

# Documentation

## Breakout Room #11

“A cultural change starts by updating the language with the contemporary norms of society.”

### #1 - Word choice

I started the debate by explaining the statement, Shay Raviv immediately responded with a critical remark. She wondered what exactly I meant by “contemporary norms of society”. The reason she asked this was because from a social designer's perspective, it's not an inclusive term to use. She explained that referring to contemporary norms, you don't include all norms in your statement. As a result, you exclude people and therefore do not design inclusively. She added that it would be better to replace 'contemporary norms' with 'society'.

Although the intention was to formulate an inclusive statement, it was not successful due to the wrong choice of words. This made me realize that it is not only important to let language change with society, but also to handle it carefully yourself.

### #2 – Is language the starting point of a social change?

The second point we discussed was whether language should be the starting point for a social change or whether it should be a consequence of the change. By changing language first, you may be imposing a certain view on people, pushing them too much in one direction. That is why you can say that the change must take place first, before you change the language for everyone. On the other hand, if you wait for society to be ready for a change as a whole, you risk that you let a certain part wait too long for a change to come through.

From the whole session these two points stuck with me the most, because we discussed these for a long time. When you're debating a complex problem such as male bias with several social designers, you learn to look at it from different perspectives. It was an inspiring conversation, from which I was able to gain valuable insights. And I am therefore very grateful to everyone who participated in this breakout session.