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Theoretical approaches to the phenomenon of stereotypes in the context of concepts such as myth and prejudice

Teoretyczne ujęcia fenomenu stereotypów w kontekście takich pojęć jak mit i uprzedzenie

Abstract: The article is a review of research on stereotypes and related concepts, such as myth and prejudice. The various definitions of stereotypes which are discussed are embedded in the humanities and social sciences, taking into account the cognitive and ethnolinguistic dimensions of the stereotyping phenomenon proposed by Jerzy Bartmiński. The article cites numerous definitions of stereotypes coined in the last century, starting from 1922, when Walter Lippmann published his groundbreaking book *Public opinion*, in which he first characterized the structure of a stereotype in relation to the formation of public opinion. The purpose of the article is to provide a holistic presentation of the phenomenon of the stereotype in an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary manner, drawing primarily on German and Polish research. The article also aims to formulate an original definition of a stereotype, which is presented at its conclusion, and to situate it within the broader context of related phenomena. Among the key problems in the presented article such as myth and prejudice, the article also presents cognitive and/or cultural studies definitions of a stereotype, as well as a purely behaviourist approach to the phenomenon, as proposed, for example, by Adam Schaff.

Key words: stereotype, cognitive studies, myth, the Ethnolinguistic School of Lublin, prejudice

Abstrakt: Artykuł stanowi przegląd badań nad stereotypami i pojęciami pokrewnymi jak mit i uprzedzenie. Przedstawia definicje funkcjonujące w naukach humanistycznych i społecznych, uwzględniając kognitywne i etnolingwistyczne ujęcie Jerzego Bartmińskiego. Artykuł przytacza liczne definicje stereotypów począwszy od roku 1922, kiedy to Walter Lippmann wydał przełomową książkę pt. *Public opinion*, w której po raz pierwszy scharakteryzował strukturę stereotypu w odniesieniu do kreowania opinii publicznej. Cel artykułu to próba holistycznego zaprezentowania stereotypu w możliwie jak najbardziej inter- i transdyscyplinarny sposób, oparta głównie na badaniach niemieckich i polskich. Celem artykułu jest również próba ukucia własnej definicji stereotypu, którą można znaleźć na końcu artykułu. Kluczowe problemy niniejszego artykułu to również próba osadzenia stereotypu w kontekście pokrewnych pojęć jak mit i uprzedzenie oraz zaprezentowanie kognitywnych lub/i kulturoznawczych definicji stereotypu, czy też behawiorystycznego podejścia do analizowanego zjawiska, jakie proponuje np. Adam Schaff.

Słowa klucze: stereotyp, kognitywizm, mit, Lubelska szkoła etnolingwistyczna, uprzedzenie

The Genesis of the Stereotype

The concept of stereotype was formulated in the 1930s by early social psychologists such as Katz and Braly (1933), who began empirically researching stereotypes of ethnic groups. That period marked its operationalization in academic study (Spears et al., 1997, p. 23).

Another key researcher of this phenomenon, considered to be one of the theoretical progenitors of the stereotyping process, is Walter Lippmann. In 1922, he laid a solid foundation for the next hundred years of research on stereotyping with his groundbreaking work titled *Public opinion*. Lippmann's flexible thesis was that man constructs his knowledge of the world, perceives it through images of the outside world, and that "[t]he images take on a variety of forms: patterns, templates, scripts and suggest what information should be assimilated and remembered, and what information can be marginalized or even ignored" (Lippmann, 1922, pp. 5–7). Once again, it is the Polish stereotype researcher Jerzy Bartmiński who emphasizes the complexity of the phenomenon under study, arguing that:

