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Emotional parliamentary lions:
Evaluative metonymic complexes in editorial cartoons

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Abstract

Various cognitive linguistic studies (e.g. Riad & Vaara, 2011; Riad, 2019; cf. Feng, 2017) indicate that the conceptual metonymy NATIONAL BUILDING FOR THE INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP or A POPULATION¹ can emotively frame activities and facilitate the creation of stereotypes and political attitudes. The article reconsiders this assessment by evaluating a multimodal corpus of editorial cartoons that depict the parliamentary lions that are usually personified and express emotions to voice different positions. Fifty-one editorial cartoons were retrieved from Hungarian dailies and coded according to their political topics, the related emotions they depict and the tropes (metonymy, metaphor, and irony), as well as their evaluative functions. Overall, the compression of PART FOR THE WHOLE and MEMBER FOR CATEGORY metonymies occurs; thus, THE PARLIAMENTARY LIONS STAND FOR THE HUNGARIAN PARLIAMENT that STANDS FOR POLITICIANS/THE GOVERNMENT or THE PEOPLE/THE MINORITY. These emotionally saturated metonymies cooperate with metaphorical and ironical processes by supporting the identification of those whose voice can be heard, but at the same time it also reduces the responsibility of the persons or the group hidden in the form of the lion.

Keywords: democracy; parliamentary lions; editorial cartoon; emotion; visual metonymy; evaluation

1 Introduction

The neo-Gothic building of the Hungarian Parliament is known as a ‘national monument’ (Sisa, 2018, pp. 61, 63), but it is also seen as the ‘symbol of Hungarian statehood’ (Kerekes, 2016, p. 107). The Parliament is an iconic emblem of the capital of Budapest (ibid.). Its elegant Eastern entrance consists of a grand staircase flanked by two proudly seated lions, and has become a popular photo spot among tourists (Figure 1). These bronze lions (made by the

¹ Capitals are used to highlight the conceptual status of the expressions, which is a common practice in cognitive linguistics.

sculptor Béla Markup) were inspired by the medieval lions that often stand guard at churches, in reference to the Temple of Solomon the Wise (Kerekes, 2016, pp. 104–105). Their prominent position reflects their symbolic representation of values such as courage, strength, power, and justice (Pál & Újvári, 2001).

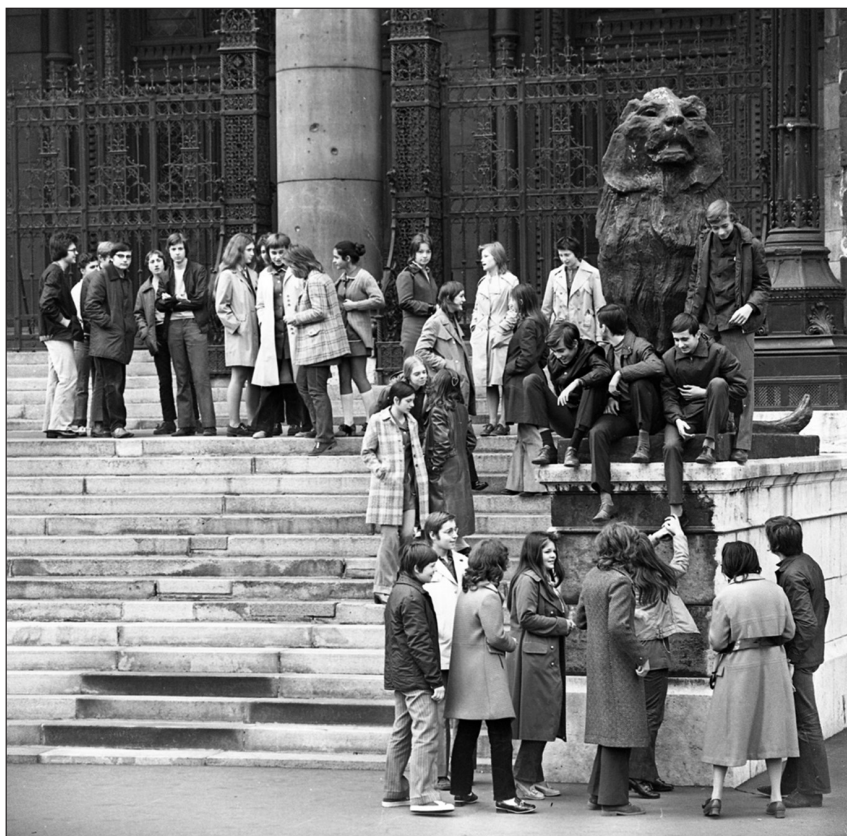


Figure 1 Tourists around the lion at the parliamentary entrance, 1973
(Fortepan/Tamás Urbán)

Nevertheless, these characteristic values are diminished in political cartoons due to the complexities of various cognitive processes, and in particular, conceptual metonymies. According to conceptual metonymy theory (Littlemore, 2015; Panther & Radden, 1999), a metonymy is a conceptual process whereby a target domain is replaced by another closely related source domain (A STANDS FOR B). Like other conceptual processes, a metonymy can occur in various modalities (e.g., verbal and visual) across diverse genres (e.g., cartoon and film). Similar to metaphors, a conceptual metonymy provides a certain perspective of the target domain in question (cf. Benczes, 2019; Pérez-Sobrino, 2016; Forceville, 2009).

The aim of the present paper is to contribute to visual politics research by evaluating the visual and multimodal metonymies in the genre of editorial cartoons (depicting the Hungarian Parliament specifically) and to demonstrate their evaluative framing character and potential with regard to stereotyping both politicians and citizens.

Visual politics research has shown that visuals can influence political attitude; however, the former mainly focuses on contemporary digital content. Various studies, for example, have examined the attractiveness of politicians or their facial expressions and gestures during debates, which can metonymically stand for their (in)competence (Bleiker, 2018, p. 24). Research on complex metonymies within editorial cartoons, however, is scarce. While visual factors like attractiveness and behavior can be crucial in cartoons given that the emotional perception of politicians is at stake, the cartoons represent a very different genre to televised political debates or magazine covers. For example, it is hard to imagine an attractive politician in a cartoon since distortion is inherent in the cartoon genre. A politician may, for instance, be represented with lion-esque features. Simultaneously, assessing emotions within cartoon images may be additionally complex, as a simple smile, for example, can be understood in many ways, including ‘[whether it is] posed, controlled, [or shows] enjoyment, amusement, and contempt’ (Dumitrescu, 2016, p. 1659).

The present article investigates the roles and emotions represented by the parliamentary lions and their functions in evaluative metonymy complexes in Hungarian editorial cartoons in order to validate the observation that

NATIONAL BUILDINGS can metonymically stand for THE INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP or A POPULATION and these can offer emotive framing of activities through which the metonymies facilitate the creation of national cultural differences and stereotypes. (Riad & Vaara, 2011, p. 746)

We aim to answer two main questions. First, whose voice(s) can be heard through the expressed emotions of the parliamentary lions, and second, what tropes are applied during the conceptual processes? Specifically, the paper explores the use of tropes that express criticism of the political elite or the people within a specific corpus of editorial cartoons, and assesses how disapproval is articulated by the parliamentary lions, originally seen as the guardians of the law and in charge of the supervision and surveillance of parliament. We want to understand the underlying mechanisms, which emotions are mediated by the parliamentary lions, how their attitudes represent political criticism, and what frameworks are perpetuated in this way.

The paper starts with a theoretical section that locates the research within a broader academic context before expanding on the salient cognitive complexes (metonymy-metaphor and metonymy-irony relations) identified during the qualitative corpus-based research. The methodological section discusses the essential features of the corpus and the analytical process. Subsequently, we present the results by discussing how the metonymic targets (POLITICIANS, GOVERNMENT, PEOPLE and MINORITY/MIGRANTS) are linked to the source of THE PARLIAMENTARY LIONS, and give examples of the evaluative metonymy complexes. The final section defines some wider implications of this metonymy research for the broader political discourse.

2 Theoretical overview

2.1 Visual politics

The field of visual politics investigates ‘how the visual content of political communication aims both to inform and influence what information voters rely on in their decisions by promoting stereotypical thinking or by highlighting certain aspects of a candidate’s persona’

(Dumitrescu, 2016, p. 1658). Visual politics research (Bleiker, 2018; Veneti et al., 2019) draws attention to the socio-political power of images, whereby politicized visuals are able to legitimize or discredit certain narratives, policies, and actions (Bleiker, 2018). In her paper, Dumitrescu (2016, p. 1668) observes that ‘influencing decisions is based on associations of candidate images and political qualities’ (ibid.), whereby, for example, a candidate with a flag ‘activates nationalist and group dominance attitudes’ (Dumitrescu, 2016, p. 1662). Dumitrescu (ibid.) also notes that, ‘political visuals generate emotions, which in turn orient attention and cognitive responses.’ We consider both of these aspects – namely, the prominent role of associations and the emotional influencing of audiences, in relation to conceptual metonymic processes presented in this paper.

Icons such as the building of the Hungarian Parliament ‘shape public opinions because they are part of the collective fabric through which people and communities make sense of themselves’ (Bleiker, 2018, p. 8, referring to Hariman & Lucaites, 2007). As such, the critical depiction of this iconic building (and all related concepts e.g., the political elite, etc.) in editorial cartoons is also likely to affect public opinion (Szabó & Oross, 2018)² in the eyes of those who have already negatively judged the former (Baumgartner & Morris, 2008). Thus, political cartoons typically do not change viewers’ attitudes but may confirm and encourage them.

2.2 Metonymy in political discourse

Within political discourse, metonymies can be used to obscure ideologies (Charteris-Black, 2014, p. 203) as governments can introduce particular social imagery which legitimizes their action and garners support from the wider public (Catalano & Musolff, 2019, p. 11). Visual metonymies help shape people’s thinking about the role of the government (Bleiker, 2018) and political power (Riad, 2019, p. 506). Through MEMBER-FOR-CATEGORY metonymy, metonymy can collectivize, homogenize, and at the same time evaluate the target entity (Salamurović, 2020, p. 181). This type of perspectivization (Benczes, 2019) leads to the creation of stereotypes. These oversimplification strategies (through MEMBER-FOR-CATEGORY and CATEGORY-FOR-MEMBER metonymies, Feng, 2017, p. 456) can facilitate the creation of national identities through place-for-people metonymy (e.g. the name of the country can stand for its institution but also for the population) (Benczes, 2019).

By facilitating the recall of common knowledge and confirming social relations (Littlemore, 2015, p. 1), metonymies are crucial in cultural representation and collective memory processes (Salamurović, 2020, p. 184). Furthermore, metonymy is a finely tuned device with a polysemic character (Salamurović, 2020, p. 188); thus, its references are often implicit, and there is uncertainty and vagueness about what exactly it refers to (Forceville, 2009, p. 83). Metonymies are usually chain-like, whereby multiple metonymies are connected to each other (A STANDS FOR B and B STANDS FOR C), combined with conceptual metaphors (e.g., A STANDS FOR B and B is C) or with irony (A STANDS FOR B, where A is contrasted with B).

² In their sociological polls, Oross and Szabó (2018) have pointed out that concepts such as politics, parliament, and democracy, among many others, are closely linked in Hungarian people’s minds.

2.3 The dynamic interplay of metonymy and metaphor in political discourse

Visual and multimodal metonymy complexes such as metonymy chains and the relationship of visual metonymies with conceptual metaphors have scarcely been discussed in political discourse (Benczes, 2019; Riad, 2019; Negro Alousque, 2013). By definition, metaphor represents a conceptual process in which the target domain is understood in terms of a conceptually distant source domain, and can be expressed as A is B (cf. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The domains can occur in various modes (e.g. verbal, visual), as well as in multimodal versions (with domains in different or mixed modes) (cf. Pérez-Sobrino, 2017; Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009) presented within different genres (e.g. cartoons, etc.).

Both Benczes (2019) and Riad (2019) cite unique examples of metonymy-metaphor combinations in which metonymies create the groundwork for metaphor scenarios (Musolff, 2006). A metaphor scenario usually involves a specific scene with a well-structured schema (e.g., participants, roles, action, and its outcomes, etc.), which build upon conventionally known assumptions but preserve their dynamic nature. Musolff (2006, p. 36) claims that narratives can be created more easily with the help of scenarios in order to evaluate and assess sociopolitical issues. In doing so, he considers that

[s]cenarios appear to dominate public discourse not just in terms of overall frequency but also in that they help to shape the course of public debates and conceptualizations of political target topics by framing the attitudinal and evaluative preferences in the respective discourse communities. (Musolff, 2006, p. 28)

2.4 Ironic metonymies

Irony is a crucial feature of political cartoons, but it has been almost entirely neglected in the field of multimodal cognitive studies (except for in El Refaie, 2005, and Conradie et al., 2012). Unsurprisingly, given that irony is assumed to be a verbal trope, it has so far been primarily investigated in verbal corpora (Pedrazzini & Scheuer, 2019).

Based on spoken and written corpus-linguistic data, irony is defined as involving ‘an implied reversal of evaluative meaning’ (Partington, 2000, p. 1560), and is mostly used for argumentation and criticism. Hence, saying ‘he did a good job’ ironically means exactly the opposite – namely, that he did not do a good job. Partington emphasizes the emotional functions of irony, including the desire of the speaker ‘to be interesting, incisive, dramatic and memorable’ (Partington, 2000, p. 1566). Burgers et al. (2011, p. 193) build on Partington’s definition (2016, p. 417) by noting that irony allows both for changing a relatively stable frame by revealing a no longer valid problem, causation, expectancy or norm, as well as for maintaining certain frames. Like a metonymy, it usually does not introduce a new frame but comments on an existing one.

The interaction between metonymy and irony can make an evaluation process more complex, as studies have shown that the dissonance caused by irony affects conceptual metonymical processes (Barnden, 2018; Riad & Vaara, 2011). According to Barnden (2018, p. 108), metonymy can be linked to irony in different ways, depending on the type of contrast that is used. He differentiates between four types of contrast in ironic metonymies, which we refer to during our analysis. Barden’s typology is as follows:

- (1) A *devaluation-based ironic metonymy* in which there is a contrast between the feature of the chosen source and the more relevant aspects of the target – e.g., saying ‘She is wearing Primark,’ whereby A LOW-COST BRAND STANDS FOR AN EXPECTED HIGH-COST BRAND. (p. 109)
- (2) A *stereotype-based ironic metonymy* in which there is a contrast between the metonymic target and common expectations – e.g., saying ‘pretty-face is speaking’ when a professor is presenting at a conference, even though her beauty is not relevant at all. (p. 110)
- (3) An *oxymoron-based ironic metonymy* in which there is a contrast between the metonymic source and target – e.g., saying ‘our friends the cockroaches,’ based on the metonymy FRIENDS FOR ENEMIES. (p. 110)
- (4) A *causal ironic metonymy* in which there is a contrast between the literal and metonymic meanings (cf. Littlemore, 2015) – e.g., saying ‘What are the French army doing in Mali?’ despite the speaker knowing that French army should not be in Mali, triggering a contrast between the speaker’s concerns about the source (action) and target (reasons). (p. 111)

In their corpus research, Riad and Vaara (2011) investigated the use of metonymy and metaphor in combination with irony, pointing out that this approach is able to overturn and resist national and cultural stereotypes. In their examples, irony has a moral or political tone, and acts as a warning against deception (Riad & Vaara, 2011, p. 742).

3 Corpus and methodology

3.1 Corpus selection

The corpus included fifty-one editorial cartoons retrieved from printed Hungarian national dailies:³ *Népszabadság* (1989–2016), *Magyar Hírlap* (1989–2014), *Magyar Nemzet* (1989–2017) and *Népszava* (1989–2019) (available at *arcanum.hu*⁴). The selection was carried out manually, and only those depicting the parliamentary lion(s) were kept for further research. The present investigation solely focuses on the emotional metonymic representations of the parliamentary lions, which trigger evaluative conceptual processes. Seven editorial cartoons did not meet this criterion and were therefore excluded. In these cartoons, the parliamentary lions were faceless or static, hence did not express any emotion. These parliamentary lions are the sources of referential metonymies’ examples based on PART FOR THE WHOLE metonymy wherein THE PARLIAMENTARY LIONS STAND FOR THE BUILDING OF THE HUNGARIAN PARLIAMENT.

The corpus covered cartoons published between 1989 and 2019, given that the depiction of the Hungarian Parliament in political cartoons became a hot topic after the fall of the party-state system, and the establishment of multi-party political system in 1989 (cf. Csillag & Szelényi, 2015, p. 19). Although political cartoons are strongly influenced by ongoing political circumstances, any historical or political contextualization goes beyond the scope of this article. Nonetheless, the date for each of the highlighted examples is always noted.

³ The selection of these sources was based on the following criteria: (1) cover the longest possible period, (2) available nationally in a similar number of copies (Juhász, 2003), (3) include print editorial cartoons, and (4) cover a broad political spectrum, but be balanced enough.

⁴ Hungarian Digital Database of Periodicals, <https://www.arcanum.hu/hu/adt/>

3.2 Corpus annotation

THE PARLIAMENTARY LIONS as a source entity semantically belong to multiple domains – namely, THE PARLIAMENT or THE GOVERNMENT (as institutions), THE POLITICIANS (who are the members of the institution), and the people (who are represented by the democratically elected politicians). In this, THE PARLIAMENTARY LIONS can metonymically stand for these domains based on the part for the whole and the PART FOR THE PART metonymies.

The physical position of the parliamentary lions at the doorstep visually implies the same metonymic target based on the container schema of the Hungarian Parliament. The parliamentary lions can belong to the ‘in-group’ domain (i.e., the political institution and its participants), or to the ‘out group’ domain (the people). The duality of roles suggests that they play the role of well-informed, omniscient guards given their proximity to political actors and people. In line with Riad and Vaara (2011, p. 746), we hypothesize that

the source of THE PARLIAMENTARY LIONS as part of a NATIONAL BUILDING can metonymically STAND FOR THE INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP or A POPULATION and their personification can offer an emotive framing of political activities through which the metonymies facilitate the creation of stereotypes and political attitudes.

The annotation procedure takes into account that ‘visual images lack a clear vocabulary system and many interpretations rely on context’ (Feng, 2017, p. 444). This is especially true of visual metonymies where the mapping of the source and target domains are not as strongly conventionalized as their verbal counterparts. While subjective, this approach is far from arbitrary as the annotation was guided by the following questions:

Q1 What type of political topic is being commented upon?

This involved establishing the cartoon’s political focus (e.g., having multiple positions at the same time) based on relevant articles that were published around the same time as the cartoon (max. three days prior to publication). Using classical content analysis, sub-themes were re-categorized into general thematic categories (e.g. ABUSE OF POWER) (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278).

Q2 Whose emotions are mediated by the lions?

This involved identification of the metonymic targets when the source is THE PARLIAMENTARY LION(S). This was primarily⁵ a top-down process based on the potential targets discussed above (e.g., POLITICIANS). Identification was supported by contextual knowledge (based on Q1) and also by co-textual elements. Displays of emotion were determined on the basis of visual (mimics and gestures) and verbal markers (e.g., the emotion was mentioned verbally).

⁵ Two additional metonymic targets (migrant and minority) were also identified.

Q3 *What are the evaluative functions of the metonymy complexes?*

The investigation of tropes was limited to the study of metaphoric scenario and irony, which are often combined with metonymies in evaluative composites. The evaluative edge of the metonymy complexes was discussed on the basis of activated evaluative metonymies (Littlemore, 2015), the operation of metaphoric scenarios (Musolff, 2006), and ironic metonymies (Barnden, 2018).

4 Qualitative results

4.1 Political topics and targets

As the first step of the analysis, the following overarching themes were identified: criticism of politicians' behavior (eight⁶), abuse of power (seven), (various) protests (seven), equal opportunities and human rights (six), the introduction of new laws (five), personnel changes in public offices (four), political elections (four), provisions for the state budget (three), and communism (three). Corruption, a weak economy, the parliamentary summer break, and the election of the first president appeared only once in the corpus, suggesting that the entrance of the parliament (with the lions) is probably least related to these political subjects. If a cartoon featured two overlapping categories, for instance immoral behavior and abuse of power (which is also immoral), then the more concrete category (here, abuse of power), was chosen.

For the second step, we identified the specific targets for which THE PARLIAMENTARY LIONS operated as their source entities. On the basis of the following activated metonymic chains:

PART OF THE BUILDING FOR THE BUILDING FOR THE INSTITUTE
 PART OF THE BUILDING FOR THE BUILDING FOR EMPLOYEES
 PART OF THE BUILDING FOR THE BUILDING FOR THE PEOPLE/MINORITIES,

the most referenced target entities were POLITICIANS (21), and THE GOVERNMENT (14), and these were followed by entities such as THE PEOPLE (seven) and MINORITY GROUPS/MIGRANTS (two).

In the role of POLITICIANS, the parliamentary lions show complex and intricate emotions through their mimicry and gestures. Emotions of OPPOSITION/TENSION (11) (Figure 2) and, by extension, anger, were most characteristically reflected through various visual schemas, including face-to-face, back-to-back, and top-down positionings. Opposition is visually represented in a more static form by means of seated but complaining lions, while the intensity of anger is expressed by snarling lions in motion such as jumping off the stairs and leaving their guard posts. Another common feature associated with politicians – as parliamentary lions – is SELF-CONFIDENCE (three) (Figure 3). This is characterized by overflowing serenity and calm portrayed through smiling lions or lions with their heads raised high but with closed eyes and mouth curving downwards (as if they were looking down their nose). In addition, other emotional expressions of the politician-lions included PUZZLEMENT (two) (por-

⁶ The numbers indicate the number of occurrences.

trayed by a clumsy face with rounded eyes), DISAPPOINTMENT WITH JEALOUSY (two) (either verbally stated or visualized through ‘green’ coloring), FEAR WITH SURPRISE (one) (portrayed through wide-open eyes, a sudden turn of the head and a painful roar because someone had suddenly stepped on its tail), IGNORANCE (one) (portrayed with clenched eyes and mouth, suggesting the inability to see, know, or speak about certain political issues), and SOFTNESS OR WEAKNESS, possibly IRRESPONSIBILITY (one) (showing small cats, one of which is licking its paw).

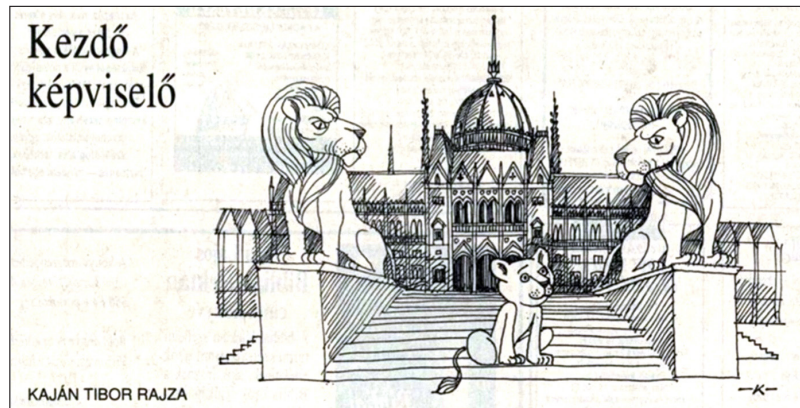


Figure 2 Emotion: opposition

Title: ‘Novice representative’ (12.7.1994, *Magyar Hírlap*, drawn by Tibor Kaján)



Figure 3 Emotion: self-confidence

Verbal text: ‘Based on my knowledge, he is already a member of four boards and a chairman of the board of trustees at two foundations...’ (20.6.1996, *Népszava*, drawn by Marabu)

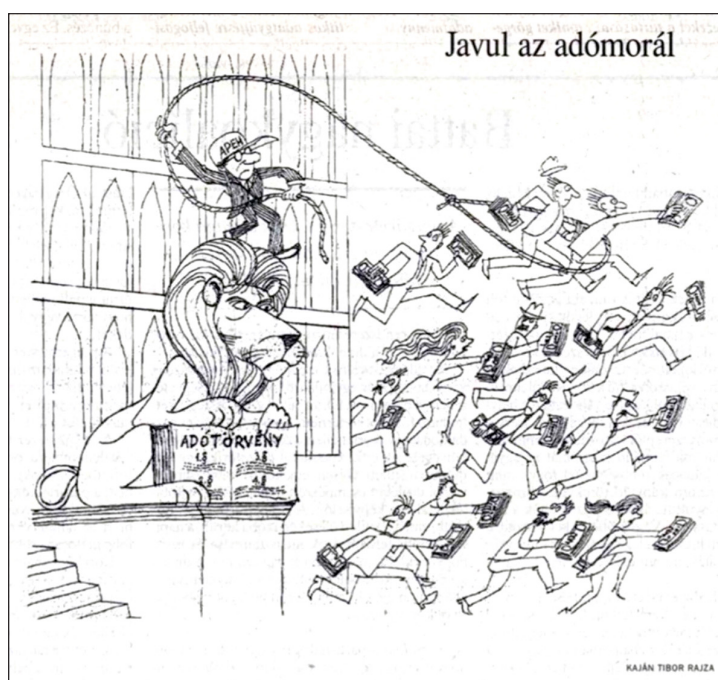


Figure 4 Emotion: self-confidence

Title: 'Tax morale is improving' (3.2.2001, *Magyar Hírlap*, drawn by Tibor Kaján)

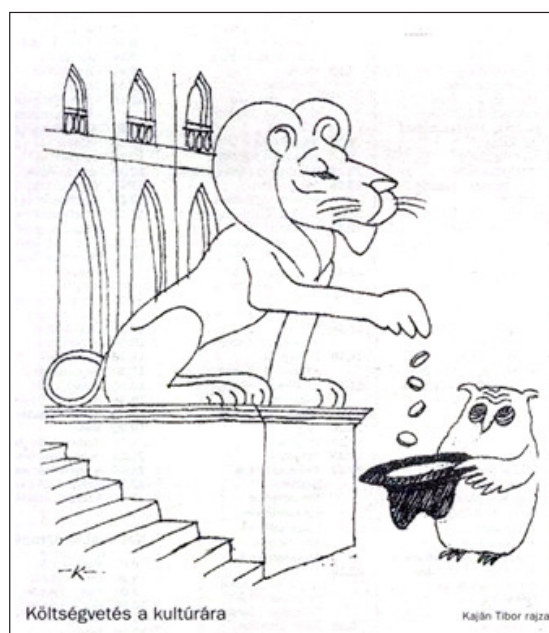


Figure 5 Emotion: fake generosity/stinginess

Title: 'Budget for culture' (15-16.11. 2003, *Magyar Hírlap*, drawn by Tibor Kaján)

The second most common target is **THE GOVERNMENT**, in relation to which the parliamentary lion mostly expresses **PUZZLEMENT** (four) through a clumsy face and rounded eyes. Interestingly, while the parliamentary lion shows **GENEROSITY** (three) by donating money to the poor, the emotion is reversed when it is related to sharing the state budget, by contributing to culture for example, and as a result displays fake generosity/stinginess (Figure 5) due to the ironic twist. The government-lion can also perform **ANGER** (two) through an indignant facial expression and growl. In other examples, **SELF-CONFIDENCE** (two) (Figure 4) is shown by a firm, stony posture with an unwavering face when the parliamentary lion assists a cowboy in the role of a horse. In a **CIRCUS** scenario, the parliamentary lions seem **DISCIPLINED WITH FEAR** (one), as illustrated by their blue color (a physiological effect) and their rounded eyes (a behavioral effect) (Figure 3). Pride (one) was displayed in a cartoon depicting the new government. Another, more conventional emotion – **MALAISE/UNHEALTHY CONDITION** with dizziness (one) – was also represented in the corpus (Negro Alousque, 2020, p. 9; Bounegru & Forceville, 2011, p. 219) in reference to the weak economic situation of the country caused by the governing party.

The third target is **THE PEOPLE**, when the parliamentary lions echo the voice of the population. Interestingly, their mimicry and gestures are limited compared to the previously discussed metonymical targets (**THE POLITICIANS** and **THE GOVERNMENT**). The parliamentary lions show **DISAPPOINTMENT** (seven), and it seems that they are totally fed up with the respective political events. They usually lie down (instead of their original proudly seated position) and often put their paws in front of their eyes. This gesture activates the conventional metaphor **KNOWING/UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING** (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980); however, in this case the act refers to the fact that the people do not want to see and do not want to know or understand what is going on right now in politics.

Finally, a fourth metonymic target was determined (as it appeared in two examples) – namely, the minority/migrants. In these instances, the parliamentary lion expressed hunger by pointing towards his open mouth, and fear through occupying a crouched position in the background (Figure 8).

4.2 Evaluative metonymy complexes in political cartoons

In the third step, the metaphoric scenarios were identified. Due to the dynamic nature of the metonymies involving the parliamentary lions (source), they can be combined with metaphoric scenarios (19) more generally. Within commercial scenes (five), the government-lion is shown as a salesman who is selling political issues (e.g., Agent Reports) at a mobile desk, suggesting that Parliament can be understood as a store with goods for sale. In **BEGGING**-scenarios (three) (Figure 5), the government-lion donates money to the poor (e.g., cultural or scientific sector), which is symbolized by an owl holding out a hat reflecting that the government has full power over the allocation of the state budget and manages it as personal property. In the circus scenario (two), Parliament is depicted as a circus, and influential politicians are animal trainers. The implication, however, highly depends on the metonymic target. In one of the cartoons (Figure 7) **THE PARLIAMENTARY LIONS STAND FOR THE PARLIAMENT** while in the second example, **THEY STAND FOR THE PEOPLE**. In **WESTERN SCENES** (two) (Figure 4), the government-lion plays the role of the horse while the Hungarian Financial and Control Administration is depicted as a little cowboy riding on it and chasing the ‘cattle’

(people who avoid paying taxes) with a lasso. Some scenarios only occur once in the corpus, e.g., CLEANING, PARENTING/KINDERGARTEN, FIGHT, PRISON (Figure 6), TALE, and BEAUTIFICATION.

Irony turned out to be a frequent trope in the corpus, challenging the evaluative edge of the metonymies in metaphorical scenarios; thus, irony was able to question the original statement, make it ambiguous, or entirely reverse it. Twenty-eight cartoons out of the fifty-one were identified as ironic.

The examples within this corpus show that contrasts found in verbal modes (Barnden, 2018) can also be found in a multimodal genre like editorial cartoons. The present research focuses on ironic metonymies where A stands for B with a contrast between them. Based on the analysis, the contrast in most cases (seven times) was that the verbally expressed statement was contradicted visually. For instance, the title of one of the cartoons says ‘Tax morals are improving,’ while the image shows people (like cattle) running away from the tax authority (cowboy). This is a type of oxymoron-based ironic metonymy, whereby the positive statement is contradicted by the negative image.

The next most common contrast (six times) involved cases in which the verbal statement is multimodally ironic. Consider, for instance, the example of the Secretary of State, who is depicted as a master of the stage in the circus and is called the Secretary of State for Clown Affairs (expressed by an ironic verbal addition in the title). While this image is motivated by the fact that Péter Fekete, Secretary of State for Culture, was the director of The Capital Circus of Budapest, it also reflects the well-known political discourse metaphorical scenario of circus. Thus, it is a humorous, ironic combination of a specific biographical detail with a common metaphorical scenario, wherein the source is stated verbally while the target occurs multimodally. The example belongs to the category of devaluation-based ironic metonymy, whereby the serious role of the Secretary of State is questioned.

Less common (occurring five times) are examples when the source is expressed visually, but the message is contradicted by the verbal statement. In one example, the viewer sees a positive visual image of the lion who is giving a little change to a beggar, making the lion seem generous. Yet this positive attitude is overwritten by the cartoon’s caption (‘Budget on culture’): the verbal content indicates that beggar represents ‘culture,’ on which the lion, or in this case parliament, spends only a small part of the annual budget. As such, the image may at first glance appear to suggest ‘generosity,’ while it instead displays ‘stinginess.’ This is again an example of ironic metonymy based on oxymoron.

Overall, the analysis indicates that the ironic contrast occurring between the various modalities includes the following patterns: verbal-for-visual, verbal-for-multimodal, and visual-for-verbal. In addition, the analysis showed that the source is usually a positive (and mostly verbal) statement, while the target is often a critical statement that is likely to be displayed visually. Both modes are needed for the ironic metonymy to be decipherable. Following Barnden’s typology of contrast (2018), the next subsections discuss examples of the devaluation-based (seven), stereotype-based (two), oxymoron-based (nine), and causal ironic metonymies (ten).

4.2.1 Devaluation-based ironic metonymy: UNVALUED FEATURE FOR A VALUABLE ONE

In Figure 6, the two lions have been replaced by two small green cats, while a woman and a man in formal attire look surprised by the change as they walk up the stairs. One of the kit-

tens is licking its paw. The inscription of the cartoon – ‘Well, at first glance, the policy seems a little different’ – overtly indicates the entry of a new party, LMP (Politics Can Be Different) into parliament in 2010. The green color of the cats may be a reference to the party’s sense of responsibility towards the environment. In the article published with the editorial cartoon, István Elek (23.4.2010, *Népszabadság*) predicts a more critical era and thinks that LMP has the potential to change the unsophisticated public language, shape democracy, and become a postmodern eco-party which can be a rival to Fidesz (Alliance of Young Democrats and Christian Democratic People’s Party).



Figure 6 Metonymy: cats stand for the lions that stand for politicians (members of LMP),

Expressed emotion: softness or weakness, perhaps along with irresponsibility

No title (23.4.2010, *Népszabadság*, drawn by Marabu)

Verbal text: ‘Well, at first glance, the policy seems to be a little different.’

According to the potential metonymical chain, green cats stand for the parliamentary lions that stand for certain representatives of parliament (the members of the LMP Party) that stand for change in politics. Ordinarily, the viewer might expect the two parliamentary lions to be featured with attributes associated with the wilderness. A wild lion could be seen as a good symbolic representative of a determined, confident, and brave politician. In contrast, even though a lion and cat may both belong to the family of felines, the emphasis on a cat washing itself is more indicative of a soft and delicate movement. By presenting the Members of the LMP Party as cats, they may seem weak and too gentle. Furthermore, the washing has a negative meaning in a figurative sense, traceable back to Pilate’s washing of hands, and can therefore be suggestive of someone (or some group) who does not want to take responsi-

bility for his (their) decisions. By introducing a feline feature at the forefront that devalues the politicians, the cartoonist has applied a devaluation-based ironic metonymy.

Under the given political circumstances, the inscription itself is ambiguous as it says ‘Well, at first glance, the policy seems a little different.’ The phrases ‘at first glance’ and ‘little different’ suggest that while it may look like policy has changed, this is not reflected in reality. The ambiguity of the verbal statement is transformed into humorous irony by the depiction of the green cats. In this case, the source (the cats) are visual, while the political targets (the lions that stand for the members of LMP) are indicated multimodally.

4.2.2 Stereotype-based ironic metonymy: STEREOTYPICAL FEATURE INSTEAD OF A NON-STEREOTYPICAL FEATURE

Figure 7 depicts two big blue lions who are looking at a small figure representing the current Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán. He plays the role of a lion tamer, holding a trainer’s stick in his left hand and pointing towards a typical circus pedestal as he commands the lions to jump. While the circus can be easily identified as the metaphorical scenario, its target can only be inferred from the accompanying article. An independent parliamentary representative, Zoltán Kész (14.10.2015, *Népszabadság*) claims that the governing coalition Fidesz-KDNP (Alliance of Young Democrats and Christian Democratic People’s Party) only uses expatriate voting rights to obtain a mandate, and does not allow for any truly independent representation in the parliament.

