Verbalized Social Statuses of a Person in the Linguocultural Space "Crime" of Modern Germany

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A R T I C L E I N F O	**A B S T R A C T**
	Although the interdisciplinary approach towards linguistic phenomena appears to be a mainstream methodological assumption of present-day linguistics, we can hardly witness breakthrough discoveries concerning fundamental issues of life, social life and humans' verbal behaviour. The article attempts to investigate language signs for denoting the social status of a person in the linguistic and cultural space "crime" of modern Germany. The social status of a person is an important component of a person's daily life. The nomination units of social status are presented at different levels of the language: lexical, phrase or extra-phrasal levels. By adequately assessing the status of the addressee, the speaker can choose the right strategies and tactics and achieve the goal. The study of the functioning of units of this type and the establishment of patterns of coding information on a person's social status in a particular linguistic culture will make it possible to identify the characteristic features of a specific nation

1.   INTRODUCTION

The research of the national-cultural specificity of a person's social status with the help of nomination units makes it possible to view the language as a

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system, the elements of which explicate the cultural and social realities of the studied linguistic community. As part of the research, the nomination process is considered as the basis for penetration into the linguistic national-cultural consciousness of the German people. The nominee refers to lexical units, phrases and free expressions that call the social status of a person by any features and qualities. The nominee refers to lexical units, phrases and free expressions that call the social status of a person by any features and qualities.

Speaking of the ways of transferring social status in the German linguistic culture, we have identified certain cultural spaces such as: *psychosomatic signs, habitat, professional activity, tastes and preferences, interpersonal relations, social hierarchy, politics, law, crime, religion, mythology, alternative subculture.* Our article deals with the *crime* sphere and it shows the main ways of explication of high/low social status based on our representative material.

2. WAYS OF VERBALIZATION OF SOCIAL STATUSES IN THE LINGUOCULTURAL SPACE "CRIME"

The language as a multifunctional code reflects the results of the conceptualization of the human reality and captures the experience, which was gained as a result of practical, cognitive, social and other practices (Baranov 2001, Vereshchagin, Kostomarov 2005, Karaulov 2010). The verbal representation of the world images and their structural elements, namely, nomination by means of linguistic signs of different levels and methods of organization (Kubryakova 1986) is realized as a situational (contextual) actualization of universal or ethno-specific quanta of knowledge about the world, which leads to the expansion of the semiosphere of humanity (Lotman 2000) and its national-cultural fragments.

As language accumulates and preserves the collective experience and culture of the people, it fixes the information in the material form of the nominations and includes them in the processes of energy information exchange (Kubryakova 1986). It shows the cumulative language function. Language is a "link between generations, a repository and a means of transferring extra-language collective experience. Language not only reflects contemporary culture, but also captures its previous state. Cumulative function is characteristic of all linguistic units, but most clearly it manifests itself in the field of vocabulary" (Emelyanova, 2010: 58, own translation). The object of the nomination is always included in the life and activity of a person in one or another period of

development of society and has reflection in the language (nomination unit). Under the nomination unit for the designation of the social status we mean

Under *nominative unit for the designation of social status* we mean units of lexical, phrase or extra-phrasal levels, which refer to the social status of a person for situationally relevant features and qualities correlated with the corresponding scenario. In this case it is a question of "markers of socialization" of human, which testify to the successful entry of man into social relations and the realization of a set of roles (Hollingshead 2011).

The object of this article is the system of nomination units of different levels of contemporary German that reflect the realization of social status of a human in the lingvocultural space *crime*.

The methods we used in our linguocultural research include:

- methods of observation, deduction, induction, description - to search for practical material and to select examples;
- the lexical-semantic method and the method of lexical-stylistic analysis – to determine semantics and lexical-stylistic features of nominative units, that denote social status;
- methods of analysis of lexicographic sources and analysis of vocabulary definitions – to establish and clarify semantics and etymology of linguistic units that express social status of a person.

The material of the research was based on the novels of contemporary German authors such as Nele Neuhaus, Charlot Link, Max Landorff, as well as a range of websites.

2.1. *The concept of crime in Modern Germany*

The concept of crime (Kriminalität) comes from the Latin word 'crimina' (verdict; adultery; crime, which is of Proto-Italic origin - *kreimen*, from Proto-Indo-European *kréymn̥*, from *krey-* ("sieve") + *-mn̥*, equivalent to cernō ("sieve") + -men (noun-forming suffix). This concept is defined as a macro phenomenon. It means that it includes all types of crimes against the current criminal law (Duden, Online dictionary). Usually it is a set of deviant behaviour or legally defined rules of violations that are considered by society or the legal system as particularly harmful and punishable (Duden, Online dictionary).

