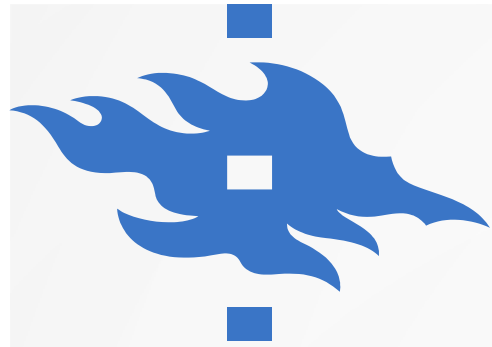


The importance of nonbinary pronouns: personal experiences and attitudes

Laura Hekanaho

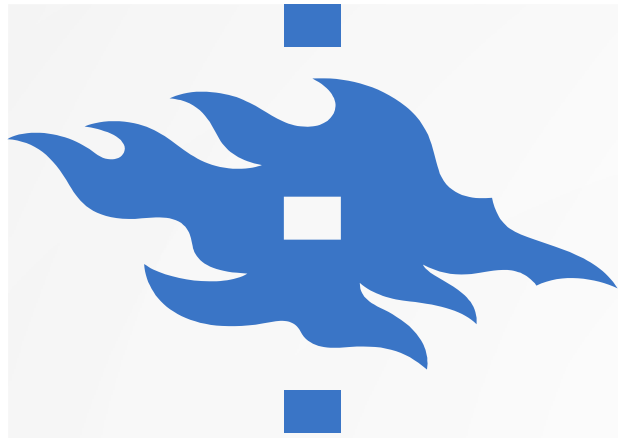
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Presentation

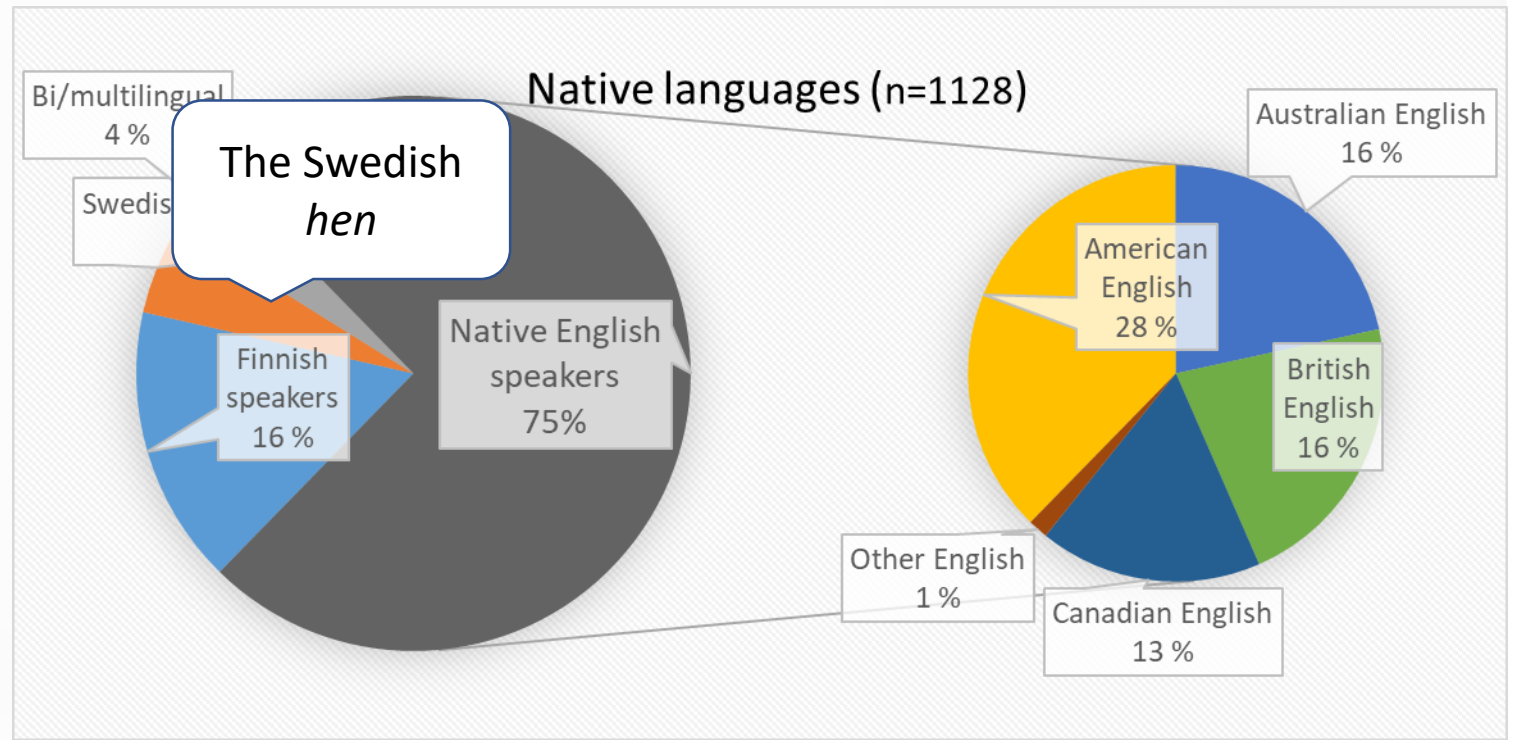
1. Participants
2. Nonbinary participants & their relationship with pronouns
3. Attitudes towards nonbinary pronouns

