

ARCANA LINGUARUM

KÖSZÖNTŐ KÖTET A 80 ÉVES
BAŃCZEROWSKI JANUSZ PROFESSZOR
TISZTELETÉRE

Szerkesztette
Pátrovics Péter

ELTE BTK
SZLÁV ÉS BALTI FILOLÓGIAI INTÉZET
LENGYEL FILOLÓGIAI TANSZÉK
BUDAPEST, 2021

KIADVÁNY TÁMOGATÓJA
Lengyel Intézet



SZERKESZTÉSben KÖZREMŰKÖDÖTT
Dr. Várnai Dorota

SZAKMAI LEKTOROK

Hamsovszki Júlia

Kocsis Adrienn

Kolasińska Iga Julia

Dr. habil. Pátrovics Péter

Uhriňák Štefan

Várnai-Cavaleiro Luca

Dr. Várnai Dorota

MŰSZAKI SZERKESZTŐ ÉS TÖRDELŐ

Dr. habil. Janiec-Nyitrai Agnieszka

BAŃCZEROWSKI JANUSZ FÉNYKÉP, KÉPGALÉRIA

Dr. Pátrovics-Egri Éva

© Szerzők

Kiadja: az ELTE BTK Lengyel Filológiai Tanszék
Felelős kiadó: a Lengyel Filológiai Tanszék vezetője

A borítót tervezte: Selley Tamás Ottó

Nyomdai kivitelezés: Robinco Kft.

ISBN: 978-963-489-340-0

TARTALOM

PÁTRÓVICS PÉTER: Lectori salutem!	9
JOANNA URBAŃSKA: Życzenia urodzinowe	11
Tabula gratulatoria	13
BALÁZS GÉZA: A nyelvtől a folklórig és a folklórtól a nyelvig: ve- lünk született struktúrák	15
BÁRDOSI VILMOS: Ritka betűk a francia értelmező szótárakban	25
BENÓ ATTILA – NAGY SÁNDOR ISTVÁN: Romániai magyar fordítók lengyel műfordításai	45
BUBAK GRZEGORZ: Alternatywna historia – propaganda komuni- styczna tworząca nieprawdziwy wizerunek Armii Czerwonej na przykładzie węgierskiej twórczości filmowej	59
CSÉBY GÉZA: Święty Jan Nepomucen w kulturze krajów Grupy Wyszehradzkiej	71
CSISZTAY GIZELLA: Grácia emlék, Óbuda.....	83
DUDÁS ELŐD: Regionalitás a horvát helyesírás történetében	91
DUDÁS MÁRIA: A férfi nyelvi képe a magyar és bolgár frazeológiá- ban	101
DZIEWOŃSKA-KISS DOROTA: Szanowny Panie Profesorze!	111
FÁBIÁN ZSUZSANNA: Olasz jövevényszavak a magyar és a lengyel nyelvben: az OIM-projekt bemutatása	113

GERENCSÉR TIBOR: Eggerth Márta és Jan Kiepura – a két világháború közötti magyar-lengyel zenei kapcsolatok elfelejtett fejezete	129
GZIŃSKA CSILLA: <i>A Rendőrségtől A mosoly birodalmáig</i> . Egy Mrożek-darab magyarországi útja az abszurdtól a poszt-dramatikus színházig	139
GÓSY MÁRIA: Megfelelőségi javítások fiatalok és idősek spontán beszédében	157
GYÖNGYÖSI MÁRIA: Blok és Goethe: egy költői formula genealógiájához (a <i>Rózsa és Kereszt</i> és a <i>Faust</i>)	175
HAMSOVSZKI JÚLIA: Az élet mérföldkövei a fák kulturális konceptualizációiban az orosz népdalok tükrében	189
JANIEC-NYITRAI AGNIESZKA: Pod znakiem Uroborosa, czyli zamiana mięsa w furkot. Idea wiecznego powrotu w zbiorze <i>Kucajac</i> (2015) Andrzeja Stasiuka	199
JANUS-SITARZ ANNA: Dylematy wokół adresata współczesnej literatury dziecięcej	209
JÁSZAY LÁSZLÓ: Hogyan javítunk, hogyan javítsunk? Gondolatok a javításról az orosz nyelvi variancia és a nyelvi változások figyelembevételével	219
KAPRONCZAY KÁROLY: Orsós Ferenc és a katyńi tömegsírok azonosítása	235
KOUTNY ILONA: A barát nyelvi képe a magyarban	249
KROÓ KATALIN: Dosztojevszkij-szereplők megszólalásáról a művészi nyelvalkotás problémájának tükrében (<i>Feljegyzések az égerlyukból</i>)	257

