

Magyar Nemzeti Helynévtár Program

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Beyond Neutral Naming: Humor in Unofficial Hungarian Toponyms

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Introduction

Name model

- Official
- vs. Unofficial toponyms

Aim: The unofficial toponyms used within local name-communities

- Hungarian National Toponym Registry Project
- More than 80 settlements
- 300 different humorous names

Unofficial toponyms

- transparent
- descriptive
- neural
- e. g. *Hosszú-dűlő* 'long field',
Móricz-tanya 'Móricz's farm'
- analytic processing

**Unofficial toponyms are mostly transparent
and descriptive**

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The same semantic content can be linguistically
constructed in different ways

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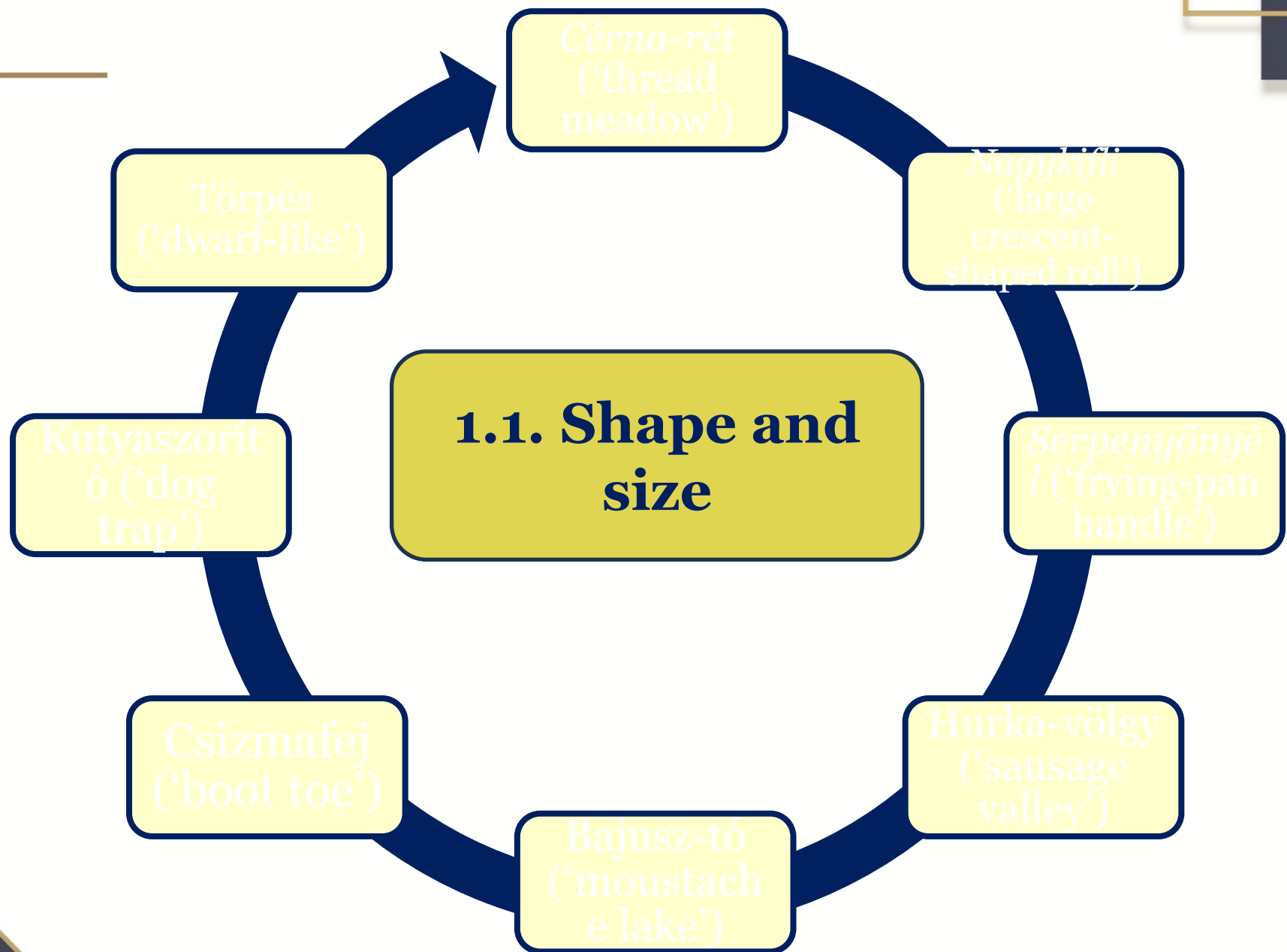
Pántlika 'ribbon'
affectionately

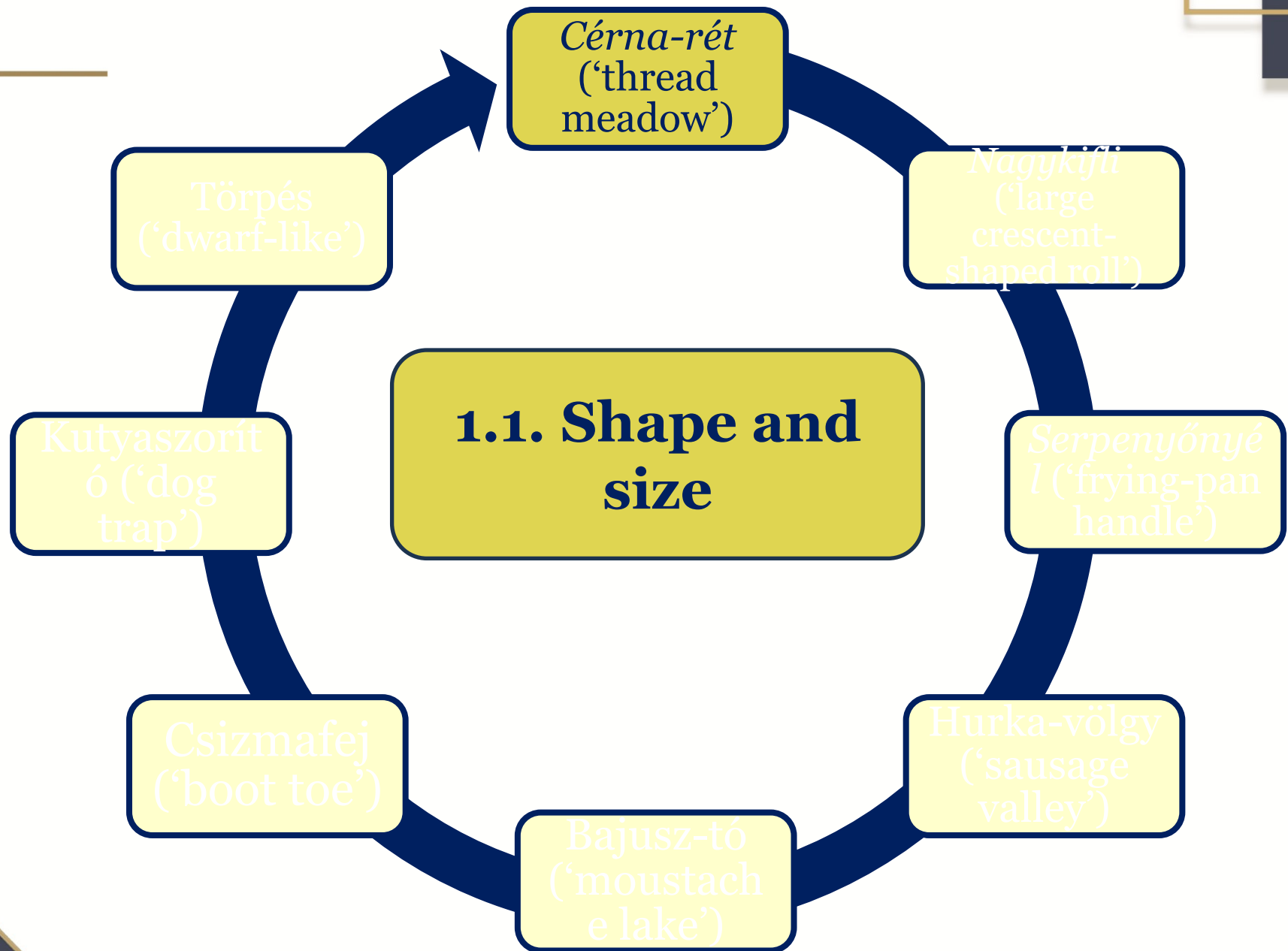
The types of humorous unofficial place names that deviate from the name model

