

# Hesam Ghasemi (Mohammadhesam Hajighasemi)

ESSEC Business School, 3 Av. Bernard Hirsch, 95000 Cergy, France

+33 667618349 | [mohammadhesam.hajighasemi@essec.edu](mailto:mohammadhesam.hajighasemi@essec.edu) | <https://www.linkedin.com/in/hesamghasemi/>

## EDUCATION

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### Ph.D. in Marketing

August 2021- Present

*ESSEC Business School, Cergy, France*

*Dissertation committee: Amir Sepehri, Cait Lamberton, Ayse Onculer*

### Advanced Master in Business Administration Research

August 2021- June 2023

*ESSEC Business School, Cergy, France*

### Master of Business Administration (MBA)

September 2018 - October 2020

*Tehran University, Tehran, Iran*

### M.Eng. Mechanical Engineering

August 2015 - December 2016

*University of Texas at Arlington, Arlington, USA*

### B.Sc. Mechanical Engineering

September 2009 - September 2014

*Iran University of Science and Technology, Tehran, Iran*

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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**Substantive:** Consumer Behavior, Human-AI Interaction, Creator Economy, Online Reviews

**Methodological:** Experiments, Econometric Models, Text Analysis, Image Analysis

## PUBLICATION

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Erin M. Buchanan, Kelly Cuccolo, Tom Heyman, ..., **Hesam Ghasemi**, et al. (in press). "Measuring the Semantic Priming Effect Across Many Languages"

*Published in **Nature: Human Behavior**. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-025-02254-x>*

## PAPERS UNDER REVIEW (see Appendix for selected abstracts)

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**Hesam Ghasemi**, Amir Sepehri, and Cait Lamberton, "Only Human: Voicebot Accent, Perceived Anthropomorphism, and Consumer Acceptance"

*Invited for the 3rd round of review at the **Journal of Marketing Research** (Decision: Invite Revision)*

**Hesam Ghasemi**, Vivek Astvansh, and Amir Sepehri, "How Content Creators Should Narrate Their Content? The Impact of Emotionality Flips on Audience Engagement"

*Submitted for the 2nd round of review at the **Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science** (Decision: Risky Revision)*

**Hesam Ghasemi**, Amir Sepehri, and Jan Landwehr, "Fluency Meets Disfluency: The Helpfulness of Textual Information Is Driven by a Mixed Processing Experience"

*Invited for the 2nd round of review at the **International Journal of Research in Marketing** (Decision: Risky Revision)*

**Hesam Ghasemi**, Amir Sepehri, and Mohammad Atari, “How People Talk on Behalf of Others”  
*Under review at **Journal of Experimental Psychology: General***

**Hesam Ghasemi**, Amir Sepehri, and Cheryl Wakslak, “Asking Users Not to Use ‘Please’ and ‘Thanks’ While Interacting with AI Makes Them Less Altruistic Toward a Human in a Subsequent Task”  
*Under review at **Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences Nexus***

## RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

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**Hesam Ghasemi**, Amir Sepehri, Christian Hildebrand, and Cait Lamberton, “Cuddly, Not Creepy: Zoomorphic AI Companions Deepen Emotional Connection and Enhance User Engagement”  
*Four studies have been conducted (targeting the **Journal of Consumer Research**).*

**Hesam Ghasemi** and Amir Sepehri, “Using Sensational Language in Restaurant Menus Increases Willingness to Pay?”  
*Four studies have been conducted (targeting the **Journal of Consumer Research**).*

**Hesam Ghasemi** and Sonja Prokopec, “Do People Devalue AI-assisted Tasks?”  
*Four studies have been conducted (targeting the **Journal of Consumer Research**).*

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (\* denotes presenter)

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**Only Human: Voicebot Accent, Perceived Anthropomorphism, and Consumer Acceptance**  
European Marketing Academy (EMAC), *Competitive Paper*, 2025\*  
10th Mediterranean Symposium for Consumer Behavior Research, 2025\*  
Association for Consumer Research (ACR), *Special Session*, 2024\*  
American Marketing Association (AMA CBSIG), *Advanced Talk*, 2024\*

