

# Complex Correlation of Two Language Systems: Modern Literary German of Germany and Austrian Variant of German

Elena V. Bondarenko<sup>1</sup>, Olga V. Dekhnich<sup>1</sup>, Natalia A. Sheifel<sup>1</sup>, Olga O. Chernova<sup>2</sup>, Svetlana M. Profatilo<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Belgorod State University, Belgorod, Russia

<sup>2</sup>Belgorod State Technological University, Belgorod, Russia

## Abstract

This article deals with the linguistic notion “language variation”. Functioning of any language system depends on some characteristic features. Variability considered to be one of the most important of them. Nevertheless “variability” in linguistics is still a point for discussion. There are too many scientific definitions of this feature. Different authors understand this term in different ways. The article starts with the analysis of linguistic schools of variability. All of them develop the idea that any language system unit functions in one of its variants, which correlates with the language system level. Variability exists in any time of the system functioning. It changes constantly. The changing happens because of another specific language system characteristic feature – evolution. It occurs under the influence of some inner and outer factors. Premises of the evolution and variability can be found in the language system’s nature, they are formed under certain conditions. The article presents a research of Austrian variant of German lexical variety. German language of Germany is a pluricentric language. It exists in some variants: standard variant of modern literary German of Germany and two variants of German in Austria and Switzerland. The relations between the standard form of the language in Germany and its variant in Austria are the main issue of the research. On the one hand the system of Austrian variant of German is influenced greatly by the system of German language in Germany, but on the other hand this variant of German exists in a separate territory of Austria, where it depends on economic, social, historical and cultural factors of the country. The article shows that there are differences in all the language system levels, but especially on its lexical level. The article provides some examples of Austrian variant of German to illustrate the authors’ point of view and gives some information to prove the hypothesis: the Austrian variant of German has strong ties with the system of German language of Germany, but it develops in its own way due to some internal and external factors.

Keywords: language system characteristic features, variability, variant of the language, German as a pluricentric language, Austrian variant of German, internal and external factors.

## **Correlación Compleja De Sistemas De Dos Idiomas: Alemán Literario Moderno De Alemania Y Variante Austriaca Del Alemán**

### **Resumen.**

Este artículo aborda la noción lingüística “variación del lenguaje”. El funcionamiento de cualquier sistema de idiomas depende de algunos rasgos característicos. La variabilidad considerada como una de las más importantes. Sin embargo, la “variabilidad” en la lingüística sigue siendo un punto de discusión. Hay demasiadas definiciones científicas de esta característica. Diferentes autores entienden este término de diferentes maneras. El artículo comienza con el análisis de las escuelas de variabilidad lingüísticas. Todos ellos desarrollan la idea de que cualquier unidad del sistema de idiomas funciona en una de sus variantes, lo que se correlaciona con el nivel del sistema de idiomas. Existe variabilidad en cualquier momento del funcionamiento del sistema. Cambia constantemente El cambio ocurre debido a otro rasgo característico del sistema de lenguaje específico: la evolución. Ocurre bajo la influencia de algunos factores internos y externos. Las premisas de la evolución y la variabilidad se pueden encontrar en la naturaleza del sistema de lenguaje, se forman bajo ciertas condiciones. El artículo presenta una investigación de la variante austriaca de la variedad léxica alemana. El idioma alemán de Alemania es un idioma pluricéntrico. Existe en algunas variantes: variante estándar del alemán literario moderno de Alemania y dos variantes del alemán en Austria y Suiza. Las relaciones entre la forma estándar del idioma en Alemania y su variante en Austria son el tema principal de la investigación. Por un lado, el sistema de la variante austriaca del alemán está influenciado en gran medida por el sistema del idioma alemán en Alemania, pero por otro lado,

esta variante del alemán existe en un territorio separado de Austria, donde depende de los aspectos económicos, sociales, históricos y económicos. Factores culturales del país. El artículo muestra que existen diferencias en todos los niveles del sistema de idiomas, pero especialmente en su nivel léxico. El artículo proporciona algunos ejemplos de la variante austriaca del alemán para ilustrar el punto de vista de los autores y proporciona información para probar la hipótesis: la variante austriaca del alemán tiene fuertes lazos con el sistema del idioma alemán de Alemania, pero se desarrolla por sí solo. camino debido a algunos factores internos y externos.