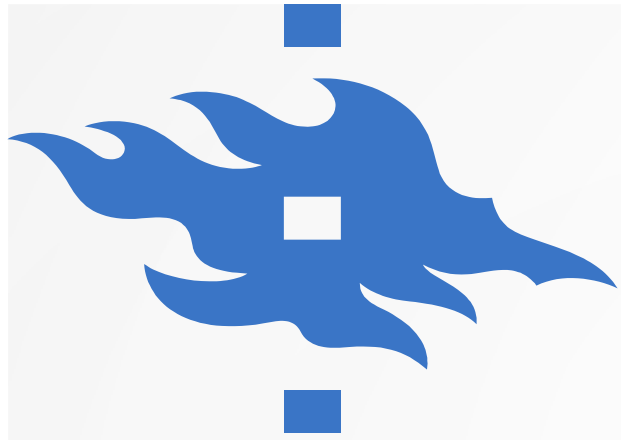


1. Participants

- Online survey, 1128 participants

- 54% male, 36% female, 9% transgender, including 79 nonbinary participants
- Age range 18-80, mean 29, median 26
- 75% have university level education
- 82% identify as politically liberal

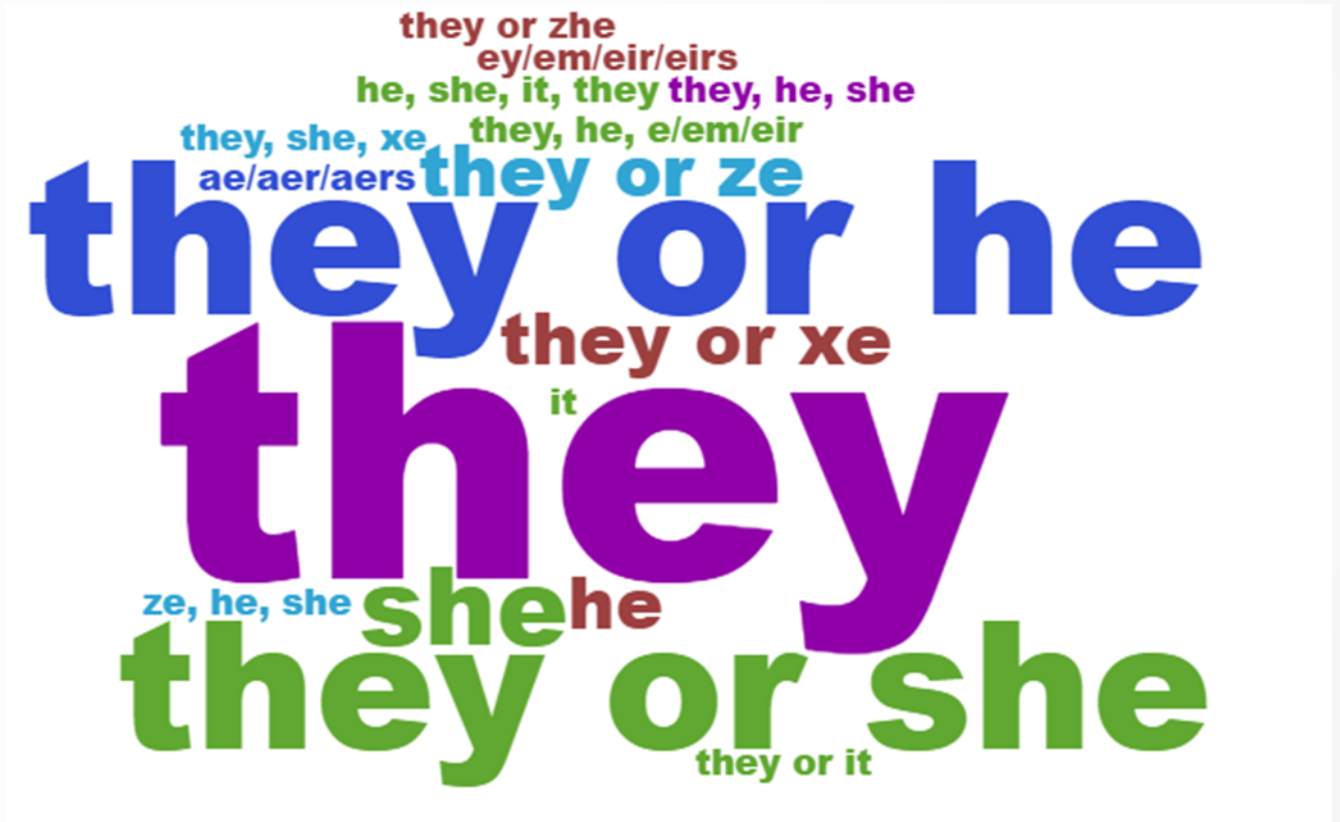




2. Nonbinary participants and their relationship with pronouns

What pronouns do nonbinary participants use? (n=72)

- *They* the most commonly used pronoun
 - 36 participants (50%) listed *they* as their only pronoun
 - 59 participants (82%) listed *they* as one (or only) alternative
- 10 participants listed neopronouns: *ze, xe, e, ae, ey, zhe*
- Only 5 nonbinary participants used only *he* or *she*
- 3 participants listed *it* as a suitable pronoun



Why multiple pronouns?

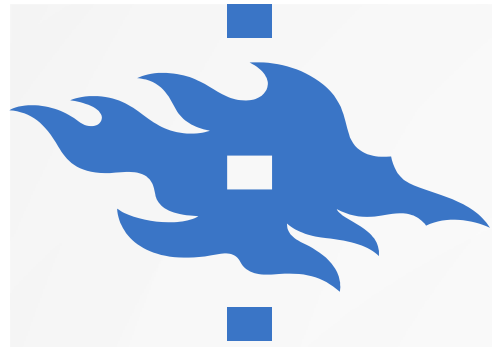
- often context-dependent
 - practical reasons
 - relationship

“I currently ask people to use 'they'. I wish I could realistically ask for 'xe'.”

“(...)I don't have a single 'correct' pronoun that I ask people to use. In situations where people know me, however they know me by is fine. (...)”

“In an ideal world, I would ask people to use neutral terms, 'they/ze', however I do not do this yet because of practical reasons”

“I prefer for my friends to use they/them, but prefer strangers to use he/him.”

