

**AXIOLOGICAL ASPECT OF MODERN GERMAN ETHNOSYMBOLS IN  
TEACHING GERMAN LANGUAGE**

***ASPECTO AXIOLÓGICO DOS ETNOSÍMBOLOS MODERNOS DO ALEMÃO NO  
ENSINO DA LÍNGUA ALEMÃ***

***ASPECTO AXIOLÓGICO DE LOS ETNOSIMBOLOS ALEMANES MODERNOS EN LA  
ENSEÑANZA DEL LENGUAJE ALEMÁN***

Nataliya YASHCHYK<sup>1</sup>  
Olga TSARYK<sup>2</sup>  
Mariana SOKOL<sup>3</sup>  
Olha LADYKA<sup>4</sup>  
Liudmyla PASYK<sup>5</sup>  
Larysa RYS<sup>6</sup>  
Lilia SHTOKHMAN<sup>7</sup>

**ABSTRACT:** Based on the axiological approach, it has been established that the moral-ethical orientations of the German society have been internalized in the minds of the ethnos and verbalized by the ethnosymbols. An ethnosymbol is a motivated, conventional linguistic sign with multiple meaning that embodies important cultural meaningful concepts. The reasons for the formation of ethnosymbols are the specificity and duration of interethnic contacts, social, political and economic conditions for the development of ethnic groups. The semantic structure of the ethnosymbol is formed on the basis of national associative relationships commonly used in a particular sociolinguistic system of agreements. The aim of the article is to establish the value dominants of German culture on the basis of the analysis of ethnic symbols as important components of the linguistic picture of the world. Symbolic meaning as an associative rethinking of the direct and figurative meanings of the word involves taking into account the social function and ethnocultural specifics of the denoted object. National verbal associations

<sup>1</sup> Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University (TNPU), Ternopil – Ukraine. Associate Professor of the Department of German Philology and Methods of German Language Teaching. PhD in Philology. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7997-2483>. E-mail: [yashchyk@tnpu.edu.us](mailto:yashchyk@tnpu.edu.us)

<sup>2</sup> West Ukrainian National University (WUNU), Ternopil – Ukraine. Professor of the Department of Foreign Languages and Information-Communicative Technologies. Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0169-7009>. E-mail: [sokol@tnpu.edu.us](mailto:sokol@tnpu.edu.us)

<sup>3</sup> Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University (TNPU), Ternopil – Ukraine. Professor of the Romanic-German Philology Department. Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3876-026X>. E-mail: [olha.ladyka@tnpu.edu.us](mailto:olha.ladyka@tnpu.edu.us)

<sup>4</sup> Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University (TNPU), Ternopil – Ukraine. Professor of the Department of English Philology and Methods of English Language Teaching. PhD in Philology. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1844-1739>. E-mail: [tsaryk@znu.edu.us](mailto:tsaryk@znu.edu.us)

<sup>5</sup> Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University (VNU), Lutsk – Ukraine. Assistant Professor of the German Philology Department. PhD in Philology. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8635-5168>. E-mail: [volyn@znu.edu.us](mailto:volyn@znu.edu.us)

<sup>6</sup> Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University (VNU), Lutsk – Ukraine. Assistant Professor of the German Philology Department. PhD in Philology. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0775-9629>. E-mail: [rys@znu.edu.us](mailto:rys@znu.edu.us)

<sup>7</sup> West Ukrainian National University (WUNU), Ternopil – Ukraine. Professor of the Department of Foreign Languages and Information-Communicative Technologies. PhD in Philology. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8887-8015>. E-mail: [shtokhman@znu.edu.us](mailto:shtokhman@znu.edu.us)

are a prerequisite for the formation of symbolic semantics of the word, but the involvement of only linguistic methods does not provide a thorough and comprehensive study. The connection between language and language consciousness can be explored through an associative experiment. The results of such an experiment make it possible not only to establish the features of verbal memory, mental lexicon, cultural stereotypes, but also to reflect the specifics of the worldview of the language community. Most German ethnic symbols objectify such concepts as order, punctuality, purity, diligence, thrift. The set of the value dominants creates a certain type of the culture that has been maintained in the language and is transferred from generation to generation.

