

BANNED WORDS DICTIONARY



A few years ago, we encountered this picture on Twitter. The Wisconsin GOP Assembly decided to ban nearly 90 words from being taught to students and school employees. One of the explanations for the ban was:

“A growing number of school districts are teaching material that attempts to redress the injustice of racism and sexism by employing racism and sexism, as well as promoting psychological distress in students based on these immutable characteristics.”

“No one should have to undergo the humiliation of being told that they are inferior to someone else. We are all members of the human race.”

We thought banning these words can re-create the existing **systems of oppression** rather than creating distress in students. Considering that having **diversity-focused** discussions in classrooms, talking about **dominant discourses, equality, and racial and social justice** are a big part of **educational justice**, we find it meaningful to create a dictionary to take a closer look at what these words mean. In reaction to banning these words, we decided to provide good definitions in case some people are not aware what they actually mean.

This dictionary is a collaborative work of members of Koc Social Identities Lab

(<http://kocsocialidentitieslab.com/>) led by Dr. Yasin Koc , and the contributions were made by the following members: Betül Gümüşoluk, Ece A. Demirgüneş, Elif Çelik, Ezgi Kara, Fatih Köseoğlu, İrem Sakarya, İrem Nur Keskin, Pelin Su Şafak, Uğur Özküsen, Zümra Kendir.

A

Abolitionist Teaching

Abolitionist teaching is a theory created due to discrimination against black and brown students. Later, the boundaries of the abolitionist teaching theory were expanded, and it was emphasized that not only black and brown students but all students should receive education in a loving and fair environment (Love, 2019).

Action Civics

Action Civics is an evidence-based approach to building a citizenry that is engaged and has the ability to efficiently take part in the political process, community, and wider society. It is an authentic, experiential approach in which students address problems through real-world experiences that apply to their lives, and it can be a powerful motivating experience setting them on a path towards lifelong civic and political engagement (National Action Civics Collaborative, 2010).

Affinity Groups

These are the groups formed by people who have a shared identity (for example, the same occupation or the same race) to share and maintain their experiences as well as finding solutions to the problems experienced (Aken et al., 1994; Michael et al., 2009).

Anti-bias training

Projects that provide services and training from schools to institutions to reduce and prevent prejudice and discrimination, especially against ethnic and cultural minorities (Schwartz, 1994).

Anti-blackness

The system of racial discrimination that systematically affects and dehumanizes the lives of black people. Widespread discrimination, negative experiences, and their consequences have produced several impacts, from economic to political, in all aspects of Blacks' lives (Bell, 2020).

Anti-meritocracy

Anti-meritocratic stance is a term used to describe when there is not a positive relationship established between meritocratic values and power, or prestige, such as including family situation as a criterion to decide payment of the work (Kunovich & Slomczynski, 2007).

Anti-racism

Anti-racism argues that races do not have a hierarchical order; no race is superior to the other. People should not be exposed to discrimination because of their race, either positively or negatively (Bowser & Bowser, 1995).

C**Collective Guilt**

Collective guilt is defined as the emotion felt by individuals who belong to a group when they admit that their group has committed immoral behavior that harms another group. This feeling can occur especially in citizens of countries with a history of colonization, torture, enslavement, or genocide (Branscombe et al., 2002).

Colorism

Colourism, also known as shadeism, is a practice of discrimination based on skin tone. According to research on skin tone stratification, light skin tone people - compared to people with dark skin tones - are privileged and rewarded in many different social settings (Hunter, 2013).

Conscious and Unconscious Bias

Conscious bias is a prejudice that the individual is aware of and it is characterized by overt behavior expressed as an attitude or behavior both verbally and physically.

Unconscious bias is prejudice based on unconscious preferences and behaviors for identities such as gender, race, sexual orientation, etc. Often people are unaware of these biases and how they affect our behavior. (Fiarman, 2016).

Critical Ethnic Studies

The interdisciplinary study of differences in race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and other identities expressed by society, individuals, civil society, and the state (Hu-DeHart, 1993).

Critical Pedagogy

It is an education model that aims to develop students' critical thinking skills, both in theory and practice, in accordance with ethical values, independent of current politics, economy, or cultural forces (Breuing, 2011).

Critical Race Theory

“A radical legal movement that seeks to transform the relationship between race, racism, and power. The critical race theory (CRT) movement is a collection of activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationship between race, racism, and power” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

Critical Self Awareness

It is defined as the degree of awareness of one's thoughts, behaviors, or emotions. It also includes questioning through self-awareness of policy-related issues, social events, or external processes affecting the person (McGannon, 2012).

