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POLITICAL CORRECTNESS AS A LINGUSTICAL PHENOMENON

Abstract

The actuality of the article is based upon the excessive number of alterations that occur in English due to the social intervention. Let us start by acknowledging the fact that language and society have been dependent on each other for centuries. Critics would agree that there is no doubt about the fact that most of the changes brought upon language have been the result of human will. Obviously people do not transform language on purpose. However, there has been an increase in the number of social communities that feel strongly about changing some of the aspects of language. Especially the lexical one.

The article is concerned with the degree to which such a sociolinguistic phenomenon as political correctness influences and changes the English language. It demonstrates the modifications brought upon English as a result of the modern society becoming more and more tolerant towards certain social communities. The issue in question is that said communities in most cases alter the language arbitrarily. Moreover, some of the arguments for the changes are fairly groundless.

The authors come to the conclusion that some of the lexical changes in the English language that are deemed necessary are fairly unjustified and are subject to be revised.

Keywords: language, political correctness, speech act theory, freedom of speech, modifications, social communities, changing some of the aspects of language

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САЯСИ ҚҰҚЫҚТЫҚ ТІЛДІК ФЕНОМЕНОН

Аңдатпа

Мақаланың өзектілігі ағылшын тіліндегі әлеуметтік араласудың салдарынан болатын көптеген өзгертулерге негізделген. Тіл мен қоғам ғасырлар бойы бір-біріне тәуелді болғандығын мойындаудан бастайық. Сыншылар тілге енгізілген өзгерістердің көпшілігі адамның ерік-жігерінің нәтижесі болғанына күмән жоқ екенімен келіседі. Адамдар тілді мақсатты түрде өзгертпейтіні анық. Алайда, тілдің кейбір жақтарын өзгертуге қатты сенетін әлеуметтік қауымдастықтар санының өсуі байқалды, әсіресе лексикалық тұрғыда.

Мақалада саяси дұрыстық сияқты социолингвистикалық құбылыстың ағылшын тіліне әсер ететін және өзгеретін дәрежесі туралы айтылады. Бұл қазіргі қоғамның белгілі бір әлеуметтік қауымдастықтарға толеранттылық танытуының нәтижесінде ағылшын тіліне енгізілген өзгерістерді көрсетеді. Мәселе мынада, аталған қауымдастықтар көп жағдайда тілді өз бетімен өзгертеді. Оның үстіне, өзгерістерге қатысты кейбір дәлелдер өте негізсіз.

Авторлар ағылшын тіліндегі кейбір лексикалық өзгерістер жеткілікті негізсіз және қайта қаралуы керек деген қорытындыға келеді.

Түйін сөздер: тіл, саяси дұрыстық, сөйлеу актілері теориясы, сөз бостандығы, модификациялар, әлеуметтік бірлестіктер, тілдің кейбір аспектілерін өзгерту

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ПОЛИТИЧЕСКАЯ КОРРЕКТНОСТЬ КАК ЯЗЫКОВОЙ ФЕНОМЕН

Аннотация

Актуальность статьи основана на чрезмерном количестве изменений, которые происходят в английском языке из-за социального вмешательства. Давайте начнем с признания того факта, что язык и общество веками зависели друг от друга. Критики согласны с тем, что нет сомнений в том факте, что большинство изменений, внесенных в язык, были результатом человеческой воли. Очевидно, что люди не преобразуют язык специально. Тем не менее, увеличилось количество социальных сообществ, которые решительно настроены изменить некоторые аспекты языка, в частности в лексическом аспекте.

В статье рассматривается степень, в которой социолингвистическое явление, как политкорректность влияет и меняет английский язык. Это демонстрирует изменения, внесенные в английский язык в результате того, что современное общество становится все более и более терпимым к определенным социальным сообществам. Вопрос в том, что указанные сообщества в большинстве случаев произвольно меняют язык. Более того, некоторые аргументы в пользу этих изменений довольно беспочвенны.

Авторы приходят к выводу, что некоторые из лексических изменений в английском языке, которые считаются необходимыми, являются довольно неоправданными и подлежат к пересмотру.

