

Self-projection as anchoring-and-adjustment processes

Tatsunori Ishii

Tokyo Seitoku University

Masanori Takezawa

Hokkaido University

Toshikazu Tateno

Sophia University

Abstract: It has long been argued that people use own mental states to infer those of others but direct evidence is scant because of methodological problems. We hypothesized this mindreading strategy which is called projection can be modeled as anchoring-and-adjustment processes and sought for the evidence using the reaction time paradigm. In the three experiments, participants judged the preferences of both themselves and the other person. If the projection is used to infer the other's preferences, it is predicted that the reaction time becomes longer when judgments of the other's and own preference are inconsistent than when they are consistent. As is predicted, this pattern was observed only when a target of judgment was the other person who is similar to participants but not when the target was the self or the dissimilar other. All the results support our hypothesis that the projection is used when judging others similar to oneself.