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Development of ethnic stereotypes from preschool to adolescence: patterns and determinants



# Introductory Notes. Hungary

Republic of Hungary is a multiethnic state. 13 ethnically defined communities are recognized as national and/or ethnic minorities. This status must be requested.

Empirical studies of ethnicity in Hungary focus mainly on four issues:

- -Roma "question"
- -Jewish "question"
- -Hungarian minorities in neighboring states
- -Ethnic tolerance.

Developmental facets of ethnic relations had received less attention.

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### Aims and Methods

#### **Aims**

Description of the structure of ethnic stereotypes (ES) in childhood and adolescence

<b>Procedures</b>	Sub	ects

1. Structured interviews preschool,

first & second grade

2. Bogardus Social Distance Scale 12 yrs +

3. Ethnic Stereotypes Scale 10 yrs +



### Structured interview

How different people may be recognized?

- List as many people (nations) as you can
- Describe them
- > Had you visited other countries?
- > What kind of people live in Hungary?
- ►Who are you?
- > Who are your parents, siblings, grandparents?
- >Who are your friends?
- Do you talk about different people at home, at the nursery

school?







## Bogardus Social Distance Scale

(modified version)

	Spaniards	Chinese	Russians	Roma (Gypsies)	Germans	Hungarians	Jews	Arabs	African Americans	French	Italians
1. Marriage											
2. Family member											
3. Neighbour (next door)											
4. Coworker											
5. Lives in the same street											
6. Lives in the same town											
7. Lives in the same country											
8. Visitor to my country											
9. Rare visitor to my country											







## **Evaluation of Bogardus Scale**

- \* Bogardus Scale does not measure ethnic stereotypes (ES) directly, but it strongly correlates with ES tests.
- \* Bogardus Scale was selected as simple, rapid, easy to use, reliable instrument
- \* Social distance is represented by willingness to establish various forms of social relations and contacts.
- \* Weight of each category is 1, the sum represents extent of ethnic tolerance. Max. score is 9 highest degree of ethnic tolerance, minimal is
- 1 highest degree of rejection
- \* Number and composition of ethnic groups may vary.







## Ethnic Stereotypes Scale (ESS)

		French	Germans	Roma (Gypsies)	Italians	Americans (Caucasian)	Poles	Jews	Russians	Hungarians	Afr. Americanns	English	Chinese	Arabs
1.	Hard working													
2.	Hospitable													
3.	Affluent													
4.	Clean, accurate													
5.	Religious													
6.	Conflicting													
7.	Good neighbours													
8.	Polite													
9.	Distrustful													
10.	Easily adjust to new lifestyle													
11.	Perfidious, mean													
12.	Enterprising													
13.	Aggressive, violent													
14.	Active in organized crime													
15.	I would invite them to a party													
16.	Kind													
17.	Law abiding													
18.	Peaceloving													
19.	Cool (cold)													
20.	Greedy													
21.	Strong self control													
22.	Good sense of humour													
23.	Reliable													
24.	I like them													
25.	Introverted													



### Application of the ESS

ESS is a semantic differential type scale. It was developed by the author and a number of collaborators in several versions. Items of the scale were selected from a pool of more than a hundred according to their statistic validity, and reliability.

Short version (shown above) was used in the presented below studies of adolescents, full version (45 items and 24 ethnic groups) was offered to adults.

Ss use -3-2-1 0 +1 +2 +3 scale for evaluation (converted to 1 to 7 linear scale for analysis)

Data analysis in most studies was factor analysis and drawing of semantic space (Petrenko and Mitina, 1997).







### Overview of Projects

#### Study 1

Subjects: preschoolers and first-second grade students. N = 30, 16 females – 14 males

Locations: ethnic status of the Ss

nursery school (Budapest),

elementary school (Békéscsaba, Békés County),

elementary school (Lórév, Pest County)

Method: interview (videotaperecorded)

Hungarian

mostly Slovakian

mostly Serbian

#### Study 2

Subjects: elementary school students (two age groups, 8 - 10, and 13 - 14 yrs.)

