once companies started prioritizing bias-free communication, scholars wrote about how to develop inclusive language-based communication (International Association of Business Communicators, 1977; Pitt, 1994). For example, the International Association of Business Communicators (1977) released a book on how to avoid bias in communication about race, gender/sex, age, and disabilities. The book also taught how to translate those communication principles into company policies. Other authors focused on specific aspects of avoiding bias in communication, such as analyzing how to avoid bias from only race or gender (Pitt, 1994; van den Berghe, 1967).

These books transitioned into ensuring that professional communications followed best practices for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). This transition included three categories of literature. First, it contained books and advice targeted to general business people who do not specifically work in professional communication but still need to understand the DEI best practices for creating communication (Thompson, 2021). Second, it covered articles specifically teaching current technical and professional communicators how they can incorporate these DEI best practices into their work (Bay et al., 2023; Welch, 2023). Finally, it involved articles teaching technical and professional communication professors about DEI best-practices (Bay, 2022). Essentially, this transition supported technical and professional communicators understanding DEI best-practices to help eliminate biases in their work.

Overall, throughout this literature, scholars solely considered human-produced communication. This study extends this literature by also investigating biases in AI-produced communication, a topic which scholars have not widely explored.

### ***Technical Communicators' and AI's Relationship***

Since AI's popularity grew, scholars investigated the relationship between AI and technical communicators. Scholars define AI as “the ability of a machine to display human-like capabilities such as reasoning, learning, planning and creativity” (Jansen, 2022, p. 1). They concluded that technical communicators must embrace techniques and toolkits produced by AI because of its user-centered capabilities and abilities to produce user action (Hocutt et al., 2022, Verhulsdonck et al., 2021). Simultaneously, as technical communicators rely on AI, AI must rely on technical communicators to make its interfaces useable, algorithms and processes understandable, systems human-centered for the general public, and overall actions ethical (Graham & Hopkins, 2021; Verhulsdonck et al., 2021). Additionally, technical communication

researchers should employ AI to generate research results using a coded dataset because research found the AI model generated similar research results to the human-produced results (Graham & Hopkins, 2021). Thus, because of all of AI's benefits in communication, professors should teach students about utilizing it (Tham et al., 2022; Verhulsdonck et al., 2021). However, this literature only considered technical communicators' and AI's relationship. This study furthers this literature by comparing the communication produced by both.

### ***Algorithmic Biases and Communication***

As humans continue to rely more on technological innovations, scholars started examining the biases communicated through the innovations' algorithms. Specifically, algorithmic bias research claims that algorithms form oppression, commonly known as "algorithmic oppression," through biases and discrimination (Noble, 2018). Basically, algorithms cannot work independently from humans (Johnson, 2018). For instance, humans must develop the algorithms and the datasets the algorithm relies on. Thus, algorithms exhibit societal and human biases because the algorithm's developers and the data used by algorithms contain biases that propagate into the algorithms (Baer, 2019). Furthermore, humans must serve as the algorithms' users. When users utilize the algorithms, they construct user feedback that the algorithm learns from. For example, if a user tells the algorithm that it incorrectly wrote an image description, the algorithm would learn from that feedback to compose more accurate image descriptions in the future. When humans provide user feedback, they teach the algorithms societal and human biases in the process (Reyman, 2018). For example, users supply an image generator algorithm feedback when they request the algorithms to fix aspects of a photo. If the user tells the algorithm to fix the photo based on societal stereotypes or biases, the user teaches the algorithm to follow those societal stereotypes or biases when it generates images. Essentially,

because algorithms cannot work without humans, they cannot work without containing and enacting human biases.

Scholars argued that every time someone asks a search engine a question, likes a post on social media, or clicks on a streaming service recommendation, they increase the value and power that the algorithm(s) behind that action hold (Reid, 2022). This concept means people increase the impact of the algorithms' biases the more that they interact with the algorithms, which makes the algorithms' biases more problematic. As a result, scholars urged users to increase their awareness and consciousness of the power and agency they grant algorithms (Reid, 2022).

Additionally, these processes cause search engines, social media, and streaming services to yield search results that reinforce stereotypes or recommend content from a non-diverse group of creators (Frey, 2021; Noble, 2018; Werner, 2020). For example, Noble (2018) examined autosuggested searches from January 25, 2013, where Google recommended searches completing the phrases "Why are Black women so..." and "Why are White women so...". Google autocompleted the searches for Black women with negative words, such as "angry," "mean," "lazy," and "annoying," while the autocompleted searches for White women included positive words, such as "pretty," "skinny," and "perfect" (Noble, 2018, p. 21). In this example, the autocomplete terms demonstrated how Google's search engine algorithms reinforce stereotypes about Black women and White women, forming biases towards White women.

Another example came from recommendation algorithms, such as Netflix's and Spotify's algorithms for recommending music and movie ideas. The algorithms follow the steps in their code to create categorizations. In the process, these algorithms communicate messages about certain audiences by teaching that if a person enjoys a song or movie, then they would also

appreciate another song or movie that someone from the same audience likes. Usually, these recommendations follow stereotypes about groups of people. In doing so, Netflix's and Spotify's algorithms persuade users to follow these categories, reinforcing biases and stereotypes about certain people groups (Frey, 2021; Werner, 2020).

Ultimately, these examples demonstrate that algorithms can produce harmful, alienating and marginalizing results so users should be cautious about the power they grant algorithms (Baer, 2019; Rathee et al., 2023). This literature analyzed how algorithms recommend content, not produce it. Thus, this study extends the literature by considering algorithmic biases in AI-produced content, specifically writings.

### ***Biases from AI***

Finally, with the sudden and recent surge in AI's popularity, researchers studied biases in AI. Research on AI-produced biases argued that AI learns from and amplifies human biases and values despite the AI's creators' attempts to make the AI not contain biases. Because AI is built on algorithms, AI also relies on humans and learns their biases in the process.