Ключевые слова: язык, политкорректность, теория речевого акта, свобода слова, модификации, социальные общности, изменение некоторых аспектов языка

Introduction. As sociolinguistics states, society and language have been going hand in hand since the moment the human race was created. Which leads us to believe that the biggest number of changes that were inflicted upon language comes from people themselves. [1] Most of the time society transforms language unintentionally, but nowadays, certain individuals, empowered by the support of like-minded communities, put forward the amendments that they consider necessary for the language to subject to.

We live in a society where the wrongly understood or conveyed words can be assessed as offensive and even entail some legal action. Everybody has to be very careful with their words, because nowadays everything connected to tolerance or politeness is strictly watched over like in George Orwell's dystopian novel '1984'. This kind of societal environment was formed due to the fact that the XXI century is characterized by a number of newly minted social and, specifically, disadvantaged groups with their rights and demands that the rest of the world, in spite of being a part of the group or not, has to respect and tolerate. It goes without saying that language got caught in this mass leniency. People are forced to say not what they intend to say, but what would be politically correct to say. There is a lot of talk about freedom of speech, but it appears that this privilege has only been given to the victimized minorities who'd been deprived of their rights as individuals and now are making up for the years when their freedom was restrained.

So, what is political correctness in language? It is employing language in a way that it excludes discriminatory speech of any kind. [2] For example, saying *mankind* instead of *humankind* might sound derogatory towards women and the feminist movement, in particular.

The origin of the term *political correctness* and its subsequent wide usage is tightly connected to American political ideologies. It was coined as a result of the culture war between leftists and conservatives. The meaning and noteworthiness of political correctness tend to delineate the actions of the adherents of liberal ideology.

Methodology. While the similar term, *right-wing political correctness,* has an opposite meaning. Its goal is ironically resembling to the one that George Orwell tried to get across with his conception of *Newspeak*, which implied a difficulty to talk and express one's thoughts if they contravene the established order. Supporters of conservatism oftentimes claim that political correctness is a part of a conspiracy theory aimed at subverting and lessening the significance of values of Judeo-Christian enlightenment philosophy in American society. Political correctness has become a synonym to a gagging order, entailing a punishment if disobeyed. "The furthest extension of political correctness is not just me disagreeing with you, it is me destroying your identity as a human," says Ben Shapiro, an outspoken conservative, political commentator, editor-in-chief for *The Daily Wire* and, in overall, one of the most noticeable figures on a political arena in the U.S.

In the field of linguistics, political correctness is rooted in the speech act theory. It originated from the studies of the Oxford philosopher J.L. Austin. The speech act theory is based on the presupposition that

words have two functions: constative and performative. The first one is based on describing the world around us, and the second one characterizes the ability of the speech to implicate actions of the speaker. [3] John Austin was of the opinion that the sound that comes out of one's mouth can potentially take a form of a foreshadowing action. The origin of this conviction dates back to the times of Ferdinand de Saussure. He made a conclusion that words either have a direct association to the subject of their reference or they are in an undeviating connection to their referent.

The speech act theory has certain similarities with the idea of unfixed meaning. It is drawn on the suggestion of the French philosopher Jacques Derrida that meaning never stays the same as it is constantly in motion. This conviction had an impact on such areas of study as psychoanalysis, literary criticism and sociology, and it was brought into light by Jacques Lacan, Roland Barthes, Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault. Derrida put forward a theory of deconstruction that has as its main premise the presupposition that the full comprehension can be reached only through deconstruction or using another context. It is rooted in the precondition that the sense is constructed during the process of reading and, therefore, is not dependent of the writer or the producer of the text. So the habitual interpretation is either lacking the depth or imposed by the repressive instance of the author. In this case, it is necessary to create a provocation that would initiate a thought and lead the way to the hidden meaning of the text.

The willingness to consider thespeech act theory true entails an exclusion of an array of words and phrases from one's active vocabulary.