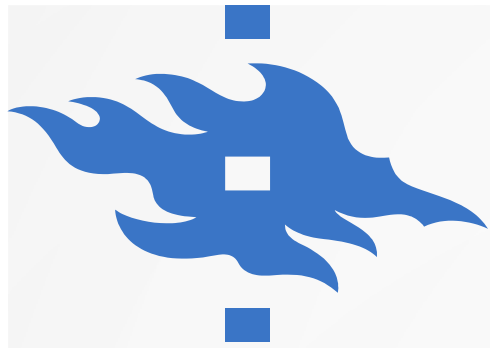


Importance of correct pronouns

- 68% (52) felt it was important that others use their correct pronouns
- Context matters:
 - where and who
 - avoiding conflict (safety)

“I can't reasonably expect strangers and people I haven't come out to to do so. (...)”

“[It's important], unless I am in the company of people who may cause me harm if I were to give my correct pronouns.”



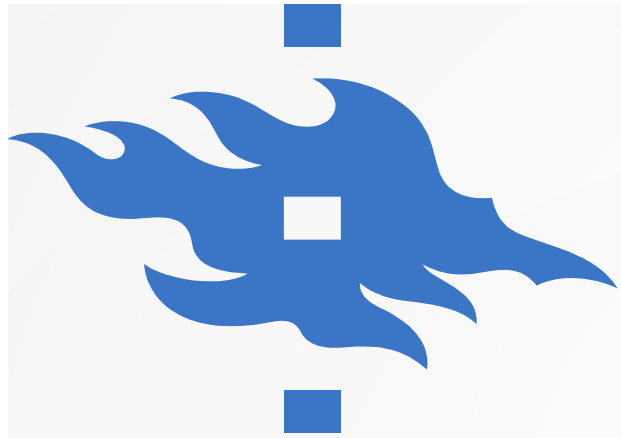
Experiences of language use as discrimination

- 80% have felt discriminated by language use
 - feelings of exclusion, invalidation

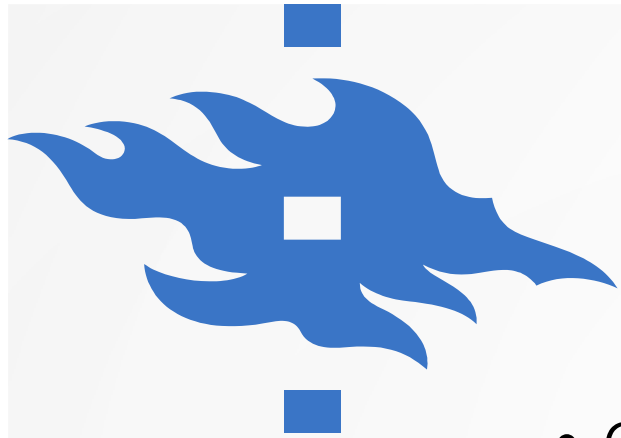
“I've heard several people actively mock neo-pronouns to my face, which feels invalidating and sometimes intimidating (...) It indicated that they don't respect my identity.”

“ (...) people like me are commonly left out of conversation and the validation of our identities is often dismissed as us being whiny.”

“ (...) people very often use language that is heterosexist and cissexist, and it's consistently made me feel unsafe. (...)”



