

The Nutshell

- **Premise:** Work on scalar inference (SI), especially inter-scale variation [8], mostly uses written materials, masking effect of (implicit) intonation
 - **Main Findings:** Contour choice varies across scales + SI rate varies by contour
- **Implications:** Without controlling intonation, unclear if SI rate differences are directly driven by manipulation of interest or mediated by intonation

Background

1. **Scalar Diversity** – Likelihood of SI varies robustly across scales → what factors explain it? [8, 5, i.a.]
2. **Intonational Contours** – Rise-fall-rise (RFR) argued to convey uncertainty [9] or incompleteness [1, 4] → *decrease of SI rate expected*
 Contrast: RFR highlights stronger alternatives [3] → *increase of SI rate expected*

Production

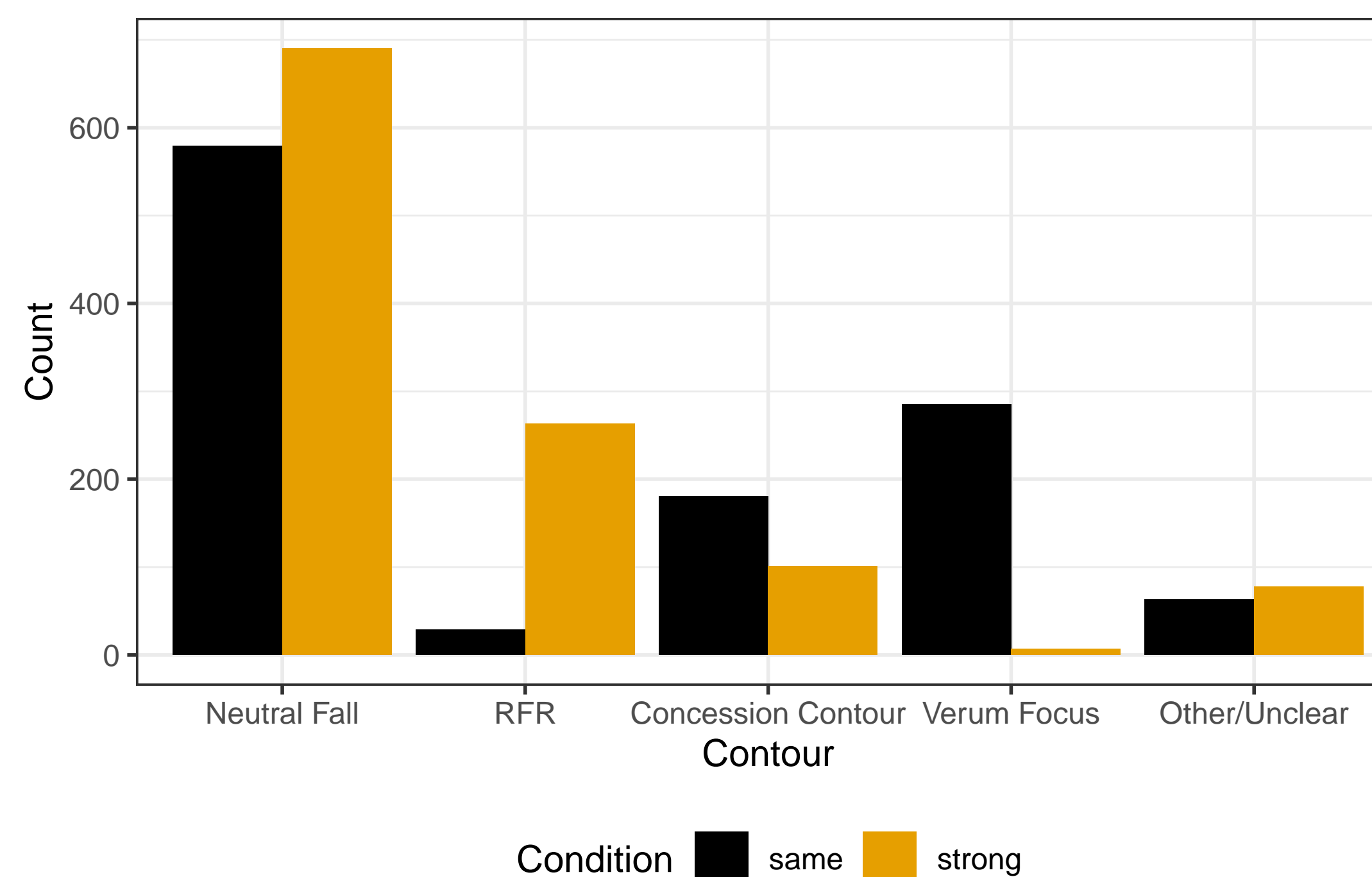
Sample Item

Emma: Was the winner ecstatic? (strong)
 Was the winner happy? (same)
 You: She was happy.
 Given your response, do you think Emma would conclude that the winner was not ecstatic? “Yes”/“No”

