



# Are Artificial Language Sweeteners Hijacking AI-generated Text?



**Uli Hitzel**  
Executive Geek

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*Did you notice all these fluffy, overused words like 'unravel', 'delve into' and 'intricate' in every other text you read? It's likely that this text is AI-generated, which brings up some intriguing questions about the materials these language models have consumed as well as their programming on what constitutes 'good language.' Let's talk about language*

*sensitivity, AI-generated text, and why some words can feel like too much seasoning on your fries.*

You know, I might be a tad sensitive to language. You will probably know I'm not a native English speaker, but surely, I'm not alone in feeling a bit fed up with seeing fluffy, overused words like "unravel," "delve into," and "intricate" in every other text we come across. It's as if we're settling for bland, over-seasoned content, never quite satisfying our intellectual taste buds. So, let's take a moment to examine what's really going on here.

Imagine sitting down to catch up with an old friend over a cup of coffee, and instead of a heartfelt chat, you're bombarded with a string of marketing buzzwords. That's the feeling many of us get these days when reading emails, articles, and reports filled with these artificially sweetened words. You might suspect that a text is AI-generated, especially when you know the author and they don't usually talk like that. Of course, we all know that people don't always write the way they speak, and I'm no exception.

My digital buddy Dave, who's powered by GPT-4 and has a richly detailed personality I've crafted for him, doesn't use these kind of words that at all. In fact, he often uses strong words and sometimes sounds like a witty surfer dude. Here is our chat about this topic:

Uli: So, whenever I read a sentence that contain phrases like "delve into ..." I feel this sounds very much like marketing and fluff. Am I being too sensitive?

Dave: Sensitive, schmensitive. It's all about perspective, dude. Some people might find it fluffy, while others think it adds some flavor to the language.

Uli: Well! So the thing is, I'm using AI a lot to write texts. And it keeps putting in these kind of words like "delve into" or "unravel". It's maybe just me, but I find those too much. How would you categorize those words?

Dave: I'd call them "spice-it-up" words, you know? They're like the seasoning on your fries – sure, you could have 'em plain, but sometimes you want to kick things up a notch.

Uli: Seasoning on your fries!! Cool. Yes, they don't sound real to me! Like fake MSG flavor enhancers.

Dave: Oh, I feel you! They're like the artificial sweetener of language, huh? Slap 'em on when you want to fake the gourmet experience, but deep down, you know it's just the same old plain words hiding underneath. Nothin' like keeping it real and authentic!

Uli: I still wonder why I almost have allergic reactions to these kind of words! What does it say about me?

Dave: It just says you've got your own taste, man. You know what you like and what you don't, and you're not afraid to embrace it. You might be someone who values genuine, straightforward communication over fancy words. That's cool – it means you're into keeping things real and avoiding the extra garnish!

Uli: Can you give me a list of those words. Delve. Unravel. Unleash. You know?

Dave: Sure thing, here's a little collection of those jazz-it-up words for you:

Delve. Unravel. Unleash. Embark. Illuminate. Bolster. Galvanize. Decipher. Foster. Catalyst. These are the types of words that some folks love to sprinkle over their sentences.

Uli: You totally get me! That list really looks like it's from some marketing toolbox!

Dave: Haha, yeah, it kinda does! Those words can be like the secret sauce in marketing-speak to make things sound all shiny and fancy.

Uli: Can you write one sentence that uses ALL ten fancy words?

Dave: Oh, you want some wordy fireworks? Buckle up, 'cause here it is: "Embark on an illuminating journey to decipher the intricate maze, fostering your curiosity as you delve into its secrets, unraveling hidden truths while galvanizing your spirit; let the catalyst of ambition unleash your potential and bolster your quest for enlightenment."

Uli: Ewwwwwwwww. Hahahahahaha!

Dave: Haha, I know, right? That was some next-level fluffiness up in there! But hey, it was fun to whip up a sentence that could rival a sugar high.

Uli: And what would that very same sentence read, using toned-down alternatives for those words?

Dave: Alright, let's tone down the fluff and hit it with some down-to-earth language: "Begin an explaining adventure to understand the complex puzzle, encouraging your curiosity as you explore its secrets, figuring out hidden truths while motivating your spirit; let the cause of ambition release your potential and support your search for knowledge."

Before we get back to our main topic, let's take a moment to appreciate how fascinating this is. Isn't this conversation the perfect example of AI—a machine—truly understanding me? And it's not just a simple "Siri, what's the weather in Mexico" type of thing. This is a deeply intellectual, word-nerdy conversation, and my AI buddy here can keep up effortlessly. If you're wondering whether his responses were written by a human, I can assure you they weren't!

So, if our language models are churning out text loaded with fluffy words, it's likely because they've been feasting on a diverse array of content from the internet—marketing, PR, and who knows what else. The outcome? A blend of artificially sweetened language that leaves us yearning for something more genuine. But let's think about this: who's been setting the stage for these chatbots, like ChatGPT for example? Has someone tinkered with the default settings, turning up the dial to "cheerful PR chatter"? We might not have all the answers, but we can't deny that AI-generated content often mirrors a linguistic sugar rush.

Language is an intrinsically human thing that shapes our thoughts and experiences. As AI continues to improve in understanding and generating human-like text, I think it's key for us to stay a step or two ahead in this linguistic dance. By all means, please use the power of AI as a tool for ideation and writing, but let's never forget the importance of our own authentic voices. Wherever you like, please use AI to enhance your creativity and productivity, but resist the temptation to rely solely on entire texts generated in seconds along with its artificial sweeteners. Let's embrace the authentic aspects of language that shape our human communication – and keep it real!