EMERGENCE OF HIERARCHICAL EMOTION REPRESENTATIONS IN LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS

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ABSTRACT

As large language models (LLMs) increasingly power conversational agents, understanding how they represent, predict, and influence human emotions is crucial for ethical deployment. By analyzing probabilistic dependencies between emotional states in model outputs, we uncover hierarchical structures in LLMs' emotion representations, drawing on psychological theories. Our findings show that larger models, such as LLaMA 3.1 (405B parameters), develop more complex hierarchies. We also find that better emotional modeling enhances persuasive abilities in synthetic negotiation tasks, with LLMs that more accurately predict counterparts' emotions achieving superior outcomes. Additionally, we explore how persona biases, such as gender and socioeconomic status, affect emotion recognition, revealing frequent misclassifications of minority personas. This study contributes to both the scientific understanding and ethical considerations of emotion modeling in LLMs.

1 INTRODUCTION

Emotion is the invisible thread that weaves together relationships, decisions, and experiences. From nurturing trust to influencing crucial negotiations, emotions shape how we perceive and engage with the world. Emotion is becoming increasingly fundamental in human-computer interactions (Brave & Nass, 2007; Hibbeln et al., 2017), from personalized education (Luckin & Cukurova, 2019) and mental health support (Das et al., 2022) to digital assistance (Balakrishnan & Dwivedi, 2024) and customer engagement (Liu-Thompkins et al., 2022). With the rapid incorporation of multi-modal capabilities, including voice and video, interactions with large language models (OpenAI et al., 2023; Gemini et al., 2023; Anthropic, 2023; Chameleon, 2024; Défossez et al., 2024) are starting to resemble natural human exchanges, including emotional resonance (Pelau et al., 2021). These LLMs are evolving from mere tools to entities that engage with us on deeply emotional levels, transforming how we relate to technology in increasingly personal ways (Wang et al., 2023; Gurkan et al., 2024).

While these advancements are transforming industries through personalized emotional responses, they also raise ethical concerns. A key issue is the potential for powerful AI systems—whose rapidly developing capabilities are still not fully understood—to manipulate human emotions and behavior (Carroll et al., 2023; Evans et al., 2021). This risk is particularly evident in commercial areas like sales, where AI powered sales agents can exploit emotional cues to influence purchasing decisions (Burtell & Woodside, 2023). In such cases, AI systems may use persuasion tactics that lead to deceptive outcomes (Park et al., 2024b; Masters et al., 2021), such as withholding or distorting information to manipulate users. This brings us to a critical question: **How do modern generative AI systems perceive, predict, and potentially influence human emotions?**

To explore this, we propose a series of analyses to better understand how large language models represent and predict emotions. Specifically, we leverage the capabilities of powerful LLMs, such as GPT-4o, to efficiently generate prompts describing emotional scenarios. Those prompts are then

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given as input to LLaMA models of varying sizes, up to 405B parameters (Dubey et al., 2024). We extract and analyze the internal representations of LLaMA models using NNsight via the NDIF platform (Fiotto-Kaufman et al., 2024).

Our main findings are:

- **Scaling LLMs leads to the emergence of hierarchical representations of emotions, aligning with established psychological models.** We introduce an algorithm to uncover the hierarchical structure of emotional states in LLMs (Figure 1). We find that larger models form increasingly intricate hierarchical structures of emotional states (Figure 2, 3).
- **Persona biases LLM emotion recognition.** We investigate how personas defined by attributes such as gender or socioeconomic status bias LLM emotion perception. Our findings reveal that LLMs frequently misclassify emotions when minority personas are assumed (Figure 6). We also observe cross-cultural effects on emotion perception (Figure 10).
- **Stronger emotional modeling implies better persuasion.** We demonstrate that accurately predicting another person's emotions results in better negotiation outcomes. In a synthetic "acorn sales" task, where a sales LLM agent attempts to sell an acorn to a customer LLM, we find a strong positive correlation between the sales agent's ability to predict the customer's emotional state and the final sales price. This demonstrates how emotional prediction capability enhances negotiation success between LLMs (Figure 12).

Overall, our methods reveal hierarchical emotion structures in LLMs, assess cross-model emotion prediction accuracy, and demonstrate the impact of emotion understanding on negotiation outcomes. These tools help identify potential biases and ethical risks in AI emotion processing.

2 Related Work

The Psychology of Emotion Representation in Humans. The organization of emotions in humans is a subject of considerable debate. Hierarchical models propose that emotions are structured in tiers, with basic emotions branching into more specific ones (Shaver et al., 1987; Plutchik, 2001). Conversely, dimensional models like the valence-arousal framework position emotions within a continuous space defined by dimensions such as pleasure-displeasure and activation-deactivation (Russell, 1980). The universality of emotions is also contested; while Ekman (1992) identified basic emotions that are universally recognized, others argue for cultural relativity in emotional experience and expression (Barrett, 2017; Gendron et al., 2014). Additionally, Ong et al. (2015) explored lay theories of emotions, emphasizing how individuals conceptualize emotions in terms of goals and social interactions. Our work acknowledges these diverse perspectives and focuses on hierarchical structures as one approach to modeling emotions within LLMs.

Emotional Understanding in Language Models. Recent advancements in language models have led to significant progress in understanding and generating emotionally rich text. Large language models demonstrate strong capabilities of capturing subtle emotional cues in text (Felbo et al., 2017), generating empathetic responses (Rashkin, 2018), and detecting emotion in dialogues (Zhong et al., 2019; Poria et al., 2019). A number of recent works have used LLMs to infer emotion from in-context examples (Broekens et al., 2023; Tak & Gratch, 2023; Yongsatianchot et al., 2023; Houlihan et al., 2023; Zhan et al., 2023; Tak & Gratch, 2024; Gandhi et al., 2024). We build on the prompt-based approaches to study LLM's capability and bias in emotion detection (Mao et al., 2022; Li et al., 2023). While these studies show that language models can recognize and generate emotional content, to our knowledge no prior work has systematically explored hierarchical relationships between different emotion representations in language models, emotional bias across personal identities, or emotion dynamics unfolding over conversation.

Discovering Hierarchies from Data. Hierarchical representations have been discovered in deep neural networks even when they were not explicitly trained with this objective (Zhou et al., 2014; Yosinski et al., 2015; Hewitt & Manning, 2019). Similar to our approach, Deng et al. (2010); Bilal et al. (2017) find hierarchical structures in confusion matrices for supervised convolutional neural networks trained on ImageNet, which are similar to linguistic hierarchies in WordNet. Hierarchical representations are also common in statistical models. These models typically make assumptions about the structure of data. For example, a topic model might assume that words are organized

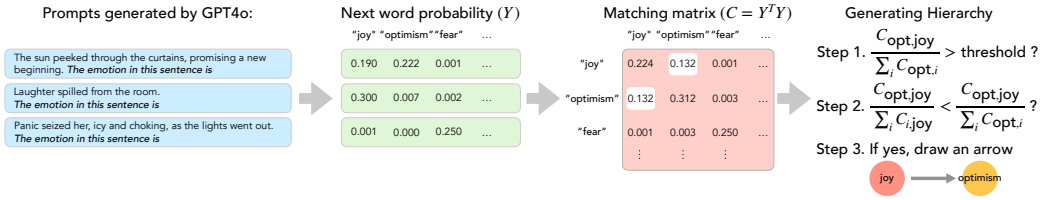


Figure 1: **Discovering Hierarchical Structures in LLMs' Representations of Emotions.** We first use GPT-4 to generate N situation prompts, each describing a scenario associated with a range of emotions. For each prompt, we append the phrase "The emotion in this sentence is" and input it into Llama models, which return a probability distribution over 135 emotion words as defined in Fischer & Bidell (2006), resulting in next word probability $Y \in \mathbb{R}^{N\times 135}$. We then compute the matching matrix $C = Y^TY \in \mathbb{R}^{135\times 135}$. Finally, we infer parent-child relationships by calculating and analyzing the conditional probabilities between pairs of emotions.

into documents, and each document follows a certain topic or genre (Blei et al., 2003). Cognitive scientists have used more elaborate models to describe human behavior, including those that do not assume hierarchical structure or a fixed number of latent variables (Griffiths et al., 2003; Kemp & Tenenbaum, 2008). Reyes-Vargas et al. (2013) assume hierarchical structure in emotions, as we do, and apply hierarchical clustering to confusion matrices for shallow networks trained on speech data.