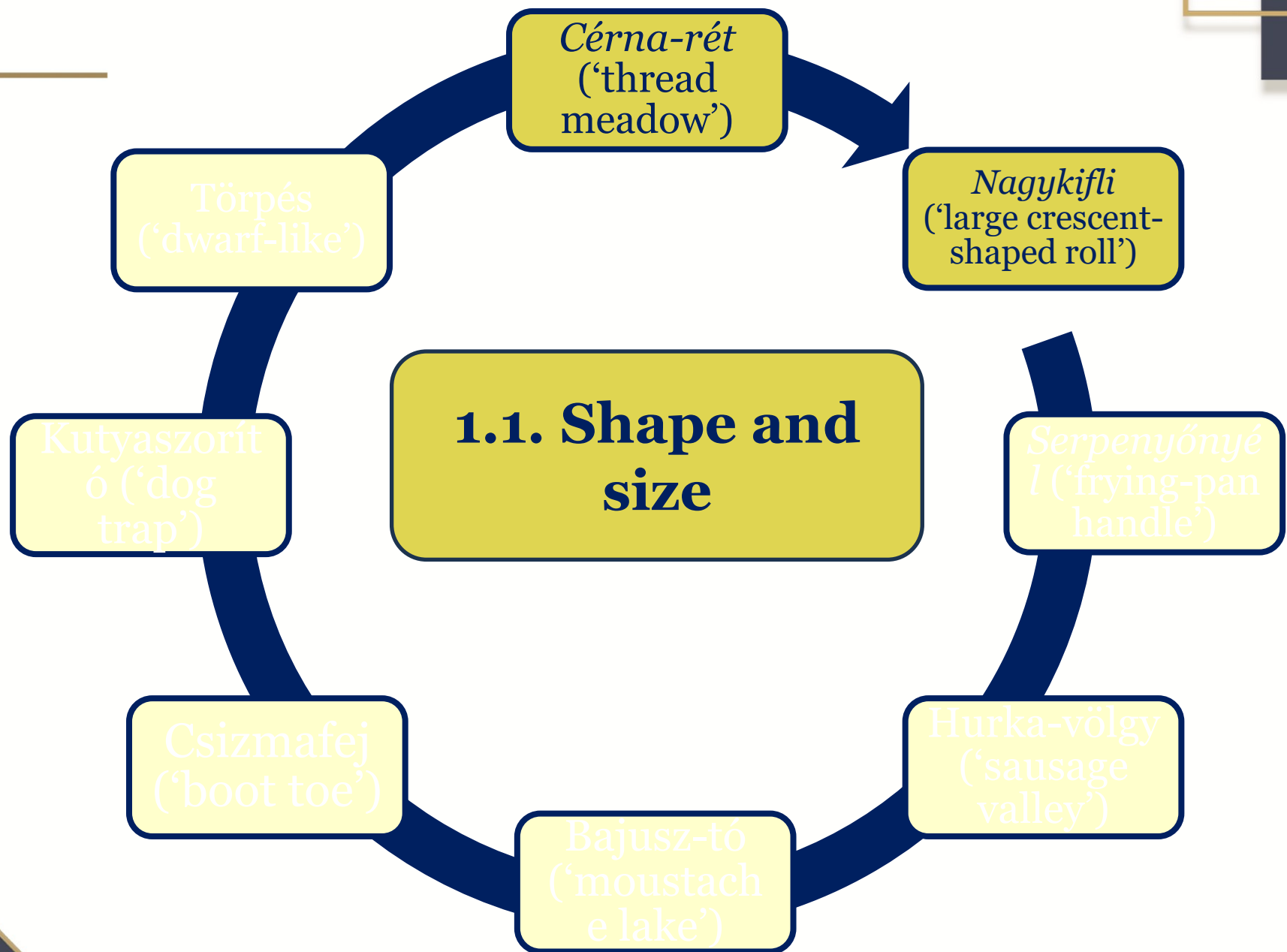
1. Humor based on semantics

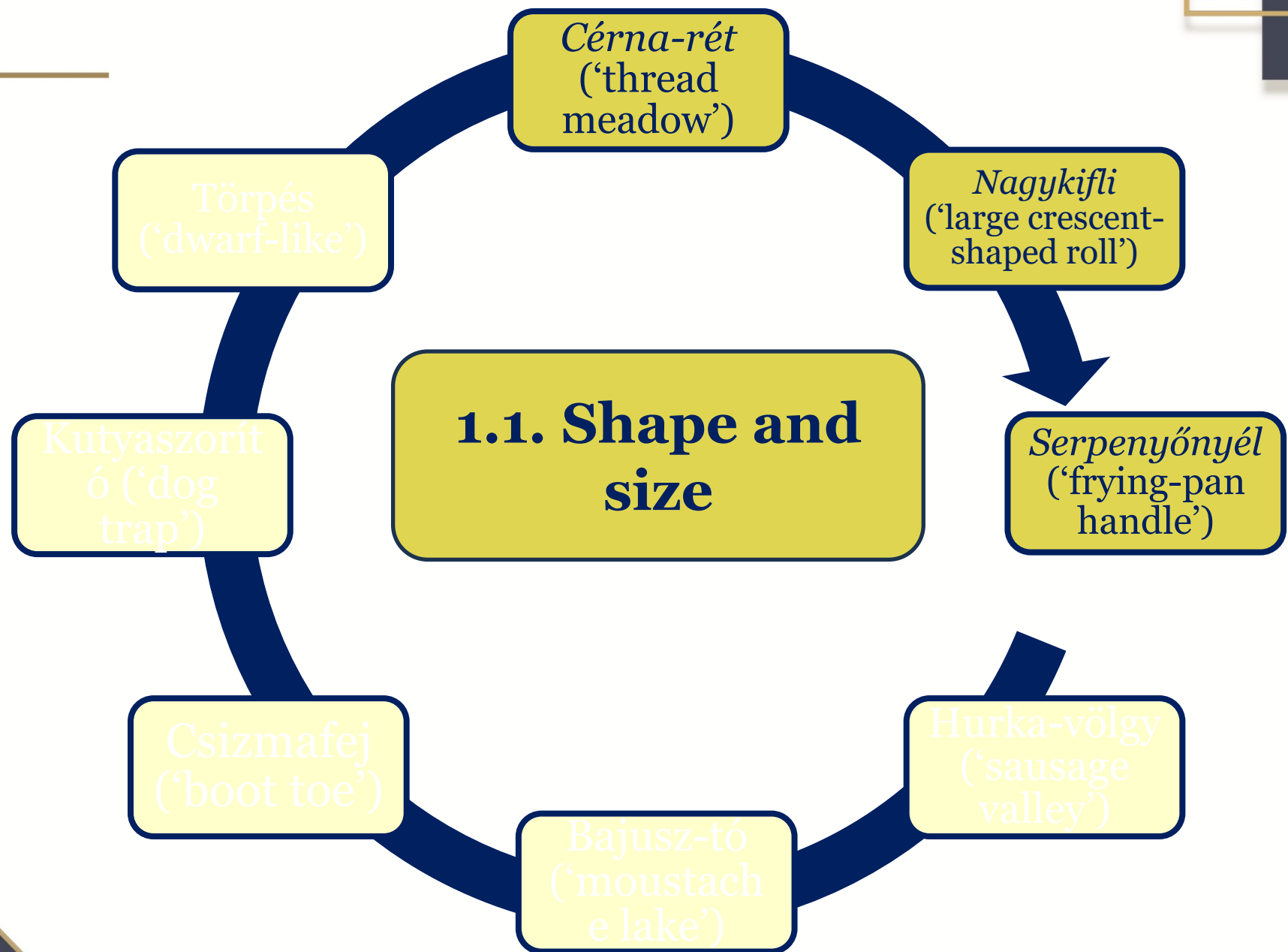