The lexico-semantic field of the concept includes the following concepts *terror, prostitution, drug, terrorism, violence, corruption* (Goldman 2017).

We divide the social status in lingvocultural space *crime* (*Kriminalität*) in the three macro groups: *the victims* (*Opfer*), *the criminals* (*Täter*) and *the human rights defenders* (*Menschenrechtsorganisationmitarbeiter*).

2.2. The nomination units of social status in the macrogroup Täter (the criminals)

This paper deals with the second macro group – *the criminals* (*Täter*). In this macro group the status of a person is realized according to the following criteria:

(1) ***Type of crime***. In the criminal circle there is a certain hierarchy of crimes. The status of the criminal is determined according to his role in this hierarchy.

   1.1. Minor crimes like:

    (1) *ein paar Computer aus einem Elektrogeschäft zu klauen*
    ' stealing a few computers from an electronics store'

                           (Link 2012)

    (2) *ein Auto zu knacken*
    'cracking a car'

                           (Link 2012)

    (3) *einer alten Dame die Handtasche zu entwenden*
    'stealing an old lady's purse'

                           (Link 2012)

    (4) *eine deftige Schlägerei vom Zaun zu brechen*

    'breaking a hearty brawl off the fence'

                           (Link 2012)

    (5) *wegen Einbruch und Körperverletzung*
    'because of burglary and assault'

                           (Link 2012)

    (6) *wegen Drogenhandels*
    'because of drug trafficking'

                           (Link 2012)

    (7) *Entführung   und Erpressung nicht nur eine Nummer sondern mindestens 10 Nummern zu groß für ihn waren*

'Kidnapping and blackmail were not only a number but at least 10 numbers too big for him.'

<div align="right">(Link 2012)</div>

The **characteristic features** of this type of crimes are:

1. the neglected appearance of the criminal:

(8) *Jäger grinste und entblößte dabei nikotingelbe Zähne*
'Jäger grinned and showed nicotine yellow teeth.'

<div align="right">(Neuhaus 2009)</div>

2. the ignorance of the criminal:

(9) *Ich war hier, echt, Jäger nickte heftig, hab Fernsehn geguckt*
'I was here, really, Jäger nodded   vigorously, watched TV.'

<div align="right">(Neuhaus 2009)</div>

1.2. Higher rank crimes

Criminals of the highest rank act as organizers, masters, manipulators:

(10)   *mögliche Drahtzieher des Attentats*
'possible masterminds of the terrorist act'

<div align="right">(Landorff 2011)</div>

(11)   *Der 57-jährige Keith Raniere soll sich als „Master" bezeichnet haben*
'The 57-year-old Keith Raniere is said to have described himself as a *master*.'

<div align="right">(Landorff 2014)</div>

The share of committed crimes is marked:

(12)   *fünfzig Prozent aller Drogengeschäfte in dieser Stadt laufen über diesen Mann*
'fifty percent of all drug trafficking in this city is controlled by this man'

<div align="right">(Landorff 2011)</div>

Criminals of this level are characterized by a high intellectual level, which is realized using the precedent name of famous classical writers:

(13) ***Er liest jetzt Tolstoi und solche Sachen***
'Now he reads Tolstoy and stuff like that'

(Landorff 2011)

We examine separately a phenomenon like *prostitution* in the sphere of crime (Kriminalität). The reason to turn our attention to it is motivated by the fact that the law which legalized prostitution – "Gesetz zur Regelung der Rechtsverhältnisse der Prostituierten" (The Act Regulating the Legal Situation of Prostitutes) came into force in 2002. This law granted social security to workers in this sphere, but prostitution remained under the control of criminal gangs (Van Bebber 2017).

Moreover, legalized prostitution does not exclude the concept of crime (Kriminalität). It creates a metaphorical connection Prostition+Kriminalität = Familie (Prostitution + Crime = Family). For instance:

(14) ***Da, wo Prostitution erlaubt sei, gebe es immer schwere Kriminalität***
' Where prostitution is allowed, there is always serious crime.'

***Beides sei „wie ein   Geschwisterpaar**.*
'They go together 'like brother and sister'.'

(ZDF 2017)

The lexico-semantic field of *prostitution* is introduced in the language by various types of criminal acts such as: *Menschenhandel (Human trafficking), Zwangprostitution (forced prostitution), Drogen (drugs), minderjährige Prostituierten (underage prostitutes), Banden (gangs), Verbrecher (criminals), Mafia (mafia).*

The analysis of the linguistic material allowed us to reveal a negative attitude to this phenomenon in the German linguistic space, which is exemplified by the combination of the following words:

- **Deutschland + Bordell** (**Germany + Brothel**):

(15) ***Deutschland ist das größte   Bordell Europas***
'Germany is the largest brothel of Europe'
(ZDF 2017])**Deutschland + Puff** (**Germany + Puff**):

(16) *die Bundesrepublik   zum Puff Europas   geworden ist*
'the Federal Republic has become the puff of Europe'

(ZDF 2017)

- **Bordell+Landschaft** (**Brothel + Landscape**):

(17) *Internationale Unternehmen organisieren mehrtägige Rundreisen durch unsere Bordelllandschaft*
'International companies organize multi-day tours through our brothel landscape.'

