

PARTICIPANTS OF RELIGIOUS INTERNET-DISOURSE

The paper deals with researching the main structure forming elements of religious internet-discourse. The author studies characteristic features and roles of participants of this phenomenon, ways of giving information influencing the recipient's choice of a definite discourse space.

Key words: religious internet-discourse; roles of participants; illocutionary functions.

УДК 316.77

ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ СТЕРЕОТИПОВ О РОССИИ ПОСРЕДСТВОМ СМИ

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Статья посвящена анализу стереотипов о России, сформированных в общественном сознании посредством СМИ. Для лучшего понимания сущности стереотипов исследователи сравнили статьи из российской и зарубежной прессы, а также провели опрос среди иностранцев, который помог определить, является ли стереотип правдивым или это всего лишь предвзятое необоснованное мнение.

Ключевые слова: межкультурная коммуникация; стереотипы; стереотипизация.

Every nation with its culture is determined by different social odes: customs, fashion, music, society relations etc. Every culture can be described as our everyday life: how we communicate, what language we use, what makes us happy and so on. The key to effective cross-cultural communication is, of course, knowledge. The knowledge of everything that is connected with other country we are going to communicate.

However, today in every society different stereotypes about other countries are formed – about behavior, traditions, habits and lifestyle. Unfortunately, stereotypes put labels about how a person should act or live according to some facts. This social mechanism can generate prejudice and specific attitudes which can escalate into ill-founded hatred [Kleg 1993: 113]. So, it is very significant to know the difference between true real facts and false believes.

The word “stereotype” comes from the printing trade and was first adopted in 1798 by Firmin Didot. At first it meant “solid impression on one or more idea”. Outside the printing, the first reference to “stereotype” was in 1850, as a noun that meant “image perpetuated without change”. Only in 1922 “stereotype” was first used in the modern psychological sense by American journalist Walter Lippman [Stereotype: URL].

Scientists described the stereotype as a small worldview held in people's minds to save time and effort while perceiving some difficult situations. So stereotypes are inside our minds. Sometimes we even don't understand that they greatly influence our worldview and perception of life [Чеснокова 2015: 91].

In our research we have analyzed some common stereotypes about Russians. Bears, vodka, severe winters, Russian mafia? In spite of the fact that life in Russia has changed foreigners still have certain stereotypes about our lifestyle. In our research we have made a questionnaire survey for 21 foreigners from Germany, Brazil, Belgium, Spain, Turkey, China, Mexico, Italy, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Serbia, Andorra and Slovakia. We have asked them what they think about Russian people and their life.

We have analyzed stereotypes basing on 20 Russian and foreign articles containing information about Russian stereotypes from different mass-media sources.

With the help of the first article [Хазан 2013] we defined the following question: **“Are Russians rude?”**. Our research has shown that only 9.5 % of respondents answered that Russians are rude. So, we may conclude that this stereotype about Russia is not true.

One more article “Russian homophobia. Now it’s just an ethical moment” [Че 2016] is dedicated to the demonstration of homophobia in one company. The author says that it is not only single instance and this attitude to “other” people is flourishing and widely supported by many people in Russia.

With the help of this article we defined the following question: **“Are Russians homophobic and intolerant?”**. Our research has shown the opposed result – only 28.6 % of respondents answered that Russians are homophobic and intolerant. So we may conclude, fortunately, that this stereotype is not completely true in foreigners’ opinion.

We have also studied an article “Why do Russians drink?” [Почему русские пьют? 2014]. In the article the author touches upon the fact that this stereotype relates to our history. The crucial moments were the age of Peter the Great and the decision of Catherine the Great to establish potatory chambers.

Since the 80s of the 19th century the alcohol consumption was reduced and in 1914 the dry law came into the effect. It led to crime reduction and formation of new traditions. However later this law was abolished and now we are where we are. As a result of this we defined the following question: **“Do you think Russians love alcohol?”**.