2. Humor based on phonology

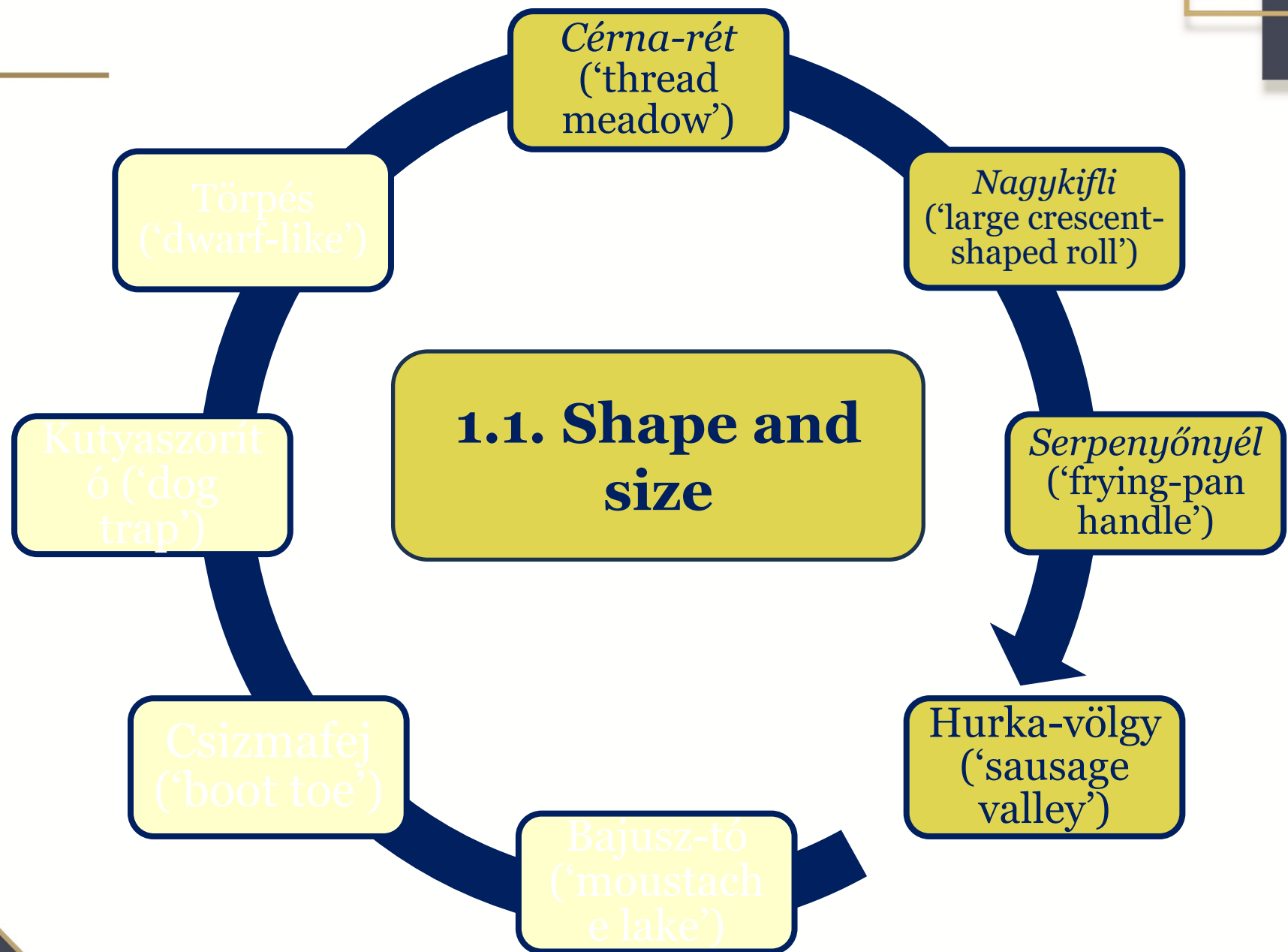
3. Distortion of an existing neutral name

