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WHERE DOES ATTENTION GO WHEN FACILITATION IS ABSENT?

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WHERE DOES ATTENTION GO WHEN FACILITATION IS ABSENT?

Attending a location in space facilitates responses to targets at that location when the time between cue and target is short. Certain types of exogenous cues – such as sudden peripheral onsets – have been described as reflexive and automatic. Recent studies however, have been showing many cases where exogenous cues are less automatic than previously believed and do not always result in facilitation. Given a lack of the behavioural facilitation, we propose to test whether this also suggests a lack of underlying attention to that location. We test exogenous cueing with saccadic responses at a range of cue-target onset asynchronies (CTOAs), but also alternate measures linked to the allocation of attention such as saccadic curvature, microsaccades and pupil size. As expected, we find no early facilitation at short CTOAs, and likewise no impact of the cue on microsaccade direction or pupil size. We do observe a small dip in the frequency of microsaccades after the cue as well as a tendency for saccadic curvature away from the cued location at short CTOAs. We interpret these results as evidence of reduced attention at the cued location that is removed or inhibited too quickly to be measured as facilitation of saccadic responses.

Keywords: Attention; Eye Movements; microsaccades; facilitation; Inhibition of return

JEL Classification: Z

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Introduction

Selective attention allows our visual system to preferentially process some information over others. Theories of attentional control often revolve around the dichotomy between top-down and bottom-up control processes, also described as endogenous and exogenous attention. Endogenous attention represents goal-driven processes (Beauchamp, Cox, & Deyoe, 1997; Bressler, Tang, Sylvester, Shulman, & Corbetta, 2008; Giesbrecht, Woldorff, Song, & Mangun, 2003) while exogenous is guided by stimulus-properties (Schreij, Owens, & Theeuwes, 2008; Theeuwes, 1991, 1992). Other factors have been suggested to supplement or modulate this dichotomy such as selection history (Awh, Belopolsky, & Theeuwes, 2012), associated reward (Anderson, Laurent, & Yantis, 2011; Theeuwes & Belopolsky, 2012), context learning & memory (Chun & Jiang, 2003); task demands and complexity (Castel, Pratt, Chasteen, & Scialfa, 2005; Lupiáñez & Milliken, 1999; Lupiáñez et al., 1997), prior experience (Leber, Kawahara, & Gabari, 2009); or a temporal continuum of top down and bottom up processes (van Zoest, Donk, & Theeuwes, 2004).

Posner's cueing paradigm (Posner et al., 1980) has served as the backdrop in understanding spatial and temporal interaction of visual attention by adjusting cue/target properties to see how they affect responses to attended locations (mental chronometry). Typically, a location in space is cued with a peripheral onset or central arrow followed by a target at the cued or uncued location. Short cue-target onset asynchronies (CTOAs) will result in a facilitatory effect (faster RTs for cued targets) and longer CTOAs in an inhibitory effect termed inhibition of return (IOR: slower RTs for cued targets). The switch from facilitation to inhibition, is usually observed around a CTOA of 250-300 milliseconds (ms) though this may depend on task demands (Lupiáñez, Milliken, Solano, Weaver, & Tipper, 2001). The facilitatory effect can be explained as an orientation of attention towards the cued location and improving further processing of the following target onset. At longer CTOAs, however, after visual attention is disengaged from the cued location facilitation gives way to inhibition of return (IOR; Posner & Cohen, 1984). Spatial cueing effects using predictive cues have been demonstrated in other species as well – monkeys (Cook & Maunsell, 2002), rats (Marote and Xavier, 2011), honeybees (Eckstein, et al., 2013), archer fish (Gabay et al., 2013; Saban, Sekely, Klein, & Gabay, 2017) highlighting their potential role in species survival. IOR is thus, seen as a 'foraging facilitator' (Klein & MacInnes, 1999) and has been suggested to improve search efficiency by reducing the likelihood of attention returning to already fixated locations (Klein & MacInnes, 1999; Bays & Hussain, 2012; MacInnes et al., 2014; but see Smith & Henderson, 2011). So, it may seem that looking at a relevant

location twice may be part of human fixation selection strategy which is in fact a trade-off between foraging for novelty and fully understanding the relevant parts (Wilming, Harst, Schmidt, & König, 2013). Although facilitation from exogenous orienting is often described as reflexive and automatic, a number of studies have reported no facilitation at shorter CTOAs but instead early onset IOR (Tassinari & Berlucchi, 1993; Tassinari et al., 1994). Danziger & Kingstone (1999) for example, observe IOR within 50ms at the cued location and Maruff et al., (1999) observed facilitation at short CTOAs but only if the cue and target overlapped temporally. Pratt, Hillis & Gold (2001) demonstrated the influence of spatial overlap and physical characteristics of stimuli on cueing effects by using three different types of cues. Out of the three experiment conditions, only one showed typical cueing effects while the others showed insignificant or zero facilitation at short CTOAs. Pratt, Sekuler & McAuliffe (2001) suggested an influence of attentional set on early facilitation. Taylor, Chan, Bennet, & Pratt (2015) observed no facilitation and early IOR when potential target locations were not marked with placeholders. MacInnes (2017) tested the spatial and temporal gradient of IOR with continuous random CTOAs and also found no early facilitation for either manual or saccadic responses. Malevich, Ardasheva, Krueger and MacInnes (2017) tested the influence of temporal expectations on cueing effects and found no facilitation when the multiple CTOAs were random or mixed, but only observed facilitation when the CTOAs were blocked. There seems little doubt that attentional set and top down expectation can modulate the appearance of facilitation but what remains uncertain, is whether attention was allocated to the cued location and removed too early to influence reaction times (RTs; Klein, 2000; Malevich et al., 2017) or whether attention is absent completely.

