Taxonomy and Structure of Lexicon of Individual Differences in Lithuanian Language
Popular-science summary of the project

The wealth of individual differences is immense, but from the psychological perspective, not all interpersonal differences are equally important. In addition, various human characteristics differ in terms of the impact they have on the social functioning of individuals. One of the tasks of psychology as a science is a systematic study of individual differences in order to identify traits that allow us to explain and predict human behaviour. Within the trait theory, there are many approaches to classifying individual differences, which are identified both by deduction and through exploratory research, and differ in terms of the degree of acceptance by the psychologists.

The results of lexical research conducted using trait theory models allowed for obtaining a relatively high degree of consistency in the number and content of key dimensions in relation to which different cultures differ from one another. According to the lexical hypothesis, on which the lexical approach is based, the most important individual differences are encoded in natural languages. The more important role a particular trait plays in the social functioning of an individual, the more descriptors it has (e.g. synonyms and antonyms). Therefore, when analysing the structure of complete personality lexicons in different languages / cultures, it is possible to identify the key, universal, dimensions in regards to individual personality differences. Going beyond the realm of dispositions, one of the most interesting areas for further research is examining the lexicon of other individual differences, such as emotional states, social effects or even worldview.

As of today, a full cycle of psycho-lexical studies (taxonomy and quantitative language structure analysis) has been carried out in twenty natural languages out of several thousand languages used throughout the world. Due to the insufficient number of languages examined, solving the question of universality of personality traits seems impossible at this stage. Examining the psycho-lexical structure of one of the languages belonging to the small Baltic languages group - Lithuanian - can help to identify new dimensions of personality, specific to a certain cultural circle, or to confirm the hypothesis of the universality of certain traits found in various natural languages. From the transaction view of personality, studying psycho-lexical structure of social effects of Lithuanian language can help to discover unique and common motivations, affects, thought patterns, and patterns of behavior, which are primarily related to dispositions in other languages.