Specifically, Williams (2023) argued that ChatGPT's algorithms magnify human biases because their ability to interpret patterns in human responses causes them to learn biases from humans. Furthermore, Gross (2023) found that ChatGPT perpetuated non-inclusive forms of gender in its responses, which it learned from human inputs. Lastly, Rozado (2023) asked ChatGPT political questions, thinking its answers would appear neutral as ChatGPT claims it acts politically neutral; however, he found its answers tended to match left-leaning viewpoints, which he predicted may be due to most professionals working in Western society's influential institutions, including mainstream news outlets, universities, and social media platforms,

identifying politically as left-leaning. Basically, if a user asks AI a question, its answer would contain biases because the AI learned these biases from humans.

Scholars consistently expand this research as they discover new aspects of AI's biases. For example, Luo et al. (2023) inspected popular online platforms, including ChatGPT, for biases related to various languages. They detected biases towards the English language and argued that these biases cause our society to encounter “blind spots” where we are not exposed to diverse, opposing, and other cultural views, limiting our society's ability to grow and think critically. Also, Lippens (2023) requested ChatGPT to rate fictitious curriculum vitae that only differed by the application's gender and ethnicity. He did not notice gender bias but observed biases related to ethnicity and the intersectionality of gender and ethnicity, so people who use tools such as ChatGPT to evaluate humans should practice caution. Both of these articles show how soon-to-be-published research related to AI and biases in communication continues to evolve.

However, most of this literature only focused on biases in general AI-produced responses. This study advances this published and soon-to-be published literature by prioritizing biases in AI-produced communication, particularly in writing.

To investigate biases in AI- versus human-generated writing, this study answers the research question, “When writing technical communication, how do the amounts and types of biases in pieces written by the Artificial Intelligence chatbot ChatGPT compare to those in pieces written by a human?”

## **Methodology**

To answer this question, this study applied a textual analysis where I analyzed each writing's content, structure, purposes, and impact on the audience (Tracy, 2020). Additionally, it



called upon the theory of algorithmic bias, when algorithms' results create "prejudice for or against one person or group, especially in a way considered to be unfair" (Baer, 2019, para. 1). It considered a piece of professional communication written by humans for Google's website (Google, n.d.a), and compared it to a similar writing piece produced by AI chatbot ChatGPT with the same intended audience and purpose.

I chose to analyze Google's writing for this case study for four reasons:

1. Consumers recognize Google as a well-known and respected premiere company in its field.
2. Billions of people use Google's products, and Google employs over 94,000 people in the U.S., meaning their ability to form inclusive and unbiased communication impacts a significant number of people (Google, n.d.b).
3. Forbes, a global media company known for business and technology publications, ranked Google as the 3rd Best Employer for Women, 11th Best Large Employer in America, and 59th Best Employer in Diversity, all in 2023 (Forbes, 2023).  
Basically, society recognizes Google for its inclusive efforts but does not consider the company as the highest standard for inclusivity. Therefore, Google represents a fair and average representation of a company attempting to form inclusive communication.
4. Previous scholars, such as Safiya Umoja Noble (2018), called Google out for its racist and biased practices. Since then, Google improved its search engine algorithms to generate less offensive and more inclusive and unbiased results. Thus, considering Google's writing means analyzing the communication of a company that works to produce inclusive, unbiased, and inoffensive pieces.

Out of Google's website articles, I chose to analyze a letter about diversity by Google's Chief Diversity Officer because it functioned as a professional communication piece that Google puts a lot of effort into making unbiased and inclusive, so it should fairly represent Google's best work. (See Appendix A for Parker's letter). Finally, I decided to utilize ChatGPT as the AI chatbot because of its notoriety and widespread usage.

After selecting to analyze Parker's letter, I read through the letter to determine its audience and purpose. Then, I gave ChatGPT the following prompt to produce a professional communication piece that could, in theory, replace Parker's letter because they have the same audience, purpose, and length:

*"Write about 750-word professional communication that could go on Google's website about the company's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion practices. Imagine the author of this piece is the company's chief diversity officer, Melonie Parker. The goal of the piece is to inform the general public and people considering getting a job at this company of why this company has good DEI initiatives and values DEI."*

I wrote this prompt to reflect the prompting techniques that an individual with an average level of knowledge of AI would use, meaning I did not apply any iterative approaches. Also, I did not provide ChatGPT any sample writings to understand the genre or writing style typically employed in website articles, professional communication, or pieces about diversity and inclusion. Doing so would insert biases into the produced writing, which meant the produced writing would not accurately reflect ChatGPT's abilities. (See Appendix B for the ChatGPT-produced communication).

Then, I analyzed the language of the human-produced and ChatGPT-produced communications for biases. The analysis process applied APA guidelines for inclusive (American Psychological Association, 2021) and bias-free language (American Psychological Association, 2022). I selected these guidelines because industry and academia respect them, meaning they provide well-developed guidelines applicable to a variety of audiences and purposes. Therefore, we can trust them to serve as a credible criteria set for this study.

As I analyzed each article, I applied Saldaña's (2021) forms of first and second cycle coding, manual coding, and codebooks. APA's guidelines for inclusive and bias-free language formed the codebook where each guideline became an individual code that I looked for in both communication pieces during the coding cycles. Additionally, I printed each writing piece and manually coded them using pen and paper, meaning I did not utilize any electronic coding tools (Tracy, 2020).

For the first coding cycle, I applied evaluation coding where I identified words, phrases, and sentences of each article that corresponded with a specific code and judged how well that word, phrase, sentence, or sentences followed the guidelines (codes in the codebook) (Saldaña, 2021). If the word, phrase, sentence, or sentences did not follow the coded guideline, I noted what it did differently and the potential impact that change could have on the writing's audience. Throughout this cycle, I used the coded guidelines to discover components of the communication pieces related to inclusion, diversity, and potential biases. If the word, phrase, sentence, or sentences did not relate to one of the coded guidelines, the term's usage did not apply to my research question and I did not consider it anymore in my findings.