Alternative measures of attention deployment

Saccadic curvature

Although RTs have become a standard in measuring the deployment of spatial attention, a number of alternative methods have been proposed. Saccades to target locations are generally not straight, and the curvature deviation from a straight path has been shown to be influenced by covert attention (Sheliga, Riggio, Craighero, & Rizzolatti, 1995; Van der Stigchel & Theeuwes, 2007). Additionally, the strength of saccadic deviation reflects the amount of attention to a particular location as measured by target RTs. The trajectories of saccades deviating away from an attended location has been consistently seen in studies, but this effect does not translate to hand movements (Van der Stigchel, Meeter, & Theeuwes, 2007b).

The temporal aspects of saccadic deviations show the same biphasic pattern as reaction times over increasing CTOAs (McSorley, Haggard, & Walker, 2006). McSorley et al., 2006 reported that deviations away from a distractor were observed for longest latencies and deviations towards a distractor in case of shorter latencies with the transition point around latency of 200ms. The same, however, does not hold for anti-saccades and longest latencies did not correspond to greatest distractor caused deviations (van Zoest, Van der Stigchel, & Barton, 2008). Saccadic deviations are also influenced by the distance of the distractor to the target (McSorley, Cruickshank, & Inman, 2009; Van der Stigchel & Theeuwes, 2005), vertical distance of the distractor from the fixation (Van der Stigchel, Meeter, & Theeuwes, 2007a) and the target hemifield (Van der Stigchel & Theeuwes, 2008).

Also, similar to reaction times, curvature deviations may change based on prior knowledge about the task (Walker, McSorley, & Haggard, 2006). In scenarios where target locations were known or predictable, saccade trajectories were found to be deviating away from the distractors and scenarios where target locations were unpredictable, saccades curved towards distractors

Microsaccades

The human visual system has been adapted to detect motion and so any stationary, unchanging scene would cause perceptual fading as the retina adapts to it. To counter this effect, oculomotor system generates micro movements (drifts, tremors and microsaccades) during a fixation. Microsaccades are fixational eye movements that are involuntary and ballistic with an average rate of 1-3 per second, magnitude of 12 to 15 minutes of arc and a typical duration of less than 10ms (but see Kowler, 2011 for an overview and why these sizes have been increasing). Microsaccades and saccades seem to be kinematically similar, existing on a functional continuum, implicating similar neural circuitry (Hafed, 2011). It has been shown that microsaccades occur not just during fixation but also during search and exploratory tasks (Martinez-Conde, Otero-Millan & Macknik, 2013).

Recent results suggest that microsaccades are modulated by visual attention in spatial cueing paradigms (Engbert & Kliegl, 2003; Hafed & Clark, 2002). Engbert & Kliegl (2003) reported that microsaccades tend to be biased towards the cued location in a spatial cueing task, but many other studies have shown microsaccade bias both towards and away from cue direction (Galfano, Betta, & Turatto, 2004; Hafed & Clark, 2002; Laubrock, Engbert, & Kliegl, 2005; Rolfs, Engbert, & Kliegl, 2004). An interaction with the cue type has also been noted – endogenous attentional cues biasing microsaccade direction towards the cue, as governed by attentional shifts (Gowen et al., 2007; Laubrock, Kliegl, Rolfs, & Engbert, 2010; Pastukhov & Braun, 2010) and exogenous attentional cues

biasing microsaccade direction away from the cue, as per IOR (Galfano et al., 2004). Attentional cues also affect microsaccade rate (Laubrock et al., 2005; Cui, Wilke, Logothetis, Leopold, & Liang, 2009) as does task difficulty (Pastukhov & Braun, 2010). This has led Laubrock, J., Engbert, R., Rolfs, M., & Kliegl, R. (2007) to propose that both microsaccade direction and RTs are strong indicators of spatial attention (but see Horowitz et al. 2007)). Interestingly, microsaccades show biphasic modulation; that is, at stimulus onset, microsaccade rate drops to zero immediately and then recovers. This is known as ‘microsaccadic inhibition’ (Engbert & Kliegl, 2003; Rolfs, 2009) and is interpreted as a top down effect on microsaccades to modulate sensory signal quality.

Pupil size

Pupil size changes are a result of the interaction of the parasympathetic and sympathetic components of the autonomic nervous systems (ANS). The primary pupillary function being regulation of light entering the eye, resulting in pupillary light reflex (PLR). Pupil dilations have been noted due to factors other than luminance changes, like individual differences, cognitive load (Beatty & Wagoner, 1978; Kahneman & Beatty, 1966), emotions (Partala & Surakka, 2003), attention (Beatty, 1977) and stimulus probability (Reinhard & Lachnit, 2002), along with color perception and faces.

Pupil size, on average, is about 3 mm, which can increase by more than double (approx. 120%) due to change in illumination, but only by 0.5 mm due to cognitive factors (Beatty & Lucero-Wagoner, 2000). Koss (1986) suggests there is a strong link between the locus coeruleus norepinephrine (LC-NE) system and the pupillary response, hence a change in LC activation can be tracked through changes in pupil size. LC-NE neurons project to a large number of brain areas, especially areas associated with attention – superior colliculus, parietal cortex, pulvinar nucleus.

Gabay, Pertzov, & Henik (2011), measured pupillary response in monkeys in localization and discrimination tasks and suggested a correlation between pupil size and IOR at cue onset. Mathôt and colleagues (2013), tie the PLR to modulations in covert attention and suggest that this may provide a measure of behavioral cueing effects.