**Palabras clave:** características características del sistema lingüístico, variabilidad, variante del idioma, alemán como lengua pluricéntrica, variante austriaca del alemán, factores internos y externos.

## 1. Introduction

Functioning of a language system is determined by a certain set of characteristic features. Variability is one of these features: “Variability of language units is a fundamental characteristic feature of any language system” (Kopchuk, 2014: 52). A language system is arranged in such a way that any of its units function in one of its variants, depending on the language system level.

Human language is one of the semiotic systems. It can be defined by a set of some specific characteristic features. Variability or the ability to constant change is one of the mentioned features. “There is a theory of social conditionality of language system evolution. According to this concept variability is one of the natural attributes of any natural human language. Any human language always exists under the influence of social, age, territory and other conditions” (Kopchuk, 2014: 52). Premises of language system variability are deep-laid in the inner language system nature and are under the influence of socio-historical forms of the system’s existence.

Variability as a linguistic issue has been studied for a long time. That means that some important data of the research results have already been collected. Despite this fact the research should be continued. Language systems are constantly changing. The external factors

which influence this process are changing too. Nowadays the new process of globalization takes place. Because of it different nations, their cultural values and languages start to intercommunicate. A new foundation for scientific researches has been found. So, that is why many of them have already been done in the European and Russian linguistics. Some of them have already become classical linguistic essays and books.

## **2. Methods**

This article is based on systematic approach to the interdisciplinary analysis. Due to the cross-disciplinary approach, we take into consideration the anthropocentric factor, linguistic and non-linguistic information, intercultural analysis, especially dealing with the problem of culture and language correlation.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

Akhmanova O.S. deals with the lexis-semantic researches in the words' variability, which are understood as separate language system units. She thinks that homonymy is a top level of word variability. Homonymy is studied in comparison with polysemy. The language contexts of homonymy and polysemy are described according to a plan, dealing with noun, adjective, verb and adverb systems (Akhmanova, 2009). Lexis-phraseological variability is studied too. The linguist defines any phraseological unit as a top variant of such kind of variability.

Variability with complex interrelation with morphological process was analyzed in the linguistic works of Yartseva V.N. "Language system variability idea has generated some tasks. Because of it many classical grammar notions and terms have to be restudied and described from a new point of view. Also, because of the variability aspect new language data has been discovered and this is another sphere of scientific research" (Yartseva, 1983: 18-19). It is also stressed that if any man wants to express himself in a full way, he has to use variants and their combinations which can be found in the language system. According to the author it will lead to new stages in the historic development of the languages. The abovementioned

work touches upon another important issue: a choice of the parameters which allow to separate variant units from the constructions of other language units. V.N. Yartseva points out that morphological variation has to be paid much attention to in future linguistic researches. “Morphological variability is the result of a process when some grammar word forms have been united in a paradigmatic row. Some of them were added to the language system in different time periods, they are archaisms and neologisms. There is another case too: some of the word forms may be different from the point of their grammar structure. They are synthetic and analytical forms” (Yartseva, 1983: 20). The author’s handling of variability process towards language system evolution is of interest too. There are some definitions of language system units’ correlations in synchrony and diachrony. It is emphasized that morphological units can stay the same while they function on a synchrony level but we can observe the differentiation between them on a diachrony level.

“Variability saturates the whole language system, it can be found also in its speech representation” – this is the main idea of Devkin’s scientific researches (Devkin, 1988: 14). Kozhina M.N. while studying language variability, elaborates it and defines it as one of the language system fundamental characteristics which “assured the creative nature of any language and guaranteed the effectiveness of communication” (Kozhina, 1982: 129).

