

GENDER-SENSITIVE LANGUAGE IN TURKISH AND ENGLISH: CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

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Abstract: *Despite the prejudiced perception from the past, culturally and politically the world today is evolving to form a more neutral perception towards people. Today, in spite of this positive change, the stereotyped perception of prejudices and discriminatory behavior continues to exist directly or implicitly in the communication process. Alternatives are offered to minimize these discourses that come as the legacy of the past in our social life and language use. Although the current perception accepts that these discourses are false, the words and expressions used in language and communication could not be detached from the ongoing perception.*

This paper aims to examine the various forms of gender-based inequality that exist within languages, attempting to portray such differences in Turkish and English. Accordingly, examples of gender associative expressions and terms that are frequently used in Turkish and English in daily life were identified. Subsequently, an alternative terminology has been proposed to sexist discourses that existed explicitly or implicitly in these statements.

Keywords: *Gender-Sensitive Language, Prejudice, discriminatory discourse, negative perception, attitudes*

Türkçe ve İngilizcede Cinsiyete Duyarlı Dil: Değişen Algılar

Öz: *Kültürel ve politik açıdan, geçmişten süregelen önyargılı algıya karşın bugün dünya, insanlara karşı daha tarafsız bir algı oluşturmaya evrilmektedir. Bu olumlu değişime rağmen, önyarguların ve ayrımcı davranışların kalıplaşmış algısı, günümüzde iletişim sürecinde varlığını doğrudan ya da dolaylı olarak devam ettirmektedir. Sosyal hayatımızda ve dil kullanımında geçmişin mirası olarak gelen bu söylemleri asgariye indirmek için alternatifler teklif edilmektedir. Her ne kadar mevcut algı, bu söylemlerin yanlış olduğunu kabul etse de dilde ve iletişimde kullanılan söz ve ifadeler, süregelen algıdan kopmamıştır.*

Bu çalışmada, Türkçe ve İngilizcede mevcut olan cinsiyete dayalı çeşitli söylemler üzerine bir inceleme yapılacaktır. Bu doğrultuda öncelikle günlük hayatta Türkçe ve İngilizcede sık kullanılan cinsiyet çağrışımlı ifade ve terimlerden örnekler tespit edilmiştir. Sonra da bu ifadelerde doğrudan ya da dolaylı olarak mevcut olan cinsiyetçi söylemelere alternatif bir terminoloji önerilmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: *Cinsiyete duyarlı dil, önyargı, ayrımcı söylem, olumsuz algı, tutumlar*

"Words have energy and power with the ability to help, to heal, to hinder, to hurt, to harm, to humiliate, and to humble."
Yehuda Berg

INTRODUCTION

Most of the time, the language we use in our daily life, without thinking about it and noticing the meanings of the words we use, can direct our thoughts, attitudes and judgments. People may use sexist language for a variety of reasons. They may do so because it is traditional, it is ingrained in current written and spoken language and can be difficult to change, they lack knowledge about what constitutes sexist language, and

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they do not believe that such language is sexist, or they are attempting to protect established social hierarchies (Swim 2004). Proverbs, idioms, and even slang expressions in our language, on the one hand, enhance language and expression and add flavor to life, on the other hand, lead to the existence of stereotypes that leave societies behind. The ways we think and talk about a subject influence and reflect the ways we act in relation to that subject. This is the basic premise of discourse theory (Foucault 1972, 1980; Hall, 1997; Phillips & Hardy 2002). Language-based sexist discourses trigger discrimination and carry gender roles from generation to generation. It is possible to change this concept, discourses and expressions to match the current values. It is possible to take the first step with the awareness people create by removing discrimination and sexism from our languages as everything starts with the words we use in our social life. Thanks to this awareness, it will be attempted to create an equal language for an equal society.

In the report of OECD, gender equality is not only a fundamental human right. It is also a keystone of a prosperous, modern economy that provides sustainable inclusive growth. Gender equality is essential for ensuring that men and women can contribute fully at home, at work and in public life, for the betterment of societies and economies at large (OECD 2017).