Our research has shown that three-quarters of respondents think that it is true. Maybe this stereotype is connected with Russian “vodka” which is widely known among foreigners. All in all, we may conclude that this stereotype still exists in foreigners’ minds.

We have studied the article “Russian Women – 6 Stereotypes that are true” [Nikolaeva 2015] from the international website with dating tips. The article is aimed to discover the real image of Russian women and describe stereotypes that are actually true.

According to this article Russian women are too flashy and prefer to dress up even for a simple walk in the park. Moreover, the author claims that thanks

to their Slavic genes, most women have the features that men find attractive, that's why in foreigners' perception the Russians are gorgeous and more beautiful than women of others nationalities.

With the help of this article we defined the following questions: **“Do you think Russian women are beautiful?”**. Our research has shown that 100 % of respondents find that Russian women are above average in the beauty meter. This is the most common stereotype and the most accurate one.

“Do you think Russians like fancy and flashy things?”

71.4 % of respondents answered that Russian women love to show off and choose extravagant clothes even for usual meetings. However, almost 29 % of foreigners do not think that people from Russia are obsessed with flashy things.

We may conclude that these two stereotypes were confirmed not only by the opinion of the author of the article but also by the vast majority of foreigners.

The next stereotype that **Russian women are pragmatic selfish gold-diggers** was produced in 90's, when a lot of Russians got opportunity to travel and tried to find a better life out there. Fortunately, foreigners almost unanimously deny the selfish nature of our beauties.

The next article is called “The wonders of Russian driving” [The wonders...: URL] and it is dedicated to Russians' style of driving. The author has once lived in Russia so he tells everything basing on his own experience. He points out that there are a lot of strange and awkward situations on the roads in Russia. Moreover, “people driving like crazy, pulling out maneuvers that save around three seconds and that create huge possibilities for road chaos”. He also mentions numerous road accidents because Russians do not obey traffic rules. In general, the author shows a negative attitude to Russians' behavior on the roads. So we formed the following question: **“Are Russians crazy about extreme things like speed driving, ice-swimming etc?”**.

It is clearly seen that this stereotype does exist. 71.4 % of respondents agree with this statement because the situation in other countries is not like in Russia. The rules there are stricter than in Russia and maybe Russians' lifestyle is so hectic that it also influences the way of driving.

Summing up the analysis of the articles and survey responses we can see the following results.

The information in articles taken from English and Russian resources is mostly truthful. We found proves to the following stereotypes.

Russians live in cold climate. Most of the foreigners wrote a comment that Russian winter is super crazy, and the same information was found in the studied articles.

Another stereotype which was proved is about famous beauty of Russian women and their flashy style. Regardless to the fact that personally we don't agree with this opinion, some articles give us the opposite information.

Two more stereotypes about Russian love of extreme and intolerant attitude to LGBT communities also turned out to be truthful.

One of the stereotypes was partly truthful. It's a stereotype of Russian's alcohol abuse. Foreigners in the responses didn't show 100 % unanimity; nevertheless, more than 70 % of the people think that we love alcohol. However, the studied article gave us slightly different information. Yes, Russian people can drink, but they don't do it more often than other nations. Moreover, the problem of alcohol consumption takes place mostly in villages. People who live in cities have normal attitude towards such drinks.

Despite the fact that we analyzed Russian and English articles, both cultures depicted stereotypes from the same side. The most interesting fact is that Russian articles mostly support existing stereotypes, not trying to prove the opposite.

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STEREOTYPES ABOUT RUSSIA IN MASS-MEDIA

The paper is dedicated to analysis of stereotypes about Russia and Russian people which have been formed in public conscience through different mass-media sources. For better understanding of stereotype nature researchers have compared articles from Russian and foreign press and conveyed a survey which helps to determine whether stereotypes are truthful or prejudiced.

Key words: cross-cultural communication; stereotypes; stereotyping.