

Introduction



- Social attention: Individuals tend to orient their own attentional resources towards the same spatial location indicated by others (1).
- Eye-gaze direction: cue of social attention (2).
- **Social variables** (e.g., ethnicity, social status, gender) can **modulate the gaze-cueing of attention** (3-5).

Aims



Does the linguistic identity associated to facial stimuli can modulate the gaze-cueing of attention?

Methods & Material

Data collection: Online, through the Labvanced platform

Participants:

96 Italian native speakers. 48 Italian native speakers (mean age =26y; 24 females) for Study 1 and Study 2, respectively. Italian participants did not have any knowledge of Albanian (in Study 1) or Basque (in Study 2).

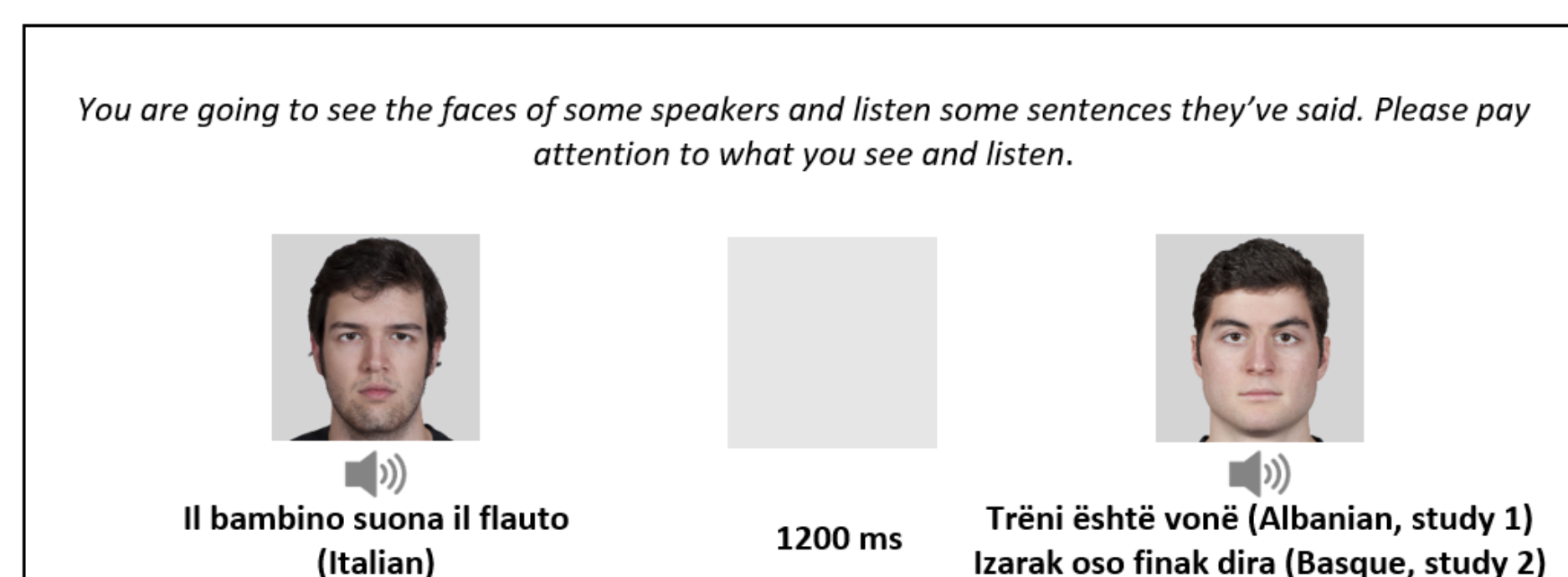
Stimuli:

8 full-colour photos of adult males
24 auditory sentences: 12 in Italian and 12 in Albanian (Study 1) or Basque (Study 2)

