

BACKGROUND

CONCEPTS

- ❖ **Sense of agency (SoA)** refers to the sense that one has control over their actions and the outcomes of these actions¹⁻².
- ❖ **Intentional binding** refers to the perceived temporal attraction between voluntary actions and their outcomes³, and has been used as an implicit measure of the SoA. Shorter estimations of the interval between actions and outcomes indicate stronger intentional binding.
- ❖ **Judgment of control (JoC)** is the subjective report of the degree of control experienced over actions or outcomes.

ACTION CHOICE and SoA

- ❖ Previous research showed that sense of agency is weakened when actions are performed as instructed by another human or virtual stimuli compared to when freely selected⁴⁻⁸.
- ❖ Increased use and engagement of AI technology and robots in human life poses the question how autonomous they are perceived by humans and how one's SoA would alter when acting with a robot compared to when acting with another human.

PRESENT STUDY

- ❖ **The goal of the present study** was to assess the sense of agency when actions (right or left key press) were either freely selected or instructed by a human or a humanoid robot. Crucially, the belief about the autonomy of the robot (Fig. 1) was manipulated such that participants (Table 1) were told either that the robot instructed pre-determined actions (*machine-like*), or it could autonomously determine an action by modeling how humans choose their actions (*human-like*).

DESIGN

- ❖ **Independent measures {4x4x2}**:
 - Choice {blocked, Fig. 2};
 - Key press-tone interval {mixed};
 - Perceived autonomy {between subjects};
 - ❖ **Dependent measures**:
 - Interval estimations,
 - JoC ratings,
 - Post-experiment questionnaire
- Anthropomorphism, Likeability, Intelligence, Intentionality, Decision making*

Participants

Human-like (n=30)	Machine-like (n=30)
14 male; $M_{age}=24.93$ years; $SD=4.55$	13 male; $M_{age}=24.73$ years; $SD=4.86$
"Zora is implemented with an AI module that mimics how humans choose their actions. On each trial, Zora will actively determine which key you should press."	"Zora is programmed to passively tell you a pre-determined action on each trial."

Table 1. Demographic data of the two groups and corresponding descriptions of Zora given to each group.

METHODS

Procedure

POST-EXPERIMENT QUESTIONNAIRE⁹

Q1) Please rate your impression of the robot on these scales:

1. Fake	1	2	3	4	5	Natural
2. Machinelike	1	2	3	4	5	Humanlike
3. Unconscious	1	2	3	4	5	Conscious
4. Artificial	1	2	3	4	5	Lifelike
5. Moving rigidly	1	2	3	4	5	Moving elegantly

Q2) The robot appeared to be intentional¹⁰.

1	2	3	4	5
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Q3) The robot appeared to be able to make its own decisions¹¹.