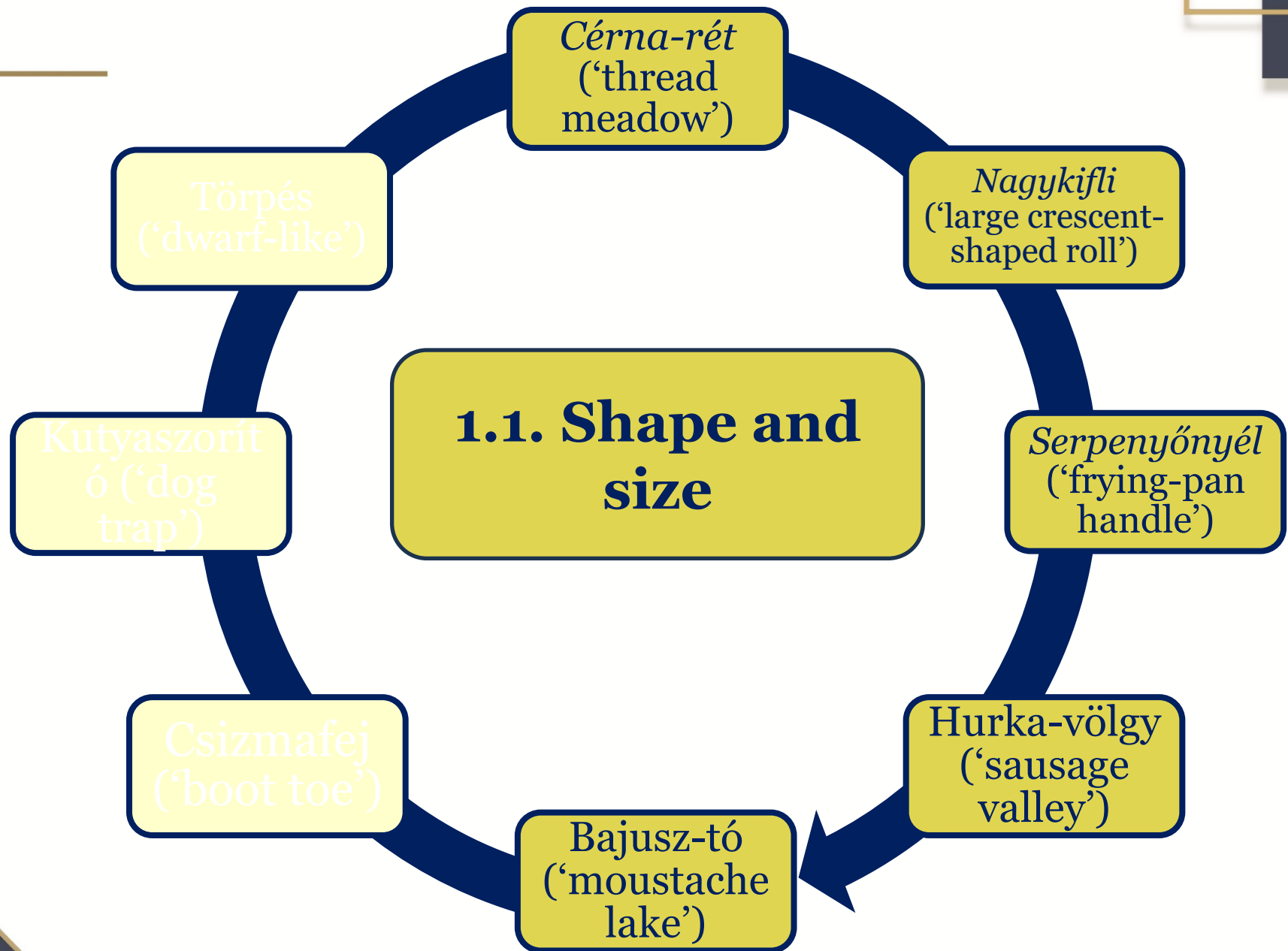


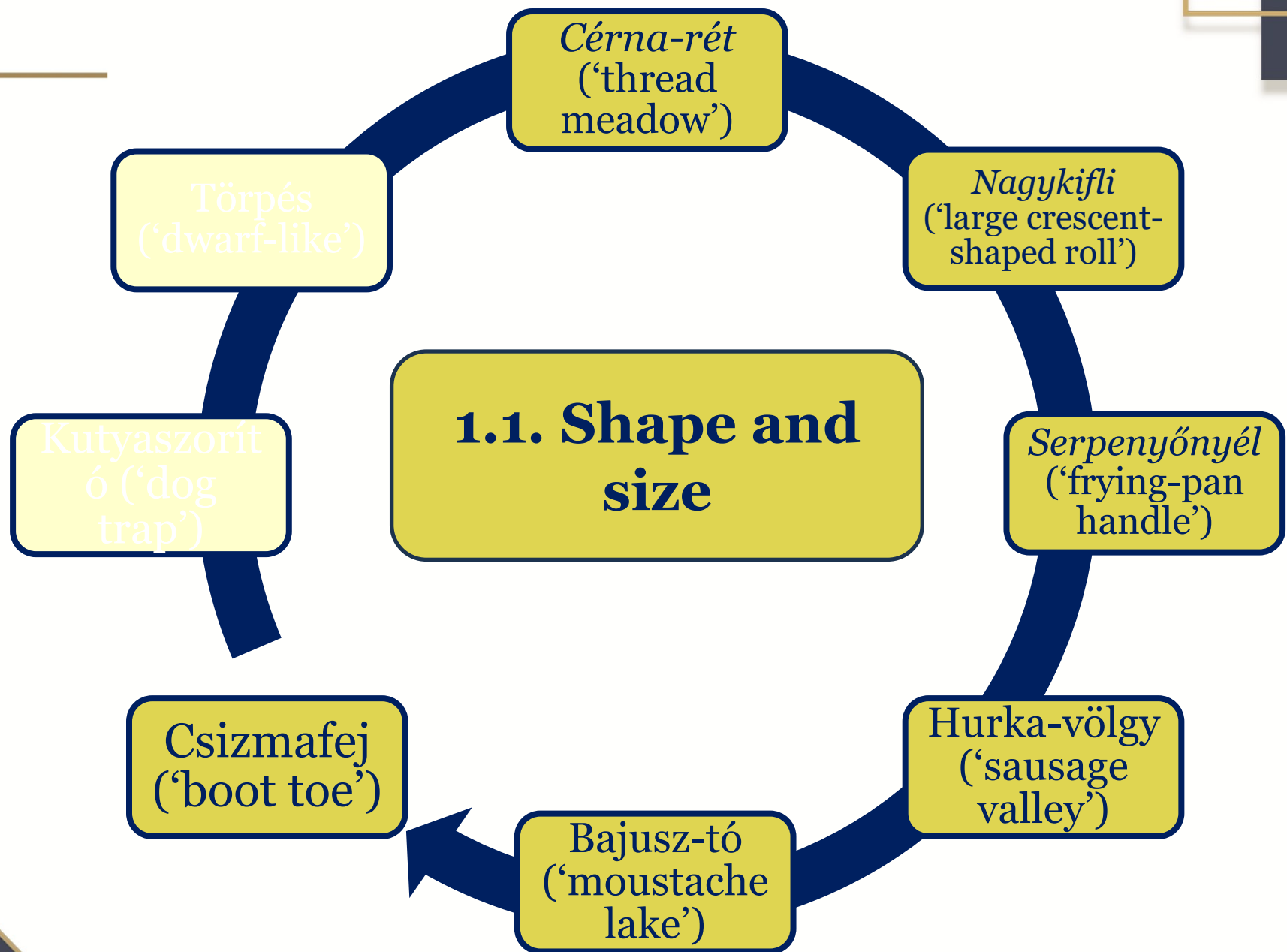


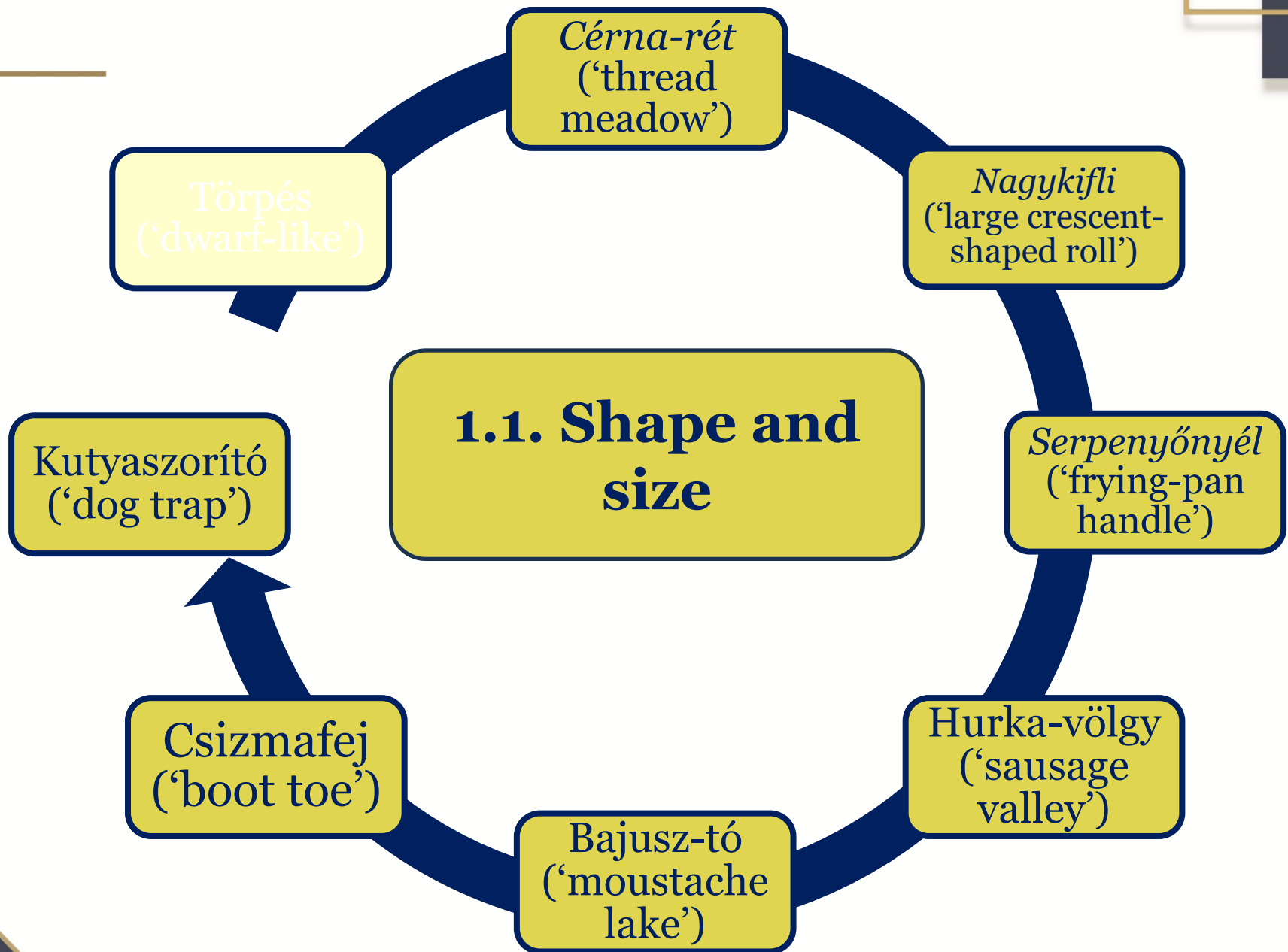


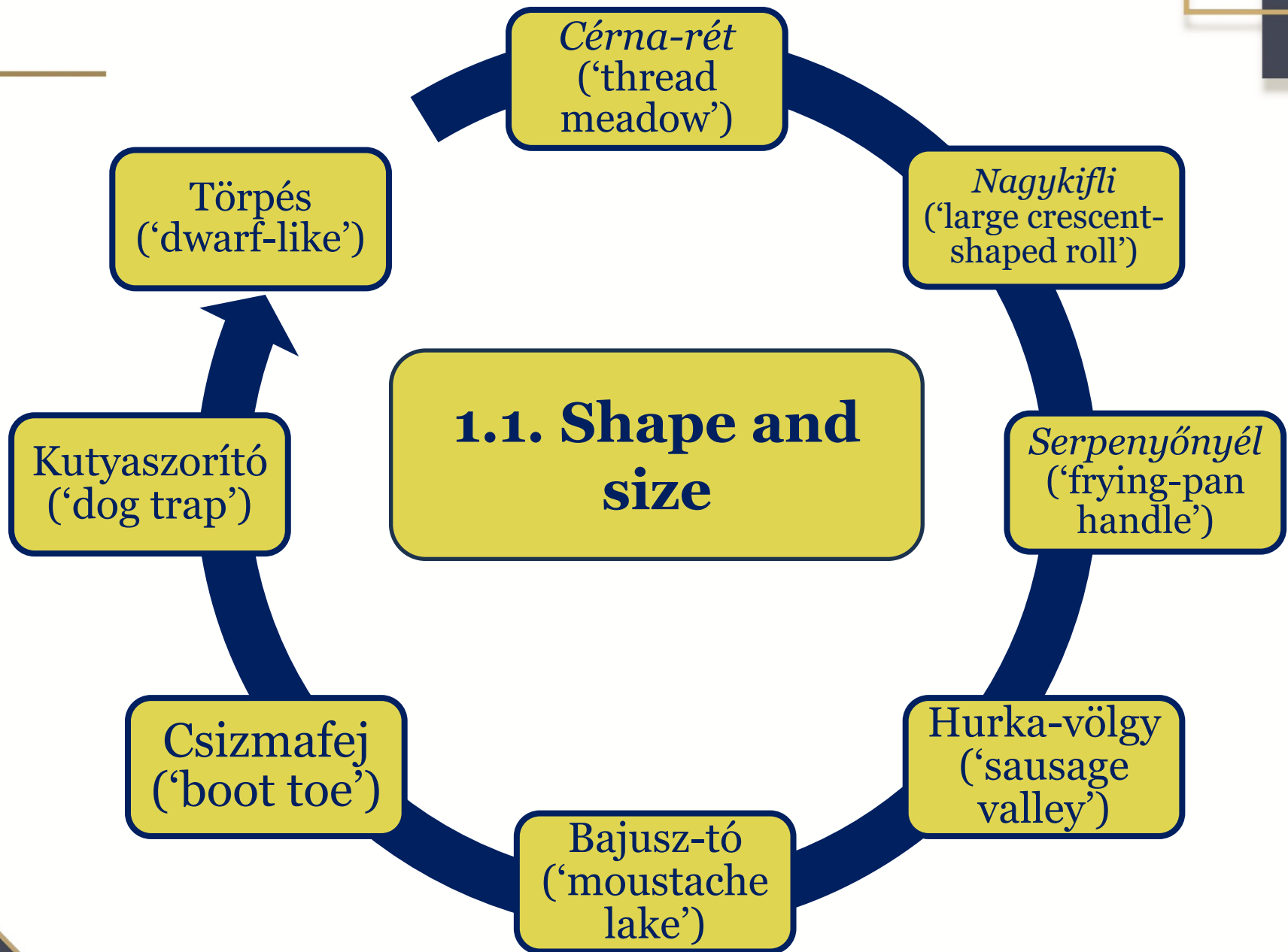












1.2. Other characteristics of places

```
graph TD; A[1.2. Other characteristics of places] --> B["Nílus 'Nile'  
Rózsadomb one of the most prestigious districts of Budapest"]; B --> C["Pityergő 'weeping'  
Fosó-rét 'shitting meadow'  
Fostenger 'sea of shit'"]; C --> D["Bánlak 'I regret buying you'  
(Meg)lakhatsz 'you can live here'  
Bánom-kert 'I regret it, garden'"]; D --> E["Morgó 'grumbler' / 'grumbling'"]; E --> A;
```

Nílus 'Nile'

Rózsadomb one of the most prestigious districts of Budapest

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Fosó-rét 'shitting meadow'