**KEYWORDS:** Ethnosymbol. Axiological classification. Associative experiment. Linguocultural experiment.

**RESUMO:** *A partir da abordagem axiológica, constatou-se que as orientações ético-morais da sociedade alemã foram internalizadas nas mentes das etnias e verbalizadas pelos etnossímbolos. Um etnossímbolo é um signo linguístico convencional motivado com múltiplos significados que incorpora conceitos culturais significativos. As razões para a formação dos etnossímbolos são a especificidade e a duração dos contatos interétnicos, as condições sociais, políticas e econômicas para o desenvolvimento dos grupos étnicos. A estrutura semântica do etnossímbolo é formada com base nas relações associativas nacionais comumente usadas em um determinado sistema de acordos sociolingüísticos. O objetivo do artigo é estabelecer os dominantes de valor da cultura alemã com base na análise dos símbolos étnicos como componentes importantes da imagem linguística do mundo. O significado simbólico como um repensar associativo dos significados diretos e figurativos da palavra envolve levar em consideração a função social e as especificidades etnoculturais do objeto denotado. As associações verbais nacionais são um pré-requisito para a formação da semântica simbólica da palavra, mas o envolvimento apenas de métodos linguísticos não fornece um estudo completo e abrangente. A conexão entre a linguagem e a consciência da linguagem pode ser explorada por meio de um experimento associativo. Os resultados de tal experimento tornam possível não apenas estabelecer as características da memória verbal, léxico mental, estereótipos culturais, mas também refletir as especificidades da visão de mundo da comunidade linguística. A maioria dos símbolos étnicos alemães objetiva conceitos como ordem, pontualidade, pureza, diligência, economia. O conjunto dos dominantes de valor cria um certo tipo de cultura que foi mantida na língua e é transferida de geração em geração.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Etnossímbolo. Classificação axiológica. Experimento associativo. Experimento linguocultural.*

**RESUMEN:** *Partiendo del enfoque axiológico, se ha establecido que las orientaciones ético-morales de la sociedad alemana han sido internalizadas en la mente de las etnias y verbalizadas por los etnosímbolos. Un etnosímbolo es un signo lingüístico convencional motivado con múltiples significados que encarna importantes conceptos culturales significativos. Las razones de la formación de etnosímbolos son la especificidad y duración de los contactos interétnicos, las condiciones sociales, políticas y económicas para el desarrollo de los grupos étnicos. La estructura semántica del etnosímbolo se forma sobre la base de relaciones asociativas nacionales comúnmente utilizadas en un sistema sociolingüístico particular de acuerdos. El objetivo del artículo es establecer los valores dominantes de la cultura alemana sobre la base del análisis de los símbolos étnicos como componentes*

*importantes de la imagen lingüística del mundo. El significado simbólico como un replanteamiento asociativo de los significados directos y figurativos de la palabra implica tener en cuenta la función social y las especificidades etnoculturales del objeto denotado. Las asociaciones verbales nacionales son un requisito previo para la formación de la semántica simbólica de la palabra, pero la participación de solo métodos lingüísticos no proporciona un estudio completo y completo. La conexión entre el lenguaje y la conciencia del lenguaje se puede explorar mediante un experimento asociativo. Los resultados de tal experimento hacen posible no solo establecer las características de la memoria verbal, el léxico mental, los estereotipos culturales, sino también reflejar los detalles de la cosmovisión de la comunidad lingüística. La mayoría de los símbolos étnicos alemanes objetivan conceptos como orden, puntualidad, pureza, diligencia, ahorro. El conjunto de valores dominantes crea un cierto tipo de cultura que se ha mantenido en la lengua y se transmite de generación en generación.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Etnosímbolo. Clasificación axiológica. Experimento asociativo. Experimento linguocultural.*

### **Problem statement in general**

The modern level of the development of linguistics involves the use of an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the linguistic units that reflect the connection between language, culture and society. Such linguistic units include symbol-words that simultaneously connect three dimensions: culture, national consciousness and language. The symbol-word has phonetic, semantic and grammatical properties of the linguistic sign, but is characterized by additional semantics, which clarify the ethno-mental peculiarities of the linguistic society.

Symbol represents another object on the basis of certain arrangements or associations; it is a material object which is used to denote an abstract phenomenon. The word “symbol” is one of the most meaningful and often used concepts of science. The study of the etymology of the word “symbol” has been carried out in different historical periods by linguists from many countries: Creuzer (1973), Schlesinger (1967), Müri (1931), Kroll (1919), Hülst (1999) and others.