> Stereotypes are part of a multidimensional system of social communication that uses simplified cognitive schemas; stereotypes, which are representations of "people and things," [...] are rooted in the elementary mechanisms of human interpretation of reality, involving such basic operations as selection, generalization and axiologization. They are embedded both into the linguistic code, social norms, and into linguistic practice (utterance operations). They are an essential component of the linguistic picture of the world and cultural code [...]. As a byproduct of psychological and sociocultural mechanisms, they are "indelible," although in a certain sense they can be subject to conscious shaping. (Bartmiński, 1995, pp. 259–260, own translation)

Myth Versus Fictive and Imaginary Stereotypes

When myths are referred to, they are usually conceived of as an opposition to logical thinking, a certain illogicality, irrationality, the opposite of *logos*. Already the ancients treated the myth as something else than reason or the rational, logical mind, as a construct "dwelling" on the fringes of reason. Following Gernot Böhme (1999, p. 13),[1] it is worth noting here that "[t]he 'alterity of reason' manifests here as nature, corporeality, the ability to create imagination/fantasy, desire, feelings, i.e. everything that remains independent of reason and one's senses." (own translation) Both myth and stereotype are, in a sense, intertwined, as both phenomena are frequency-based, and a stereotype may stem from a mythological notion, or a counterfactual belief held by people.

[1] The original quote: "Das andere der Vernunft, das ist inhaltlich die Natur, der menschliche Leib, die Phantasie, das Begehren, die Gefühle – oder besser: all dieses, soweit es sich die Vernunft nicht hat aneignen können." The topic of "otherness of reason" was also dealt with by the following researchers, among others: Angehrn, 1996, pp. 13–17; Bürger, 1983.

FL.2026.14.1.04 s. 3 z 11

Matthias Freise (2003, pp. 6–7) proposes to "busticate the order of things" into the following triad: myth, culture and stereotype. The researcher emphasizes that there is a certain functional-historical relationship between the stereotype and the myth. He also argues that the stereotype is a kind of by-product of cultural processes (German: *das "Endlager" des kulturellen Prozesses*). So, in both cases the *ratio* factor, i.e. reasoning/understanding, is of little importance, and what is more, it is not based on the experience of the individual, but on the *a priori* assumption that the information it contains is the (only) "true" content. Both the myth and the stereotype are popular elements of cultural specificity found in most speech communities, so both phenomena have become "permanently embedded" in the collective social consciousness of ethnic groups (Szostak, 2010, p. 24). Myths and stereotypes also condition human actions and behaviour (Schaff, 1981, p. 127), after all, these result from the accepted "regime of truth" in a given community (Chruszczewski, 2011, p. 170). At the same time, what is important is that myths, unlike stereotypes, are characterized by greater flexibility, susceptibility to change, as well as various formats of transformations and interpretations (Parandowski, 1992, p. 7). This is because stereotypes are based partly on the direct knowledge, i.e. it "specifically generalizes," designates to a specific object, person or group of people, in a general way, as a result of which the stereotype is less susceptible to modification.

Modern myths are usually understood as irrational ideas about reality, having a strong emotional character, and in each case these ideas have a volitional character – negative or positive (Chodubski, 2000, pp. 61–63). Myths, possessing the character of a kind of *sacrum* and often used as arguments in discussion, reveal how strongly people adhere to certain beliefs. As a result, such individuals may perceive reality through top-down, socially accepted categories and display the features of a stereotype themselves (Piwnicki, 2010, p. 193).

There is another renowned researcher of myths whose meaningful statements deserve attention and who conceives of stereotypes as a kind of myths, since he tends to generalize too much, as in the following quote, which is *nota bene* crucial for humanity:

> it takes up the ancient myths of public Suffering and Humiliation: the cross and the pillory. It is as if the wrestler is crucified in broad daylight and in the sight of all. I have heard it said of a wrestler stretched on the ground 'He is dead, little Jesus, there, on the cross,' and these ironic words revealed the hidden roots of a spectacle which enacts the exact gestures of the most ancient purifications. (Barthes, 1991, p. 19)

Given the scope of the analyses undertaken in this article, the phenomenon of stereotyping has been presented here mainly with regard to Polish and German studies of the subject. Already a preliminary review of the studies reveals that both German and Polish observations of the problem bear some resemblance, e.g. both of them emphasize the evaluative/emotional character of stereotypes above all, or the issue of historical contexts as one of the manifold components of stereotyping. Although it should be noted here that not all stereotypes are related to emotion.

