

From the Proverbs to Modern Media. Formation of People Identity Through Education of Language Stereotypes of Neighbors

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Introduction. The paper deals with the phenomenon of language as a marker of people's identity, which is formed by building boundaries and describing relationships, primarily between neighbors. The aim of the research work is to analyze the forms of expression of journalists in the media.

Methodology and sources. The report examines materials from the main release of the News of the first Polish television channel, concerning the two neighbors of the Poles, that is, the Germans and Russians. The collected material covers the period of November 16, 2015, that is, from the day of the inauguration of the new Polish government (which has a completely different approach to Poland's foreign affairs than its predecessors) until December 31, 2016. Created and described on the basis of the collected material stereotypes of German and Russian in modern Poland will be compared with the stereotypes of these two peoples, familiar to Poles by proverbs, which were found in the explanatory dictionaries of the Polish language, as well as in other dictionaries of proverbs and sayings. The linguistic analysis of the text, the socio-psychological-linguistic foundations of the formation of auto-and heterostereotypes, mass-media discourse and its impact on recipients were used as the theoretical basis for the arguments presented in the paper.

Results and discussion. In Polish dictionaries, and dictionaries of Proverbs and sayings it was found 38 Proverbs Russian Proverbs and 107 of the Germans. It was analyzed how many of them are positive and how many negative traits of Russians and Germans. As for the Russian, positive traits can be found in only 6 of 38 Proverbs (15.7 percent). There are 18 positive of 107 sayings about Germans in Polish sources (16.8 percent). Specified number of Proverbs shows that the poles hand down from generation to generation a negative image of their neighbors. On the basis of material collected from "News" channel images of Russians and Germans were made up as well. During the period under review, any positive information about Russia and Russian has not appeared. As for the Germans, it is also dominated by a negative image, and, if to speak about positive things, they are never left without comment, which contains a warning.

Conclusion. Heterostereotypes play an active role in fostering the way of thinking of contemporaries and, one can assume, representatives of the next generations, since popular wisdom and historical experience are passed on from generation to generation in each country. Heterostereotypes often become reality themselves, are inherited and acquire new symbolic meanings, and are updated depending on the political situation. A comparison of the heterostereotypes of Russian and German in Polish proverbs, the oldest of which were found in a dictionary published in 1830, with modern heterostereotypes from

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the main release of "News" proves that the description of the phenomenon of stereotypes in each new historical era is an important scientific problem.

Key words: language stereotype, mass media discourse, proverbs, autostereotype, heterostereotype, linguistic analysis of the text.

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От пословиц до современных СМИ. Формирование идентичности народа посредством образования языковых стереотипов соседей

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Введение. Рассматривается феномен языка как маркера идентичности народа, который формируется посредством построения границ и описания отношений, прежде всего между соседями. Целью работы является анализ форм высказывания журналистов в СМИ.

Методология и источники. Исследованы материалы из главного выпуска «Новостей» первого канала польского телевидения, касающиеся двух соседей поляков, т. е. немцев и русских. Собранный материал охватывает собой период с 16 ноября 2015 г. (со дня инаугурации нового польского правительства, у которого совсем другой подход к иностранным делам Польши, чем у его предшественников) по 31 декабря 2016 г. Описанные на базе собранного материала стереотипы немца и русского в современной Польше сравниваются со стереотипами этих двух народов, хорошо знакомыми полякам по пословицам (использованы толковые словари польского языка, а также словари пословиц и поговорок). Теоретической основой для представленных в статье рассуждений послужил лингвистический анализ текста, социально-психолого-лингвистические основы образования авто- и гетеростереотипов, массмедийный дискурс и его воздействие на адресатов.