Because of the symbol definition study in the German, Ukrainian, English and Russian dictionaries it has been found, that in most cases, the symbol is:

1) a sign (an object or an action) with a deep meaningful content; a figurative sign for a certain notion or process, that doesn't always have a visible and distinct connection with the phenomenon it denotes (for example, blue flower as a symbol of romance); something that is an image for a particular abstract concept;

2) a letter, sign or figure representing a certain number, a chemical element, a process;

3) Christian recognition of baptism and a symbol of faith (DORNSEIF, 1965, p. 105; DUDEN, 1999, p. 965; WAHRIG, 1986, p. 1255; WEHRLE, 1967, p. 500).

Each ethno-cultural community has its own symbols, which it is advisable to call ethnosymbols. The term “ethnos” has been used to denote the community of people, who speak the same language, have typical mental characteristics and are united by common ideas about their history, culture, traditions. The dominant feature of the ethnos is ethnic self-awareness: “the recognition by members of the ethnos of their group unity and difference from other similar formations” (MUSTAYOKI, 1995, p. 10).

In this scientific work, ethnosymbols have been regarded as associative complexes, fixed in the minds of people, existing in the linguistic meaning of the word in the form of a “symbolic aura”: a complex of cultural stereotyped semes. Cultural stereotypes are “...an ordered, more or less consistent picture of the world, to which our habits, our tastes, our capacities, our comforts and our hopes have adjusted themselves. They may not be a complete picture of the world, but they are a picture of a possible world to which we are adapted” (LIPPMANN, 1922, p. 63).

It is necessary to distinguish between hetero-stereotypes – standard believes of people belonging to a certain ethnic group about other ethnic groups, and auto-stereotypes – the stereotypes of one ethnic group about themselves. The actualization of ethnosymbols takes place with the participation of auto-stereotypes and the background knowledge of speakers about the values of their culture. Accordingly, this group of ethnosymbols are units of language that reflect the contemporary ethno-picture of the world of society. The semantics of this type of ethnosymbol has been determined by the culture, economic, social, political spheres of the nation’s life.

### **The methodology of the research**

In order to establish a group of ethnosymbols a survey of German respondents has been conducted, which was based on an associative experiment. The term “associative experiment” is considered as an investigation method of personality’s motivation, the method, which is concentrated to determine by the person the associations, that have been formed on the basis of his previous experience. In linguistic this method has been used to investigate associative structure of personality’s consciousness and ethnic consciousness by exploring linguistic reactions at word- or phrase-stimulus: “reflective temporary connections of sensations, images, concepts and their designations in the mental lexicon of native speakers”.

The novelty of this research is that a complex experiment has been used. First, the respondents had to name 15 words which, in their opinion, have a symbolic meaning for Germany (Nennen Sie 15 Wörter, die Ihrer Meinung nach eine symbolische Bedeutung für Deutschland haben). The second stage was to write 5 associations to each symbol in such an order as they appear in their head (Schreiben Sie zu jedem Wort 5 Assoziationen, in einer solchen Reihenfolge, wie sie in Ihrem Kopf entstehen). Accordingly, the respondents determined the words-stimuli by themselves and gave associative reactions at it.

This method of studying symbols has been used for the first time. In this context should be mentioned the work Fleischer (1996) “Weltbildgesteuerte Wirklichkeitskonstruktion”, in which the results of the comparative analysis of German and Polish symbols are presented. The linguist also used an associative experiment to collect symbols, but this research has been based on the determining of important concepts for the speakers of two countries, therefore the object was the connotation of words, and not their symbolic meaning.

This is evidenced by the form of the experiment: informants had to write positive and negative words and expressions, which, in their opinion, are important for the country; to evaluate them on a scale of +100 (a very positive word) and – 100 (a very negative word); to determine how important these words are for people of each country and to name 5 words or concepts that characterize these values (FLEISCHER, 1996, p. 71). Therefore, the given study is not identical, the difference is not only in the form of carrying out, but also in the results obtained.