A Linguistic Approach to the Phenomenon of Stereotyping

At the outset, it should be stressed that the author of the article understands and accepts a narrow interpretation of stereotypes, mainly as stereotypical characterizations of other social groups. Generally speaking, stereotypes occur in all social dimensions: there are stereotypes, among others, related to profession (e.g. distracted professor, unreal scientist, "geek," suspicious insurance representative, arrogant manager), regarding religion or creed (e.g. fanatical Muslim, dogmatic Catholic), related to social condition (e.g. bourgeois – exploiter, proletarian – simpleton, narrow-minded petty bourgeois) or gender (e.g. woman at the wheel) (Hahn, 2002, p. 19). What, then, is a stereotype, and how should this term be understood? Uta Quasthoff, a well-known German stereotype researcher and linguist, presents a narrow understanding of the problem by stating unequivocally that "[s]tereotype is the verbalization of a belief, which addresses social groups or a selected individual who is a member of that group" (Quasthoff, 1973, p. 27, own translation).[2] A notable feature of this definition, however, is the lack of attention to the evaluative nature of the stereotype, it also lacks the fact that not every stereotype is verbalized or axiologized. Instead, Quasthoff stresses the linguistic dimension of the phenomenon itself by pointing out the inextricable link between language and stereotypes. All in all, Quasthoff broadens the definition of a stereotype:

> It is a verbal expression of a belief concerning social groups or individuals who are members of it. It has the logical form of a judgment that categorically trivializes and generalizes, with a tendency towards emotional axiologization, attributing to a given class of people either specific characteristics or behavioural patterns or it [the stereotype – M. K.] shys away from doing so. In linguistic terms, it [this judgment – M. K.] takes the form of a sentence. (Quasthoff, 1973, p. 28, own translation)[3]

In this expanded definition, the "emotional charge" of the stereotype manifests itself.

"Transcollocability" as Another Feature of Stereotypes

The aforementioned approach corresponds to the multi-faceted perspective on the issue proposed by Christa Stocker (2000, p. 144). In fact, the researcher says that

[2] The original quote: "[...] die werbale Ausserungsform von Überzeugungen, die sich auf soziale Gruppen beziehen, Stereotyp zu nennen."

[3] The original quote: „Ein Stereotyp ist der verbale Ausdruck einer auf soziale Gruppen oder einzelne Personen als deren Mitglieder gerichteten Überzeugung. Es hat die logische Form eines Urteils, das in ungerechtfertigt vereinfachender und generalisierender Weise, mit emotional-wertender Tendenz, einer Klasse von Personen bestimmte Eigenschaften oder Verhaltensweisen zu- oder abspricht, Linguistisch ist es als Satz beschreibbar."

> stereotypes are characterized not only by semantic qualities, but also by all those pieces of information that in any way, on the basis of linguistic usus, exhibit connectivity [or better to say they manifest some kind of a "transcollocability" – M. K.] with a given social group – information regarding usual ways of behaviour, rights, duties, expectations, etc. The author deliberately uses the prefix *trans-* rather than *meta-* to demonstrate the interpenetration of two intertwined dimensions, in this case the social/non-linguistic (a group of people) and the linguistic one (stereotypes). These stereotypes are the "core" of socially shared collective knowledge, i.e. values, perceptions that are associated with a given social group. (Stocker, 2000, p. 144)[4]

In Stocker's definition, the phenomenon of collective (social) consciousness is highlighted, along with the multitude of factors that co-constitute it. The researcher draws attention to the fact that humanity is a harmonious social collective, "a summation of interacting factors," which consequently amounts to the "crystallization" of social stereotyping, focused on various social groups, with the aim of attributing to them certain collective characteristics (Stocker, 2000, pp. 145–146).

