Interactional beings: the power of automatic mimicry and nonverbal cues in shaping human-human and human-robot naturalistic interactions

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Stellingen behorende bij het proefschrift

Interactional Beings

The power of automatic mimicry and nonverbal cues in shaping human-human and human-robot naturalistic interactions

door Fabiola Diana

Automatic mimicry does not have a default affiliative function. Its social consequences depend on the cue mimicked and the broader social context.

Mimicry of negative and ambiguous nonverbal cues is functionally meaningful and theoretically underrepresented in human research.

Mimicry may help us gather more information about others, enabling us to navigate our surroundings more efficiently, whether through improving social interactions or avoiding potential dangers.

Physiological synchrony amplifies shared state without privileging cooperation or prosocial behavior.

Implementing mimicry in artificial agents without understanding cue perception is theoretically premature and could backfire.

Naturalistic lab interactions are not equivalent to real-world social interaction: social behavior in the lab remains constrained by task structure, demand characteristics, and awareness of being observed.

Exploratory research is indispensable for scientific progress because robust phenomena must be discovered before they can be explained, but treating exploratory work as confirmatory systematically contaminates the scientific record with false positives.

Scientific responsibility extends beyond preregistration: making science accessible requires that data, materials, and protocols are openly shared so that knowledge can be evaluated, reused, and challenged by all.

Knowledge and wisdom can be reached not only by attending, studying, and remembering facts, but also by opening oneself to sensations. Scientific reasoning is sharpened, not dulled, when guided by sensation and presence.

Humility is the right path to be a good human being, and being a good human being is the right path to be a good scientist.