There is an article “Variability as a general characteristic feature of any language system” written by famous Russian linguist Solntsev V.M. He suggested the understanding of language variability as a vital mean of language units’ existence and functioning without any exceptions, but there are some specific features on every language system’ level (Solntsev, 1984: 31). An important stage in the scientific development of the variability theory was formed by some scientific research papers and dissertations. One of the dissertations was written by Bukharov V.M. The linguist studied variability for a long time and has come to the conclusion that: “any language system functioning observation reveals a great diversity of means which can represent one and the same semantics” (Bukharov, 1995: 5).

Modern linguists define the variability notion from different aspects.

Bloch M.Y. interprets it from functional point of view (Bloch, 2004: 6-15). Brodovich O.I. touches upon theoretical issues of the English dialects' variability. English language dialects' specific features are studied from the territory aspect. They are described as separate dynamically developed systems which are typical for certain areas of The United Kingdom (Brodovich, 2009).

Phonetics-phonological variability is the central notion in the scientific research of Torsuev G.P. (Torsuev, 2008) where he gives detailed description of phonetics and phonological variability of the language system's units. The author analyzes the linguistic works on the topic, and he works out his own understanding of a language unit – phoneme as an abstract one and delineates its variants – allophones – characteristic features and functioning. The author states out that the allophones appearance is connected with a peculiar linguistic context where the phoneme representatives are used.

Individual method of language system units' variability study can be found in the research of Shahbagova D.A. English language intonation peculiarities' analysis is a step forward in the variability researches. Russian linguist suggests English language variants' phonetics system characterization. Some of the English language variants are described: British, American, Australian and Canadian ones. The analysis is done as a comparative study of constant and variable language units. They are considered to be united as two sides of a medal. Constant features help the language system to keep vital system-structural units. While changing it aims and tends to variability as it functions in a society as a mean of communication (Shahbagova, 1992).

Domashnev A.I. has worked out a unique theory of language variability. He was deeply interested in a correspondence of some notions: language system – language norm – language variant. All these notions have been studied from the sociolinguistic point of view. The author pays special attention to “variability ontology; factors, which form the foundation of the variants' appearances; variability's role in the language system development and evolution process; typology of variability etc.” (Domashnev, 2005: 862). This Russian linguist was one of the first who stated the fact that variability is a

characteristic feature of both: the smallest language system units and the whole language system itself, whose functioning depends on the internal and external conditions.

The topic of correlation of English language system's variants is also considered in the works of some modern linguists. Bondarenko E.V. explores the issue of a collaboration of British English language and its variants all over the world. British English language system and Cameroon variant of English coexistence is of interest. Some linguists have a point that Cameroon variant of English is a kind of lower level language in comparison with the British variant of English. But in the mentioned research it is emphasized that these two language systems are equal. "Cameroon variant of English goes after the British variant of English, but on the other hand it has its own way of evolution" (Bondarenko, 2018: 13).

Russian linguists have already contributed to the theory of German language variability. They analyze modern situation with German language variants from the point of view of understanding German as a "pluricentric literary language". Baikova O.V. points out that modern linguistic researches "are united by one idea that national variants of German are the different forms of one literary language, which has been adapted to the conditions and needs of another nation for to be used by its citizens" (Baikova, 2009: 14).

Kopchuk L.B. supporting this point of view, emphasizes that "Variability characterizes German language system. It was created by the influence of functional, communicative and social factors. Every German-speaking country is differentiated by the unique conditions of economic, historical, cultural kinds. That is why the study of German language variants are still relevant...The usage of German in different states outside Germany...shows the necessity of all the wide range of separate outside Germany language existence conditions..." (Kopchuk, 2014: 53).

