

Meaning Representations of “Trans,” “Transgender,” “Transsexual” and “Tranny”: A Corpus-Based Analysis in Digital News and Magazines

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Abstract

This present study aims to examine the English references in digital media that are commonly used to refer to the group of non-binary people and to explore the aspects of references used to portray their meanings towards LGBT people. The first-100 concordance lines of NOW Corpus were used as a primary data source. In order to analyze the data, two groups of the nodes: favorable terms (*transgender and trans*) and unfavorable terms (*transsexual and tranny*), were searched and analyzed using descriptive percentage, thematic content analysis, and corpus-driven discourse analysis. The findings revealed that the highest frequencies of references commonly used in digital news and magazines to refer to LGBT individuals are transgender and trans, respectively. Besides, two sub-themes were found in the concordance lines in terms of positive meanings: *raising equality, showing advocacy and performance, and politics, and policy* and sarcastic or negative meanings: *showing bias or discrimination, subgroup, abandonment and insecurity, difficulties and oppressions, and derogatory and sexual desire*. Some unfavorable terms are still underused in media, but they could reveal some positive meanings in terms of politics and policy. The implementations of the study are that the meanings of some LGBT terms are dynamic and that when used in media, content writers need to be aware of different meanings and contexts of the words.

Keywords: Corpus-based analysis, LGBT references, Gender equality, NOW Corpus

Introduction

The term LGBT which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender, is commonly used to refer to people in a rainbow group. In printed media, such as newspapers and magazines, or even in today's social media, such as YouTube, Facebook, or Twitter, gender roles are presented in various ways regarding masculinity, femininity, or lesbian, gay, bisexual,

and transgender. In modern society, people may easily perceive gender differences through stereotyped representation in the media (Siebler, 2012). Worse than that, in foreign countries, the use of hate speech in media exist to show bias or discrimination against non-binary people. As evidence of this, the word “tranny”, representing trans people by the media, is reported by LGBTQIA Resource Center (2020) as offensive and inappropriate. Another example includes the phrase, “that is so gay,” which describes a situation negatively. Given the (in)appropriate references used for non- binary people, this present study focuses on what and how words/phrases were used in digital media, i.e., online newspapers and magazines. According to Baker (2014), media is considered a reliable source of information and influences many readers (Dijk & Adrianus, 2008). The present study’s findings would, consequently, portray the use of language per human rights for gender equality, gender integrity, and gender identity of non-binary people. It would also help lessen the negative feelings of LGBT people because of the misuse of references in media. Hence, the motivation for conducting this present study is to answer the two major research questions as follows:

1. What English references in the global digital media are commonly used to refer to LGBT people?
2. In what aspects are English references in the global digital media used to portray their meanings toward LGBT people?

Objectives

The objectives of this present study are as follows.

1. To investigate the references in the global digital media, which are commonly used to refer to LGBT people.
2. To explore the meanings of English references portraying LGBT people in the global digital media.

Literature review

In this section, two major theories regarding LGBT language will be presented. First, theories regarding LGBT regarding Minority, Gender Minority Stress Theory, and Queer Theory are discussed in terms of language ideology. The second ends with a discussion of corpus linguistics, which is the main tool for the present study.

Minority, gender minority stress theory, and queer theory

In 2003, Meyer asserted that the chronic marginalization deleteriously affected mental and physical health of non-binary members. The feeling of being marginalized results from two major factors: distal stressors (external factors) and proximal stressors (internal factors). These factors may lead to health disparities in terms of discrimination, rejection, harassment, physical or sexual violence, and negative attitudes and negative beliefs about self when minority groups experience it disproportionately. The belief of Spargo in 1999 on Queer Theory is that both intellectual concepts and sexual desire regarding gender and sex can be used as a systematic framework for analysis since there is a wide range of focus within the

theory. In other words, Queer Theory could be employed to interpret the desire association for same-sex relationships in various media fields such as film, music, and images. In the way of politics, for example, sexual power could be seen through the lens of this theory. In addition, the language used in referring to non-binary individuals and identifying trans people can be interpreted within this framework. In the same vein, the belief that gender diversity people should be grouped in the same category is disregarded by this framework since a wide range of gender identities and any reference to them seems unnecessary. In addition to Spargo's ideas regarding Queer Theory, Butler (1990) they were asserted that society and culture are shaped to co-construct gender. Gender identity is constructed through repeated actions that people express or perform regardless of inborn gender.

