

Russian Students' Associative View of Germans

Vasiliy Glushak

Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO University)

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Vasiliy Glushak, Department of German,
MGIMO-University, 76 Prospekt Vernadskogo, Moscow, Russian Federation, 119454.
E-mail: glushakvm@mail.ru

The article investigates semantic forms of the association field 'German' in the linguistic consciousness of Russian students. It systematises Russian stereotypical ideas of Germans through a word association experiment. Five thematic areas of the semantic form 'German' are described. Both direct (from stimulus to response) and inverse (from response to stimulus) test items probing the associative field 'German' were analysed. The results indicate how stable stereotypical ideas of Germans are in the consciousness of today's Russian students.

Keywords: psycholinguistics, semantic form, stereotype, lingua-cultural community, naive linguistic picture, Russian

A growing body of research in linguistics utilizes associative experiments, with many investigators turning to the field of word associations (e.g., Entwisle, 1966; Deese, 1965; Cramer, 1968; Marshall et al., 1970, 1986; Postman et al., 1970; Kiss et al., 1973; Anderson et al., 1973; Made-van Bekkum van der, 1973; Nelson et al., 2000; Tikhonova, 2014). In psycholinguistics, semantic relations are based on the fundamental associative types of similarity, contiguity and contrast first articulated by the philosopher Aristotle. Within the framework of cultural approaches to linguistic phenomena, classifications of associative responses were developed (e.g., Sabitova, 1991; Ivanova, 1997; Eršova, 1998) that allow the structure and content of the 'naive, every day and subjective linguistic view of the world' (cf. Puzynina, 1992, p. 9; Apresjan, 1995, pp. 66–67) to be constructed. In this context, the goal of associative experiments is to expose the ideas surrounding particular facts and realities of modern life in the consciousness of a lingua-cultural community. Not of interest to the researcher, here, is the classical behavioural chain of "stimulus – response – connection between the two" or the linguistic features of responses evoked during an experiment. Rather, from the perspective of cultural psycholinguistics, it is much more important to gain a picture of individual images of the outside world in the consciousness of the speaker. Several classifications in comparative research on national consciousness are constructed on the basis of similar principles.

One of the newest and most original ideas in the classification of associations comes from Yury Karaulov (1999). In my view, his classification system shows the role of associations not just in a person's linguistic system but also in his naive, every day and subjective linguistic world view. In his work, Karaulov has introduced a revolutionary structure that he describes as the "semantic form [gestalt] of associative space" – a dynamic feature that enables fragments of the naive, linguistic picture to be "reconstructed". In essence, the semantic form recreates models of typical speakers for every national culture – ones that reflect the stimuli in the speaker's surrounding reality (Novikova, 1998, pp. 22–23). This structure is expanded upon through assignment of a response to one or more stereotypical characteristics of the speaker. These assigned responses activate different semantic features that are brought together in a thematic field. The combination of semantic fields forms "a gestalt" that reflects a particular aspect of the naive, linguistic world view of a lingua-cultural community. In essence, the naive linguistic picture is a kaleidoscopic combination of unique semantic forms.

This article attempts to reveal the semantic form of the association field "German" in the Russian linguistic consciousness. More specifically, the aim is to systematise Russian stereotypical ideas of Germans through a word association experiment and to determine how stable these ideas are in the consciousness of today's speakers (the last decade of the 20th and the first years of the 21st century).

Materials and Methods

The 'Russian Association Dictionary' (RAD) (Karaulov, 2002) served as the source of all test material. This associative thesaurus was created under the direction of Y. Karaulov and represents a comprehensive compilation of linguistic associations that speakers of Russian typically make. The dictionary was the result of a mass experiment that employed the following task. A questionnaire consisting of different word stimuli was administered to 11,000 participants (students from the 1st through 6th semester). In the first stage of the experiment, participants were asked to answer the question: "What do you associate with the Germans and Germany?" From this prompt "direct" reactions were recorded. In the second stage of the experiment, a different group of experimental participants were instructed to generate associations to the "direct" reactions obtained in the first stage of the experiment. These answers are referred to as "inverse" reactions. The participants had to write next to each stimulus the first associative response that came to mind. To analyse the associative field 'German', lexical items were chosen such that the outcome was either direct (from stimulus to response) or the inverse (from response to stimulus).

