

There Is No 'u' in Team:

We-Prioritization Does Not Extend to Individual Group Members.

Merryn D. Constable and Günther K. Knoblich

merryndconstable@gmail.com

Background

The strength of human society may rest upon collaborative tendencies (Tomasello, 2014). Human collaboration is facilitated by the engagement of a 'we-mode' (Gallotti & Frith, 2013) and the subsequent capacity to represent tasks as joint rather than individual (Sebanz et al., 2003). Indeed, information that is relevant to the collective is processed with priority, although, not to the same extent as self-relevant information (Constable et al., under review). If we-mode operates as a lens through which individuals process incoming stimuli, then how is a partner relevant stimulus processed? Does the semantic overlap between self and partner (as compared to stranger) produce a partner-prioritisation effect or can the we-mode act as a filter to exclude or inhibit responses to stimuli that should be acted upon by a partner?

Does the we-mode act to prioritise all group relevant stimuli or can it act as a filter for individually relevant group-stimuli?

Task

Pairs of participants made associations between identity labels and arbitrary shapes. One participant was required to respond if, on a given trial (see Figure 1), the shape and label matched. The other participant was required to respond if they did not match.

E1-Joint Matching: Shape associations for Self, Partner, Stranger, Own Team, Other Team.

E2-Remapped Associations: Shape associations for Self, Partner, Stranger. Associations remapped halfway through the task.

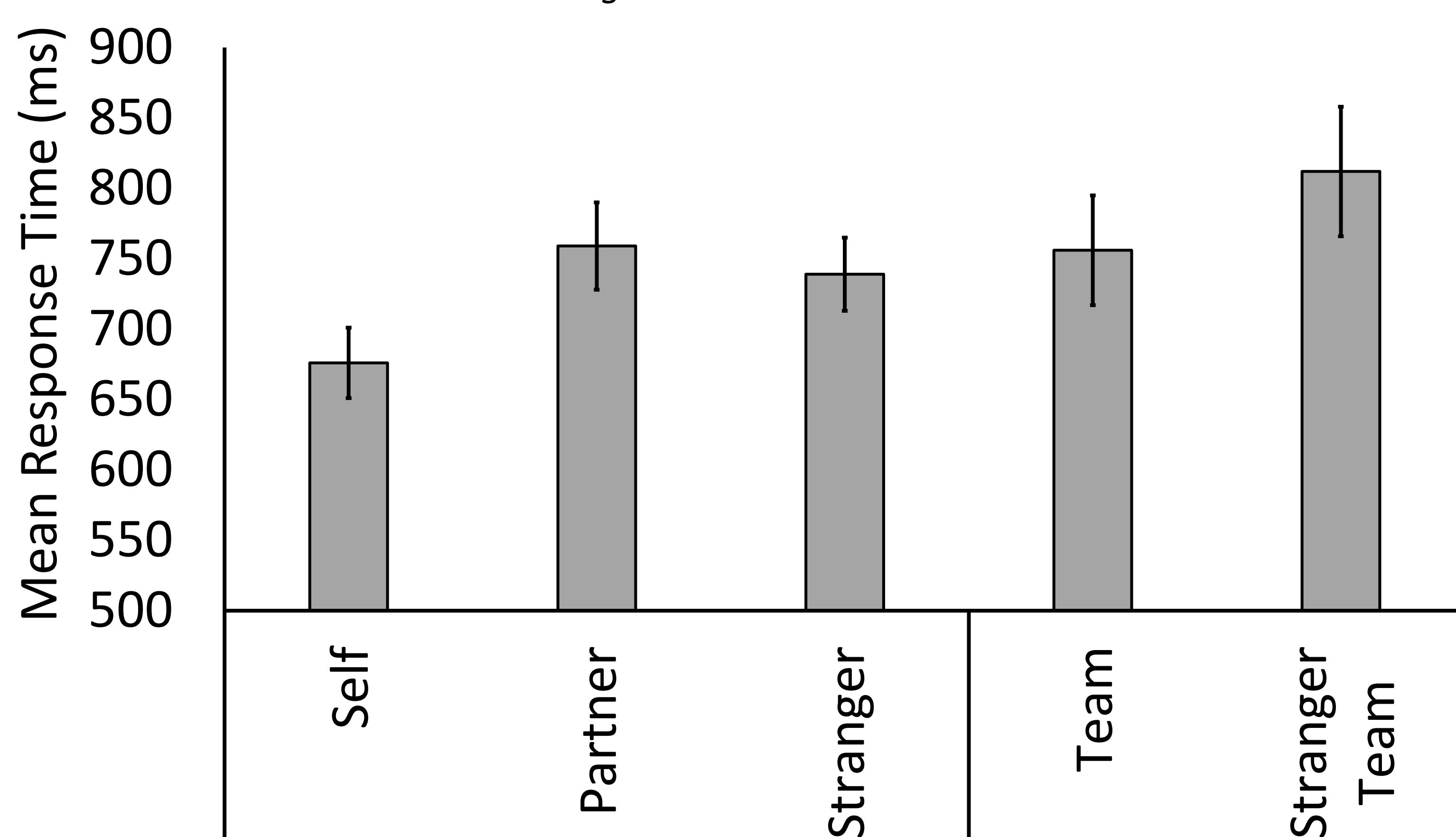
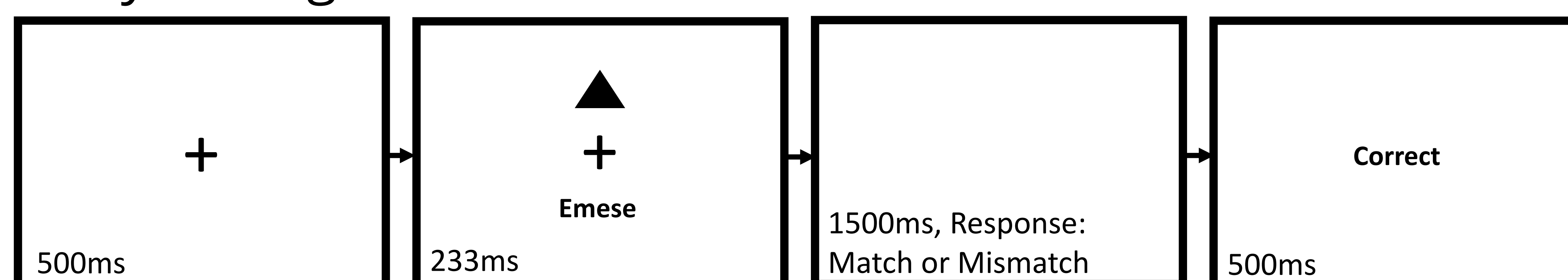


