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A text-based analysis of the effects of personality on the adoption of cultural and linguistic norms

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Abstract

Cognitive variation due to language and culture has been shown in a range of domains, including visual perception, emotions, theory of mind, economic strategies, decision making, and categorization. While such patterns are robust, individuals within a given culture are affected by these cultural patterns differentially. One possible cause for these individual differences is personality (e.g. extroversion or agreeableness). The personality traits of individuals will affect how they interact with and adopt cultural patterns. To explore this possibility, we perform analyses on online data from individuals with self-identified Myers-Briggs personality types (a popularized personality measure that is widely self-reported in social media). In particular, we examine how personality type predicts the rate at which individuals adopt novel lexical items and conform to the linguistic norms of their surrounding community. The results make explicit predictions about which individuals will be more affect by cultural and linguistic patterns.