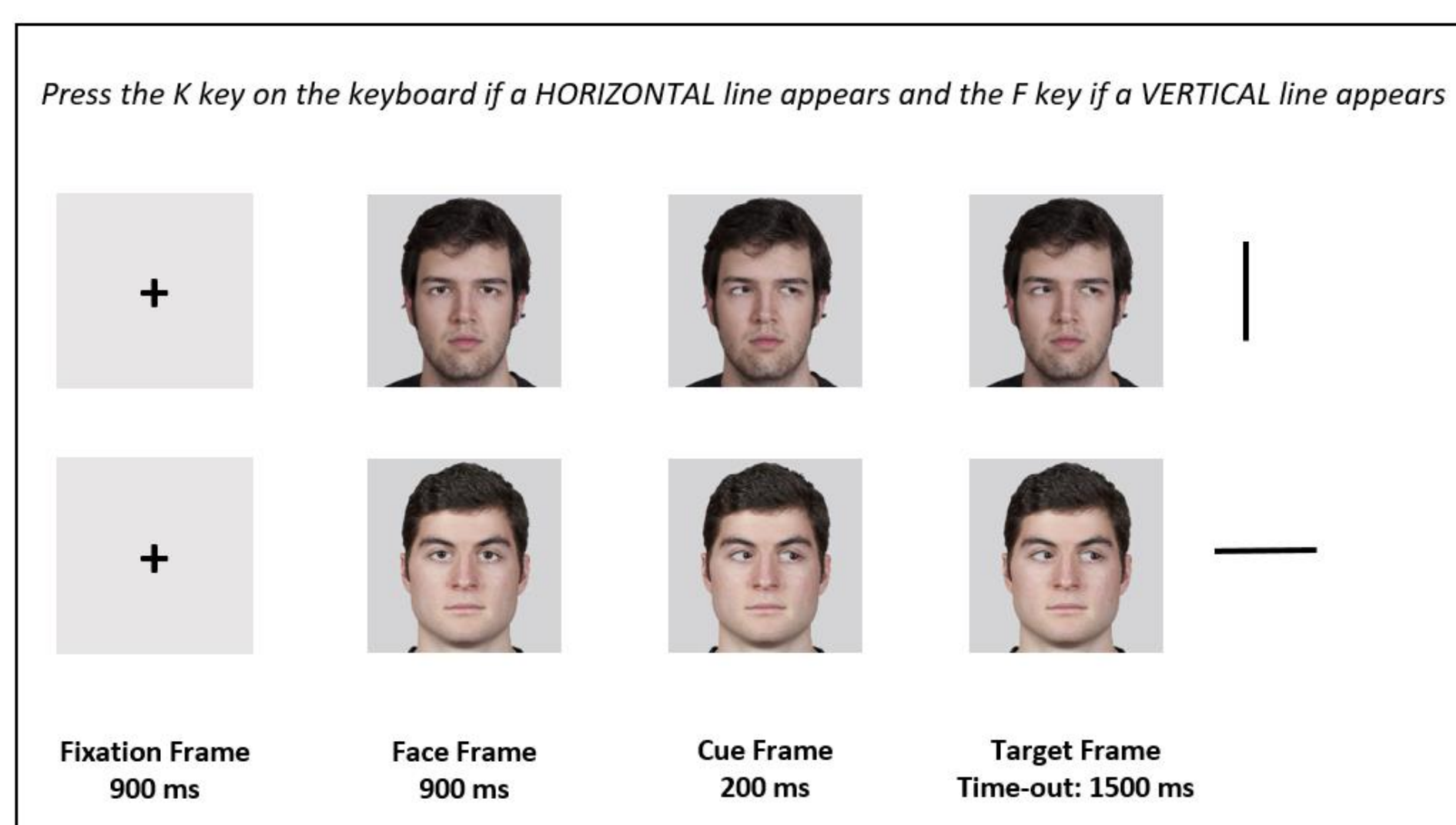
Procedure:

1) Familiarization

8 faces: half associated with Italian language and the other half with the unknown language (Albanian for Study 1; Basque for Study 2)



2) Gaze cueing



3) Implicit test



Sequence: Familiarization (1) | Gaze cueing (Block1) | Familiarization (2) | Gaze cueing (Block2) | Implicit test