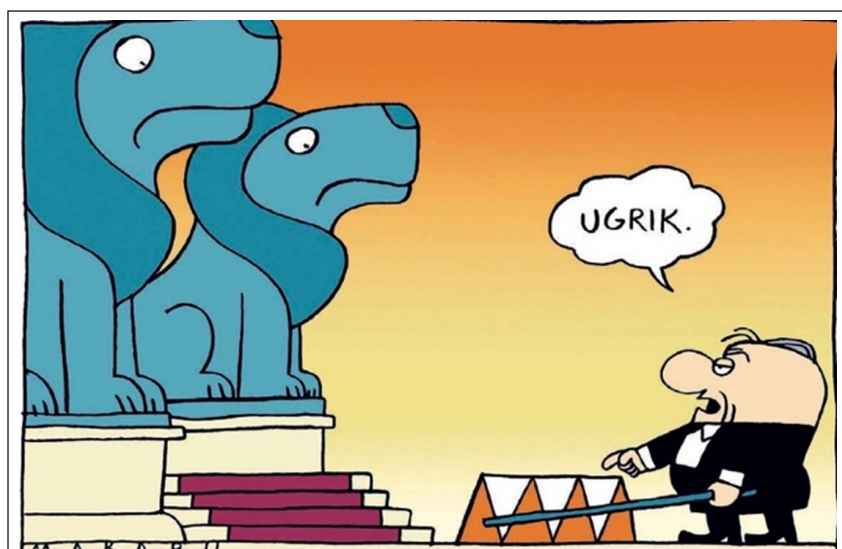


Figure 7 Metonymy: lions stand for politicians (representatives of the parliament), circus lions stand for the false representatives of the parliament

Expressed emotion: discipline and surprise

No title (14.10.2015, *Népszabadság*, drawn by Marabu)

Verbal text: ‘Jump’

In this case, therefore, THE BLUE CIRCUS LIONS metonymically STAND FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY LIONS which STAND FOR (THE REPRESENTATIVES OF) THE PARLIAMENT. The blue color of the circus lions characterizes the physiological effect of fear (Kövecses, 2000). Their rigid, motionless pose and their rounded eyes suggest concentration or DISCIPLINE as well as the expression of surprise. However, these features are not what one would expect from truly independent parliamentary representatives. The parliamentary lion ought to be wild, able to act on his own, and able to represent the people by whom he was elected. Instead, in line with Barnden's (2018) stereotype-based ironic metonymies, this cartoon depicts a more stereotypical take of parliamentary representatives. The cartoon places the emphasis on the stereotypical features of circus lions – namely, disciplined and controlled behavior – instead of on the features of lions in the wild (instinctual and independent behavior, steadfastness). It appears to be a critique suggesting that parliament (the blue lions) act according to the Prime Minister's will. While the example shows the importance of contextual knowledge, it also requires a basic understanding of the implied irony based on the difference between the behavior of lions in the wild and circus lions. The characterization of the blue lions acts as both a critique of the parliament itself as well as of the character of the prime minister.

Irony occurs in multimodal form in how the source of the circus appears multimodally (through the depiction of the circus lions and the speech bubble 'Jump' attached to the prime minister), while the target domain of the parliamentary lions is indicated by the visual environment (staircase), and the position and placement of the lions (sitting on pedestals).

4.2.3 Oxymoron-based ironic metonymy: an entity for the opposite of the entity

In Figure 8, the parliamentary lion can hardly be seen as it is presented in a crouching position, trying to be as small as possible. Visual features such as a faceless expression, opacity, size and background positioning are conventional features of newspaper photo publications of refugees, especially when migrants are considered negatively (cf. Catalano & Musolff, 2019). While the visual image of the crouching lion draws on similar features, the scenario is made more concrete by the wild boar placed at the forefront of the image (replacing the second lion), which says: 'At least I am not an immigrant like the one over there.'



Figure 8 Metonymy: lion stands for a migrant, Expressed emotion: fear

No title (19.1.2015, *Népszava*, drawn by Gábor Pápai)

Verbal text: 'At least I am not an immigrant like that one over there.'

Given that the wild boar is a well-known native animal, it is likely THAT THE PARLIAMENTARY LION STANDS FOR AN IMMIGRANT and possible that the WILD BOAR STANDS FOR A LOCAL RESIDENT. Lions are not natural to Hungary, which is why the depicted lion can be seen as a foreigner, or more specifically, as an immigrant. In contrast, the wild boar can be found in Hungary. Nonetheless, it is somewhat debatable to what extent the wild boar can be considered a typical symbol of the local population, as it is not an indigenous species (in this case, the Hungarian Vizsla would have been more logical, for example). It is also possible that the wild boar is a reference to gypsy culture as it is a common character in Hungarian gypsy tales and jokes. The credibility of the speaker depends on how the reader interprets the character of the wild boar (as a local resident belonging to the majority, a person identifying himself as a local resident, or a gypsy who is local but belongs to the minority).

The choice of the wild boar may also have a more layered symbolic meaning. Wild boars are often used to highlight negative moral values such as rudeness, violence, impurity, ignorance, gluttony, and adultery (Tóth, 2013). Thus, here the typically ‘bad’ figure wants to represent himself as ‘good’ or ‘the lesser evil.’ If the viewer recognizes this irony – based on the metonymy GOOD FOR EVIL – then the wild boar’s comment can be seen as hate speech. As for the modality of the oxymoron-based ironic metonymy, ‘goodness’ (more specifically local patriotism and national thinking) is expressed verbally, while the ‘evil’ is represented multimodally through the visual choice of the wild boar and the verbal differentiation of ‘us’ versus ‘them.’

4.2.4 Causal ironic metonymy: effect for the cause

An example of causal ironic metonymy is shown in Figure 9, where one of the male lions has been replaced with a lioness (illustrated by the lack of a mane and large lashes). They are both sitting firmly, their eyes closed. Three people are staring at the lions, looking clueless and confused while the image is captioned by a question: ‘The lioness is done, but how do we put another ten percent leopard in here?’ The article published alongside the cartoon discusses the necessity of a gender-based quota among parliamentary representatives. Hence, the lions metonymically STAND FOR FEMALE AND MALE PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATIVES.