Результаты и обсуждение. В польских толковых словарях, а также словарях пословиц и поговорок было найдено 38 пословиц о русских и 107 – о немцах. Проанализировано, сколько из них называют положительные, а сколько отрицательные черты характера русских и немцев. Что касается русских, положительные черты характера можно найти лишь в 6 из 38 пословиц (15,7 %). Положительных пословиц о немцах в польских источниках 18 из 107 (16,8 %). Указанные количества пословиц показывают, что поляки от поколения к поколению передают негативный образ своих соседей. На основе собранного материала из «Новостей» первого канала также составлены образы русских и немцев. За рассматриваемый период не появилось ни одной положительной информации о России и русских. Что касается немцев, то здесь также преобладает негативный образ, и, если говорить о положительных явлениях, они никогда не остаются без комментария, который содержит предостережение.

Заключение. Гетеростереотипы играют активную роль в формировании образа мышления современников и, можно полагать, представителей следующих поколений, так как народная мудрость и исторический опыт передаются от поколения к поколению в каждой

стране. Гетеростереотипы часто сами становятся реальностью, наследуются и приобретают новые символические значения и актуализируются в зависимости от политической ситуации. Сравнение гетеростереотипов русского и немца в польских пословицах, наистарейшие из которых были найдены в словаре, изданном в 1830 г., с современными гетеростереотипами из главного выпуска «Новостей» доказывает, что описание феномена стереотипов в каждую новую историческую эпоху является важной научной проблемой.

Ключевые слова: языковой стереотип; массмедийный дискурс; пословицы, автостереотип, гетеростереотип, лингвистический анализ текста.

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Конфликт интересов. О конфликте интересов, связанном с данной публикацией, не сообщалось.

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Introduction. A person, trying to understand the diverse and mysterious surrounding world, has always exalted that was his own, familiar, and denied that was strange, unfamiliar. Although the development of mass communication, thanks to the media and the Internet, has strengthen international contacts and, it would seem, has provided the possibility to know your neighbors better, it turns out that so far, for the background for creation of the image of others act constantly living stereotypes handed down from generation to generation.

The paper attempts to consider the selected genres of texts (proverbs and television news bulletins) as markers of people identify, which are formed by describing relations, primarily between neighboring nations.

The work aims to compare the image of the neighbors of Poles, i. e., Germans and Russians, embodied in proverbs with their modern image, created in journalistic texts and in the media. This analysis will provide to determine: a) how do modern media describe neighboring nations influencing creation of their specific imaging to the viewers? b) To what extent is the stereotype of neighbors created this way new compared to that which is familiar to the people from proverbs?

The paper examines materials from the main bulletin of “The News” of the first channel of the Polish television concerning two neighbors of Poles, Germans and Russians. The material collected covers the period from 16 November 2015, i. e., from the day of the inauguration of the new Polish government (which has a completely different approach to the Polish foreign affairs than its predecessors) to 31 December 2016. Created and described on the basis of the collected material heterostereotypes of German and Russian in modern Poland will be compared with the heterostereotypes of these two nations, well-known to Poles from proverbs which were found in the explanatory dictionaries of the Polish language, as well as in other dictionaries of proverbs and sayings.

The theoretical background for reasoning presented in the paper is the linguistic analysis of the text, the socio-psychological-linguistic frameworks of auto- and heterostereotypes formation, mass-media discourse and its impact on the target audience.

Methodology and sources.

1. The concepts of stereotype, autostereotype and heterostereotype.

In colloquial speech, the term “*stereotype*” is understood as prejudice and negative opinion about people [1, p. 63], accepted opinions about others, handed down from generation to generation [2, p. 22], as well as something that simplifies reality, or falsifies the image of reality [3, p. 7].

The term “stereotype” from the colloquial speech to the scientific one, or rather, to social psychology and sociology, was introduced by the American journalist and politician W. Lippmann in the work “Public Opinion” [4]. W. Lippmann meant by the concept of stereotype “pictures in our heads”, referring to some social phenomenon, images are unilateral, partial, and schematic [5, p. 63]. According to W. Lippmann, people respond to the complexity of the world around them through stereotypes, i. e., structures that provide a person an opportunity to collate information about the world [6, p. 31].

In the field of linguistics, the first scientific work on the subject of stereotypes was the work of U. Quasthoff [7], which clarified the definition of W. Lippmann and outlined that the stereotype can be a verbal concept. This definition served as the background for linguistic research on stereotypes. For linguists, however, it is essential that stereotypes are directly related to language, which, in turn, is based on categorization and repetition, without which communication would not be possible at all [8].

