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СТИЛИСТИЧЕСКИЕ АСПЕКТЫ ИЗБЫТОЧНОСТИ В УСТНОЙ РЕЧИ И ОФИЦИАЛЬНЫХ ПИСЬМАХ

Избыточность представляет собой очень интересное явление, так как может рассматриваться с двух сторон. С одной стороны, избыточность характерна для устной речи и способствует взаимопониманию коммуникантов. С другой стороны, в письменной речи избыточность ведет к путанице и раздражению из-за возможного недопонимания адресата.

Redundancy is the usage of unnecessary words. It can be divided into 2 types: pleonasm and tautology. The first is an expression containing words which contribute nothing to the meaning, and the second is a repetition of the same idea in different words.

Redundancy is a very interesting phenomenon and is not always condemned. For instance, in ordinary conversation it is a natural thing, helping to keep up the flow and the rhyme of thought. If redundancy and repetition were not a regular feature of informal speech, a mispronunciation by the speaker, a lapse of attention in the listener, or the intrusion of some noise could easily lead to a temporary breakdown in communication. When we are talking we have to improvise, we hesitate, make false starts, fumble for words, repeat ourselves, and leave sentences unfinished. Spontaneous discourse contains a good deal of redundancy, including fillers such as 'er, um, well, like, sort of, lubricators such as actually, I mean, you know', and rhetorical questions such as '(all) right?, OK? and (y) know what I mean?'.
Some tautological expressions, being established idioms, are acceptable. Such are the legal phrases 'goods and chattels, rest, residue and remainder, and without let or hindrance, and the everyday phrases ways and means, by leaps and bounds, in any shape or form, and to all intents and purposes'. In such cases synonyms are used either to ensure comprehensiveness: 'each' (individually) and 'every' (collectively), or to add emphasis 'the one' (single) and 'only' (stressing uniqueness).

By contrast, the written language, except where it is used to mirror the spoken word, has no need of padding. Here redundancy serves no useful purpose because the reader, unlike the listener, can go back over what has been said. Indeed, superfluous words in writing are a hindrance, since they clutter the page and tend to confuse, distract or annoy the reader. They waste both time and paper. Written communication is most effective when it proceeds from the smallest number of words compatible with clarity.

Abstract nouns are sometimes tacked on to another noun without adding to the sense. Words such as 'condition', 'situation' and 'state' are freely resorted to as appendages by people who mistakenly imagine that abstract terms add distinction or tone to their writing. But 'in bad weather conditions' means no more than 'in bad weather', 'in a crisis situation' means the same as 'in a crisis' and 'in a state of coma' merely means 'in a coma'. Other abstract nouns are appended in the same way, nouns which have meaningful uses but are here pretentious verbiage.

Redundancy in oral communication is an ordinary phenomenon and we use it for emotional purposes and vividness of speech. But the same things lead to misunderstanding in official letters, where everything should be expressed clearly and distinctly.