Another very general attempt at a definition of the term stereotype has been made by a representative of social psychology Andreas Zick (1997, p. 44), who notes that in the field of psychology alone there are numerous definitions of a stereotype, but most of them agree on one point, namely that stereotypes are cognitive concepts that make generalizations about individuals or groups of people. The stereotype outlines a certain framework for the term, in itself hard to objectivize, nonexistent as such, always as a construct.

Semantic Dichotomous Dimension of Stereotypes

According to another German scientist, Wolfgang Manz (1974, p. 13), understanding stereotypes depends on whether we analyze them in a narrow or broad perspective. Indeed, Manz points out the semantic dichotomous nature of the term "stereotype" (primordial and secondary meanings), and even its polysemy, as a result of the domain within which stereotypes become the object of observation. Regardless of this, the researcher points out the underlying characteristics of a stereotype: immutability, uniformity (German: *Gleichförmigkeit*) and a demystification/meaninglessness (German: *Sinnentleerung*).

Speaking of the way how German science approaches the phenomenon of stereotyping, it is difficult not to mention Hans Henning Hahn's perspective. Basically, it is based on Lippmann's concept, called "mapping in the head" as a thought process initiated by stereotypes existing in the mind. Hahn proposes the following definition of a stereotype:

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[4] The original quote: "Soziale Stereotype enthalten also nicht nur semantische Merkmale, sondern auch all jene Informationen, die in irgendeiner Art habitualisiert mit einer sozialen Gruppe verbunden werden – Informationen über gewohnheitsmässige Verhaltensweisen, Rechte, Pflichten, Erwartungen etc. Sie konstituieren sich aus sozial geteiltem Wissen, d.h. aus Werten und Vorstellungen, die mit einer sozialen Gruppen assoziiert und in Merkmalszuschreibungen aktualisiert werden."

> A stereotype represents an utterance, it may represent a positive and/or negative value judgment, which usually goes hand in hand with a strong belief (or the speaker merely fakes a strong belief when he consciously uses a stereotype with the intention of manipulation, even he himself is therefore not convinced of the validity of the stereotype, of its "truthfulness"). It [the stereotype – M. K.] is practiced on people, more precisely, on human groups that can be characterized in ambiguous ways: racially, ethnically, nationally, socially, politically, by religion or profession etc. (Hahn, 2002, p. 20, own translation)[5]

Historical Origins of Stereotyping

An interesting perspective on stereotyping has been proposed by Elisabeth and Stuart Ewen, who situate the definition of a stereotype within its historical context. They emphasize that the genesis of modern stereotyping systems, *sensu largo*, should be traced back to globalist movements of past centuries and hundreds of years of civilizational development, whereas *sensu stricto* it can be linked only to the globalization of the economy. Stereotypical concepts of thought related to society, which "reside" in the modern language and the people who speak it, may have also emerged over the years from deeply ingrained patterns of unequal socioeconomic development in people. The authors also postulate that social stereotypes have been formed in a world where coexistence with strangers has permeated, even "stuck" to everyday life. According to the researchers, the belief in social inequality has been reflected in many spheres of life – from the realm of the profane, through the areas of new forms of scientism, forms of aesthetic beauty, to the realm of sacrum (E. Ewen, and S. Ewen, 2006, p. 460).

Among more recent German accounts of social stereotypes, the perspective proposed by Lars-Eric Petersen and Bernd Six (2020, p. 21) draws attention. They posit that a stereotype can be understood "as a sequence of beliefs about members of a given social group"[6] or "as the association of a certain chain of characteristics with a category."[7] The aforementioned researchers, reflecting on the functions and genesis of stereotypes, conclude that the central mechanism in which the origins of stereotypes must be seen is the willingness and internal need of people to categorize others (for example, the polarization of society into representatives of in-groups and out-groups) (Petersen and Six, 2020, p. 21).

