

CONCLUSION

To change language may not be to embark on drastic social changes directly, but it does involve consciousness-raising; that is, bringing awareness of a problem to the public's attention. The assumption underlying consciousness-raising is that before behaviour can be changed, there must be awareness that a situation exists.

(Nan van den Bergh, 1987:132 In: Talbot, 1998:15)

The aim of the study is to give an insight into the nature of the institutional discourse. The research is directed at the language used in the forensic and academic discourses.

The professionals in the forensic discourse distribute ideas by highly conventionalised and traditional language means. Language used in the forensic discourse is easily understandable to the specialist community, but it is difficult to be comprehended by laymen.

The purpose of promotional academic language is to disseminate university ideas, policies and strategies and to distribute rights, duties, and responsibilities of students or other tertiary educational institution workers and members. Similarly to legal language, it has also a highly conventional character. "Academic writing contains formal conventions. It has quite complex structures and is more formal and impersonal in style than everyday language" (Carter, McCarthy, 2006: 267).

I have attempted to see the examined discourses not only from the linguistic but also from pragmatic perspective. The focus on pragmatics has been necessitated by the aim of the study: to reveal some covert facts about communication performed in the institutionalised discourse; participants' status, their force, and their relationships. These characteristics are not always overtly expressed in the institutionalised language, but they may be seen through the prism of pragmatics. Widdowson (1996: 63) rightly says that "... pragmatic features are not signalled in the language itself: they have to be inferred from the context in which the utterance is made". My attention has been devoted to the relationship between the form and the content of a written message in order to show explicit and implicit meanings of the text and to some other conditions under which institutional communication takes place.

The results of the research provide evidence that

- a/ the institutional language is a subtle reflection of the past society life and relationships among its members;
- b/ the patriarchal society has left its prints on this language;

c/ that the English nouns - both morphologically marked and morphologically unmarked - is a carrier of a historical and social message. It is realised either through the gender inflections (in morphologically marked nouns) or through the usage of pronouns (in morphologically unmarked and dual nouns). The structure of the morphologically marked nouns proves that the noun having a gender inflection (either feminine or masculine) is created later than the noun without an inflection. It is evident that mostly feminine nouns are derived from their masculine counterparts. This detail proves a later social requirement for the creation and existence of a feminine counterpart.

d/ The form and the usage of the English noun and pronoun have revealed a male-dominated society. The usage of masculine nouns and pronouns used in the generic reference reflects the real state of affairs in the man-centred world in the more and less remote past. The man-dominant world is also reflected in the nouns where male and female counterparts carry different meanings, such as *governor/governess*.

e/ There are several ways how to avoid male-female inequality in institutionalised language:

- by using coordinated masculine and feminine pronouns;
- by using the third person plural personal pronouns *they/them* and the third person plural possessive pronoun *their* with a dual singular noun;
- by using plural forms of dual nouns;

The plural form of a dual noun allows the author of the text to use the third person plural pronouns *they, them, their*. The use of a plural form with the third person plural pronouns expresses a neutral stance to any biological sex. It seems to be one of the most suitable and prospective ways of expressing gender equality.

- by the repetition of the same singular dual noun;
- by the repetitive use of the possessive form of a singular dual noun;
- by a combination of a plural form of a dual noun, its singular form and coordinated pronouns *he* and *she*;
- by the usage of the indefinite and definite article;
- by leaving out the third person singular or plural possessive pronouns and their replacing with the definite article;
- by premodification of a dual noun by means of *male* and *female*.

I suppose that this kind of repetition may also fulfil another function – it may become a manner of avoiding the use of the third person singular masculine pronouns: personal (*he*, *him*), possessive (*his*), or reflexive pronoun (*himself*) for generic gender reference. I am fully aware of the original functions of repetitions in the forensic discourse but the analysis of the promotional academic texts show them as one of appropriate ways how to keep away from being gender unfair.

f/ The results of the research have shown that the prints of the past still exist in both: the language of law, particularly in older last wills and testaments and affidavits, and in promotional academic language. They demonstrate the tendency of their writers to rely on well-established and time-proved expressions, rather than on less complicated contemporary items. It has been discovered that some practices that are not commonly employed in ‘non-institutionalised’ discourse are still used. They seem to add the institutionalised language a touch of formality, past rituality, discretion and ‘necessity to be performed’. The history of society with the focus on the man-woman status has been overtly as well as covertly reflected in the analysed texts.

g/ In everyday communication addressers may use a considerably wider range of linguistic devices to express their intended meanings than in the institutional, particularly legal setting. In legal discourse the creative communicative space of addressers (those who create a legal message) is significantly restricted by conventions and traditions. The research shows that even though there is/are certain predetermined model/s or structure/s to be used in institutional, particularly legal discourse, there is still some manoeuvring room which is available for the addresser’s/addressers’ disposal. The findings show that English is continuing to evolve in this respect that the linguistic conventions are not absolutely frozen and static, that they are in action. It is vivid from the analysed texts that the linguistic gender conventions are being reconstructed to mirror the changes in society. It is also observed that promotional academic institutionalised English is trying to find new linguistic means for gender identification to express balance between biological sexes.

The study is not a contrastive analysis study; its aim is not to compare British and American cultural background. The comparison of legislative and legal language is also out of the framework of the study.

The aim of the study is to record the state of some selected linguistic phenomena found in the analysed texts and to provide some pragmatic observations and comments (without respect to time when texts are created). The study does not provide statistical data about the examined issues.

I would like to accentuate that all the claims presented in this study are made with reference to the analysed texts only.