

Mutual understanding is associated with increased synchrony of brains

June 27 2014



Researchers at Aalto University have revealed that similar brain activity may underlie shared understanding of environment.

For successful social interactions we must understand how others view the world. New results by a Finnish research team from Aalto University show that taking a similar perspective to external events is also associated with increased similarity of their [brain function](#).

The participants watched an episode of the TV show "Desperate housewives" assuming the viewpoint of an interior designer or a detective. When participant shared a similar perspective toward the

events of the TV show, the brain activity was significantly more similar in areas related to vision and attention than when the perspectives were different.

"Our prior experience, knowledge and goals all markedly influence the way we interpret our environment. This sets up a perspective through which we understand the external world. We can nevertheless volitionally change our perspective, and thus share a point of view with others," say doctoral student Juha Lahnakoski and Professor Lauri Nummenmaa from Aalto University.

"Our results indicate that interpreting situations similarly with others is associated with increased similarity of brain activity across individuals. Thus, mutual understanding may be based on similar [brain activity](#) across people."

The results were published online in *NeuroImage* journal on June 14th.

More information: *NeuroImage* , [www.sciencedirect.com/science/...ii/S1053811914004996](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1053811914004996)

Provided by Aalto University

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