LESFALVI TIBOR: A szlovák (biblikus cseh) nyelv szerepe Szarvas város történetében a 18-19. században	273
LUKÁCS ISTVÁN: Élet és irodalom halmazállapotai (Cankar, Makovič, Kiš)	291
MANDICS GYÖRGY: Csiki csoda	301
MENYHÁRT KRISZTINA: „Sípbal, dobbal, nádi hegedűvel”: hangszer a magyar és a bolgár frazeológiában etnomuzikológiai és nyelvészeti szemszögből	319
NAGY LÁSZLÓ KÁLMÁN: Kariera mało znanej węgierskiej powieści o Armii Czerwonej w Polsce: <i>Syberyjski garnizon</i> Rodiona Markovitsa.....	331
NÉMETH ORSOLYA: Néhány posztsovjet fantomállam a lengyel tényirodalom tükrében	343
PACSAI IMRE – NAGY SÁNDOR ISTVÁN: <i>A lánc</i> szavunk etimológiai vizsgálata	353
PÁTROVICS PÉTER: Adalékok egyes fák lengyel nyelvi képezésének rekonstrukciójához	371
RÁDULY ZSUZSANNA: A magyar és a lengyel nyelv eponimáinak szemantikai, stilisztikai jellemzői	381
SNOPEK JERZY: Kategorie sensualne w przekładzie (z języka węgierskiego)	399
STEFAŃCZYK WIESŁAW TOMASZ: O rzeczownikach zakończonych pierwotnie na spółgłoski wargowe miękkie we współczesnej standardowej polszczyźnie	407

SUTARSKI KONRAD: Szanowny Jubilacie, drogi Januszu!	415
SZAWERDO ELŐBIETA: Nasz Polak w kontekście wybranych utworów Móra Jókaiego i Kálmána Mikszátha	417
SZCZEŚNIAK KRYSZYNA: Dąb, drzewo mocne i dające oparcie	435
UHRNÁK ŠTEFAN: Ethnic stereotypes – How are Slavic people perceived?	455
VÁRNAI DOROTA: Egy Balassi-vers nyomai a régi lengyel irodalomban	465
VIG ISTVÁN: Hiperkorrekt fonémahelyettesítés néhány itáliai újlatin eredetű csa horvát szóban	475
WOLNY-ZMORZYŃSKI KAZIMIERZ: O artykule wiralowym	485
ZOLTÁN ANDRÁS: Czy pol. <i>starać się</i> może być bohemizmem?	493
ZSILÁK MÁRIA: A keletiszlovák nyelvjárások genézisének kérdései és helyük a szlovák nyelvben	503
Képgaléria	515

Ethnic stereotypes – How are Slavic people perceived?

ŠTEFAN UHRINÁK

Field of study: PhD in linguistic sciences, ELTE BTK (Budapest)

Abstract: The purpose of this article is to collect and analyze representative stereotypical Slavic character traits based on the content of memes presented at the website *Slavorum.org*, which focuses on an international English-speaking audience and currently has more than 986,000 followers. The website's content is updated on a daily basis, presents political and socio-cultural events affecting Slavic life represented by a humor category that demonstrates stereotypical Slavic character traits. National stereotypes found at *Slavorum.org* represent a mocking glass of today's Slavic society. Stereotypical assumptions are greatly simplified, but still reflect a certain social experience and also refer to the social and religious attitudes of people. The memes of *Slavorum.org* generally imply that despite their stereotypical nature, the portrayal of Slavic people is rather humorous, not meaning to offend.