The total number of selected lexical items pertaining to the semantic form "Germans" was 607. The responses were classified into constant/stable, individual and unexplained. The individual and unexplained responses constituted types of semantic relations whose motivation could not be established (Sokolova, 1999, p. 25). The predominance of constant/stable/fixed responses attests to the stable character of ideas in the naive world view of the speaker. The predominance of individual and unexplained responses is a sign that in the naive world view of a lingua-cultural community, stereotypical ideas are being transformed in that a few stereotypes cease and new stereotypes form.

Results

In what follows, a description of the thematic areas of the semantic form 'German' is provided.

Thematic area 1. Germans as subjects or actors in social and historical events.

1.1. Germans in the Middle ages

росток – *Ганза* (germ/seed – because of the homonymy in Russian [rostok] as a plant part and as a German city).

1.2. Germans in the Second world war

The most frequent word associations observed in the RAD are those that represent Russians'

knowledge of the Second World War (especially the Great Fatherland/Patriotic War, which is how Russians describe their fight with Hitler's Germany) in the structure of the semantic form. Germans/German/Germany. It has been noted that study participants belong only to the third post-war generation. They are therefore not eyewitnesses but rather carriers of various discourses – institutional (inter alia celebrations to mark victory in war), everyday (talks with eyewitnesses) and art discourses about the Second World War. The most frequent responses to the stimulus German were those that can be assigned to the association field The Second world war: *ариец* (Aryan – 2¹), *война* (war – 5), *враг* (enemy), *Гитлер* (Hitler – 2), *националист* (nationalist), *солдат* (soldier), *фашист* (fascist – 17), *фашизм* (fascism).

The stimulus Germany produced, among others, the following responses: *война* (war – 3), *войска* (troops), *враг* (enemy), *вывод войск* (troop withdrawal), *Гитлер* (Hitler), *побеждена, побежденная* (is defeated), *Рейхстаг* (Reichstag), *фашизм* (fascism – 2), *фашистская* (fascist), *фашисты* (fascists – 4).

The stimulus German evoked the following responses: *лагерь* (concentration camp), *солдат* (soldier), *фашизм* (fascism), *фашист* (fascist), *фронт* (front).

The words Germans/German/Germany that appeared as responses to other stimuli form the following word associations of the association field The Second world war: *атаковать – немцев* (to attack – the Germans *асс.*), *взять, штурмовать – Берлин* (to storm – Berlin), *вешать – Гитлер* (to execute – Hitler), *выстрел – Панцерфауст* (shot – anti-tank missile), *завоевание, захват – немцев* (capture, annexation – the Germans *асс.*), *крах – Гитлер* (collapse, defeat – Hitler), *лагерь – Гестапо* (camp – Gestapo), *мучить, предать – Гестапо* (to torture, to betray – Gestapo), *нацизм – в Германии* (Nazism – in Germany), *победа – над фашизмом, над ФРГ, Рейхстаг* (victory – over fascism – 5, over the FRG, the Reichstag building – 2), *процесс – Нюрнберг* (trial – Nuremberg – 3, from Nuremberg – 2), *пытка – фашистами, фашист* (torture – by the fascists, fascist), *разрушенное – Дрезден, Берлин* (destroyed – Dresden, Berlin), *советский – фашист* (Soviet – fascist), *солдат – рейха* (soldier – the Reich), *тыл – немцы* (Hinterland – Germans), *убить – фашист* (kill – fascist), *штурмовать – Рейхстаг* (storm – the Reichstag building – 5).

1.3. The visual picture of the 'German fascists'

In this topic area, one also finds in the RAD such responses as: *Германия – нацистский крест*

¹ Throughout the article the numerals show the frequency with which various responses are given to a word. If there is no numeral after the response then it was only given by one person in the sample.

