

## DIFFICULTIES IN TRANSLATION IN VIEW OF POLITICAL CORRECTNESS

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There is no doubt that language is a living organism which reacts to the processes taking place in society, reflects the tendencies of its development. A striking example, in our opinion, is the changes in the language occurring under the influence of the movement for political correctness. So, presently, people all over the world face problems of using and translating politically correct vocabulary.

So, let us, first, consider the meaning of the term *politically correct*. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines it as “conforming to a belief that language and practices which could offend political sensibilities (as in matters of sex or race) should be eliminated”.

What is currently known in English as Political Correctness (commonly abbreviated to PC) is a wide-spread phenomenon characterizing the use of the language in official and semiofficial situations. Adherence to PC demonstrates to the audience that the speaker / writer supports the philosophy of inclusion by following certain rules which are meant to ensure that ethnic, racial, sexual, social, age, or other minority groups are represented and referred to in the “correct” way. This is done to avoid any derogatory connotations which may be associated with certain words denoting people belonging to such groups. Thus, using PC suggests that the speaker is a “progressive” person who is against discrimination and supports equality.

One of the most common but not the most acceptable translation strategy is not to reflect PC features of the source text in translation at all. For example, *flight attendant* corresponds in translation into Ukrainian to *бортпровідник* / *бортпровідниця* or *стюард* / *стюардеса* (depending on the actual sex of the person), and *chairperson* corresponds to *голова* (masculine gender). Without inventing a new word, it is impossible to convey in the Ukrainian language the fact that in accordance with PC rules one has to avoid using words which indicate the sex of the person or avoid using words with the affix *-man* (i.e. *chairman*). The Ukrainian words *бортпровідниця* (feminine gender) or *стюардеса* (feminine gender) do not have negative connotations. One can also use *бортпровідник* but it is a noun of masculine gender and using it to denote a woman would be contradictory to the principles of PC and, most importantly, will not help Ukrainian speaking addressees to see that the source text follows PC rules. In the case of *chairperson* – even if the word refers to a woman – the only acceptable word in a formal / official text is *голова* (masculine gender)

because *жінка-голова* (literally: *woman-chairman*) or *головуюча* (feminine gender) are not stylistically neutral and cannot be used in a stylistically neutral formal text. In the Ukrainian language nouns denoting people, when used in the generic sense, are usually neutral in regard to individual attributes of a person (such as age, sex, height, family situation, race, or ethnicity, etc.). In the sentence *Що повинен і що не повинен робити продавець* (what a shop assistant should and shouldn't do) the noun denoting a person *продавець* (*shop assistant*) refers to any person who is engaged in selling things, and though this noun grammatically is of masculine gender, it denotes both men and women.

We need to emphasize that, despite all the ingenuity of the translator's effort, the reason of introducing these particular linguistic innovations in the target text is not quite clear for the readers of the Ukrainian translation. The problem is that for the majority of people who speak Ukrainian and have a mentality different from that of Americans, political correctness is a fairly new linguocultural phenomenon. This in turn means that the translation of English terms will inevitably be accompanied by difficulties in the selection of the appropriate lexemes of the Ukrainian language.

Difficulties also arise with the translation of gender-neutral units, especially given the fact that now feminine gender-specific job titles are being actively introduced in the Ukrainian language.

Translation issues associated with PC include complex relations between phenomena of language and culture and highlight importance of integrating cultural aspects of translation into interpreter and translator training. There are no simple recipes as to which translation strategy to use and its choice depends on a number of cultural and linguistic factors.

Thus, the intensification of the movement for political correctness sets many urgent tasks to be solved by linguists, terminologists and translators / interpreters.

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