Keywords: stereotype, ethnic stereotypes, *Slavorum.org*

1. Introduction

According to Gordon W. Allport (1999: 285), stereotypes are associated exaggerations that persist in society despite all available evidence of their falsehood. The term is derived from the Greek word *stereós* meaning *hard*. As stated by Lippmann (1922), stereotyping is a perception of a phenomenon, object, or person before it is actually known or understood. Putnam's work (1975) refers to the concept of stereotype concerning not only groups of humans or objects, but also different social situations, behaviors, products made by humans, elements of the human environment, animals and plants, and objects of nature.

The main feature of stereotype is generalization, which produces a highly subjective result. Bańczerowski (2007: 76) points out that, according to the cognitive interpretation, stereotypes are generalizations that occur as a result of human categorization of objective reality due to sorting and classification of the information obtained.

According to Szabó (2004), stereotype is a tool used to recreate our memories, a set of assumptions that one projects on a group of people based on an individual's personality or distinctive physical characteristics.

Bañcerowski (2007: 76) highlights that stereotyping encompasses what one knows and acquires, and creates a world model based on it and a scenario that defines one's place and behavior in this created world. The social significance of the phenomenon of stereotype stems from its linguistic role in shaping our vision and behavior. Although stereotyping is closely related to language and the spoken word, it can also be communicated by nonverbal means. A great example is the creation of so-called memes, which will be discussed in more detail later.

As a result of external influences and experiences, stereotypes may be modified in the course of human cognition, but their complete elimination is impossible. However, cognition can contribute to a significant change in stereotypical attitude. According to Bañcerowski (2007: 76), external, objectively motivated changes occur as a result of historical transformations. Internal change involves changing the perspective from which we see and assess others. In this case, we need to be aware of the above-mentioned regularities, and that human cognition and knowledge acquired, subject to subjective and objective factors, is naturally limited, fragmentary, inaccurate and selective, so it can never be complete and entirely authentic. However, the main prerequisite for this is to become aware of the psychological and cultural societal mechanisms that act as filters to influence human perceptions.

As stated by Hřebíčková and Graaf (2018: 87–99), national stereotypes are exaggerations and do not reflect reality. Bañcerowski (2007: 76) claims that stereotypes are formations that allow identity to be retained and at the same time form an integral part of identity. According to Csepeli (1990: 73–74), stereotypes can be distinguished regarding visibility and spirituality. In addition, stereotypes, which refer to externalities, are gross clichés and provide distinctive features for perception (e.g. clothing). Csepeli established five theoretical categories regarding stereotypes:

1. *Name, nationality*
2. *Religion and religious beliefs*
3. *National symbols*
4. *Language*
5. *Thematization*, in which human, spatial and temporal dimensions symbolize the existence of an ethnic group.

The aforementioned categories were used in our analysis and complemented by additional subcategories. However, in order to be able to interpret and analyze the information available on the Slavorum web portal, we need to clarify another basic concept besides stereotyping: we have to provide the definition of *memes*.

2. Memes

According to the *Oxford Dictionary*, a *meme* is a humorous image, video, or piece of text that is quickly copied, distributed, and often slightly modified by Internet users. (W1)

The expression *meme* is an abbreviated version of the Greek word *mimema* ('imitation'). However, the formation of the word can be linked to another term already existing in the theory of social evolution, the word *mneme*, also of Greek origin that means 'memory'. The term *meme* was coined by Richard Dawkins (1976) and first used in his book *The Selfish Gene*. Dawkins, in his 1976 book, explains the mechanisms of evolution and natural selection with the 'meme theory'. (W2)

3. Stereotypical representations of Slavs in memes

As mentioned earlier, we have analysed the memes according to the selected categories presented by Csepeli, which we have complemented by additional subcategories.