1	2	3	4	5
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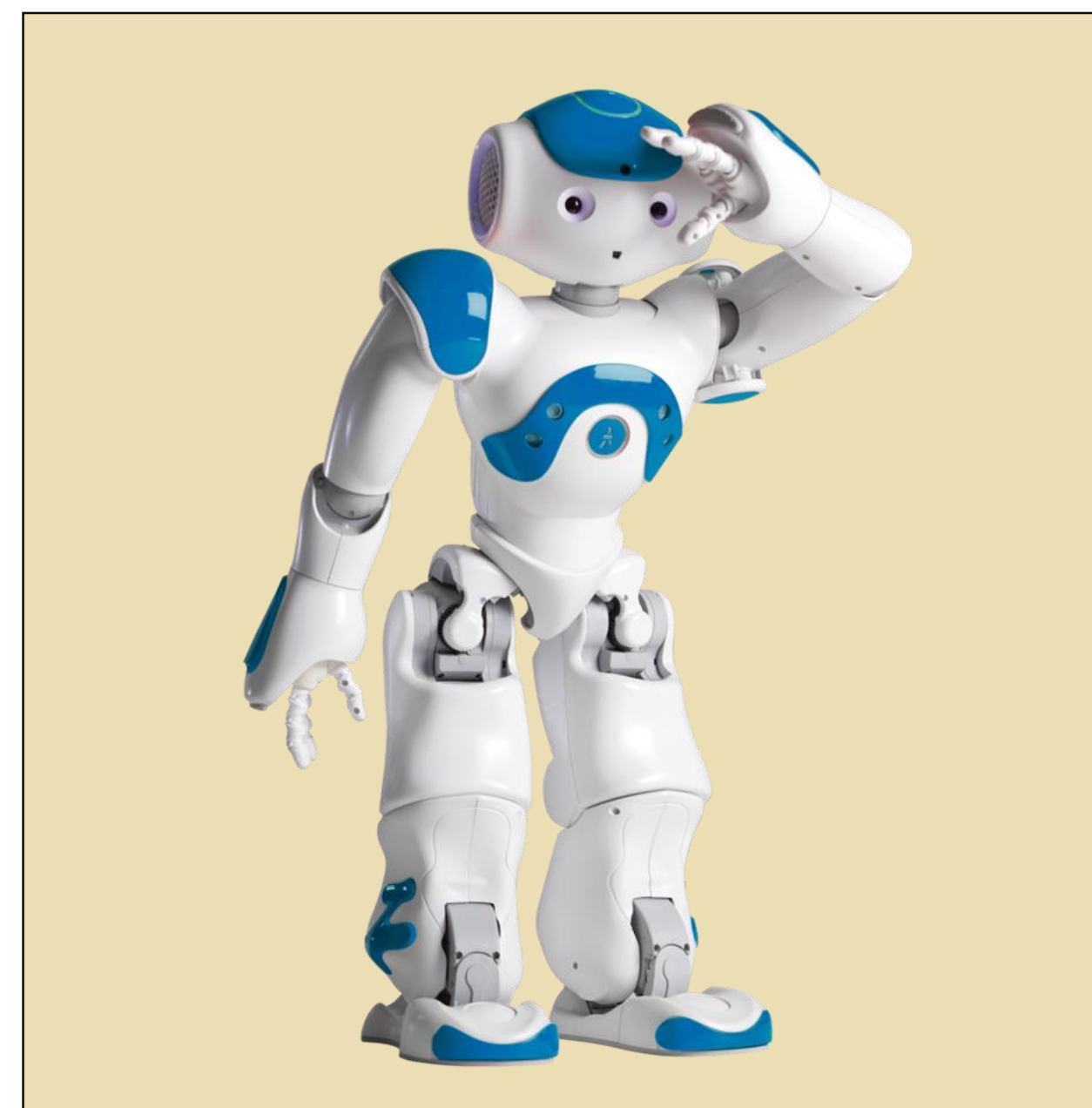


Fig. 1. Nao, named "Zora" in the present study, is a humanoid robot produced by Aldebaran Robotics. "Zora" was programmed using NAOqi Python API, integrated with PsychoPy^{12,13} that was used to develop the experiment software.