N = 100, 53 females – 47 males

Location: elementary schools in Arnót and Abaújszántó (BAZ County)

Ethnic status: mixed Hungarian and Roma (about 50-50 %)

Method: ESS

#### Study 3

Subjects: high school students, 16 - 19 yrs. N = 79, 40 females - 39 males

Location: high school (Dunaújváros, Fejér County)

Ethnic status: Hungarian

Method: Bogardus Scale, ESS





## Study 1

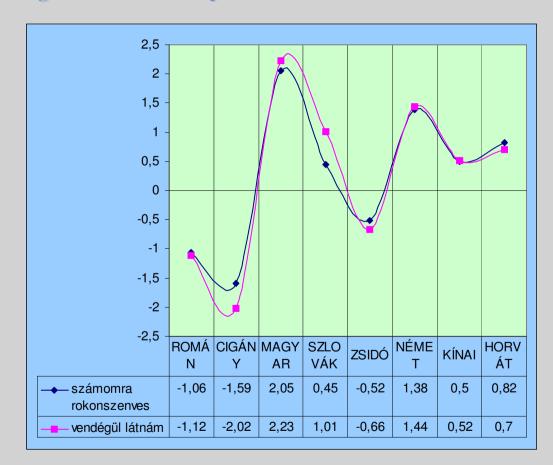
#### Results and conclusions

- 1. Preschoolers (5 6 yrs) are aware of their ethnic affiliation
- 2. Few ethnic stereotypes can be identified
- 3. Ethnic affiliation is recognized mainly according to external appearance (racial identification)
- 4. Personal experience is limited and not structured, it seems to influence development of ES primarily in the case minority students, who live in pronounced multicultural environment
- 5. First and second grade students (7-8 yrs) show developed and structured system of ethnic identity and first elements of ethnic stereotypes
- 6. Minority students, Slovaks more than Serbs emphasize their Hungarian rather than native ethnic affiliation





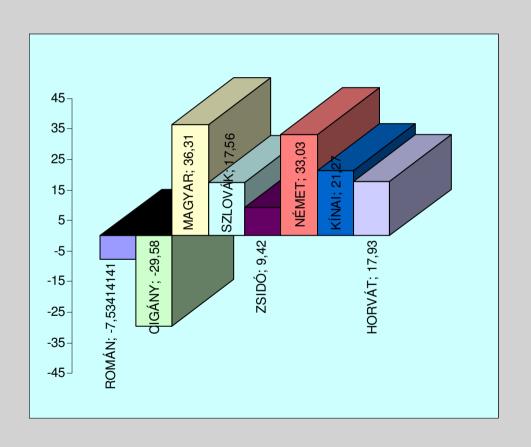
**Two items:** blue – I like them, lilac – I would invite to a party. Romanians, Roma, Hungarians, Slovaks, Jews, Germans, Chinese, Croats



## Study 2. Positive personality features

(combined scores)

Romanians, Roma, Hungarians, Slovaks, Jews, Germans, Chinese, Croats









## Study 3. Bogardus Scale

(means and SD)

Ethnic groups	Females		Males	
Hungariana	8.2	0.0	7.9	1 0
Hungarians	_	0.8		1.9
Spaniards	6.5	2.7	6.8	2.3
Italians	5.5	3.1	6.0	3.0
Germans	5.3	2.8	5.0	2.5
French	5.1	2.6	6.2	2.2
African-Americans	4.5	3.2	6.1	2.8
Poles	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.4
Russians	2.9	2.6	5.5	3.0
Chinese	2.7	2.4	4.7	2.6
Jews	2.3	2.6	3.6	3.1
Arabs	2.2	2.4	3.7	2.8
Roma (Gypsies)	1.2	8.0	1.9	2.6
Whole sample	4.2	2.4	5.1	2.7





## Study 3. ESS.

### Factor Analysis summary

Factors components and representing ethnic groups	Weight
<ol> <li>Civilised, non-aggressive, law-abiding vs. sly, conflicting, active in crime English, Austrians, Jews, German, French, Hungarians vs.</li> </ol>	0.45
Roma, Serbs, Turks, Arabs, Romanians, Ukrainians  2. Open-minded, good-natured, attractive vs. intraverted, closed, separated, conservative Italians, Hungarians, Armenians, Poles, French vs.	0.148
Arabs, Jews, Bosnians, Romanians 3. Tolerant to other religions, accepts equality of sexes <b>vs.</b> religious, nationally separated, industrious, keeps traditional lifestyle	0.132
Romanians, Germans, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles <b>vs</b> . Jews, Arabs, Chinese, Roma, Italians, Greeks 4. Easily adjusts to other cultures <b>vs.</b> nationalistic, reserved, closed, cool, cruel, keeps distance Italians, Greeks, Hungarians, Turks, Russians vs.	0.093
English, Romanians, Serbs, Jews, Germans, Roma  5. Oriented to high moral norms <b>vs.</b> promiscous, strong self-respect Armenians, Chinese, Poles, Arabs <b>vs</b> . Roma and French	0.045
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# Study 3. Self-stereotypes of Hung (ESS)