1. *Name, Nationality*

The following meme from the Slavorum web portal represents the aforementioned category. The picture shows a Polish soccer player's jersey with the name of the player so complicated as if a cat walked randomly on a computer keyboard typing the name. According to the stereotype, Polish surnames are extremely complicated and do not make much sense.

Image 1: Jedrzejczyk-cat meme

2. *Religion and religious beliefs*

This category is perfectly symbolized by the following meme. The painstakingly detailed nail art design reflects the Slavs' deep religious beliefs, mocking the fact that religion is extremely important to Slavs and appearing in a place one would not expect.

Image 2: Slavic fashion nails

3. *National symbols*

The colors of the Slovak flag are represented by bryndza (sheep's cheese), plums (most of which are used to make slivovica, plum brandy) and a commonly preserved fruit. According to the stereotype, Slovaks are focused mainly on food and drinks.

Image 3: Slovak flag

4. *Language*

In the following category of Slavorum, we see an example of how Polish-speaking people communicate compared to those speaking other European languages. Those speaking other European languages are represented as being somewhat normal by the portrayal of a mother asking her child (Polish language): Why can't you behave normally? In contrast, the Polish-speaker responds by simply screaming like a bad kid in the back of the car. Again, according to the stereotype, we can see that Polish-speaking people, and the way they communicate, are perceived as somewhat odd and complicated.

Image 4: European languages vs Polish language

5. *Thematization* – Human, spatial and temporal dimensions that symbolize the existence of a nationality group appear in this category. The aforementioned themes are also relevant for the examination of stereotypic Slavic character traits.

a., *Thematization – Nature*

Nature can be viewed as the geographical and natural framework of a given ethnic group. The following map shows three geographical areas that are distinguished by the meme's author based on the alcoholic beverages preferred by a specific area. Surprisingly, the three areas meet in the Czech Republic. Also noteworthy is the „Rakia Empire“ highlighted in red on the map, which highlights territories of former Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. According to the stereotype, alcohol consumption is probably more important to Slavic people than it should be, especially the Czechs.

Image 5: Beer-wine-vodka triangle

b., *Thematization – Psychology*

According to the meme, a Russian man hired an entire film crew (screenwriter, director, stuntman and makeup artist) to make his marriage proposal memorable. He invited his girlfriend to join him on a date, however, when she arrived at the destination, she found herself at an accident scene where she witnessed her boyfriend die in a brutal car accident. The man then jumped up and proposed to his girlfriend. The frightened woman said yes, but admitted she was extremely angry with her fiancé. Apparently, the man wanted to make his girlfriend feel how empty her life would be without him.

Image 6: Crazy Russian man fakes death in order to propose to girlfriend

c., *Thematization – Financial status*: living standards and the economic situation of a given nationality group. „Here in the Balkans, the saying goes: ‚The woman can come from a village, but the car must be from Germany.‘ According to the stereotype, less demanding and less elegant women are perfect candidates for wives, but if a man wishes to do really well, he should purchase a reliable car made in Germany.

Image 7: Wife can come from a village, but the car must be from Germany.

According to the previous stereotype, looks are far more important to Slavic people than real values, and the perception of the outside world is perhaps more important than reliability. In contrast, the following meme depicting the taste in automobiles contradicts the previous statement: The evolution of the BMW 5-series – Lada is perfect from the beginning.

Image 8: The evolution of the BMW 5-series – Lada is perfect from the beginning

d., *Thematization – Society*

Nowadays we can frequently encounter the state-of-the-art wireless headsets called airpods. The memes below depict the stereotypic Slavic character who cannot afford these costly headphones and creates look-alike fake earbuds to maintain a trendy image.