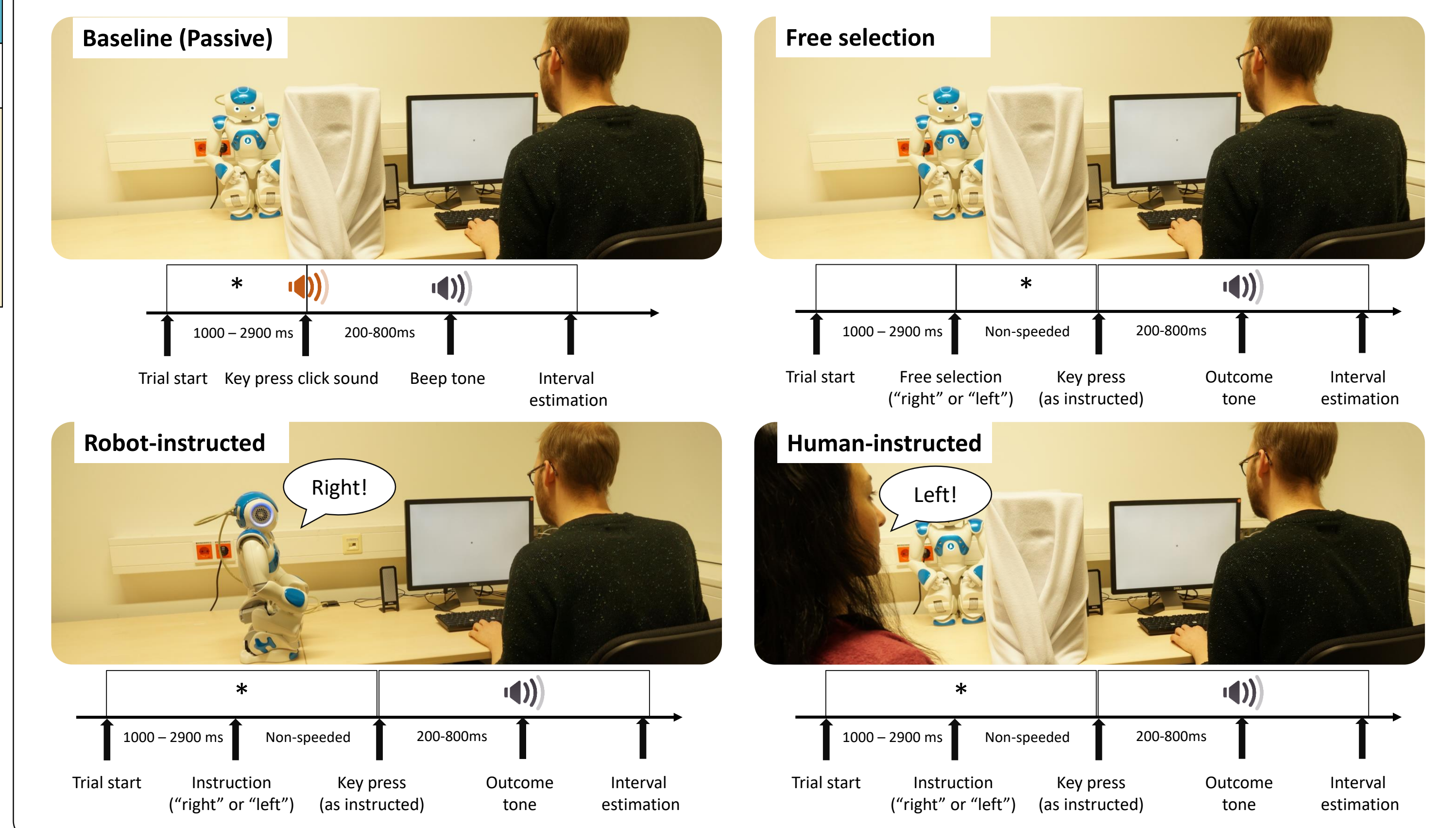


Fig. 2. Illustration of each condition and corresponding trial procedure. In the baseline condition, participants estimated the delay between two passively heard sounds (a key press click sound and a beep sound). In the free condition, they freely chose between the right and the left key while in the human and robot-instructed conditions, they pressed the instructed key. At the end of each trial, they estimated the delay between their key press and the beep sound. At the end of each block (80 trials), except the baseline condition, they indicated how much control they experienced over the beep sound on a 6-point scale (1:very weak; 6:very strong). Additionally, participants completed a post-experiment questionnaire that assessed the robot in terms of anthropomorphism, likeability, perceived intelligence, and whether it appeared intentional and able to make its own decisions.

