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**Interdisciplinary approaches to the investigation of  
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## **Interdisciplinary approaches to the investigation of norms and normality**

Katharina Rosenberg, Rita Vallentin (eds.). 2012. *Norm und Normalität. Beiträge aus Linguistik, Soziologie, Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaften*. Berlin: Logos Verlag.

The reviewed publication was created after a colloquium about norms and normality held at the university of Frankfurt/Oder, Germany. The purpose was to interdisciplinarily gather views on norms and to explain different methodological approaches on research about norms and normality.

The preface concentrates on linguistic norms referring to Coseriu's, Labov's and Saussure's ideas, then presents interdisciplinary notions and elements.

Norm und Normalität is opened by Klaus Gloy who considers the elementary parts, the normative parts of norms, in the tense atmosphere of sociology and philosophy. He discusses in which way norms can be defined by one's own will and how they depend on the expectations of others.

The publication is then divided into three parts:

The first chapter combines contributions on the origins and the creation of norms as well as their modifications and changes.

Rita Vallentin works on the basis of the concept of Gloy distinguishing between "we" and "the others". Focussing on her empirical research in a Guatemalan community, she points out that "we" behave corresponding to norms while "the others" don't respect them. She concludes: "Eine Einteilung von Gruppen in communities of practice macht aus den Bewertungen des eigenen 'richtigen' und des abweichenden Verhaltens der anderen, welche die Akteure selbst vornehmen, Normen erkennbar" (p. 38). This includes also norms which exist only implicitly. Although the results are quite convincing, the corpus-transcriptions contain some spelling mistakes.

Anna Zaytseva examines in her article the emergence of work norms in an international hotel chain. She points out five stadiums in the implementation process of work norms using the example of responsibility for mini-bars. The implementation of norms is, according to the author, "an active process of learning and interpreting as well as demonstrating power" (p. 57). Zaytseva investigates how norms function, how work norms are implemented, how they are seen immediately after their implementation and when they are widely accepted by staff.

Boike Rehbein presents a sociological, anthropological and linguistic analysis based on Saussure, Bourdieu and Wittgenstein which he applies to the development and the actual constitution of the Lao language. He combines elements of the different theories to show „inwiefern jede Sprache zugleich gesetzmäßig, ein Spiel und ein Kampf ist“ (p. 61). He points out that nationalism and globalization are the most significant forces transforming the Lao language.

Codified norms and the linguistic realities, which means norms in different regional varieties (Portuguese, Spanish and German), are the focus of attention of the second chapter.

Ulrike Mühlischlegel's article focuses on three different concepts of lusofonia: Lusofonia can be seen as a space of memories (“Erinnerungsraum”) based on the shared past of today's Portuguese speaking countries, it can be understood as a community of states for an economic and political cooperation, and it is an area of shared language and culture. She concentrates her analysis on the prestigious norm of the Portuguese language and its varieties. The author shows that the lusofonia cannot be compared to the Spanish speaking countries in many ways: History seems similar, but Mühlischlegel shows differences concerning the normative institutions referring to the language: Their importance on norm building is divergent.

Sönke Matthiessen has also looked at norms of a pluricentric language: He investigates the differences in relation to the position of the attributive adjective in nominal phrases in translations from English original versions to American and peninsular Spanish. His corpus consists of 24 episodes of Dr. House and the Shrek movie. He focuses on the syntactical structures of the español neutro which is used for the synchronization of movies and TV productions. His investigation shows the beginning of the creation of a panhispanic norm.

Claudia Scharioth discusses the discrepancy between language use and normative judgement of language-features by the speakers. She focuses on the perception of dialectal variety, precisely at the spirantization of the German [g] in e.g. intervocalic and ending positions proposing that there is a difference between informal and formal use. Some of the interview partners show a low willingness to speak the high variety instead of the dialect or even do not perceive the difference. The author deduces from this result: “Verschiedene Normhorizonte steuern individuelles Verhalten, das je nach Situation ausgehandelt wird” (p. 119).

The third part of the book contains papers on the subject of breaches and control of norms. They discuss the treatment of norms in literary and (sub-)cultural contexts.

Nils Bahlo and Jörg Bücken consider forms how breaches of norms and their sanctions are communicatively handled using the example of conditional formats. They make a distinction between situational and general norms and show some activities of norm-controlling in interactions in teenage-slang on the basis of some conditional formats in everyday life. The result of their corpus-analysis shows that there exist two types of conditional formats depending on a real or a fictional sanction.

Melanie Grundmann treats the subject of deviation from the norm and the breaking of a taboo using the concept of the dandy as an outsider in the novel "Armance" by Stendhal. In the field between individuality vs. norm, the taboo is treated as a special case of norm. Stendhal uses the physical deficiency of his main character as a deviation from the moral norm therefore seen as pathological. Grundmann describes the dandyism which is characterized by accepting and ignoring norms at the same time. Unfortunately, her paper does not contain a conclusion.

Ramona Jakobs analyses the norms of speech in Italian renaissance-dialogue on the basis of Searle's speech act theory. Using the distinction, according to Blumenthal, between effecting and affecting speech act she proves the assumption that the Libro del Cortegiano is directed at enjoyment and not knowledge. Based on this result, the author proposes to find a more precise and detailed distinction instead of the common dichotomy of successful and failed speech act.

Milan Mihajlovic discusses normativity in the field of argumentative discourse. His paper considers the sixth of ten pragma-dialectical rules "which is theorizing the necessity of a common ground in order to make a meaningful argumentation possible at all" (p. 173). After a detailed analysis, the author argues that the sixth rule must be completed with the following proposition: "Gemeinsame Grundannahmen sind nicht zu etablieren, sondern mitsamt der notwendigen Konsequenzen, sprich der (Un-)Möglichkeit eines Lösungsversuchs per Diskussion, lediglich ob ihrer Vorhandenheit oder Ermangelung festzustellen. Vorschläge können nur gebilligt oder abgelehnt, nicht aber diskutiert bzw. argumentativ eingeholt werden" (p. 179).

In general, this book highlights many different scientific (linguistic, sociological, literary and cultural) approaches to the investigation of norms and normality and opens an interdisciplinary field of corresponding research. *Norm und Normalität* is an important contribution because the subject is treated in a very complex manner. Nevertheless, it would have been helpful to point out more precisely the relations between the different disciplines in

a more concrete introductory paper. A more uniform appearance of each paper with regard to writing formalities would have made for easier reading.

This Review was written in cooperation with **Katharina Leonhardt**.

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Research Interests: sociolinguistics, Spanish in America, indigene languages, language and identity, language and politics, multilingualism

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