

Przemysław Gawroński, Maria Nawojczyk, Krzysztof Kułakowski

Opinion formation in an open system and the spiral of silence

A group of N talking actors is simulated. Each actor j has an opinion $S(j)$ on a given issue, selected randomly from the Gaussian distribution, and a charisma $C(j)$, selected randomly from the Poisson distribution. The group content is slowly changed; the oldest leave, new actors come, keeping $N = \text{const}$. An actor k dares to express his opinion $S(k)$ openly if it is not too far from what he hears; then his voice enters to what others hear, with the weight $C(k)$. We show that the influence of a leader – an actor with large charisma - can persist longer, than his lifetime in the group. Yet, after the leader leaves, the group opinion sometimes switches to the opposite one.