Proposal

In our study, we follow the continuous CTOA design (MacInnes, 2017; Malevich et al., in press) with a saccadic response and four possible target locations. With target validity and CTOA selection chosen randomly within each block, we expect to observe robust IOR at mid to late CTOAs

but expect no facilitation at early CTOAs. With four possible equi-eccentric placeholders for cue and target (top, bottom, left and right), invalid target locations are possible at opposite and orthogonal to the cued location. This design allows us to test the impact of attention at valid and invalid spatial locations using a number of metrics not related to saccadic reaction time, i.e. saccadic trajectory, microsaccades and pupil size. If exogenous attention is automatically pulled to the cued location it is possible that we will see its influence in microsaccades or pupil size at short CTOA, or in the saccadic curvature in trials where the cue is orthogonal to the target. If attention is not allocated to the exogenous cue, we expect to see no impact of target validity on any of our saccadic metrics.

Methods

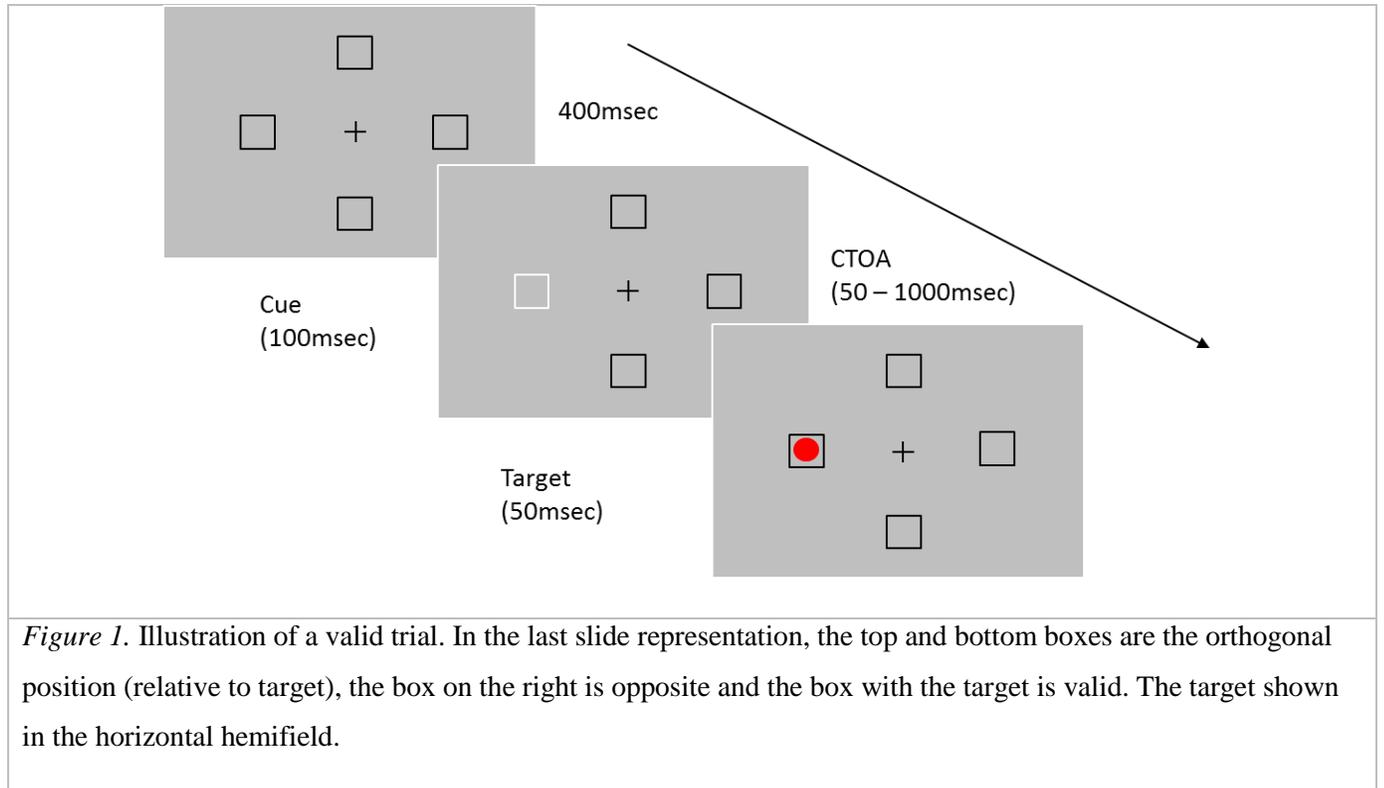
Participants

Thirty participants (one excluded due to insufficient data; 14 males, 15 females in the age range 19 – 44 years; mean = 25 years) took part in the experiment. All participants reported normal or corrected-to-normal vision and no color blindness. Written informed consent was provided and an honorarium of 200 Rubles was given at the end of the session. The experiment was conducted with the approval of the Higher School of Economics (HSE) ethics board.

Stimuli and Apparatus

Stimuli were presented on an ASUS VG248QE LCD monitor running at 120 Hz with a 1920x1080 pixels resolution and eye movements were recorded with SR-Research EyeLink II system (SR Research, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada) at a temporal resolution of 1000 Hz. Stimuli were generated using MATLAB (MathWorks, Natick, MA, USA) and Psychophysics Toolbox extension (Brainard, 1997; Pelli, 1997). A nine-point eye tracker calibration and validation procedure were done for each participant at the beginning of the session. The participant's head was placed in a chinrest so that the eyes are at a distance of 80 cm from the screen. The stimuli were viewed binocularly, but eye movements from the right eye only, were analyzed. Stimuli and an experimental procedure are illustrated in Figure 1. Each trial consisted of a fixation display with a gray background (B2B2B2), for a duration of 400ms, showing a black (000000) central fixation cross and four black square placeholders (top, bottom, right, and left; 5 degrees of visual angle from fixation). The exogenous cue (white flash) appeared at any one of the four equi-eccentric locations (equal probability) for a duration

of 100ms and after a random interval varying from 50 – 1000ms, the target (red dot - #d1736b) appeared randomly in any of the four locations for a duration of 50ms.