(ZDF 2017)

The low status of sex workers is expressed through the use of nouns with a negative connotation:

(18) *Die Nutten arbeiten mal da und mal dort*
'The hookers work here and sometimes there.'

(Landorff 2014)

(19) *ein Foto mit einer minderjährigen Nutte*
'a picture with an underage hooker'

(Landorff 2014)

The low pay of prostitutes is a contextual synonym for the low status of workers in this sphere*:*

(20) *Frauen prostituieren sich für ein paar Euro*.
'Women prostitute for a few euros.'

(Schmoll 2017)

This sphere is inherent in a certain hierarchy. Lexical units with the component *Luxus* (luxury), *Edel / Nobel* (noble) are used to indicate the higher status of employees:

(21) *29-jährige Edelprostituierte*
'29-year-old noble prostitute'

(Landorff 2014)

(22) *Irgendwann schaffte sie es vom Straßenstrich, zog in die nobleren Bordells ein*.
'At some point she made it down from the street to the noble brothels'

(Landorff 2014)

The use of euphemisms is a contextual synonym for higher social status in the hierarchy of the workers in this sphere:

(23)   *Tietz fragte: „Haben Sie Rotlichtkontakte?"*
       'Tietz asked: "Do you have red light contacts?"'

(Landorff 2014)

(24)   *Also, ich sage mal, in der Escort-Branche*
       'So, I say, in the escort industry'

(Landorff 2014)

(25)   *Der andere Trend heißt Luxus, Stichwort Begleitservice*
       'The other trend is called luxury, keyword escort service'

(Landorff 2014)

Particular attention should be given to the stereotypical provision of the status of the criminals to foreigners. For a long time, immigrants from Eastern Europe were perceived by the representatives of the German-speaking community as potential danger. For example:

(26)   *Wie viele Männer waren mit dem polnischen Skoda gekommen?*
       'How many man had come by the Polish Skoda?'

       Was soll sie tun, wenn sie plötzlich vier oder fünf Bewaffneten gegenüberstand
       ''What should she do if she suddenly faced four or five gunmen?'

(Neuhaus 2009)

(27)   *Die Szene werde von albanischen Clans, bulgarischen und rumänischen Gangs sowie „Balkansyndikaten" dominiert*
       'The scene is dominated by Albanian clans, Bulgarian and Romanian gangs and "Balkan syndicates"'

(Schmoll 2017)

Recently, due to the situation with refugees, a new stereotyped image of **Flüchtlinge = Verbrecher** (**Refugees = criminals**) appeared:

(28)   *als Flüchtlinge nach Deutschland gekommen und als Straftäter aufgefallen sind*
       'came to Germany as refugees and became known as offenders'

(Janich 2016)

(29)   *Afrikanische Banden terrorisieren die Bürger*
'African gangs are terrorizing the citizens'

(Janich 2016)

As a result of the tense relationship between refugees and local people, the emergence of the new concept *Biodeutsch*, which means "Mensch ohne Migrationshintergrund" (An individual, a person without migration background) (Goldman 2017).

3.   CONCLUSION

Social status is an important part of human life. The information about culture and social life of human is accumulated in the nomination units. The nominations of the actual social status of the HUMAN are understood as verbal "navigational guidelines" that outline the likely paths of the course of social scenarios and reflect their own ethno-specific experience of social interactions. If the person reads correctly the social status signs, the addressee can achieve his goal, while the false interpretation leads to communicative failures (particularly in case of intercultural communication). After examining the social status of *crime* (*Kriminalität*) in modern Germany, we explored three macro groups: *Opfer* (victims), *Täter* (criminals) and *Menschenrechtsorganisationmitarbeiter* (Human rights organisation employees). In the criminals (Täter) group, social status is implemented in a language using nominative units to denote the type of crime, a hierarchy in the middle of criminal gangs.

This research is designed to deepen our knowledge of the German linguistic culture. Ordering the language methods of social status verbalization in the criminal sphere will give the opportunity to use this method in the analysis of social status in any sphere of human relations and in various language cultures in the future.

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