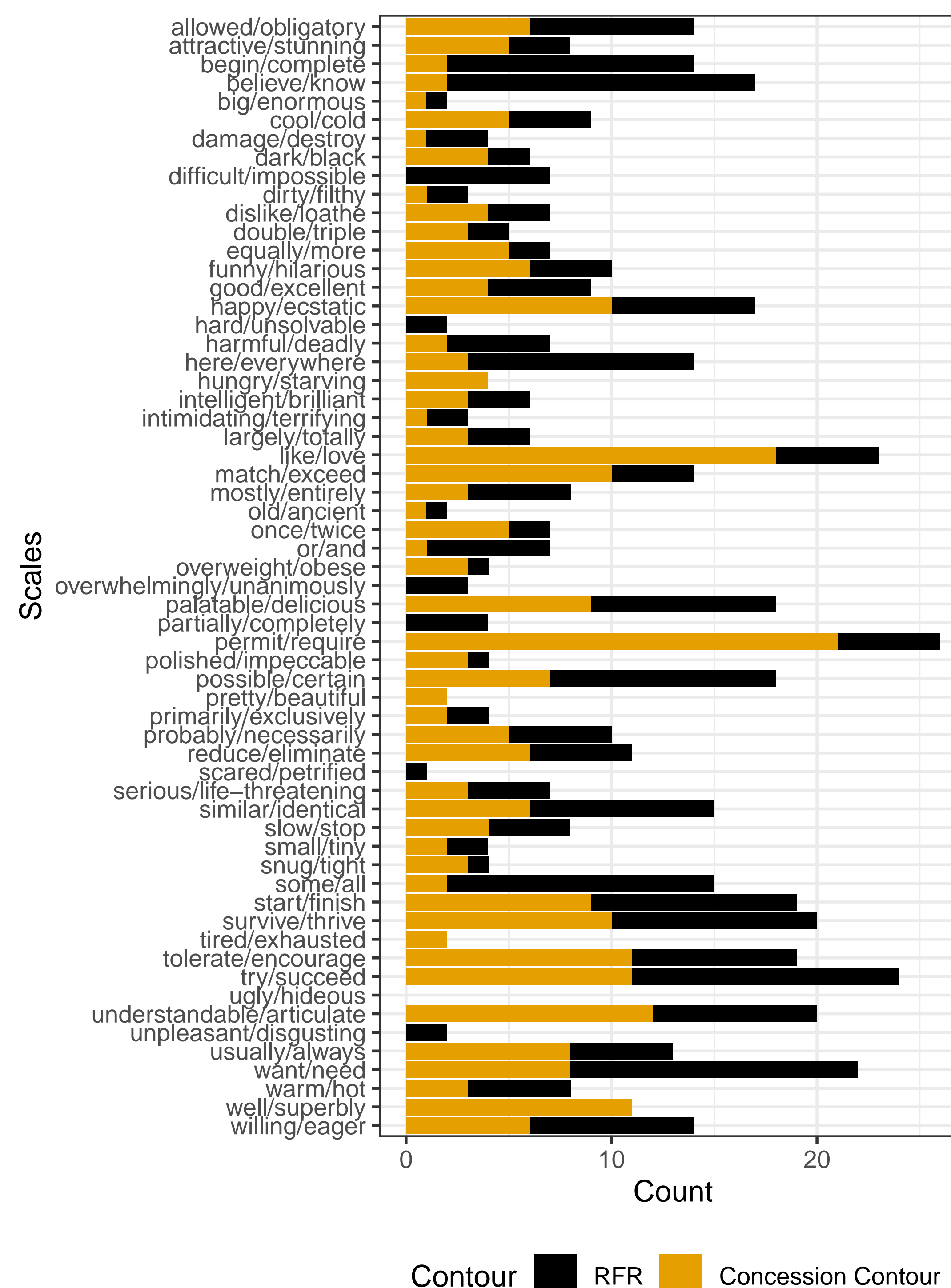
Method (participant N=37)

