

# The construction of political competence attribution in the reporting of German digital mainstream media using the example of Ursula von der Leyen (2006-2016)

## Context

To describe "political competence" or a good politician, the literature often refers to Max Weber's work "Politics as a Profession" (Beck 2016, p. 20 ff.) as a basic framework. Political knowledge (cf. Westle, Tausendpund, 2019 p. 95ff.) as a central component of "political competence" also finds influence on the term. These works paint a masculine professional image that is linked to politics and competence. Competence in general is socially negotiable and the attribution characteristics socialised. Science and society shape the concept of competence. Competence also has a power effect. The terms "political competence" are also accompanied by a certain image of man that draws conclusions about political practices/competence. Digital mass media construct images of people and their political competence for a broad public.

Ursula von der Leyen, who has headed three different German ministries filled with diverse stereotypes of voters (Holtz-Bacha 2009 p. 8), is a successful example of how digital reporting can change depending on the ministry. The dimensions of gender, age/generation, social origin and religion will be examined. What influence do these diversity dimensions have on the assumption of "political competence" in the German digital media?

## Work goal

According to initial research (44 internet articles from 2006-2016) in the German mass media, it is hypothetically assumed that the current definition of political competence is outdated. The diversity dimensions of gender, religion, age/generation and social origin are only covered one-dimensionally in the current definition of "political competence". The objective is to amend or expand the definition of "political competence".

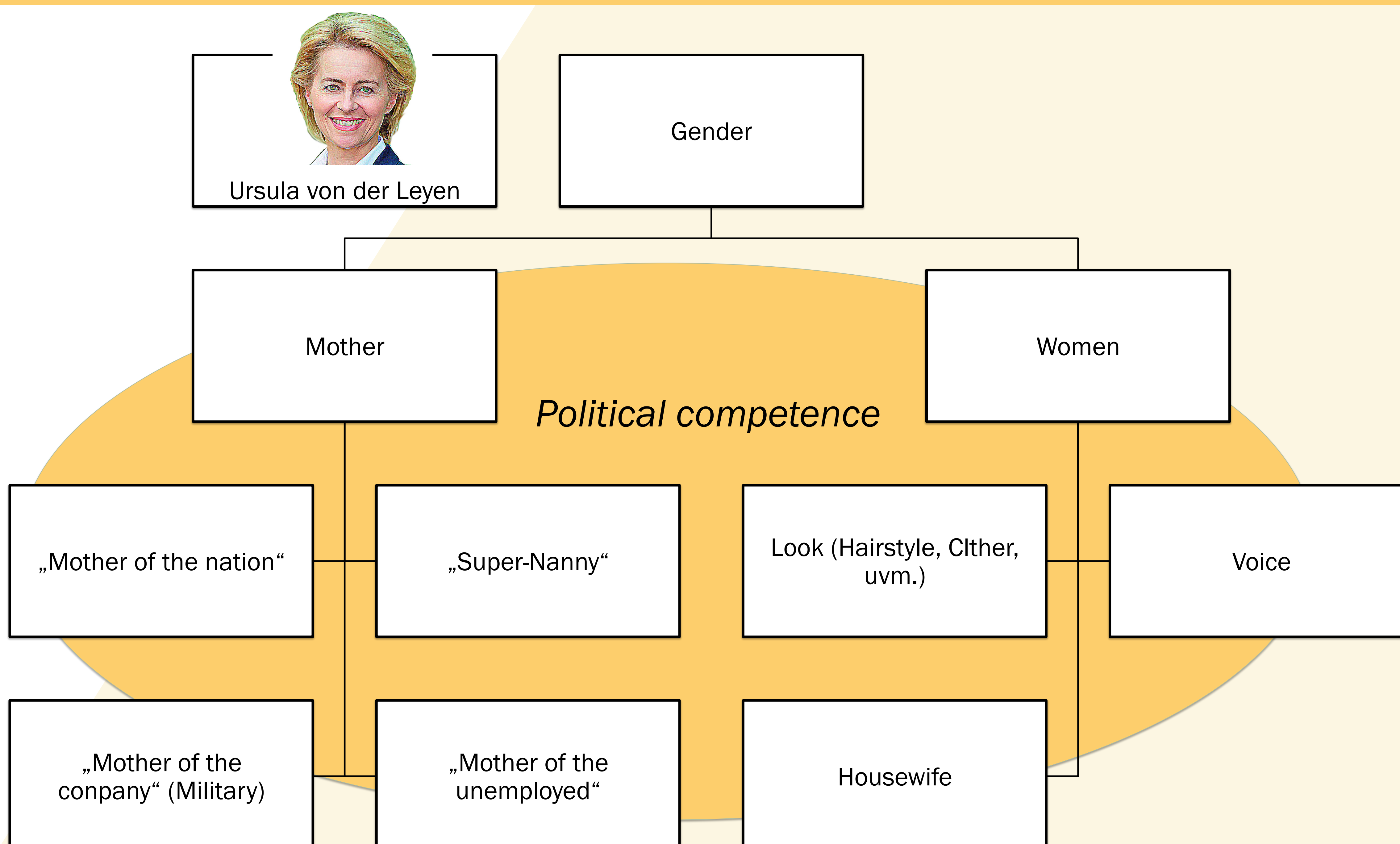
## Question

The dimensions of gender, age/generation, social origin and religion will be linked and examined with the concepts of "political competence (attribution)" using the example of Ursula von der Leyen. What influence do these diversity dimensions have on the assumption of "political competence" in the German digital mass media?

## Scientific method

Critical discourse analysis according to S. Jäger is used as the central research method. As an interdiscourse, the media (self-)staging of Ursula von der Leyen is the focus of the work. The (self-)staging will be analysed with the help of photographs following the documentary image interpretation according to Ralf Bohnsack.

## The filtered categories from the German mainstream media using the example of "gender" (discourse strand I)



Westle, Bettina/ Tausendpund, Markus (Hg.) (2019): Politisches Wissen: Relevanz, Messung und Befunde. Wiesbaden: Springer VS Verlag.

Weber, Max (2010): Politik als Beruf. 11. Auflage, Berlin: Duncker und Humboldt.

Beck, Dorothee (2016): Politikerinnen und ihr Griff zur Macht: Medienrepräsentation von SPD-Spitzenkandiatischen bei Landtagswahlen. Bielefeld: transcript Verlag.

Jäger, Siegfried (2015): Kritische Diskursanalyse: Eine Einführung. 7. Auflage. Münster: UNRAST-Verlag.

Holtz-Bacha, Christina (Hg.) (2008): Frauen, Politik und Medien. Wiesbaden: Springer VS Verlag.

Lünenborg, Margareth/ Röser, Jutta (Hg.) (2012): Ungleich mächtig: Das Gendering von Führungspersonen aus Politik, Wirtschaft und Wissenschaft in der Medienkommunikation. Bielefeld: transcript Verlag.