The first step towards ensuring gender equality, which is closely related to a country's level of development, is to begin examining and comprehending the concepts of sex and gender. In UN Women Gender Equality Glossary (2017) these terms are defined as following:

Sex: It relates to innate biological and physiological characteristics, distinguishing males and females. It is not learned. It's universal

Gender: A social and cultural construct, which distinguishes differences in the attributes of men and women, girls and boys, and accordingly refers to the roles and responsibilities of men and women. Gender-based roles and other attributes, therefore, change over time and vary with different cultural contexts. The concept of gender includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviors of both women and men (femininity and masculinity). This concept is useful in analyzing how commonly shared practices legitimize discrepancies between sexes.

Roles, behaviors, activities and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for men and women gender is not innate, but learned. It is not based on biological differences. It's shaped by culture, socioeconomic factors, education, beliefs, and ethnic factors as well as time and geography. Gender identity development begins in childhood and it is reinforced by society. It is not universal.

Gender Equality: Gender equality is, therefore, the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners in the home, community and society. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female (UN 2017).

Some indicators that a sexist attitude settles in our subconscious:

Sexism comes in many different forms, such as blatant, covert, and subtle sexism (Benokraitis & Feagin 2000). In today's society, perceptions like these are rarely

openly discussed. Instead, they are maintained through implicit bias—the often subliminal thinking that can influence partial-policing decisions and covert biased practices—in all of their subtle or veiled ways of operating. Sexist language refers to words and phrases that degrade, ignore, or stereotype members of either sex or that needlessly call attention to gender. It's a form of biased language. Sexist language often excludes one sex, usually women. It can always be avoided. Sexist language is characterized as “words, phrases, expressions that unnecessarily differentiate between women or men or exclude, trivialize, or diminish either gender.” They give examples of sexist language as false generics (e.g., he, mankind), hierarchical and separatist terms (e.g., man and wife, sex differentiated job titles), and words that can decrease self-esteem and negate personal identity (e.g., referring to adult females as “girls” rather than “women,” emphasizing the importance of women’s marital status with “Miss” and “Mrs.”) (Parks and Robertson 1998: 478). It is always possible, for instance, to avoid generic ‘he’ and generic ‘man’. Many women feel themselves as invisible or unimportant. Sexist Language treats women and men differently without reason.

Some scholars from various fields such as sociology (West and Zimmerman 1991), psychology (Aries 1996) and linguistics (Tannen 1994) have carried out various researches regarding gender-based differences. It is highlighted that English and other languages can be interpreted as gender-biased. (Graddol and Swann 1989). Braun (2000, 2001) states that Turkish displays a tendency towards determining more female gender. This implies that most words have masculine meaning, unless they are characterized by words that mark the woman. Indeed, examples such as male nurses and male secretaries are less. Since most professions are associated with men, the use of male qualifiers is less than that of female qualifiers: A female qualifier is used in a phrase such as a female bus driver because it is a general situation that the driver is female. When it comes to a man, the male qualifier is not used. The male connotation of the bus driver is evident. On the other hand, these languages have words that can be used to identify gender such as words for denoting female and male. The third person singular pronoun ‘o’ is employed to name either a female ‘kadın’ or a male ‘adam.’

Gender inequalities prevails in all areas of social and economic life and across countries. Therefore it is not only limited to our country or an English speaking country. Karlberg argues that throughout the public sphere, in our economy, political institutions, judicial systems, educational systems, and so forth tend to privilege conventionally “masculine” adversarial traits over conventionally “feminine” traits such as caring and cooperation (2005: 5). Gender disadvantage is not based on biological sex; it is the result of socially and culturally defined behaviors, roles, relations and entitlements that are assigned to men and boys and women and girls. They have to do with prevailing social and gender norms, policies and institutions (for example, political representation and legal structures) that continue to privilege men and boys in families, communities and nation (UNESCO 2015: 20). The woman is believed in the gender roles given to her since birth and adopts a lifestyle accordingly. Girls, boys, women and men are affected by gender roles that shape expectations of them in the home, in the community and in society

According to The Gender Equality 2019 Index, published by the European Gender Equality Institute (EIGE), European Union countries are far from the finish line on gender equality. In that report, it is stated that “advances in gender equality are still moving at a snail’s pace.” The index, which measures the position of European Union

(EU) countries in gender equality, depicted that countries have not made any significant progress. According to this report;

Sweden was the country with the highest gender equality in Europe with 83.6 points out of 100. In the index, which evaluates the gap between men and women over 6 basic parameters, EU member countries were evaluated between 1 and 100 points from the perspectives of disability, age, level of education, country of birth and family type intersect with gender to create different pathways in people's lives. Denmark took the second place with 77.5 points. In the index where half of the member states were evaluated under 60 points, the countries below 52 were Greece and Hungary. Portugal and Estonia, on the other hand, were the countries with the highest development rates on gender equality (UNESCO 2015: 20).

