

Moving at the Speed of Life: How Life Pace Influences Temporal

Reasoning

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Abstract: The Moving Time metaphor and the Moving Ego metaphor are common in English speakers' conceptualization of time (Clark 1973; Lakoff and Johnson 1999). Previous research has suggested a broad range of factors influencing people's perspectives on the movement of events in time (e.g., Boroditsky and Ramscar 2002; Matlock et al. 2005; Duffy and Feist 2014). In the current study, we investigated whether the pace of life, a previously unexplored factor, influences people's interpretations of the ambiguous temporal statement "*Next Wednesday's meeting has been moved forward two days. What day is the meeting on now?*". As demonstrated previously, bigger cities tend to have more tempos regardless of the cultural setting (Bornstein & Bornstein 1976). Thus, we use population as a standard to choose our research sites. In Study 1, we compared the preferred responses of residents in New York City, the most densely populated city in the United States, to the ambiguous *Next Wednesday's meeting* question with residents living in Albuquerque, a less populous city. In Study 2, we attempted to conceptually replicate these findings in a new sample and a different cultural context by examining time representations in UK participants. Moving beyond the macro level differences in pace of life between cities, in Study 3 we measure these concepts at an individual level. Specifically, Study 3 investigated whether the individual pace of life predicts people's temporal perspective adopted in response to the *Next Wednesday's meeting* disambiguation. Results showed that participants with slow pace of life tended to adopt the Moving Ego perspective than participants with fast pace of life. The current research offers a new perspective that individual differences such as the pace of life may also influence the resolution of temporally ambiguous language.

Keywords: Moving Time; Moving Ego; temporal perspective; ambiguity; pace of life

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