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ГЕНДЕРНО-НЕЙТРАЛЬНЫЙ ЯЗЫК

В настоящее время вопросы политической корректности, в особенности вопросы, связанные с гендерными аспектами, являются особенно релевантными в обществе в связи с возросшей необходимостью уменьшить вероятность конфликта в общении. Гендерно-нейтральный язык является универсальным для любой ситуации.

"Political correctness" is the term given to a set of social and linguistic prescriptions (political policies) to maintain conflict-free communication. It has been in practice since the 1960s. These policies are constantly changing, being updated and adjusted to specific communication situations, so what used to be "politically correct" in the 1970s may no longer be "politically correct" in 2005. People become aware of "political correctness" when they victim to it. Gender problems constitute an important part of the concept of political correctness. Nowadays it is of paramount importance to treat genders neutrally. Underestimation of this fact may lead to a series of communicative problems, related to pragmatic mistakes. It is well-known that in cross-cultural communication pragmatic mistakes are rated as the most significant ones, as in this case communicative failures are considered by a native speaker to result from inadequate upbringing and poor education of a foreign interlocutor, which is supposed to be a much more serious defect than a poor knowledge of the foreign language, or even from the deliberate intention to insult or humiliate him/her implying aggression. That is why, in order not to offend one's interlocutor and to reach the purpose of communication, it is necessary to treat genders in the equal way and to be aware of the gender-neutral language.

Gender-neutral language (gender-generic, gender-inclusive, non-sexist, or sex-neutral language) is the language that refers neither to males nor to females when discussing an abstract or hypothetical person. This most commonly means using gender-neutral pronouns instead of gender-specific pronouns. Gender-neutral pronouns are pronouns that neither reveal nor imply the gender of a person or thing being referred to. There are at least six main strategies that might help to treat genders neutrally [1].

1. Instead of a gender-exclusive pronoun use a plural pronoun.
2. Delete gender-exclusive pronoun altogether.
3. Substitute first or second person for third person.
4. Revise the sentence to change the subject.
5. Do not overload your speech with "he" and "she".
6. Instead of possessive (masculine or feminine) pronouns use articles [2].

From the first sight, the issues discussed above seem obvious. However, in everyday communication people may fail to keep to the gender-neutral style. It is really significant in public discourse. This problem is one of the most serious ones nowadays because the neglect of gender aspects may result in controversy and communication conflicts. That is why, in order to avoid misunderstandings, taking offence and other communication failures, prescriptions of gender-neutrality should be kept in mind.

ЛИТЕРАТУРА:

1. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender-neutral>.
2. <http://www.rightwords.co.nz/sexist.html>.