RESULTS

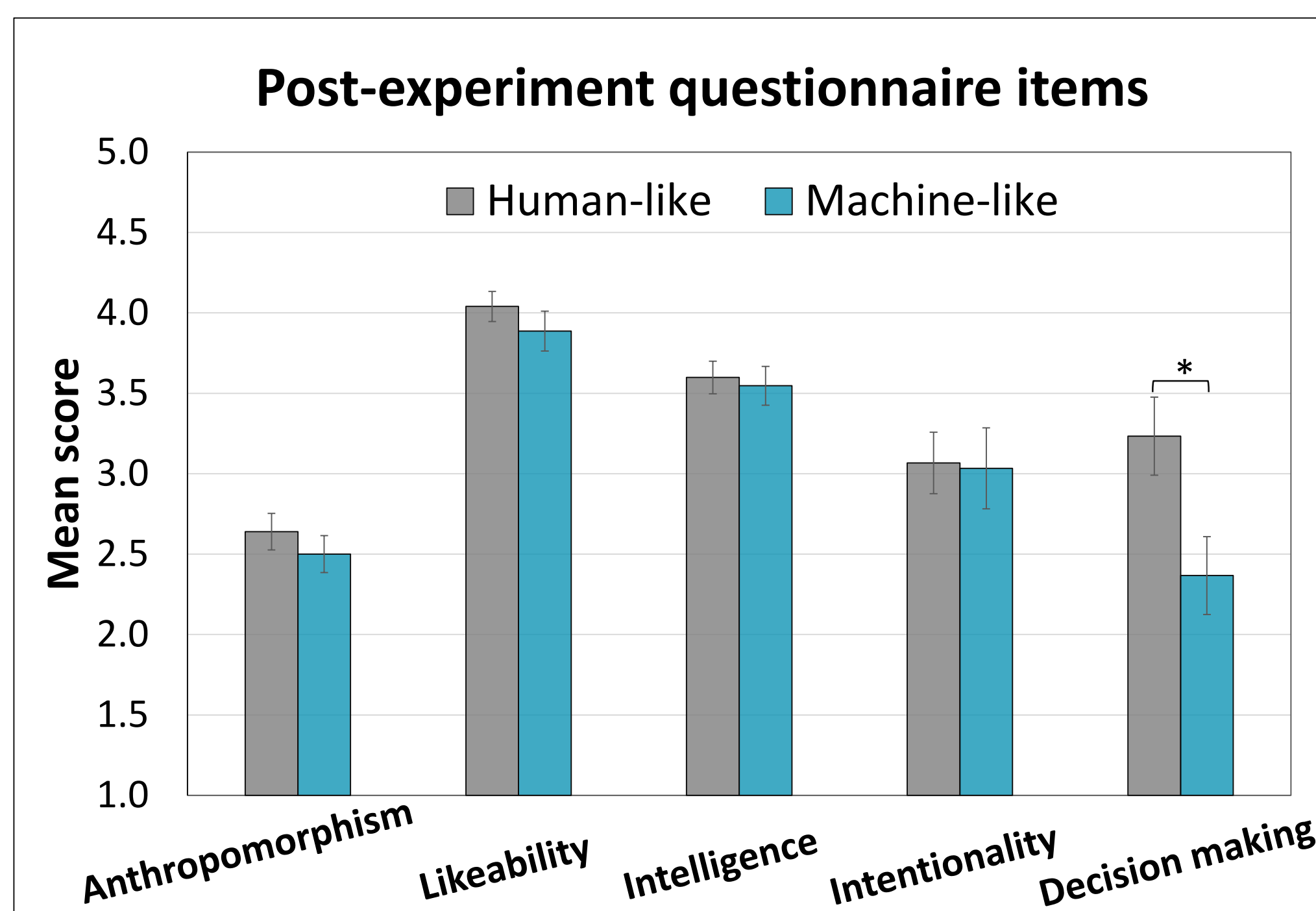


Fig. 3. Mean scores for each questionnaire item and group. ($t(58)=2.53$, $p=.014$). Error bars are SE.