The following discusses what corpus linguistics is.

Corpus linguistics

Corpus linguistics is defined by some scholars (such as O'Keefe, McCarthy & Carter, 2007) as "a collection of text, written and spoken, which is stored on a computer" (p.1). Sinclair (1990) further advocated that a corpus comprises accurate or natural data for analysis. Another benefit of corpus linguistics is that it can analyze the rule of language changes through time when people of different languages interact (Lindquist, 2009).

Through concordances, researchers may investigate how language is used through concordance line analysis and word frequency (Boontam & Phoocharoensil, 2017). According to O'Keefe, McCarthy, and Carter (2007), "Key-Word-In-Context" (KWIC) occurs perpendicularly in the center of the line. Researchers can use contexts and items around a node, or a search word, to analyze its collocation in the concordance lines (Evison, 2010). Regarding frequency, linguists look for helpful evidence of how frequently a word occurs in the sample concordance lines.

Given information about concordance lines and frequency, some researchers (such as McEnery & Wilson, 1996) argued that corpora are used in a quantitative analysis. For example, sensitive issues, such as LGBT language, are randomly analyzed through a finite language sample, resulting in an objective look into the language (McEnery & Wilson, 1996). However, according to Krennmayr's (2015) corpus linguistics research on the use of metaphors in newspaper texts, it is claimed that "what quantitative corpus analysis can add is a look at larger patterns that distinguish metaphors in the news from metaphors in other kinds of discourse. This can set the stage for more detailed qualitative analysis" (p.532). This means that the quantitative analysis can draw a more precise picture of what kinds of metaphors are commonly used in newspapers, further explained qualitatively through discourse analysis. This kind of practice is echoed in Charteris-Black (2000) and El Rafeie (2001) in that metaphors in the news were found in terms of frequencies, and they were further categorized into their pragmatic and rhetorical dimensions, persuasive force, and sociocultural context. When the frequencies were found, Boontam and Phoocharoensil (2017) suggested that researchers investigate the concordance lines where nodes are in terms of discourse analysis.

Regarding discourse analysis in a corpus, Baker et al. (2008) proposed using human interpretation and analysis of data from the corpora. This is because language use in newspapers and magazines collected in the corpora represents “discourse” community (Foucault, 1980; Koteyko, 2006; Teubert, 2005). By looking at nodes in the concordances and interpreting the discursive emergence of meaning, researchers could identify the language of this discourse community. Dijk and Adrianus (2008) further argued that “power can be described as access to or control over public discourse and communication” (p.89). This means that the references used to refer to LGBT connote speakers’ attitudes and, therefore, can be literally and connotatively analyzed through quantitative.

To conclude, this present study employed corpus and discourse analysis to unveil the use of references regarding LGBT people in digital media. To further explore the discourse community of digital newspapers and magazines, the following section discusses a specialized corpus, where the sample of the LGBT language is used.

News on the Web Corpus (NOW)

To extract language use in newspapers and magazines, a specialized corpus named, News on the Web Corpus, or NOW, was used in the present study which will be discussed below.

NOW comprises 11.6 million words regarding over- 10-year global language use in web-based English newspapers and magazines. The size of this corpus grows daily as the up-to-date news is added up regularly. The corpus contains the written genre and is organized by Brigham Young University (BYU) by the creator Mark Davies. In this corpus, the various kinds of searches, e.g., concordance analysis and collocation analysis, are available and shared among other corpora in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (Törmä, 2018). It could gain more benefits than that of manually created, which is expressed by Davies (2017) as follows:

“One of the challenges facing corpus creators and users is the fact that so many corpora quickly become “stale,”. They may do a great job of representing the language from 10– 20 years ago, but there is nothing from the last year or two – or especially the last month and definitely not from yesterday” (1).

In analyzing LGBT references in NOW concordances, Davies (2011) suggested that words, phrases, and families of new words could be extracted from the corpus. Then researchers could investigate morphological productivity and lexical creativity in real-time. This way, the present study employed the context of NOW concordances as the source of LGBT sample language in digital media.

LGBT+ people in order to avoid being offensive, sensationalist. and ridiculous.

Research methodology

The present study used frequencies and discourse analysis to investigate LGBT references in digital media. According to Baker et al. (2008), the analysis of frequencies and discourse analysis is regarded as corpus-driven discourse analysis. In other words, the researchers extracted concordances from the corpus, then looked into words or phrases in the

contexts of the nodes. After that, the contexts were interpreted to derive the underlying meanings of the nodes. The following paragraphs discuss the research process.