Critical Self-Reflection

Being aware of our assumptions, and presuppositions and questioning our established patterns of thinking. “It is also a process, not a complete action. Critical self-reflection requires reflection consistently” (Jarvis et al 2003; Mezirow, 1990).

Cultural Appropriation/Misappropriation

Use of a culture-specific feature, such as lifestyle, religious symbols, hairstyle, ritual, practice, and other reflections of culture, without understanding the deep meaning or cultural context. The term appropriation has a more neutral meaning, while the word misappropriation is used to emphasize the negative side of this situation (Das, 2020).

Cultural Awareness

The ability to understand, value, and be aware of their own and other societies' cultural values, differences, routines, perspectives, or practices (Byram, 2011; Roysicar, 2004).

Cultural Competence

It defines a set of behaviors that enables it to work effectively in systems, institutions, or formations where intercultural differences exist. This set of behaviors includes understanding cultural backgrounds, values, similarities, and differences and developing attitudes and policies accordingly (Moton and Minkler, 2019; Flaskerud, 2007).

Cultural Proficiency

It defines a set of skills, values, beliefs, and principles that acknowledge and contribute to effective interactions between the various cultural and ethnic groups that come into contact at work or in personal life (Louque and Latunde, 2019).

Cultural Relevance

A multifaceted term and technique that can be used in service systems and education programs to achieve a fit between service systems and ethnocultural elements, or, in other words, to harmonize the provision of services in a culturally relevant manner (Barrio, 2000).

Cultural Responsiveness

Competence and ability to understand the ingroup differences that make each person unique, as well as to respect and celebrate intergroup variations. It can be implemented by leaders and educators through empowering minority students, encouraging student diversity, and reflecting on cultural experiences (Cultural responsiveness: Definitions and principles, 2017; Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2021).

Culturally Responsive Practices

It is commonly used in educational settings and aims to improve the learning of students from various ethnic backgrounds by considering their cultural knowledge and experiences, as well as their surroundings and performance styles (Gay, 2000).

D

De-Centering Whiteness

Especially in the USA, whiteness is at the center of society and being white brings many privileges. However, the focus should be on decentering whiteness and creating a multiracial center because it is believed that no single racial or cultural group should control the center. As decentering whiteness increases, crucial steps will be taken toward a truly multiracial environment (Hitchcock & Flint, 2015).

Diversity Focused

Embracing, respecting, and appreciating what differentiates people, such as gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and so forth. It could be a strategy used in the workplace or in education where students are trained in abilities needed to achieve this perspective through education (Kvam, Considine & Palmeri, 2018; Jouany & Martic, 2021).

Diversity Training

The program and services facilitate intergroup contact, reduce discrimination and prejudice, and teach to work effectively with people from different groups and affiliations (Lindsey et al., 2015).

Dominant Discourses

The dominant discourse is the most common language and actions in a given society. These speech and action patterns reflect the ideologies of the most powerful groups in society. They can be so ingrained that we consider them truthful, natural, normal, and right (Thibodeaux, 2022).

E**Educational Justice**

Educational justice emphasizes seeing all students equally and providing equal opportunities for each to achieve their goals, regardless of their social, economic, racial, or other forms of discrimination (Yamani et al., 2017).

Equitable

Equitable means treating everyone fairly and equally. Impartial, just, nonpartisan, objective, unbiased and unprejudiced can be considered synonyms (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Equity

Equity is one of the principles that is defined in distributive justice terms, meaning that people are distributed depending on how much they contributed to the common good such as payment of taxes or market participation (Hootegem et al., 2020).

F**Free Radical Therapy**

Radical therapy developed by a group of psychologists and psychiatrists in the 1970s and 1980s, is a non-mainstream form of clinical intervention that focuses on the harmful psychological effects of social problems on individuals. It aims to change society rather than adjust the individual, and therefore it encourages individuals to change society to solve their problems (American Psychological Association, n.d.).

Free Radical Self/ Collective Care

Collective care means viewing the psychological, emotional, or physical well-being of members as a shared responsibility of the group. Unlike self-care, in which one looks after just oneself, in collective

care, people are willing to look after others and make themselves accessible to people who may need support (Mehreen and Gray-Donald 2018).

H

Hegemony

The concept of hegemony, which can be used for countries or groups, means being in the strongest and most powerful position and therefore able to control or dominate others (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

I

Implicit/Explicit Bias

Implicit bias is attitudes or stereotypes that unconsciously influence our understanding, behavior, and decisions. Explicit bias is a type of bias in which a person is consciously aware of negative beliefs, judgments, actions, attitudes, or stereotypes about another person or group (Boysen, 2009; Burke et al., 2017).