European scientists also deal with the issue of language variability. An analysis of the linguistic scientific researches shows that the description of collaboration of German language system of Germany and its variants' systems is a dynamic one. The Linguistic Encyclopedia gives a widely spread point of view: "The official language

of Austria is German. However, the variety of German spoken in Austria, is not identical to that spoken in other areas, such as in the Federal Republic of Germany. Rather, variation is found in the phonological, morphological, syntactical, lexical and pragmatic levels of language... The most obvious differences between the German in Austria and in Germany are found in lexicon” (Strazny, 2013: 103). Pluricentricity of some languages as a linguistic phenomenon can be understood from several points of view: either differing national standards or differing local norms. The study by Sylvia A.S. explores structural, conceptual, historical and sociolinguistic issues of German language variants. The relationship between national variant in three German speaking countries is of particular interest. The linguistic scientific research is done from two linguistic theoretical platforms: Cognitive Linguistics and Sociolinguistics. “A pluricentric language is typically defined as one which has more than one normatively installed national standard variety, when applied to German, this definition leads to the rather uncontroversial conclusion that German is a pluricentric language... But I will suggest ... more interesting questions... They become visible once we look under the surface of definition matters and ask: what Standard German means for speakers in Germany, Austria and Switzerland” (Sylva, 2013:19).

The A.D. Havinga’s book provides a detailed description and analysis of some aspects of Austrian variant of German in its diachronic development. The process of standardization is paid much attention to. The author points out how the language system norms were prescribed and that was the course of some stigmatization in varieties of language forms: “The standardization of a language goes hand in hand with the stigmatization of certain varieties and variants. By selecting and implementing particular language norms, variants deviating from this norm are stigmatized. These stigmatized varieties and variants are then usually avoided especially in writing since they are perceived as “bad”, “wrong”, “lower class” (Havinga, 2018). In some other linguistic papers, it is stressed that the usage of one German language helps to make the understanding between German speaking nations better. “Through the use of Austrian German

language participants not only identify as Austrians, but the common language and history also necessitates identification with other members of the entire German language community” (Stolt, 2010: 8).

So, the analysis of linguistic works proves: there are many trends in language variability understanding because of different theoretical platforms which are the foundations of them. In this article we shall follow the common understanding of German as a pluricentric language which has a variety in Austria. Austrian varieties can characterize all the language system levels but are most frequently found on a lexicon level.

Judging by the linguistic data, it becomes obvious that the existence of modern Austrian German system can be characterized by two contending tendencies: it aligns itself with modern literary German system of Germany, but there is an opposite tendency: Austrian German preserves its own peculiar features which are typical only to the area of Austria. Nowadays the level of national self-understanding is going up. We can stress the fact that the nation feels its unity, while using specific forms of Austrian German.

In Austrian variant of German there is a large group of lexicon which nominates everything in an Austrian way if we compare it with the same group of lexicon in standard German of Germany. While describing the contexts we shall use two abbreviations: Germ. Germ. (German language of Germany) and Austr. Germ. (Austrian German).

- Germ. Germ. die Reisemütze «cap» – Austr. Germ. die Reisekappe

Nun, was hat diese kleine Reisekappe, die wie ein winzig kleines Köfferchen von Playmobil aussieht auf dem Hut?;

Diese kleine Reisekappe ich wohl sehr praktisch, aber wie schon erwähnt nicht dringend notwendig;

Reisekappe ist nur für den Transport gedacht und muss wieder abgenommen werden (Amanshauser, 2013: 47).

These are three examples from one of the famous books by Amanshauser M., who is an Austrian author. So, he prefers to use Austrian variants of the word to show the readers that the action takes place

in Austria and the main characters speak Austrian German. Also, we can say that the author uses the lexeme to create special Austrian atmosphere in his novel.

- Germ. Germ. bunt «multicolored» – Austr. Germ. färbig

In the system of standard German these two words are synonyms. But according to the contexts there can be different shades of meaning. But as for the Austrian German färbig is used to speak about a multicolored thing:

An dieser Stelle finden Sie alle ADLER Produkte aus der Kategorie 2K-Holzlacke LM färbig. Bitte wählen Sie hier Ihr gewünschtes Produkt für weitere Informationen (Igudesman & Joo, 2014).

