

How submissive (vs. dominant) language in AI-based assistants shapes consumer attitudes, intentions, and perceptions

Daniel Ruiz-Equihua

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

Jano Jimenez Barreto

Oxford Brookes University

Jaime Romero

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

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Abstract

To create effective assistants, companies must determine which language characteristics will maximize persuasion and interaction quality. This generates multiple questions—for example, Should AI virtual assistants (VA) induce a sense of submissiveness/dominance through language during interaction with consumers, and if so, in which situations? Based on the assemblage theory and the interactive dynamic of dominance/submissiveness, this research explores the psychological mechanism through which virtual assistants' submissive (vs. dominant) language influences consumers' rapport and comfort during interactions. A multimethod investigation, including four studies, supports that VA using submissive language enhances consumer attitudes, intentions, and perceived interaction value. These findings shed light on how virtual assistant language influences consumer responses across multiple situations, such as having high time pressure and considering products with different involvement.

Subject Areas: *Attitude, Consumer Behaviour, Electronic Commerce and Internet Marketing, Recommendation Systems*

Track: Digital Marketing & Social Media