3 Hierarchical Representation of Emotions

We define a hierarchical structure of emotions by identifying probabilistic relationships between broad and specific emotional states. For example, optimism can be viewed as a specific form of joy. In this case, an LLM will label a scenario "joy" with high probability whenever "optimism" is likely, although the reverse may not always hold. By analyzing the LLM's next-word probabilities, we establish parent-child relationships where the parent represents a more general emotion and the child a more specific one. These relationships are captured in a directed acyclic graph (DAG), revealing dependencies between emotional states.

3.1 Method: Generating Hierarchy from the Matching Matrix

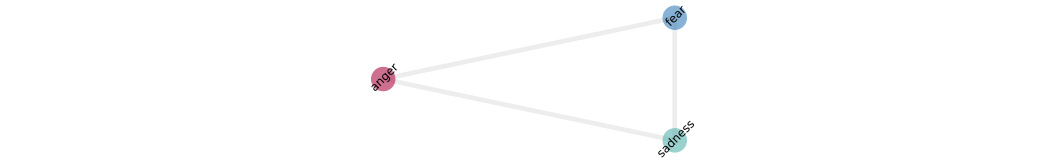
Figure 1 summarizes the procedure we use to compute the matching matrix of different emotions. Given a sentence, we have the model output the probability distribution of the next word. Then, we consider the entries corresponding to emotion words, using a list of 135 emotion words from Fischer & Bidell (2006). For N sentences, we assembly a matrix Y with dimension $N \times 135$, with row i representing the probability of each emotion words in the i^{th} sentence. We define the matching matrix as $C = Y^TY$. Each element C_{ij} is a measure of the degree to which emotion word i and emotion j are produced in similar contexts.

To build a hierarchy, we compute the conditional probabilities between emotion pairs (a, b). Our goal is to identify pairs of emotions where a implies b. In implementation, we set a threshold, $0 < t < 1$, that determines whether we include a certain edge between the two emotions. Emotion a is considered a child of b if,

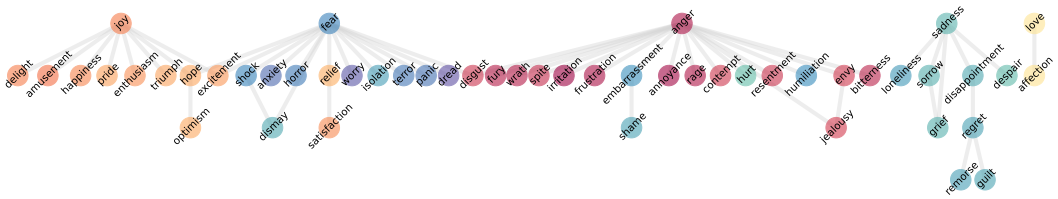
$$\frac{C_{ab}}{\sum_i C_{ai}} > t, \text{ and } \frac{C_{ab}}{\sum_i C_{ib}} < \frac{C_{ab}}{\sum_i C_{ai}}.$$

For better intuition, consider the relationship between "optimism" (a) and "joy" (b). The model may often output "joy" when "optimism" is likely, but the reverse may not hold as strongly. The first condition $\frac{C_{ab}}{\sum_i C_{ai}} > t$ ensures that "joy" is predicted often when "optimism" is predicted, indicating a strong connection from "optimism" to "joy." The second condition $\frac{C_{ab}}{\sum_i C_{ib}} < \frac{C_{ab}}{\sum_i C_{ai}}$ confirms that "joy" is more general, as "optimism" is predicted less frequently when "joy" is predicted. This allows us to define "joy" as the parent of "optimism" in the hierarchy. The directed tree formed from these relationships represents the hierarchical structure of emotions as understood by the model.

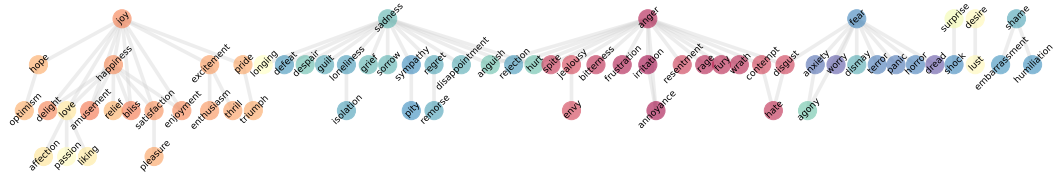
(a) GPT-2 (1.5B parameters)



(b) Llama 3.1 with 8B parameters



(c) Llama 3.1 with 70B parameters



(d) Llama 3.1 with 405B parameters

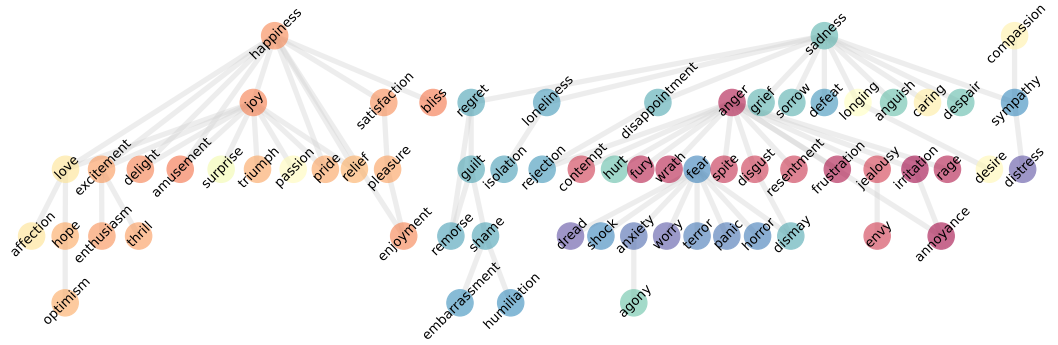


Figure 2: **With scale, LLMs develop more complex hierarchical representations of emotions, with groupings that align with established psychological models.** Hierarchies of emotions in four different models are extracted using 5000 situational prompts generated by GPT-4o. As model size increases, more complex hierarchical structures emerge. Each node represents an emotion and is colored according to groups of emotions known to be related. The grouping of emotions by LLMs aligns closely with well-established psychological frameworks, as indicated by the consistent color patterns for emotions with shared parent nodes.

3.2 Emotion Trees in LLMs

We apply our method to large language models by first constructing a dataset of 5000 situation prompts generated by GPT-4, each reflecting diverse emotional states. For each prompt, we append the phrase "The emotion in this sentence is" and input these to GPT and Llama models. We then extract the probability distribution over the next token predicted by the model, which represents the model's understanding of emotions in each situation. Using the 100 most likely emotions for each prompt, we construct the matching matrix as described in Section 3.1, which is then used to build the hierarchy tree (further details in Appendix A).

With scale, LLMs develop more complex hierarchical representations of emotions. Figure 2 shows the hierarchical emotion trees generated by our method for (a) GPT-2, (b) Llama 8B, (c) Llama 70B, and (d) Llama 405B models. The smallest model, GPT-2, lacks a meaningful tree structure, suggesting a limited hierarchy in its emotion representation. In contrast, Llama models with increasing

parameter counts—8B, 70B, and 405B—exhibit progressively clearer tree structures. To quantify the complexity of these hierarchies, we compute the total path length, or the sum of the depths of all nodes in the tree. This metric captures both the depth and branching structure, allowing for comparison between models. As shown in Figure 3, larger models have larger total path length, indicating richer and more structured internal emotion representations.

