

Socially Facilitated Alignment and Novelty in Separate Channels of Communication

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Abstract: We discuss two viewpoints of potential interactive alignment, socially facilitated priming and socially facilitated novelty, and test them by using simulated online conversation. In a computer-based pseudo-interactive environment, participants were led to believe they were interacting with another person or that they were seeing examples from a database and must supply 12 responses. The exchange consisted of a modified game of "I never." In both conditions, nine prompt sets were presented in which the verb, tense, topic, and presence of emoticons varied. Recall was also tested. Results show that those who believed they were conversing with another person aligned less than those who believed they were seeing examples, but recalled more of the prompts. In addition, those who believed they were talking to another person used more emoticons than those who believed they were seeing examples. We suggest that a more complex theory of alignment is necessary in which different levels of alignment, including but not limited to topical and emotional, are modulated differentially to account for the flow and drive of conversation.