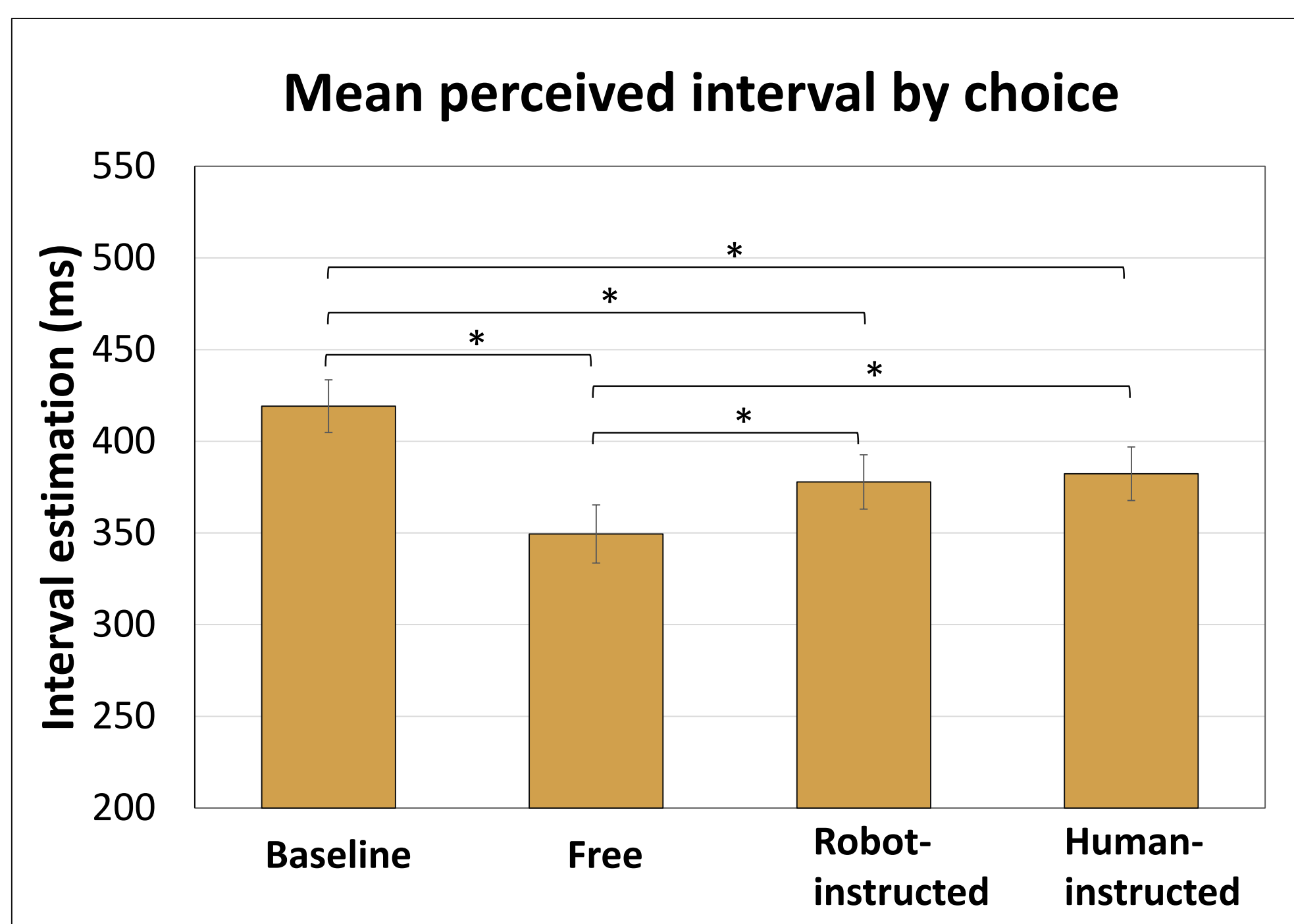


Fig. 4. Mean interval estimations across all groups for each choice condition ($F(3,174)=11.88$, $\eta^2_p=.17$, $p<.001$; * $p<.05$ [Newman-Keuls]). Shorter estimations indicate stronger binding. Error bars are SE.

