Rebuilding the Tower of Babel?

The Influence of Language Policy on Political Trust

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Towel of Babel

Rebuilding the Towel? For What?

Going Beyond Existing Research

Shared Object

- Official Language

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Limits

- Only minorities
- Only state-building phase
- Proxy of culture

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Goal

1. Full population
2. Established environment
3. Beyond culture

~~Culture~~ Communication-Based Theory

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- Listening:
  - Mainstreamized ⇧
  - Hypotheses:
    - Being more familiar with the political institutions
    - Align more with the government

- Speaking:
  - Activism ⇧
  - Hypotheses:
    - More interests and internal efficacy in politics
    - Less external efficacy
    - More negative impression of the governmental officials.

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- Relative ($Speaking_i - Speaking$)
  - Suitability ⇧
  - Hypotheses:
    - Better self-evaluation
    - Less enthusiasm in changing it
    - More political trust

Research Design

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- Source:
  - Chinese General Social Survey 2010--15

Research Design

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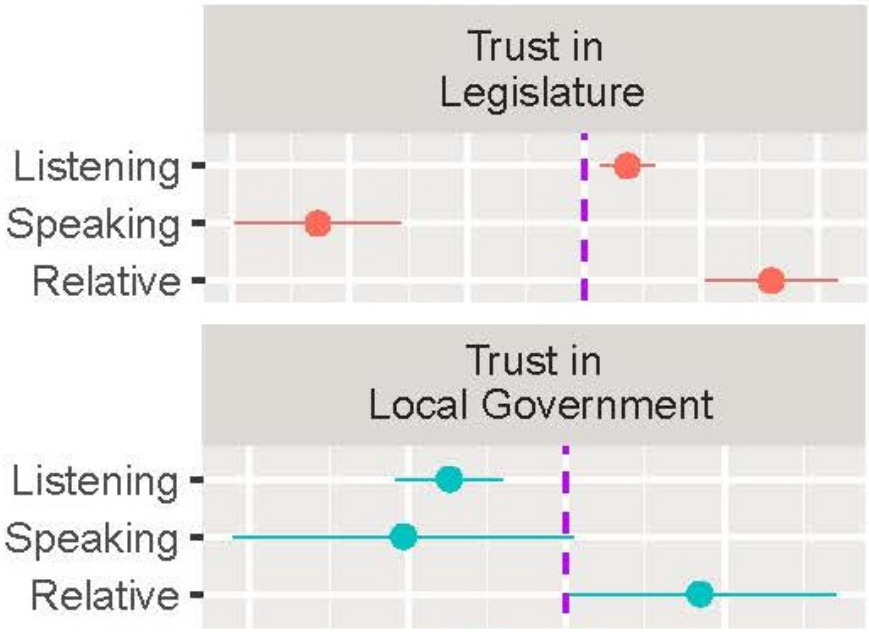
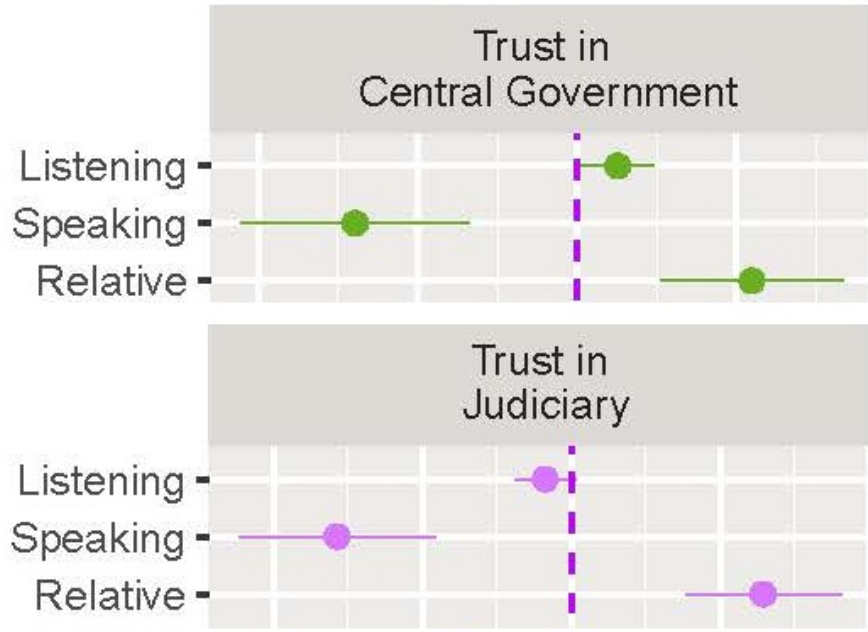
- DV:
  - Mainstream attitudes (5)
  - Activism (6)
  - Self-evaluation (1)
  - **Political Trust**
    - National legislature, central government, local government, judiciary