Image 9: Cigarette airpod

Image 10: Onion airpod

Thematization – Sociology

According to the stereotypic meme, choice of partners can be influenced by cartoons watched in childhood. Hence Hence, Slavic women, who are attracted to rather corpulent and hairy men, obviously did not grow up watching Disney cartoons, but rather were following Slavic animated films.

Image 11: I don't blame Disney for my expectations when it comes to men . . .

"Like country like Rambo." – In response to Slovak and Czech political events, we see the President of the Slovak Republic and the President of the Czech Republic. In both Slovakia and the Czech Republic, the President of the Republic is also the commander-in-chief of the country's military. We see the President of the Slovak Republic, Zuzana Čaputová, in camouflage clothes, and the President of the Czech Republic, Miloš Zeman, in swimwear. One time, Zeman went boating and, allegedly due to excessive alcohol consumption, required assistance because he was not able to get out of the boat. The meme shows Zeman being supported while leaning on oars.

Image 12: Like country like Rambo

e., *Thematization – History*

The meme shows the abbreviation of the famous American fast food chain, Kentucky Fried Chicken, in Cyrillic alongside Lenin's picture on a field of red replacing Harland David Sander's picture found on the original poster. The meme mocks the fact that in Slavic countries during the Communist regime, only Communist politicians and propaganda could be displayed on posters with bright-red backgrounds.

Image 13: Lenin KFC

f., *The personality cult of Babushka* – The role of the stereotypical Slavic grandmother is to always provide food. Babushkas do not favor small or light meals; the importance of food is paramount. As shown in the picture, Babushka frowns upon commercially-made french fries, but highly approves of and favors home-made fried potatoes covered with cheese. The meme creates the stereotype of Slavic people preferring traditional home-made food over fast food.

Image 14: Babushka vs french fries

g., *Slavic science* – Based on the stereotype, Slavic thinking revolves around food. Slavic people are less interested in environmental awareness than their diet, so they even associate solar panels with sausage fermentation.

Image 15: Slavic solar panels

h., *Hollywood* – This collection mocks Slavic people that look like Hollywood celebrities. Thanks to these characters, Hollywood stars are taken out of the glitter of Hollywood and placed in completely grotesque settings. According to the stereotype, Slavic people live in environments that lack any luxury.

Image 16: *The Bulgarian "George Clooney"*

Image 17: *Slav wolverine*

Image 18: *DiCaprio in Eastern-Europe*

i., *Fashion* – The glorification of sports brands, especially the leading German sports brand, is reflected in the following stereotypic memes. The proudly worn Adidas suit and sports shoes as bridal footwear are a representation of the longing for the luxuries of the ‘Western world’, which have been considered nearly impossible to afford.

Image 19: Adidas suit

Image 20: Adidas wedding shoes

j., *“Sandalistics* – It exists somewhere. That’s why we are around”. According to the picture, the insurance company bases its advertising campaign on the fact that Czech tourists tend to wear the socks-sandals combination, since numerous times, they found themselves in unpleasant, sometimes bizarre situations abroad, typically in the mountains. The next meme testifies to this, showing the shop window of a mountaineering store in Prague, Czech Republic, where, besides the standard equipment, a pair of sandals is also displayed. All in all, in terms of the stereotype, Czechs seem to be unable to choose the right footwear.

Image 21: *“Sandalistics* – It exists somewhere. That’s why we are around”.

Image 22: ‘Sandalistics’ – Store selling mountain gear in Prague

k., *Architecture* – “Balcony, where are you? I’m here!” The following meme shows a failed architectural situation. The picture implies that the Slavs are sloppy and inattentive, and therefore their work produces illogical, often absurd results.

Image 23: Balcony, where are you? I’m here!

l., *Tourism* – Many people choose to spend their vacation in the Balkans. The following stereotypic meme shows the difference between going to the Balkans for a holiday and staying in the Balkans for a long time. Even if the Balkans seem to be a nice place to live at first glance, according to the meme, reality is completely different.