In other words, progress has been slow and there is a strong need for further policy action to close gender gaps in many fields such as education, employment, entrepreneurship and public life. A majority of world languages do not convey a grammatical gender, and Turkish is one of these world languages. However, as Castagneto and D'Amora (2006: 197) argue that "even though Turkish has no morphological gender marking, the languages from which it has borrowed many loanwords do have it." In contrast to most other Indo-European languages, English does not retain grammatical gender and most of its nouns, adjectives and pronouns are therefore not gender-specific. However, the fact that grammatical gender in a language does not exist, does not mean that discrimination of the sexes does not exist in the language completely. In most other Indo-European languages, nouns are grammatically masculine gender distinctions do not exist in Turkish. "o" which is the third person singular pronoun signifies "he", "she" and "it". It is not possible to find out the gender of the person that is mentioned in Turkish from point of third person reference. Arkadaş (friend), öğrenci (student) may refer to a man or a woman. In English, one of the natural gender languages, it is possible to use gender-neutral nouns to index people (e.g., "student," "parent," "person,"). In this case, it is the speaker's choice to determine other people's gender. On the other hand, there are many occasions when speakers optionally state people's gender during conversation. As Leaper and Bigler (2004) argue that many teachers commonly welcome their students with expressions such as "Good morning, girls and boys" (as opposed to "Good morning, students". In our schools, however, students are mostly greeted as "Günaydın çocuklar" or "Günaydın" or "Merhaba arkadaşlar" This kind of gender separation is reported to enhance the gender lines in social life both in children and adults as well, leading to gender stereotyping (Bigler and Liben 2007).

However, unlike genderless languages, it is challenging to deal with sexist words in languages with grammatical gender like Spanish as each noun is marked as either feminine or masculine. Kreitler (2014, 62-81) argues that one form of linguistic gender bias in English and many other languages is the generic use of masculine nouns and pronouns such as "mankind" or "chairman" as well as the use of "he" to refer generally to all persons. (e.g., "When a student studies for an exam, he is likely to do well"). However, it is highly possible that this kind of problematic use will lead to some problems. For example, the extensive employment of such masculine generic paves the way for supremacy of males over females. As MacKay (1980) maintains that the masculine generic meets the criteria for effective propaganda: frequent occurrence,

early age of exposure, and association with high-prestige sources (e.g., teachers, books).

Approaches and discrimination within the dual gender system in patriarchal societies put pressure not only women and adults, but also all age groups and genders. As soon as our gender becomes evident in the womb, our gender roles begin to be shaped. As soon as we are born, we find ourselves amid pressures suitable for these roles. Traditions, upbringing, lifestyle and education system make us perceive gender as normal and even become the executive of the system itself; the sexist language shapes our consciousness from the age we started speaking. However, male biases in gender-neutral terms are often a result of historical and cultural factors, not related to grammar. As long as sexist discourses continue in educational institutions, in the media and in the family environment, it is not possible to expect children not to use sexist discourses and to have a sexist mindset.

The language in use is the main structure of the society. We speak how we think, and how we think how we speak. The prejudices and attitudes we acquire over time reflect our thinking system, reflect on our language. Every word we pronounce, whether consciously or not, forms our perspective on women over time. It is necessary to clear our language from these biases against women. It will be focused that no words or expressions that make women invisible can be accepted. Gender stereotypes can be described as simple assumptions and ideas about women's and men's behavioral patterns. Gender stereotypes are practical reflections of a culture's general gender perception. They have deep cultural roots that are fixed and accepted over time. Repeated every day, these assumptions and ideas standardize perceptions by limiting individual's multi-faceted and complex differences.