Speaking of stereotypes, it is critical to pay attention to the fact that people have an interest in other people not only in conflict situations, dissatisfactions or threats, but also in daily contacts. This interest is caused not only by differences existing between groups, but primarily by the need to distinguish their in-group from the alien out-groups, as well as with the requirement to define clearly the traits of in-groups, which would distinguish it from all other out-groups. These social phenomena are characterized by the fact that they are based on the comparison of “own–alien”, which leads to association of the in-group with the good, and the out-group with the evil [9]. These types of judgment are assembled by generations, and are handed down to other generations by using stereotypes, named in sociology and social psychology auto- and heterostereotypes.

Under the concept of “*autostereotypes*”, we mean stereotypes related to a contact group, that is, an in-group, while *heterostereotypes* are stereotypes related to other groups, that is, out-groups [3, p. 37]. An out-group, which we consider as inferior to our own (in-group), plays the role of a “scapegoat”, which enables to discharge tension in the in-group and reduce the feeling of inn-group own imperfection [3, p. 148, 156].

Studies of these phenomena began in the twenties in the USA, and they led to the conclusion that all in-groups consider their own traits to be more positive than those of out-groups. This phenomenon is directly related to the term of ethnocentrism, introduced by W. G. Sumner, who collected twenty-three modes of behavior regarding the in- and out-groups. We are particularly interested in ten of them, which have a direct connection with the features reflected in the collected language material. We present these ten modes of behavior folding the ethnocentrism syndrome in the form of a table.

Table. Relationship to the in- and out-group, folding on the syndrome of ethnocentrism

Relationship to the in-group	Relationship to the out-group
We consider ourselves supreme, noble	We consider others inferior, immoral, despicable
We consider our principles universal for all	–
We consider ourselves strong	We consider others weak
–	We feel greater social distance to others
–	We hate others
–	We use out-group representatives as a bad example
–	We blame the out-group for our own problems
	We distrust and fear the out-group

* see. [3, p. 160].

2. Characteristics of language data sources.

The material used for the study was Polish proverbs (Poles about Germans and Russians) and materials from the main bulletin of “The News” of the first channel of the Polish television.

The material collected covers the period from 16 November 2015, i. e., from the day of the inauguration of the new Polish government, which has a completely different approach to Poland’s foreign affairs than its predecessors, to 31 December 2016. The Polish Foreign Policy Concept was approved by the Polish government for the period from 2017 to 2021 [10]. In order to ensure national interests and realize the strategic interests of Poland, the state foreign policy is aimed at fulfilling the following main tasks:

- strengthening the defense capability of NATO’s eastern flank;
- cooperation with the USA in the field of Security;
- Visegrad group;
- pragmatic relations with Russia;
- support of the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine;
- friendly relations between Poland and Germany;
- migration crisis.

The abovementioned goals of the Polish foreign policy are reflected in the media [10].

Proverbs as one of the sources of language data.

Under the concept of *proverbs*, we mean set combinations of words resembling clichés (from French cliché, so-called metal or wooden printing form with a relief pattern, used to reproduce illustrations [11, p. 591]). Both these forms and proverbs are used mechanically in a more or less unchanged form, appearing in both oral and written speech of many generations [12, p. 11]. Proverbs are “... short folk sayings having either truest and metaphorical sense or only a metaphorical sense and assembling the complete sentence grammatically” [13, p. 11].

To represent the image of Germans and Russians for Poles, we have chosen proverbs as one of the data sources, since they confirm the consolidation of some features of this people in language, in the linguistic image of the world [14, p. 104]. As a rule, those are not the most important traits of character or behavior, which are distinctive to all objects of a given class, but only typical, peculiar to objects, considered representative. These organized in groups and ordered features assemble linguistic and cultural images of phenomena and people, which we call stereotypes. The proverbs we have gathered illustrate the code of folk wisdom as a kind of code of laws compiled by past generations and enrich, thanks to the knowledge fixed in them, the linguistic image of the world. Linguists who study linguistic stereotypes initially refer to dictionaries, because the knowledge of the world recorded in them is highly automated.