- IV:
  - Listening, speaking and relative proficiencies ($\delta_{si} = s_i - \bar{s}.$)
  - Demographic and socioeconomic controls (13)
  - Fixed effect (province, wave), post-stratification weights.

Results


Trust in
Legislature
Listening
Speaking
Relative
Trust in
Local Government
Listening
Speaking
Relative


Trust in
Central Government
Listening
Speaking
Relative
Trust in
Judiciary
Listening
Speaking
Relative

Conclusion

1. Communication-based theory: A general understanding

Conclusion

1. Communication-based theory: A general understanding

2. New insight into public opinion

Thank you!

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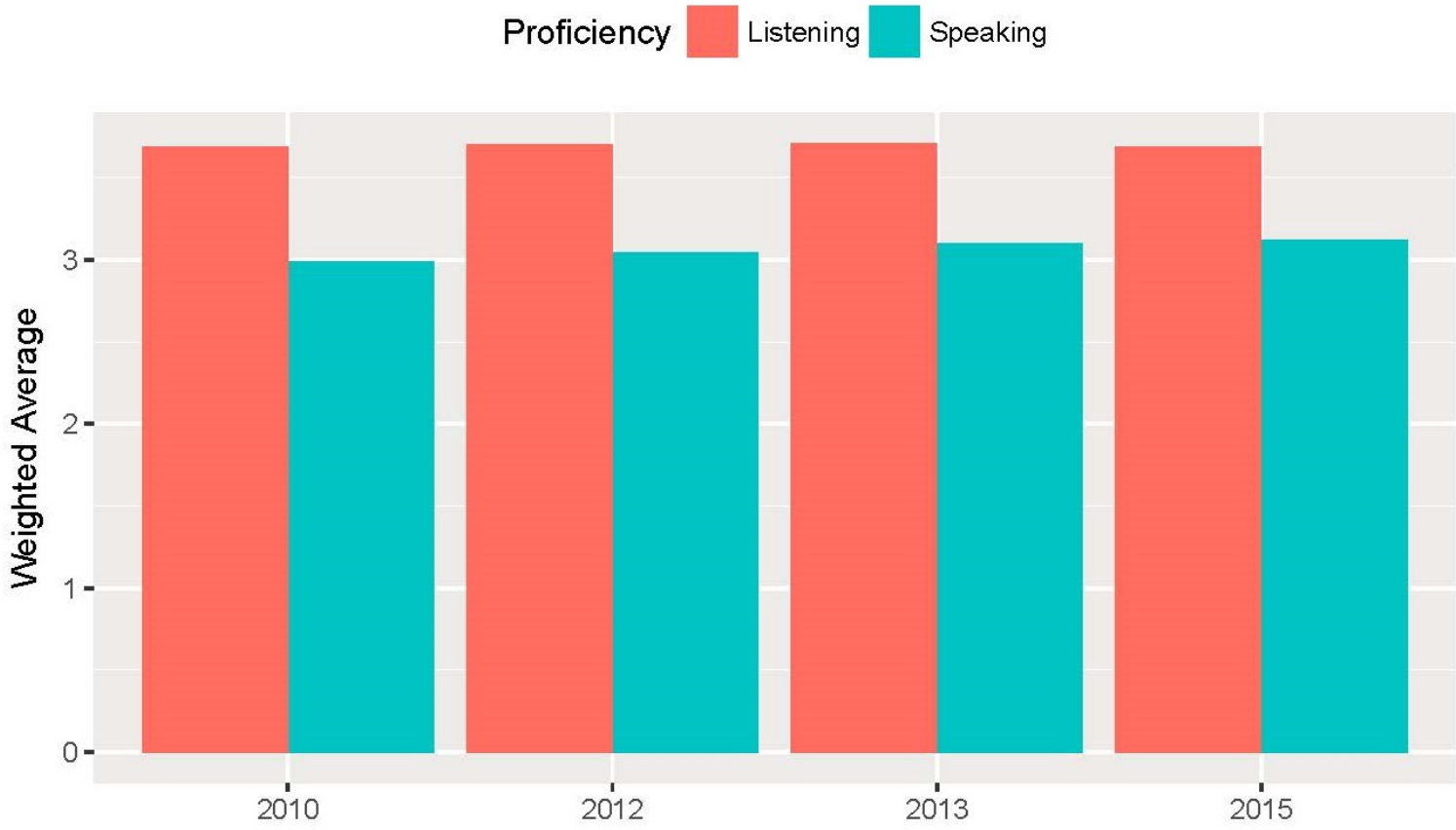
Appendix