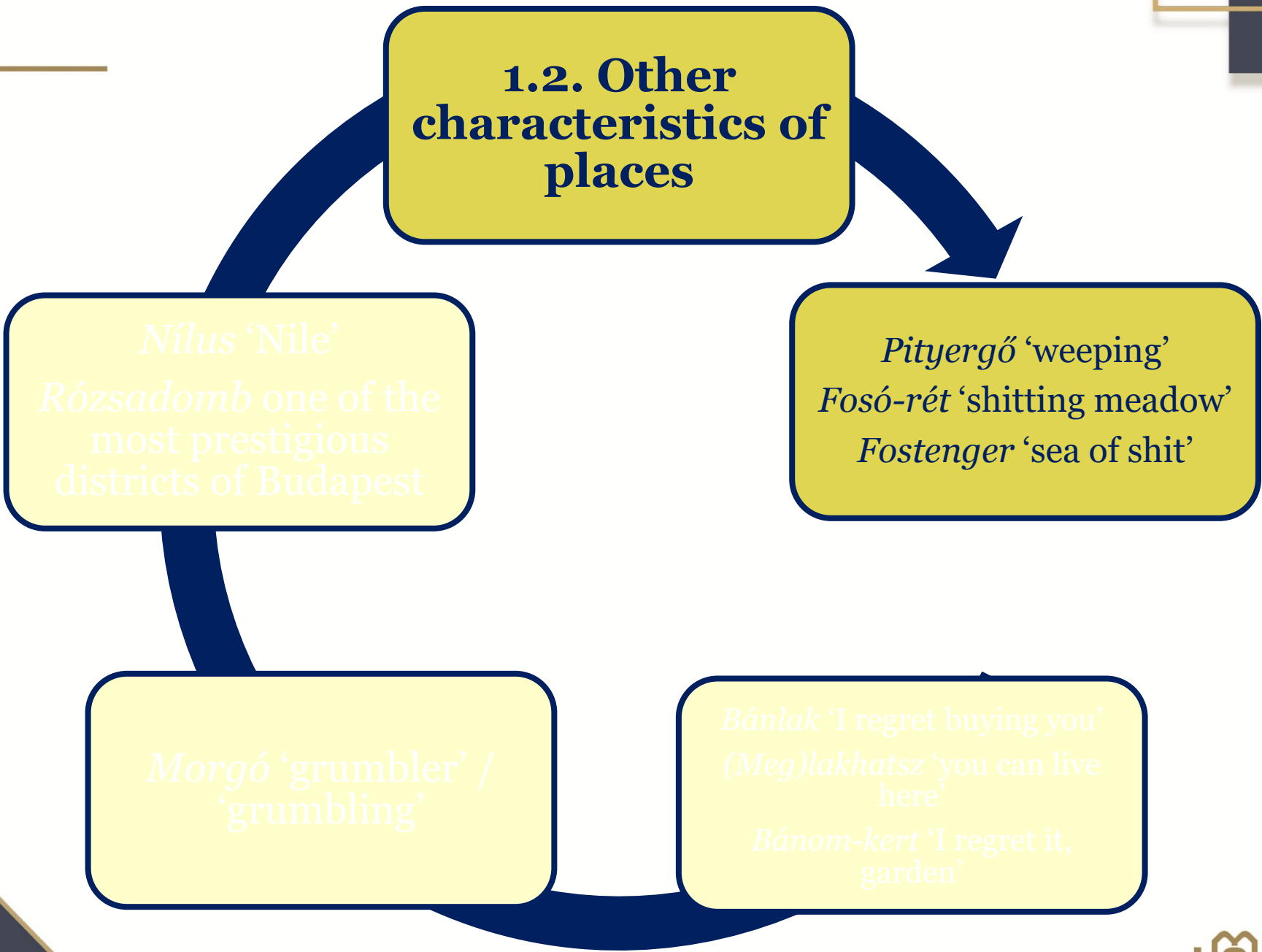
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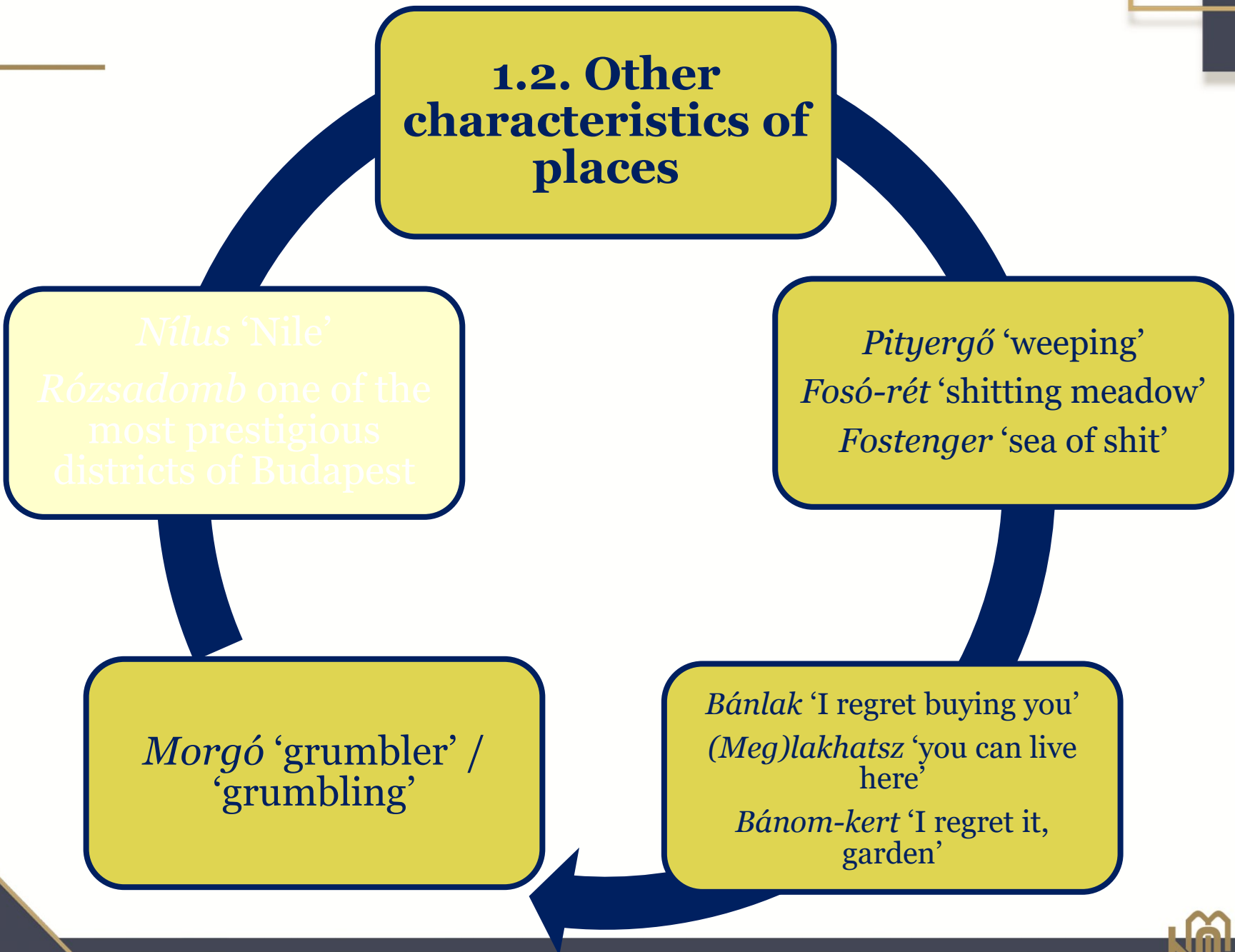