The Austrian newspaper “Austrian News” uses the adjective färbig to show to the readers that they speak one language and belong to one nation. Also there is a marketing effect in this usage: the authors wanted to attract the readers’ attention.

- Germ. Germ. die Sauerkirsche, die Weichsel «cherry» – Austr. Germ. die Weichsel

Weichsel. Synonym: Sauerkirsche. Die zur Familie der Rosengewächse (Rosaceae) gehörende Weichsel ist ein bis zu 8 m hoher Baum mit breiter, gewölbter Krone und schwach entwickeltem Stamm (Muller, 2014: 67).

It is interesting to mention that this pair of synonyms exists in the system of standard German of Germany, but only the first of them is used on the territory of Austria. Austrian biologist Muller K. used the Austrian German variant in his book to stress its significance. These two synonyms are scientific terms. They don’t have the shades of meaning, but the usage depends on the territory and the language system variant.

- Germ. Germ. der Pilz «mushroom» – Austr. Germ. das Schwammerl

This pair of synonyms is also used in both variants of German. But just the same situation as it was in the mentioned above context. The territory of usage is different. And it is necessary to emphasize that these synonyms are different from stylistical point of view. Only the first word is used in Germany. It is also considered to belong to standard literary German. The second word is not used in Germany

at all. It may be met only on the territory of Bavaria but there it is classified as a dialect one. In Austria the situation is: the second word is used only. But the first one can be understood but not used at all.

Schwammerl: Ein Schubert-Roman (Bartsch, 2018).

This is the title of a novel written by an Austrian writer Bartsch H.R. Everybody knows that titles are extremely important. Readers usually pay attention to a title first and only then they open the book. So, the writer used the Austrian German word in his title to catch the readers' eye and to accentuate the usage of Austrian German and his own belonging to the Austrian nation and language community. Schwammerlsauce. Ein echer klassiker. Die Herrnpilze ja nicht waschen... Viel Butter zerlassen, geschittene Schwammere dazu, auf kleiner Flamme dünsten (Vockenhuber, 2013: 110).

The cookery book was written by the Austrian cook Vockenhuber P. While giving some recipes of mushroom dishes he used two variants of the word "mushroom": and Austrian variant and standard German variant. Our point is: to attract both groups of readers from Germany and from Austria. But while giving detailed description of the sauce the cook prefers the Austrian variant, this fact shows that the Austrian variant is natural for him, because he uses it every day.

- Germ. Germ. Kaldaune, die «animals' inner organs, variety meat» – Austr. Germ. Kuttel, die

In Austrian Cuisine there are many dishes which are prepared from the animals' inner organs or variety meat: liver, kidneys, lungs or spleen. That is why in Austrian German there is a large group of lexicon which names the dishes.

“Saure Kutteln” bereitet man zu, indem man die Kutteln mit Essig und Wein in einer sich rasch bräunlich einfärbenden Mehlsauce kocht (Ortheil, 2015: 44).

- Germ. Germ. Weißkohl, der «cabbage» – Austr. Germ. Kraut, das

World famous dictionary Duden gives some information about the lexeme Kraut, das. It is typical for not only Austria, but also for the South of Germany. But for the rest of Germany there is a synonym Weißkohl, der. Nevertheless, the authors use the Austrian variant

synonym to stress the fact that the recite is an Austrian one.

...ist die Masse zu weich, etwas Semmelbrösel dazugeben. Kräftig mit Muskatnuss würzen. Auch fein gehackte Kräuter passen gut (Saahs, 2015: 25);

Die Suppe sehr heiß in vorgewärmten Tellern mit Kräutern bestreut anrichten (Saahs, 2015: 40);

Für Sauerkraut beispielsweise wurde in großen Holzbottichen fein gehobeltes Kraut mit Äpfeln eingesalzen (Saahs, 2015: 67).