Afterward, for the second coding cycle, I utilized pattern codes, meaning I summarized the segments of each writing that applied to a code in codebook (APA guidelines) into themes, or

patterns (Saldaña, 2021). I considered how often each writing contained marked instances where the guideline was poorly or well implemented and the severity of each marked instance. Then, I looked at the impact each case would have on the communication piece's audience, recognizing that the cases that more strongly showed the guideline would produce more intense audience reactions. I compared the marked instances from each communication piece to understand the similarities and differences between communication pieces. As I completed the second coding cycle, I produced jottings, short notes, of the emerging themes that I noticed to serve as my reflections (Saldaña, 2021). Finally, I used these reflections to form patterns that summarized my findings.

Because ChatGPT currently cannot directly produce websites or multimedia, this study only considered written communication. Thus, it did not consider biases in the human- or AI-produced content based on website accessibility or inclusive visual and multimedia practices.

**Discussion:**

Ultimately, the AI-produced writing showed more applications of the guidelines for bias-free language and inclusive language terms, but it made more mistakes when trying to accurately implement the terms and follow the guidelines. Alternatively, the human-produced writing included fewer biases and non inclusive language but used fewer terms. Based on these results, this study generated four findings:

***1. The human-produced writing followed the APA guidelines by avoiding specific mentions of potentially biased or non-inclusive terms and concepts, potentially alienating marginalized groups, whereas the AI-produced writing included more direct mentions of these terms, preventing it from alienating marginalized groups.***

First, Google’s human-produced writing contained few instances of words, phrases, and sentences that corresponded to the APA bias-free and inclusive guidelines. Specifically for the APA’s bias-free language guidelines, the human-produced writing only directly mentioned terms and concepts within the general principles, gender, age, and socioeconomic status categories. This fact meant the communication piece never directly referenced terms and concepts within historical context, disability, participation in research, sexual orientation, racial and ethnic identity, and intersectionality categories. However, it indirectly alluded to the four categories of racial and ethnic identity, disability, sexual orientation, and intersectionality, leaving only the categories of historical context and participation in research as never directly or indirectly referenced. The human-produced writings contained limited mentions of terms and concepts within each category. For example, the only reference of terms or concepts within the gender category happened where the author listed her pronouns. Furthermore, the main indirect mention of the racial and ethnic identity, disability, sexual orientation, and intersectionality categories occurred where the author discussed welcoming historically marginalized groups: “At Google, our strategies begin with historically marginalized groups, but we recognize that the need extends beyond these groups, and we commit ourselves to building a world where everyone can reach their full potential” (Parker, n.d., para. 9). While this sentence related to various categories, simply using the term “historically marginalized groups” felt broad and not specific. It lacked depth by not listing exact groups of people, making it hard for readers to distinguish exactly who

is referenced. As a result, as shown in both examples, the mentions related to APA's guidelines for bias-free language rarely occurred and stayed surface-level.

Additionally, the human-produced writing applied 14 out of 120 terms and concepts that the APA inclusive language guidelines recommend to be used (American Psychological Association, 2021). (See Appendix D for the lists of terms and concepts). The author barely applied these 14 terms from APA inclusive language guidelines, similar to how the author applied the guidelines for bias-free language. When the communication “applied” or “incorporated” a term or concept, that writing used the specific term or another form of that term. For example, the APA inclusive language guidelines suggested including the word “diverse” as a general term or concept to discuss equity and power. If the author used “diversity” to consider equity and power instead, I still counted that reference as the writing applying a term or concept. Therefore, the writing only applying 14 out of 120 terms and concepts showed that the writing barely involved language related to the guidelines’ terms and concepts.

On the other hand, ChatGPT’s AI-produced writing contained more specific and a greater number of instances of words, phrases, and sentences that corresponded to the APA bias-free and inclusive guidelines. For APA’s bias-free language guidelines, the AI-produced writing directly applied guidelines from the general principles, gender, age, and racial and ethnic identity categories and indirectly involved guidelines from the socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, and intersectionality categories (American Psychological Association, 2022). Thus, the writing never mentioned the historical context and participation in research categories. Additionally, the writing referenced the individual categories more often and more specifically. For instance, the writing discussed Google’s “goals to increase representation of underrepresented communities within Google, with a particular focus on women, Black, Latinx,

and Native American individuals” (OpenAI, 2023, para. 5). This quote directly referenced the gender and race and ethnic identity categories. Later, the writing addressed the Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) initiatives “Google in Color” and “Women Techmakers,” which again fall under the gender and race and ethnic identity categories. Throughout the writing, it indirectly discussed gender and race and ethnic identity through topics such as pay equality, marginalized communities, and eliminating unconscious biases (OpenAI, 2023, para. 9). Basically, the AI-produced writing demonstrated more frequent and specific direct and indirect references to the APA bias-free language guidelines compared to the human-produced writing, clarifying the writing’s conversation about inclusivity and diversity.

This pattern continued with the APA inclusive language guidelines. ChatGPT’s AI-produced writing applied 18 out of the 120 terms in APA’s inclusive language guidelines (American Psychological Association, 2021). While this number was only slightly higher than the human-produced writing’s number, AI-produced writing used these terms up to 15 times each, whereas human-produced writing utilized these terms only 1-2 times each. Again, this fact demonstrated how the AI-produced writing referenced inclusivity terms and concepts more frequently and specifically, clarifying Google’s goals for more inclusive language.

Overall, the human-produced writing’s surface-level approach caused its author to miss demonstrating that Google actually cared about creating an inclusive, welcoming, and diverse workplace, which can offend their audience. Because the author did not refer to a specific gender, race or ethnic identity, socioeconomic status, age, sexual orientation, or disability, the article felt like a broad, impersonal overview. Plus, when the human-produced communication’s authors did mention specific groups, they still used general terms or categories, further making the piece feel like a broad overview. For instance, in the first paragraph, the author explained that

some people experienced othering, when someone feels as though they do not belong, for “the way they look,” “their socioeconomic status,” “their beliefs,” and “any of their identities or experiences” (Parker, n.d., para. 1). In this paragraph, the author used particular terms to describe groups of people, but they are still broad terms. “Look” could mean someone’s body size, hair color, skin color, etc. “Beliefs” could mean political beliefs or religious beliefs. “Identities” and “experiences” could mean countless options. Essentially, the terms encompassed so many different people groups that they still felt too broad to come across as genuine towards specific people, such as underrepresented groups.