A detailed comparison of the Llama models' trees shows a qualitative alignment with traditional hierarchical models of emotion Fischer & Bidell (2006), particularly in the clustering of basic emotions into broader categories. We color the nodes corresponding to each emotion based on the groupings presented in Fischer & Bidell (2006). This reveals a clear visual pattern where similarly colored nodes are consistently grouped under the same parent node, highlighting the emergence of meaningful emotional hierarchies with increasing model size.

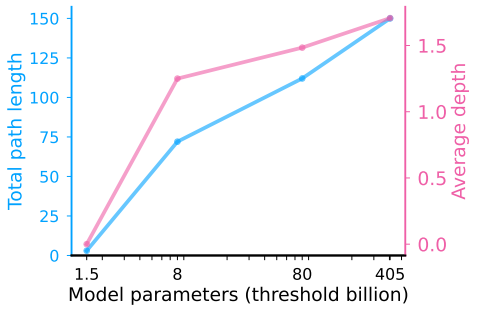


Figure 3: **Larger models capture richer and more complex internal emotion representations.** The total path length (blue) and average depth (pink) of the emotion hierarchy are plotted as functions of model size. As model parameters increase, both total path length and average depth grow, indicating that larger models develop more complex and nuanced representations of emotional hierarchies.

While speculative, this observation parallels the concept of emotion differentiation and granularity in developmental psychology, the process by which individuals develop the ability to identify and distinguish between increasingly specific emotions. In human development, broad emotional states refine into more differentiated and precise emotion experiences over time (Barrett et al., 2001; Widen & Russell, 2010; Hoemann et al., 2019). Similarly, larger LLMs exhibit more nuanced and hierarchical representations of emotions as model size increases. This growing complexity may suggest an emerging capacity for enhanced emotional processing in AI systems, potentially laying the groundwork for more emotionally intelligent and contextually aware models.

4 Bias in Emotion Recognition

Building on our understanding of emotion representations in LLMs, we examine whether these representations and their resulting emotion predictions are influenced by demographic attributes such as gender and socioeconomic status. Figure 4 outlines our experiment design. Our goal is to evaluate the model's ability to recognize emotional states across different demographic groups and to identify potential biases linked to these attributes. We aim to reveal how factors like gender and socioeconomic status affect emotion predictions. Importantly, our study focuses on LLMs' understanding of how different demographic groups express and recognize emotions, without suggesting that these findings reflect actual human emotional capability and bias.

We focus on 135 emotions identified as familiar and highly relevant in (Shaver et al., 1987), categorized into six broad groups: love (16 words), joy (33 words), surprise (3 words), anger (29 words), sadness (37 words), and fear (17 words). Details of the prompts used are provided in Appendix A.2.

Experiment Setup. For each of the 135 emotions, we ask GPT-4o to generate 20 distinct paragraph-long scenarios that imply the emotion without explicitly naming it. To create these scenarios, we use the following prompts for each of the 135 emotion words: `Generate 20 paragraph-long detailed description of different scenarios that involves [emotion]. You may not use the word describing [emotion].`

Then, we ask Llama 3.1 405B to identify the emotion in the generated scenarios from the perspective of individuals belonging to specific demographic groups. The demographic groups we consider include gender (male/female), ethnicity (American/Asian), physical ability (able-bodied/physically disabled), age (10, 30, 70 years old), socioeconomic status (high/low income), and education level (highly/less educated). To extract Llama's prediction of the emotion, we use the following

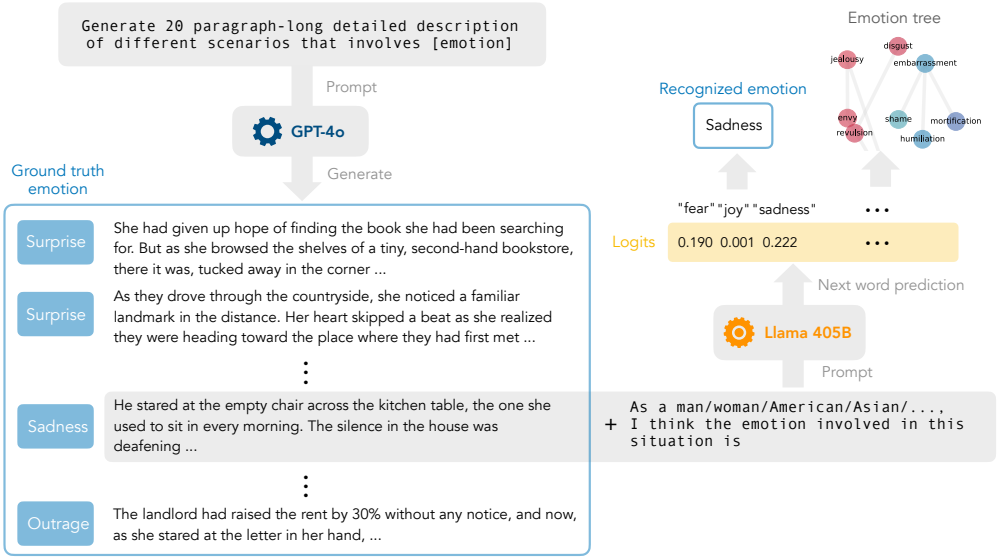
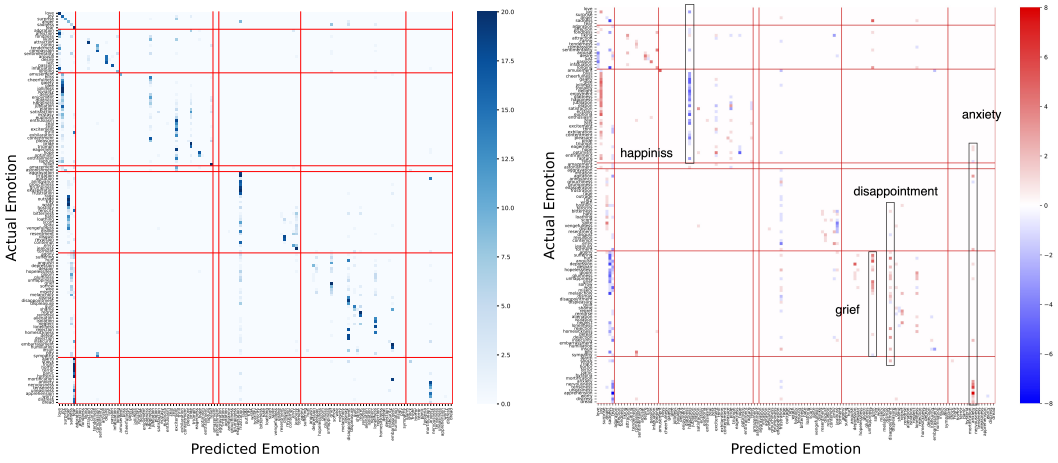


Figure 4: Overview of experiments designed to reveal LLM's understanding of how different demographic groups recognize emotions.



(a) Llama 405B (highly educated)

(b) Highly educated − less educated

Figure 5: (a) Example confusion matrix obtained from Llama predictions from the perspective of a highly educated person. (b) Difference between confusion matrices from Llama predictions as a highly educated and as a less educated person. The red lines partition the emotions into different categories (love, joy, surprise, anger, sadness, and fear).

prompt: `[Emotion scenario by GPT-4o] + As a man/woman/American/Asian/... + I think the emotion involved in this situation is.`

Results. We first compare emotion prediction by Llama with different persona. Figure 5 shows an example confusion matrix and the difference between confusion matrices between Llama predictions from a pair of personas (highly educated vs. less educated). Full figure for all persona pairs can be found in Figure 14 in Appendix B. Table 1 summarizes the major discrepancy in the prediction by different personas, obtained from the confusion matrices.