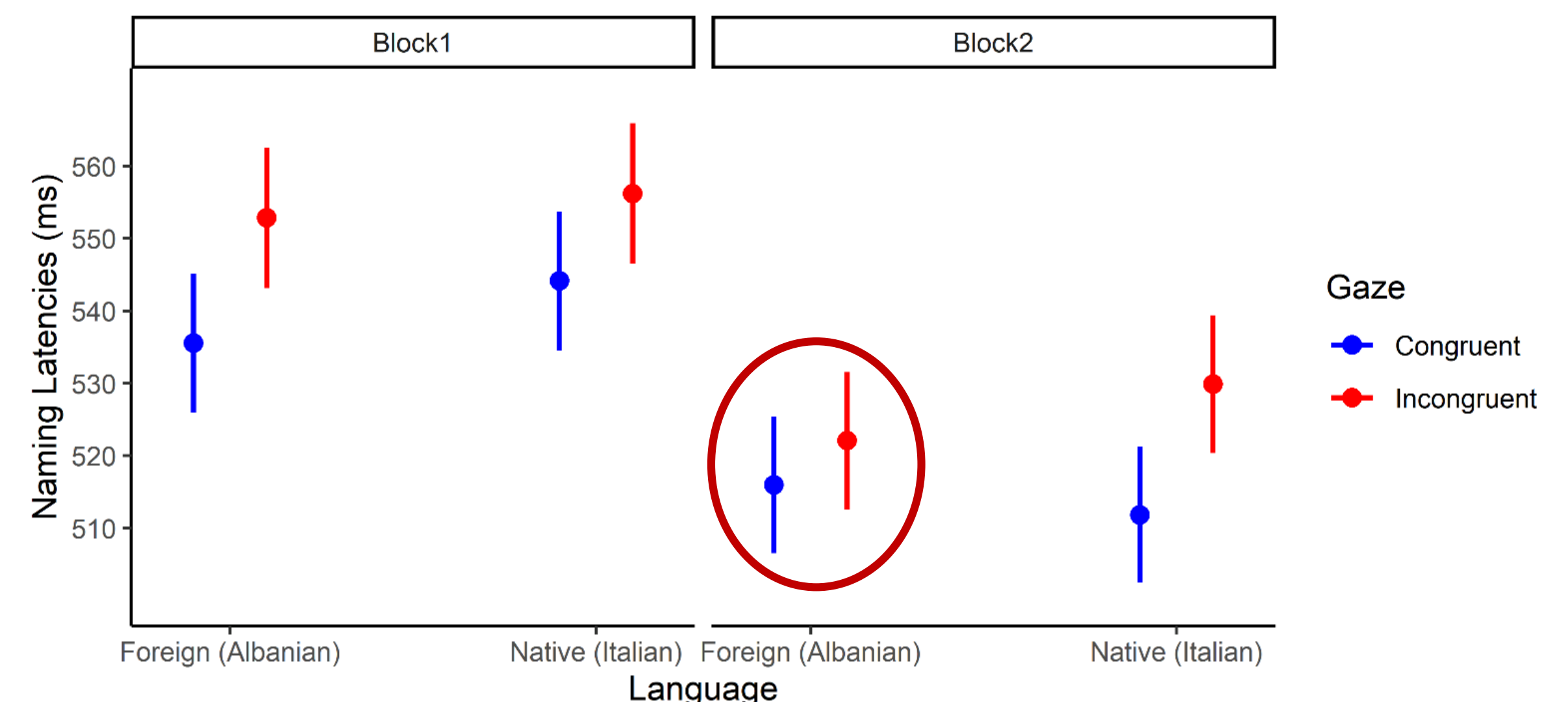
Analysis

Reaction times (RTs) for the gaze cueing task were analyzed employing generalized mixed effects model. We followed a *hierarchical stepwise forward model comparison approach* (6). The model comparison included the simplest model and proceeded by adding predictors.