Nodes

This study's nodes, or search words, are derived from Trans Media Watch (2015). This UK organization does not only provide a guideline for the use of trans language in media but also suggests lists of favorable and unfavorable terms for reporting LGBT+ people in order to avoid being offensive, sensationalist, and ridiculous.

Table 1 below shows four favorable and unfavorable terms used as the nodes in the concordance analysis of this study.

Table 1 Favorable and unfavorable nodes reviewed from Trans Media Watch

Favorable Terms	Unfavorable Terms
Trans	Transsexual
Transgender	Tranny

The following section discusses data collection.

Data collection

The data in this study comprises the first-100 concordance lines from NOW. Then, the researchers investigated the concordances in terms of frequency note-taking, analyzing the themes, and refining the overlapping theme. After that, the whole frequency of each search word was generated by the software in the corpus, and it displayed the percentage of the nodes indicating LGBT people/issues. After collecting the frequency of nodes, the contexts of search words were further analyzed into themes using thematic content analysis. According to Trans Media Watch (2015), LGBT language can be favorable and unfavorable. The researchers used this guideline as a basis for concordance analysis. When the context of some concordance lines of the search words did not match each other, they were eliminated. Then, overlapping themes were refined and judged. Finally, each category was allocated with different colors of related themes to explore the findings.

Concordance analysis

In the first stage, the nodes from the group of favorable terms were explored and analyzed. Words or phrases in the concordances that convey negative or sarcastic meanings towards LGBT people were deductively paid attention to. Secondly, the next group of unfavorable nodes was considered against LGBT issues. This group of nodes was explored in terms of positive meanings to find any overlapping meanings. These two stages were completed by using descriptive percentage and corpus-driven discourse analysis. The main purpose was to answer the two major research questions quantitatively and qualitatively.

Results and discussion

Descriptive percentage

Table 2 Favorable and unfavorable nodes in percentage ranked from high-low frequencies

	Nodes	Frequency	Percentage
Favorable and Unfavorable Nodes	Transgender	120,407	53
	Trans	101,838	45
	Transsexual	2,913	1.5
	Tranny	1,155	0.5
Total		226,313	100

It is evident from the data shown in Table 2 above that, from the total of 226,313 frequency, the highest frequency came from the node “transgender” with 53% (or 120,407 tokens). The node “trans” was considered the second rank with 45% (or 101,838 tokens). However, the nodes “transsexual” and “tranny” were found minimally with 1.5% (or 2,913 tokens) and 0.5% (or 1,155 tokens), respectively. What is interesting in this set of data is that the first and the second ranks are favorable terms, according to Trans Media Watch (2015). On the contrary, the frequencies of unfavorable terms do not show much difference in percentage.

The results revealed that the high percentage of favorable terms in the present study portrayed the most frequent use of transgender and trans in the digital media discourse community (Koteyko, 2006; McEnery & Wilson, 1996; Teubert, 2005). Conversely, unfavorable terms, i.e., tranny and transsexual, are minimally used in digital media. This confirms Törmä's (2018) study that unfavorable terms should be avoided, and this was reflected in the language used in digital media.

Following the frequency analysis found in the present study, the following section illuminates the underlying meanings of node contexts.

The emerging themes from NOW Corpus

This section presents the thematic content analysis from the first-100 concordances of each node from NOW Corpus. Two major themes emerged from favorable (transgender and trans) and unfavorable (transsexual and tranny) nodes: (1) positive meanings to refer to LGBT people and (2) sarcastic or negative meanings to refer to LGBT people. This will be discussed in the following section.

The positive meanings of LGBT people

Table 3 Favorable and unfavorable nodes in positive meanings regarding LGBT people

Nodes	Positive meanings towards LGBT people	
	Semantic preference	Example of words and phrases obtained from the concordances
1. Transgender (favorable)	To lessen discrimination	Equality (noun) and Equally (adverb)
	The visibility in the society	a well-known face from television commercials and recruit
2. Trans (favorable)	Advocacy	support, full support, full-throated support, act as escorts, supporting trans equality, care about protecting and supporting, supported leading LGBT+, value, leading, and supported
	Performance	model actress actor
3. Transsexual (unfavorable)	Showing politics	Mayor, House of Parliament, and Republican nominee for sheriff
	Showing policy	custody and self-identify, safety and security, safety, and treats prisoners with dignity and respect, and the right to marry

Regarding Table 3, it is apparent that both favorable and unfavorable terms revealed positive meanings regarding non-binary people in different aspects. The first two favorable nodes, “transgender and trans,” co-existed with the sub-themes of lessening discrimination, the visibility of LGBT people in society, and advocacy and performance towards LGBT people. This can be explored in the NOW extracts below.

