

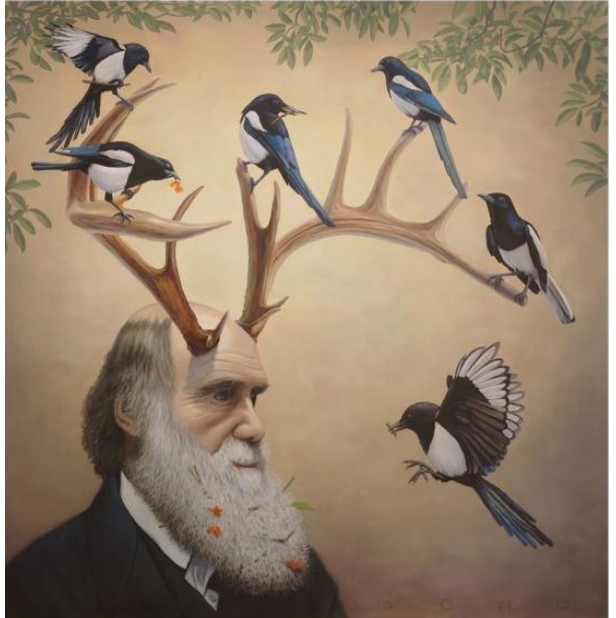
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# Concept Ordnung and German communicative style: Problems of intercultural communication

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## Abstract

The aim of the article is to define the structure of the concept Ordnung and the main features of the German communicative style determined by this cultural dominance. We also used semantic analysis to define the nuclear and peripheral layer of the concept Ordnung as a method. The study showed that the concept Ordnung in these German-speaking ethnosociums is associated with discipline, law-abidance and cleanliness. In conclusion, the cultural dominant Ordnung plays a significant role for representatives of this ethnosocium, which is confirmed by their love of order and punctuality.

**Keywords:** Language, Concept, Ethnosocium, Communicative, Intercultural.

## Concepto Ordnung y estilo comunicativo alemán: problemas de comunicación intercultural

### Resumen

El objetivo del artículo es definir la estructura del concepto Ordnung y las características principales del estilo comunicativo alemán determinadas por este dominio cultural. También utilizamos el

análisis semántico para definir la capa nuclear y periférica del concepto Ordnung como método. El estudio mostró que el concepto Ordnung en estos etnosocios de habla alemana está asociado con la disciplina, el respeto de la ley y la limpieza. En conclusión, el Ordnung dominante cultural juega un papel importante para los representantes de este ethnosocium, que se confirma por su amor por el orden y la puntualidad.

**Palabras clave:** Lenguaje, Concepto, Etnosocio, Comunicativo, Intercultural.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is an axiomatic fact that all communication processes take place in a specific cultural context, and the individuals' communicative behavior is determined by their belonging to a certain socio-cultural and linguistic community. In this regard, the role of researches devoted to the study of national speech stereotypes is rising. PROKHOROV (2003) defines the national speech stereotypes as socioculturally marked units of the mental-lingual complex of a representative of a certain ethnoculture realized in speech communication in the form of a normative local association to the standard communication situation for a given culture. Speech stereotypes are associated with the choice of appropriate means according to the purpose of the statement. This choice is determined by national cultural values, ethnosocium's systems of concepts and social conventions and rules (PALUTINA & MARTYNYCHEVA, 2015; EROL & ORDU, 2018; FUJO & DIDA, 2019; GOLESTANI, HESARI, & HASHEMVARZI, 2018).

Cultural concepts representing the most important category of cultural linguistics are studied on the material of various languages and cultures. Traditionally countries develop their own language policy that aims at preserving their unique national heritage: language and culture. The main feature of the linguocultural concept is its value component. Values as the main elements of culture which determine the behavior of representatives of a particular ethnosocium, including verbal behavior, occupy a special place in the structure of a communicative personality. The core of the evaluative picture of the world of any culture is cultural dominants – the most significant concepts of the culture. The study of cultural dominants of various ethnosociums is undoubtedly relevant and has an applied significance that cannot be overestimated because it forms the basis for the formation of intercultural communicative competence (KARASIK, 2004; SOHRABI, 2017).