Procedure

Participants were instructed to press the spacebar to commence the trial and drift correction, keep their eyes on the fixation, then wait for the red dot inside one of the placeholders and make an eye movement (saccade) to the target. The trial ended after this saccade and any error was signaled by a beep and a message on the display screen. The fixation display was presented for a duration of 400ms, after which the cue flashed for 50ms at any one of the placeholders. After a variable CTOA (between 50 – 1000ms), the target was presented until response (maximum 5000ms). There were 368 such trials in a 45-minute session (with breaks) for each participant.

We varied three main factors, within subjects: stimuli location - cue location and target location were randomly presented at any of the four locations; cue validity - resulting in three possible values (valid, invalid-opposite or invalid-orthogonal); and target hemifield (horizontal or vertical). We also selected the CTOA from a random continuous distribution between 50 and 1000ms. The dependent

measures were the saccadic reaction time (SRT in ms), saccadic curvature, microsaccades between presentation of cue and target, and pupil size changes to the cue (pre- to post- onset).

Data analysis

Anticipatory responses or RTs < 100 ms (4.13%), keyboard press errors (0.77%), fixation errors (7.30%), outliers with RTs > 3 SD from mean (1.2%) and trials with blinks (1.09%) were excluded. Hence, 14.5% trials excluded using these criteria.

Saccadic reaction time was defined as the latency from target onset to saccade initiation, in milliseconds. Saccadic amplitude was defined as the shortest distance between saccade start and end co-ordinates in degrees of visual angle, and direction was defined as the angular deviation of saccade direction taken from the initial fixation location to the final endpoint in polar coordinates. The direction and magnitude of saccadic curvature was calculated by finding the area under the saccade trajectory curve (Ludwig & Gilchrist, 2002), which was further normalized by dividing by the saccadic amplitude to get curvature per unit. For trials in which the target was orthogonal to the cued location, trajectories were signed as positive if they deviated towards the cued location and those deviating away from the cue were assigned negative curvature values.

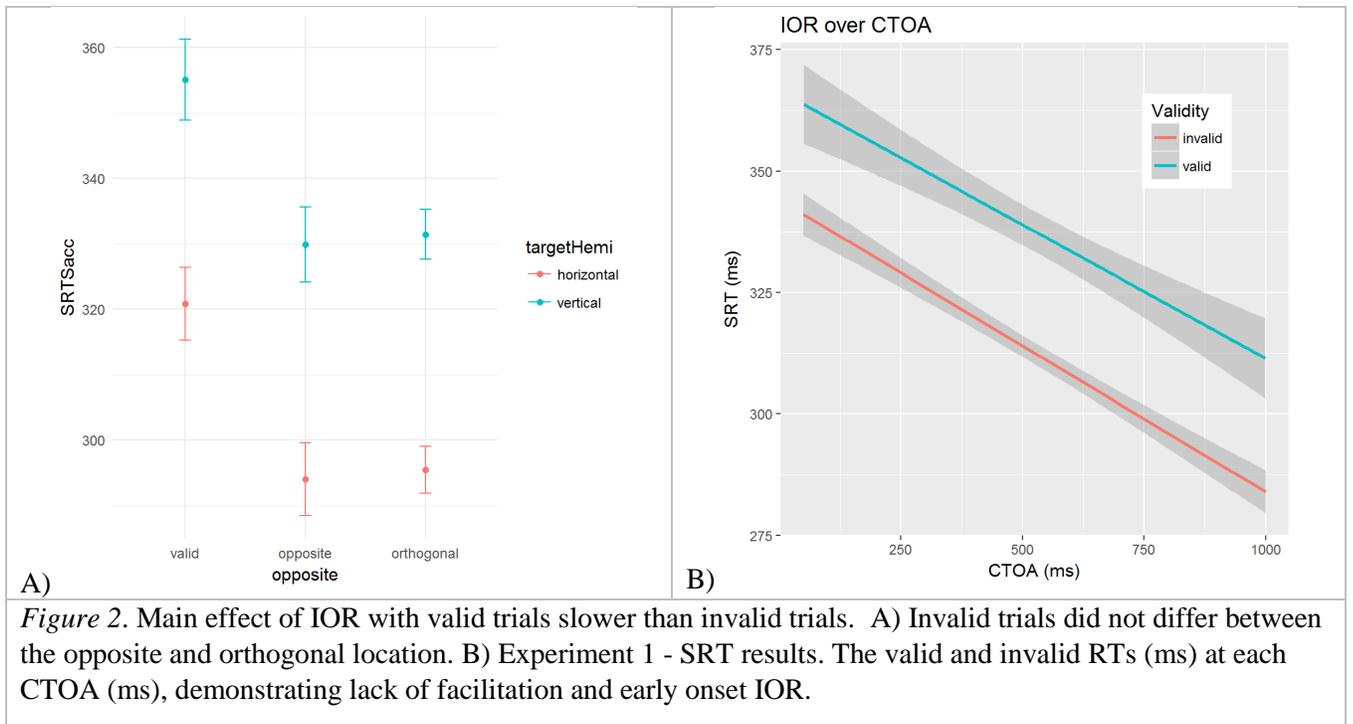
Pupil size was measured as difference score, comparing pre-cue baseline measurement with post-cue measurement, reflecting pupil size change linked to cue onset. Using the change in pupil size removes potential confounds due to ambient lighting, stimuli luminance and individual differences. If pupil size represents arousal due to awareness of the cue, then larger changes in pupil size resulting from that cue might predict the existence or magnitude of facilitation in those trials. Microsaccades measured in the duration between cue onset and target onset, were investigated monocularly and analyzed using the velocity-based detection algorithm specified by Engbert & Mergenthaler (2006). The time series of gaze co-ordinates was first converted to velocity in the horizontal and vertical space and separate detection thresholds were set for both components. Microsaccades were detected as outliers in the velocity domain as defined by these detection thresholds.