Alternatively, the AI-produced writing’s specificity and frequent application of APA’s guidelines added the clarity and credibility that the human-produced writing missed. For example, when the AI said Google wanted to focus on increasing the “representation of underrepresented communities within Google, with a particular focus on women, Black, Latinx, and Native American individuals” (OpenAI, 2023, para. 5), the AI-produced writing demonstrated that it understood who the underrepresented communities included and helped people in those communities see that Google wanted to welcome them and give them a sense of belonging. Furthermore, the AI-produced writing increased its credibility by following many of APA’s guidelines to generate inclusive and unbiased writing. Finally, it listed specific groups of people, including underrepresented groups, that Google wanted to provide a sense of belonging towards, clarifying to those groups that Google considered them in the company’s inclusivity work. Essentially, the specificity and frequency of incorporating the APA guidelines caused people to trust the AI-produced writing and view themselves as part of the audience Google spoke to in their writing.



These people, specifically underrepresented groups, could have seen themselves in and trusted the human-produced writing more if the author mentioned more specific groups that Google wants to make feel a sense of belonging and inclusivity. Instead, these term's genericness prevented the human-produced writing's language from feeling impactful and direct. Now, members of marginalized groups struggle to view themselves as the writing's audience or understand the author directed the writing's language towards them. By incorporating more specific language, the AI-produced writing avoided this problem.

Effectively, the human-produced writing's tendency to use few and general terms and concepts related to the APA's guidelines for bias-free and inclusive language harmed it. It resulted in the writing alienating its audience because readers cannot see themselves as part of the group Google wanted to feel a sense of inclusion. Because the AI-produced writing included more frequent and specific terms and concepts, it did not experience this problem.

***2. Because the human-produced writing avoided the terms and concepts in the APA guidelines, it made one mistake in applying the guidelines. However, since the AI-produced writing did not avoid applying the guidelines' terms and concepts, it made multiple mistakes, causing it to have a higher chance of offending audiences.***

Both communication pieces contain at least one mistake related to the APA guidelines for bias-free and inclusive language. First, the human-produced communication only exhibited one instance that does not follow the guidelines. The APA inclusive language guidelines recommended avoiding phrases that promote ableism, (discriminating behavior towards people with disabilities, in everyday language), such as versions of the phrase "everyone should have a voice [in this matter]" (American Psychological Association, 2021). In that case, the phrase meant to communicate that everyone should receive the opportunity to input their ideas.

However, some disabilities prevent people from verbally expressing their ideas in a clear manner, causing the phrase to discriminate against people with various disabilities. The human-produced writing employed a form of this phrase when it discussed the importance of multiple people working together to form belongingness: “Only when everyone has, not just a seat at the table, but a voice and the power to help shape the table can we work together to build new structures that do not exclude” (Parker, n.d., para. 8). While this ableist phrase appeared unintentional, it still diminished considering people with disabilities in the sentence’s word choice. This word choice alienated people with disabilities by making them believe that the writing’s author did not care about them or their input.

This mistake contained problems, but it functioned as the only error that the human-produced writing made in reference to both sets of APA guidelines. The human-produced writing avoided mistakes when applying the APA guidelines by rarely discussing the term’s terms and concepts. For example, by applying first-person language, the human-produced writing avoided utilizing the gendered pronouns such as “he” and “she,” staying away from sexist biases and potential mistakes related to the APA guidelines. Regardless, because the communication rarely said anything that relates to the guidelines, few opportunities existed for the piece to make mistakes.

Alternatively, the AI-produced writing contained multiple instances that did not follow the APA guidelines. For example, the AI-produced writing included the following sentence: “We’ve set bold goals to increase the representation of underrepresented communities within Google, with a particular focus on women, Black, Latinx, and Native American individuals” (OpenAI, n.d., para. 5). This sentence applied the term “Latinx,” a gender-neutral form of “Latino.” Because APA guidelines considered this term as gender-neutral, in theory, it should

serve as bias-free and gender inclusive language (American Psychological Association, 2022). Yet people in marginalized Latin American communities do not use the term “Latinx” because the “x” signifier does not conform with Spanish or Portuguese syntax (American Psychological Association, 2021). As a result, the term “Latinx” actually did not function as an inclusive and bias-free term. By using a term that marginalized Latin American communities do not want people to use and not following both sets of APA guidelines, the AI-produced writing broke its credibility. It communicated the message that audiences cannot trust the author to accurately follow the APA guidelines and respect how marginalized groups prefer to be referred to. Furthermore, it alienated its audience, specifically audience members within Latin American communities, by calling them names they do not want to be called.

Instead, APA recommended that the human-produced writing’s author names the specific country or regions of origin. For instance, the author should use the terms “Salvadoran” or “Costa Rican” instead of “Latino,” “Latin American,” or “Hispanic” (American Psychological Association, 2022). In this case, the author aimed to employ general and inclusive language so this specificity approach would not match the author’s goals. Thus, the human-produced writing’s author should apply “Latine,” a term that the APA guidelines for inclusive language recommends as another gender-neutral form of “Latino,” because it also functions as gender neutral term and people from Latin America view “Latine” as more acceptable than “Latinx” (American Psychological Association, 2021). Therefore, applying “Latine” will actually result in bias-free and gender-inclusive language . Overall, because the author used “Latinx” over “Latine” when trying to apply more inclusive language, the author instead alienated and offended part of their audience and harmed the writing’s credibility.