Polish proverbs about Germans and Russians were found in the explanatory dictionaries of the Polish language, as well as in other dictionaries of proverbs and sayings. Thus, the proverbs about Germans were found in nine dictionaries and the proverbs about Russians in ten [15].

Materials from the main bulletin “The News” as a source of language data.

In addition to the dictionaries, materials from the main bulletin “The News” of the first channel of Polish television were also the sources of the language data we collected. As mentioned above, the collected material covers the period from 16 November 2015 to 31 December 2016.

The main bulletin “The News” (“Wiadomości”) of the first Polish television channel, airs daily at 19.30, is one of the most popular news program, in addition to the program “The Facts”

(“Fakty”) of the private TVN channel, which is in American hands, and the program “The events” (“Wydarzenia”) of the Polsat private channel, which is in Polish hands. We have chosen the program “The News” because it is a state program.

Analyzing the results of a monitoring of the TV audience of the main bulletins of information programs in Poland in 2016 and in the first quarter of 2017, it should be noted that in 2016, an average 22.28 % of viewers from the target audience watched the News program (media indicator SHR [15]), while in the first quarter of 2017 their number averaged to 19.77 % [16]. As for the AMR rating [15], in 2016, “The News” gathered an average 3 448 053 viewers watching TV, and 3 084 608 viewers in the first quarter of 2017 [16].

Discussion and results.

The image of Germans and Russians in Polish proverbs and in the main bulletin “The News” of Polish television.

In Polish explanatory dictionaries, as well as dictionaries of proverbs and sayings, 38 proverbs about Russians and 107 proverbs about Germans were found. In connection with the stereotyping of the image of two neighbors of Poles, we wondered how many of them call positive, and how many call negative traits of the character of Russians and Germans. So, as for Russians, positive traits of the character of the eastern neighbor of Poles can be found only in 6 out of 38 proverbs, i. e., in 15.7 % of them. There are 18 positive out of 107 proverbs about Germans in Polish sources, i. e., in 16.8 %. The indicated numbers of proverbs show that Poles hand down from generation to generation negative image of their neighbors.

If we take a closer look at the specific character traits of Russians and Germans, which Polish proverbs speak about, the eastern and western neighbors of Poles can be described as follows:

– **russians** – *in positive way*: like Poles, smart after failure; they talk well; whoever deceives them will be smart; strong. Examples: “Both Poles and Russians are smart after failure, let them not laugh at each other” [17]; “Whoever deceives a Russian will be smart” [18]–[21];

– *in negative way*: devils; dissenters, stupid; bouncers; unreliable; revengeful; inaccurate; stubborn; deceptive; love the mess; they must be punished. Examples: “When a Pole is hungry, he whistles, and a Russian beats wife” [19]; “Even God is with Russians” [19].

– **germans** – *in the positive way*: neat; merchants; rich; they are people too; they beat well; conscientious. Examples: “Better with a German than with a stupid sage” [19]; “Looking for a conscientious person, go to a German – this is a real pharmacy” [19].

– *in the negative way*: one must fight with them; we will always defeat them; dissenters; dogs; other than Poles; they will do everything for money; weak; naive; one shouldn't trust them; they have an incomprehensible language; exploiters; crafty; can live everywhere; conceited, but afraid of Poles; devils/brothers of the devil; always against Poles; will never be our brothers; bad sons-in-law; enrich at our expense; come to us poor, leave rich; God created them, as he was angry with Poles. Examples: “Not even a fly will eat with Germans” [19], [21], [22], “While the world exists, a German will not be a brother of a Pole” [23], [19], [24], [21]

The main bulletin “The News” of the first channel of Polish television is broadcasted daily at 19.30. The paper focuses on issues that cover the period from 16 November 2015 to 31 December

2016. It should be noted that information about both Germany and Russia appears in “The News” almost every day, and it happens that there are several pieces of information in the same bulletin.