New Case: Mainland China

Ethnicity

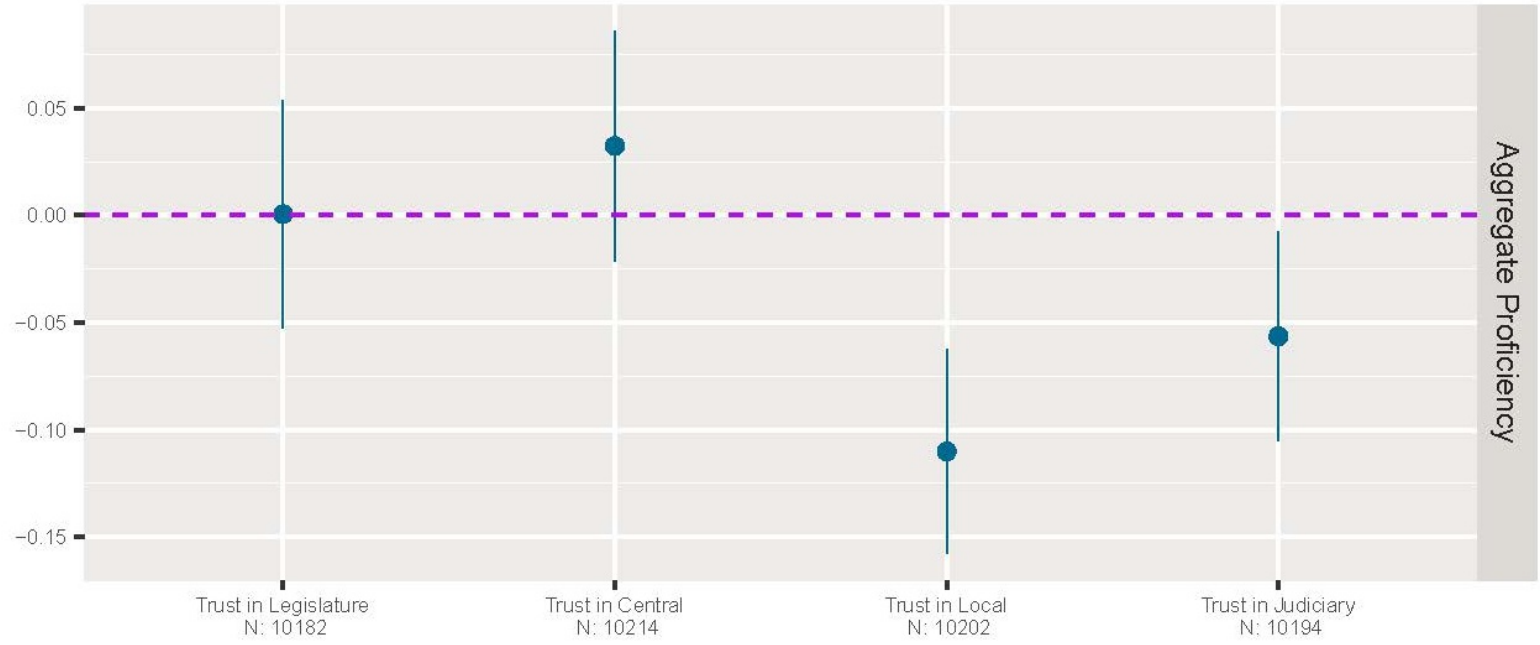
Language

Reliability of Self-Report Official Language Proficiency