## **2. METHODS**

To reveal the peculiarities of the concept *Ordnung* in the German-speaking linguosociums, German and Swiss, we analyzed the dictionary definitions of the word *Ordnung* and phraseological units with this word. We also used semantic analysis to define the nuclear and peripheral layer of the concept *Ordnung*.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The concepts and conceptual spheres are investigated from various aspects of operation. The concept *Ordnung*, to which this article is devoted, traditionally stands out among the key cultural dominants of the German ethnosocium. The studies of the German communicative behavior highlight the following characteristic features of the latter: orientation to content, self-orientation, directness, explicitness, categoricalness, and the German culture is characterized as low-context and status-oriented.

These characteristics of the German communicative style, in our opinion, are closely connected with the concept *Ordnung*. The examples of KALEGINA, TAKHTAROVA & ZAGLYADKINA, (2015) illustrate the implementation of this concept in the speech act *Verboten* (prohibition). Analyzing the concept *Angst* as one of the main human emotions, VEZHBITSKAYA (1999) notes that for the Germans, it is necessary to have *Ordnung* (order) and live in a world where *Ordnung* prevails. In fact, only *Ordnung* can provide them with inner peace. The description of the concept involves a set of specific research procedures, including definitional analysis of the name of the concept, syntagmatic and paradigmatic connections of its keywords, contextual and paremiological analysis, as well as questionnaire surveys and interviewing.

The representative lexeme of the analyzed concept *Ordnung*, which is a derivative of the verb *ordnen*, borrowed from the Latin

language, received this syncopated form in the XV century and denoted the process of ordering something, bringing in a certain systematic state or the result of the process, correlated with the words law, rule, status, prescription. The analysis of the dictionary definitions of the key lexeme *Ordnung* in the dictionaries of the modern German language which allowed to determine the nucleus of the analyzed concept also showed that the nuclear part of the concept *Ordnung* unites the following main features the concept: *Disziplin* (discipline), *Gesetz* (law), *Regeln* (rule), *Reihenfolge* (sequence) (KOTTHOFF, 2003):

*Ordnung* – 1. der Zustand, in dem sich etwas befindet; 2. a) geordnete Lebensweise; b) Einhaltung der Disziplin, bestimmter Regeln im Rahmen einer Gemeinschaft. *Ord|nung*: 1 das Ordnen, das Geordnetsein, ordentlicher Zustand; *Zus Ordnungsliebe i Regel, Vorschrift. Ord|nung*: 1. der Zustand, in dem alle Dinge an ihrem Platz sind; 2. der Zustand, in dem j-d gesund ist, etw. funktioniert od. alles so ist, wie es sein soll. Analyzing the paradigmatic connections of the representative lexeme, it should be noted that the latter has a wide synonymic chain, which allows to define the nuclear and near peripheral layer of the concept *Ordnung*. All synonyms can be divided into the following groups determining the development of peripheral features of the analyzed concept in the German thesaurus (STERNIN, 2001):

1) arrangement: *Aufeinanderfolge, Aufgliederung, Abstufung, Hintereinander, Einteilung, Gliederung, Klasse, Klassifikation,*

Kategorie, Rubrik, Zusammenstellen, Folge, Gliederung, Reihenfolge, Systematik;

2) compliance with the rules, regulations, laws: Allgemeingültigkeit, Gesetz, Gesetzlichkeit, Gesetzmäßigkeit, Formalität, Verordnung, Vorschrift, Plan, Regelmäßigkeit, Planmäßigkeit, Richtigkeit, Korrektheit;

3) discipline: Disziplin, Strenge, Drill, Genauigkeit;

4) cleanliness: Sauberkeit, Reinheit, Reinlichkeit, Fleckenlosigkeit.

The analysis of the realization of the concept *Ordnung* in the German paremiological units revealed the same main features of this concept: *Ordnung ist das halbe Leben, Ordnung muss sein, Ordnung erhält die Welt, Ordnung hat Gott lieb, Ordnung hilft haushalten; Ordnung, Ordnung, liebe sie, sie erspart dir Zeit und Muh.* Thus, the concept *Ordnung* in the German linguistic consciousness can be defined as follows: bringing things and lifestyle into a certain framework established by the norms of the society, by law, rules and regulations. Keeping an order helps you live and stay healthy. Order is closely connected with such personal qualities as a discipline, law-abidance, cleanliness. In our opinion, it is due to the desire for order that the German ethnosocium is characterized by the high level of imperativeness and the possibility of direct criticism. It is proved, in particular, by the German idioms *mit j-m deutsch reden* (literally,



speak German to someone) –to speak bluntly, and *auf gut deutsch* (literally in good German) –to speak simply, unequivocally.