Lessening discrimination and visibility in society:

- (1) *Transgender **Equality** said the order " moves us another step toward a day when transgender people can openly live as who they are without being targeted for discrimination." (NBC News)*
- (2) *Jamaican Vice President in US History. **Equally** impressive is his recent appointment of a Transgender Doctor, Rachel Levine, as Assistant Health Secretary. President Biden's team is (Forbes)*

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- (3) *will get a chance to **equally** participate in society. Citizens need to encourage the transgender community by losing prejudice against them. (sentinelassam.com)*
- (4) *Mekha Rajan, a **well-known face from television commercials** and Namitha, who won Miss Transgender India last year. Over the years, this project has been known to give (The Hindu)*
- (5) *# Chariduar. # Transgender in police # The Bihar Police had decided to **recruit Transgender** in its force. The State police is likely to issue an advertisement regarding recruitment (sentinelassam.com)*
Advocacy and performance:
- (6) *Joe Biden's secretary of defence pick gives **full-throated support** for trans troops serving in military # Retired General Lloyd Austin smiles as he testifies before the (pinknews.co.uk)*
- (7) *Services Group has announced it **supported leading LGBT+** charity Stonewall to amplify trusted information about trans equality to millions of UK citizens. # Stonewall, Britain's leading lesbian, (Marketing Dive)*
- (8) *for beauty salon employment, and Correia is preparing to launch her career as a trans **model**. Photo: Bruno Kaiuca for VICE World News. (VICE)*
- (9) *at a time, it's different, " said Rebecca Gotto, a 34-year-old trans **actress** from Rio's outer Baixada region. Gotto, who had stayed with Casa (VICE)*

In addition, the unfavorable node “transsexual” depicted some positive meanings concerning politics and policy to refer to non-binary people, while the node “tranny” showed no evidence of positive meaning. Here is evidence extracted from the concordances in NOW Corpus:

Showing politics and policy:

- (10) *yet Carterton elected Georgina Beyer as **Mayor**, who was not only Maori but a transsexual as well... When I stood, I did not run on a banner that (odt.co.nz)*
- (11) *Yes, I have to say it, I guess, I am the first transsexual in New Zealand to be standing in this **House of Parliament**. This is a (community.scoop.co.nz)*
- (12) *Provided that the **safety and security** of the prison is not compromised, transgender, transsexual and intersex prisoners have the right to be housed in a correctional facility appropriate to (examiner.com.au)*
- (13) *official - - 1,000- person strong - - Pride parade in 2008; a high court giving transsexual women **the right to marry** in 2013; 2018's winning bid to become the (hk.asiatatler.com)*
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The sarcastic or negative meanings towards LGBT people

Table 4 Favorable and unfavorable nodes in sarcastic and negative meanings regarding LGBT people.

Nodes	Sarcastic or negative meanings towards LGBT people	
	Semantic preference	Example of words and phrases obtained from the concordances
1. Transgender (favorable)	Showing bias or discrimination	rule, prohibit, and block (<i>for medical treatment</i>), refuse and invalidate (<i>for gender identity</i>) restrict (<i>for sport</i>) ruling (<i>for utility</i>) ban (<i>from school, sport and utility</i>)
2. Trans (favorable)	Showing subgroup	sparked a backlash, a subgroup are worse off still, and subpopulations
	Showing abandonment	displaced, eviction and throwing, and discard
	Showing insecurity	shamed and uncomfortable questions, may not even allow public establishments, might be beaten up in women's washrooms, beaten up or raped in men's public washrooms, and force
3. Transsexual (unfavorable)	Showing difficulties	struggle (<i>for prosperity</i>) and visibility...not for (<i>difficulty to get accepted</i>)
	Showing oppressions	a string of horrible jokes and embarrassed (<i>humiliation</i>), beaten and harassed (<i>discrimination</i>), prostitutes (<i>sexual object</i>), shot (<i>violence</i>), FTM porn star, the man with a pussy (<i>sexual object</i>), and object of desire (<i>social oppression</i>)
4. Tranny (unfavorable)	Showing derogatory	horrible tranny faggots, derogatory word " tranny ", horrible tranny f*****s, highly inappropriate and very troubling, old diggers, inappropriate and hilarious, grotesquely inappropriate slurs and demeaning labels, and derogatory name
	Showing sexual aspects	Happy Meal toy: a cheap orgasmic pleasure, pick me up and real fish, a 6-foot-tall tranny with bright red hair and tattoos, sex, good fun, Fucking faggot, and tranny porn