Statistical analysis was done using the linear mixed effects model (lme4; Winter, 2013; Bates, Maechler, Bolker, & Walker, 2015; Baayen, Davidson, & Bates, 2008) in the R statistical package (R Core Team, 2017). For the linear mixed effects model, we first defined a null model, only with random factors (participants), and incrementally added fixed effects and random slopes (target hemifield, cue-target location, CTOA and pupil size change) to the model to see if their inclusion improved the model. We used the chi-squared (χ^2) test to check if a new model was an improvement over the previous one.

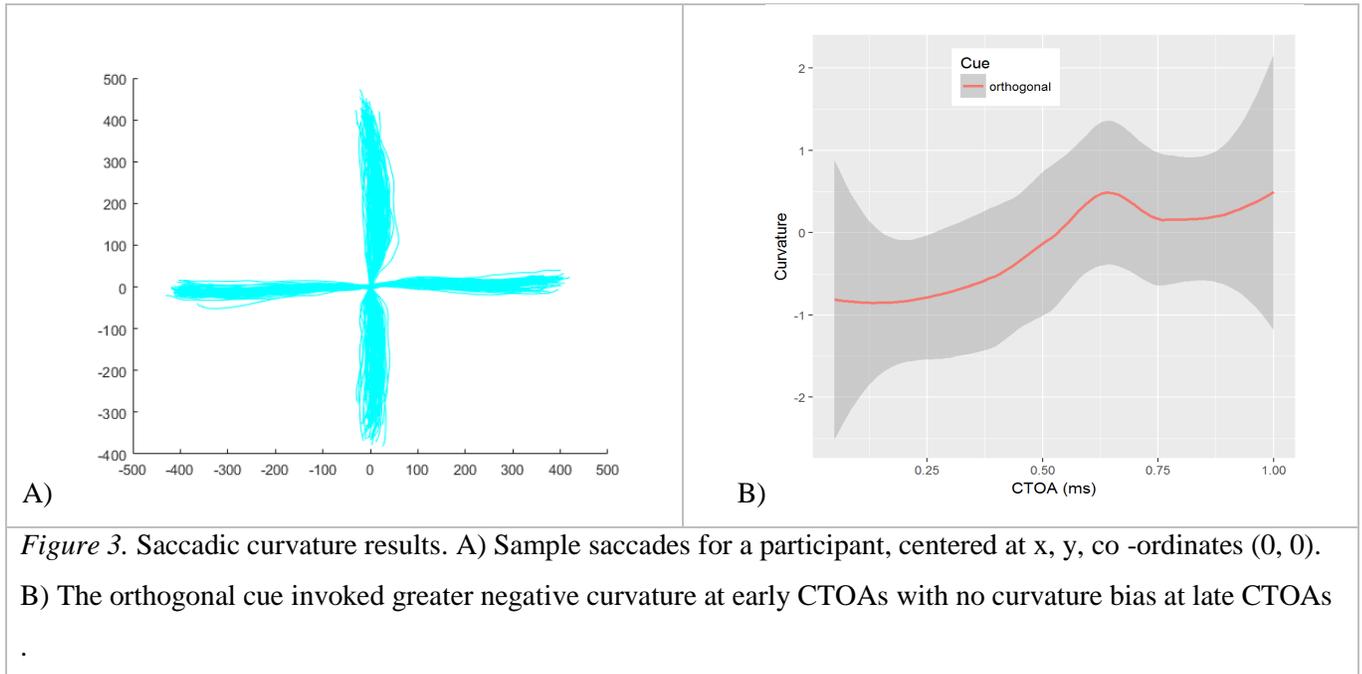
The model was tested for both slopes and intercepts, with by participant random slopes for CTOA improving the model fit ($\chi^2(2) = 295, p < 0.001$), with all other fixed effects being intercepts. There was no difference between the two invalid trial options (opposite and orthogonal, $t < 1.0$: and see figure 2a) so these were combined for a single ‘invalid’ option for target location. Zero condition for all models was selected as invalid, horizontal hemifield and 50ms CTOA.

Results

The mean model reaction time was 323ms, standard error 8.5ms (for the baseline condition of horizontal target hemifield, 50ms CTOA, invalid trial) for the final model. There was a significant main effect of cue validity ($\chi^2(1) = 148, p < 0.001$) as validly cued locations had slower RTs (25ms, SE 2ms) than invalid trials (Fig. 2.). This effect of IOR was significant from the outset of 50ms with no validity by CTOA interaction ($\chi^2(1) = 0.02, p = .876$, see also figure 2, B). CTOA was also significant ($\chi^2(1) = 45, p < 0.001$) with faster RTs (6.3ms/100ms CTOA, SE .6ms) at late CTOAs. We observed strong significant effect ($\chi^2(1) = 397, p < 0.001$) of target hemifield on the saccadic RT with saccades made in the vertical hemifield slower (37ms, SE 2ms) than those made in the horizontal hemifield.



We also tried to fit the change in pupil size as a fixed effect to see if there was a change in overall cue awareness as measured by pupil size. Although an interaction of pupil size and target hemifield does help predict overall SRT ($\chi^2(2) = 8.9, p=0.011$), pupil size does not interact with validity to differentially influence valid cues at any CTOA.



