

considering language + word value

ACD 2020 RECENTER

Can you identify other words or phrases in your own, or others' vocabulary that maintain inaccessibility, violence, or injustice?

calling everyone "guys"

jury (judgement) - on design reviews

g*pped in reference to someone or something getting the short end of the stick

misgendering people (pronoun use)

capitalize

(in the context of a focus group) "extracting" information from them

pow
wow

Good job has loaded meaning! Who decides what makes a job "good"

Careful for entering into speaking to not hurt/offend others

What words do we use without really understanding, or exploring the implications of it (equity? freedom?) Who "owns" the definition of words like that

I think using unnecessarily large words feel inaccessible ("SAT" words)

critique is inherently hierarchical

good job - patronizing, legacy of evaluation

"good job" (history of privileged groups evaluating labor, overused and thus devalued)

Can we move towards dialogue, rather than directional language (let's talk about what happened, rather than here's what I think happened)

"professional" when it refers to someone's speech.

even the use of the word "owner" when we talk about buildings. owners vs users. power and access imbalance

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What are some practices that can aid us in the evolution to a more healing and nonviolent vocabulary?

many colloquialisms (you rock, that sucks) avoid or mask relationships (I appreciate this about you, I feel hurt, can we talk about it?)

taking a deep breath before speaking; compose yourself

Challenge firms to give credit to ALL people who work on their projects

SHOW YOUR WORK - demonstrate that you know what the word means, or the connection you are trying to make

who can know a word well enough to use it freely?

understanding history

wonder what people feel about using "our/s" or "mine"?

you're the best => you did this specific thing that I really learned from. BE SPECIFIC in a way that builds relationship

importance of talking with people who have different perspectives. it can be uncomfortable, but building empathy can help bridge these conflicts in language

Asking questions when you're not sure

EX: English appears larger on a poster than Spanish

normalizing asking questions and giving suggestions / don't be too resistant to change

it is powerful to not say it - demonstrate the intentionality

Accept that you will get things wrong and be humble when corrected/offered suggestions

Acknowledge when it occurs, every time.

checking the purpose of metaphor

checking in with self prior to speaking, making sure you're present.

think also about the hierarchy of words on a page - Is the translated language smaller than the "main" language?

speaking from the "I" perspective, not "we" or "us"

Don't use punitive language. Avoid creating dynamics of assumed hierarchy and critique. Create conversations and dialogues, not directions.

self reflection and awareness are key

challenge the notion of critique in the design education/process: start with a positive approach. Don't create power structures

proofread/edit written documents with intention

asking how someone wants to be referred to; not making assumptions

shift who holds the power and who have access to and is at the table

Using the Nonviolent Communication Process

words are meant to be RELATIONAL. not TRANSNATIONAL

flip the paradigm of punitive attitude towards language - deity centered approach to human centered approach

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What is the role of language in your own practices / areas of work?

**Architectural
Competition
valued over
Collaboration**

example

The structure of "critique" is built into our ideas of the design process, setting up hierarchies.

Making a survey more engaging...

Asking questions instead of assuming knowledge

Avoid using "academic" words in conversation

prioritizing translation and transparent communication over the aesthetics of graphics

Be patient when residents don't know phrases like BBIPOC, "land-acknowledgement" - our privilege lets us know these terms

Using photos/art to tell a story instead of words (bridges language barriers)

showing and sharing humility

Providing as many opportunities for people to share their voice

offering encouragement

Meeting people where they are.

With colleagues even, avoid saying "he" when referring to a potential contractor