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[5] The original quote: "Ein Stereotyp stellt eine Aussage dar, und zwar ein (negatives oder positives) Werturteil, das gemeinhin von einer starken Überzeugung getragen wird (oder der Sprecher gibt die starke Überzeugung nur vor, wenn er das Stereotyp gezielt in manipulativer Absicht benutzt, also selbst nicht davon überzeugt ist, dass das Stereotyp zutrifft, 'wahr ist'). Es wird meist auf Menschen angewandt, und zwar auf menschliche Gruppen, die unterschiedlich definiert sein können: rassisch, ethnisch, national, sozial, politisch, religiös oder konfessionell, beruflich usw."

[6] The original quote: "Stereotype sind eine Reihe von Überzeugungen über die Mitglieder einer sozialen Gruppe."

[7] The original quote: "Stereotype sind als Assoziation einer Reihe von Merkmalen mit einer Kategorie zu verstehen."

It is worth noting here that, also for the above-mentioned Hahn, the formation of stereotypes is mainly about the inner desire of people to "inject" objects (on the basis of "similarity of individuals") into some common framework. Thus, a stereotype defines the existence of a particular group by extracting from its representatives some recurrent qualitative characteristics. Thus, it can be concluded that a stereotype is an image with an "admixture of truth," whereby this kernel of truth inherent in a stereotype can become "degenerated or distorted" due to the influence of external emotional influences, and thus factors of human nature (i.e. the tendency to hyperbolize, to lay it on thick, to draw the longbow, or any generalization). Therefore, Hahn (2002, pp. 24–25) proposes that a stereotype must be understood as a half-truth (German: *Halbwahrheit*) or as a complete lie, which, however, can be unmasked.

Ruth Florack's literary study of stereotypes and stereotyping also draws attention in German scientific thought. Indeed, the researcher conceives of a stereotype as a kind of timelessness of seeing something (German: *Überzeitlichkeit*), constituted by historical conditions and social connections. Ruth presents the view that depending on political conflicts or social tensions in different social groups, stereotypes can take on various forms, which makes it all even more difficult to fully analyze their specificity (Florack, 2000, p. 132).

Behaviourist Approach to Stereotypes

The stereotype is also an object of interest for Polish researchers. Of paramount importance in this regard seem to be the meditations of Adam Schaff (1981, p. 127), a philosopher, who undertakes an analysis of the phenomenon of stereotyping, quoting definitions of stereotype researchers from every corner of the globe, to rethink it on his own, in his unique style. Schaff devotes considerable attention to the issue of the proliferation of the term *linguistic stereotype*, focusing on its structure. He notes that the expression indicates not only the fact of verbalization (which, *de facto*, is an immanent feature of any stereotype), but is also somewhat misleading, as it suggests the existence of other, non-linguistic forms of stereotypes (Schaff, 1981, p. 36). For Schaff, stereotypes are only "linguistic," but they also reflect the social thinking and attitudes, and, in addition, they lack objectivity. The philosopher states that a stereotype has the shape of "a value judgment (negative or positive) intrinsically linked with a belief whose subject matter are groups of people whose judgment is emotional and independent of personal experience, completely or partially contradictory to facts, resistant to change, associated with a word-name" (Schaff, 1981, p. 127).

The Cognitive Character of the Stereotype and Its Axiologization

Jerzy Bartmiński (1998, p. 64), speaking of stereotypes, also emphasizes their social and subjective character. The ethnolinguist points out that "a stereotype is a subjectively determined representation of an object, including its both descriptive and evaluative features, and is the result of the interpretation of reality within the framework of social cognitive models"

(own translation). Other aspects of stereotypes and the stereotyping process can also be seen in Bartmiński's views, especially the issue of axiologization (Bartmiński, 1998, p. 64).