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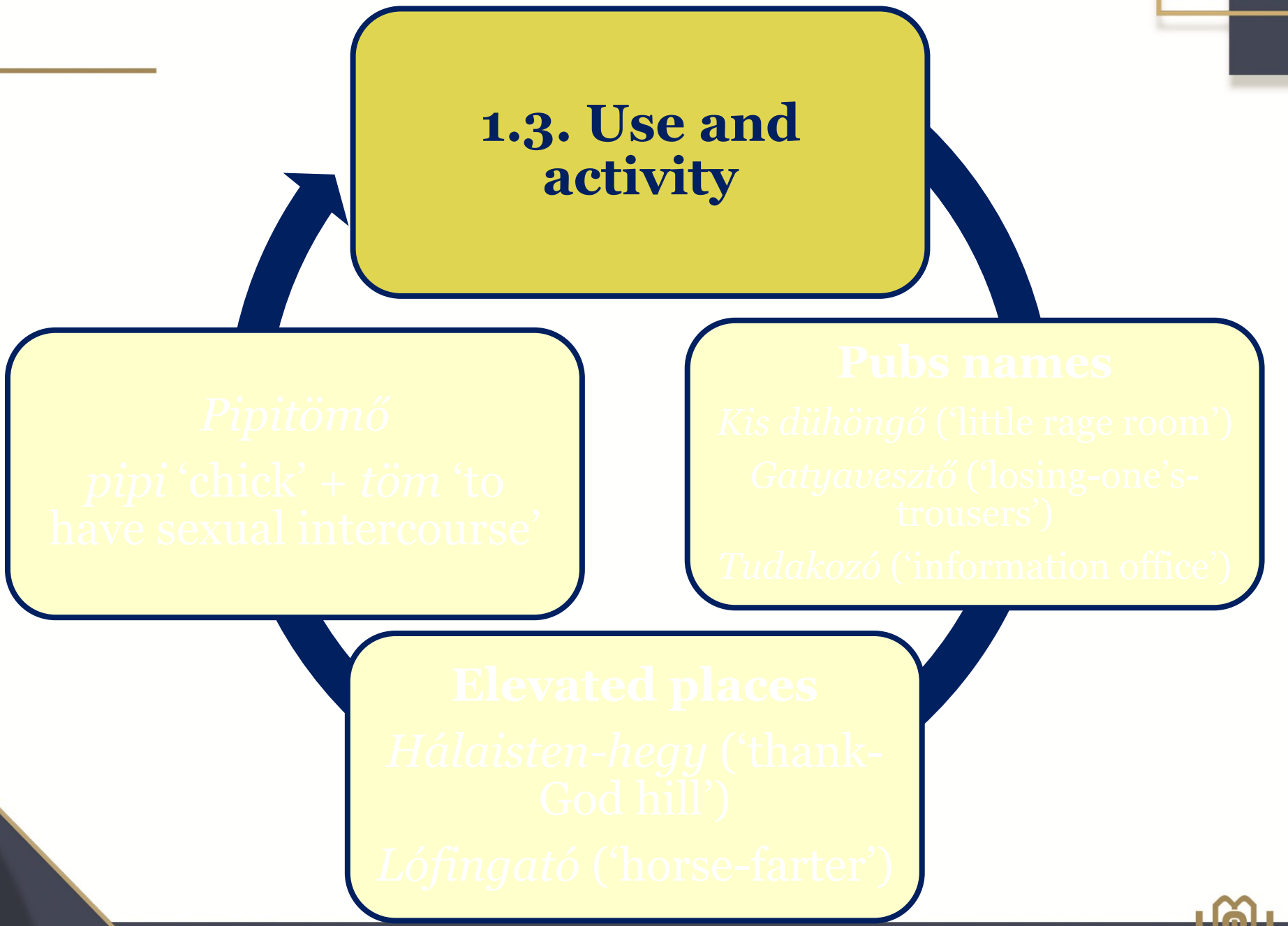
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1.3. Use and activity