However, it is known that categorical statements often contradict the requirements of proper and polite behavior. For example, in works devoted to the study of the German communicative style in comparison with the communicative behavior of other ethnosociums it is noted that the intersection of direct German style with high-context styles, which are characterized by indirect, implicit transmission of negative information to the addressee, can cause communicative frustration and communicative dissonance due to discrepancies in speech stereotypes in different linguocultures.

But the problems associated with the national specifics of the communicative styles may arise not only in situations of intercultural communication, but also in situations of intended intracultural communication, causing in this case much greater communicative shock and cognitive dissonance, as communicators are not ready for the emergence of conflicts in communication with speakers of the same language who belong to the same culture as they are. What is likely to happen, expected in the process of intercultural communication, and thus easily forgiven for the representatives of another ethnosocium, is much harder to accept in relation to one's own culture.

This aspect of the communicative style and communicative behavior remains, unfortunately, understudied. Of undoubted interest,

in this regard, is the study of the differences in communicative dominants and the problems they cause in communication between the citizens of Germany and the German-speaking cantons of Switzerland united by the same language and having historically related national roots. The differences in the communicative norms of these ethnosociums are mentioned in various guidebooks and articles of coaches on intercultural communication.

DREWS (2012), an intercultural communication trainer, writes: *Viele Deutsche glauben, dass in der Schweiz alles genauso funktioniert wie in Deutschland, nur weil das Land an Deutschland grenzt und auch die gleiche Sprache gesprochen wird. Wer das glaubt, begeht schon einen großen Fehler.* The expert in intercultural communication RIEDEL (2000) is of the same opinion: *Obwohl das Land auf den ersten Blick so nahe liegt und die Sprache so ähnlich scheint, sind die kulturellen Unterschiede für Deutsche in der Schweiz beinahe so groß, wie bei einem weiter entfernten Land.* Cultural differences are manifested, in particular, in the fact that German-speaking Swiss, unlike the Germans, are focused on maintaining consensus in communication, avoid conflicts and prefer an indirect style when formulating directives and criticism, which brings them closer to high-context Eastern cultures.

These cultural characteristics explain the difference in communicative norms and rules that determine the national communicative style of the analyzed ethnosociums: *...die Kommunikation der Schweizer durch eine indirekte Ausdrucksweise*

geprägt. So gilt es, mit einer taktvollen Kommunikation Kritik vorsichtig und mit netten Umschreibungen zu formulieren. Da dies in Deutschland anders ist, gelten Deutsche in der Schweiz schnell als unhöflich und arrogant.

#### **4. SUMMARY**

The concept Ordnung in the German-speaking ethnosociums can be realized in different ways in the process of inter- and intracultural communication. WILLMEROOTH & HÄMMERLI (2009) mention such communicative norms and rules of German-speaking Switzerland as restraint and unwillingness to focus on their own person, increased attention to courtesy strategies, non-categoricalness, attention to the interlocutor, focus on compromise and the desire to save the person, and the desire to save interlocutor's and their own face. According to WERLEN (1998) the main feature of the mentality of the German-speaking Swiss is the importance of the level of relations on which the communicative norms accepted in their culture are based.

#### **5. CONCLUSIONS**

All the above-mentioned signs of the communicative style of German-speaking Switzerland allow us to define the communicative

style of the representatives of this ethnosocium as mitigative marked, in contrast to the direct and explicit style of the Germans. In this regard, the study of cultural dominants of German-speaking Switzerland, the cultural dominant Ordnung in particular, is of prime importance. The cultural dominant Ordnung plays a significant role for representatives of this ethnosocium, which is confirmed by their love of order and punctuality. The study of the association between the cultural dominants of the population of the German-speaking cantons of Switzerland and their national communicative style is undoubtedly relevant and requires further study.

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