



Rise-fall-rise (RFR)

Prior Accounts

- * uncertainty relative to a scale [13]
- * unclaimable alternatives [2]
- * incomplete answer [12, 6]
- * secondary QUD [14]
- * presence of higher alternative [4, 5]

⇒ Predictions for scalar inferences:

decrease: [13, 12, 14]; increase/ambivalent: [4, 5, 2]

SI rate

- o evidence against [13, 12, 14] (see also [3])

Scale variation

- ? question context less compatible with “evaluative” scales [4, 5]
- ? order of negative predicates on Horn-scale (<cool, cold>) reversed on measurement scale (<cold, cool, warm, hot>), thus stronger predicate not higher [11]

“Concession” Contour (CC)

Resemblance with Contradiction Contour: [9]

- (1) A: Too bad elephantiasis is incurable...
B: Elephantiasis isn't incurable!

* ContC presupposes contextual evidence against p [7]

SI rate

- o questions convey uncertainty → relation to evidence against p ?

Scale variation

- x non-uniform variation unexpected

Experiments

A: { Was the winner ecstatic? (“strong”)
Was the winner happy? (“same”)

You/B: She was happy.

Given your/B's response, do you think A would conclude that the winner was not ecstatic? - “Yes”/“No”

Method: 60 scalar predicates from [10] plus 20 fillers

- Exp 1 (N=37): Participants read dialogue, listened to audio of A, recorded reply, then answered question → Recordings manually annotated for contour
- Exp 2 (N=73): Participants listened to full dialogue (“strong” condition only!), then answered question