Table 4 demonstrates that favorable and unfavorable terms revealed sarcastic or negative meanings towards LGBT people in various topics. The first two favorable nodes, “transgender and trans,” appeared with sub-themes relating to bias or discrimination and subgroup, abandonment and insecurity regarding LGBT people. This is shown in the NOW extracts below:

Showing bias or discrimination:

- (14) *on school sports... more > # HELENA, Mont. (AP) - Transgender kids would be **banned** from playing on school sports teams for the gender with which (Washington Times)*
- (15) *appeals Judge Kyle Duncan, who represented the Virginia school district that tried to **ban transgender** student Gavin Grimm from using the bathroom aligning with his gender identity. # Lambda (NBC News)*
- (16) *in women’s sports. # This year, state lawmakers also want to **restrict transgender** students’ sports participation in Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, North (Washington Times)*
- (17) *A House committee will vote this week on a proposal to **prohibit** doctors from providing transgender youth certain gender-related medical treatment. # The Montana bill targeting transgender youth sports participation (Washington Times)*

Showing subgroup, abandonment, and insecurity:

- (18) *members of the LGBTQ community, or one violent death every 26 hours. Brazilian trans people as **a subgroup are worse off still**: a 2018 cross-national survey by European (VICE)*
- (19) ***subpopulations** at equal rates. White, black, Asian, Latinx, gay, trans, and more - it is 10% of each population.’ Now that is (Diginomica)*
- (20) *COVID-19 isolation. # This time, **eviction** would mean **throwing** dozens of gay and trans residents into the streets, exposing them to infection just as Brazil passed the 115,000 (VICE)*
- (21) *of a dominant art historical canon that extracts from, and then **discards**, Black trans life, Tourmaline speculates on the gaps in history -- what she calls,“ tapping (The Nation)*
- (22) *are afraid they might be beaten up or raped in men’s public washrooms. Trans men are afraid they **might be beaten up in women’s washrooms**. # There (montrealgazette.com)*
- (23) *Article content continued # Many trans people see this as a safety issue. Trans women are afraid they might be **beaten up or raped in men’s public washrooms** (montrealgazette.com)*

In the same vein, both unfavorable nodes, “transsexual and tranny” illuminated sarcastic or negative meanings concerning difficulties and oppressions and showing derogatory and sexual aspects to refer to non-binary people. Hence, the concordances below reveal the emerging sub-themes regarding LGBT people:

Showing difficulties and oppressions:

- (24) *Sudha Kongara is set in a village where Sathar (Kalidas Jayaram), a transsexual, **struggles** to get a foothold to establish himself as part of the society. (theweek.in)*
- (25) ***visibility** for men or women now, but still **not for** asexual, transsexual, or transwomen. It is fantastic to see people from other gender and sexualities also (livemint.com)*
- (26) *when I first heard Morris’ name, it was attached to the now archaic term transsexual by **a string of horrible jokes**. Too **embarrassed** to sign out a copy of (The Daily Beast)*
- (27) *I woke up one morning, and I saw all this stuff on Instagram about these transsexual women who were being **beaten and harassed**, and there were a bunch of people (Entertainment Tonight)*

Showing derogatory and sexual aspects:

- (28) *The officers mocked LGBT+ people as “queers” and “horrible tranny faggots”, as well as joking about migrants drowning, referring to a Black colleague (pinknews.co.uk)*
- (29) *called a **derogatory name** such as ‘faggot’, ‘dyke’ or ‘tranny’ in the past 12 months. # Despite this, only 41% of’ (miragenews.com)*
- (30) *night a Hasidic rabbi tried to **pick me up** because he thought I was a tranny. I had to tell him: “Baby, this is **real fish!** (thestreetjournal.org)*
- (31) *desires, and joy better than the men on Bumble/Hinge/Tind/Grindr who think I’m their tranny **Happy Meal toy: a cheap orgasmic pleasure** only meant to enjoy while in between (jezebel.com)*

At this discussion point, the findings on favorable terms of the nodes (*transgender and trans*) aligned with the study of Törmä (2018). Evidence of positive meanings, such as raising equality and showing advocacy and performance towards LGBT people, were found. This echoed what Törmä advocated as proper references to be reported in digital news and magazines to refer to LGBT people.