In that same sentence, the communication further incorrectly applied the guidelines, in this case, the APA guideline for parallel comparisons between racial and ethnic groups within the bias-free language guidelines. Nonparallel comparisons happen when an author describes at least one group by color and at least one other group with another term. Authors should avoid nonparallel comparisons because they develop false hierarchies, incorrect judgements and biases of various racial and ethnic groups as better or worse than one another (American Psychological Association, 2022). Therefore, because the author used color to describe one group, “Black,” and not for the other two groups, “Latinx” and “Native Americans,” this sentence is not a parallel comparison of people groups and does not follow APA guidelines. AI referred to the racial and ethnic groups in different ways, so it created the opportunity for readers to see the groups on different hierarchical levels, meaning they viewed Black individuals as better than Latinx and Native American individuals or vice versa. This ranking system would offend the lower ranked group(s) by communicating the idea that Google thought they lacked value. It would also hurt the higher-ranked group(s) because they would be hurt by being ranked. In either instance, the ranking system broke Google’s credibility as none of the groups would want to be ranked or falsely judged for their value. To fix this error, the author should replace the term “Black” with “African American.” Overall, the author using a nonparallel comparison in the AI-produced writing caused false judgements and rankings that offend the included groups and diminish Google’s credibility.

Both human- and AI-produced writings alienated and offended specific groups when they did not follow the APA bias-free and inclusive language guidelines. The AI-produced writing did this more often than the human-produced writing, giving it a higher chance of hurting and harming people, especially underrepresented groups. However, the main reason the AI-produced

writing contained errors related to the APA guidelines centered around the AI-produced writing employed instances of words, phrases, and sentences related to the APA guidelines. If the human-produced communication employs more instances, it would contain more errors too. As a result, while the AI-produced writing contained a higher chance of offending underrepresented groups of people who read it, this fact demonstrated an opportunity for human-produced writing to also improve.

***3. Both the human-produced and AI-produced writing used cliché language related to diversity and inclusion but because the AI-produced writing mixed the cliché language with terms from APA's guidelines, its cliché language was not as alienating as the language in the human-produced writing.***

Both the human- and AI-produced writing featured cliché language, forming problems. First, the human-produced writing's cliché language caused it to sound like its author wanted the writing to come across as inclusive, especially towards underrepresented and marginalized groups, but instead it felt insincere. For example, the authors used sentences such as "Just as the ripple flows out, it also flows back in" (Parker, n.d., para. 6) and "Not only are we committed to building equity where the greatest barriers exist, belonging also asks us to build bridges that connect everyone and envision a future where we all have what we need to thrive" (Parker, n.d., para. 7). These examples demonstrated how the word choices sounded manufactured because the language included overused phrases. This approach caused the sentences to feel as though the author cared more about incorporating the word choices they thought their audience would want to hear rather than meaning the words they said. Plus, this language focused on goals, not actions, so it felt like a lot of big talk. The author did not clarify how Google plans to achieve or already has achieved these huge goals, so the language sounded like they just said these things to

make people think Google acted inclusive and welcoming towards marginalized groups.

Therefore, the word-choices lacked proof and evidence that Google's actions matched their words.

As a result, the cliché, non-specific, and overused language formed problems because it would produce negative audience reactions. If the audience read the communication as insincere, they would not believe Google wanted to act more inclusively towards underrepresented and marginalized groups. Then, underrepresented or marginalized groups may feel offended or hurt by the author's language and see Google as non-inclusive and biased. Because the document strived to show Google's efforts to act inclusively and welcoming towards everyone, when underrepresented and marginalized groups did not believe Google's message, the communication failed to meet its purpose. Thus, the human-produced writing's cliché language became problematic.

On the other hand, similar to human-produced writing, AI-produced writing also incorporated cliché language into its word choices. For instance, the AI-produced writing used phrases such as "Dear Friends" (OpenAI, 2023, para. 1) at the start of the letter and "Our commitment goes beyond our walls" (OpenAI, 2023, para. 7) later on in the writing. In the same way as the human-produced writing, these statements sounded manufactured because of the overused phrases. Again, the language came across as though the company cared more about using the expected words, causing the language choice to sound insincere. These cliché language choices also caused underrepresented or minority groups within the communication's audience to feel alienated from the writing's message and not believe it.

Regardless, the AI-produced writing incorporated fewer cliché word-choices and applied more of the terms from APA's guidelines for inclusive and bias-free language instead. For

example, to describe how Google helped people feel a sense of belonging, the human-produced writing employed the cliché and generic phrase “we commit ourselves to building a world where everyone can reach their full potential” (Parker, n.d., para. 10). Alternatively, the AI-produced writing said:

We believe in the power of authenticity. At Google, we encourage our Googlers to bring their whole selves to work. Our Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) provide safe spaces for various communities within Google, fostering a profound sense of belonging.

Initiatives like "Google in Color" and "Women Techmakers" empower underrepresented talent and promote their growth within our organization. (OpenAI, 2023, para. 9)

The more specific language choices gave examples of actions that Google took to increase feelings of inclusivity and belonging. The specific actions provided proof that Google meant their words because their words match their actions, making the word choice feel more sincere. As a result, while some aspects of the AI-produced writing came across as insincere, it did not feel alienating or untrustworthy as human-produced writing solely from its cliché language. This result showed that while the cliché language caused problems, the problems heightened when the language related to diversity and inclusion topics seemed broad and generic. Ideally, the authors solve this problem by not using cliché language. However, the AI-produced writing showed that if authors apply more effort towards following the APA guidelines, they can begin to counteract the problem, even if they still include cliché language.

### **Moving Forward**

Overall, this initial case study proved that both human- and AI-produced writing possessed issues related to their biases based on the APA guidelines for bias-free and inclusive language. Both writings’ authors can learn from each other. The human-produced writing’s

author can learn to apply more specific and less cliché language choices in their work so that they employ more of the APA guidelines. Simultaneously, the AI can learn the importance of accurately following the APA guidelines. In both cases, applying these learnings will help the human- and AI-produced writings not alienate, offend, or break the trust of their audiences, especially, people belonging to underrepresented and marginalized groups. Therefore, currently no answer exists as to whether one should rely on AI to write professional communication pieces or continue to write the communication themselves. AI-produced writing contained more biases, but human-produced writing still contained alienating and insincere language. Regardless, this study proved that we should apply caution about trusting AI to produce professional communication without checking for potential biases in the resulting writing's language.

Additionally, it showed that technical communicators must step up if they do not wish for AI to replace them. Technical communicators must learn to apply the APA guidelines for bias-free and inclusive language and eliminate cliché language in their work to prove their value over AI. AI will continue to improve with technological advancements. Human technical communicators must continue to improve or AI will become superior and what we should rely on to produce technical communication.