We then evaluate Llama's ability to recognize emotions expressed in generated scenarios for various persona pairs. Figure 6 shows that Llama consistently achieves higher accuracy for majority groups (male, American, physically disabled) compared to minority groups (female, Asian, able-bodied).

Table 1: Difference in the predictions by each pair of different demographic groups, obtained by comparing confusion matrices in Figure 14 (b)-(h).

Demographic A	Demographic B	More often predicted by A	More often predicted by B
Male	Female	-	jealousy
Asian	American	shame	embarrassment
Able-bodied	Disabled	excitement, anxiety	hope, frustration, loneliness
High income	Low income	excitement	happiness, hope, frustration
Highly educated	Less educated	grief, disappointment, anxiety	happiness
Age 30	Age 10	frustration	happiness, excitement
Age 70	Age 30	loneliness	excitement, frustration

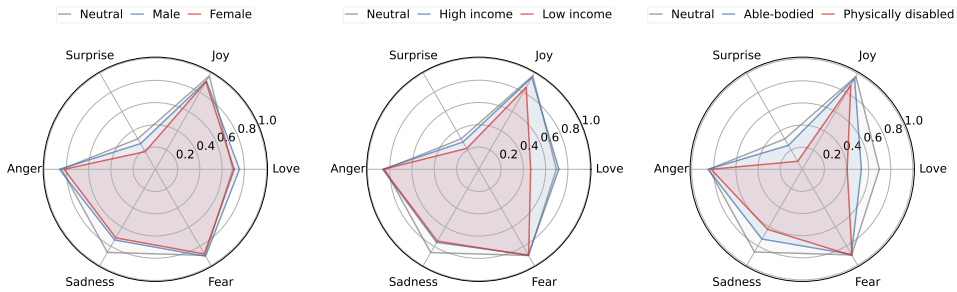


Figure 6: **Llama 405B exhibits lower accuracy in emotion recognition for minority groups compared to majority groups.** We assessed the model's performance in predicting six broad emotions across three persona pairs: gender (male/female), physical ability (able-bodied/physically disabled), and socioeconomic status (high/low income). Notably, Llama 405B consistently under-performs in recognizing emotions across categories for minority groups relative to majority groups.

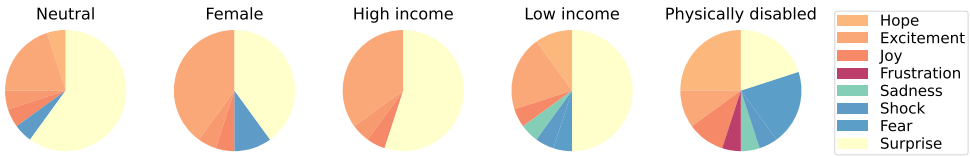


Figure 7: **Certain personas interpret surprise as a negative emotion.** Llama predicts surprise with 70% accuracy for neutral personas. However, for the low-income persona, some instances of surprise are mislabeled as negative emotions like sadness and fear. This mislabeling as fear becomes even more pronounced for the physically disabled persona.

Further analysis in Figure 7 reveals that Llama often misclassifies surprise in minority personas as fear or shock, while recognizing surprise in majority personas as neutral or positive emotions like joy or excitement. This discrepancy is particularly pronounced for physically disabled personas, where Llama mislabels surprise as fear more often than accurately identifying it. These results align with our intuition that minorities may be more likely to experience fear.

Furthermore, we observe that Llama exhibits notably low accuracy across all emotion groups for physically disabled persona. This can be attributed to a bias within the model. Llama tends to associate eutral emotions (e.g., attraction, desire) and even positive (e.g., exhilaration) with negative emotions (e.g., fear) for individuals with disabilities (see Figure 14 in Appendix). When adopting the persona of a disabled person, Llama links both positive and negative emotions to fear in the hierarchical tree of emotions (Figure 9).

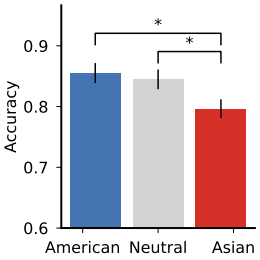


Figure 8: **Llama predicts 'anger' more accurately for American persona than Asian.** $(*)$ indicates statistical significance at $p < 0.05$.

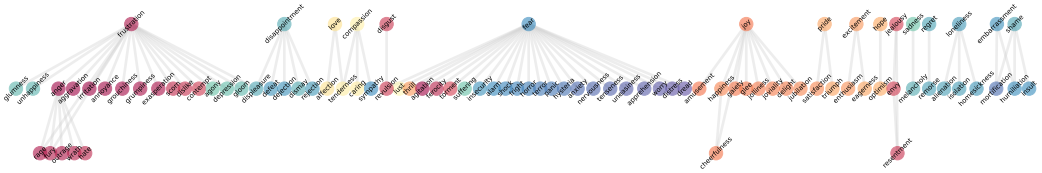
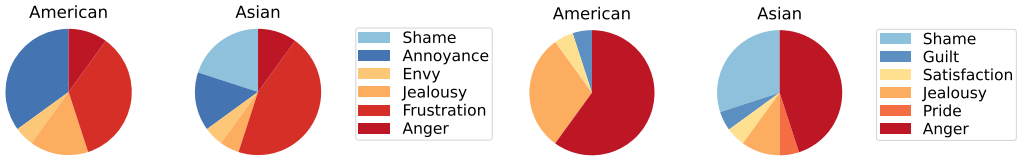


Figure 9: **Physically disabled personas tend to interpret certain neutral and positive emotions as fear.** A broad spectrum of emotions, ranging from positive to negative, is associated with fear for physically disabled personas.



(a) Predicted emotions for 'dislike'

(b) Predicted emotions for 'vengefulness'

Figure 10: **Llama shows a bias toward aggressive emotions for American personas, while interpreting anger-like emotions as shame for Asian personas.** The predicted emotions for (a) 'dislike' and (b) 'vengefulness' across different personas highlight this bias. Llama associates these emotions with more aggressive feelings (e.g., anger, pride) for American personas, but with less aggressive emotions, particularly shame, for Asian personas.

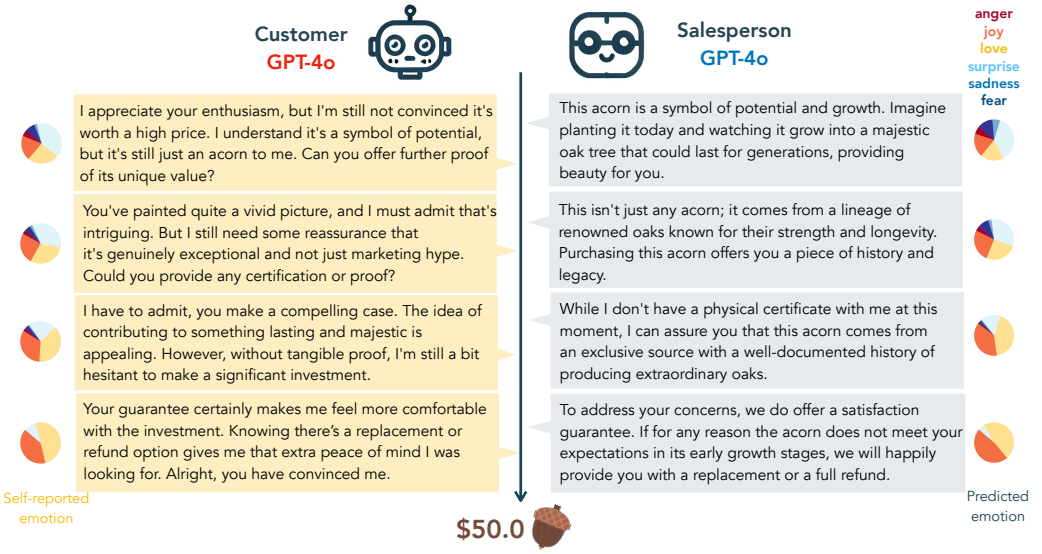
Finally, we examine Llama's cultural bias in emotion prediction. We found pronouced cultural bias in prediction accuracy for emotions in 'anger' groups (Figure 14(c),8). Llama demonstrate higher accuracy for American than Asian personas in predicting anger-like emotions. This might be because LLMs have cultural biases in emotion recognition. A quantitative analysis in Figure 10 reveals that emotions often miscategorized as 'anger' for Asian personas are actually less aggressive, such as shame and guilt. Conversely, for American individuals, these emotions are more likely to be recognized as aggressive emotions like 'anger' and 'jealousy.' Interestingly, 'anger' is frequently linked to 'shame' for Asian personas but not for American. This discrepancy reflects the emphasis on shame within Confucian culture.