(Germany – swastika), *коричневый – нацист, фашизм, фашист* (brown – Nazi, fascism, fascist), *немец – в каске, каска, мотоцикл, с автоматом* (German – in a helmet, helmet, military motor cycle, with a submachine gun), *немец – не придет!* (German – (he) is not coming!), *руки – немец* (hands – German meant is the Nazi salute with a raised arm), *смерть – фашистам!* (death – the fascists! – 6).

1.4. Germans as Aryan

The most frequent response to the stimulus German was Aryan. This seems to indicate a strong connection between these two terms in the national consciousness of Russian students. It should be emphasised that in the analysed association field the original and rather outdated meaning in the Russian vocabulary of the word *арийцы* (Aryan), as a description of Indians and Iranians and later of all people that spoke an Indo-European/Indo-Germanic language, was only sporadically present. The following responses, even when from a naive and frequently false interpretation, can carry such meanings as: *ариец – иностранец, африканец, восток, вьетнамец, негры, туземцы* (Aryan – foreigner, African, Eastern, Vietnamese, Negro, local).

Most of the responses in the association field ARYAN verbalised ideological elements of Nazi propaganda, which declared 'Aryan' (predominantly Germanic people) to be a 'higher' race. Aryan race is a term used in racist theories to describe the so-called 'higher' race type – blonde Aryans, the founder of great civilisation. In the RAD we find the following associations to the stimulus Aryan: *африканец* (African), *богатый* (reich), *бойня* (carnage/bloodbath/massacre Blutbad), *веселый* (funny), *Германия* (Germany – 3), *восток* (Eastern), *высокий* (tall), *вьетнамец* (Vietnamese), *Ганс* (Hans), *Гитлер* (Hitler – 2), *голубая кровь* (blue blooded), *идеал* (ideal), *иностранец* (foreigner – 3), *истинный* (a true – 13), *ласковый* (affectionate), *молодой* (young), *национальность* (nationality – 11), *национальный танец* (national dance), *нацист* (Nazi), *нация* (nation – 3), *негры* (Negro), *немец* (German – 21), *немцы* (Germans pl.), *певец* (singer), *раса* (race – 2), *светло-русый* (light blonde), *снег* (snow), *туземец* (aborigine), *уехал* (left/transported away), *фашизм* (fascism – 2), *фашист* (fascist – 3), *фашистская кровь* (fascist blood), *фриц* (Fritz), *человек* (person – 4), *чистый* (clean), *Штирлиц* (Stirlitz – 5).

The associative connections presented in the RAD for the lexemes *German* and *Germany* reflect that they are a part of Association Field I. – *фашизм* (fascism), *Великая отечественная война* (Great Patriotic/Fatherland War), *Вторая мировая война* (Second World War), *нацизм* (Nazism), *национализм* (nationalism), *война* (war). On the one hand, these associative fields demonstrate a connection with the concept under study (German/Germany). On

the other hand, responses to the stimulus *нацизм* (Nazism) show new associations not connected to the Second World War. Here they fall under Association Field II. – the change in the ethnic tie: *Нацизм – Жириновский, хачики* (Nazism – Schirinowskij, khachiki – *offensive, ethnic slur*. commonly of any person native to the Caucasus region).

1.5. Germans after the Second World war

In the RAD there are also word associations based on certain book knowledge connected to contemporary history and German social society. In this way, the toponym *Germany* is reflected in the responses to Germans after the Second world war. The responses to the stimulus *Германия* (Germany) are the following: *объединенная* (unified – 2), *объединилась* (became unified – 2), *поездка* (journey), *распалась* (fell apart), *СССР* (USSR), *торговый партнер* (trade partner), *чемпион* (champion).

The stimulus *немец* (German) produced among others the following responses: *ГДР* (GDR), *турист* (tourist), *Хоннекер* (Honecker).

In addition the following responses can be included: *немцы – Берлинская стена* (Germans – Berliner Wall), *советский – немецкий* (Soviet-German), *совместный – Западно-Германский* (together – west German), *стена – Берлин* (Wall – Berlin), *стена – Берлинская* (Wall – from Berlin – 3).