For the above mentioned time, 235 news about Russia and 179 about Germany were aired. The main topics related to Russia were the following:

- POLAND'S security – 17.87 %;
- Russian intervention and the situation in Syria – 16.59 %;
- the crash of the Polish plane near Smolensk – 12.76 %;
- Ukraine and Crimea – 10.63 %;
- gas – 5.10 %;
- history (anniversaries of World War II, Soviet monuments in Poland) – 5.10 %;
- Polish-Russian relations – 3.82 %;
- political and economic situation in Russia – 2.55 %;
- cooperation between Russia and Germany – 2.55 %;
- sports in Russia (doping) – 2.55 %;
- sanctions against Russia – 2.12 %;
- political killings in Russia – 2.12 %;
- elections in Russia – 1.70 %;
- Russian propaganda – 1.27 %;
- President Putin – 1.27 %.

The analysis of the materials we received from the main bulletin “The News” of the first channel of Polish television, whereby we focused only on the comments of Polish journalists and experts, as well as on information as such, without taking into account the comments of foreigners, provides us with the possibility to compose the following image of Russians:

- Russians are becoming more aggressive (03.02.2016), they are invaders in Ukraine, annexed Crimea and Mr. Putin will not retreat (01.01.2016);
- mr. Putin named the enemies of Russia – this is the United States and all its supporters who are against the annexation of Crimea (01.01.2016);
- the new gas pipeline that Russia is building with co-partnership with Germany, Nord Stream 2, will connect the two countries and at the same time will not cross the Polish territory (08.13.2016) – this threatens the energy security of Poland and other countries of the region (11.01.2016). Mr. Putin is playing gas games, threatening us to stop gas transit. Such games using gas are a well-justified weapon in the East (11.25.2015, 01.07.2016):
- Russians to this day do not want to give us the skeleton of our plane (11.27.2015), what should be called the seizure of Polish property – these are Putin's puzzles, since Russia never does anything for free. The main principle of Russian diplomacy is friend and foe (01.22.2016). The Russians do not care about the crash site of our plane (04.05.2016), family members of those killed in the plane crash near Smolensk do not believe in the accuracy of the autopsy of the victims of the plane crash, they do not believe the Russians (06.21.2016);
- Russians are constantly trying to destabilize the situation in Ukraine (08.11.2016) and scare it with their weapons (08.11.2016);
- the Russian army is straining muscles (08.13.2016) – this is a response to strengthening the eastern flank of NATO. The biggest threat to Poland is constantly in the East (01.19.2016), Russia is trying to scare us with its weapons (03.05.2016), because the Russians do not understand the

modern world, they do not understand that every country has the right to protect its security (13.05.2016). The historical experience of the countries of eastern Europe shows that Russia always posed and poses a threat, even if this is not visible at the moment, we must not forget about it and we must counteract this (07.11.2016). The Russian mentality is characterized by the fact that Russia always feels itself to some degree endangered and justifies its policy, which is expansionist (07.14.2016);

– Russia is returning to the great game thanks to its intervention into Syria. Mr. Putin has always been a good player who knows his strengths and weaknesses (11.19.2015);

– Russians and Germans are united by the fight against terrorism (11.26.2015);

– Poland is not a partner for Russia, a Russian policy towards Poland does not exist, it is a policy of circumventing Poland, but Poland prevents Russia from achieving its important goals (01.22.2016);

Russia's goal is to expand its sphere of influence in Eastern Europe and slow down the democratization process in those countries that want to cooperate with the West (01.29.2016);

– in the Putin era, for Russians, the historical truth about Katyn does not matter, the main thing is the power – it does not matter whether it is real or not (03.06.2016). Historical truth is still important today, because only it can serve as a basis for reconciliation (04.03.2016);

Summing up, it should be said that in “The News”, not a single positive piece of information about Russia and Russians appeared for the period referred to.