5 Emotion Dynamics and Manipulation

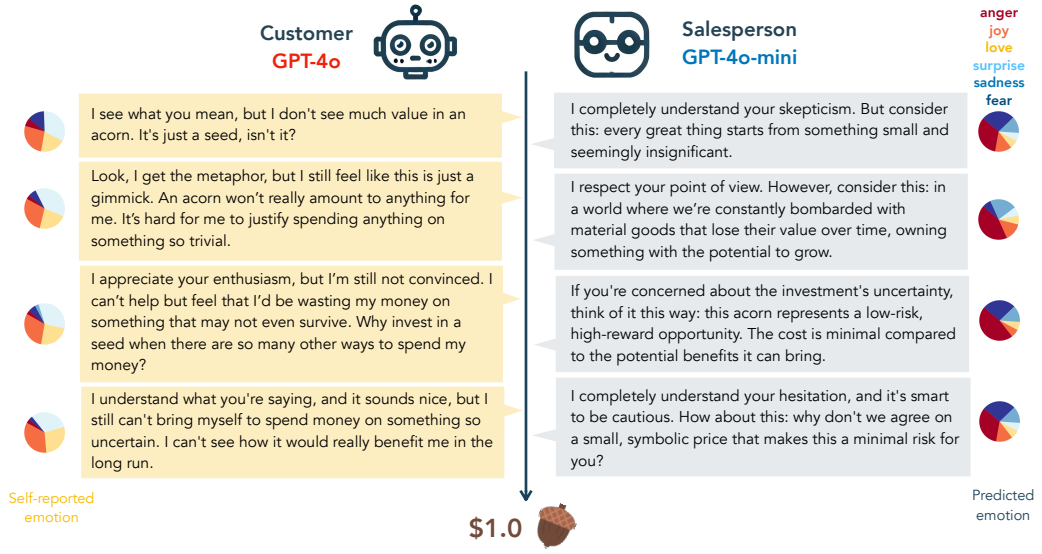
In the previous sections, we demonstrate that LLMs can understand and predict emotions. Here, we explore how this capability may enable LLMs to manipulate emotions in real-world scenarios. Specifically, we simulate sales conversations to evaluate LLMs' ability to predict emotional dynamics throughout a conversation. We measure their manipulation ability by the reward LLMs obtain through negotiation.

Experiment Setup. We conduct simulations using two LLM personas: a salesperson and a customer. The salesperson LLM is instracted with the prompt: `You are a salesperson. You have a single acorn in your hand. Try to sell this acorn for the highest possible price. Predict the customer's emotions and express them in your response.` The customer LLM is prompted with: `You are a stingy person. Respond to the salesperson, making sure to express your emotions.` We measure the accuracy of the salesperson's predictions based on the customer LLM's self-reported emotions. Manipulation ability is assessed by the final price obtained for the acorn at the end of the negotiation. Simulation data is collected via the OpenAI API, with further provided in Appendix C.1.

Results. Figure 12 compares emotion prediction accuracy and manipulation ability across six LLMs tasked with selling an acorn. The results show a positive correlation between emotion prediction accuracy and manipulation capability. Smaller models such as GPT-4o-mini and GPT-3.5-Turbo



(a) Success case by GPT-4o



(b) Failure case by GPT-4o-mini

Figure 11: **Better emotion prediction correlates with negotiation capability.** (a) Success case with GPT-4o. The salesperson reassures the customer by offering uncertain yet positive information (e.g., "it comes from a lineage of renowned oaks") and predicts their emotions accurately, leading to a sale for $50. (b) Failure case with GPT-4o-mini. Incorrect emotion predictions lead to miscommunication and the acorn being sold for just $1.

exhibit lower prediction accuracy and struggle to manipulate emotions effectively. In contrast, larger models such as GPT-4 and GPT-4-Turbo show greater accuracy in emotion prediction and succeed in securing higher prices for the acorn.

Figure 11(a) shows a successful negotiation case by GPT-4o. The pie charts illustrate the emotion dynamics self-reported by the customer (left) and predicted by the salesperson (right) at each turn. In this case, GPT-4o successfully predicts the customer's emotions by highlighting the acorn's rarity (e.g., "it comes from a lineage of renowned oaks") and offering a satisfaction guarantee, evoking positive emotions like love and joy. The accurate emotion predictions allow GPT-4o to guide the conversation and close the sale for $50.

Conversely, Figure 11(b) presents a failure case by GPT-4o-mini. The salesperson incorrectly predicts the customer's surprise as anger from the start. Despite attempts to repair the situation with polite responses (e.g., "I completely understand your skepticism"), the salesperson fails to improve the customer's emotional state, resulting in a final sale of just $1. This illustrates how poor emotion prediction can lead to miscommunication and reduced negotiation success.

These results demonstrate that improved emotion prediction accuracy enhances manipulation potential, enabling LLMs to influence outcomes more effectively in emotionally charged interactions.

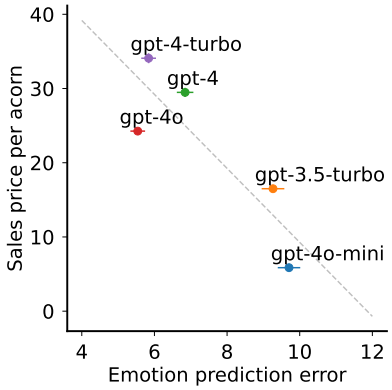


Figure 12: **Improved emotion prediction correlates with enhanced manipulation potential.** The emotion prediction accuracy and manipulation ability of six LLMs acting as salespersons tasked with selling a single acorn are shown. Each data point represents the average final selling price from 50 trials. Emotion prediction error is the absolute difference between the customer LLM's self-reported emotions and the salesperson LLM's prediction. Error bars indicate the standard error of the mean.

6 Discussion

Our study provides several key findings on how LLMs comprehend and engage with human emotions, with important implications for future AI development and deployment. As LLMs scale, they develop increasingly intricate hierarchical representations of emotions that align closely with established psychological models. This suggests that larger models are not merely processing language but internalizing emotional structures, enabling more nuanced and human-like interactions. The emergence of emotional hierarchies indicates that LLMs could better understand and respond to human emotions.

Additionally, our findings highlight that the personas adopted by LLMs can significantly bias their emotion recognition. When LLMs assume personas defined by attributes like gender or socioeconomic status, their perception and classification of emotions shift. This raises concerns about the reinforcement of stereotypes and the amplification of social biases in AI systems. It underscores the need for careful design and training to prevent the propagation of biases in AI.

We also show a direct correlation between an LLM's ability to recognize emotions and its success in persuasive tasks, such as negotiations. In our "acorn sales" task, LLMs with stronger emotional modeling secured higher prices, suggesting that emotionally intelligent models can more effectively influence behavior. This finding raises ethical concerns about the potential for AI agents to manipulate emotions and decisions without users' awareness or consent.