The complex statistical analysis of the word associations that make up the thematic area Germans as subjects or actors in social and historical events of the semantic form 'Germans' leads to the results shown in Table 1.

Thematic area 2. Identification

2.1. Reference object

The stimulus *немец* (German) can produce a person/referent as a response: *австриец* (Austrian), *англичанин* (Englishman/Englishwoman), *гражданин* (citizen), *из Германии* (from Germany), *национальность* (nationality) – 3, *нация* (nation), *немец* (German) – *Германия* (Germany – 4), *страна (Германия)* (Country (Germany)), *француз* (Frenchman/Frenchwoman – 3), *человек* (person).

Other responses have the toponymist meaning of 'territory, state': *Берлин* (Berlin – 3), *Германия* (Germany) – *страна* (country – 27), *государство в Центральной Европе* (state in Central Europe), *Греция* (Greece), *Дрезден* (Dresden), *Европа* (Europe), *и Россия* (and Russia), *карта* (map Karte), *люди* (people), *малая* (small), *маленькая* (very small), *немец* (German), *немцы* (Germans – 4), *Пруссия* (Prussia), *родина* (home/homeland), *Россия* (Russia), *Япония* (Japan).

2.2. Actualization of the etymological meaning of the ethnonym

Etymologically, 'German' means 'mute, soundless, silent' in Russian. According to the RAD, the

Table 1
Structure and Quantitative Data of Thematic Area 1

Germans as subjects or actors in historical events	Attitude			Perception	
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Fixed/ Constant	Individual/ Undetermined/ unexplained
1.1. Medieval Germany (1)	0	0	1	1	0
1.2. World war II (86)	9	58	19	67	19
1.3. The visual picture of 'German fascists' (16)	0	15	1	15	1
1.4. Germans as Aryan (104)	9	55	40	59	45
1.5. Germany after World war II (20)	7	5	8	20	0
	227/37%	133/83%	69/18%	162/31%	65/81%

consciousness of Russian students contains the following actualization of the etymological meaning of the ethnonym 'Germans':

немец – молчит (German – he is silent), *немой – немец* (mute/soundless/silently – German – 2), *слепой – немецкий* (blind – German).

2.3. Information sources

In the responses to the stimulus *Германия* (Germany) 'information sources' can also be ascertained: *таблица* (table), *фильм* (film).

2.4. 'Geo-Civilisational orientation point'

The most frequent responses to the stimulus German were *русский* (Russian – 10) and *иностранец* (foreigner – 7), which, despite their antonymic meanings have the same function of instantiating the opposites 'our own – not our own'. In other words, 'to be Russian' means 'not to be like a German', and 'to

be German' means 'not to be like a Russian'. Similar responses are found in the following: *Германия – далекая* (Germany – remote/far/distant), *немец – за граница* (German – abroad), *немецкий – не русский, чужой* (German ADJ – not Russian, foreign/alien).

Equally the response *немец, немецкий* (German, German ADJ – 3) is produced by the stimulus *иностранный* (foreign adj).

2.5. Artefacts of German society

At the periphery of the association field Germans are artefacts of German society: *Германия* (Germany) – *BMW, пиво, шоколад, фильм* (BMW, beer, chocolate, film), *ездить – на Мерседесе* (drive – Mercedes), *журнал – Шпигель* (magazine – Spiegel), *пиво – Баварское* (beer – Bavarian), *свитер – Бурда* (jumper – Burda Moden).

Table 2
Structure and Quantitative Data of Thematic Area 2

Identification	Attitude			Perception	
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Fixed/ Constant	Individual/ Undetermined/ unexplained
2.1. Reference object (speaker) (72)	6	1	65	72	0
2.2. Actualisation of the etymological meaning of the ethnonym (4)	0	3	0	2	1
2.3. Sources of information (3)	0	0	3	3	0
2.4. 'Geo-Civilisational orientation point' (7)	0	0	7	7	0
2.5. Artefacts of German society (8)	8	0	0	8	0
	93/15%	4/3%	75/19,8%	92/17%	1/1%

Table 3
Structure and Quantitative Data of Thematic Area 3

German character and appearance	Attitude			Perception	
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Fixed/ Constant	Individual/ Undetermined/ unexplained
30/5%	19/27%	10/6%	1/0,2	30/6%	0/0%

The complex statistical analysis of the word associations that make up the thematic area identification of the semantic form 'Germans' leads to the following result refer to Table 2.