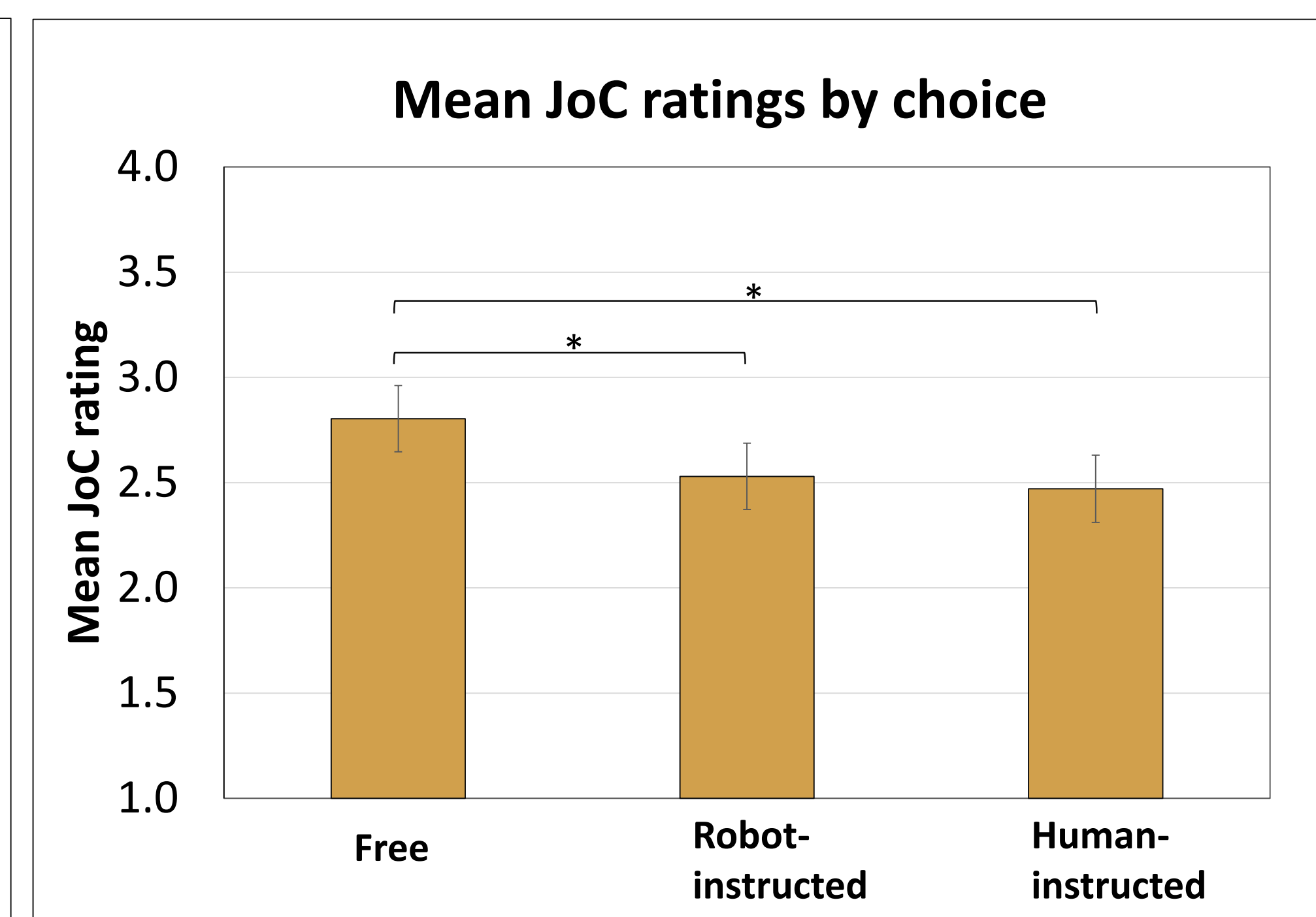


Fig. 5. Mean JoC ratings across all groups for each choice condition ($F(2,116)=4.05$, $\eta^2_p=.06$, $p=.024$; * $p<.05$ [Newman-Keuls]). Error bars are SE.

Questionnaire item	Intelligence	Intentionality	Decision making
Anthropomorphism	$r=.47$ $p<.001$ 95% CI=0.24-0.65	$p>.05$	$r=.42$ $p=.001$ 95% CI=0.19-0.61
Intelligence	$p>.05$	$r=.49$ $p<.001$ 95% CI=0.27-0.66	$r=.45$ $p<.001$ 95% CI=0.21-0.63
Intentionality	$p>.05$	$p>.05$	$r=.47$ $p=.000$ 95% CI=0.24-0.65

Table 2. Pearson correlations among the questionnaire items.

CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ Anthropomorphism was positively related to perceived intelligence and decision making ability of the robot. Perceived intelligence was also found to be related to the perceived intentionality and decision making ability. Finally, perceived intentionality positively correlated with the robot's ability of autonomous decision making (Table 2).
- ❖ SoA, measured by intentional binding and subjective judgment of control, was stronger when actions were freely selected as compared to when instructed by a human or by

- a humanoid robot (Fig.4 and Fig. 5).
- ❖ SoA was found to be independent of whether the external source of action selection was a human or a humanoid robot and whether the robot was perceived to be autonomously selecting its own actions or not.
- ❖ A follow-up experiment is planned to test whether the SoA would be independent of the external source of actions (i.e., human vs. robot) when action-outcomes bear an emotional or moral value.

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