

THE ABSURDITIES OF AMERICAN POLITICALLY CORRECT “NEWSPEAK” AND ITS TRANSLATABILITY INTO THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

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Political correctness is not a new thing, its origin can be traced back to the beginning of the 20th century, but this phenomenon has recently gained such a wide outreach, that only a lazy one knows nothing about it. It appeared in the US due to three social movements: the University student movement, feminism and the struggle of the Africans and of the national minorities for equality and de-racialization language. Today politically correct language and the rules of conduct have spread across the globe.

The rise of modern political correctness is a great example of the cunning way in which social engineers such as the New World Order manipulators operate. Political correctness is the proverbial “road to hell, paved with good intentions”. It is intolerance disguised as tolerance, and it is running wildly and uncontrollably almost everywhere in society. Political correctness akin Orwellian Newspeak, a controlled language created by the totalitarian state Oceania. There can be drawn several parallels between the two. On the surface, the idea behind Newspeak might seem rather sensible: to eliminate all the redundancy in the language. There are far too many words with a diversity of shades in meaning, thus any synonyms or antonyms, along with undesirable concepts, are to be eradicated. There is no need to use *wonderful, excellent, superb, amazing, or fantastic*, if these can be substituted by *good, plus good, double plus good*. Similarly, you do not need such words as *awful, horrible, horrendous*, because *ungood, double ungood, double plus ungood* will do. In politically correct language the list of euphemisms for firing people is so long it could fill a book. Workers can be *attritioned, excessed, graduated*, or even *decruted*, the evil twin of *recruited*. The affix **de-** has proven prolific in this area, so people have been *dehired* and *deselected* when a company is in the process of *destaffing* or *degrowth*. Or take the word **challenged**, which can be added to an adverb to make ridiculous word combinations: *vertically-challenged, visually-challenged, mentally-challenged, horizontally-challenged*, etc. Just as George Orwell laid out so precisely in his novel *1984*, Newspeak is threatening to limit our ability to speak and think freely, by reducing the number of available words in our vocabulary. As the main character puts it: “You think that our chief job is inventing new words. But not a bit of it! We’re destroying words – scores

of them, hundreds of them, every day. We're cutting the language down to the bone." [4] In terms of political correctness, the goal is not so much to eliminate the words or make them very primitive, as to substitute normal and neutral words with "bias-free", but ridiculous words and word combinations, as in *seniors*, *elders*, *the elderly* => "*people of advanced age*"; *overweight*, *obese* => "*people of size*".

Below the surface, however, the true purpose of Newspeak is far more sinister. Bearing in mind, that language is inseparable from culture and is the reflection of a people's beliefs, ideas and attitudes, then Newspeak was meant to deprive the whole human nation of their beliefs, ideas and attitudes. Newspeak is a tool to limit freedom of thought, and concepts that pose a threat to the regime such as freedom, self-expression, individuality, peace and justice. And any form of thought contrary to the Party's dictum is classified as "thoughtcrime": "... the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought... we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it" [4].

Political correctness, in its turn, dictates what you can and cannot say based on how "offensive" a word is. Again, we can claim that politically correct speech carries the seed of Newspeak, and here arise a number of questions. First, who are those officials or authorities who have granted themselves power to decide which words rank as "offensive"? Second, since when has "feeling offended" become such an important issue that it legally justifies restricting everyone else's freedom?

Thirdly – and most importantly – just as beauty is in the eye of the beholder, so is "feeling offended" in the realm of the beholder. Words are just words; each person is in charge of their own emotions; people choose to ignore, respond or react to words how they want, but they should not blame someone else for their emotional state. Blaming someone else because you feel angry, offended or upset shows the renunciation of responsibility and an utter lack of emotional and spiritual maturity. Since when have we humans become such cry-babies that we can't stand hearing a word, a name, a label or a phrase?

Political correctness as a kind of responsible self-censorship is an undoubtedly useful thing. But even in moderation, no matter how beneficent it may be, it would be good to be moderate. Reductio ad absurdum (reduced to absurdity) political correctness is often ridiculous, but not always funny. In American universities, for example, candidates not belonging to the white race have a better chance of admission than the whites. This social policy is called "positive discrimination", but it is racial. The authorities in New York have banned the kids in biology class mentioning the names of their favourite cartoon characters, such as

dinosaurs, because the word “dinosaur” refers to the theory of evolution, and it might offend the believers who were brought up on the theory of the divine origin of Man.

In some places in the USA, even the word “Christmas” has been withdrawn from use. Now it is called “holiday season”, should we translate it as “сезон праздников”? And in Washington, near the U.S. Congress, with the onset of the first winter month there starts shining “the holiday tree” (“праздничное дерево”?). Thus, paying tribute to political correctness, during the Christmas ceremony people have to greet each other, saying neutral “Happy holidays!” instead of “Merry Christmas!” As if to crown this all, the school of law at the University of Indiana several years ago decided to remove the decorated Christmas tree from the main building: several teachers and students claimed that it is a religious symbol and puts Christianity in an “exclusive” position. It seems that all these zealots of political correctness want to be literally holier than the Pope, but they forget that the languages we speak affect the way we see the world.