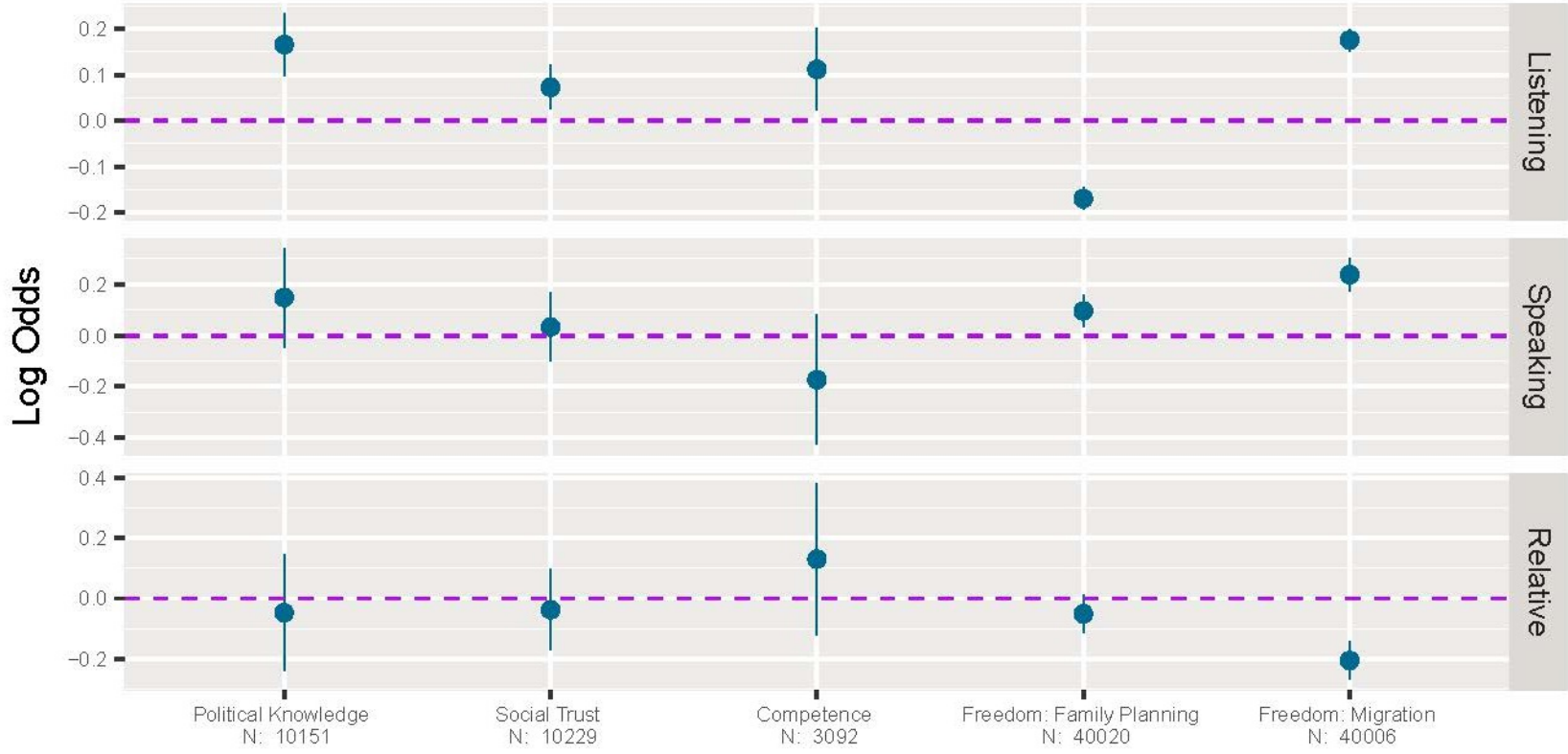
Results

Culture-based theory + aggregated measurement



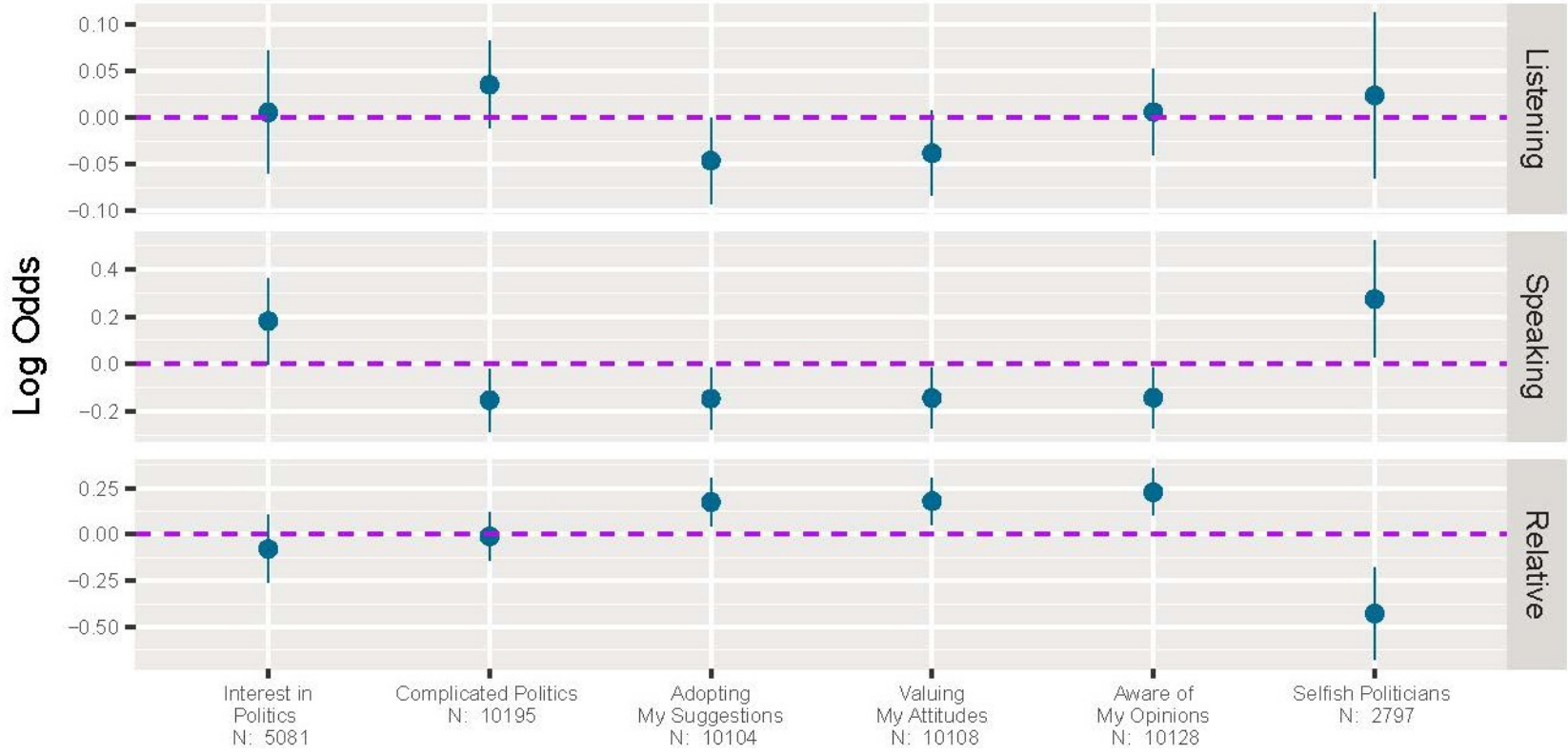