Inclusivity Education

Inclusive education refers to the fact that all children access learning opportunities regardless of their background, specifically children who have been traditionally discriminated against (e.g. children with disabilities, minority children). It is a way of giving a chance to benefit from the education system (UNICEF, Inclusive education, n.d).

Institutional Bias

Discriminatory practices which go beyond prejudice and discrimination at the individual level, and affect individuals and the groups to which individuals belong. Institutional bias is seen in almost many social institutions and organizations; groups and people affected by these institutions vary depending on the institution and the domain. Thus, in practice, institutional bias is boundless (Dovidio et al., 2010).

Institutional Oppression

Institutional oppression means that law, custom, and/or practices lead to inequalities for the benefit of some social groups; thus, leading to the outrage of individuals belonging to the specific group that is implemented by society and its organizations (Deutsch, 2006).

Internalized Racial Superiority

Internalized racial superiority, also known as internalized racism, is where racial hierarchy is accepted and whites are found to be the most favorable race compared to People of Color in either conscious or unconscious way (Huber et al., 2006).

Internalized Racism

“Internalized racism refers to the acceptance, by marginalized racial populations, of the negative societal beliefs and stereotypes about themselves” (Williams& Williams-Morris, 2000).

Internalized White Supremacy

It's a term to express internalized racism. Beliefs, values, and standpoints existing in white supremacy are accepted and become natural, and it is likely that different racial groups may perceive themselves adversely because of that acceptance (Hwang, 20211; Huber et al., 20062).

Interrupting Racism

Interrupting racism means ending the sustained advancement of racism. What needs to be done to interrupt racism is a topic that is highly discussed in the school context. When continuity of the current situation is prevented and factors that hinder students' success (independent of their race) are singled out; it is considered that interrupting racism can be achieved (Atkins, 2017).

Intersection

If two things assemble and influence one another, the point formed is named an intersection ("Intersection", n.d.).

Intersectionality

People concurrently have multiple, interdependent, changeable, and fluid social identities based on but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, class, and sexual orientation. These categories that are socially built are rooted in systems of inequality or power. Intersectionality is the term used to describe that (Else-Quest & Hyde, 2016).

Intersectional Identities

“Intersecting identities is the concept that an individual's identity consists of multiple, intersecting factors, including but not limited to gender identity, gender expression, race, ethnicity, class (past and present), religious beliefs, sexual identity, and sexual expression” (Bolding, 2020).

Intersectional Studies

It is a field of study consisting of three categories that address different aspects of intersectionality. These categories examine the dynamics, extent, and content of intersectionality, as well as political interventions from the intersectional perspective (Cho et al., 2013).

L

Land Acknowledgement

It's the recognition of the connection between Indigenous Peoples and traditional territories, which is special and long-lasting. The term is a declaration of that recognition (Laurier Students' Public Interest Research Group. n.d.).

M

Marginalized Identities

"Marginalized groups are defined as those who "experience patterns of social and political inequality" via membership in a group that is assigned negative meanings by the broader society or the dominant culture thereby fostering oppression. More broadly, "marginalized identities" are defined as including marginalized groups and symbolic indicators of these groups" (Coe & Griffin, 2020).

Marginalized/Minoritized/Under-Represented Communities

The system-based and institutional operation where individuals are intentionally isolated, denied and removed from cultural, political, and economic participation based on income, race, ability, or immigrant status (Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs, n.d.).

Microaggressions

"Microaggressions are commonplace, interpersonally communicated, "othering" messages related to a person's perceived marginalized status" (Pierce et al. 1977; Sue 2010).

Multiculturalism

"Multiculturalism is a system of beliefs and behaviors that recognizes and respects the presence of all diverse groups in an organization or society, acknowledges and values their socio-cultural

differences, and encourages and enables their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context that empowers all within the organization or society” (Rosado, 1996).

R

Race Essentialism

Racial essentialism refers to the idea that racial groups acquire underlying essences which display not changeable and deep-rooted abilities and traits (Tadmor, 2013).

Racial Healing

Racial healing addresses the necessity to recognize and tell the truth about the racism that has been caused, both systemically and individually, and points out the present consequences (Kalamazoo Community Foundation, n.d.).

Racialized Identity

“Racialized identities are identifications with "groups of people that have been socially and politically constructed as "racially" distinct... [They] have notable cultural dimensions, but they are primarily a manifestation of unequal power between groups” (Baum, 2006).

Racial Justice

“The systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all. Racial justice — or racial equity — goes beyond "anti-racism." It is not just the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures” (N.E.A, n.d.).

Racial Prejudice

Racial prejudice is antipathy toward individuals by targeting them because of their race. There are weakly grounded and generalized considerations for these individuals (Quillian, 2006).

