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USAGE OF EUPHEMISMS TO EXPRESS POLITICAL CORRECTNESS IN ENGLISH

Political correctness is a term that describes a style of speech, ideas, and beliefs that should minimize or eliminate statements or actions that may be offensive to others, especially those directly related to race, ethnicity, or sexual status [3; 4].

In recent decades, the problem of political correctness and its main aspects have been widely presented in the works of linguists, political scientists, philosophers, sociologists, psychologists, and cultural studies. In particular, political correctness has been the subject of research by foreign scholars G. Adler, D. D'Souza, D. Ravitch, and others.

An analysis of various definitions and interpretations has illustrated that the term «political correctness» is semantically ambiguous and versatile. The Collins English Dictionary offers the following definition of this phenomenon: «Political correctness is an attitude or course of conduct that aims to avoid offending or upsetting any person or group of people who are disadvantaged or have been treated differently because of their gender, race, physical or other disabilities» [4]. This is the definition we use as a basis for our study.

According to George Adler, the English language is characterized by «purity and neutrality, the desire to avoid offense (even if unintentional) when using a word or expression» [1, p. 7].

It should be noted that political correctness is closely related to the concept of tolerance, but they should not be confused, because tolerance is used to show respect and acceptance; to properly understand the rich diversity of cultures, forms of expression and human individuality; to establish friendly relations with a particular person. In contrast, political correctness is used to avoid offending a certain group of people, representatives of minorities. The linguistic aspect of this concept is mainly expressed in restricting the use of vocabulary recognized as offensive to certain categories of people or inappropriate for use in certain situations, as well as in the search for new means of language that reflect the ideas of political correctness. The primary task of the linguistic aspect of political correctness is to find new means of linguistic expression and adjust the language code.

The main way of manifesting political correctness in the language of the media is euphemism (from the Greek *eo* – «beautiful» and *phemo* «I say»). Euphemism is a multicomponent linguistic phenomenon that is a linguistic means of manifesting the phenomenon of political correctness in the language.

The main function of politically correct euphemisms should be recognized as the function of mitigation. In some cases, politically correct euphemisms also have the function of disguising a negative concept, veiling the essence of what it means. Euphemism can also be seen as a way of tabooing – euphemisms are used to replace a forbidden word.

In recent years, politically correct vocabulary has significantly expanded its boundaries. It can be grouped depending on what type of discrimination needs to be avoided.

1) Names of representatives of indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities. This type of discrimination is called «*racism*» in English. This is probably the group of words we think of first when we hear about political correctness. However, the vocabulary that can be attributed to this group has long gone beyond the *Afro-American* instead of *Negro* that most people know: *black – African American/ member of the African diaspora, Oriental – Asian, Jew – Jewish person, Hispanic – Latino, Eskimo – Native Alaskan, Indian/ American Indian – Native American/ indigenous person/ First nations (Canadian usage), tribe – people, colored – person of color*.

2) Lexical units aimed against sexism in the language. The presence of a large number of masculine forms in English has been the subject of many discussions and controversies. Feminists have accused the English language of sexism. There have even been attempts to create substitutes for the word *woman* that are not derived from *man – womyn, wimmin,*

wimyn, womon. Over time, an active search for neutral lexical items began: *actor/ actress – actron, businessman – businessperson, cameraman – cameraperson/ camera operator, chairman – chairperson/ chair, doorman – access controller, fireman – firefighter, steward (-ess) – flight attendant, milkman – milkperson, mailman – mail carrier, Miss / Mrs – Ms, policeman – police officer, spokesman – spokesperson, he or she – they, waiter/ waitress – waitron*.

3) Lexical items used to increase the prestige of certain professions. Such euphemistic substitutions emphasize the importance of people responsible for cleaning and help to remove negative attitudes towards people engaged in certain types of activities: *janitor – environmental hygienist, automobile mechanic – automobile engineer/engine redesigner/vehicle consultant, undertaker – funeral director, garbage collector – sanitation engineer/ garbologist, prostitute – sex care provider/sex worker*.

4) Lexical items associated with physical or mental disabilities. In English, politically correct expressions of this group are formed with the prefix challenged. It has replaced the once quite acceptable «*handicapped*» or «*disabled*», which emphasize the complete absence of a particular physical ability in a person: *the disabled/ the handicapped/ the impaired – differently abled/ physically different/ physically challenged/ people with disabilities, fat – full-figured/ bigboned, bald – hair disadvantaged/ follicularly challenged, deaf – hearing impaired/ aurally inconvenienced, nearsighted, farsighted – optically inconvenienced/ optically challenged, the mentally handicapped/ the retarded – learning disabled/ people with learning difficulties/ mentally challenged/ special, blemishes – imperfections, dumb – speech impaired, short – vertically challenged, blind – unseeing/ visually challenged*.

5) Poverty-related lexical items. Such vocabulary replaces words that evoke unpleasant associations when describing a person's financial status. Therefore, in order not to offend your interlocutor by hinting at his or her difficult financial situation, it is politically correct to use the following expressions: *the poor – the deprived/ the disadvantaged/ the low-income/ the needy/ the illprovided/ the socially deprived/ the underprivileged*.

6) Names of representatives of different age groups. Age discrimination is called «*ageism*» and most often refers to respect for the elderly: *old/ elderly – golden – ager/ mature/ middlescence/ an older person/ senior/ third age*.

7) Lexical units related to the sexual sphere: *homosexual – gay/ LGBT person (lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered), sexual preference – sexual orientation*.

8) Phenomena related to family and marriage: *mother – biological mother, housewife – homemaker, father/ mother – parent 1/ parent 2, husband/ wife – partner/ companion, unmarried mother – single parent household*.

After analyzing the correlation between political correctness and euphemism, we have concluded that the phenomena are not identical, as they belong to different categories. Political correctness is an extra-linguistic phenomenon, and linguistic political correctness is only one of the manifestations of social political correctness: to avoid discrimination and create equal conditions for everyone. Euphemism is a philological term that means a lexical unit that serves to soften unpleasant concepts and phenomena. The main difference between political correctness and euphemism is that political correctness is a strategy of behavior consciously chosen by a person, an attitude towards others, and euphemisms are only means of expressing this attitude in practice, in language.

References
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