

The Role of Contingency and Correlation in the Stroop Task

Nabil Hasshim¹ & Benjamin A. Parris²

¹De Montfort University & ²Bournemouth University

Author Note

Ethical approval was obtained from the research ethics committee of De Montfort University faculty of Health and Life Sciences (Ref: 3427). All materials, raw data, analysis, approved stage 1 protocol and documents related to this project are publicly available at <https://osf.io/tfeq6/>

Orcid:

Nabil Hasshim: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6375-8554>

Benjamin Parris: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2402-2100>

Corresponding author:

Nabil Hasshim: nabil.hasshim@dmu.ac.uk

Abstract

Facilitation (faster responses to Congruent trials compared to Neutral trials) in the Stroop task has been a difficult effect for models of cognitive control to explain. The current research investigated the role of word-response contingency, word-colour correlation, and proportion congruency in producing Stroop effects. Contingency and correlation refers to the probability of specific word-response and word-colour pairings that are implicitly learnt while performing the task. Pairs that have a higher probability of occurring are responded to faster, a finding that challenges top-down attention control accounts of Stroop task performance. However studies that try to experimentally control for contingency and correlation typically do so by increasing the proportion of incongruent trials in the task, which cognitive control accounts posit affects interference control via the top-down biasing of attention. The present research focused on whether facilitation is also affected by contingency and correlation while additionally looking at the effect of proportion congruency. This was done in two experiments that compared the typical design of Stroop task experiments (i.e., having equal proportions of Congruent and Incongruent trials but also contingency and correlational biases) to: a) a design that had unequal congruency proportions but no contingency or correlation (Experiment 1), and b) a design where the correlation is biased but proportion congruency and contingency were not (Experiment 2). Results did not support the hypotheses that contingency or correlation affected facilitation. Interference was almost halved in the alternative design of Experiment 2, demonstrating an effect of contingency learning in typical measures of Stroop interference.

Keywords: *Cognitive control, Contingency learning, Facilitation, Stroop task*

The Role of Contingency and Correlation in Stroop Task Facilitation

The Stroop task (Klein, 1964; Stroop, 1935), probably the most widely used paradigm in selective attention research (MacLeod 1992), requires participants to respond to the 'ink' colour of individual words, while ignoring what the word spells out. The efficiency in performing the task is influenced by the property of the word, with the classic finding being that responses are fastest when the word and colour are *Congruent* (e.g., the word 'blue' printed in blue), and slower when they are *Incongruent* (e.g., 'blue' printed in green). When the word does not evoke a colour (e.g., 'table' presented in red) or is made up of a string of letters or symbols (e.g., 'xxxx' in blue, or '#####' in red), the time taken to respond to these *neutral* trials is typically between that of Congruent and Incongruent trials. The difference in performance between Congruent and Neutral trials is often taken as a measure of *facilitation*, while the difference between neutral and Incongruent trials is taken as a measure of *interference* (see MacLeod, 1991, and Parris, Hasshim, Wadsley, Augustinova & Ferrand, submitted, for comprehensive reviews).

An interesting and consistent finding in the Stroop literature for which models have attempted to account is that facilitation effects are less stable, less reliable and are generally much smaller than interference (e.g., Glaser & Glaser, 1982; Lindsay & