FOLK SONG COLLECTION IN CSÍKMADARAS AT THE TURN OF THE 20-21ST CENTURY¹

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SUMMARY. Csíkmadaras is in the southern part of the microregion called Felcsík. The latter has always been a preferred area for ethnomusicologists, beginning with Béla Bartók. After I started collecting folk songs in the area in 1993, I set out to make a monograph of vocal songs of Csíkmadaras village. Between 1999 and 2011 I spent 18 days on the field, recording more than 12 and a half hours of vocal folk music. The collection contains 441 distinct melodies, along with variants and those repeated several times, a total of 644 tunes. What surprised me during the processing of the material was the great number of songs from the old strata. Along with the new-style melodies they represent almost 2/5 of the total collection. In comparison, the relatively small number of less valuable songs was below previous expectations. From the result of the collection, it appears that, at the beginning of the XXI century, in Csíkmadaras there is still very valuable folklore material.

Keywords: folk songs, collections, Csíkmadaras, monograph, old strata, new style

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Csíkmadaras is in the eastern part of Transylvania, in the upper half of the Csík basin, surrounded by the Harghita and the Csíki mountains, and belongs to the smaller ethnographic region called Felcsík. Felcsík is situated north of Csíkszereda, between the Bogáti strait and Balánbánya. Settlements belonging to this sub-region are (from north to south): Balánbánya (town), Csíkszentdomokos, Csíkszenttamás, Csíkjenőfalva, Karcfalva, Csíkdánfalva and Csíkmadaras.³

The region of Csík has always been a preferred area for ethnomusicologists. Being so rich in traditions, it has been visited by numerous collectors beginning with Béla Bartók. This is why I consider it important to give a brief overview of the collections of Felcsík so far and the Felcsík folk songs published in various publications. All the more so that during my collection in Csíkmadaras I often relied on them.

1. The first who collected songs from Felcsík was **Béla Bartók**, in Karcfalva, Csíkjenőfala and Csíkszenttamás in **1907**. From his collection Ilona Rácz publishes 18 tunes in her study⁴, and she notes that Bartók collected other 66 tunes in the named three villages. From the latter songs Bartók himself publishes seven.⁵ Not counting the tunes published several times in different publications, other songs were also published such as: five tunes in *Bartók-order*, ⁶ three tunes in the volume by László Dobszay and Janka Szendrei,⁷ too in The Encyclopaedia of Hungarian Folk Music IX⁸ as well as

³ Vofkori, László. Székelyföld útikönyve. II. Csíkszék Háromszék (Travel Guide of Szeklerland. II. Csíkszék Háromszék). Carthographia Kft. Press, Budapest, 1998, pp 11.

⁴ Rácz, Ilona. "Bartók Béla Csík megyei pentaton gyűjtése 1907-ben (Béla Bartók's pentatonic collection of Csík County in 1907)." In Vargyas, Lajos (editor). Népzene és zenetörténet, I. (Folk music and Music History, I). Editio Musica, Budapest, 1972, pp. 9-62, Nos 1, 5, 7, 10, 12, 14, 19, 20, 24, 31, 33, 36, 37, 39, 44, 45, 46, 47.

⁵ Bartók, Béla. A magyar népdal (The Hungarian Folk Song). Rózsavölgyi és társa Press, Budapest, 1924, Nos 64, 165, 176b, 197, 202, 204, 223.

⁶ Bartók, Béla. Magyar népdalok, Egyetemes gyűjtemény (Hungarian Folk Songs, Universal Collection), edited by Sándor Kovács and Ferenc Sebő. Akadémiai Press, Budapest, 1991, Nos 58/1-2, 65b, 157i/2, 334a.

⁷ Dobszay, László–Szendrei, Janka. A magyar népdaltípusok katalógusa – stílusok szerint rendezve, I. (Catalogue of Hungarian Folk Song Types – Sorted by Stiles, I). MTA Press, Budapest, 1988, Nos I/18a, III/117a, IV/198a. Note: tune III/117a derived from a collection attributed to Bartók from Csíkszentdomokos (in 1907). According to Ilona Rácz however, Bartók never collected in Csíkszentdomokos (see. quoted work, pp. 10-11).

⁸ *The Encyclopaedia of Hungarian Folk Music (EHFM).* IX, *Népdaltípusok 4. (Folksong Types 4),* Edited by Mária Domokos. Balassi Press, Budapest, 1995, No. 672, notes e, f.

some tunes in The Encyclopaedia of Hungarian Folk Music I,⁹ IIIA,¹⁰ IV¹¹ and VII,¹² at Kodály,¹³ and in the popularizing *111 Folk Dance Songs* booklet.¹⁴

Pál Bodon also collected in Felcsík in **1907**, together with Bartók. From his collection of Csíkmadaras the Encyclopaedia of Hungarian Folk Music VI publishes too tunes.¹⁵ At the same time I found a few songs at Kodály,¹⁶ in The Encyclopaedia of Hungarian Folk Music VIII,¹⁷ and in the volume by Dobszay and Szendrei.¹⁸ The collection entitled *A mi dalaink* (*Our Songs*) also contains one melody,¹⁹ in which as locality we only have the name "Csík". Supposedly this also originates from the same place.

László Lajtha collected in Csíkszentdomokos in **1912**. From his collection a tune can be found at Bartók,²⁰ as well as one in the *111 Folk Dance Tunes*²¹ (in the latter another song appears at number 97 that can be identified with the tune from Bartók's volume).

These three collections are followed by a long pause in the research of the folk song from Felcsík. Beginning in the 40's however, for thirty years we witness important collecting work.

⁹ EHFM, I, Gyermekjátékok (Children's Toys), edited by Dr. György Kerényi. Zeneműkiadó Press, Budapest, 1951, No. 1023.

¹⁰ *EHFM*, IIIA, *Lakodalom (Marriage)*, edited by Lajos Kiss, Akadémiai Press, Budapest, 1955., No. 382.

¹¹ *EHFM,* IV, *Párosítók (Pairings)*, edited by Dr. György Kerényi, Akadémiai Press, Budapest, 1959, No. 661.

¹² EHFM, VII, Népdaltípusok 2. (Folksong Types 2), edited by Imre Olsvai. Akadémiai Press, Budapest, 1987, No. 206.

¹³ Kodály, Zoltán. A magyar népzene (The Hungarian Folk Music). The collection of examples was edited by Lajos Vargyas, 8th edition. Zeneműkiadó Press, Budapest, 1981, No. 158.

¹⁴ Martin, György (editor). 111 népi táncdal (111 Folk Dance Songs). Drawn up by Benjamin Rajeczky and Sándor Gönyei. Reviewed edition. Zeneműkiadó Press, Budapest, 1975, No. 68.

¹⁵ EHFM, VI, Népdaltípusok 1. (Folksong Types 1), edited by Pál Járdányi and Imre Olsvai. Akadémiai Press, Budapest, 1973., Nos 378.

¹⁶ Quoted work, No. 235.

¹⁷ *EHFM*, VIII, *Népdaltípusok 3. (Folksong Types 3)*, edited by Lajos Vargyas. Akadémiai Press, Budapest, 1987, No. 403.

¹⁸ Quoted work, No. I/5ff.

¹⁹ Bereczky, Sándor–Szigethy, Béla–Szőllősy, András (editors). A mi dalaink (Our Songs), 8th edition. Ifjú Erdély Press, Kolozsvár, 1943, No. 226.

²⁰ Bartók, Béla. A magyar népdal (The Hungarian Folk Song). Rózsavölgyi és társa Press, Budapest, 1924, No. 48.

²¹ Quoted work, No. 69.

From **György Kerényi**'s collection I found two tunes dated from **1940** from Karcfalva, in The Encyclopaedia of Hungarian Folk Music II²² and VI,²³ and in the Dobszay and Szendrei volume.²⁴

Károly Mathia worked in Csíkszentdomokos in **1941**. From his collection a song can, be found in The Encyclopaedia of Hungarian Folk Music II²⁵ and another in *Our Songs*.²⁶

János Jagamas collected in Csíkszentdomokos and Csíkszenttamás in **1949** and in **1954-1955**. From these places he publishes eight tunes.²⁷ In his book one can find the complete data of the Hungarian folk song collection of the Ethnography and Folklore Department from Kolozsvár. According to this, on 1st October 1959 in the Archives there are 41 other songs from the two villages of Felcsík. In addition to the above, two more melodies from Jagamas' collection appear in The Encyclopaedia of Hungarian Folk Music IIIB.²⁸

Júlia Szegő collected in Balánbánya in **1955**. In her popularizing volume includes nine songs.²⁹

Bálint Sárosi collected in Karcfalva and Csíkjenőfalva, first in **1958**, then together with László Dobszay, then in **1967** (only in Karcfalva). Dobszay and Szendrei publish eight tunes from his collection,³⁰ three other songs are included in The Encyclopaedia of Hungarian Folk Music VI,³¹ and one melody is published in the book of Vargyas.³² Sárosi himself published five songs, giving only the lyrics.³³

²² *EHFM,* II, *Jeles napok (Songs of Calendar Occasions),* edited by Dr. György Kerényi. Akadémiai Press, Budapest, 1953, No. 937.

²³ Quoted work, No. 539.

²⁴ Quoted work, No. III/75h.

²⁵ Quoted work, No. 546.

²⁶ Quoted work, No. 111.

²⁷ Jagamas, János–Faragó, József (editors). *Romániai magyar népdalok (Hungarian Folk Songs from Romania).* Kriterion Press, Bukarest, 1974, Nos 20, 74, 139, 141, 163, 244, 255, 275.

²⁸ EHFM, IIIB, Lakodalom (Marriage), edited by Lajos Kiss, Akadémiai Press, Budapest, 1956, Nos 23, 23.

²⁹ Szegő, Júlia–Sebestyén Dobó, Klára. Kötöttem bokrétát, 150 népdal (I tied a bouquet, 150 Hungarian folk songs). Zenei Press, Bukarest, 1958, Nos 27, 28, 34, 35, 43, 48, 52, 96, 98.

³⁰ Quoted work, Nos I/4a, II/6b, III/12a, III/129b, IV/106b, e, IV/377b, IV/440b.

³¹ Quoted work, Nos 538, 543, 595.

³² Vargyas, Lajos. A magyarság népzenéje (Folk Music of the Hungarians). Zeneműkiadó Press, Budapest, 1981, No. 036.

³³ Sárosi, Bálint–Németh, István. Magyar népzenei antológia, VI., Kelet 2., Székelyföld (Hungarian Folk Music Anthology, VI, East 2, Szeklerland). MTA Zenetudományi Intézet Press, Budapest, 1995, Nos 74, 75, 76, 89, 108.

In **Árpád Gál**'s collection there is one song from Csíkszentdomokos from **1961** and another from Csíkszenttamás from **1968** in a pupularizing publication.³⁴

Dénes Imets collected in Csíkszentdomokos, Csíkjenőfalva and Karcfalva, probably in **1970**.³⁵ His collections from around Csík, prepared for publication were unfortunately left in manuscript:³⁶ The Romanian political regime of the time prevented it from publication. In his volume there are 87 tunes from the three villages.³⁷

Naturally, in later collections also reappear variants of songs collected earlier. So, a total of 178 variants of 162 tunes collected in Felcsík were placed side by side.

The below table gives information on the number and origin of songs from different collections:

Table 1

Collector's	Number of songs published per villages*)					
Name	Csík-	Karc-	Csíkjenő	Csíkszent	Csíkszent	Balán-
	madaras	Falva	-falva	-tamás	-domokos	bánya
Béla Bartók		12	12	16	1?	
Pál Bodon	5+1					
László Lajtha					2	
György Kerényi		2				
Károly Mathia					2	
János Jagamas				4	6	
Júlia Szegő						9
Bálint Sárosi		9	8			
(László						
Dobszay)						
Árpád Gál				1	1	
Dénes Imets		1	32		54	
Total:	6	24	52	21	66	9

*) Dénes Imets's manuscript was not published

³⁴ Ádám, Gyula–Sárpátki, Ágnes–Szabó, Katalin–Urszuly, Árpád (editors). Fújom az éneket, ötvenkét népdal Gál Árpád gyűjtéséből (I Sing the Song, Fifty-two Folk Songs from the Collection of Árpád Gál). Hargita megye Népi Alkotások Háza Press, Csíkszereda, 1998, pp. 61, 62.

³⁵ In his manuscript the year of the collection is only notes at three songs from Csíkszentdomokos and a song from Csíkjenőfalva.

³⁶ Imets, Dénes. Szivárvány havasán, Népdalok (Szivárvány Havasán. Folk Songs). Manuscript. I would like to thank the author for his having made his valuable manuscript available to me.

 ³⁷ Pages 1, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 21, 24, 27, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 47, 48, 49, 52, 54, 56, 59, 60, 61, 63, 66, 67, 68, 70, 76, 77, 82, 89, 90, 92, 93, 99, 101, 102, 104, 107, 109, 111, 112, 114, 115, 120, 125, 126, 128, 129, 130, 131, 133, 134, 135, 136, 138, 140, 142, 147, 148, 149, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 160, 161, 163, 166, 167, 168, 170, 171, 173, 174, 175, 176, 178, 182, 183.

I, myself, started my scientifical collection of folk songs in Csíkszentdomokos³⁸ in 1993. The melodies from here were intended to provide authentic singing material to the folk song teaching of the dance camp organized several times in Gyimesközéplok. From this collection, I have multiplied and popularized an audio tape in the same year. The folk song teaching of the camp, organized twenty-five times, was aided by song-booklets that I personally made for domestic use, first including the popular songs of the "táncház", then taking ever more from authentic collections.³⁹ The total number of tunes that appeared in these booklets is 168. In the transcriptions, as well as in the choice of tunes, I've been striving more and more towards authenticity, though I never forgot the point of view required by the popularization to make them easier to read. In the 5th camp (when we first introduced teaching for folksingers), as an experiment, the booklets contained detailed transcriptions. However, later we gave up on them.

2. When the director of the publishing house that published the songbooklets⁴⁰ made me an offer to publish a collection that would include all the pieces from the previous booklets, I came up with the idea of a collection that would cover the complete vocal material from Felcsík. The offer was noteworthy because it emphasized the importance and necessity of such a publication.

So, I started collecting in 1999.⁴¹ That year I went to make sound recordings in three villages: Csíkmadaras, Csíkjenőfalva and Karcfalva. At the beginning of the 2000s, I applied for a research tender announced by the Sapientia Foundation in Kolozsvár. Since the application was for a ten-month scholarship, it was not possible to plan a full Felcsík collection in such a short time. Later, following the collections in Csíkmadaras, I changed my original plan and set out to make a monograph of vocal folk music only for a single village.

³⁸ During the "táncház" movement restarted in Csíkszereda in 1985, took place also teaching of folk songs. To enlarge the repertoire in "táncház", later in dance-groups, I often asked my acquaintances of Felcsík (especially from Csíkmadaras) to clarify lyrics of certain songs. The instrumental collections included many songs of vocal origin that I had not heard sung with lyrics before. I don't count these gatherings of information as being of scientific value.

³⁹ Szalay, Zoltán (editor). IV-VIII. Gyimesi tánctábor. Énekes füzet (IV-VIIIth Dance Camp of Gyimes, Song Booklet). Pro-Print Press, Csíkszereda., 1995-1999; IX. Gyimesi tánctábor. Énekes füzet (IXth Dance Camp of Gyimes, Song Booklet). Tipographic Press, Csíkszereda., 2005; X. Gyimesi tánctábor. Énekes füzet (Xth Dance Camp of Gyimes, Song Booklet). Státus Press, Csíkszereda., 2006; XI-XIX. Gyimesi tánctábor. Énekes füzet (XI-XIXth Dance Camp of Gyimes, Song Booklet). Tipographic Press, Csíkszereda., 2007-2016; XXI-XV. Gyimesi tánctábor. Énekes füzet (XXI-XVth Dance Camp of Gyimes, Song Booklet). Tipographic Press, Csíkszereda., 2017-2021.

⁴⁰ *Pro-Print Ltd,* Csíkszereda, director Endre Burus, whom I thank for his assistance.

⁴¹ I did not include here my collection from Csíkszentdomokos from 1993.

Why did the choice fall on Csíkmadaras? On the one hand, for personal reasons: my wife comes from Csíkmadaras, where most of the kinship lives. We have since moved out to the village. On the other hand, except for Csíkdánfalva, from which a single lament appeared,42 perhaps the least vocal folk music was collected from Csíkmadaras, as can be seen from Table 1.

At first, from the domestic and Hungarian publications available to me. I wrote out the song's characteristic of the Csík area and its immediate vicinity (Udvarhelvszék, Háromszék), but also of certain more distant regions (Barcaság, Moldva, Bukovina), that are in some way close to the Szeklers of Felcsík. At the same time, I have also transcribed the material that appeared on the relevant audio cassettes available to me. Almost 500 tickets were made in this way, which I used in my later work. In finding the informer singers and collecting the folk song lyrics. I was greatly helped by cantor Lajos Bálint and teacher Éva Bíró. 43 At my suggestion, students were recruited from the school who questioned their relatives and acquaintances. I have made audio recordings 18 times between 1999 and 2011.44 During the collections. I let the informers sing what they wanted. Later, I used the method of interrogation, in which I questioned first the songs recorded in the other villages, then the tunes from the previous collections in Felcsík, and finally the typical melodies of the nearer regions. For most of the sessions, I made audio recordings in groups of 2-5 people. The collections contain more than 12 and a half hours of audio.

3. In Transylvania, Pál Járdányi and János Jagamas published similar monographs.⁴⁵ The latter served as a model for me during research: I have compered the results of my work so far with the statistical data of this volume. There were also difficulties with the collection and processing. Since 1965, in the folk-dance ensemble that worked in Csíkmadaras, folk songs that are not typical of this region have been permanently taught and performed (and thus they were spread). Some of these have gained great

⁴² EHFM, V, edited by Lajos Kiss and Benjamin Rajeczky. Akadémiai Press, Budapest, 1966, No. 161.d.

⁴³ This time I would like to thank them, as well as the students, namely: Borbála András, Júlia Biró, Sára Biró, Julianna Fazakas, Beáta György, Piroska Hajdu and Melinda Kajtár, who provided useful help during the collection.

⁴⁴ In most of the collections, as well as during the processing of the material, great help was given to me by my wife, Rozália Antal. This time I thank her for her constant and unconditional help.

⁴⁵ Járdányi, Pál. A kidei magyarság világi zenéje (Secular Music of the Hungarians in Kide). Gróf Teleki Pál Tudományos Intézet Press, Kolozsvár, 1943 and Jagamas, János. Magyaró énekes népzenéje. Egy Felső-Maros menti falu magyar néphagyományaiból (Vocal Folk Music of Magyaró. From the Hungarian Folk Traditions of a Village Along the Upper Maros Region). Kriterion Press, Kolozsvár, 1984.

popularity over time in Csíkmadaras. The separation of these and similar songs (e.g. learned at school) was based on the relates of the informers on the one hand and my previous personal experiences on the other. If a tune is not found in the neighboring villages of Felcsík, it may be suspicious. According to János Jagamas, the collection of the repertoire of villages with a larger population is only possible with a larger working group and over a longer period. "For creating monographs on folk music, small villages are more suitable because their overview is more certain."⁴⁶ The population of Magyaró exceeded 3000 at the time of the collections. In comparison, the population of Csíkmadaras was nearly 2300 according to the 1992 census.⁴⁷ It's still high for processing planned by a single researcher.

Jagamas spent 23 days in Magyaró in four years, between 1954 and 1958. After 13 years, in 1971, he supplemented his collections on two more occasions. Even the 18 sessions were not enough to complete the collection work in Csíkmadaras. More research will be needed. Jagamas collected from 66 informers in Magyaró.⁴⁸ In comparison, I recorded with 35 singers in Csíkmadaras. In terms of the number of recorded melodies – including the variants – 890 songs were collected in Magyaró and 644 in Csíkmadaras. The following comparative table provides information about the song treasure recorded in Magyaró and Csíkmadaras (in parentheses the number of variants, in braces the number of learned and taught songs – without variants).

		Magyaró's collected folk song treasure	Csíkmadaras' collected folk song treasure	
Children's songs		15 (44)	11 (15) [1]	
Lullabys		1 (2)	-	
Laments		1 (9)	-	
Lament parodys		1 (7)	-	
Folk songs	old-style	63 (142)	70 (124) [14]	
	new-style ⁴⁹	112 (189)	102 (168) [1]	

Table 2

⁴⁶ Quoted work, pp. 6 (translated by me).

⁴⁷ Pál-Antal, Sándor–Ördögh, Imre–Balázs, Dénes–Miklós, Márton. Csíkmadaras. Egy felcsíki falu hét évszázada (Csíkmadaras. Seven centuries of a village in Felcsík). Mentor Press, Marosvásárhely, 1996, pp. 165.

⁴⁸ See list of performers, quoted work, pp. 250.

⁴⁹ I interpreted the layer of new-style melodies more broadly than the traditional one. I also included some of the small-scale songs found in the volume of Dobszay and Szendrei. Quoted work, I/IV.

Old dance melodies	2 (3)	_
Folk versions of old art music	4 (5)	2 (3)
Folk songs related to occasions	7 (13)	2 (4)
Folk songs of foreign origin	8 (15)	12 (14)
Sacred folk songs	7 (7)	26 (31)
Melodies of the transitional layer (half-	102 (143)	34 (54)
folk songs)		
Folk song-like constructions	2 (8)	2 (4)
Truncated (and corrupted) forms	3 (4)	8 (9)
Half folksy art songs	169 (214)	152 (195) [3]
Romanian folk melodies	30 (30)	-
Folksy art songs of foreign origin	16 (20)	3 (4)
Other not cleared songs	30 (35)	4 (5)
Songs characteristic of other regions	-	13 (14)
Total:	573 (890)	441 (644) [19]

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What surprised me was the great number of old-style songs. In comparison, the relatively small number of less valuable songs was below previous expectations (meaning the melodies that are half folk songs, the folk song-like constructions, the truncated and corrupted forms, the half folksy art and the folksy art songs). At first, I thought that they would be in greater numbers than the valuable tunes. Instead, as can be seen from the table above, the number of these is less than that of the more valuable ones (199 out of 441). However, I should note that I had no intention of collecting the less valuable songs exhaustively. Nevertheless, they were found in relatively large numbers, thus justifying the well-known fact that in the consciousness of the villagers they also live as folk songs. Their collection could be the subject of further research in the future. Another future task is to collect sacred folk songs, in which this region abounds (from which much more has already been recovered than from Magyaró).

So, not counting the close-up variants and repeated melodies by the informers, I collected 441 melodies. Comparing these with the older collections already presented, it turned out that I also found eleven of the 49 songs from the beginning of the century in closer and farther variants. And another 61 of the 130 tunes collected after the 40s. Most of the latter can be found among the songs collected by Dénes Imets in the 1970s. For a volume with many new-style (and a couple less valuable) melodies, this quantity is not surprising, because most of the tunes sung today are also like these.

In the collections dating from the beginning of the century I found many parlando melodies with six, eight and twelve syllables. In Csíkmadaras, except for the variants, there are ten 6-syllables, nine 8-syllables and only two 12syllables similar songs from the old strata (see Appendix E.g., 3-5). So, the

majority is a giusto dance song (see Appendix E.g., 6). Of the new-styles ones, there are only five melodies with a freer way of performing (parlando or parlando-rubato). More than half of the old-style songs are alike, the majority having single five-note scheme. From these many are clear pentatonic (see Appendix E.g., 3). Almost 1/3 of the new-style songs are pentatonic, the majority have double five-note scheme and pien (see Appendix E.g., 7). There is also a great proportion of Mixolydian new-style melodies (see Appendix E.g., 8). Many of the old-style songs have fifth construction or they show sign of this construction. A smaller number have reciting style.

Other melodies of the Appendix: children's song (E.g., 1) and melodies of "Szent Jánosolás" (Saint Jon's) associated with the calendar holiday of June 24 (E.g., 2).

From what I have presented above it appears that at the beginning of the XXI century we still find very valuable folk music material in the village of Felcsík, at Csíkmadaras. All these values urge us to continue researching the musical culture of this area so rich in traditions.

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E.g. 3



 Mindenkinek azt ajánlom, Szerelemnél jobb az álom, Mert az álom nyugodalom, A szerelem szívfájdalom.

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E.g. 5



- Mér' jársz a magyar lány után? Azért járok a magyar lány után,
- Szebb a magyar, mint a cigány.



E.g. 7