During the experiment 150 respondents (67 men and 83 women) from different cities of German aged 18 to 72 have been questioned. Among the respondents were students (40%), teachers (11%), pupils (9%) and representatives of various specialties (employees, electrical engineers, engineers, pilots, social workers, economists, doctors, taxi drivers, scientists), temporarily unemployed and pensioners (3%). The experiment has been conducted in writing, internally and in absentia using email resources.

Because of the experiment, 430 ethnosymbols of Germany have been identified: Berlin (61), Bier (52), Fußball (42), Autos (38), Mauer (32), Oktoberfest (26), Bayern (24), Adolf Hitler (22), Ordnung (20), Pünktlichkeit (20). In the table below we provide the dominant 50 ethnosymbols.

**Table 1** – The dominant German ethnosymbols according to the results of the survey

№	Symbols	Quantity of fixations	№	Symbols	Quantity of fixations
1.	Berlin	61	26.	Bratwurst	12
2.	Bier	52	27.	Geschichte	12
3.	Fußball	42	28.	Krieg	12
4.	Autos	38	29.	Wald	12
5.	Mauer	32	30.	Einheit	11
6.	Oktoberfest	26	31.	Nationalflagge	11
7.	Bayern	24	32.	Volkswagen	11
8.	Adolf Hitler	22	33.	Essen	10
9.	Ordnung	20	34.	Alpen	10
10.	Pünktlichkeit	20	35.	Arbeitslosigkeit	10
11.	Goethe	19	36.	Brandenburger Tor	10
12.	Bildung	17	37.	Holocaust	10
13.	Adler	17	38.	Rhein	10
14.	Angela Merkel	17	39.	Schiller	10
15.	schwarz-rot-gold	16	40.	WM	10
16.	Autobahn	14	41.	Europa	9
17.	DDR	14	42.	Sport	9
18.	Demokratie	14	43.	Föderalismus	8
19.	Mauerfall	14	44.	Kölner Dom	8
20.	Sauerkraut	14	45.	Kultur	8
21.	Wiedervereinigung	14	46.	Sauberkeit	8
22.	Wirtschaft	14	47.	Reichstag	7
23.	Zweiter Weltkrieg	13	48.	Fleiß	7
24.	Bürokratie	13	49.	Helmut Kohl	7
25.	Nationalsozialismus	13	50.	Martin Luther	7

Source: Prepared by the authors

## Results and discussion

Axiological group of symbols reflects the peculiarities of ethnic consciousness of speakers, their views on moral values and norms of behaviour in the society: good, evil, conscience, deception, etc. The ethnosymbols represent “the highest spiritual values that form and embody for human that moral ideal, the pursuit of which is the moral justification of his life – an ideal for the sake of which it is worth living and dying for” (VESELOVSKY, 1979, p. 39).

### Die Ordnung

Die Ordnung (‘order’ in English) is ethnosymbol indicating the most typical features of German mentality. This lexeme has different semantic meanings:

1. durch Ordnen hergestellter Zustand – ‘condition created by arranging’;
2. geordnete Lebensweise – ‘an orderly way of life’;



3. Gesellschaftsordnung, Gesetz – ‘social order, law’;
4. Art und Weise, wie etwas geordnet, geregelt ist – ‘the way in which something is organized, regulated’ (DUDEN, 1999).

For German respondents the most relevant is the second definition of this word, because die Ordnung associates with:

a. an orderly way of life: Pünktlichkeit, Sauberkeit, Exaktheit, Zuverlässigkeit, Tugend, Klarheit, unentspannt, Steifheit, Übertriebenheit, Selbstkontrolle. This group is complemented by a number of adjectives: fleißig, korrekt, zurückhaltend, pingelig, gründlich, akkurat, zwanghaft; expressions related with the order: «Ordnung muss sein», «Ordnung ist das halbe Leben», «einen Ordnungsfimmel haben», Ordnungswahn.

b. social and legal factors, that ensure the order in the society: Preußen, Gesetze, Polizei, Uniform, Verwaltung, Staat, Kehrwoche, Bürgersteig fegen, Garten pflegen, aufgeräumte Straßen, Dosenpfand, Verhalten, Planung, Mülltrennung.