On the contrary, the findings in the present study, even though partly supporting Törmä’s suggestion, showed sarcastic or negative meanings regarding non-binary genders in terms of bias or discrimination, subgroup, abandonment, and insecurity through the use of favorable terms. This means that the guideline from Trans Media Watch (2015) for the media on LGBT language only posits a side of a coin. This study, however, revealed that the suggested referents, i. e., transgender and trans, connote sarcastic or negative meanings regarding LGBT people as well.

Like the favorable terms, the present study partly rejected the guidelines of avoiding unfavorable terms, i. e., transsexual and tranny, as suggested by Törmä (2018), particularly concerning politics and policy. The findings suggest that these unfavorable terms should be

avoided in digital news and magazines regarding difficulties oppressions and derogatory and sexual aspects, similar to Trans Media Watch (2015). However, in the political and policy aspects, the terms could still be used in a positive perspective. This reflects the dynamic use of language in today's digital media.

The findings of this study also confirmed the concepts of the Minority and Minority Stress Theory by Meyer (2003) in that the two main stressors, i.e., distal stressors and proximal stressors, were found. To amplify this issue, distal stressors are caused by stressful external events in terms of discrimination, rejection, harassment, or sexual violence, and these were found in the sub-themes of bias or discrimination; subgroup, abandonment and insecurity; and derogatory and sexual desire from the four nodes (*transgender, trans, transsexual and tranny*). Also, proximal stressors or internal events consist of internalized transphobia or situations that make LGBT people feel uncomfortable, unacceptable, and vulnerable, as found in the sub-theme of difficulties and oppressions in the “transsexual” node. These two stressors found in this discourse community confirmed that digital news and magazines could bring about health disparities for LGBT people by utilizing favorable and unfavorable terms.

Pedagogical implications and conclusion

From the concordance lines, “transgender and trans” were found more frequently to depict positive meanings toward LGBT people/issues, which are recommended as favorable terms of reference for these people/issues. The authentic data from the concordances in NOW Corpus also indicated that favorable terms (transgender and trans) and unfavorable terms (transsexual and tranny) portrayed both with sarcastic or negative meanings and positive meanings towards non-binary people in various aspects. This connotes that the reports of digital news and magazines concerning LGBT people from different geographical areas around the world resonate sarcastic or negative meanings and positive meanings with different sub-themes.

The pedagogical implications of this study are that it could denote significance to journalism and mass communication students. To elaborate, students who study courses relating to news reports or prepare to work as media content writers can use this study's results to convey underlying meanings and the context of LGBT references correctly. As suggested by the study of Klomkaew and Kanokpermpoon in 2022, the results of this present study can raise the awareness of news reporters regarding the intended meanings of media when reporting LGBT people and issues. Regarding news and media, this present study used linguistics mechanisms to explain how generic and specific LGBT terms were used. When it turns to learners in secondary and higher education, this study's results can benefit them. In writing English courses, for example, students will have more opportunities to select appropriate words drawn from the corpus in writing about gender issues/topics. In addition, more consciousness will be added to students' mindsets when talking or communicating with people of gender diversity. They can avoid using offensive terms to call those people. Regarding teachers,

respecting and using proper lavender references to refer to LGBT students can help them feel they are part of the classroom community and be fully present in their academic experience.

Given the NOW corpus used in the present study, the study has some limitations. The first issue is the lack of a specialized corpus of LGBT in the printed genre to cross-check the findings obtained from NOW Corpus. However, given the daily language used in digital news and magazines, the present study could portray how the public audience used references to refer to LGBT people/issues. Another issue concerns the size of corpus. The present study was conducted, during which more information added to NOW Corpus. However, the frequency in the present study likely revealed enough samples for each node in the analysis. Future research concerning LGBT references could be in spoken language with other nodes. This would widen the picture of how references are used towards LGBT people/issues in modern society.

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