Another researcher, Andrzej Kątny, defines stereotypes by their function of integrating individuals within a group: "[...] Stereotypes are an act of defending values that are of paramount importance to us [...]. Their intention is to strengthen a bond between members of a given community [...], to strengthen the positive image of one's own ethnos over others, they [stereotypes – M. K.] significantly affect the integration of the individual into the group" (Kątny, 2007, p. 117, own translation).

The fact that there is a negative axiologization of reality in stereotypes is also pointed out by Łukasz Tyczkowski (2008, p. 1), although he focuses exclusively on social stereotypes. According to him, a stereotype "is a simplified, generalized judgment, an unjustified superstition regarding other people, moreover, it is a fixed, perpetuated stereotypical picture in one's mind of other people."[8] This corresponds with Tomasz Szarota's understanding of a stereotype, for whom a stereotype is a complexity of ideas about the mentality of a certain social/ethnic group or about the character traits of a given community. Szarota is under the impression that stereotypes, viewed in this way, are an important part of the cultural heritage of a given speech community and that they are an expression of the scale of values adopted in a given community. The researcher links stereotypes to the collective knowledge of a given social group, i.e. their opinions about others, about something familiar, about something foreign. Szarota concludes his dilatation with Andre Maurois' maxim: "A foreign nation is a mirror into which the traveler peers to see his own face" (Szarota, 1995, pp. 3–12, own translation).[9]

It is also worth noting at this point the difference between a stereotype and a superstition. A stereotype is "a specific cognitive structure, because of its specificity involving the combination of cognitive and emotional factor, we get a pragmatic structure" (Bering and Villaine-Gandossi, 1995, p. 14), while the superstition is "a source of norms and values, an axis of a crystal around which other beliefs and views are arranged" (Wiatr, 1959, p. 27). Berting and Villaine-Gandossi (1995, p. 15), taking into account such features of a stereotype as an integrative function and negative or positive axiologization, come to the conclusion that each time a stereotype is simply a judgment based on beliefs. Touching upon the issue of stereotype or stereotyping, it is legitimate to refer to related issues, i.e. discrimination and prejudice. After all, stereotyping processes condition and determine attitudes, including prejudice towards various social groups. The close connection of the problems is pointed out, among others, by Gordon Allport (1954, p. 204), who writes that "[...] stereotypes serve primarily to rationalize. [...] While it would not hurt (and perhaps would be advisable) to combat them in school and academic settings and to limit their manifestations in the mass media, it should not be thought that these measures are sufficient to eradicate prejudice Allport."

[8] The original quote: "der Begriff Stereotyp ist ein vereinfachendes, verallgemeinerndes, stereotypes Urteil, ein ungerechtfertigtes Vorurteil über andere Menschen, auch ein festes, klischeehaftes Bild von jemandem" (own translation).

[9] The original quote: "ein fremdes Volk sei ein Spiegel, in den der Reisende schaut, um sein eigenes Antlitz zu erblicken."

Stereotypes are not prejudices, but the factor that shapes them – they perpetuate prejudices, i.e. negative attitudes. "Man creates beliefs about himself and stereotypes about social groups in such a way to justify the existing situation" (Macrae, et al., 1999, p. 226) – say experts on the problem. Thus, it can be said that prejudice is misleading, wrong attitudes, "resentment based on erroneous and excessive generalizations" (Allport, 1954, p. 9), and, importantly, this resentment may be felt or expressed, or it may be directed at the group as a whole or at its particular individual representative.

Andreas Beelmann and Clara Neudecker point out three basic sources of prejudice formation. Firstly, prejudice can result from learning processes in the context of the social environment. Secondly, prejudice is associated with the development of cognitive-social competencies. Thirdly, prejudice may result from motivational processes, which take place within the framework of identity/personality development (Beelmann and Neudecker, 2020, p. 114).