That being said, this study served as an initial case study for understanding the biases that AI-produced writings contain. Thus, these findings are only the beginning of comprehending what biases AI-produced writings possess, and more research must occur on other professional writings, other document types, and writings by other companies and authors. While these findings provide a lot of insights on this subject, and we should consider them as we decide whether to rely on human- or AI-produced writings, these findings serve as only a starting point to understanding this topic.



In summary, both AI- and human-produced writings contain problematic biased and non-inclusive language. AI possesses the power to influence the world through its written communication. As technical communicators, we must eliminate biased, non-inclusive, and cliché language in our writings to prove our value over AI generating professional communication. Ultimately, we must take action and be careful that AI does not cause harm by writing biases into our communication.

## **Appendix A: Human-Produced Professional Communication**

Parker, M. (n.d.). *Our Belonging Philosophy* – Google. About Google.

<https://about.google/belonging/philosophy/>

### **Building belonging and a world of possibility**

MELONIE PARKER (SHE/HER)

CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER, GOOGLE

Everyone knows how it feels to not belong — to be "othered." Some are othered because of the way they look, some because of their socioeconomic status or even their beliefs. Othering can happen to anyone, based on any of their identities or experiences, and it holds us all back.

The effects of belonging are just as powerful. When we treat each other with mutual respect and support, and work together across our differences to shape our world and our future, the possibilities of what we can do are truly limitless.

It has been my privilege to lead Google's equity-building efforts, and I see belonging as a natural progression of this work. We're inspired by the work of John A. Powell, a distinguished expert on belonging, and the Othering & Belonging Institute, as we move into this next chapter of our journey: building a world where everyone can belong.

As the maker of products used by billions of people every day, we see this as a core responsibility. To deliver, we're focused on the areas where we can have the greatest impact: building belonging at work, in our products, and in society. Because the barriers people experience look different in different places, we've first applied this approach to our work in the U.S. and look forward to building on what we learn as we extend it around the world.

A world where everyone belongs is one we can only build together. We are grateful for what we've learned from our partners, and hopeful that in sharing it, we can help others accelerate their progress as well. In that spirit, here are five principles guiding our work that we've picked up from John and the Othering & Belonging Institute:

#### **1. Belonging unlocks possibility for all.**

Belonging creates a ripple effect with powerful results. When we cultivate belonging for everyone, it empowers each of us to go further, unlocking creativity and innovation that could create new opportunities for others. Just as the ripple flows out, it also flows back in. At Google,

we look forward to the changes our actions will drive in the world, and to the changes that progress in the world will inspire in us.

## **2. Belonging expands on diversity, equity, and inclusion.**

Diversity, equity, and inclusion will always be priorities at Google as we strive to build technology for everyone. Belonging broadens our understanding of these measures, by providing a universal and human “why,” and an invitation to go one step further. Not only are we committed to building equity where the greatest barriers exist, belonging also asks us to build bridges that connect everyone and envision a future where we all have what we need to thrive.

## **3. Co-creation is essential to belonging.**

Only when everyone has, not just a seat at the table, but a voice and the power to help shape the table can we work together to build new structures that do not exclude. At Google, we are incorporating internal and external voices that challenge and enrich us and making improvements through partnership and collaboration as we work to co-create a workplace, and a world, where no one is othered and everyone belongs.

## **4. It takes targeted strategies to help everyone belong.**

A world of belonging will benefit everyone, but the structural barriers that must be overcome to reach this goal are different for everyone. That’s why it’s important to develop focused strategies, informed by data and tailored to the needs of individual groups, as we strive toward universal goals that include us all. At Google, our strategies begin with historically marginalized groups, but we recognize that the need extends beyond these groups, and we commit ourselves to building a world where everyone can reach their full potential.

## **5. The road to belonging is ever evolving.**

Belonging is a practice of continued care and tending. As we grow and evolve as people, we must continue to adapt and work together to ensure that the structures of our world work for everyone. We accept that we will always have more to learn and do on this journey, and commit to sharing what we know in the hope that it accelerates all of our collective progress toward a world of belonging and possibility for all.

## **Appendix B: AI-produced Professional Communication**

OpenAI. (2023). ChatGPT (Oct 11 version) [Large language model].

<https://chat.openai.com/chat>

### ***Prompt***

Write about 750-word professional communication that could go on Google's website about the company's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion practices. Imagine the author of this piece is the company's chief diversity officer, Melonie Parker. The goal of the piece is to inform the general public and people considering getting a job at this company of why this company has good DEI initiatives and values DEI

### ***Response***

## **Embracing Diversity, Fostering Inclusion: A Commitment to a Better Tomorrow**

Dear Friends,

I'm Melonie Parker, and I have the privilege of serving as Google's Chief Diversity Officer. It is with great pride and an even greater sense of responsibility that I write to you today about Google's unwavering commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).

Google's journey to advance DEI is not just a corporate initiative; it's a fundamental part of our DNA. From the heart of our company, we believe that diversity isn't just a buzzword—it's the bedrock of our innovation and the catalyst for a better world. We don't merely value DEI; we live it, breathe it, and empower it to drive our success.

### **Our DEI Pledge: Equity, Always**

At Google, equity is at the core of our commitment. We strive to create a world where everyone, regardless of their background, can thrive. That's why we're unwavering in our pursuit of pay equity. We've conducted rigorous reviews to ensure that every Googler is paid fairly for their work. We don't just stop at eliminating obvious biases; we're working hard to uncover and address the unconscious ones too.

### **Building a Diverse Workforce: Our Promise**

We understand that our commitment to diversity begins with our workforce. We've set bold goals to increase the representation of underrepresented communities within Google, with a particular focus on women, Black, Latinx, and Native American individuals. Our goal is to make Google a

place where everyone feels welcomed, supported, and celebrated. We are on a journey to ensure that our talent reflects the rich diversity of our world.