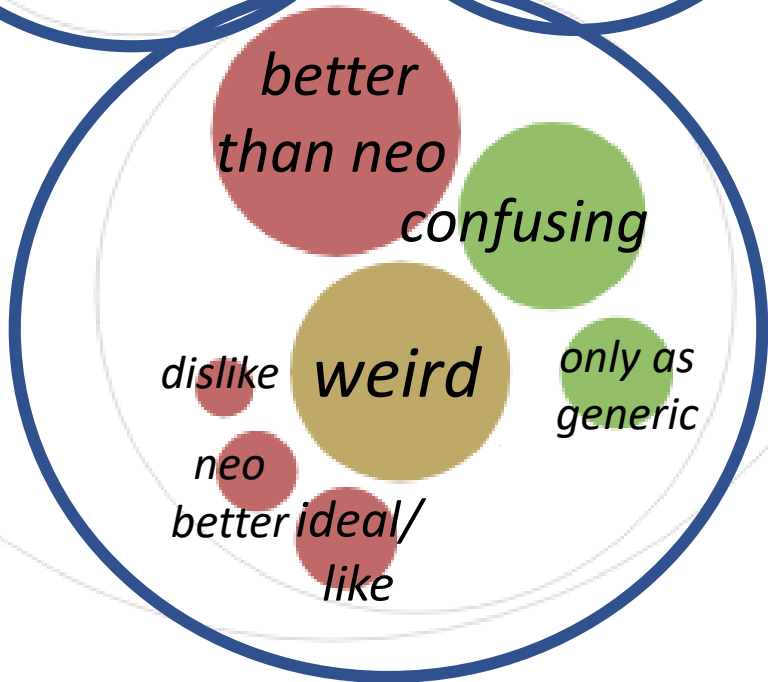
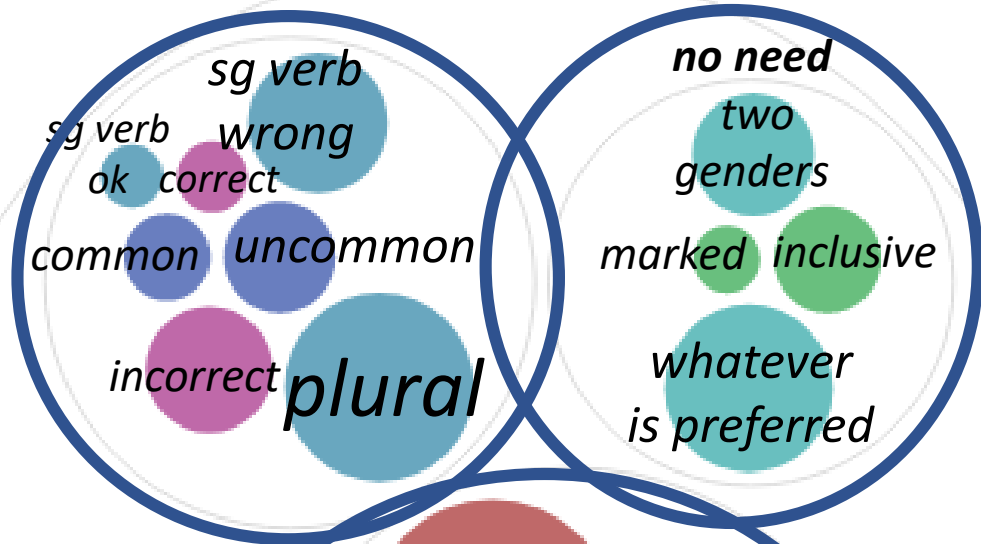
3. Attitudes towards nonbinary pronouns