Thematic area 3. German character and appearance

Most of the elements of the association field verbalise meanings that are not directly connected to the speaker. The connection between such elements is subjective and extralinguistic. Such lexemes belong to the cultural strata of the concept 'character traits'. According to the RAD, the consciousness of Russian students contains the following ethno-cultural stereotypes of Germans: *аккуратист* (meticulous person), *аккуратный* (orderly – 2), *веселый* (funny), *глупый* (stupid), *деятельный* (entrepreneurial), *дискутирует* (he debates/argues/discusses), *жестокый* (brutal), *интеллигентный* (a person with good manners/morals), *педант* (pedant), *порядок* (order), *пунктуальный* (punctual), *светлый* (blonde), *скупой* (miserly), *строгий* (strict), *точность* (accuracy), *точный* (punctual), *чистоплотный* (clean), *чистота* (cleanliness – 2), *щедрый* (generous), *экономный* (thrifty).

The complex statistical analysis of the word associations that make up the thematic area German characters and areas of the semantic form 'Germans' leads to the results shown in Table 3.

Thematic area 4. Germans and their language

4.1. Naive linguistic skills

From among the word associations of the word German ADJ/Germans, one can single out those that reflect elements of the so-called 'naive linguistic skills', namely:

a) the translation from Russian into German: *Германия – Deutschland, немецкий – deutsch*;

b) individual anthroponyms can also have culturally determined negative connotations of the word *German*. In the RAD one finds the following word associations: *ариец* (Aryan) – *фриц, Ганс* (Fritz, Hans), *немец* (German) – *фриц, Ганс* (Fritz – 3, Hans), *чурбан* (soulless clod (refers to inhabitants of Central Asia)) – *Ганс* (Hans);

c) In other responses one finds, *exotisme*, i.e., a lexeme that names Germans: *зепп* (Mr/Sir [Herr]), *бюргер* (citizen – 2), *швайн* (pig – particularly strong negative connotation).

4.2. Use of the language

The adjectives used to describe characteristics are extremely generalised and are only updated in connection with the appropriate semantic substantive. The most frequent response to the stimulus *немецкий* (German ADJ) is the response *язык* (language – 41). The participants also gave as a response to the word *язык* (language) the responses *немецкий* (German ADJ) – 3, *немец* (German). In addition, the following word associations were observed: *газета – немецкая* (newspaper – German ADJ), *говорить – по-немецки* (speak – German ADJ), *немецкий – журнал* (German ADJ – magazine), *перевод – с немецкого языка* (translation – from German – 2), *рассказ – немецкий* (story – German ADJ), *речь – немецкая* (speech – German ADJ), *сказать – по-немецки* (say – in German), *статья – немецкая* (article – German ADJ).

4.3. German as a foreign language

английский – немецкий (English – German), *немецкий – английский* (German – English – 10), *немецкий – французский* (German – French – 3), *французский – немецкий* (French – German – 2).

It also frequently occurs that *немецкий* (German ADJ) is given also as a response to stimuli that belong to the thematic area 'learning a foreign language': *курс – немецкого языка* (course – German language), *метод – немецкий* (method – German ADJ), *немецкий – учитель, словарь* (German ADJ) – teacher, dictionary), *понедельник – немецкий язык* (Monday – German language), *преподаватель – нем.яз.* (lecturer – German language), *преподаватель – немецкого языка* (teach – German language), *словарь – Немецко-русский* (dictionary – German-Russian), *урок – немецкий, немецкого* (lesson – German, the German language – 5), *учебник – немецкого 2* (textbook – German ADJ – 2), *учебник – немецкого языка* (textbook – German language), *учитель – немецкого* (teacher – German), *учительница – немка* (teacher F – German), *учить – немецкому* (teach – German), *учитель – немецкого языка* (teacher – German language).