#### **4. Conclusion**

Summing it up, it is necessary to emphasize that the article presents a short analysis of Austrian German language system. A study of some scientific research papers devoted to the description of sociolinguistic situation in Austria, reveals the fact that the state's language policy is to use standard German language of Germany as an example. This tendency is most obvious in the written form of Austrian German. But in everyday speech people use colloquial Austrian German, which has many specific characteristic features. Most of which can be found in lexicon system. Austrian variant of German forms its own lexeme variants to reflect special Austrian way of life. Peculiar economic, historical and cultural conditions have formed such an environment for the language that it has started to develop in its own way. People of Austria identify themselves as Austrians, not Germans. This fact has a great impact on the language, makes a foundation for certain Austrian innovations in its system and influences its modern evolution.

#### **References**

- Akhmanova, O.S. 2009. *Essays in General and Russian Lexicology*. Moscow: Libricom Publishing House.
- Amanshauser, M. 2013. *100.000 verkaufte Exemplare*. Wien.
- Baikova, O.V. 2009. German Settlers' Language Variability under the Condition of Other Languages Surrounding. *Vestnik of Cheliabinsk State University*, 35(173), 14-19.
- Bartsch, H.R. 2018. *Schwammerl: Ein Schubert-Roman*. Creative Media Partners Publishing House.

- Bukharov, V.M. 1995. Modern German Pronunciation Norms Variants: PhD Dissertation. Nizhniy Novgorod.
- Bloch, M.Y. 2004. Theoretical Foundation of Grammar. Moscow: High School Publishing House.
- Bondarenko, E.V. 2018. Specific Features of the Orthography System in the Cameroon Variant of the English Language. *Theoretical and applied linguistics*, 4(3), 13.
- Brodovich, O.I. 2009. English Language Dialects Variability: Theoretical Aspects of Study. Moscow: Librocom Publishing House.
- Devkin, V.D. 1988. Different Understanding of Variability. Moscow: Science Publishing House.
- Domashnev, A.I. 2005. German Linguistics and Sociolinguistics Works. Saint Petersburg: Science Publishing House.
- Havinga, A.D. 2018. Invisibilising Austrian German: On the Effect of Linguistic Prescriptions and Educational Reforms on Writing Practices in 18-Century Austria. Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG.
- Igudesman & Joo. 2014. *Niederösterreichische Nachrichten*. Retrieved January 6, 2019 from <http://www.igudesmanandjoo.com/niederosterreichische-nachrichten-austria-feb-18-2014/>.
- Kopchuk, L.B. 2014. Conversational Language Development in the German-speaking Countries from Sociolinguistic Concept of Language Evolution. *Point of View*, 2, 51-61.
- Kozhina, M.N. 1982. Language System Variability in its Functional-Stylistic Aspect. In *Variability as a language system characteristic feature: Part 1*. Moscow.
- Muller, K. 2014. *Obst und Gemuse*. Wien.
- Ortheil, H.-J. 2015. *Glücksmomente*. BTB Verlag.
- Saahs, Ch. 2015. *Das Wachau Kochbuch - Rezepte aus dem Herzen Österreichs*. Wien: Brandstätter Verlag.
- Shahbagova, D.A. 1992. English Language Phonetic System in Synchrony and Diachrony. Moscow: Follis Publishing House.
- Silva, A.S. 2013. *Pluricentricity: Language Variation and Sociocognitive Dimensions*. Walter de Gruyter Publishing House.
- Solntsev, V.M. 1984. Variability as a General Characteristic Feature of any Language System. *Linguistic Issues*, 2, 31.
- Stolt, R. 2010. Relationship between Language and Nation in the

Development of Austrian German. GRIN Verlag.

Strazny, Ph. 2013. Encyclopedia of Linguistics. Routledge Publishing House.

Torsuev, G.P. 2008. Some Issues of Theoretical Phonetics and Phonology. Moscow: Librocom Publishing House.

Vockenhuber, P. 2013. Paul's Beisl: Maßlos kochen. BoD – Books on Demand Publishing House.

Yartseva, V.N. 1983. About a Territory Foundation of Social Dialects. In Norm and social differentiation of a language. Moscow.