**The Dark Side of Political Correctness**

First draft

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May 27, 2024

**Outline**

* **The first paragraph (introduction)** –

1. The definition of politically correct language
2. The positive side of political correctness (very briefly)
3. The negative side of political correctness argued by many people nowadays (my main focus) and my inclination to this opposing point of view

* **The second paragraph** –

1. The **first flaw** of political correctness: **the discrepancy of words and actions**

* **The third paragraph** –

1. The second flaw of political correctness: **the deprivation of freedom of speech and its harm to democracy**

* **~~The fourth paragraph~~** ~~–~~

1. ~~The third flaw of political correctness:~~ **~~as an excuse for self-inflicted poor people to escape from their problems (perverse incentive)~~**

I removed this paragraph because this flaw is actually not a matter of the usage politically correct “language”. However, my focus is still laid on the drawbacks of politically correct wording and phrasing.

* **The fourth paragraph (conclusion)**

Political correctness (PC) refers to language that attempts to avoid any offense when describing racially, culturally, and sexually minor groups in particular. The purpose of employing politically correct language is benign, and as Roger Longley (2019) writes in an online article on political correctness, the usage of it “helps to prevent the marginalization and social exclusion of those groups.” However, the opponents of PC, conversely, see it as a “superficial,” “hypocritical,” and an “overly exaggerated” practice “unable to offer actual social change” (Papastefanaki, 2022). Leaning more towards this opposing view on political correctness, in this essay, I will focus on the two drawbacks of political correctness, the first going to the inevitable discrepancy of words and actions, then the deprivation of freedom of speech and its damage to democracy.

A strict politically correct wording creates an offense-free environment from the surface, but never can ensure one’s uniformity of their ideas, words, and real actions, let alone actually solve the social issues. As pointed out in the same article of Longley’s, asking people to avoid using politically incorrect language when expressing their thoughts will not wipe out those beliefs and feelings or therefore end the unwanted situations. He also includes some instances for further elaboration. According to Longley, Sexism does not disappear by replacing salesmen and saleswomen with “salespeople,” also, refer to the homeless as “temporarily displaced” cannot generate job opportunities and eliminate poverty. Therefore, always sticking to politically correct language seems less meaningful due to its invalidity of navigating people’s perceptions towards an inclusive, non-discriminatory direction and improving the society.

Political correctness not only fails to address the real problems in society, but arouses people’s panic of sharing honest opinions, which seriously threatens the freedom of speech, whereupon shakes the foundation of democracy. Freedom of speech is the cornerstone of the essence of humanity’s well-being—democracy, and thereby cannot be deprived. Nevertheless, as political correctness has become part of the social norms, people would rather not to express different ideas for fear of incurring criticism and being seen as politically incorrect. The valuable diversity of viewpoints on social issues is thus stifled, giving rise to a forced silence disguised as superficial harmony. In a sense, people’s freedom of self-expression is lost in the excessively emphasized political correctness. Furthermore, the oppression of freedom of speech gives rise to the crisis of democracy, bringing more harm than good to the society.

After all, however politically correct one’s word choice is, the real social issues will not therefore be tackled. In addition, people’s perceptions, words, and actions could be quite inconsistent. They can speak in a completely political correctness, but behave totally different from what they think and say. Political correctness not only cannot be a solution to the existing social problems, but even results in the deprivation of free speech and the harm to democracy being the most serious ones. Even though political correctness bears a good intention, and does have positive effect on people, its overwhelmingly negative impact is worth constant attention and more concern.

**Reference**

Longley, R. (2019, July 9). *What is political correctness? Definition, pros, and cons*. ThoughtCo. https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-political-correctness-4178215

Papastefanaki, C. (2022). *Political correctness: a threat to free speech or a tool to achieve equality?: an examination of whether political correctness is a justified restriction to freedom of speech or not*. <https://repository.gchumanrights.org/items/969f7612-acc6-420c-b94e-cd03968a4f0e>