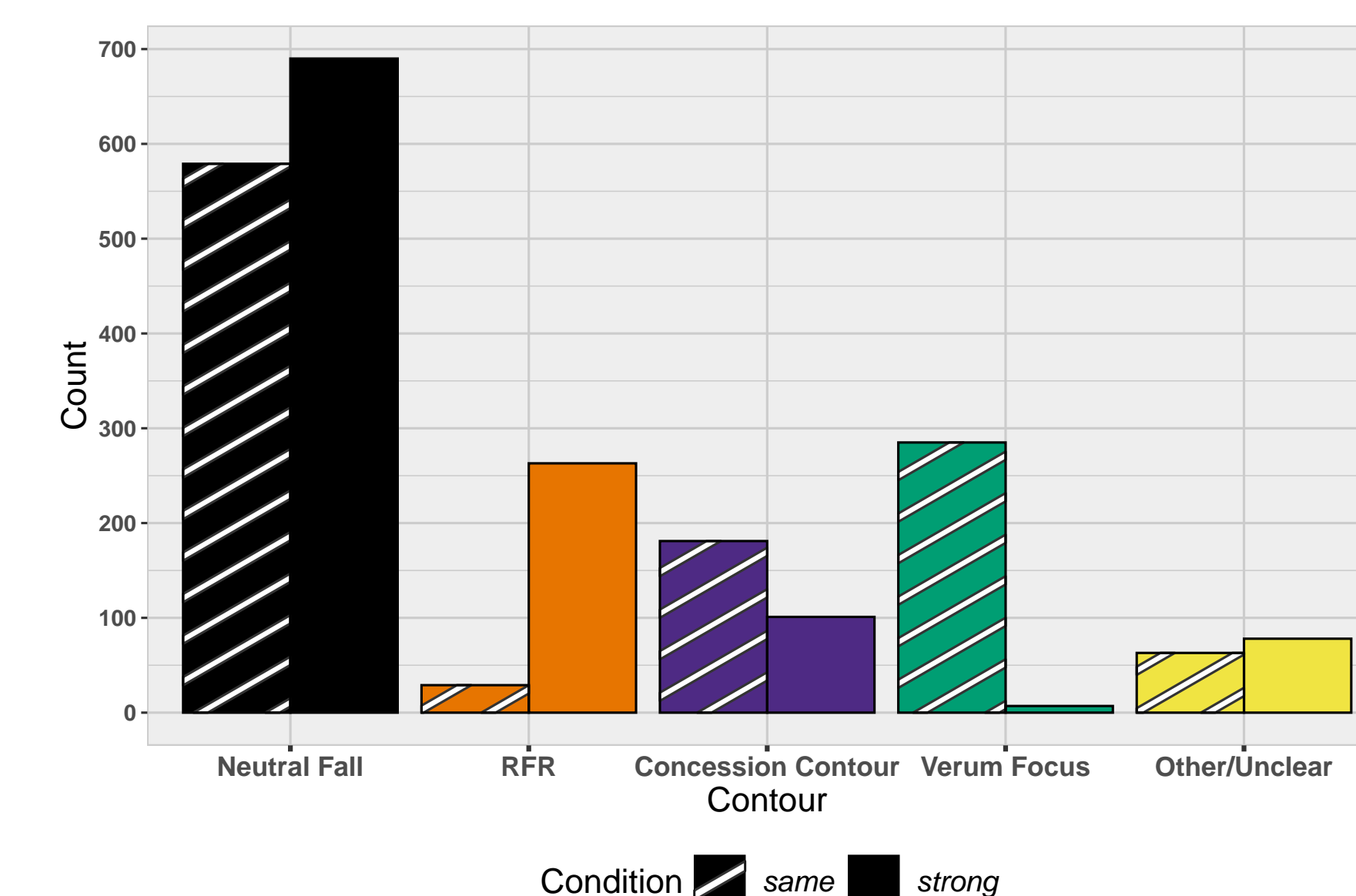


Figure 1. Production contours

- RFR mostly in “strong”
- CC in both conditions
- Verum mostly in “same” [8]