- 60 scalar predicates from [7] plus 20 fillers
- Participants read dialogue, listened to audio of Emma, recorded reply, then answered question
- Recordings manually annotated for contour

Production: Results

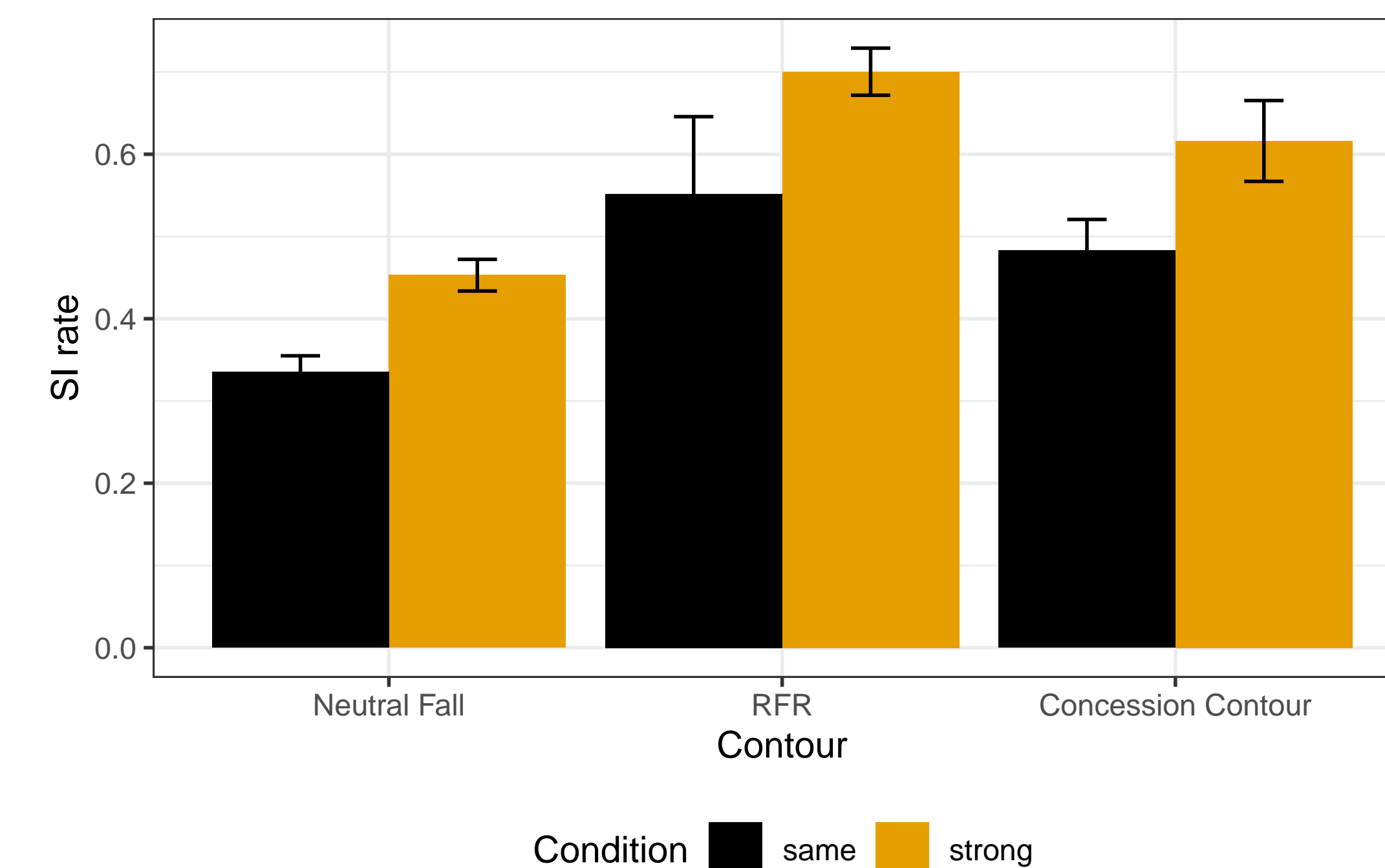


- RFR almost exclusively in ‘strong’
- Verum Focus in ‘same’ [6]