**How Content Creators Should Narrate Their Content? The Impact of Emotionality Flips on Audience Engagement**  
European Marketing Academy (EMAC), *Competitive Paper*, 2025\*

**Fluency Meets Disfluency: The Helpfulness of Textual Information Is Driven by a Mixed Processing Experience**  
European Marketing Academy (EMAC), *Competitive Paper*, 2025\*

**How People Talk on Behalf of Others**  
European Marketing Academy (EMAC), *Competitive Paper*, 2025

**Cuddly, Not Creepy: Zoomorphic AI Companions Deepen Emotional Connection and Enhance User Engagement**  
Association for Consumer Research (ACR), *Special Session*, 2025

## HONORS AND AWARDS

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AMA-Sheth Foundation Doctoral Consortium Fellow (June 2025)

Best Content Award (ESSEC Business School Poster Competition, 2023)

## TEACHING

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## SERVICE

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2024 **ACR** Annual Conference | Paris

*Session Chair: “Beyond Automation: The Transformative Power of AI to Shape Consumer-Firm Relationship”*

2024 **ACR** Annual Conference | Paris

*Session Chair: “Visual Elements and Online Engagement”*

## ABOUT ME

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Fitness enthusiast, podcast devotee, and culture lover

## REFERENCES

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Amir Sepehri, Assistant Professor of Marketing, ESSEC Business School  
[sepehri@essec.edu](mailto:sepehri@essec.edu)

Cait Lamberton, Alberto I. Duran President’s Distinguished Professor, The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania  
[catlam@wharton.upenn.edu](mailto:catlam@wharton.upenn.edu)

Christian Hildebrand, Full Professor of Marketing Analytics, University of St. Gallen  
[christian.hildebrand@unisg.ch](mailto:christian.hildebrand@unisg.ch)

Jan Landwehr, Chair of Market and Consumer Psychology, Goethe-University of Frankfurt  
[landwehr@wiwi.uni-frankfurt.de](mailto:landwehr@wiwi.uni-frankfurt.de)

## APPENDIX: SELECTED PAPERS’ ABSTRACTS

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**Hesam Ghasemi**, Amir Sepehri, and Cait Lamberton, “Only Human: Voicebot Accent, Perceived Anthropomorphism, and Consumer Acceptance”

*Invited for the 3rd round of review at the **Journal of Marketing Research**.*

Given that consumers prefer talking to humans over machines, it is questionable whether speeding firms’ responsiveness by using voicebots will be accepted as substitutes for more costly, and less immediately accessible, human agents. In this paper, we propose and find that one way to overcome resistance to this substitution is to endow voicebots with non-standard accents. Across a range of accents, genders, and contexts, our data suggests that voicebots communicating with non-standard accents make the concept of human diversity salient in the user’s mind. As a result, non-standard accented voicebots are more readily anthropomorphized than those without non-standard accents. Consequently, they can, in fact, be preferred over live agents in customer service contexts. However, we also document that these effects do not hold when the voicebot has countervailing dehumanizing attributes, when the interaction with the voicebot is about an embarrassing topic, when the wait time for a substituting human agent is lower as opposed to higher, and when users hold an unfavorable attitude toward AI. Together, this work highlights the benefits of accented speech in

improving human-AI interactions. We also hope that it sparks further investigation of factors that make technology—even if technically “imperfect,”— more readily accepted by consumers.

**Hesam Ghasemi**, Vivek Astvansh, and Amir Sepehri, “How Content Creators Should Narrate Their Content? The Impact of Emotionality Flips on Audience Engagement”

*Submitted for the 2nd round of review at the **Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science**.*

Influencers, as opinion leaders, often use long-form content to share personal stories that shape their audience's views. How can they enhance engagement with this type of content? While previous research on short content (e.g., posts' captions) suggests that higher emotionality boosts engagement, we state that, for long-form content, it is not the intensity but rather the frequency of shifts in emotionality direction (i.e., positive slope to negative slope and vice versa)—which we term “emotionality flips.” We also suggest that the intervals between these flips have an inverse U-shaped effect on engagement. Our 33,598 podcast episodes and TED Talks field data analyses support these hypotheses. This study advances the understanding of emotional dynamics in influencer marketing, highlighting the importance of emotional shifts for engagement. Our findings provide key insights for influencers seeking to shape the opinions of their followers and contribute to automated text analysis methods in consumer research.