Associative reactions to this world-symbol indicate the propensity of Germans for pedantry and accuracy: Akribie, Pedanterie, jede Kleinigkeit, Pünktlichkeit, Qualität, fehlerfrei. On the basis of associations with the symbol die Ordnung we can define:

c. the appearance of perfectionists: Glatte Frisur, Anzug, Armbanduhr, grau, in English – ‘smooth hairstyle, a suit, a watch, gray’;

d. their demands to themselves and surrounding: hohe Ansprüche an sich, an Produkte, an Arbeit, an andere, in English – ‘high standards for themselves, products, work, other people’;

e. their typical credo: «das Beste ist nicht gut genug» in English – ‘the best is not good enough’.

The symbolic meaning of this word is confirmed by the existence of more than 300 composites with Ordnung: Ordnungsfaktor, -fanatiker, -gesetz, -konzept, -liebe, -macht, -merkmal, -polizei, -amt, and Tages-, Kirchen-, Betriebs-, Haus-, Straßenverkehrs-, Weltordnung-, etc., the phrases: für Ordnung sorgen, Ordnung machen, in Ordnung bringen, Ordnung halten, in Ordnung sein, alles in Ordnung. The ethnosymbol die Ordnung is the ideal of moral values of Germans:

Das Ideal, das den Raum und die Zeit bestimmt, ist die Ordnung

In English – ‘The ideal that determines space and time is the order’

The ethnosymbol *die Ordnung* connects a human – family – state – world:

Ist die eigene Person in Ordnung, so kommt die Familie in Ordnung; ist die Familie in Ordnung, so kommt der Staat in Ordnung; ist der Staat in Ordnung, so kommt die Welt in Ordnung.

In English – ‘If the person is in order, then the family is in order; if the family is in order, then the state is in order; If the state is in order, the world will be fine’.

However, the order may have a negative connotation, in the sense of excessive pedantic attitude to things. The representative of this semantics is the ethnosymbol *der Spießer* (‘philistine’) denotes conservative, pedantic, picky man who is constantly unhappy with something. The formation of the symbolic meaning of the specified concept has a long history. The lexeme *der Spießer* appeared in the Middle Ages and signified the guard of the town with a spear in hands (*der Spieß* – spear). With the advent of firearms, the word received negative connotation and indicated conservatism and narrow-mindedness of people who continued to use spears. Subsequently, the words *der Spießer* and *spießig* began to denote arrogant, selfish people who reject innovations just because they find it difficult to get used to them. Another lexeme that verbalizes the order from the negative side is the shepherd. The lexeme *der Schäferhund* (‘shepherd’) indicates a breed of dogs brought out in Germany. Before the World War I a shepherd was a symbol of reliability and loyalty. The lexeme got negative semantics when National Socialists came to power and *der Schäferhund* became the subject of their propaganda: German shepherds used to guard concentration camps so they symbolized order based on violence and terror. In the post-war period German shepherds helped police and the armed forces. After 68’s German shepherds started to associated with order and law (WINTER, 2009, p. 165-168).

## **Die Pünktlichkeit**

Another significant moral-ethical ethnosymbol is *die Pünktlichkeit* (‘punctuality’ in English). The symbolic meaning of this word in the German language is expressed by the phrases: *5 Minuten vor der Zeit ist des Deutschen Pünktlichkeit!*, «*Pünktlichkeit ist die Höflichkeit der Könige*», and also the proverbs: *Wer versäumt, der löffelt Wasser; Man soll das Eisen schmieden, solange es heiß ist; Wer nicht kommt zur rechten Zeit, der muss nehmen, was übrig bleibt.*



The interviewed Germans combine punctuality with Disziplin, Ordnung, Exaktheit, and refer it to the main human values: Tugend, Charakter, Weltbild, Respekt, Werte, in English – ‘Virtue, character, world view, respect, values’.

Total order and punctuality sometimes cause a negative attitude: nervig, überflüssig, nicht immer leistbar, von Älteren erwartet, in English – ‘annoying, superfluous, not always affordable, expected by older people’.

But most of the respondents believe that it is not only the rules of politeness, but the necessity: notwendig, genau, verlässlich, korrekt, wichtig, praktisch, in English – ‘necessary, accurate, reliable, correct, important, practical’.

The words describing German transport system form a separate associative group: deutsche Bahn, Verspätung, Fahrpläne, Stau, in English – ‘German train, delay, timetable, traffic jam’.