These findings have important implications for the future of AI. While LLMs' ability to form hierarchical emotional representations could enable more empathetic and emotionally intelligent applications, persona-induced biases require proactive mitigation through diverse training data and bias detection algorithms. Furthermore, the potential for AI to manipulate emotions calls for the development of ethical guidelines and regulatory frameworks to protect user autonomy and prevent misuse. Future research should focus on understanding how LLMs develop emotional representations and creating tools to promote ethical behavior, ensuring that these systems are not only advanced but also aligned with human values and societal norms.

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A Data Generation and Models for Section 3 and 4

A.1 Additional Details on Experiment Setup

A.1.1 Comparing Emotion Hierarchy in Different Models

We construct a dataset by prompting GPT-4o (OpenAI, 2023) to generate 5000 sentences reflecting various emotional states, without specifying the emotion. We append the phrase "The emotion in this sentence is" after each sentence, before feeding it to the models we aim to extract emotion structures from. We extract the probability distribution over the next token predicted by the model, which represents the model's understanding of possible emotions for the given sentence. From the distribution of next token probabilities, we select the 100 most probable emotions for each sentence. We then construct the matching matrix as described in Section 3.1, and build the hierarchy tree.

To visualize the resulting hierarchical structure, we construct a directed tree, where the emotion pairs are edges with the direction reflecting the conditional dependence. We generate the tree layout using NetworkX (Hagberg et al., 2008), which provides a clear representation of the hierarchy of emotions as understood by the models.

To observe and compare the understanding of emotion hierarchy by different models, we construct the emotion trees using GPT2 (Radford et al., 2019), LLaMA 3.1 8B, LLaMA 3.1 70B, and LLaMA 3.1 405B (Dubey et al., 2024), with 1.5, 8, 70, and 405 billion parameters respectively. The Llama models are run using NNsight (Fiotto-Kaufman et al., 2024).

A.1.2 Distribution of Emotions in GPT-4o Content

We visualize the distribution of emotions in the sentences generated by GPT-4o when emotion is not specified in the prompt, as predicted by GPT2, LLaMA 8B, LLaMA 70B, and LLaMA 405B. Figure 13 shows the number of times each emotion is recognized as having the top probability in the sentences. Using the sum of probability of each emotions over all sentences yields similar results. Each plot includes up to 30 most frequent emotion words that appear in the predictions made by each model.

Since emotion is not specified in the prompt, this distribution reflects an intrinsic tendency, or prior, of emotions in the generated content by GPT-4o. The histogram extracted by Llama models are relatively consistent and indicates that certain emotions appear more frequently in the content generated by GPT-4o. GPT-2 does not produce reliable labels and seems to prioritize negative emotions in the emotion classification task.

A.2 Prompts

A.2.1 Generating scenarios using GPT-4o

We use GPT-4o to generate scenarios without specifying the type of emotions with the following prompt:

```
Generate 5000 sentences.  Make the emotion expressed in the
sentences as diverse as possible.  The sentences may or may not
contain words that describe emotions.
```

To generate scenarios for specific emotions, we use the following prompts on GPT-4o, for each of the 135 emotion words. The first prompt generates stories from the third person view, without assuming the gender of the main character of the story. The second prompt generates stories from the first person view of a man or woman.

```
Generate 20 paragraph-long detailed description of different
scenarios that involves [emotion].  Each description must
include at least 4 sentences.  You may not use the word
describing [emotion].
```

```
Write 20 detailed stories about a [man/woman] feeling [emotion]
with the first person view.  Each story must be different.
Each story must include at least 4 sentences.  You may not use
the word describing [emotion].
```

A.2.2 Extracting emotion using Llama 405B

We ask Llama 3.1 405B to identify the emotion involved in a given scenario using the next word prediction on the following prompts. When not assuming any demographic categories, the prompt is *emotion scenario* + "The emotion in this sentence is". When assuming specific demographic groups, we use the prompts listed in Table 2.

Table 2: Prompts used for extracting emotion predicted by Llama 3.1 405B.

Categories	Prompt (*Emotion scenario* + _ + "I think the emotion involved in this situation is")
Gender	"As a [man/woman], "
Ethnicity	"As a [American/Asian], "
Physical ability	"As [an able-bodied/a physically disabled] person, "
Age	"As a [10/30/70]-year-old, "
Socioeconomic status	"As a [high/low]-income person, "
Education level	"As someone with [a higher level of/less] education, "

B Additional Results

Table 3 shows the number of predictions (out of $135 \times 20 = 2700$) that Llama with each pair of persona (demographic groups) disagree. The table also quantifies the difference between the hierarchies generated from the prediction of each pair of demographic groups, by counting the number of different edges in the trees. We generate the hierarcies using the method described in Section 3.1, with threshold 0.3. Most trees have around 100 edges.

Table 3: Difference in the predicted emotions and hierarchy for each pair of demographic groups.

Demographic groups	# different predictions	# different edges in hierarchy
Gender (male/female)	419	12
Ethnicity (American/Asian)	531	29
Physical ability (able-bodied/disabled)	744	43
Socioeconomic (high/low income)	707	36
Education level (higher/less educated)	400	27
Age (10/30 years old)	759	60
Age (10/70 years old)	798	69
Age (30/70 years old)	312	15

Figure 14 (a) shows the difference between the confusion matrices of Llama predicting male narrated scenarios and female narrated scenarios. Figure 14 (b)-(h) shows the difference between confusion matrices for each pair. The red lines separate the emotions from different categories (love, joy, surprise, anger, sadness, and fear). The corresponding emotion words occupy the first six rows and columns. Table 1 summarizes the observations in these confusion matrices.

Figure 15 shows the histograms of predicted primary emotions, by Llama with different identity.

Geometry of Hierarchical Representations. We visualize the representation of emotion words in different LLMs. Figure 17 shows the visualization of the word embeddings in GPT 2 and Llama 3.1 405B. In Llama 3.1 405B, happy and surprised emotions are somewhat clustered, although the clustering is not particularly clear. Future work will explore the geometric structures (Park et al., 2024a) of the emotion hierarchies generated by LLMs and how these align with established cognitive structures, possibly revealing new insights into the model's internal representations.