Figure 2. Experiment 1. Responses to match trials by identity. Error bars represent standard error of the mean.

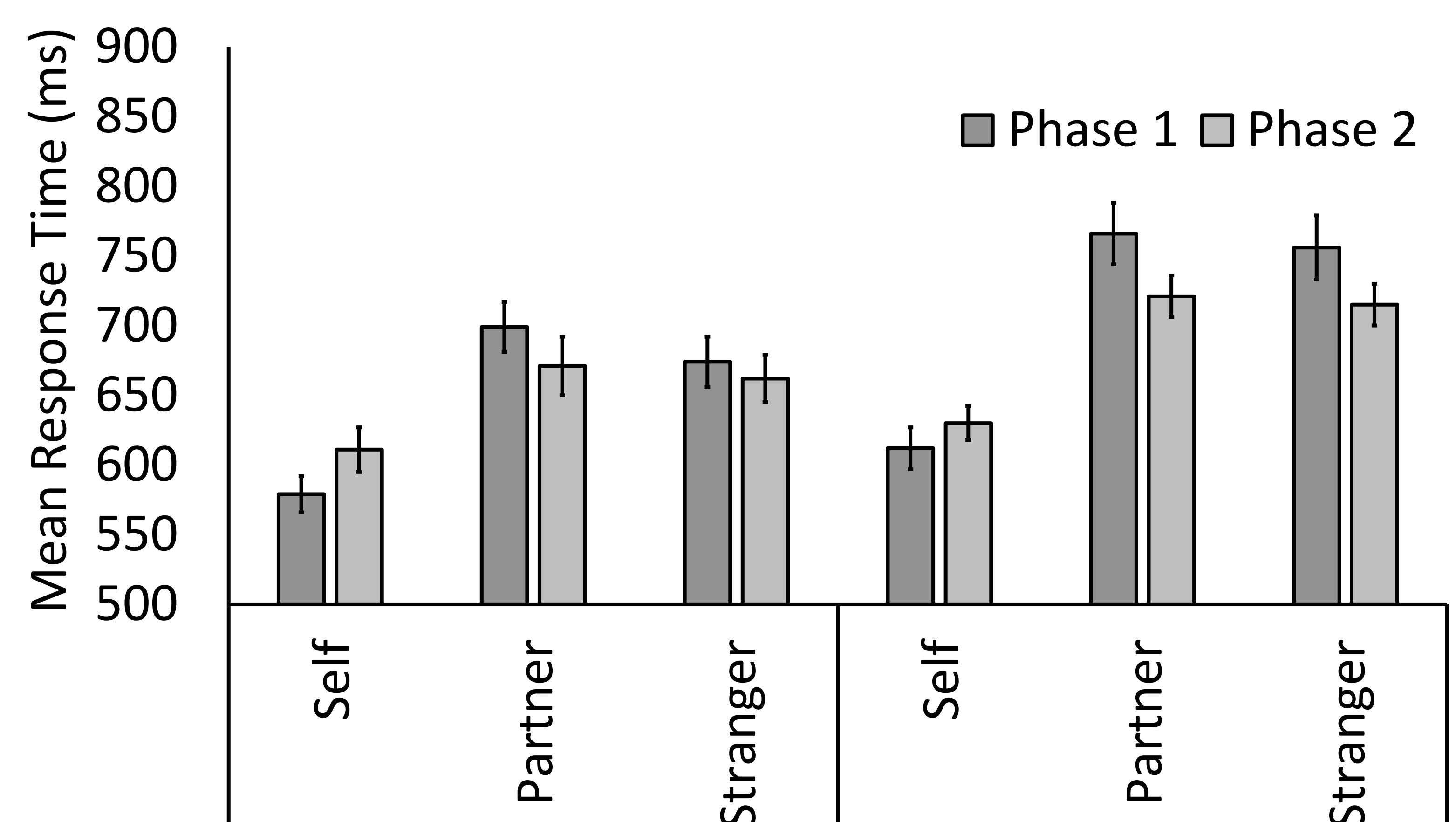


Figure 3. Experiment 2. Responses to match trials by identity for Phase 1 and Phase 2. Error bars represent standard error of the mean.

Conclusions

- Robust Self- and We- Prioritisation effects emerged.
- No Partner-Prioritisation effect was observed.
 - In fact, a partner inhibition effect is more likely.
- Performance decrement for self-stimulus after switching associations but not for partner- and stranger-stimuli.
- We suggest that the self-association is stronger and less malleable which could partially account for the self-prioritisation effect.