An example for speech act theory might be racial political correctness. As the name implies, it deals with the matters of race and, in this case, language that political correctness affects in the process. It goes without saying that one of the biggest racial issues in America has to do with African-Americans. Throughout the history, there have been several names used in reference to people with darker skin. The most insulting one was without a doubt the word *Negro* or other, slang variations of it, such as *nigger, nigga.* These words have, in a way, become taboo for white people to use. But, essentially, what's wrong with this word? If we go back to its etymological roots, we will not find any derogatory definition behind it. The word *Negro* comes from Latin and means *Black.* Well, the problem is not with the meaning of the word as it is, the offensive part is concealed in the concept of this word. For centuries, the word *Negro* and its derivatives have been associated with the denigration of the dark-skinned people. No wonder, African-Americans do not want white people to use it even if they mean no harm. It's like taking a walk down the memory lane; and for some people that lane does not look all that bright.

Results. The same changes occurred in the way Spanish and Asian people were addressed. In the 70s of the XX century, Latin American were predominantly called *Hispanics.* However, these days such an address is unacceptable due to several reasons. The most significant one is that the word *Hispanics* is in its core associated with low-income, poor families and with impoverishment and ill-being in general. That association should not come as a surprise, since South America is infamous for the low conditions of living for people. Now, the polite way to address a person of an obvious Spanish heritage would be *Latino/Latina.*

In addition, for a long time Asian people have been wrongly called Orientals. That is the name that was given to them by their continental neighbors — Europeans. Well, as a matter of fact, it makes sense for them, since for those who live in Europe, people who live in Asia are indeed Orientals. However, that would not be true for Americans. Now, the term that is generally accepted is Asians. For those who want to step on an even more neutral ground in terms of racial political correctness there is another, more obvious, way of addressing someone who is not white — non-white, plain and simple.

People of Jewish heritage know what racism can lead to and how discriminating it can be as much as black people, maybe even a little more. Anti-Semitic Germans of the twentieth century made sure they would never forget that. However, even in the twenty-first century some social groups continues to mock Jewish people, who at that time were simply called Jews. It led to the word Jew gaining an ill-famed reputation. It became a part of frequently used phrases, such as *dirty Jew*, *Jew store, Jew boy*. The first phrase,*Dirty Jew,* is, basically, employed to define someone of Semitic origin who is dishonest in their business deals, in other words, plays dirty. The second phrase is not much different from the first one. *Jew boy* describes someone with stereotypical characteristics of a Jew. (Mostly someone who manipulates people into buying things from them and making profit out of it.) The last phrase, *Jew store*, defines a certain type of a store that sells all the necessities for an overnight camp, or in general the things that one would need going camping. Oddly enough, hardly anyone who is not Jewish is a regular in that type of store. It is not necessarily offensive on the surface, yet it can be considered to be another type of discrimination — Jewish people go to the stores for Jews, black people go to the stores for African-Americans, and white people

oriented stores are universal. There is nothing wrong with stores that are specifically targeted at products that attribute to Jewish culture. The problem is with people who think that it is beneath their dignity to visit those stores.

It appears that all that political correctness is doing is sugarcoating the obvious so that nobody would be offended. Yet there will always be someone who ends up insulted. Why cannot we call black people *black*? Would not that be the truth? After all, everybody is perfectly fine with calling white people *white*. In our opinion, calling someone *a person of color* is more discriminating that calling them *black*. Saying *a person of color* is emphasizing that black people are different from the norm, which is not correct. Calling them *black* is stating the obvious, and in no way an offence.

Plenty of words and phrases that used to be acceptable in a speech or in a written text are right now being banned one by one from the active vocabulary of English speakers. For example, calling someone *short* is no longer politically correct. The better way to say itwould be *vertically challenged.* As well as it would also sound disrespectful to call someone *overweight,* the right way to convey this thought of yours would be to say*horizontally gifted.* All of this is a part of physical political correctness.

In many cases, the extremes that political correctness has reached are truly far out of the lines of reasonable.Workplaces have become excessively politicized, so people who have viewpoints different from the indoctrinations of the political correctness do not feel comfortable at all in being able to use language of their choice to have subjective opinions about a variety of things. Some may even claim to be harassed by people who do not agree with their opinions.