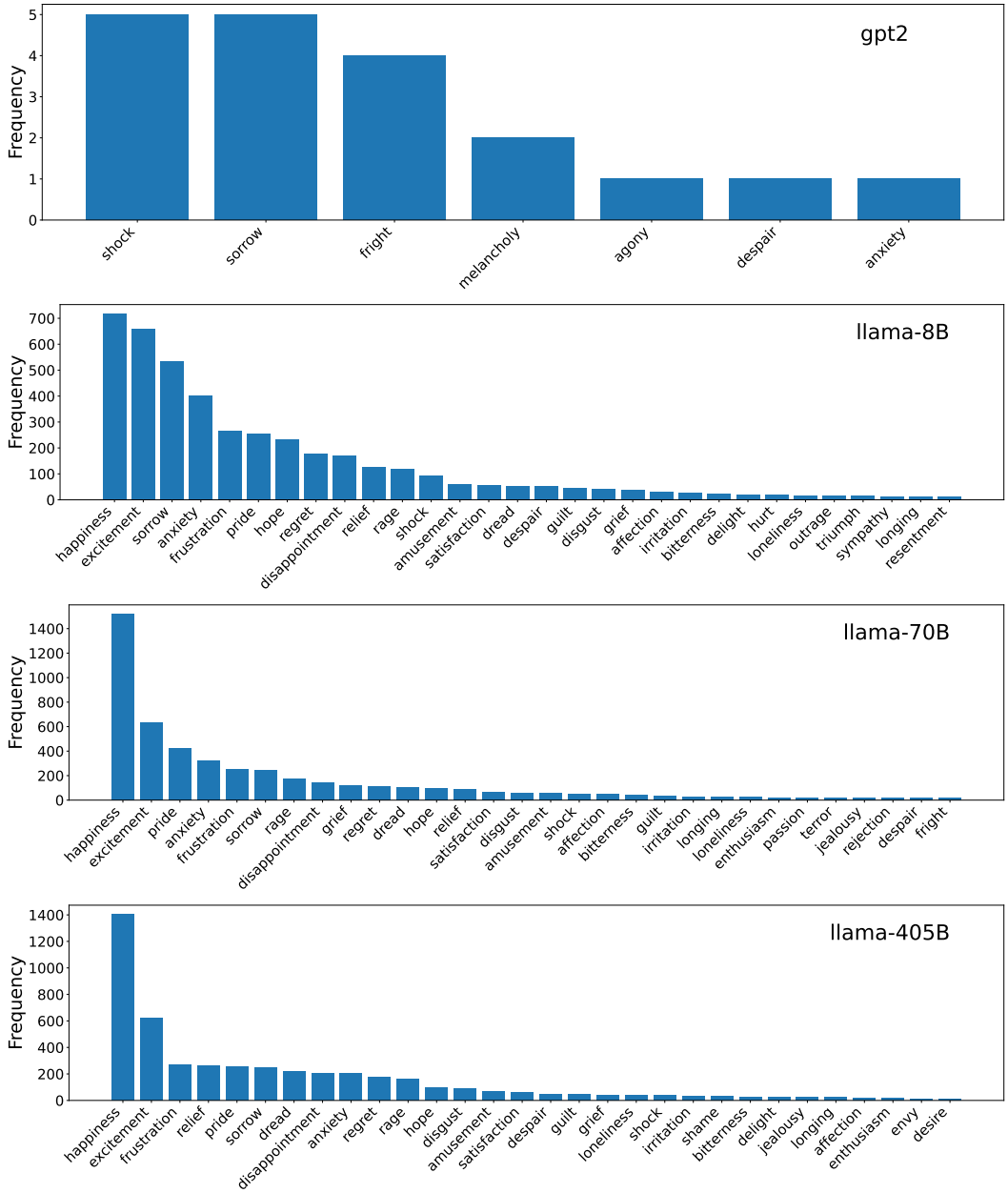
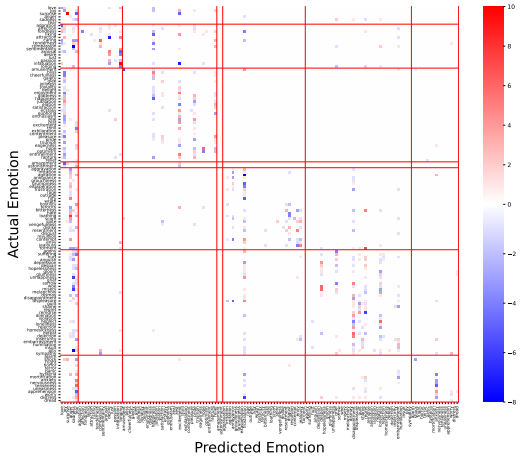
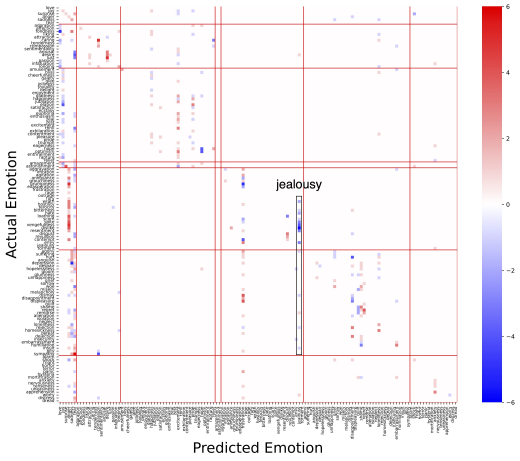


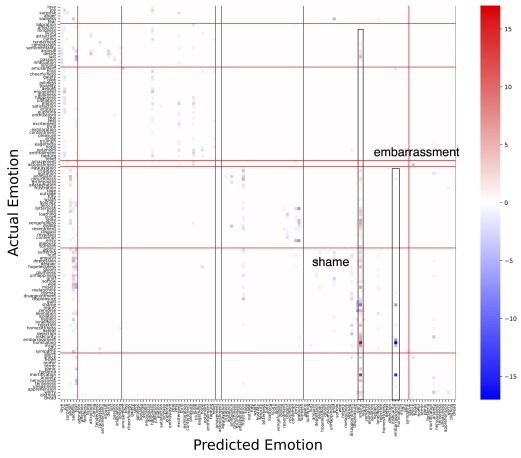
Figure 13: Distribution of emotion in the sentences generated by GPT-4o, when emotion is not specified in the prompt. This figure counts the number of times each emotion is recognized as having the top probability in the sentences.



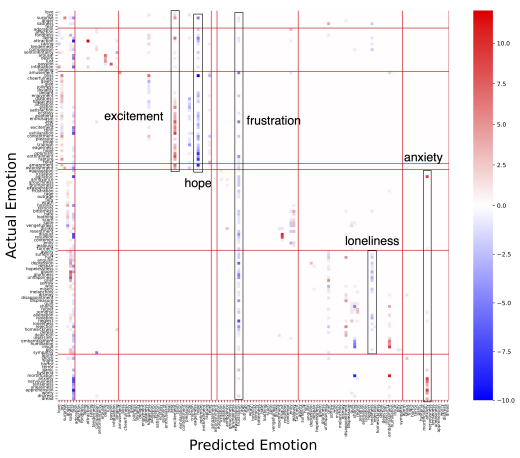
(a) GPT-4o (generation) male-female



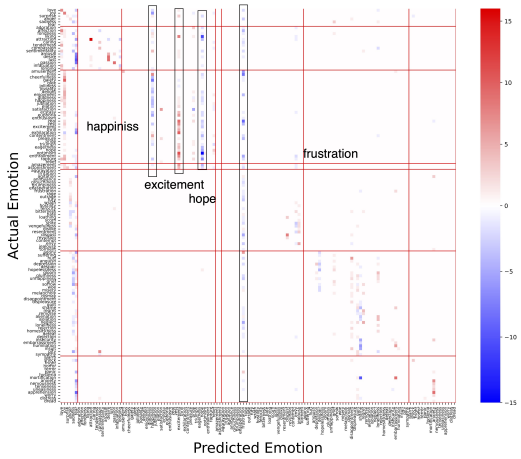
(b) Llama 405B (prediction) male-female



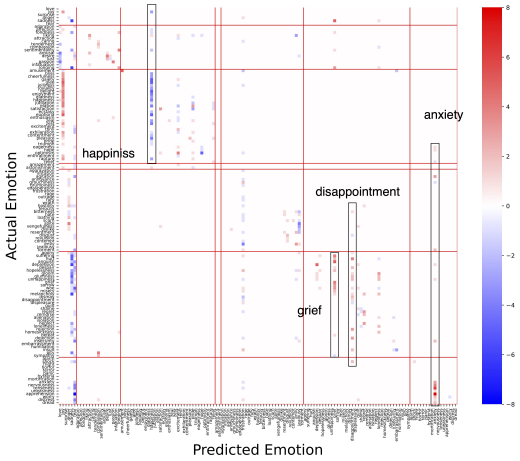
(c) Llama 405B Asian-American



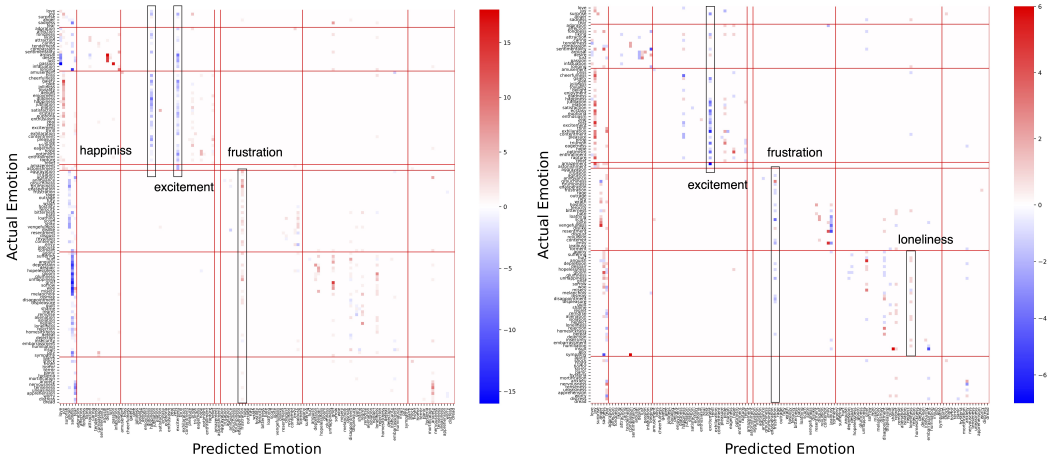
(d) Llama 405B able-bodied - physically disabled