Pipitömő

pipi ‘chick’ + *töm* ‘to have sexual intercourse’

Pubs names

Kis dühögő (‘little rage room’)

Gatyavesztő (‘losing-one’s-trousers’)

Tudakozó (‘information office’)

Elevated places

Hálaisten-hegy (‘thank-God hill’)

Lófogató (‘horse-farter’)

1.3. Use and activity

```
graph TD; A[1.3. Use and activity] --> B[Pipitömő]; A --> C[Pubs names]; A --> D[Elevated places];
```

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1.3. Use and activity

Pipitömő

pipi ‘chick’; ‘women’+
töm ‘to stuff’; ‘to have
sexual intercourse’

Pubs names

Kis dühöngő (‘little rage room’)

Gatyavesztő (‘losing-one’s-
trousers’)

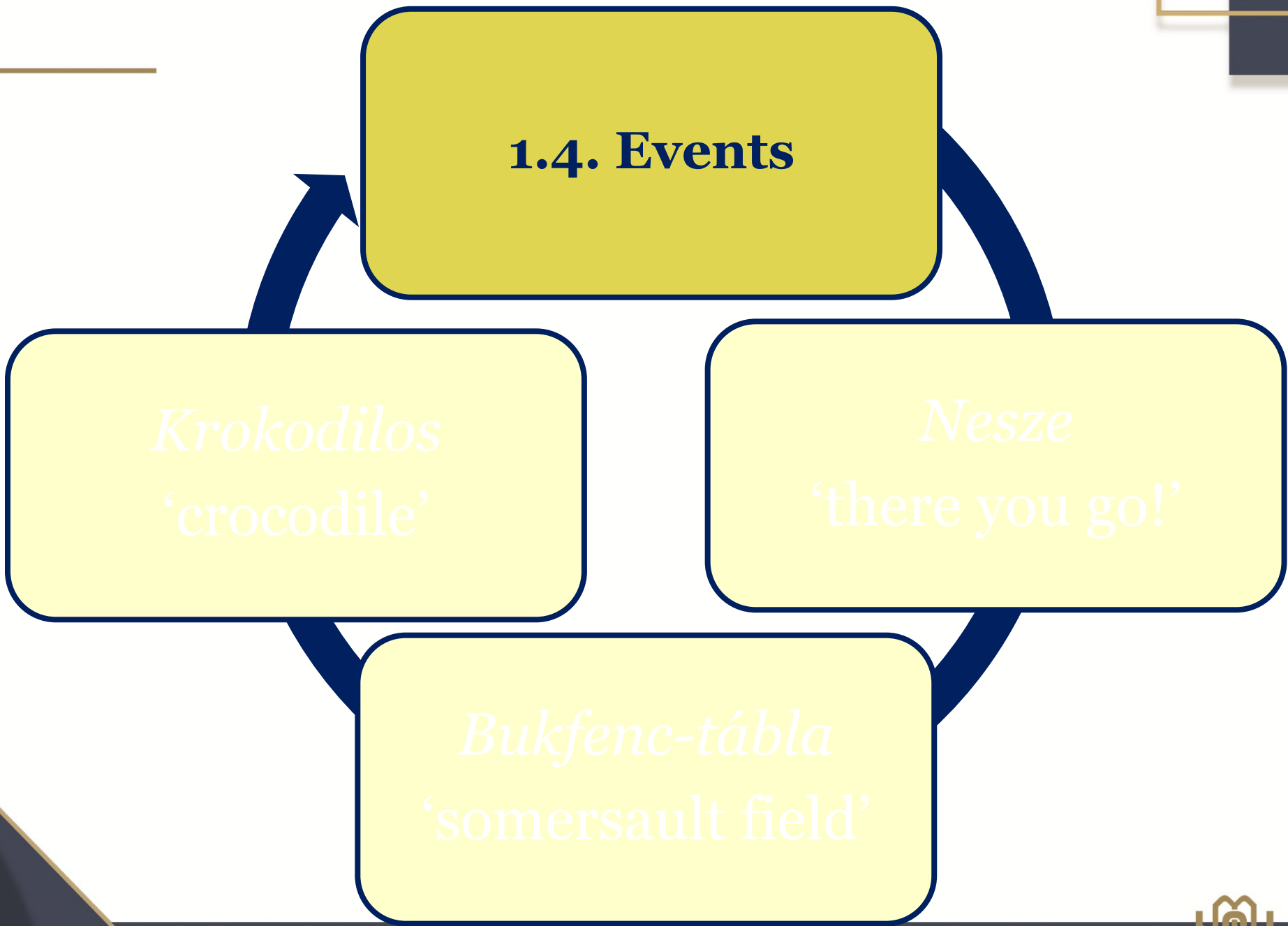
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1.4. Events



```
graph TD; A[1.4. Events] --> B[Krokodilos  
'crocodile']; B --> C[Nesze  
'there you go!']; C --> D[Bukfenc-tábla  
'somersault field']; D --> A;
```

Krokodilos
'crocodile'

Nesze
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1.5. People living there or associated with the place

```
graph TD; A["1.5. People living there or associated with the place"] --> B["Kaszáló tündérek 'mowing fairies'"]; A --> C["Bébi-dűlő 'baby field'"]; A --> D["Nejlonbaba háza 'nylon doll's house'"];
```

Kaszáló tündérek
'mowing fairies'

Bébi-dűlő
'baby field'

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Pápaszem
'spectacles'

Nyúlfilkó
'rabbit fool'

**1.6. Unknown
naming
motivations**

Pipahalála-tető
'pipe's-death hill'

Botramász
'climbs the
stick'

Álljélre-sűrű
'stand aside,
dense forest'

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Csúzi p.n.

*csúszkál v.
'to slide around'*

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Hörpi

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*'one who takes a
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cuki 'cute'

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Hörpi

hörpintő

*'one who takes a
sip'/'drinking place'*

Cikicuki csárda

cuki 'cute'

Gugyori-kocsma

Zajgató,

Pötyöm-part

Mamacsár-forgó

3. Distortion of an existing neutral name

the dog name *foxi* ~ ***Fogszi*** < *Fogadó* 'inn'
(fox terrier)

sznob ~ ***Sznoboszló*** < *Szoboszló*
(‘snobbish’)

Conclusions

The humorous unofficial toponyms

- Not homogeneous category
- The result of different degrees and types of deviation from the conventional name model
- The greater the distance from the conventional name model, the stronger the potential for humorous salience
- Humorous naming and processing of these names: multidimensional process
- The type of place can also be a decisive factor when it comes to humor

Thank you for your attention!





A programot
a Magyar Tudományos Akadémia
támogatja, és a Debreceni Egyetem
Magyar Nyelvtudományi Tanszéke
koordinálja.