All social patterns impose that what is normal and what is normal is male gender. A simple example still made more widely from the media; the doctor, minister, judge, etc. who stated in a news If the gender of a person like a woman is a woman, this is emphasized, such as a female doctor, a female judge. Because the first thing that comes to mind is the male. As such, it is not surprising that there are people who claim that the word 'man', which means male person, is actually used instead of human. In this regard is the use of the word "man" is the most common example in the sense of both human and human beings, as well as remarkable people or respected people. Expressions such as counting from a man, being a man, a man of the job suggest that the usual form of being human means being a man. In these expressions, we think that the meaning deviates when a woman is replaced instead of a man, and suddenly it turns from a general expression to a particular one. On the other hand, there are sexist expressions reflected in the written language used in business life as well as in daily speech. Recently, changing terms such as businessman, scientist and seaman started to come to the agenda.

Another biased practice from the perspective titles is the use of 'Mr.' and 'Mrs.' preceding surnames. 'Mr.' is used for men in English and other languages as well, bearing any clue for a man's status. However, addressing a woman as 'Miss' if she is unmarried and 'Mrs.' if she is married leads to disparity between two genders. The introduction of 'Ms.,' which is prevalent in business, has gained acceptance and popularity and acceptance. Another way through which language is used to discriminate women is taking her husband's family name. Even though this seems a traditional practice, there is a change for women in our society or in western societies

not to change their name or to hyphenate both parent's family names. In English Mr. is used for all men (Beare 2020). However, in the past, women were either 'Mrs.' or 'Miss' depending on whether they were married. Now, 'Ms.' is used for all women. 'Ms.' reflects that it is not important to know whether a woman is married or not.

Have you ever thought why you are consciously or unconsciously using 'bayan' automatically instead of 'kadın' in Turkish? And, the word 'lady' is used instead of 'woman' in English. It is seen that this word almost everywhere instead of 'woman', from the words of men and women used to indicate gender. Women's Basketball Team, women's aisle, female competitors ... This is trying to be normalized with the return of the mindset that interprets the distinction between girls and women differently. Another biased statements are when males and females are each describes as having inherent qualities as in the sentences of "Only girls can play with dolls" or "Only boys can play with footballs." (Kreitler 2014: 66). Thus, matching girls with dolls and boys with football offers a biased and broad generalizations about genders. Take for example, when a baby is born, if it is a girl, everywhere is pink, and therefore she receives toys or dolls in pink, if it is a boy, it is blue, and he will receive blue toys. Apart from these two colors, many other colors are separated in this way in our subconscious. However, there is no specific data concerning what or when this perception occurred. Just as colors, separation of professions by gender. Even the branches of that profession are separated in this way. For instance, some departments such as construction, machinery, mining engineering are considered more suitable for men, while departments such as industry, chemistry and food engineering are regarded more suitable for women.

Having said that, there are other problematic areas that have considered as gender-related issues. Establishing different roles for girls and boys, especially in domestic contexts is a traditional based practice. Gender imposes normative roles on us before we are born, introduces a sexist approach when the child is younger and causes us to adopt this language without realizing it. It would not be wrong to claim that from a young age, it is divided into girls and boys. Here are some examples: Incorporating children with gender roles is one of the common practices, representing as good girl/boy, naughty girl/boy, representing girls in mother roles and boys in father roles, affiliating boys with soldiers, policemen, heroic characters, war, and fighting from childhood, unlike boys, associating girls with domestic affairs such as housekeeping games, caring for home and the family, representing professions such as engineering, medicine, politics, science as "boys only," representing professions such as teaching, nursing, and flight attendant as "girls only" depicting girls with make-up and boys with mustaches and briefcases; children dressed as brides and grooms. While girls are expected to help their mothers with housework, there is generally no such demand for boys. From the perspective of education, for example in our country mostly boys were used to send schools. However, over time, the practice and process of various campaigns have yielded a number of positive results, paving way for girls to attend schools. Our constitution guarantees both the right to free and the right to compulsory education in authoritative language to all children or specifically to girls, either generally or specifically at the primary level. For example, since 2013 several OECD countries, including Australia, Hungary, Portugal, Slovenia and Turkey, have introduced or extended the rights of parents with young children to at least request part-time or flexible work... (OECD 2017)

Expressions from the perspective of sexist discourse:

There are also many idioms and proverbs which are based on a sexist distinction in our language are important devices for us to reflect our thoughts and attitudes. These proverbs are examined under the phrasal level. Under this topic different types of metaphors, similes and proverbs will be analyzed. How is the situation in the idioms and proverbs that are part of every language and which we can call the projection of cultural life? It is worth mentioning a little. Comparing the proverbs in Turkish with the proverbs of other countries, it is easy to find that the woman is not at all behind her situation in other cultures in terms of humiliating, belittling, and discriminatory thinking and prejudice in society. There is no doubt that there will be many proverbs related to women in a country with a population of eighty-three million in which 50.2 percent of the total population is men and 49.8 percent is women, according to TurkStat (2019). Everything that women generally experience in social life is reflected in proverbs and idioms. Indeed, proverbs and idioms are mirrors of thought, understanding and value judgments that have cost a large part of society.

Although there are numerous number of idioms and proverbs in both Turkish and English that are associated with women, portraying women in a positive manner, in some proverbs women constitute the other half, which is not equal to men, snoring, oppressed, excluded, and valued beyond the nature of the existing society. *Dişi köpek kuyruk sallamazsa erkek köpek yaklaşmaz.* The words and metaphors we use have sexist patterns such as “Men don't cry.” There are many more examples to be given to these proverbs and idioms. Providing some examples, Yigitoglu, M. and Yalcinkaya, Z. (2016) argue that some of the proverbs and idioms can have a universal identity along with social structure and values. Apart from proverbs, sexist jokes are also one form of this biased practice. These kind of jokes can also undermine women's status in the workplace (Boxer and Ford 2010). Take for example “Women make terrible managers”. This joke is a more subtle form of sexism.

Another pattern for the practice of using the terms “feminine” and “masculine” to describe social behaviors (Leaper 1995; Lott 1981). For example, in our culture, it is commonly accepted that ‘men pay the bill’. However, everyone can pay for their own account. These kind of behaviors and attitudes that are carried out under the name of politeness do not create anything other than a perception that portrays women as weaker and more fragile beings. Labeling behaviors as “feminine” and “masculine” is that it perpetuates the notion that certain behaviors are inherently either female or male (Lott 1981). Unfortunately, the statement of “*erkekler ağlamaz*” in our society is associated with that gender bias. Showing affection is not referred to a masculine behavior, on the other hand acting confidently is not regarded as feminine. In our culture, it is possible to encounter some sexist sanctions in the regulations. Women are also less likely to be entrepreneurs, and are underrepresented in private and public leadership positions. For example, wearing high-heeled shoes, not wearing lipsticks in remarkable colors, not wearing sleeveless or collared collar. Generic structures illustrate further evidence to depict the sexism encoded in the language. Words like 'generic' he and man can be said to provide women invisible. There are many sexist rhetoric about 'being a man' in Turkish, which linguists say is a masculine language.

Over the past few decades, writers and instructors have become more aware of common terminology and writing styles that tend to favor men and assumptions about behavior that no longer reflect the modern world. To change this, English speakers

have adopted new terminology that reflects a more gender-neutral style. English speaking Western cultures and societies have evolved over the past few decades, the use of gender-specific language has (is becoming) a thing of the past. Although the extent of this may still vary from country, it is now becoming more common and acceptable to use gender-neutral terms when writing and speaking in English.

Following is a list of gender-specific words/terms with their recommended gender-neutral equivalents. The words/terms that are included on the list are those considered to be the most frequently encountered in social life.

Recommended gender-neutral equivalents:

Gendered title	Gender- neutral title in English and Turkish
businessman, businesswoman iş adamı, iş kadını	business person/person in business, business people/people in business iş insanı
chairman, chairwoman erkek başkan, kadın başkan	chair, chairperson başkan
mailman, mailwoman, postman, postwoman erkek postacı, kadın postacı	mail carrier, letter carrier, postal worker postacı
policeman, policewoman erkek polis, kadın polis	police officer polis
salesman, saleswoman erkek satış elemanı, kadın satış elemanı	salesperson, sales associate, salesclerk, sales executive satış elemanı
steward, stewardess erkek hostes, kadın hostes	flight attendant kabin memuru/uçuş görevlisi

fireman, firewoman	firefighter
erkek itfaiyeci, kadın itfaiyeci	itfaiyeci
barman, barwoman	bartender
erkek barmen, kadın barmen	bar görevlisi
man, mankind	people, humanity, human kind, human beings
adam, insanoğlu	insan, insanlık, insan nesli, insan
manpower	workforce, personnel, workers, human resources
erkek gücü	insan gücü, iş gücü
males, females	men, women, boys, girls, adults, adolescents
erkek, dişi	erkek, kadın
woman doctor, male nurse, woman driver	doctor or physician, lawyer, nurse, driver
kadın doctor, erkek hemşire, kadın şoför	doctor, avukat, hemşire, şoför

How do we change biased-based perceptions?