Researchers estimate that some trends of political correctness appear in our country. Therefore, it is relevant to consider cultural and linguistic aspects of this phenomenon, as well as ways of translating politically correct vocabulary into the Russian language. So far the incredibly rich Russian language is clearly losing battle in the inventiveness of equivalent politically correct expressions, which cannot but rejoice, because, it would seem that the language itself resists the imposition of artifice, cultural degradation, mental and spiritual deformity, which will most likely result from the usage of such vocabulary.

The semantic groups of politically correct euphemisms are diverse: they are associated with groups of people subjected to racial, cultural, religious or sexual discrimination; euphemisms, indicating a terrible and unpleasant reality, such as death, disease, physical and mental disabilities; euphemisms related to the state of life, such as social evils (alcoholism, drug addiction, prostitution, homelessness, crime), poverty, academic failure; and euphemisms denoting appearance and age: weight, age, and so on. We purposefully have not narrowed our research down to a specific area in order to show the ubiquitous character and the omnipresence of politically correct lexis in all spheres of life. The translation of some of them into the Russian language may be impeded by different factors.

The theory of untranslatability is based on the ideas of Leibniz that “language is not an instrument of thought but its determining medium”. Humboldt, Schlegel and Schleiermacher also considered each language immeasurable in their own uniqueness. The translation contained two incompatible requirements: either to adhere to the language and culture of the

original or to adhere to the language and culture of the translation. The thought about the fundamental impossibility of such a translation found justification in the works of W. Humboldt, according to which each language defines and expresses the national identity and the “spirit” of the people.

In modern translation studies, it is customary to distinguish two types of untranslatability – linguistic and cultural [3]. This duality illustrates the difficulties of two kinds: discrepancies of language systems and cultural differences. According to J. Catford, linguistic untranslatability is “the inability to find an equivalent in the target language only due to the differences between the language of translation and the original language” (e.g. due to a play on words, polysemy, ambiguity) [3]. Cultural untranslatability occurs “when a certain situation which is functionally relevant for the source language is completely non-existent in the culture of the target language” [3] (e.g. names of some institutions, clothes, food and abstract concepts).

According to J. Catford, cultural untranslatability is a “variant” of linguistic untranslatability, because all the cases of cultural untranslatability arise due to “the impossibility of finding an equivalent combination the language of translation”.

V.N. Krupnov defines the category of non-equivalent vocabulary as “words and combinations of words denoting objects, processes and phenomena, which at this stage of the development of translation do not have equivalents in it”. [2] He explains the existence of non-equivalent vocabulary by dividing it into two groups: 1) because at this stage in the language of translation there are **no quite good matches** (it is temporal non-equivalence); 2) because there simply **cannot exists** equivalents in the language of translation [1]. And according to V.N. Komissarov, translation-specific vocabulary is found among neologisms, i.e. among the words naming specific concepts and national realities, and among the lesser-known names for which it is necessary to create **occasional matches** in the process of translation.

Let’s consider some vivid examples of politically correct gobbledygook and their possible translation into Russian:

Person of Color (*Calling someone a "person of color" is way more offensive in, especially because it designates people into two distinct categories: whites and non-whites.*) – ‘человек с другим цветом кожи’ (PC).

Differently Able (*Disabled is a perfectly good word that describes someone who cannot function normally for health or mental reasons. If someone is "differently able," you're directly calling out the fact that this*

person is different than the rest of us.) – ‘с иными возможностями’, ‘обладающие иными физическими возможностями’ (PC)

Sanitation Engineer – (This politically correct term is more of a joke, but "sanitation engineer" is still absurd. The job of a garbage man has absolutely nothing to do with engineering, as he just drives a truck or throws trash into the back of one. This wording devalues the hard work that goes into becoming a real engineer and needlessly props up the simple task of collecting garbage.) environmental hygienist – ‘специалист по гигиене окружающей среды’ – garbologist – ‘инженер по санитарии’ (PC) – garbage collector – janitor – ‘дворник’ (non-PC)

Motivationally Dispossessed – (This wording makes being lazy sound like a clinical disorder. If you're feeling lazy, the cure isn't in a pill, you just need to get up off the couch and do something.) – ‘лишенный мотивации’ (PC) – ‘ленивый’ (non-PC)

When discussing euphemisms, George Orwell wrote: “A speaker who uses that kind of phraseology has gone some distance toward turning himself into a machine.”

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ОТРАЖЕНИЕ СОДЕРЖАНИЯ КОНЦЕПТА «ЭКСТРЕМИЗМ» В ЛЕКСИКОГРАФИЧЕСКИХ ИСТОЧНИКАХ

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Изучение концепта представляется одной из наиболее значимых областей исследования для современной лингвистики. Сегодня термин «концепт» широко применяется филологами, лингвистами, когнитологами и психолингвистами. Вследствие изучения концепта ученым предоставляется возможность рассматривать с разных точек зрения принципы происхождения и развития языка, менталитет