Results

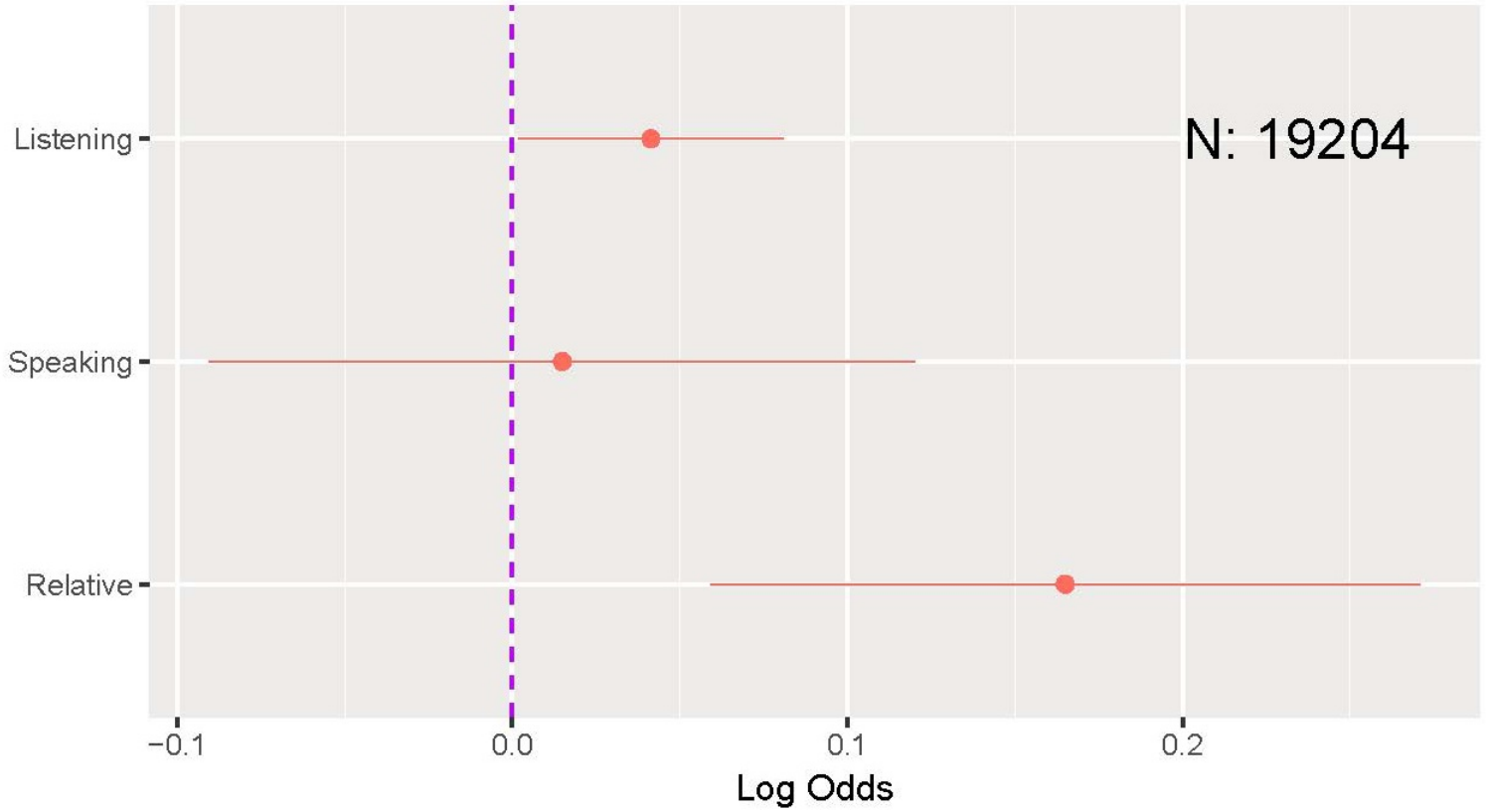
~~Culture~~ Communicate-based theory + ~~aggregate~~ decomposed measurement: Listening



Results

Communicate-based theory + decomposed measurement: Speaking



Results

Communicate-based theory + decomposed measurement: Relative