- RFR not produced evenly across scales

Production: SI Rates

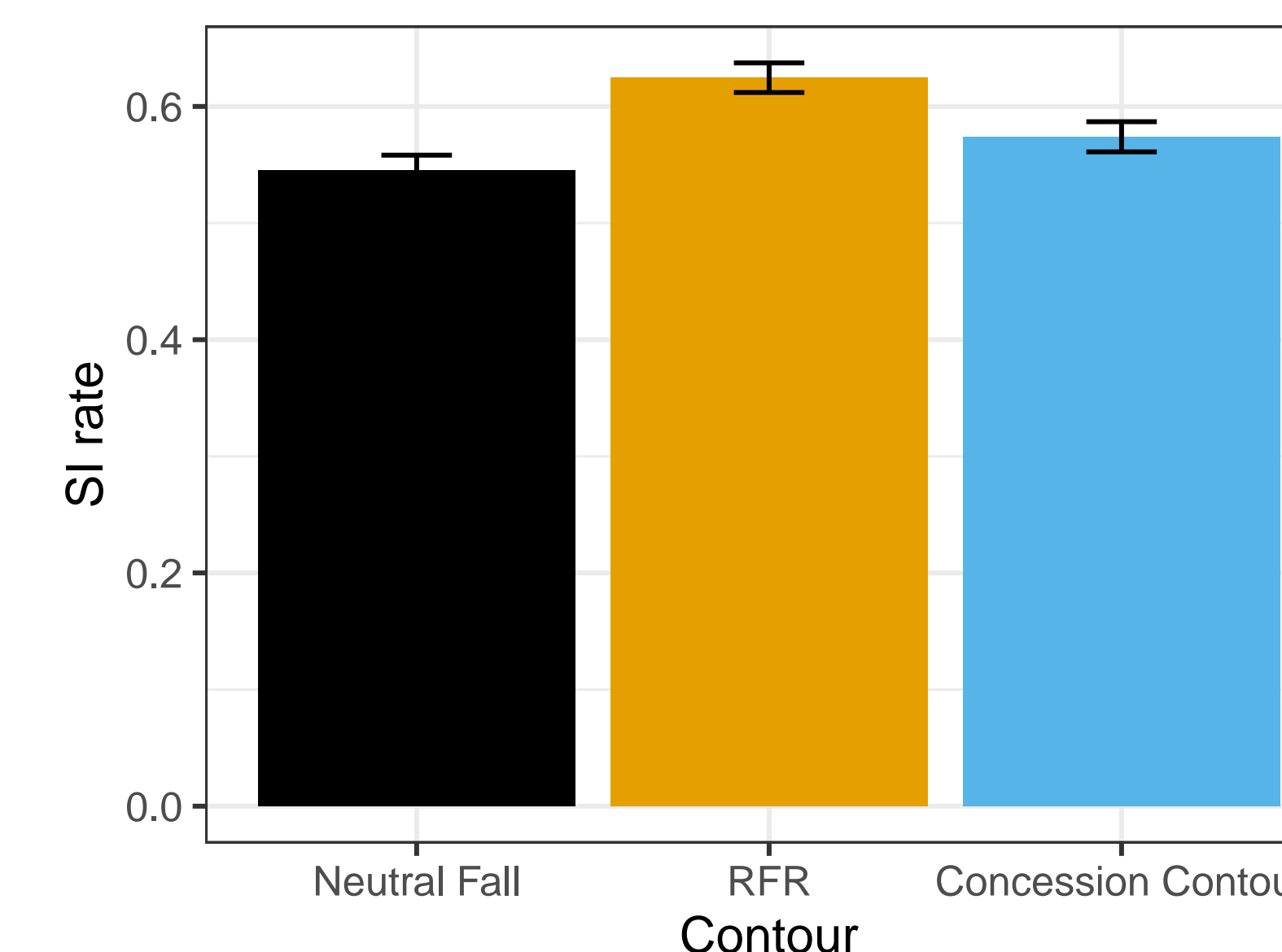


- Higher SI rates in ‘strong’ ($p < 0.001$, replicating [7])
 - Higher SI rates with RFR compared to Fall ($p < 0.05$)
- Support for accounts of RFR like [3], see also [2]

Perception

Method (participant N=73)

- Same items as Production, but only ‘strong’
- Intonation of reply manipulated as extra factor
- Participants listened to dialogue (without seeing it), then answered question



- RFR higher SI rate than Fall ($p < 0.01$), CC in between
- Replicates pattern from Production, supports [3, 2]