Self-portrait of Hungarians is very favourable indeed. The adolescents believe Hungarians are as highly civilized as Germans or French, slightly below English, Austrians, and Jews. Hungarians are viewed as very open, communicative, hospitable people with excellent cense of humour. Self-image also includes positive attitudes to work, politeness, education. Such features as cruelty, coldness, intraversion are not typical for Hungarians. Hungarian culture is believed to be very complex, multifaceted and rich.







### Discussion

Comparison of the data, gained in children's populations of different ages show that first ethnic stereotypes might be observed in preschool age. By the age of 10 children show well developed patterns of ethnic stereotypes, which are getting closer to adult models. Later, by the age of puberty ethnic stereotypes seem to be stable constructs, which might be more negative, than ethnic stereotypes of adults: adolescents express less tolerance and more rejection. There are however pronounced sex-related differences: somewhat unexpectedly females seem to be more rejecting and less tolerant than males.

Among offered for evaluation ethnic groups, most rejected are Roma. Non-Roma see few valuable features in them, and limit interpersonal contacts to extreme degrees.

Image of Jews is more controversial. Hungarian adolescents acknowledge many positive elements of Jewish national character, however it does not make Jews to be accepted. In fact it seems that at present rejection of Jews is more pronounced than any time since WWII.

Russians, Romanians, and Poles receive better ratings, but they are not let into the inner social circle either. It is especially astonishing to see Poles rejected since positive mutual attitudes of Poles and Hungarians are proverbial.



## Discussion (contd.)

On the other hand it is important to mention relative positive attitudes to Chinese and African Americans, also not predicted by the author.

Finally, on accepted ethnic groups. Favorable perception of Germans could be expected, however positive ratings of Spaniards, Italians, and French exceed expectations.

Some of these patterns could be expected, other require explanation. Comparison of the data, collected at various periods of last two decades, indicate that youth today is more rejecting and less tolerant, than two decades ago. Favorable political changes, were accompanied by undesirable changes in ethnic relations, increased crime rate and popular support of extreme right wing political movements. Most likely these patterns will not change within short time.

There are hardly any doubts that ethnic stereotypes are learned in childhood through various channels.

Primary determinant is socialization process in the family. While evidence is largely anecdotal, reports of the children indicate, that transfer of various facets of ethnic stereotypes is done by the parents at any occasions, which involve contacts, or expressing opinions related to various ethnic groups.



## Discussion (contd.)

Family retain its role of mediator of ethnic stereotypes throughout whole process of child development.

Secondary determinant is nursery school, where interactions between teachers, and children, and peers themselves reinforce and/or modify primary ethnic stereotypes. Separation of Roma – frequent phenomenon – contribute to strengthening and generalization of primary stereotypes.

Third set of determinants is interactions with older, more mature peers in school. Political and social factors, literary and historical data most frequently influence adolescents through mediation of peers, and parents.

Final note on methodology. Two items of ESS:

I like them, and I would invite them to a party seem to be most reliable indicators of intensity, and direction of ethnic stereotypes.

#### **Coloquios Internacionales sobre Cerebro y Agresion (CICA)**

### Ethnic Conflict and Aggression in a Society in Transition

August 26 – 29, 2010 Villa Székely Leányfalu, HUNGARY

- Coloquios Internacionales sobre Cerebro y Agresion (C.I.C.A.) announce, that the XXX. Conference of C.I.C.A. will be held in Hungary
- Following traditions of CICA meetings, the Conference will address many interdisciplinary issues of ethnic relations and aggression, and conflicts.
- Transition, change became dominant feature of international life at the "fin de ciecle". New political, economic, social, cultural realities became part of societal life around the world. Central and East Europe were the first sites of major changes. Accordingly, the conference in the very Center of Europe will address ethnic conflicts and violence, which had accompanied the transition processes. C.I.C.A. conference will provide opportunities for truly international, intercultural, and interdisciplinary exchange.
- Further information: cicadf@gmail.com