This group also includes such expressions as um jeden Preis, Kaffee trinken, akademisches Viertel (‘at all costs, drinking coffee, academic quarter’). The phrase akademisches Viertel is a short form of akademisches Viertelstündchen (‘academic quarter hour’). It was popular among students and depicts the allowed time of being 15 minutes late, and it became used by all social groups. However, the most frequent associations to the word-symbol die Pünktlichkeit are connected with time and meetings: Termin, Uhr, Arbeit, Zeit, Date, immer auf die Uhr gucken, in English – ‘Appointment, clock, work, time, date, always watch the clock’.

Respondents also associate punctuality with eingeplant sein, keine Spontaneität, Problem für Ausländer, deutsche Mentalität, Terminkalender. Planning of the meetings and following the rules of their conducting are so typical for Germans that there is a number of synonyms to express different kinds of arrangements: Besprechung, Date, Meeting, Sitzung, Treffen, Zusammenkunft.

## **Die Sauberkeit**

The third place among the symbols, which reflect the peculiarities of ethno-cultural behaviour of Germans is occupied by the ethnosymbol die Sauberkeit (‘cleanliness’). The associative field of this symbol contains the words related with tidying up and cleanliness:

a. the group of nouns (Müllabfuhr, Hygiene, Stadtreinigung, Schönheit, große Wäsche, Räum- und Streudienst, Grünanlagen, in English – ‘Garbage disposal, hygiene, city cleaning, beauty, big washing, clearing and litter service, green areas’);

b. the group of adjectives (blendend weiß, frisch, gut organisiert, weiß, durchsichtig, schick, in English – ‘dazzling white, fresh, well-organized, white, transparent, chic’);

c. the group of verbs (waschen, fegen, blinken, in English – ‘to wash, to clean, to blink’).

Among the associations there are two with the opposite meaning Schmutzfink (sloven) and Putzteufel (neatnik), Putzfimmel, which indicate excessive aspiration to cleanliness.

In the German language the lexeme sauber (‘clean’) is used not only to indicate external cleanliness but also to characterize a person: anständig, tüchtig (‘decent, efficient’), that is the reason why there are such composers as Sauberkeitserziehung, Sauberkeitsdressur, Sauberkeitsfimmel, Sauberkeitswahn. In youth slang the word sauber has a special meaning since it indicates a person, who does not use drugs.

## Der Fleiß

The word der Fleiß (‘diligence’) is symbolic for the German respondents and characterizes the Germans as a hardworking nation:

Arbeit, Ordnung, Pünktlichkeit, Disziplin, Wertarbeit, Nachkriegsgeneration weltbekannt, in English – ‘work, order, punctuality, discipline, skill, postwar generation) world famous’.

The etymological meaning is derived from the ancient Germans ahd. flīz and meant: Kampf, Streit, körperliche Anstrengung, geistige Anspannung, Übereifer (in English – ‘Fight, quarrel, physical activity, mental stress, excess’) (KLUGE, 2002, p. 220; PAUL, 2002, p. 336).

The symbolic meaning of the lexeme was obtained in the post-war period and the period of the so-called “economic miracle”, as the rapid development of the economy is connected with the diligence and hardworking of the Germans: Fleissige Hand baut Leut und Land (‘Hardworking hand builds people and land’). Before that period the lexemes der Fleiß and fleißig denoted able-bodied people. And in the interpretation of Christian ethics diligence is one of the main virtues of a person striving for spiritual development.

The domination of material values in the society has led to the transformation of the meaning of the word der Fleiß, which symbolizes wealth and well-being: sein Fleiß trug Früchte (‘his diligence bore fruit’); Die fleißige Hand macht reich (‘The diligent hand makes you rich’);

Mühe und Fleiß erhalten den Preis ('Effort and diligence get the prize'); Die fleißige Spinne hat ein großes Gewebe ('The hardworking spider has a large web'). This symbolic semantics of the words der Fleiß exists today and it is enriched with the additional meaning of success and career growth. The linguistic specifics of the described symbols is manifested in the fact that they rarely become derivatives for new words: Fleißarbeit, Fleißaufgabe, Fleißprüfung, Fleißkärtchen, but it is actualized in various idioms. In particular, in the "Lexicon of proverbs and citations", there were 15 proverbs fixed with the word der Fleiß: Ohne Fleiß kein Preis ('No pain no gain'), Fleiß bricht Eis ('Diligence breaks ice'), Der Jugend Fleiß, des Alters Ehre ('The diligence of youth is the honor of age'), Fleiß bringt Brot, Faulheit Not ('Diligence brings bread, laziness distress') and others (BEIER, 2004, p. 319-320).

