

Abstract

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**The digital ambassadors: a view on
how cultural exchanges on Reddit
outline the national identity of
Eastern-European countries**

Reddit is one of the most popular digital places available, drawing from the need of people to submit, comment and rate every piece of information on virtually any topic (or subreddit). It is a common practice for every country to have a national subreddit, a digital play on the public sphere Jürgen Habermas envisioned, where the citizens, in this case redditors, would deliberate on social life matters and make their opinion public.

The role of the cultural exchanges between national subreddits is to create a digital bridge between two different nations in an attempt to debunk certain stereotypes and enrich ones knowledge about another country. In this sense, Reddit acts as a human knowledge repository and the redditors as ambassadors for their subreddits.

Within this framework, we analyzed a corpus of 8518 comments collected from 98 threaded conversations from 10 national subreddits (Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia and Ukraine) by interrogating the Reddit API. The aim of this study is to

identify the national narratives based on the subjects discussed in the cultural exchanges, spanning from gastronomy, history, sports, politics, current affairs, with an almost mandatory detour through the national stereotypes. Using co-occurrence and language processing tools we managed to create an outline of national identities as reflected by the prominent online community.