Results

Study 1 – Italian | Albanian

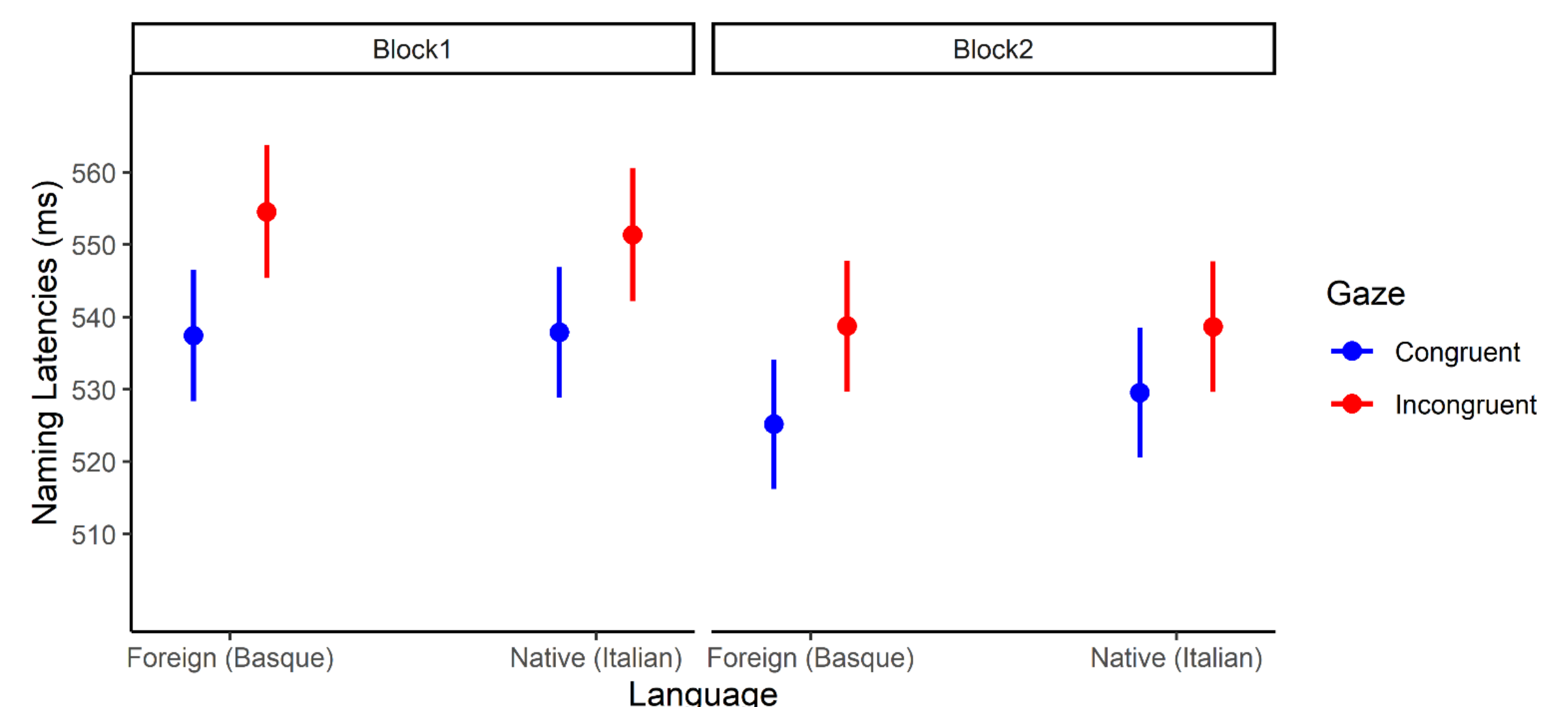
Best model: Gaze (Congruent vs. Incongruent) * Language (Native vs. Foreign) * Block (1 vs. 2) [$b=-17.17, SE=8.09, t=-2.12$]



The results indicate a **modulatory effect of linguistic identity in the gaze-cueing effect in block two** (i.e., after two Familiarization phases).

Study 2 – Italian | Basque

Best model: Gaze (Congruent vs. Incongruent) + Language (Native vs. Foreign) + Block (1 vs. 2) [$b=-13.26, SE=2.02, t=-6.57$]

