

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE IN PORTUGUESE

Like other romance languages, Portuguese is very marked in terms of gender. Therefore, using inclusive language in Portuguese can be challenging. However, here is some advice about how to be more inclusive in Portuguese:¹

1. Firstly, there is a way of using the Portuguese language more inclusively without breaking any of the existing grammatical rules.

For example, instead of saying:

- *Ela é brasileira (She is Brazilian) / Ele é brasileiro (He is Brazilian)*

We can say, - *Aquela pessoa é do Brasil (That person is from Brazil).*

The word “pessoa” (person) does not refer to any gender and can be used to refer to anyone. This means that, when we use it, we do not convey any idea about the gender of the person we are referring to.

2. With the objective of being more inclusive of non-binary individuals, some gender-neutral language systems have been introduced (but not yet added to the official Portuguese grammar and dictionaries). For some non-binary people, the pronouns ELE (he) and ELA (she) feel too restricting. A new pronoun has therefore been coined by the community: ILE. It is also used with all the words that are formed with the pronouns ELE and ELA.

For example:

dela, dele, dile (his, hers, their)

aquela, aquele, aquile (that one)

daquela, daquele, daquile (of that one)

- I. Words ending with the letters A or O can take the letter E at the end to indicate the neutral gender.

This applies to possessive and demonstrative pronouns. For example:

minha, meu, minhe (my/mine)nossa, nosso, nosse (our/ours)

essa, esse, isse (this/that)

This is also the case with nouns and adjectives. For example:

garoto, garota, garote (boy, girl)

namorado, namorada, namorado (boyfriend, girlfriend)

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parceira, parceiro, parceire (partner)
bonito, bonita, bonite (handsome/pretty)

Here are some example sentences:

Eles são amigos. (linguagem binária) / They are friends. (binary language)

Iles são amigues. (linguagem não-binária) / They are friends. (non-binary language)

Brazilian Portuguese:

Seu amigo passou aqui. (linguagem binária) / Your friend stopped by. (binary language)

Sue amigue passou aqui. (linguagem não-binária) / Your friend stopped by. (non-binary language)

European Portuguese:

O seu amigo passou aqui. (linguagem binária) / Your friend stopped by. (binary language)

Le/el/ê/i/lu sue amigue passou aqui. (linguagem não-binária) / Your friend stopped by. (non-binary language)

- Note: In European Portuguese, some vocabulary and grammar forms are different from those in Brazilian Portuguese. With respect to the definite articles (o/a), in the sentence above (O seu amigo passou aqui.), unlike what occurs in Brazilian Portuguese, it is customary in European Portuguese to include the article before the noun, therefore stressing the grammatical gender. There are several ways to make the article inclusive, but this is rather difficult to achieve because we cannot simply use 'e' instead of 'o/a', since it would be easily confused with the word for 'and' ('e').
- Another way of forming gender-neutral language is through the neopronoun ELU and continuing to replace the letters O and A with the letter E.

For example:

dela, dele, delu (her, his, their)

aquela, aquele, aquelu (that one)

daquela, daquele, daquelu (of that one)

Elu é bonite.

- Many years ago, when people started talking about gender-neutral language in Portuguese-speaking countries, many people began using the letter X or @ at the end of words to indicate a neutral gender. However, words with the letter X or @ are unpronounceable and are not recognizable by operating systems that read to blind people. So, for accessibility reasons, using the letter X or @ is no longer recommended.

Further resources

- [Gender-Neutral Language in Brazilian Portuguese \(speakingbrazilian.com\)](https://speakingbrazilian.com/)



- [UM GUIA PARA PROMOVER A LINGUAGEM INCLUSIVA EM PORTUGUÊS | diversitybbox](#)
- [Website-Inclusive-Language-in-Portuguese.pdf \(uwm.edu\)](#)
- [Gender neutral language in Portuguese - Nonbinary Wiki](#)