Racial Sensitivity Training

Racial Sensitivity training is a training that assists employees to realize more about the effects of what they say and their behavior on people from different races, religious backgrounds, gender, or any other category through discussion and conversation (Impactly, n.d).

Reflective Exercises

“An assessment that encourages students to reflect on what they have learned and to relate that learning to their own life experience. A journal is a type of reflective exercise” (IGI Global, n.d.).

Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is a term to describe efforts shown to victims of wrongdoing including practices like apologies, restitution, acknowledgment of harm and injustice as well as reintegration of wrongdoers into society (Menkel-Meadow, 2007).

Restorative Practices

Restorative practices are based on in which ways relationships between people and social ties in communities can be bolstered. It is considered a new social science. In terms of the school context, a favorable connection with students and stakeholders can be achieved with the help of restorative practices, which provide various instruments for educators. It doesn't only aim attention at prevention but also when it comes to restoring impaired relationships and in the face of conflicts, restorative practices are preferred to find solutions for these (International Institute for Restorative Practices, n.d. ; Kline, 2016).

S

Social Justice

Social justice is a term, which first emerged in the 19th century, that advocates for justice for all. It is also believed that everyone in society should have equal economic, political, and social rights and opportunities (Prilleltensky, 2001).

Spirit Murdering

It is the result of racism which slowly drags people's diverse and colorful souls to death by humiliating their identities and rejecting their inclusion, safety, security, and acceptance (Williams, 1987; Love, 2016).

Structural Bias

Structural bias refers to receiving more or less pleasant coverage as a consequence of media routines and newsworthiness, not as the consequence of ideological opinion (van Dalen, 2011).

Structural Inequity

“The systemic disadvantage of social groups due to a confluence of unequal rights, opportunities, power, and opportunities, as well as discriminatory laws and policies” (Gomez, Arteaga& Freihart, 2021).

Structural Racism

“A system in which social, economic, and political systems often reinforce ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. Differs from other types of racism by its scope; it is not only personal or institutional but more general and structural as in its name” (Aspen Institute, 2016).

Systemic Bias

Social systems favor powerful groups over less powerful ones based on identities such as racism, ethnicity, and sexism. Such norms and policies of institutions, legal and educational systems, and mass media are beneficial for powerful groups and detrimental for less powerful groups (Payne et al., 2017).

Systemic Oppression

“Systemic oppression refers to the permanent subordination, humiliation, and domination of certain social groups due to their socially constructed lower position in society on account of the socially constructed higher position of the oppressing groups. It often happens covertly, invisible, and without any bad intention, which indicates the ordinariness of steady oppression and points to the fact that it is systemically ingrained” (Liedauer, 2021).

Systemic Racism

People are exposed to radical discrimination in all areas of society, such as the economy, education, politics, and access to health services, both in social relations and in institutions and organizations just because of their race. For example, black and brown people do not have some of the advantages that white people have in social life, institutions, and organizations (Bonilla-Silva, 2021).

U

Unconscious Bias

They are unconsciously constructed biases that individuals have with the tendency of classifying identities, followed by social stereotypes that are unconsciously built toward categorized identities (Unconscious Bias Training, n.d).

W

Whiteness

Whiteness is a form of power that breeds inequality and imposes the invisibility of whiteness by positing whiteness as the standard (Vidal-Ortiz, 2014).

White Fragility

“White Fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. It may be conceptualized as a product of the habitus, a response or "condition" produced and reproduced by the continual social and material advantages of the white structural position” (DiAngelo, 2011).

White Privilege

“White privilege refers to the advantages that some have with the help of their race; the more they resemble the people in powerful positions, the more doors will be open to them based on their skin color” (Kendall, 2012).

White Social Capital

“A well-established, but narrow definition of social capital. Racial context plays an important role in how social capital operates. The benefits of social capital are not equally felt by all members of society. Minority groups, in particular, seem to be left out. In this sense, we can say that just like the WEIRD sample, white social capital refers to the overrepresentation of white people in the social capital literature and the underrepresentation of other social groups” (Hawes, 2017).

White Supremacy

White supremacy or white supremacism is a form of discrimination that white or lighter-skinned people are superior to those of other races and therefore should dominate them. Due to this belief, the interests and perceptions of white subjects are continually placed center stage and assumed as 'normal' in society (“White Supremacy,” 2022; Gillborn, 2006).

Woke

“Well-informed, up-to-date. Now chiefly: alert to racial or social discrimination and injustice; frequently stay woke” (Steinmetz, 2017).

“Aware of and actively attentive to important facts and issues (especially issues of racial and social justice)” (Merriam-Webster, 2018).

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