Image 24: Holiday vs living there?

m., *Food* – According to the stereotype, in Slavic culture, everything is closely connected to food. Whether it be fashion, social events, or relationships, everything revolves around food.

Image 25: Food and fashion

Image 26: Food and religion

Image 27: Food and relationships

4. Conclusion

Various national stereotypes regarding neighboring nations have evolved over centuries. National stereotypes found on the Slavorum website represent a mocking glass of today's Slavic society. Stereotypical assumptions are greatly simplified, but still reflect a certain social experience and also refer to the social and religious attitudes of people.

Stereotypic memes of the website Slavorum target Slavic people who are uniquely integrated into the globalized world and who strive to meet certain expectations through strong prioritization of branded clothing, expensive cars, exteriors and food. Stereotypes clearly show the desire for material goods and state-of-the-art products according to which certain Slavic people, because of their limited financial resources, cannot afford, and must therefore settle for older, obsolete, almost useless products. As a result, their appearance also becomes distinctive.

According to Bańczerowski (2007: 84), stereotypic depictions are usually negative, hostile, and offensive, but sometimes humorous. Slavorum's stereotypes dealing with politics – in this case, memes – are usually overly exaggerated, as they sometimes reflect a certain tension, even antipathy towards political figures. However, the memes of Slavorum.org generally imply that despite their stereotypical nature, the portrayal of Slavic people is rather humorous, not meaning to offend. It is most likely due to the fact that most of the humorous content on Slavorum is a collection created by contributors of Slavic origin. It can be concluded from the site's attendance that it not only presents interesting content for Slavic viewers, but is attractive for users from abroad as well.

Stereotypes, while providing a subjective picture of a certain phenomenon, also provide information about their creators. The

importance of memes presented on Slavorum.org is expressed by the fact that views of anonymous people on Slavic people are presented in a humorous manner. The collection of memes on this site may seem unusual, sometimes even difficult to understand for people who have never been to a Slavic country and are not familiar with the particular culture (such as people from Asia or America). It would be highly beneficial, as a next step of our research, to examine the impact of Slavorum's stereotypic memes on visitors coming from different cultural backgrounds. Comparing the socio-cultural phenomena presented on the Slavorum Internet portal with the opinions and reactions of foreigners who do not know Slavic people could be an interesting task for the future.

Literature

- Allport G. W. 1999. *Az előítélet*. Budapest. Osiris Kiadó.
- Bañcerowski J. 2007. *Nemzeti sztereotípiák a magyar és a lengyel közmondásokban és frazeológiai kapcsolatokban*. *Magyar Nyelvőr* 131, no.1 76–87.
- Csepeli Gy. 1990. *...és nem is kell hozzá zsidó*. Budapest. Kozmosz Könyvek.
- Csepeli Gy. 1992. *Nemzet által homályosan*. Budapest. Századvég Kiadó.
- Dawkins R. 1976. *The Selfish Gene*. Oxford. Oxford University Press.
- Hřebíčková - Möttus - Graf - Jelínek- Realo - Jackson. 2018. *How Accurate Are National Stereotypes? A Test of Different Methodological Approaches*. *European Journal of Personality*. 32/2. 87–99.
- Lippmann W. 1922. *Public opinion*. New York. Harcourt, Brace and Co.
- Putnam H. 1975. *Mind. Language and Reality*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- Szabó I. 2004. *Bevezetés a szociálpszichológiába*. Budapest. Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó.

Website content

1. "Meme", accessed January 9, 2020. <https://www.lexico.com/definition/meme> accessed.
2. "Mit mímelnék a mémek?" *Nyelv és tudomány*, accessed January 9, 2020. <https://www.nyest.hu/hirek/mit-mimelnek-a-memek>.
3. "Slavorum", accessed January 9, 2020. <https://www.slavorum.org>.