

MAKING GAMES EASIER CAN BOOST REVENUE

Designers of free-to-play games often ramp up their difficulty to get players to purchase add-ons that help them advance. But the opposite tactic may be more profitable. In an experiment with more than 300,000 global players over a 12-week period, researchers found that lowering a game's difficulty significantly increased player engagement and retention, leading to an increase in long-term revenue. "Personalized Game Design for Improved User Retention and Monetization in Freemium Games," by Eva Ascarza, Oded Netzer, and Julian Runge

GENERATIVE AI

LLMs Respond Differently in Different Languages

A new study suggests that the language you use with generative AI can affect its answers. In it researchers analyzed more than 10,000 responses from two leading models: OpenAI's GPT and Baidu's Ernie. They asked the models questions about two foundational constructs in cultural psychology: social orientation (how people define themselves in relation to others) and cognitive style (how people habitually process information).

The researchers used well-established cultural patterns as a reference point for their predictions. In the United States people tend to have an independent social orientation characterized by autonomy and uniqueness, along with an analytic cognitive style relying on logic and rules. In China people tend to have an interdependent social orientation emphasizing harmony and connectedness, along with a holistic cognitive

style focused on context and open to contradiction.

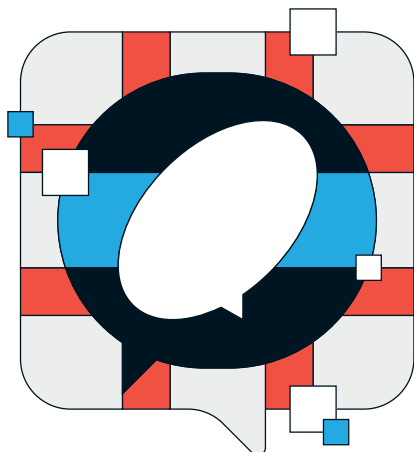
The researchers found that the generative AI models—trained on textual data that is inherently cultural—consistently exhibited those cultural tendencies when prompted in each language. When posed questions in Chinese both GPT and Ernie exhibited a more interdependent social orientation and holistic cognitive style. For example, both models attributed a person's actions at a basketball camp to the context rather than to individual personality traits.

These tendencies can have real-world business implications. When the researchers asked the models to recommend the most effective marketing slogans for fictional startups, the recommendations shifted simply because the prompt language had changed.

The researchers also found that these tendencies aren't necessarily fixed. When the generative AI was prompted in English to adopt the perspective of a Chinese person, its responses more closely resembled those it produced when prompted in Chinese.

"Leaders should be aware that prompt language can quietly influence [generative] AI's recommendations and, in turn, business decisions," the researchers write. "Managers and executives, especially those who work with multilingual teams or global customers, should therefore treat language choice as a strategic decision." ▀

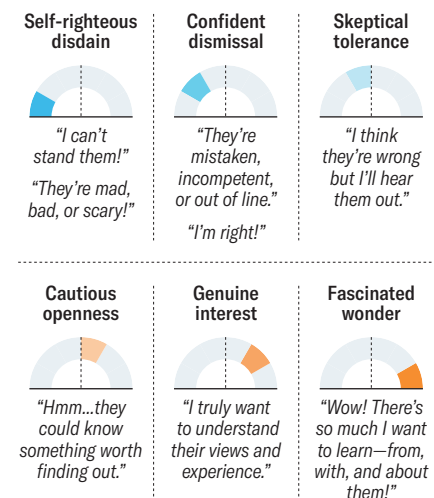
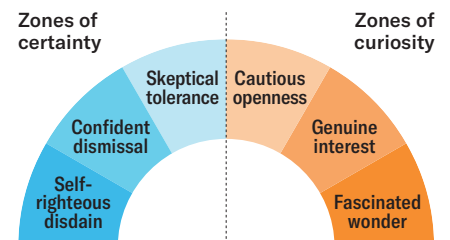
 **ABOUT THE RESEARCH** "Cultural Tendencies in Generative AI," by Jackson G. Lu, Lesley Luyang Song, and Lu Doris Zhang (Nature Human Behaviour, 2025)



INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

A More Constructive Approach to High-Stakes Conversations

Many leaders approach important discussions armed with rehearsed arguments to anticipated objections. Yet this mindset can block new insights and threaten working relationships. Before a big conversation, take a moment to assess your curiosity, or openness to vital new information, by asking which of the zones on the spectrum below you're in. Then ask, "If I encounter disagreement, which zone will I jump to?" Next, commit to shifting one or two zones to the right. Challenge your assumptions that make curiosity difficult. These steps can turn tense conversations into opportunities for joint problem-solving.



Source: Jeff Wetzler

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