People have gotten control over the situation, and all of a sudden we live in an upside-down world where even the lines of such obvious things as sex and gender are blurred. How can we talk about such an everlasting matter as language if part of the population of the world does not know if they are male or female? People do not even hold their gender sacred, which is, basically, a huge part of their identity. How can we talk about the inviolability of language? Nobody is even bothered by the fact that by making injudicious choices in regards to linguistics, people "pollute" our language with useless terminology. [4] Some of the words that are now widely employed do not even make sense. For example, feminists came up with a word *mansplaining,* which, basically, describes a situation when a man is explaining something to a woman. By that, feminists insinuate that men are boasting of their knowledge in front of presumably uneducated women. One the one hand, this kind of perturbation is completely understood. Women did not use to have a right to gain education. It is no wonder that females of modern age can be insecure about that. On the other hand, many years have passed since that time. Today education is mandatory, much less forbidden. Therefore, women's overreaction is completely unjustified. Moreover, there are plenty of situations when women are bound to be more proficient in some matters, andmen are the ones who need to have something explained to them. We believe new age demands the reevaluation of the matters of the passed times.

Incidentally, for a century now, there have been plenty of changes caused by the rise of feminists all over the world. Particularly, remarks in the field of linguistics are mostly reduced to gender-inclusive language.

Analysis. Gender-inclusive or gender-neutral language implies avoiding any type of offence based on sex, social gender or generic words for humans, honorifics, naming practices and gender identity discrimination. In addition, it also includes all kinds of gender-centered stereotypes.

Virtually, offence based on generic words can be evaded by excluding from one's speech or writing gender-specific pronouns or professions. That actually is one of the main reasons that nowadays it would be tactless to say *policeman*, *mailman*, *fireman* and so on. Instead, it's replaced by *police officer*, *mail carrier* and *firefighter*, respectively. Basically, every job title that is specified by the *–man* ending is considered to be gender-specific and, therefore, derogatory to women. Some of the job titles are substituted with completely new names altogether. For instance, *air hostesses* and *stewardesses* have become *flight attendants.* When it comes to pronouns, such as *he, she, him, her, his,* they are typically substituted with the pronoun *they or he/she.*

As for honorifics, the neologism that has been used in place of *Mr. Miss*, or *Mrs.* is *Mx.*, which stands for 'Mix'. Its principal goal is to provide gender neutrality. The recognition of novel gender honorifics spread rapidly all over the English speaking countries and it has been included in the Oxford English Dictionary since 2015.

Another issue is giving children the last name of their father and women themselves taking their husbands' surnames. It has been one of the main concerns for the feminist movement, as this kind of naming

practice with a preference towards patriarchy wipes females' names off the face of the history map. In modern society, it led to married couples taking a double-barreled name.

In addition to the aforementioned changes in linguistics caused by the rise of the feminist movement, the terms that traditionally specify family members, such as *sister*, *brother*, *mom*, *dad* are banned from the gender-inclusive language. Instead, they are swapped with *parent*, *sibling*, and *child*.

Such terms as *boyfriend* and *girlfriend* are also considered to be objectionable and in some communities and among certain individuals they are even unaccepted nowadays. They are suggested to be replaced by their non-gender specified substituents, such as *partner* and *significant other*. The reason for that is the growing number of "genderless" people or "queers" who do not feel comfortable being a part of the conversation where the terms *boyfriend* and *girlfriend* are used extensively and, therefore, are highly offensive.

In our tolerance-driven society, there are not many people who openly speak against gender-neutral language. However, there are those who do not necessarily agree that it is an effective tool against sexism. The principal argument in favor of importance of those changes is language being a tool that we employ to perceive the world and which helps us shape subjective judgments about others. Therefore, language has become a part of the global goal to create a community where people regardless of race, gender or sexuality would feel equal and have the same possibilities and opportunities as everyone else.

Objectively speaking, respecting someone (male or female, black or white) is a matter of culture and values embedded in it. We believe there is a huge number of people who still say *fireman* instead of *firefighter*, however it does not automatically mean that they have a deep-seated disrespect for women. It also works the other way around: if a man was taught to use gender-neutral language, it does not make him show deference towards women, not in a significant way, in any case.

There are not only separate words in the English language that might sound disrespectful to a certain gender (female, mostly), there are actually plenty of phrases that feminists consider sexist. One of the examples is a saying *Take it like a man* or *Man up.* This phrase implies that such qualities as bravery, courage, endurance and perseverance are only attributed to men, and females are in no control of their emotions whatsoever.