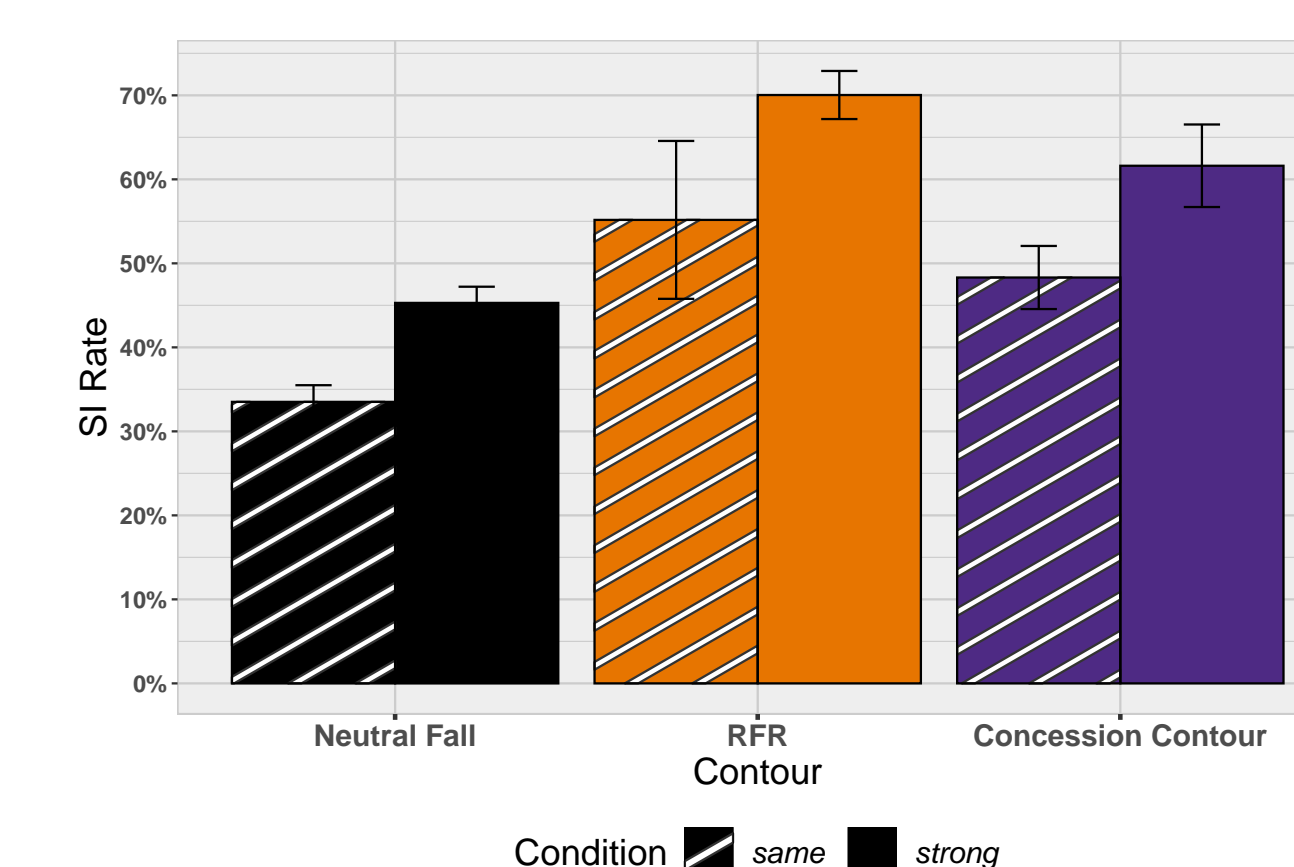


Figure 2. Production SI rates

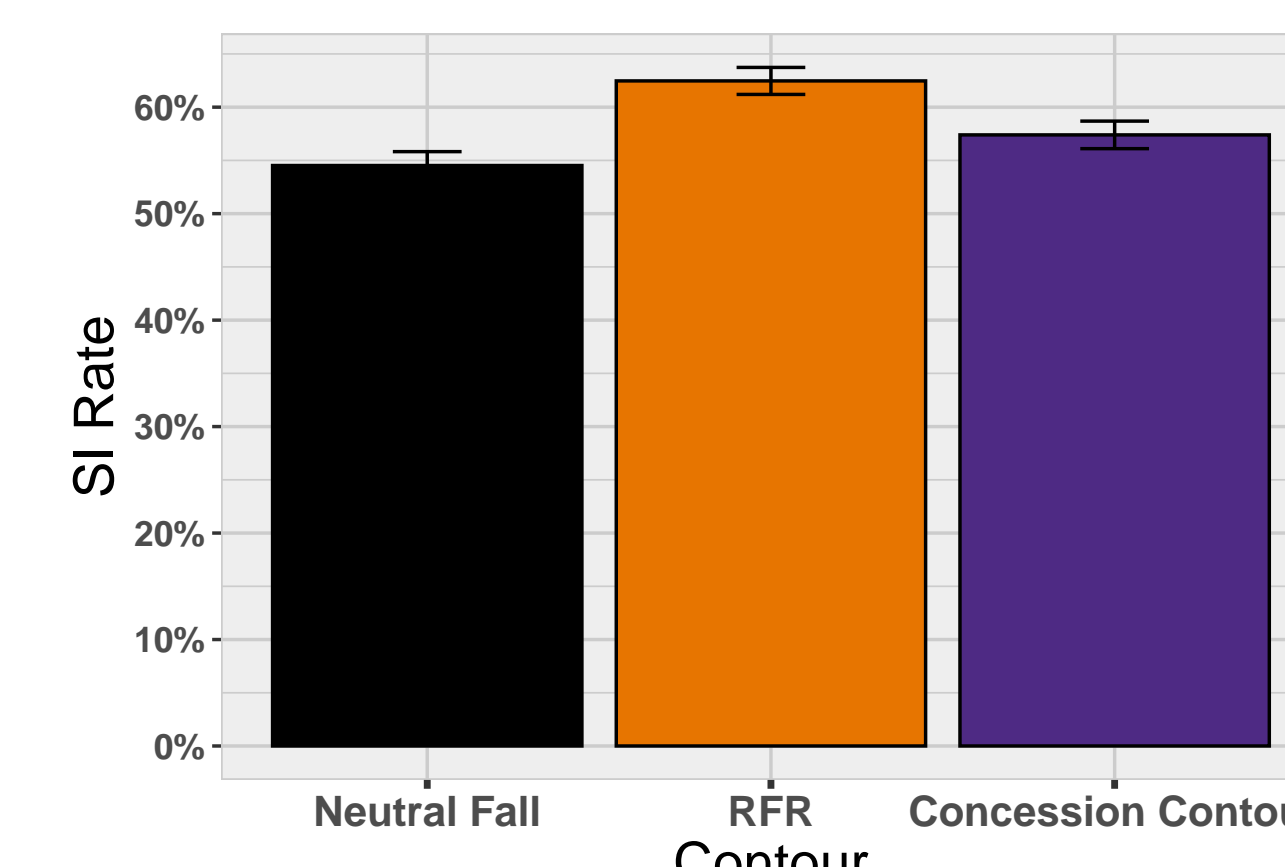


Figure 3. Perception SI rates

- Higher SI rates in “strong” ($p < 0.001$, replicating [10])
- Higher SI rates with RFR compared to Fall ($p < 0.05$, $p < 0.01$)
- SI rates for CC in between Fall and RFR
- larger difference for Production than Perception

Scale Variation



Figure 4. Production contours by scale

Impressionistic patterns (speculative!)

- RFR infrequent with adjectival scales
- RFR & CC infrequent with negative scales (e.g. ugly)

Concluding Remarks

- results imply need to control for intonation in studies on scalar diversity
- question about relation between scalar inferences and ignorance inferences (see [1])

References: [1] Buccola & Goodhue (2023), CLS59; [2] Constant (2012), L&P; [3] de Marneffe & Tonhauser (2019), Questions in Discourse; [4] Göbel (2019), SALT29; [5] Göbel & Wagner (2023), ELM2; [6] Goodhue et al. (2016), NELS46; [7] Goodhue & Wagner (2018), Glossa; [8] Höhle (1992), Informationsstruktur und Grammatik; [9] Liberman & Sag (1974), CLS10; [10] Ronai & Xiang (2022), LSA2022; [11] Solt (2015), L&L; [12] Wagner et al. (2013), SemDial17; [13] Ward & Hirschberg (1985), Language; [14] Westera (2019), Secondary content: the linguistics of side issues
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