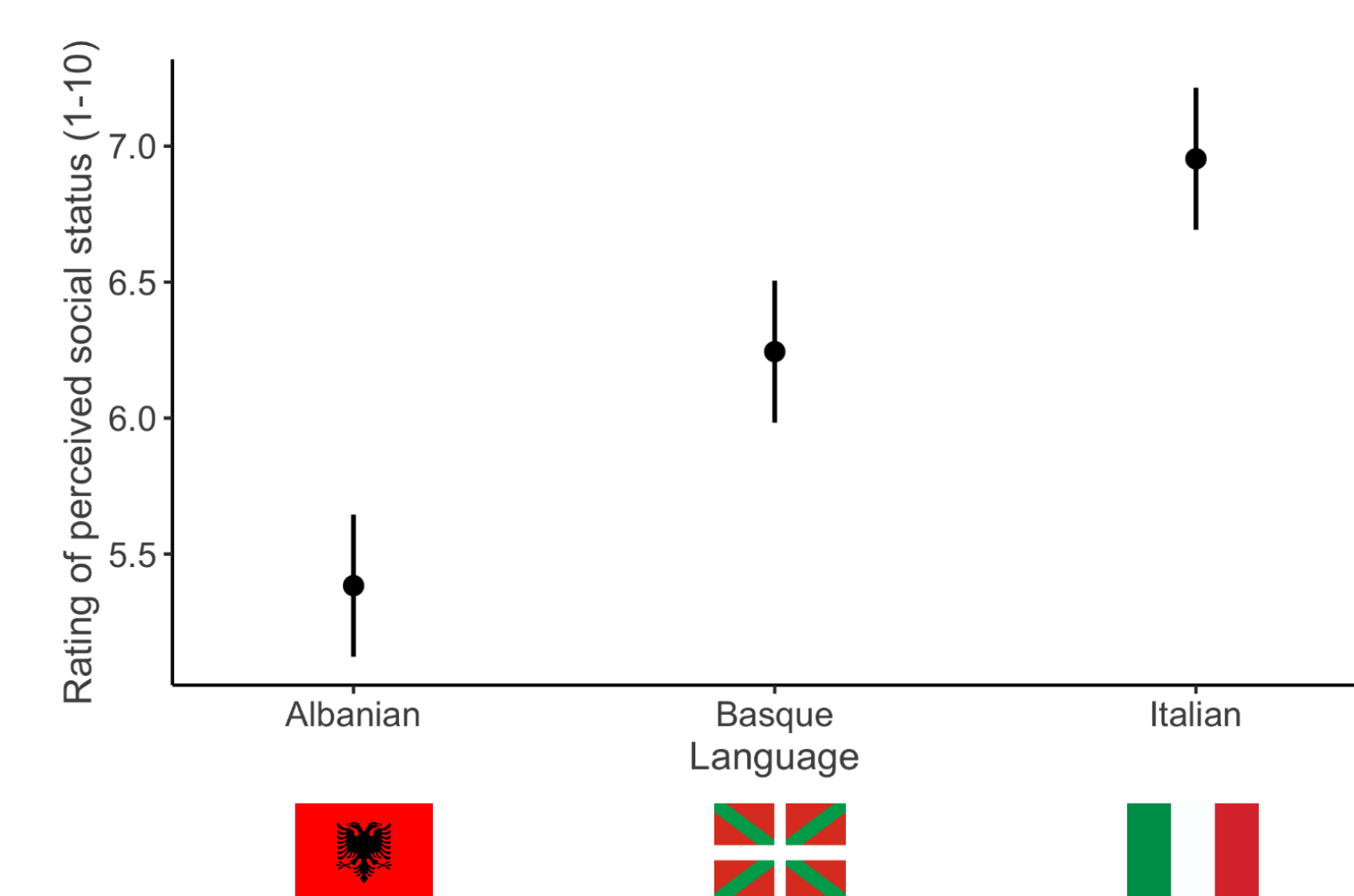


The results did not indicate a modulatory effect of linguistic identity in the gaze-cueing effect.

..On the social status associated to the languages..

Two weeks after the same participants were required to complete:

MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status



The results indicated that **Albanian** is the language with **less perceived social status**

Conclusion

We reported **evidence of the role of language as a factor modulating the gaze-cueing of attention**. This is seen by a decrease in the gap between incongruent and congruent trials when the face is Albanian (foreign) compared to Italian (native). This is not the case for Study 2. We suggest that the **different social status** attributed to the two foreign languages can explain the pattern of results.

References

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- (6) Heinze, G., Wallisch, C., Dunkler, D. (2018). Variable selection—A review and recommendations for the practicing statistician. *Biometrical Journal*, 60(3), 431-449.

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