Causal ironic metonymy usually focuses on the effect instead of the cause, and contrast occurs between the literal and the intentional meaning. In Figure 9, the effect shown is an artificial solution to ensuring women’s equality, namely a fifty-fifty split which takes into account two biological sexes. The question regarding the leopard is a rhetorical one aimed at critiquing excessive political correctness. Additional emphasis is placed on the perceived impossibility of hypercorrection by expressing the number of leopards as a percentage. The placement of the lions only provides two possibilities, one on the right and another one on the left side of the staircase, mimicking the bipolar view of the sexes, which excludes the possibility of adding a percentage.

The metonymical source of the possible solution, namely the literal meaning, is shown in a multimodal way (two sexes are depicted visually and the option of a third sex is presented verbally), while the target of the intentional message (the political issue) is kept silent; it appears neither verbally nor visually. In the case of causal ironic metonymies, this approach is common, most probably because the cartoonist can compensate for the lack of a target by expressing the different source aspects through two different modes (i.e., the cartoonist avoids repeating the same content twice).

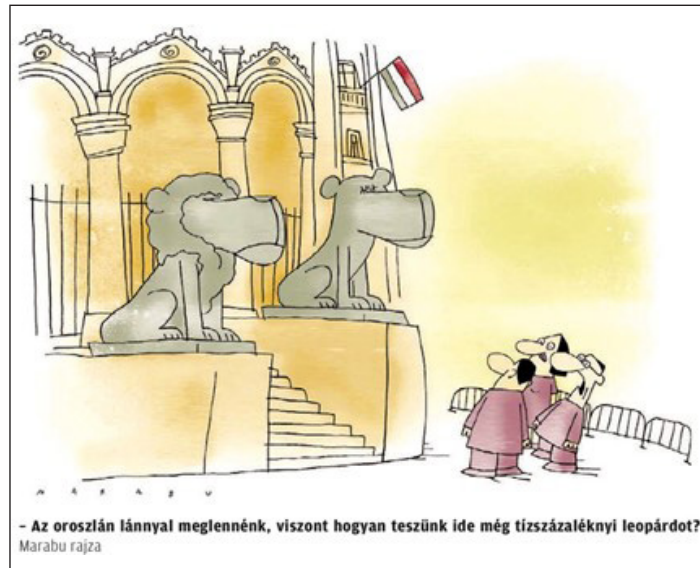


Figure 9 Metonymy: lions stands for politicians (of opposite sex)

Emotion expressed: sturdiness

No title (30.7.2007, *Népszabadság*, drawn by Marabu)

Verbal text: ‘The girl lion is done, but how do we put another ten percent leopard in here?’

5 Discussion and conclusions

This corpus-based empirical research is intended to show that the source of THE PARLIAMEN-TARY LIONS AS PART OF A NATIONAL BUILDING can metonymically STAND FOR THE INSTI-TUTIONAL LEADERSHIP or THE POPULATION and their personification can offer an emotive framing of political activities by which the metonymies facilitate the creation of stereotypes and political attitudes.

The use of the PARLIAMEN-TARY LIONS follows two main patterns and ultimately STANDS FOR THE POLITICAL ELITE (POLITICIANS, GOVERNMENT, OR PARLIAMENT), and also for THE PEOPLE. However, the ‘speaker’ (designated by the lion) can only be identified by its (or their) behavior and gestures. These suggest that politicians are stereotypically linked to opposition and tension, while disappointment features among the people. This is confirmed by the related political topics, which are often transformed into metaphorical scenarios. Mocking politicians’ behavior, abuse of power, and demonstrations are among the most frequently depicted political topics. These appear in COMMERCE and CIRCUS-based metaphorical scenarios, to name a few, allowing an interpretation of the politics at hand through the following conceptual metaphors: POLITICS IS TRANSACTION/SHOW/CONFLICT, and also EDUCATION. This gives rise to a social imagery in which people are mostly seen as indifferent and uninterested, an audience for the politicians’ show, helpless demonstrators, or as children who need to be taught and cared for, thereby legitimizing narratives that see people as powerless, passive members of society. This, in combination with homogenization and ste-

reotyping processes, suggests that metonymy complexes can contribute to the creation of a political attitude in which people are perceived as not really playing a democratic role. Through dynamic meaning-making processes, the viewer, triggered by compassion, is likely to identify with the 'little man' in the cartoons. The viewer might easily laugh at the helplessness of this little man or feel the same sentiment – namely, that they are also fed up with politics. This generates emotions and creates a kind of cohesive force among members of society, albeit not a mobilizing one. Instead, it appears to confirm a cultural representation of a passive society. When the parliamentary lions represent the people, their emotive behavior devalues polity-related issues as well as the role of the people in parliamentary democracy. People are not portrayed as playing a role in upholding the principle of checks and balances within a democratic system; thus, they do not function as 'guards' of Parliament.

If we take a closer look at the rendering of the parliamentary lions as politicians or the parliament, opposition and tension, overconfidence, puzzlement, and fake generosity are among their characteristic features. In the assessed metaphorical scenarios, they are selling suspicious things, abusing their power, acting as teachers or parents who can educate the people, or simply performing a show. Overall, the parliamentary lions in their role as the political elite do not appear democratic as they do not take into consideration the views of the opposition parties, and they treat people in a derogatory manner by treating them as children or an audience. These stereotypical representations of the powerful political elite are supplemented by ironic interpretations including devaluation-, stereotype-, oxymoron-based-, and causal ironic metonymy. Within the editorial cartoon genre, the multimodality of ironies seems to be a must, where verbal elements usually position the humorous content and the visuals deliver the punch line.

In sum, the results show that the almost conventional metonymic chain which has been recurring regularly over the years is so flexible that is able to appear in diverse metaphorical scenarios and cooperate with context-dependent ironies that strongly change the evaluative procedure. The metonymic complexes within this corpus can produce stereotypes of two major complementary narratives, with – on the one hand – the narrative of an inoperable democratic system maintained by a passive society, and – on the other – the narrative of a repressive power. These narratives are not directly obvious to the viewer, however, as the speaker represented by the parliamentary lions is fundamentally expressed through metonymies and shaped by ironies, which may be a vague cognitive tool that triggers different associations. Hence, it is likely that viewers will only laugh at or be triggered by the situation if the narratives match their preexisting views and knowledge, leading to the reinforcement and maintenance of these narratives.

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