4.4. Characteristics of the German language

The ethno-cultural stereotype belongs not only to the idea of the 'speaker' but also to the foreign language. The word associations of *немецкий* (German ADJ) characterise the German language: *зубрить – немецкий* (to swot up – German ADJ), *немецкий* –

Table 4
Structure and Quantitative Data of Thematic Area 4

Germans and their language	Attitude			Perception	
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Fixed/ Constant	Individual/ Undetermined/ unexplained
4.1. Naive linguistic skills (13)	2	8	3	13	0
4.2. Use of the language (55)	0	0	55	55	0
4.3. German as a foreign language (36)	0	0	36	36	0
4.4. Characteristics of the German language (4)	4	0	0	4	0
108/18%	6/8%	8/5%	94/25%	108/20%	0/0%

трудный (German ADJ – heavy/difficult), *немецкий – черт голову сломит* (German – Not even the devil would find his feet here), *слишком – немецкий язык* (too much – German).

According to other research, prevalent among Russians is the stereotype that German does not sound nice as a language (Sternin 2005, p. 169): *грубый* (rough), *командный* (commandeering), *немелодичный* (unmelodic), *лающий* (baying), *отрывистый* (rousing), *свистящий* (hissy), *сложный* (complicated).

The complex statistical analysis of the word associations that make up the thematic area Germans and their language of the semantic form ‘Germans’ leads to the results shown in Table 4.

Thematic area 5. German precedence phenomena

An important place in the associative field *German* occupies the so-called *precedence-phenomena*. This term refers to personalities, their words and deeds, as well as objects from the past or also the present that can be updated in communication (Karaulov, 2007, p. 216), e.g., *Also today turn up soon here, soon there new **Stalins** and **Hitlers***. As sources for precedence, texts from Germans and Germany in Russia literature,

cinema and modern folklore. Thereby, precedents from the military field dominate: *ариец – истинный* 13 (Aryan – a true – 13 (quotation from the film ‘17 moments of spring’: ‘a true Aryan with a northern character)), *ариец – Штирлиц* (Aryan – Stirlitz – 5), *фашизм – обыкновенный* (Fascism – a common one (title of a film by M. Romm), *вторая мировая война – Гитлер капут* (the Second World War – Hitler kaputt!), *момент – айн, айнмомент* (moment – from German ein, ein Moment), *немец – русский и поляк* (Germans – the Russian and the Pole [as the butt/explanation of a series of jokes]).

The associative experiment also highlighted which *German* personalities play a particular role in the social life and culture of Russian students: *доктор – Фаустус* (doctor – Faustus), *композитор – Бах* (composer – Bach), *композитор – ванн Бетховен* (composer – van Beethoven), *мелодия – Баха* (melody – Bach), *музыка – Бах, Баха* (music – Bach, von Bach – 2), *немец, Германия – Клинсман, Шумахер, Гегель, Ремарк* (German (n.), Germany – Klinsmann, Schuhmacher, Hegel, Remarque), *Ремарк – о товарище, товарищах* (Remarque – about the comrade, about the comrades), *страдание – Вертера* (suffering – Werther – 6),

Table 5
Structure and Quantitative Data of Thematic Area 5

Semantic form German (607)	Attitude			Perception	
	Positive 71/12%	Negative 59/26%	Neutral 77/62%	Fixed/ Constant 527/87%	Individual/ Undetermined/ unexplained 80/13%
Precedence phenomena 149/25%	7/10%	4/3%	138/37%	135/26%	14/18%
5.1. Personalities and artefacts (42)	0	0	42	41	1
5.2. Stirlitz (107)	7	4	96	94	13

Table 6

Structure and Quantitative Data of the Semantic form 'Germans' (numerals without brackets – total number of associations; in brackets – the number of associations expressed as a percentage)