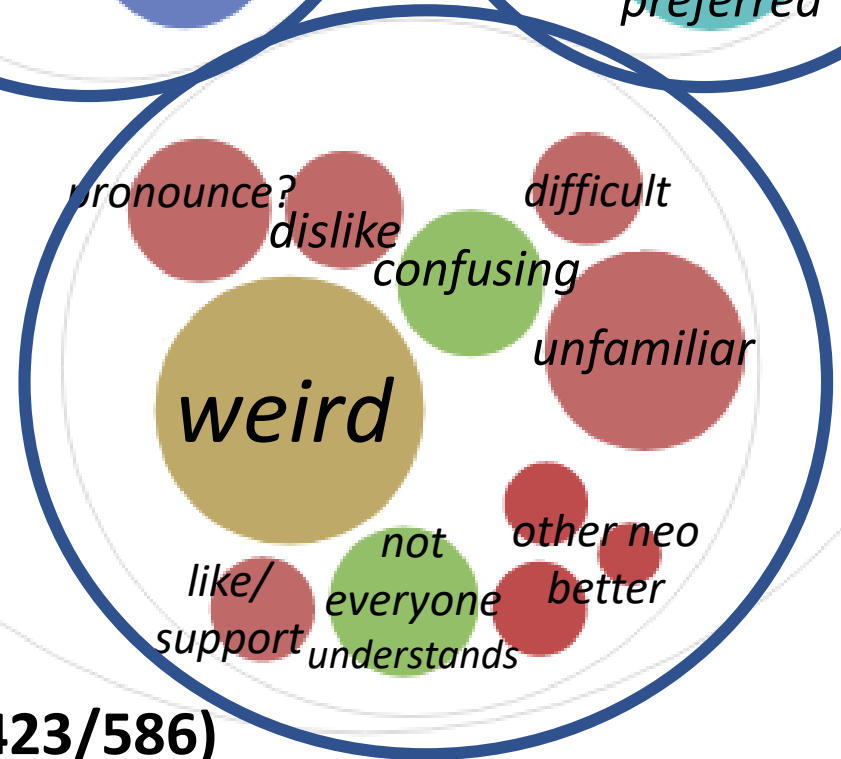
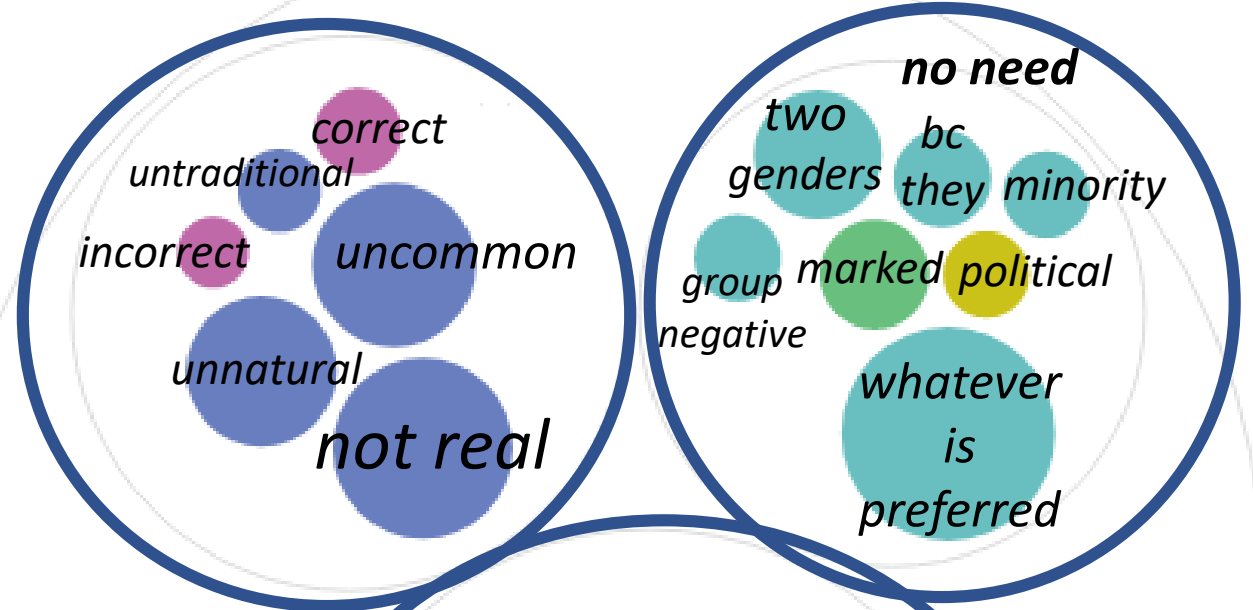
Attitudes

- Optional open answer questions: What is your view on X?
- Nonbinary *they* 461 responses (~9400 words)
- Neopronouns *ze* and *xe* 635 responses (~15900 words)
- (Corpus assisted) thematic analysis