For saccadic curvature analyses, a LME was tested for orthogonal cues specifically with fixed effects of CTOA and hemifield. There was a small but significant effect of CTOA ($\chi^2(3) = 3.9, p=0.048$) with early CTOAs showing a negative curvature (-.98 away from the cued location, SE .45) and becoming positive (toward the cue) as CTOA increases (Fig. 3). No other effects were significant on saccadic curvature.

Microsaccade analyses focused on the impact of the cue on the rate and direction of microsaccades. Following the analyses of Laubrock et al., (2005), we look at the rate of microsaccades in the range of immediately prior to the cue (-250ms) to the CTOA following the cue (50ms or greater). Since our CTOAs were randomly selected between 50 and 1000ms, we calculated microsaccade rate as a frequency of observed microsaccades over the number of trials that match or exceed that CTOA. Plotting the rate of microsaccades in the range of -300ms to +600ms as compared

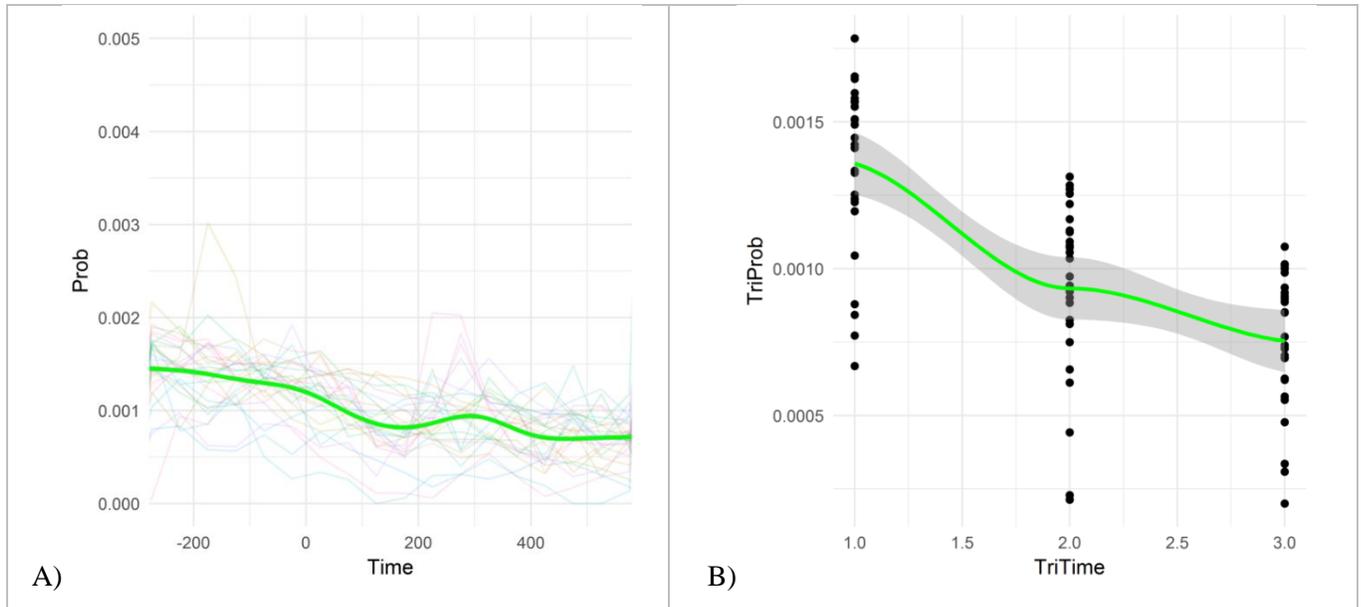


Figure 4. A) Microsaccade rate plotted as the likelihood of a microsaccade at a given time compared to the cue onset with time = 0, representing the onset of the cue. We do see a dip in microsaccade rate following the cue, but not a recovery of the rate at 300ms and later. B) Microsaccade rate with microsaccade probability prior to the cue, shortly after the cue and at longer intervals after the cue.

to the cue onset (Fig. 4A), we see a slight reduction in rate immediately after the cue, but this is not as severe as the dip reported in Laubrock et al., (2005). Also, we do not see a recovery and increase in the rate at 300+ ms. An LME analyses of the three temporal groups shows a main effect of group ($\chi^2(1) = 70, p < 0.001$), with an initial drop in rate after the cue, but this drop in rate continues in the 300-600ms range instead of recovering as in Laubrock et al., (2004).

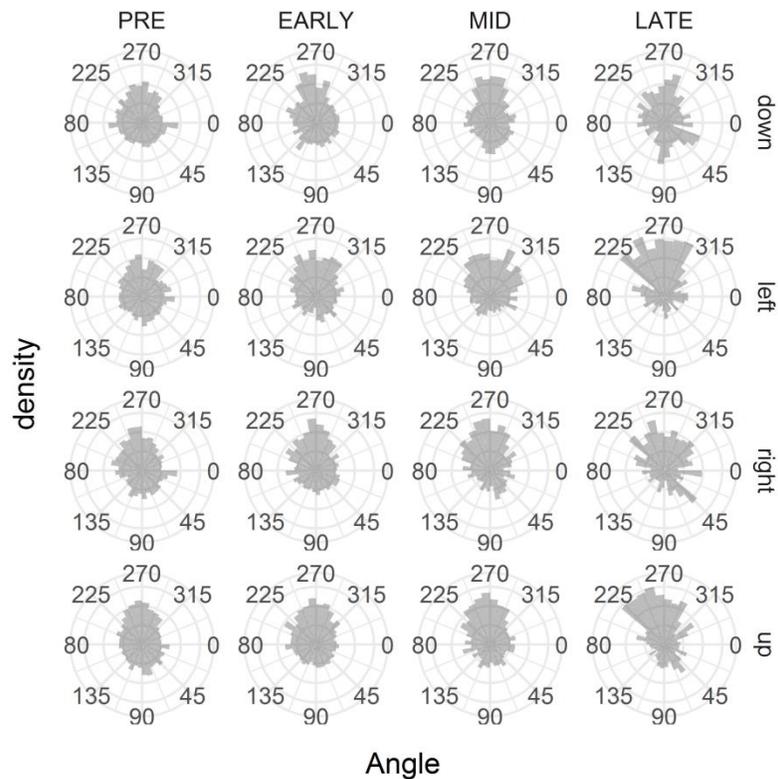


Figure 5. Directional bias of microsaccades at various time frames relative to cue. Pre-cue was up to 300ms before the cue, Early, Mid and Late were up to 300, 600 and 900ms bins after the cue respectively.