That's a question that people have been trying to answer for decades. It would be wise to bear in mind that change requires shifting both policy and culture. It requires dealing with more complicated problem, that is, biases we suppress within our subconscious minds, in other words, the perceptions that we act upon, with or without being aware of them. In the study conducted by Alptekin (2014: 209) it is argued that "in order to analyze a patriarchal social structure, it is necessary to have the opportunity to live all gender categories in equality and justice. The purpose should be the realization the reconstruction of gender in this axis. To achieve this goal, it is essential that not only men but also women scrape patriarchal influences."

To move forward, all of us need to do the hard work of self-reflection. Yet, it is difficult to grow up in any society without accumulating biases along the way, as there are subtle messages embedded in the fabric of their culture, be it developed or underdeveloped. The lessons we were taught as children about different ones, and gender differences, shape our perceptions of others. These symbols are displayed in various forms, including the use of images, and the use of language describing "good"

and “bad” in this society. Take for example all the ways in which we deploy associations with gender, and race in everyday language. Common sayings like “don’t act like a girl,” denotes something negative engender negative views and perceptions.

How do we overcome our gender-based prejudices?

Bringing the issue to light can positively and definitely reduce our biases in decision-making practices. Diving a bit deeper, we can start to deal with our biases once we become aware of them. Awareness can often begin through dialogue, education and by means of press. On the other hand, the hardest part is how do we become aware of our own prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behaviors? In Education 2030, Unesco declaration (2015), is a call on governments and partners alike to put in place some measures in terms of gender-sensitive policies, planning and learning environments:

To ensure gender equality, education systems must act explicitly to eliminate gender bias and discrimination resulting from social and cultural attitudes and practices and economic status. Governments and partners need to put in place gender-sensitive policies, planning and learning environments; mainstream gender issues in teacher training and curriculum monitoring processes, and eliminate gender-based discrimination and violence in education institutions to ensure that teaching and learning have an equal impact on girls and boys, women and men, and to eliminate gender stereotypes and advance gender equality. Special measures should be put in place to ensure the personal security of girls and women in education institutions and on the journey to and from them, in all situations but in particular during conflict and crises.

It’s time to restart some conversations concerning gender-related issues and in this sense, various initiatives are required to bridge the divide between policy and practice on gender inequality to help keep these issues in the forefront of public from time to time. And it is essential that we keep those problematic issues at the forefront of our own minds, by means of interacting with others who are not the same as with us, employing to use gender-neutral language on purpose.

In the following, you will see a text from the fictional country of Michland, including many examples of gender-discriminatory language, European Institute for Gender Equality (2019).

Preamble Precarious employment is arguably man’s greatest challenge in the modern age. Michland is still recovering from the effects of the recent economic crisis, but the benefits have not been equally shared amongst her citizens. Although unemployment has started to fall, the rise of low-pay, insecure jobs is threatening the ability of families to make ends meet. More and more families are facing poverty and insecurity, through no fault of their own. This development is wreaking havoc on workers from all occupations – from builders and policemen through to teachers and even waitresses.

On 1 November 2000, a spokesman for the President stated: “The failures of the last government have left many families struggling. Our social inclusion strategy embodies the virile action needed to overcome the spectre of precarious employment and give everyone a decent chance in life”

This strategy aims to ensure that:

- Every employee has sufficient income and social protection to protect himself from poverty;
- There are adequate measures to support the work-life balance of women;
- Early years interventions are in place for parents and children at risk of poverty;
- Boys and girls everywhere have access to a decent education, regardless of their income.

However, in the second text it includes examples with many forms of free gender-discriminatory language. Thus, a change in the language is noticed, in other words, examples of clear gender bias are demonstrated, European Institute for Gender Equality (2019).