If we talk about Germans, most of the space in “The News” was devoted to the following topics:

– refugees – 21.78 %;

– Polish-German relations – 16.20 %;

– Poland-Germany-the European Union – 13.40 %;

– terrorist attacks – 6.70 %;

– security – 6.14 %;

– history: the second world war – 5.58 %;

– gas – Nord Stream 2 – 5.02 %;

– elections in Germany – 3.35 %;

– German-Turkish relations – 3.35 %;

– Russian-German cooperation – 2.23 %.

The analysis of the materials we obtained from the main bulletin “The News” of the first channel of Polish television, it is important to outline that we focused only on the comments of Polish journalists and experts, as well as on information itself, without taking into account the comments of foreigners, provides us with the possibility to compose the following image of Germans:

– more and more Germans are against the open doors policy of Chancellor Angela Merkel (07.28.2016), since they are afraid of refugees (08.13.2016). The Germans have a big problem, they decided to let refugees into their territory, and now they don't know what to do with them (08.19.2016). The German migration policy is a selfish policy of this country in the name of the needs of its own economy (03.03.2016). The Germans are our main and most important political and economic partner in the European Union (09.05.2016), but we do not agree that they, in connection with the migration crisis, want to share responsibility with us for it (09.16.2016). With regard to refugees, Ms. Merkel cannot rely on Warsaw (11.27.2016);

– Germans and Poles are partners, we have together proved that it is possible to overcome a difficult past and mistrust in favor of partnership, and even friendship. However, we need to work on these achievements every day (11.26.2016). Poland and Germany have good relations, but Poland sees in them the role of an equal partner (05.16.2016);

– The Germans are used to pursuing a dominant policy, and in this way they conduct themselves towards the countries of Eastern Europe (02.15.2016). Ms. Merkel as the Empress of Europe (02.17.2016) is trying to impose a migration policy on other countries, but we do not agree with it (02.18.2016);

– The Germans cooperate with Russians; they want to build the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline together, which is “the Molotov-Ribbentrop Energy Pact”. In this regard, some German politicians even speak out against sanctions against Russia (10.06.2016). Such a policy is very dangerous for Poland (07.25.2016);

– More than 70 % of the Polish media are in German hands. The Germans use this situation for their own purposes and influence the formation of public opinion in Poland (10.20.2016);

– German media criticize the political situation in Poland and compare it with the Putin regime (01.10.2016); they call Poland the Wild East (04.05.2016);

– The Germans are against strengthening the eastern flank of NATO (01.19.2016), since they do not want to annoy Moscow (01.28.2016);

– Germans have recently had problems with understanding who was the criminal during World War II and who was the victim. They show untruth in their films (ex. “Our mothers, our fathers”). The Germans have a policy whose task is to shuffle all responsibility on the Poles (07.18.2016).

The material collected shows that in “The News” the negative image of the Germans prevails, if we talk about positive phenomena, they never remain without a comment, which contains a warning.

Conclusion. The results of our analysis of the stereotype of Russian and German in Polish proverbs and the main bulletin “The News” of the first channel of Polish television provides us with the possibility to conclude that hetero-stereotypes play an active role in forming the mode of thinking of contemporaries and, we can assume, representatives of the next generations, since folk wisdom and historical experience is handed down from generation to generation in every country. The hetero-stereotypes we have collected, like all stereotypes, have exceptional persuasive power, due to the convenience and ease of their perception. Although everyone knows that the idea of “aliens” does not always completely coincide with objective reality. Hetero-stereotypes often become reality themselves; they are inherited, acquire new symbolic meanings and are updated depending on the political situation.

Comparison of heterostereotypes of Russian and German languages in Polish Proverbs with modern heterostereotypes from the main Bulletin “The News” proves that the description of the phenomenon of stereotypes in each new historical era is an important scientific problem. Dictionaries, in this case, play the role of the guardian of folk wisdom, while the media are not a passive contemplator, but rather a reflector of public sentiment.

We want to end this article with a question that we think should be considered when talking about relations between Poland, Germany and Russia: should the “enrichment” of relations with centuries-old historical heritage be regarded as a burden or as wisdom?

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