For microsaccadic direction, we again see no change in response to the cue. Our results (Fig. 5) do not show the horizontal bias observed in Laubrock et al. (2005), though this is not surprising, since our display had vertical as well as horizontal locations. Also missing in our results is the early bias of microsaccades toward the cue and the later inhibitory bias away from the cue. An ANOVA of the total bias (microsaccades toward the cue minus total opposite the cue) for 100ms bins before and after the cue shows a small effect of microsaccade time ($F(10) = 2.0, p = .031$), unlike previous research, none of the bins differ significantly from 0. Although the changes in observed microsaccade could be related to the lack of facilitation, it's also possible that the random CTOA influenced the rate and direction of microsaccade activity in response to the cue. Laubrock et al. (2004) used a fixed CTOA which allowed participants to build an expectation of event timing, where our random and shorter CTOAs did not.

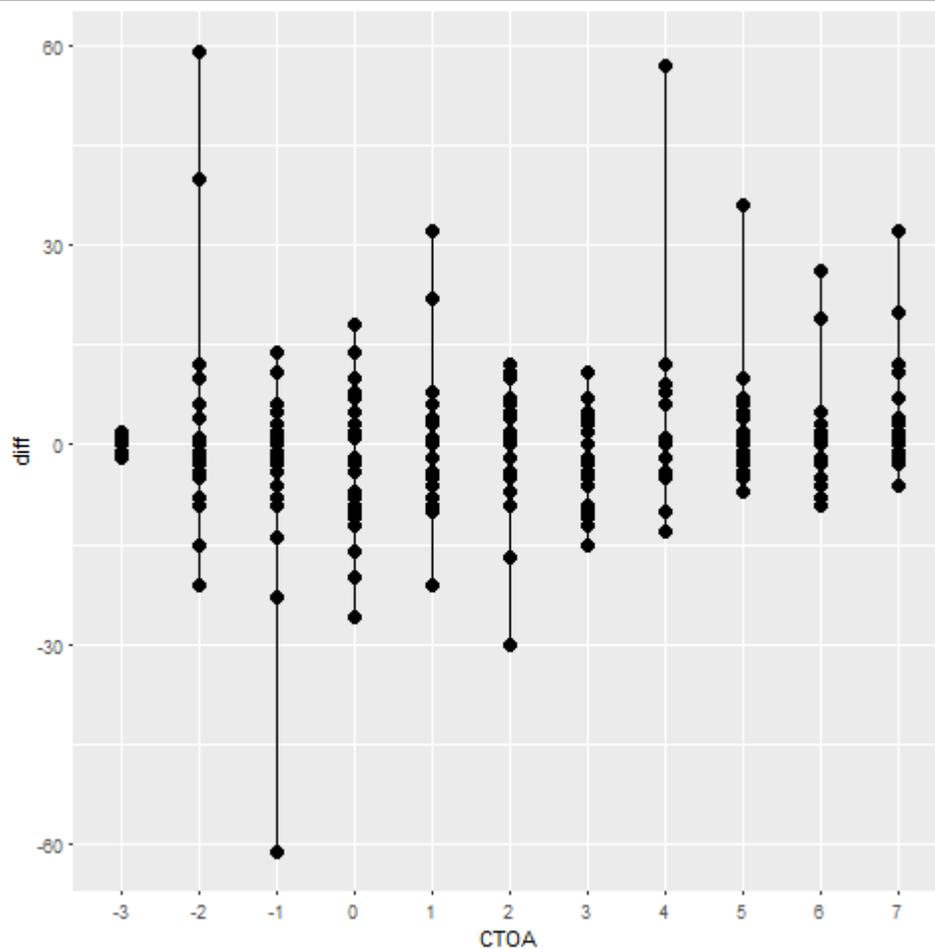


Figure 6. Bias in microsaccadic direction plotted over time (100ms bins with 0 = cue onset). Difference score is the total number of microsaccades toward the cue minus the total in the opposite direction (binned 45 degrees).

Discussion

The data presented here show robust IOR from the earliest CTOA with no evidence of facilitation for saccadic reaction time. Although attention to exogenous cues is considered automatic (Posner, 1980; Posner et al., 1980; Nakayama & Mackeben, 1989; Yeshurun & Rashal, 2010), our study joins recent examples where facilitation of saccadic (MacInnes, 2017; Hilchey et al, 2014) and manual (MacInnes, 2017; Malevich, in press) RT is not observed. Facilitation is not the only measure of attention to an exogenous cue, however, and we observe an impact of the cue on saccadic curvature away from the cued location at very short CTOAs. Combined, these results suggest early inhibition at the cued location. Impact on other measures such as pupil size and microsaccade rates are not observed in response to the cue event.