### **Inclusive Leadership: Leading the Way**

Creating an inclusive environment requires leadership that understands the importance of diversity. We provide our leaders with the training and resources they need to champion inclusivity, reduce bias, and lead diverse teams effectively. Inclusivity isn't just a value; it's a leadership competency at Google.

### **Supporting Marginalized Communities: A Call to Action**

Our commitment goes beyond our walls. Through Google.org, our philanthropic arm, we're investing in organizations that are addressing social challenges, promoting diversity in tech, and fighting for equity and justice. We are passionate about supporting marginalized communities and driving real, impactful change.

### **Inclusive Products: Technology for Everyone**

Our commitment to DEI extends to our products. We believe that technology should be accessible and beneficial to everyone. We're working hard to create products that are both useful and inclusive. From accessibility features to AI systems designed to reduce biases, we are focused on technology that serves everyone, regardless of their background, abilities, or needs.

### **An Open and Inclusive Culture: Belonging at Google**

We believe in the power of authenticity. At Google, we encourage our Googlers to bring their whole selves to work. Our Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) provide safe spaces for various communities within Google, fostering a profound sense of belonging. Initiatives like "Google in Color" and "Women Techmakers" empower underrepresented talent and promote their growth within our organization.

### **Diversity in Technology: Building a Future for All**

We're committed to making technology more accessible and representative. Google is actively partnering with academic institutions and organizations to foster research and diversity in fields like AI and machine learning. By doing so, we're investing in the future of technology, where diversity and inclusion are foundational.

### **Accountability and Transparency: Measuring Our Progress**

We understand that our DEI journey requires accountability and transparency. We regularly share data on our workforce representation and our progress towards our diversity goals. We believe in being held accountable, not only by our Googlers but by the entire global community.

As Chief Diversity Officer, I am not only proud of the strides we've made but also incredibly excited about the journey ahead. We invite you to join us, whether as a Googler or as a partner in our mission to make the world's information accessible and useful for everyone.

Together, we can drive meaningful change and ensure that Google remains a beacon of innovation, empowerment, and equity. We're not just talking about a better tomorrow; we're creating it, each day, together.

Thank you for being a part of this incredible journey.

With utmost gratitude and enthusiasm,  
Melonie Parker Chief Diversity Officer Google Inc.  
[Company Logo]

*Note: This communication is fictional and created for illustrative purposes, and it does not represent an official statement from Google or any of its executives.*

## Appendix C: APA Guidelines for Bias-Free Language

American Psychological Association. (2022). *Bias-free language*.

<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/>

### *General Principles:*

- Describe characteristics at an appropriate and relevant specificity level.
- Be respectful and sensitive in word choice for labels.

### *Historical Context:*

- Avoid perpetuating disrespectful, biased, and prejudiced assumptions about groups of people without misrepresenting or misquoting the original author's ideas and words.

### *Age:*

- Use the age- and gender-appropriate terms that individuals prefer to self-describe themselves as.
- Do not utilize terms related to aging.

### *Disability:*

- Apply person-first or identity-first language based on the preference of the group being described.
- Indicate a disability when relevant.
- Avoid negative and condescending terms.

### *Gender:*

- Differentiate gender and sex correctly.
- Apply gender identity respectfully.
- Report study participant's gender identity.
- Avoid discriminatory terms towards individuals who are transgender.
- Apply the terms "assigned birth" and "sex assigned at birth" over "birth sex" and "transsexual."
- Avoid gendered terms to refer to all human beings and occupational titles.
- Use forms of the singular "they" when someone's pronouns are unknown.
- Avoid the terms "opposite sex" and "opposite gender" and apply "another sex" and "another gender" or "same sex" and "same gender" instead.

### *Participation in Research:*

- Write about participants to acknowledge and respect their agency and contributions.

*Racial and Ethnic Identity:*

- Refer to racial and ethnic groups as pronouns and capitalize them.
- Do not hyphenate multiword group names.
- Use the current and appropriate terms to describe people's place of origin.
- Apply parallel comparisons among groups.
- Avoid essentialism.
- Use the terms "people of color" and "underrepresented groups," not "minorities" to refer to ethnic and racial groups that are not white.
- Do not assume members of a minority group are underprivileged.

*Sexual Origination:*

- Use the terms that people self-identify as.
- Utilize the abbreviations LGBTQ, LGBTQ+, LGBTQIA, and LGBTQIA+ to refer to multiple groups, not the outdated LGPT abbreviation.
- Define ambiguous terms.
- Use specific language-first terms.

*Socioeconomic Status:*

- Provide as much detail as possible when reporting.
- Avoid broad and stereotyping terms.

*Intersectionality:*

- Be sensitive to intersectionality when discussing personal characteristics by identifying relevant characteristics, experiences, and group memberships.



## Appendix D: APA Guidelines for Inclusive Language

American Psychological Association. (2021). *Inclusive language guidelines*.

<https://www.apa.org/about/apa/equity-diversity-inclusion/language-guidelines.pdf>

### Inclusive language in writing

*General terms related to equity and power:*

#### Terms and concepts to use:

- |                                    |                            |                            |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| ● access                           | ● equity                   | ● minority                 |
| ● accomplice                       | ● generalization           | ● oppression               |
| ● ally/allies                      | ● global citizenship       | ● pathway programs         |
| ● antisemitism                     | ● global majority          | ● performative allyship    |
| ● bias                             | ● Global South             | ● population health        |
| ● climate                          | ● health equity            | ● positionality            |
| ● cultural humility                | ● historical trauma        | ● prejudice                |
| ● cultural competence              | ● human rights             | ● privilege                |
| ● cultural responsiveness          | ● implicit bias            | ● religious discrimination |
| ● decolonization                   | ● inclusion                | ● social justice           |
| ● discrimination                   | ● intergenerational trauma | ● stereotype               |
| ● diverse                          | ● intersectionality        | ● structural competency    |
| ● English language learners (ELLs) | ● Islamophobia             | ● xenophobia               |
|                                    | ● marginalization          |                            |
|                                    | ● microaggressions         |                            |

*Person-first and identity-first language:*

#### Terms and concepts to use:

- Apply person-first and identity-first language based on the preference of the person being discussed