Precarious employment is arguably humanity's greatest challenge in the modern age. Michland is still recovering from the effects of the recent economic crisis, but the benefits have not been equally shared amongst its citizens. Although unemployment has started to fall, the rise of low-pay, insecure jobs is threatening the ability of families to make ends meet. More and more families are facing poverty and insecurity, through no fault of their own. This development is wreaking havoc on workers from all occupations – from builders and police officers through to teachers and even waiting staff.

On 1 November 2000, a spokesperson for the President stated: “The failures of the last government have left many families struggling. Our social inclusion strategy embodies the strong action needed to overcome the spectre of precarious employment and give everyone a decent chance in life”

This strategy aims to ensure that:

- All employees have sufficient income and social protection to protect themselves from poverty;
- There are adequate measures to support the reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities of parents with young children, and particularly to support new mothers, who continue to bear the majority of caring responsibilities;
- Early years interventions are in place for parents and children at risk of poverty;
- Girls and boys everywhere have access to a decent education, regardless of their income.

The second text illustrates the clear examples with the language improved to be more gender-sensitive and inclusive. For example, the use of ‘man’ is as generic and focuses only on the experiences of men and boys. Instead, ‘human-beings’, or ‘people’ as reviewed earlier in the list above are good alternatives. The use of the pronoun ‘it’ used instead of ‘her’ which is used as gendering of an inanimate object (country). As for ‘policemen’ gendered occupation is being used. However, the term ‘police officer’ would be more gender inclusive. The other example is ‘waitress’ even though not all waiting staff are women, gendered occupation is being used. Alternatively, ‘server’ or ‘table attendant’ may be better choices. Another example is the choice of ‘spokesman’, not necessary to gender this occupation, as gender is irrelevant, the use of ‘spokesperson’ is gender inclusive. The employment of ‘strong’ instead of gendered adjective ‘virile’ is preferred. Here, the use of ‘himself’ is an example of clear gender bias, reflecting assumption that all employees are men. Instead ‘themselves’ is

preferred. The choice of ‘parents with children’ in place of ‘women’ is reasonable as to be clear to ensure that they are not based on, nor reinforce stereotypical thinking, leading to the assumption that women and men have different responsibilities. Actually, there is nothing wrong with the phrase ‘boys and girls’ in itself, but the problem arises from its order, prompting gender- discriminatory language, by means of reflecting the cultural value assigned to each gender. Switching the order around is advised.

CONCLUSION

We can overcome our biases, by first becoming our deepest biases. One should not forget that, sexism is not only a women's issue, but a men's issue as well. It should always be in our minds that no gender is superior to another. Thus, any kind of sexist practice in any kind of discourse that might imply gender bias may be distracting, causing irritation or interruption, and so should be avoided. Thus language is important in fighting gender bias and promotes the use of gender-inclusive language in all contexts and at all times, representing men and women equally. What needed is a gender inclusive language that refers to language that places both women and men at the same level, and which does not convey gender stereotypes.

It is essential that the media promote gender equality, both within the working environment and in the representation of women, explaining the difference, that is, sex is a biological construct while gender is a social construct. Media should open this debate and highlight the issue in the news agenda to better inform society and to overcome gender stereotypes. Both media and education can play a key role in promoting gender equality by challenging and transforming norms, attitudes and behaviors that create and maintain gender inequality and discrimination. If there are any problematic gendered associations available in the curricula, it should be revised and changed. Reading materials should portray females and males in non-stereotypical situations.

Policy implementations also should incorporate key principles of communication that impact on gender equity in multiple contexts. Thus policies and plans must be sensitive to the lives of women, men, girls and boys and the ways that their experiences and opportunities are shaped by gender norms, as a key part of a larger picture of social, economic and structural inequalities. Not integrating consideration of gender issues, together with other equity and inclusion issues, into policies, plans and programs risks overlooking these societal forces and failing to achieve desired outcomes. It should be attempted to ensure that women and men are represented and visible, challenging gender stereotypes and avoiding depicting men and women in exclusively stereotypical, disempowering or traditional ways. As in the practices of the families, rather than putting the children in shape during his/her childhood, it is necessary to free them.

Future research should address how such gender-biased applications are reflected in education books, and their incidence in daily conversations. Another study is recommended on comparison of such discourses in other languages.

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