Semantic form Germans	Attitude			Perception	
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Fixed/ Constant	Individual/ Undetermined/ unexplained
Thematic area 1. Germans as subjects or actors in historical events 227/37%	25/35%	133/83%	69/18%	162/31%	65/81%
Thematic area 2. Identification 93/15%	14/20%	4/3%	75/19,8%	92/17%	1/1%
Thematic area 3. German character and appearance 30/5%	19/27%	10/6%	1/ 0,2	30/6%	0/0%
Thematic area 4. Germans and their language 108/18%	6/8%	8/5%	94/25%	108/20%	0/0%
Thematic area 5. Precedence phenomena 149/25%	7/10%	4/3%	138/37%	135/26%	14/18%
607	71/12%	159/26%	377/62%	527/87%	80/13%

орган – Бах (pipe organ – Bach), философ – Гегель (philosopher – Hegel).

Of particular interest are responses to the stimulus *Stirlitz*. Standartenführer Max-Otto von Stirlitz, actually the Soviet agent Maxim Issajew, is the hero of the 1973 produced TV-cult series '17 Moments of Spring', played by Vyacheslav Tikhonov: агент (agent), актер (actor), анекдот (joke – 6), анекдоты (jokes), без проблем (without problems), Борман (Borman – 6), ВОВ (Great Patriotic/Fatherland War), военный (military), герой (hero – 2), гестапо (Gestapo), Гитлер (Hitler – 2), дурак (idiot), и Мюллер (and Müller), изворотливый (nimble), и радистка Кэт (and radio operator F) Ket), Исаев (Issajew – 5), истинный ариец (a true Aryan), кино (cinema), the man, Максим (Maxim), машина (car), молодец (main man – 2), молодость (youth), мудака известный (typical mug), Мюллер (Müller – 11), ностальгия (nostalgia), приколы (spoof), прохиндей (villain), разведка (enlightenment – 2), разведывает (he throws light on sg), русский (Russian (n.)), серьезный человек (a serious person), сказал (he said), обдолбанный (drugged up), разведчик (infiltrator – 21), сейф (safe), сыщик (detective – 2), Тихонов (Tikhonov – 5), умен (clever), фильм (film – 4), хитрый (cunning), шпион (spy – 10).

The complex statistical analysis of the word associations that make up the thematic area PRECEDENCE PHENOMENA of the semantic form 'Germans' leads to the following results (see Table 5).

Discussion and Conclusion

The complex statistical analysis of the word associations 'Germans' and 'Germany' leads to the following results shown in Table 6.

The above table contains statistical analyses of all obtained reactions to the semantic form 'Germans', which were divided into positive, negative or neutral attitudes according to the word's connotation in Russian students' consciousness. The following criterion shows how deeply fixed the reactions in Russian collective consciousness are. The perception of these associations can be fixed/constant or individual/undetermined. A fixed perception of items indicates that they are stable ideas, ones that contribute to a stereotypical Russian picture of Germans. The use of individual/undetermined word associations cannot be explained in terms of a generic, stereotypical picture of Germans; that is to say, they are not represented in the consciousness of today's Russian students.

After analysing 607 stimuli and responses that belong to the semantic form 'Germans', it was found that in the naive linguistic world view of Russian students neutral associations of Germans prevail (377/62%). The majority of negative perceptions (133 out of 157 negatively connotated semes of the whole semantic form) belong to the thematic area Germany and Germans as subjects or actors in social and historical events. Meanwhile this thematic area

includes like no other the vast majority of individual and undetermined/unexplained associations. This indicates a change in relations between Russians and Germans that is first and foremost connected to the Second World War and the unleashing of fascist ideology.

As shown in Table 6, in all other thematic areas of the form 'Germans', positively connotated semes prevail. This permits the conclusion that Germans as a nation are predominantly positively or neutrally perceived in current Russian student society. Despite the considerable military and ideological confrontations of the last century, for the most part a positive picture of Germans has taken root in the Russian collective consciousness.

Noteworthy is the fact that only 80 units, or 13 percent of all reactions, were "individualized"; that is, reactions given by single participants. The constant/fixed nature of most associations (527/87%) reflects the stable character of stereotypical ideas in the Russian picture of Germans.

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