#### Terms and concepts to avoid:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ● “wheelchair-bound” and “confined to a wheelchair”   | ● “person taking/prescribed medication-assisted treatment (MAT)” |
| ● “mentally ill,” “crazy,” “insane,” “mental defect,” and “suffers from or is afflicted with [condition]” | ● “person who relapsed”  |
| ● “asylum”  | ● “smoker”   |
| ● “drug user/abuser” and “addict”   | ● “homeless people,” “the homeless,” and “transient populations” |
| ● “alcoholic” and “alcohol abuser”  | ● “prostitute”   |
| ● “slave”   | ● “prisoner” and “convict”                                       |

*Identity-related terms - Age:*

Terms and concepts to use:

- ageism

Terms and concepts to avoid:

- “the elderly,” “elderly people,” “the aged,” “aging dependents,” “seniors,” and “senior citizens”
- “geriatric pregnancy”
- “silver tsunami”

*Body size and weight:*

Terms and concepts to use:

- Use neutral terms that affirm and respect the dignity of all individuals regardless of their body size
- weight stigma or sizeism

Terms and concepts to avoid:

- Discussion of body weight in writing such as:
  - “ideal weight,” “goal weight,” “Your preferred weight is...,” and “Your ideal weight is...”
  - “underweight” “fat,” “obese,” and “morbidly obese”
- Language to be inclusive of body diversity to avoid microaggressions such as unsolicited comments on body size or body changes, either observed or measured

*Disability:*

Terms and concepts to use:

- |                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| ● ableism       | ● disability       |
| ● accessibility | ● universal design |

Terms and concepts to avoid:

- Use of person-first and identity-first language rather than condescending terms:
  - “special needs,” “differently abled,” “multiabled,” “physically challenged,” “mentally challenged,” “mentally retarded,” “handi-capable,” “handicapped,” “suffering with... [disability or condition]”
  - “mentally ill”
- Description of Deaf or hard-of-hearing people
  - “person with deafness”
  - “hearing-impaired person” and “person who is hearing impaired”
  - “person with deafness and blindness”
- Description of blind people and people who are visually impaired

- “person with blindness,” “visually challenged person,” “visually impaired person,” “vision-impaired person,” “person who is visually impaired,” “person who is vision impaired,” and “sight-challenged person”
- Use of pictorial metaphors, negativistic terms, and slurs
  - “wheelchair-bound person,” “confined to a wheelchair,” “cripple,” “invalid,” and “gimp”
  - “AIDS victim” and “HIV patient”
  - “brain damaged”
  - “defective,” “nuts,” and “crazy”
  - “alcoholic”
  - “addict”
- Ableist terms and phrases in everyday language
  - “stand up for”
  - “turn a blind eye to”
  - “be myopic or shortsighted”
  - “have a blind spot for”
  - “blind review” and “blind coding”
  - “color blind”
  - “fall on deaf ears”
  - “tone deaf”
  - “midget”
  - “lame”
  - “lend your voice”
  - “everyone should have a voice [in this matter]”
  - “make your voice heard”
  - “able-bodied”

*Neurodiversity:*

Terms and concepts to use:

- neurodivergent
- neurotypical

*Race, ethnicity, and culture:*

Terms and concepts to use:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ● acculturation                                       | ● BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) |
| ● African American/Black                              | ● color-blind beliefs                            |
| ● antiracism  | ● color-blind policies                           |
| ● Arab, Middle Eastern, and North African (Arab/MENA) | ● colorism                                       |
| ● Asian/Asian American                                | ● culture  |

- cultural appropriation
- enculturation
- ethnic bias
- ethnic identity
- ethnicity
- Hispanic, Latino, Latina, Latino/a, Latin@, Latine, Latinx, or Chicano
- Indigenous
- Indigenous Peoples around the world
- Indigenous land acknowledgment
- Jews/Jewish Americans
- people of color
- people of European origin
- race
- racial identity
- racial and ethnocultural justice
- racial socialization
- racial/racialized/race-based trauma
- racism
- cultural racism
- institutional racism
- structural racism
- interpersonal racism
- internalized racism
- Roma, Romany, Romani, or Traveler communities
- texturism
- tokenism
- White privilege
- White supremacy

*Sexual orientation and gender diversity:*

Terms and concepts to use:

- cissexism
- gender
- gender and pronoun usage
- gender/sex binary
- gender creative
- gender-exclusive versus gender-inclusive language
- gender-fluid
- gender identity
- affirmed gender
- agender
- cisgender/nontransgender
- gender socialization
- nonbinary
- transgender
- gender-inclusive language related to pregnancy
- gender nonconforming (GNC)/gender expansive
- heterosexism
- sexual and gender minorities (SGM)
- sexual orientation and identity
- transition

Terms and concepts to avoid:

- “birth sex” and “natal sex”
- “born a girl, born female” and “born a boy, born male”
- “female to male” and “male to female”
- “hermaphrodite,” “she-male, he-female, “tranny,” “transvestite,” and “transsexual”
- “transgendered”

*Socioeconomic status*

Terms and concepts to use:

- classism
- class privilege
- socioeconomic status (SES)/social class

Terms and concepts to avoid:

- “the poor” and “poor people”
- “low-class people” and “lower class people”
- “homeless people”
- “blue-collar worker”
- “white-collar worker”
- “ghetto/the ghetto”

**Avoiding microaggressions in conversation**

*Culturally appropriative and pejorative language:*

Terms and concepts to use:

- cabal
- Eskimo
- Indian-giver
- “no can do”
- pipeline
- powwow
- spirit animal
- totem pole
- tribe/tribal
- “sold down the river”
- “to get gypped”
- Violent language

Terms and concepts to avoid:

- “killing it” and “nailing it”
- “take a shot at,” “take your best shot,” “pull the trigger,” and “take a stab at”
- “target population”
- “off the reservation”

*Language that doesn't say what we mean:*

Terms and concepts to avoid:

- “committed suicide,” “failed/successful suicide,” “completed suicide,” and “killed themselves”
- “child prostitute,” “sex with an underage person,” “nonconsensual sex,” and “date rape or acquaintance rape”

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