

Karolina Jankowska

Title of dissertation: Lexical convergence in Polish dialogues

Abstract

Convergence in communication concerns the assimilation of verbal and non-verbal behaviours during interpersonal interactions. This phenomenon has been studied at the linguistic, paralinguistic and non-linguistic levels in various languages. Materials in Polish were used for research focused mainly on phonetic and acoustic parameters, which confirmed the convergence in dialogues at this level. Far too little knowledge is available on lexical convergence in Polish dialogues.

The literature contains numerous examples of the methodologies, parameters and measures used that enabled the analysis of linguistic materials in terms of linguistic convergence in dialogues. The analyses were based on acoustic-prosodic features of speech, e.g. speech rate, pauses, fundamental frequency (F0), etc., lexical features such as utterance length, lexical variety, lexical adjustment (reuse of words from the previous utterance of the interlocutor). There are also complex methodologies for examining the level of convergence between interlocutors, such as *Language Style Matching*¹, which are based on the analysis of non-content words.

The theses of the dissertation assume the occurrence of the lexical convergence phenomenon in dialogues in the Polish language, observable in the choice of vocabulary at the level of parts of speech, the change in the intensity of lexical alignment depending on the communication situation, the adjustment of the degree of formality of the language utterance to the interlocutor and the circumstances and differences in the length of dialogues depending on the task and goal. In order to verify the theses, an analysis of the level of formality of the language, choice of vocabulary and collaborative effort (level of involvement measured in the number of words spoken) of the interlocutors in the dialogues was carried out. A Language Style Matching analysis was also performed, the methodology of which was adapted to the Polish language. The research material was part of the Harmonia corpus created within the frames of *Automatic Analysis of Phonetic Convergence in Speech Technology Systems* project (no. 2014/14/M/HS2/00631). The recordings selected for the lexical convergence analysis were obtained from dialogues conducted according to a fixed scenario.

The choice of vocabulary (individual parts of speech and the level of formality of the language) changes with the topic, purpose and partner of the conversation. Depending on the task according to which the participants conducted dialogues, the share of individual parts of speech varied. Based on the conducted research, it can be concluded that the interlocutors use polite forms in dialogues with a teacher and when playing the roles of strangers. In the diapix² task, partners used the most nouns and adjectives and matched the descriptions of the objects in the picture. Once used, the term was usually repeated by both interlocutors in a dialogue. In the map tasks, the interviewees tended to duplicate terms describing directions and ways of moving. The interlocutors created a distance suitable for strangers and used polite forms as well as official greetings and farewells in tasks where one interlocutor impersonated a tourist and the other impersonated an employee of a tourist information office. In tasks where participants were to express opinions on controversial art, an increase in the share of particles, conjunctions and pronouns in the statements was noticed. Dialogues in which participants agreed on the

¹ The technique of analysing stylistic similarities in the language and the linguistic match index.

² Spot the difference task with a pair of pictures to induce spontaneous speech.

provocative work showed a lower level of vocabulary repetition than in dialogues in which participants disagreed. The results of the Language Style Matching index calculations were the highest on average (0,717) in student dialogues in which participants unanimously criticised provocative art. Slightly lower values occurred in student-teacher dialogues, in which the interlocutors were to praise provocative art (0,702) and express distinct opinions about it (0,707). On average, the lowest index values (0,611) occurred in the task of providing information to the tourist about events in the city. The results of the research confirmed the theses – lexical convergence occurs in dialogues in Polish in the presented aspects.