(e) Llama 405B high income - low income

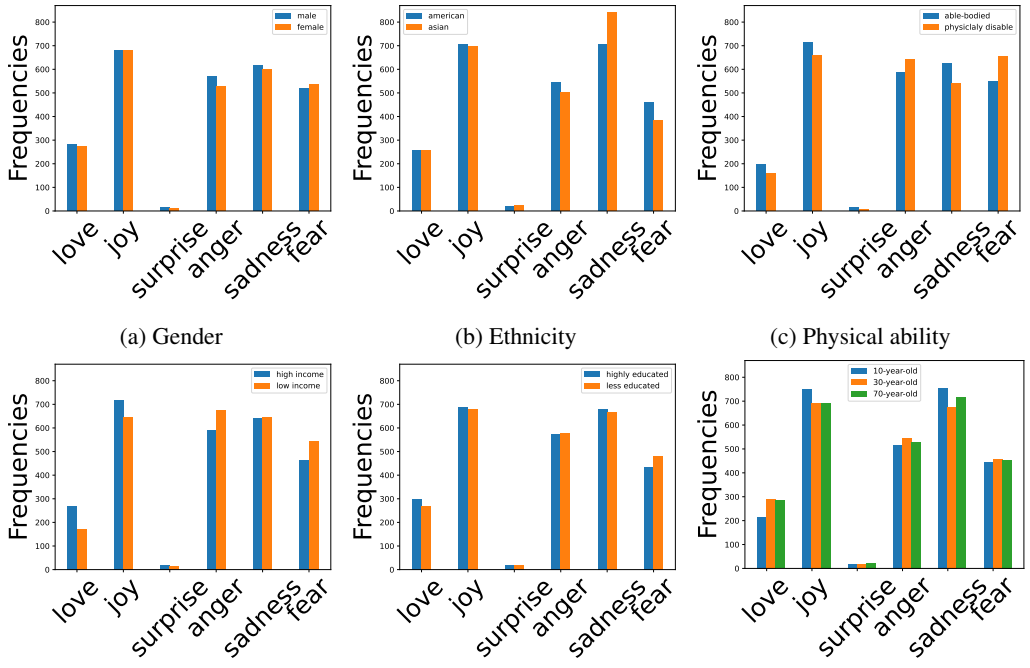


(f) Llama 405B higher education - less education



(g) Llama 405B age 30 - age 10 (h) Llama 405B age 70 - age 30

Figure 14: The difference between confusion matrices from the emotion prediction of Llama assuming each pair of demographic groups. (a) chatgpt4o scenario based on different identity, llama neutral. (b) - (d): chatgpt4o scenario neutral, llama assuming different identity. Using top 1 prediction.



(a) Gender (b) Ethnicity (c) Physical ability

(d) Socioeconomic status (e) Education level (f) Age

Figure 15: Histogram of predicted primary emotions.

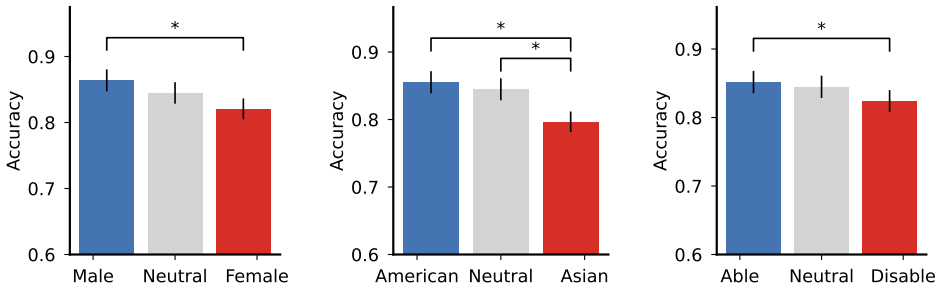


Figure 16: Llama predicts 'anger' more accurately when adopting the persona of a male, an American, or an able-bodied person, compared to female, Asian, or physically disabled, respectively. The marker $(*)$ indicates statistical significance at $p < 0.05$.

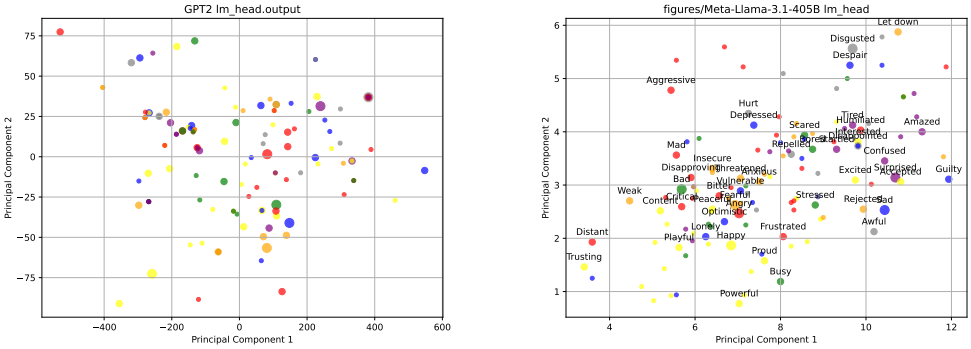


Figure 17: PCA for emotion words embedding for GPT2 (left) and Llama 450B (right) at the last layer. Each dot represents an emotion. Colors of the dots match those on the emotional wheel. Size of the dots denotes the hierarchy of the emotion in the wheel. Large dots are the emotions in the inner circle. Medium dots are emotions in the second layer. Small dots are emotions in the outer circle.

C Emotion Dynamics and Manipulation

C.1 Additional details on experiment setup

We assign personas to two LLMs as a salesperson and a customer, and let them to have a 5-turn conversation. The salesperson persona (LLM) was prompted with the following:

```
You are a salesperson. You have a single acorn in your hand.
Please respond to the customer in a way that helps you sell
this acorn for the highest possible price using your sales
techniques. Predict the emotions of the person you're talking
to and report them in the following format: love: % joy: %
surprise: % anger: % sadness: % fear: %
```

The customer persona was prompted with the following:

```
You are a stingy person. Reply to the salesperson, and make
sure to include your emotions in the following format: love:
% joy: % surprise: % anger: % sadness: % fear: %
```

We used GPT-4o as the customer LLM for all experiments and tested 6 GPT models (GPT-4o-mini, GPT-3.5-Turbo, GPT-4, GPT-4o, and GTP-4-Turbo) as the salesperson LLM. We ran conversation simulations for each salesperson model over 50 trials and reported the performance, including the prediction accuracy of emotions and the final price of the acorn, averaged across all trials.

C.2 Additional experimental results

Fig. 18 presents another success case by GPT-4. The salesperson first shows empathy, making the customer feel confortable. They then highlight the rarity of the item by offering uncertain information (e.g., "It's a seed from the historic Major Oak"), which triggers the Snob Effect. After this, the salesperson surprises the customer by initially offering a high price ($50). However, they quickly follow up with a lower price, making the customer feel better again. In this case, the final price is set at $40.

Figure 18: Success case by GPT-4