**Hesam Ghasemi**, Amir Sepehri, and Jan Landwehr, “Fluency Meets Disfluency: The Helpfulness of Textual Information Is Driven by a Mixed Processing Experience”

*Invited for the 2nd round of review at the **International Journal of Research in Marketing**.*

Humans, as social beings, rely on the knowledge and experience of other people when forming their judgments and decisions. Yet, there is considerable variation in the perceived helpfulness of the information we receive from other people. To improve our understanding of the systematic sources of this variation, the current set of three large-scale field studies in the domain of online reviews analyzes the impact of two core textual characteristics on the perceived helpfulness of online reviews of physical products, online apps, and services. Based on processing fluency theory, we examine the interplay of a contrastive writing style and the concreteness of the employed language. We find that a contrastive writing style as a disfluent textual characteristic increases perceived helpfulness, an effect that is further enhanced by the concreteness of the employed language as a fluent textual characteristic. This finding indicates that perceived helpfulness of textual information traces back to an interaction of a disfluent and a fluent textual characteristic, which supports the theoretical notion that there are qualitatively different types of processing fluency and that complex judgments such as helpfulness are shaped by different facets of a processing fluency experience.

**Hesam Ghasemi**, Amir Sepehri, and Moahammad Atari, “How People Talk on Behalf of Others”

*Under review at **Journal of Experimental Psychology: General**.*

Across five studies, we examine how representing others versus oneself influences the use of passive voice. We begin by analyzing real-world online complaints (Study 1), then demonstrate the causal nature of the effect in an experimental setting (Study 2A). We show that the effect varies by cultural background (Study 2B) and is moderated by the severity of the event (Study 3). Finally, we test whether the effect extends to a different helping context—fundraising—where people advocate for others versus themselves (Study 4). In Study 1, we analyzed real-world consumer complaints from a public U.S. government database, demonstrating increased passive voice when complaints are filed on behalf of others. Studies 2A and 2B use pre-registered online experiments in the United States and India, respectively, to establish causal evidence and test cross-cultural boundary conditions. We find that U.S. participants, representing a more individualistic society, use significantly more passive voice when narrating on behalf of others. In contrast, this effect disappears in India, a more collectivistic context where “self” and “others” are not representative as separate entities. Study 3 replicates these findings and further shows that severity and representation interact in a compensatory fashion. Finally, Study 4 shows that when individuals support others, they again resort to more passive constructions. Together, these findings suggest that the act of speaking for others introduces psychological distance that alters linguistic framing, but that culture shapes whether and how this distance is expressed. Finally, we hope our

findings offer guidance for individuals who narrate others' experiences—such as support workers, caregivers, or advocates—by highlighting that, since passive voice is associated with reduced trust and psychological distance, using active voice may help convey credibility and make their messages more impactful.

**Hesam Ghasemi**, Amir Sepehri, and Cheryl Wakslak, “Asking Users Not to Use ‘Please’ and ‘Thanks’ While Interacting with AI Makes Them Less Altruistic Toward a Human in a Subsequent Task”

*Under review at **Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences Nexus**.*

Although humans often interact politely with chatbots, courtesy expressions (e.g., please and thank you) serve as extra words that impose further computational overhead, increasing companies' operational costs and their carbon footprints. OpenAI's CEO has estimated this cost to be potentially “tens of millions of dollars” in electricity bills. From this perspective, it might be beneficial to ask users not to use these courtesy expressions; however, lowering courtesy expressions may have unintended spillover effects. We examined how cost- vs. environment-framing of such appeals shapes later altruistic behavior. Participants (N = 300) were randomly assigned to control (no instruction), cost-based (avoid courtesy expressions to reduce company costs), or environment-based (avoid courtesy expressions to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions) conditions; compared to control participants, those in the environment-based condition were subsequently less selfish when splitting a £10 lottery reward with another participant and those in the cost-based condition were more selfish. These results suggest that the framing of recommended practices for AI-communication can have important downstream consequences.