nonbinary *they*

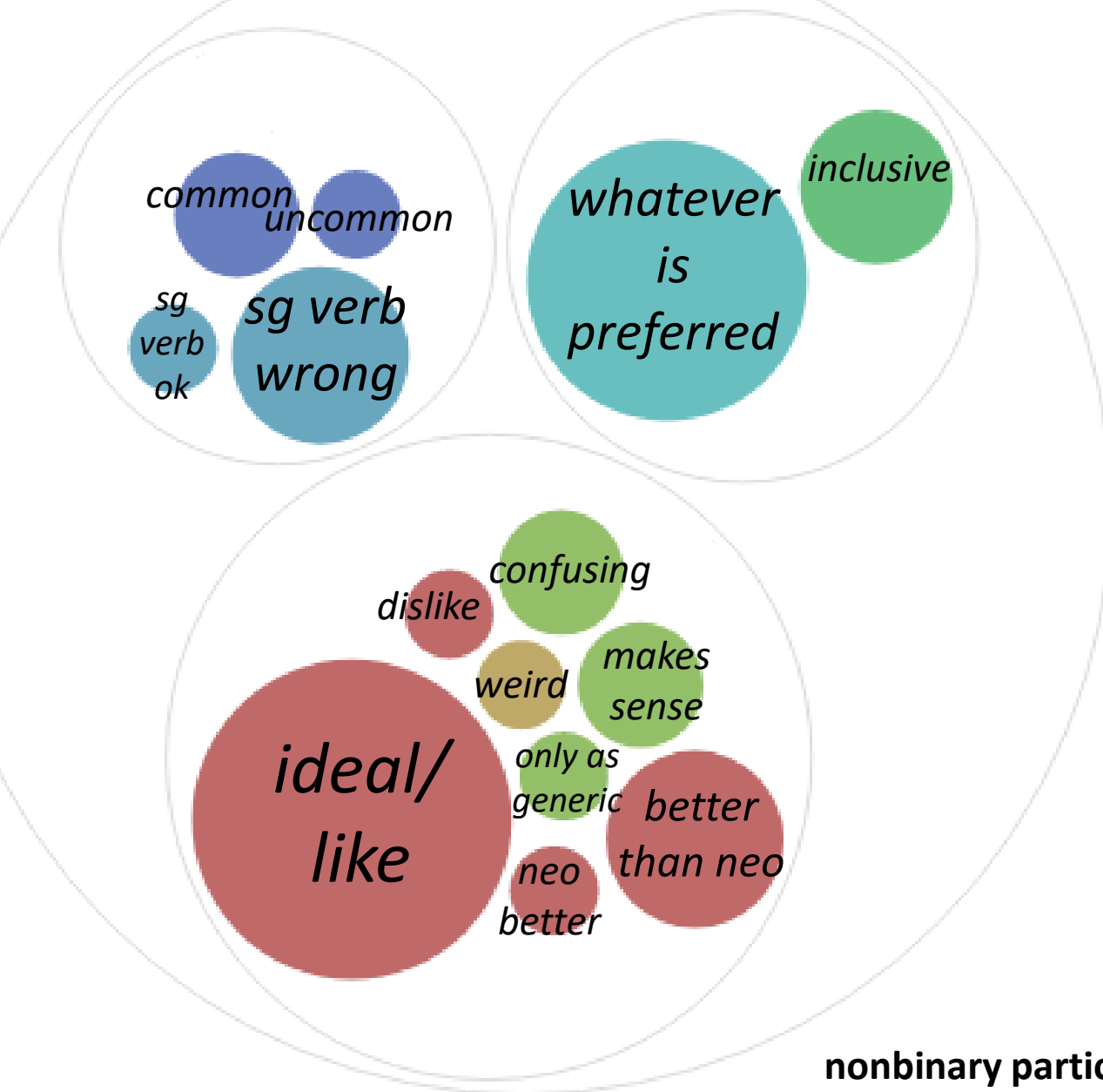


nonbinary *ze/x*

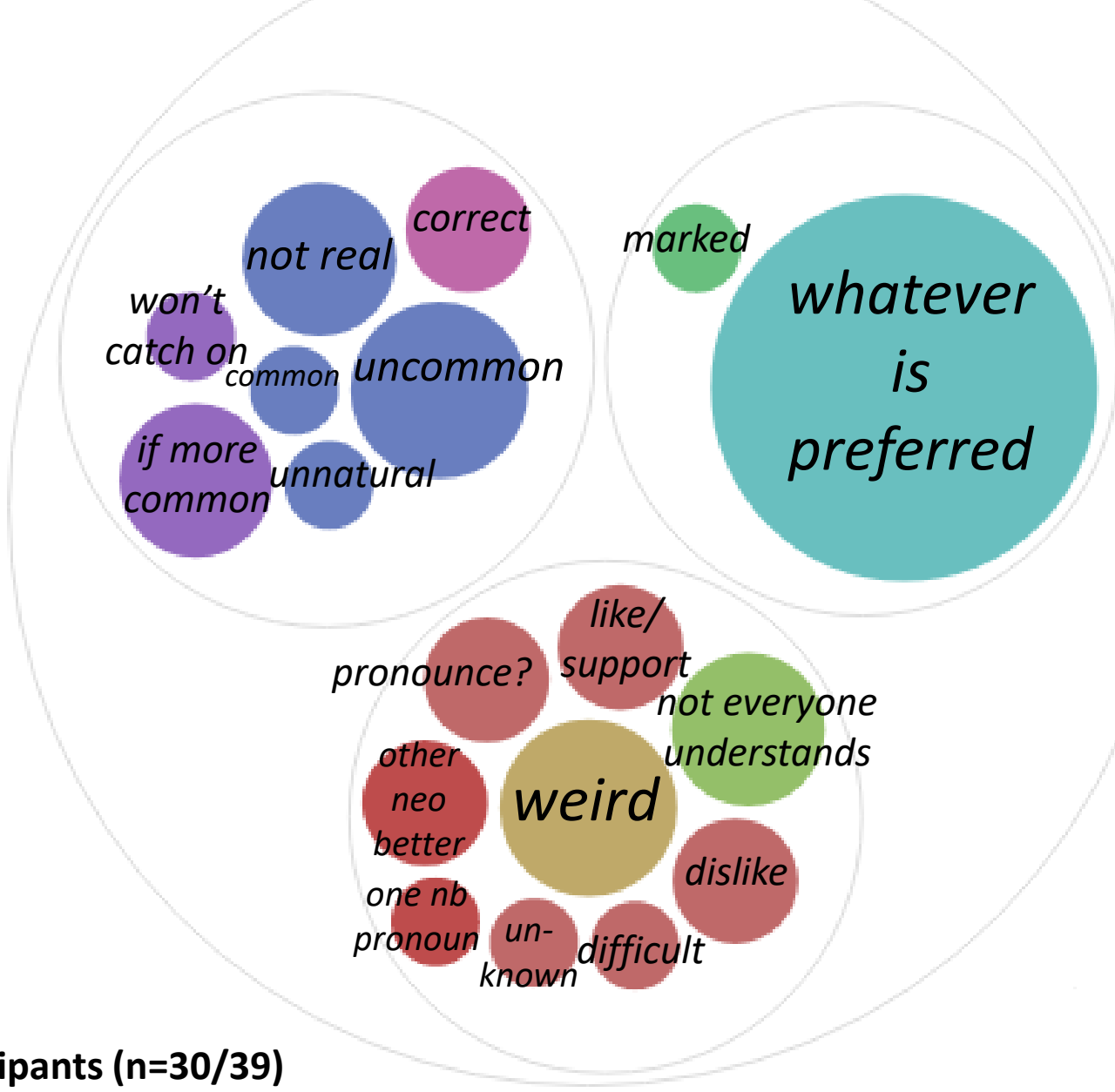


cisgender participants (n=423/586)

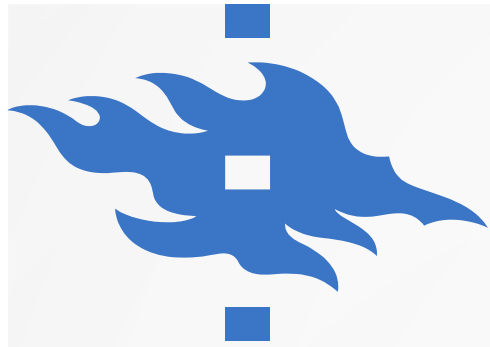
nonbinary *they*



nonbinary *ze/x*



nonbinary participants (n=30/39)



To sum up...

- various nonbinary pronouns, *they* most common
- neopronouns weird, *they* more neutral/accepted
- attitudes vary based on gender
- pronouns matter
 - reflection of identity
 - validation / conflict
- what can we do?
 - avoid cissexist language
 - help normalize nonbinary pronouns