Summary

Generalizing all the positions presented so far on stereotypes and prejudice, one can share the view of Jan Błuszkowski, according to whom a stereotype is

> a form of consciousness: fully or partially consistent with facts, expressing cognitive content from sources in general or to some extent independent of experience, containing emotional evaluations and value judgments, associated with words playing the role of an impulse actualizing preconceived beliefs, characterized by relative permanence and inflexibility. (Błuszkowski, 2003, p. 49, own translation)

Reconciling several of the aforementioned perspectives on the phenomenon of stereotyping – including Walter Lippmann's theoretical considerations, Katz and Braly's empirical, measurable, and operationalized approach, as well as the linguistic frameworks proposed by Jerzy Bartmiński and Uta Quasthoff – and embedding the cognitive phenomenon of stereotyping, which is in a sense a precondition within the broader context of concepts such as social or systemic bias and discrimination, the author of the article proposes the following generalized definition of the stereotype. In many cases, it can be understood as a *generational perceptual error* – an error arising from fundamental, innate, and automatic, above all experience-independent, cognitive processes. These processes may be rooted in the primal nature and, as it were, the "perennial aggression" of the human species, manifesting themselves in the creation of negative, often aggressive and racist stereotypes by language users. This "anti-phenomenon" can be prevented only through early and long-term education of young people, supported by exercises, tools, and games aimed at relieving tension. A stereotype is usually epistemic in its nature (usually, since it may also be used to achieve a myriad of other purposes, such as mockery or the ludic function of language), similar to a metaphor. The relationship between metaphor and stereotype and their cognitive function in getting to the truth, which is often being instrumentalized by various groups of lobbyists, politicians, governments or capital groups, sometimes even scientists, should be the subject of future research. Also, we individuals, as users of an inborn natural language,

more or less consciously instrumentalize this plastic and cognitive structure in order to better comprehend reality or to get the lowdown, to cognize "the eternal truth," "the objective truth," as mentioned by, among others, the renowned German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche ("veritas aeterna est") (Nietzsche, 2011, p. 36). One should seek tools to study this remarkable psycholinguistic phenomenon, those preconceptions, in order to discover yet undiscovered areas of the human mind, human nature, which is, in a sense, programmed *a priori*. Following what Lippmann said in the context of stereotypes: "We are told about the world before we see it. We imagine most things before we experience them" (Lippmann, 1922, p. 51), and "For the most part we do not first see, and then define, we define first and then see" (Lippmann, 1922, p. 55), it becomes reasonable to compare the stereotype in its manifold forms to a logical fallacy: *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. I would recommend further research into stereotypes in the context of their primary anchoring in our minds and the "anchoring effect" itself, combined with stereotypes. I would link them to human nature, something wild, intuitive, instinctive, automatic, and therefore not consciously scrutinized, only "subconsciously thought through," if anyone dares to tackle this problem in this way, because a subconscious decision, a subliminal stereotypical judgement on a given issue is measurable in milliseconds, which elude our conscious perception; we are unable to consciously register such short periods of time, the measurement of which is, of course, a task not for linguists but for neurobiologists and neuropsychologists from experimental biology institutes. According to me, a stereotype is a structure closely intertwined with the primal nature of humans as social animals (*homo animalis socialis/antisocialis*) with something ancient, with an immanent part of human pre-perception, pre-existing in the human mind, with their primal instincts. A stereotype is not based on experience, hence its frequent failure to function as a tool leading to the discovery of "objective truth," which can be linked to the so-called "Orwellian truth," albeit devoid of "newspeak," "doublethink" and "thoughtcrime"; one may link this with one of the Orwell's quotes: "the further a society drifts from truth the more it will hate those who speak it." A stereotype understood as a collective (intersubjective) knowledge stored in the long-term memory of individuals should continue to be the subject of transdisciplinary research, although I would recommend focusing, as aforementioned, on linking the genesis of stereotypes with the pre-intuition of homo sapiens, on its unconditional reflexes in interpersonal relations.

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