Saccadic curvature deviations have been explained in terms of population coding theory (Tipper, Howard, & Houghton, 2000; McSorley, Haggard, & Walker, 2004), which states that each neuron in the motor map aligns to a vector, coding movement towards the corresponding location. Eye movements are generated in the direction of the average of the vectors in the oculomotor system. When there are two objects close to each other, the average movement vector would point to an intermediate location. In the case where a single object has to be selected (target), the average movement vector will involve suppression of one vector and hence, a deviation away from the distractor. On the other hand, if the suppression is weak, it results in a deviation towards a distractor. Another interpretation, on the basis of neurophysiological results, states that saccade trajectories are initiated on the basis of weighted average of the corresponding vectors (Robinson, 1972). These results focus, primarily, on the superior colliculus (SC) area of the brain which represents a vector map of the external world and receives inputs from other cortical areas. So, stimulation of particular cells in the SC result in saccades to the location corresponding to the stimulated location. Saccade deviations are seen as competitive interaction within the layers of the SC and a measure of the oculomotor activity.

Other explanations of saccadic trajectories involve effect of distractor, temporal and spatial aspects of oculomotor inhibition (Van der Stigchel, 2010). In distractor paradigm, deviation towards the distractor indicates that the distractor activity has not been fully inhibited, deviation away from the distractor represents complete inhibition of distractor activity. This inhibition is further influenced by the strength of the stimulus and the distractor location. Walker, McSorley, & Haggard (2006) suggest that top down inhibitory processes, originating in the frontal eye field (FEF), are applied before stimulus onset when target location is known in advance. In unpredictable target conditions like our paradigm, we should not see this preparatory inhibition process and should expect a greater possibility of saccades deviating towards the distractor. Given the early deviation away from the uninformative (distractor) cue in our results, we are likely seeing an early suppression of the oculomotor system with no automatic attention to the cued location.

Although microsaccades are typically reflexive, they can be controlled voluntarily without retinal fading and in some high-acuity tasks they do get suppressed automatically. There seems to be a fixed relation between the micro-saccadic amplitude (degrees) and velocity (degrees/sec) which is seen in a typical linearly increasing pattern called 'main sequence' (Bahill, Clark & Stark, 1975), indicating a common generation mechanism for saccades and microsaccades (Otero-Millan, Troncoso, Macknik, Serrano-Pedraza, & Martinez-Conde, 2008; Rolf, Laubrock & Kliegl, 2008; Zuber, Stark & Cook, 1965). While some have observed more horizontal and vertical than oblique microsaccades (Engbert,

2006), this seems to be task dependent as we observe no effect here with horizontal and vertical targets equally likely.

The distinction between pupillary dilation (driven by LC) and PLR (controlled by SC activity) has been highlighted as they refer to different underlying mechanisms (Loewenfeld, 1958). It has been demonstrated that PLR is modulated by higher level cognition or covert attention and should be considered similar to spatial eye movements, seeing that both saccades and PLR have their origins in SC (Wang et al., 2012; Wang, Brien & Munoz, 2015). Although there may have been an influence of PLR on the cognitive demands of our task, we do not see a differential impact on cue validity.

Facilitation of reaction times to exogenous cues has been a key measure of spatial attention since Posner's original demonstration (Posner, 1980). Given a lack of observed facilitation, however, it's possible that the cue was not attended or that attentional control settings encouraged an early removal of attention from the cue (Klein, 2000). The analyses presented here suggest that the cue was at most briefly attended and then inhibited based on the early curvature of saccades away from the cue. Any attention at the cued location was insufficient or too short lived to observe other results such as facilitation or impact on microsaccades. Microsaccade rates have recently been suggested as a result of automatic attention causing early directional bias toward the cue followed by spatial inhibition resulting in a bias away from the cue. Given that we see minimal dip in frequency and no later rebound, we suggest that attention to cue was minimized by some process other than oculomotor inhibition. Likewise, the directional analysis shows no change in behavior to the cue as suggested by the attentional account.

Although we do not observe early facilitation, we do observe robust IOR throughout the CTOA range including early CTOAs. Hilchey et al., (2014) have suggested a dual account of IOR to explain similar results (their Expt 1: peripheral). Rather than an attentional account, they propose an early oculomotor facilitation caused by residual activity in the intermediate layers of the SC (Boehnke et al., 2011; Dorris et al, 2002; Fecteau & Munoz, 2005). In their first experiment (similar to the method presented here), their lack of facilitatory effect is explained by an early, stronger IOR possibly caused by 'input' sensory adaptation. In fact, they only observe oculomotor driven facilitation when the target saccade is signaled by a central arrow. This adaptation is observed neutrally in monkeys and has worked in models of the SC (Wang et al, 2012; Trappenberg et al., 2001) and depends on whether the oculomotor system is inhibited (Hilchey et al., 2014). This account, however would require a second type of 'output' IOR for the later CTOAs since sensory adaptation is short lived, measured in a few

hundred milliseconds. Given our lack of interaction between validity and CTOA, we believe a single underlying mechanism is more likely.

Although exogenous, ‘bottom-up’ attention is often considered automatic, it can be modulated by top-down attention (Folk, Remington, & Johnston, 1992; Folk & Remington, 1998; Yantis, 2000; Godijn & Theeuwes, 2002). Attentional control settings influenced by experiment design could influence the degree of attentional allocated to the cue and reduce its impact when the likelihood of its usefulness is low. Malevich et al. (2017), for example observe no early facilitation for manual responses across a number of experiments with random and mixed CTOAs, and only see facilitation when the CTOAs are blocked and temporally predictive. Pratt, Sekuler and McAuliffe (2001) demonstrated a reduced impact of cues with reduced cue-target feature similarity. This also provides evidence for the suggestion that the mechanisms for both IOR and facilitation exist very shortly after the cue, but that IOR is typically masked by early facilitation when the bi-phasic pattern is observed (Danziger & Kingstone, 1999; Pratt et al., 2001).

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