### **Sparsamkeit und Fleiß**

The word der Fleiß is often used with the lexeme die Sparsamkeit ('thrift') in German proverbs:

Sparsamkeit und Fleiß machen Häuser groß;

Fleiß ist des Glückes rechte Hand, Sparsamkeit die linke;

Fleiß und Sparsamkeit hilft auch durch schlechte Zeit.

The propensity of Germans to the thrift is reflected in the language in almost 300 composites with the word Spar: -lampe, -kasse, -büchse, -konto, mann, -strumpf, -heizung, -auto, -maßnahme, etc. However German society tries not only to save their money but also to save natural sources, that's why die Sparsamkeit is associated with Sparlampe, Atomkraftwerk, Strom- und Wasserzähler, Umweltverträglichkeit.

The moral-ethical symbols also include a symbol-word der Geiz ('miserliness'), which indicates the excessive economy of the Germans. Miserliness is associated with the money, frugality and politics: Sparsamkeit, Geld, Sparkasse, Politik and with the word «ist geil». The last association has been connected with the advertisement slogan of German chain of electronics stores "Saturn": "Geiz ist geil". This expression became the topic of discussions concerning the concentration of German buyers on the price, and not on the quality of products. This trend has negative consequences in the country's economy, as it leads to a deterioration in the competitiveness of goods. New words appeared in the German language: Geiz-ist-geil-Ware (bad quality goods) and Geiz-ist-geil-Mentalität (the propensity of the Germans to excessive frugality) (WALDERMANN, 2007).

Moral-ethical ethnosymbols accumulate information about the dominant values of the German mentality, so studying their symbolic specifics helps not only to specify the semantics of the corresponding concepts, but also to understand better the worldview of native speakers.

### **Die Schönheit**

In the German ethno-socium die Schönheit ('beauty') is symbolized by the words Schwarzwald, Adler, G. Schiller, Bayern, Rhein, Kölner Dom, Ostsee, Hamburg, Wald, blond, German blonde blue-eyed beauties Claudia Schiffer, Heidi Klum. The ethnosymbol blond, which may be regarded a component of the conceptual symbol die Schönheit, denotes not only the color of the hair, but is also a symbol of the ideal of beauty and sexuality: Haarfarbe, Ideal, Schönheit, Liebe, Sex, Klischee.

### **Conclusions and prospects for further studying**

The axiological approach to the study of ethnosymbols confirmed the hypothesis that moral, ethical and social values of the society have been fixed by the linguistic units. The study of the lexical semantic features of word-symbols, their associative fields and researches in German lingua-culturology, it came to the conclusion that the basic value of the German ethnic society is Ordnung. This has been indicated not only by the socio-political structure of the country, but also by the lexical and phraseological foundation of the language. This mental feature of the Germans has been formed long ago and firmly entrenched in the consciousness of next generations. With the change of the political situation and the emergence of new spheres of life in the society, the order got a new lexical expression. In the German Empire the highest social class was the military, so the order has been expressed by the words Pflicht, Disziplin and Pünktlichkeit. The expression militärische Pünktlichkeit ('military punctuality') still exists in the German language. These concepts were relevant also during the reign of the Nazis. After the World War II the lexemes Pflicht and Disziplin got a negative meaning, because they indicated excessive obedience which can lead to immoral acts. With the industrialization of Germany new lexemes Fleiß and Arbeitseifer appeared. They denote main features of a respectable citizen and symbolize the order in the social economic sphere. The Order in money relations has been called Sparsamkeit, the order in the domestic sphere – Sauberkeit, excessive attitude to order – Spießertum.

The axiological classification of ethnosymbols gave the opportunity to determine other core national values of the German language community. The ability of symbols to actualize the important concepts of culture indicates that they are not just lexical units, but also representatives of axiological attitudes of culture. The prospect of studying this topic lies in a comparative study of ethnic symbols of countries in which the German language has the status of the state. In the context of the declared problem, the syntactic and epigrammatic relations of German ethnic symbols, the influence of the means of communication on the formation of symbolic consciousness deserve attention.

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