Reflection of temporal horizon across demographic groups in PELCRA Spoken Conversational Corpus of Polish

In 1920s the French pioneer psychologist Pierre Janet started examination of time perception from the point of view of human social behavior. Janet observed a strong connection between the perception of time and the socializing process, which he regarded as a reciprocal relationship: on the one hand, people adapt to time; on the other hand, they create time in their minds. Earlier, the concept of time perspective was discussed in a similar context by Frank (1939), who was one of first psychologists to emphasize the role of the total mental representation of past, present, and future in the study of human behavior. The problem of how we adapt to time and create temporal conditions was also intensely investigated by Fraisse (1963, 1983), who argues that it is not time as such, but what happens in time that creates temporal effects, which are subsequently turned into psychological temporal horizons reflecting personal life experience. Normally, as people grow older their temporal horizons become broader due to their increasingly wider experience. Time perspective as a personality trait was explored by Zimbardo and Boyd (1999, 2008), who view time perspective as a fundamental process in both individual and societal functioning.

This paper demonstrates a linguistic, corpus-based approach to investigation of temporal horizon, which reveals its new aspects. In this research a cognitive schema of temporal horizon emerges from a systematic examination of the frequency of expressions denoting objective temporal distance, i.e. expressed in time units, in spontaneous linguistic performance. The study follows Langacker’s model (2012) of representational space for processing time in human cognition that views temporal linguistic manifestations created in human mind as interpreted experience, i.e. the product of cognition in a socio-cultural context. The empirical linguistic material examined in this study includes transcriptions of impromptu spoken conversations conducted in various informal personal contexts among a wide demographic diversity of Polish speakers, which amounts to 2.4 million words. The results obtained with an application of corpus linguistics methodology confirm that temporal horizons change dynamically with age. Moreover, the data enable us to identify three distinctive regions in the emergent cognitive schema, corresponding to one day, one year, and up to 50 year periods, which were labeled respectively as immediate, operational, and projective temporal horizons.

References

Corpora
PELCRA Spoken Conversational Corpus of Polish.
Available at: [http://www.nkj,p.uni.lodz.pl/spoken.jsp](http://www.nkj,p.uni.lodz.pl/spoken.jsp)