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**TANJA WISSIK, TERMINOLOGISCHE
VARIATION IN DER RECHTS- UND
VERWALTUNGSSPRACHE.
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Tanja Wissik is a researcher whose main interests concern digital language resources and technologies, especially terminological resources and corpora, metadata, workflow research, variational linguistics and translation studies.

Tanja Wissik holds a PhD from the University of Vienna in translation studies with a specialisation in the field of terminology and corpus linguistics. Currently, she works as a senior researcher at the Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities of the Austrian Academy of

Sciences and teaches information technologies for translators at the University of Graz.

Her book entitled “Terminologische Variation in der Rechts- und Verwaltungssprache. Deutschland – Österreich – Schweiz“ published in 2014 by Frank & Timme GmbH Verlag für wissenschaftliche Literatur proves that she did a lot of research on the topic of German varieties and translation process. Her PhD dissertation with the theme of German as a pluricentric language in legal and administrative translations was the incentive to create this book with introducing some modifications. In such a way arose “Terminologische Variation in der Rechts- und Verwaltungssprache. Deutschland – Österreich – Schweiz“ which is a great source of information for all the people involved and interested in the topic of German variations in connection with the field of legal and administrative translations.

Tanja Wissik’s work is divided into eleven comprehensive chapters, nevertheless the book can be divided into two main parts: theoretical and analytical one. It is visible that both parts were well-considered. The first chapter is the introduction where the author describes the aims of the book and describes the steps undertaken in each section.

The second chapter is devoted to the notion of German pluricentrism and contains information about three German varieties. Three German-speaking countries, i.e. Germany, Austria and Switzerland are depicted fastidiously, grouped into clearly separated sections in order to systematize the data about each variation. The description of German, Austrian and Swiss variations was conducted thoroughly according to few main categories and levels of the language. In each of those three subsections there are characteristics about each country and language levels concerning orthography, morphology, morpho-syntax, pragmatics and lexis. There is also information about regional differences in each of those countries and status of standard language and its codification. The information gathered in this chapter constitute clearly summarized data about key features distinguishing three German varieties.

The third chapter delivers the readers information about key notions of the book, i.e. variations, varieties, variants. The fourth chapter however concerns the concept of specialized and institutional language, the language of higher education and finally of legal and

administrative one. The following chapter raises the subject of German varieties in language of law and administration.

The sixth section opens the analytical part of the book with the terms connected with corpus analysis. Tanja Wissik describes here the notion of corpus and its creation including information needed for work with corpora. In the next chapter the author depicts the following steps which were made to conduct the analysis and at the same time it is the core part of the book because the results of research are presented here. The research constitutes a profound analysis of similarities and differences between three Standard German varieties: German Standard German, Austrian Standard German and Swiss Standard German which was conducted on the level of legal and administrative language in normative texts of universities in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

Tanja Wissik put a lot of effort to group the outcome and to assign it to respective categories. By means of some programs for corpora analysis, she lists the words which are specific for a particular variety. Then, the author gives the equivalents in two other varieties if they exist. She marks whether the given terms are codified or not and enumerates collocations which appear in the analysed texts. The author undertook also the effort to divide the lexis according to the regional distribution in Germany, Austria and Switzerland with indication of normative texts and universities where those terms can be found. All the words, expressions and collocations are gathered and compared between each other.

The eight chapter is devoted to answer the questions which arose during the whole work on the book. The author explains ambiguities which appear very often while working on language varieties and describes the cooperation with scientists who helped her in the results analysis and who are “experts in the field as a source of information”, i.e. they come from one of the three German centres (Germany, Austria or Switzerland), they are involved in work at university, its organisation or management or they deal with the concept of German varieties in their scientific life.

The ninth chapter constitutes the summary and conclusion where the author expresses her opinion about all the methods, process of research and the concept of German variations that was analysed thoroughly under supervision of experts.

German pluricentrism as the source of confusion for translators and interpreters

German belongs to the group of pluricentric languages. According to Ammon (1995, 96 and 2004, XXXI) there are three “full centres” (Vollzentren) of German language: Germany, Austria and Switzerland which constitute the varieties of German language: German variety (deutschländisches Deutsch, Bundesdeutsch, Binnendeutsch); Austrian variety (österreichisches Standarddeutsch) and Swiss variety (Schweizerhochdeutsch). The differences between three German variations are visible on every level of the language – they concern orthography, phonetics, grammar, lexis and pragmatics (Kubacki 2014, 163; Szulc 1999,). The linguistic differences that are used in Germany, Austria and Switzerland are called as follows (Utri 2013, 335):

- German variety – Germanisms, Teutonisms;
- Austrian variety – Austriacisms;
- Swiss variety – Helvetisms.

“Full centres” have their own codices, i.e. dictionaries, grammar and pronunciation guides. However, German is used also in other countries, which form the group of “semi centres” (Halbzentren) of German language and which do not have such codices. “Semi centres” of German include the following countries: Luxembourg, Lichtenstein, eastern Belgium and southern Tyrol in Italy (Ammon 1995, 96).

There are words and expressions which are common for three German varieties but there exists also a great number of expressions which are different and they are the source of ambiguity and confusion for translators and interpreters. The translators and interpreters need to know equivalents used in a particular variety while translating a document from a particular country.

There are some works concerning comparison between German in Germany and German in Austria or German in Germany and German in Switzerland, however more attention is paid to the Austrian variation than to the Swiss one. What is more, there are only few books or papers which involve comparison of those three varieties, especially when it comes to the legal and administrative language. That is why, Tanja Wissik’s book is a true asset for

scientists, German language learners, translators, interpreters and all the people interested in German language.

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