A saying similar to that is *Like a girl* (for instance, *flight like a girl*). The meaning behind it also entices women's emotional instability, physical weakness, or a lack of certain skills on the matter.

Another offensive phrase is *You guys* as an address to a group of people with men and women present. Its sexist nature is manifested in the fact that the person who used it automatically assumed that the default gender in the society is male.

The phrase *Boys will be boys* is also banned by feminists from the English vocabulary, as it can be used as an excuse for men's far from good behavior.

Conclusion.So, is gender-inclusive language important? Yes, in its own way, but not in a major one. We do not reckon that it makes a noticeable difference in awakening people's awareness about gender equality. In our opinion, it does no harm as long as it stays reasonable. We mention that because the third-wave feminists tend to cross a lot of lines in their race towards social acceptance; linguistic lines are one of those. Language started evolving long before feminists recognized their awareness about the patriarchal world order. By all means, they have a right to vote, to take higher job positions, to earn as much money as men, but they have no right whatsoever to change the language. That is clearly and most definitely not their task to accomplish.

The part of the population who still feels uncertain about political correctness can either go with the global insanity or take a non-conformist route and stop mainstreaming the collective lunacy that seems to be seizing the world these days.

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ИНСТИТУЦИОНАЛДЫ ҚАРЫМ-ҚАТЫНАСТАРДЫҢ ЕРЕКШЕЛІКТЕРІ: ӘЛЕУМЕТТІК ИНСТИТУТТАР

Аңдатпа

Мақалада біз қоғамда тұлғаны әлеуметтендіру процесінде негізгі қызмет атқаратын институационалды коммуникацияға тоқталамыз. Адам белгілі бір топтың ғана мүшесі болатын жағдай іс жүзінде кездеспейтіндіктен индивидтің әр түрлі топтарға қатысты жағдайын, сондай-ақ оның әрбір топтағы функционалдық мүмкіндіктерін талдау қажет. Қарым-қатынаспен байланысты барлық әлеуметтік-практикалық мәселелер өзекті және кез келген институционалды қарым-қатынас тілдік қатынасқа тәуелді. Демек дәл осы қарым-қатынас социумды ұйымдастырады және адамның өз мінез-құлқын басқа адамдардың іс-әрекеттері мен мінез-құлқымен сәйкестендіре отырып, онда өмір сүруге және дамуға мүмкіндік береді. Осы тұста қарым-қатынасты зерттеудегі түрлі аспектілер мен жағдаят түрлері анықталады. Қарым-қатынас формаларының тиісті дамуынсыз тәрбие, білім беру, денсаулық сақтау, ғылым, өнер, саясат, идеология және т. б. сияқты адам қызметінің салаларының дамуы іс жүзінде мүмкін емес. Қоғамның әртүрлі әлеуметтік институттарға бөлінетінін айта келе, институционалды қарым-қатынас ұғымына кеңінен тоқталамыз. Әлеуметтік институттарды кеңінен зерттеген ғалымдардың пікірлеріне шолу жасаймыз. Осылайша институционалды қарым-қатынасты зерттеудің маңыздылығын арттыру қажеттігін анықтай түсеміз.

Түйін сөздер: тілдік коммуникация, әлеуметтік институттар, институционалды қарым-қатынас, педагогикалық дискурс

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FEATURES OF INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS: SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Abstract

This article examines examines institutional communication, which performs the main function in the process of socialization of the individual in society. Considering that the situation when a person becomes a member of only a certain group is not found practically , it is necessary to analyze the position of the individual relative to different groups, as well as its functional capabilities in each group. All social and practical issues related to communication are relevant and all institutional relations depend on language communication. Therefore, it is this communication that organizes society and allows a person to live and develop in it, bringing their behavior in line with the actions and behavior of others. This defines various aspects and situational forms of relationship research. Without proper development of forms of communication, it is almost impossible to develop such spheres of human activity as education, education, health, science, art, politics, ideology. When we say that society is divided into various social institutions, we pay great attention to understanding institutional relations. We are reviewing the opinions of scientists who have studied social institutions extensively.

Keywords: language communication, social institutions, institutional communication, pedagogical discourse