

Choices We Live by: a Socio-Cognitive Perspective

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Abstract

In this project, a cognitive-semantic insight into the roots of the human decision-making process is offered. The project is shaped from the perspective of a linguist who looks at the richness of the related disciplines such as philosophy, sociology or psychology in search of a better understanding of the cognitive foundations of human action. The claim is that human choices, whatever their motivation and scale of significance, are contingent upon image-schematic structuring constrained by space and time, whose manifestation is the CONTAINER schema, specifically the CUBE frame. Then the research proceeds on how this CUBIC geometry of our choices permeates such areas of social life education, given the formal-institutional import of the Polish Higher Education Act of 2018.

The CHOICE CUBE shows that decision management mechanisms may encapsulate both the traditional, vertical decision-making and the horizontal decision-processing grounded in the principles of balanced coordination and check. Both are inherent in the systemic essentials of CUBE and are to be profiled as complementary rather than competitive models. In this respect, CUBE emerges as an optimal conceptual framework for thinking about the choices we make regardless of their scale and weight.

This gives rise to SDMS (Sustainable Decision Management System), which sees a decision-making system as a single-tier, balanced structure where each decision-making centre has its counterpart.

Although projected as a systemically single-tier, balanced structure, SDMS accounts for pyramid processes predicted by CUBE. Moreover, SDMS stresses the democratic system of decision-making yet at the same time accounts for the hierarchy of decision process. The paradox is solved by the intersecting vertical and horizontal lines, where choice is the mid-point at such an intersection. SDMS sees, then, choices and decisions as effects of the individual mental act of CHOICE. Thus, the morality of thinking is crucial for the quality of choices/decisions.

Short Bio

Marek Kuźniak – a professor of linguistics at Wrocław University and a sworn translator of English. He is also Head of the Institute of English Studies at the University of Wrocław. Marek Kuźniak is a member of the State Examination Commission to conduct examinations for sworn translators (nomination of the Minister of Science and Education (2009-2017) and the Minister of Justice (2017-2021). He is the author of books and articles in cognitive linguistics, legal translation, pragmatics, and philosophy of language. He is a member of the following Polish and international associations: Polish Linguistic Association, Polish Association for the Study of English, Polish Cognitive Linguistics Association, Polish Cognitive Science Society, Linguistic Society of America, Societas Linguistica Europaea.

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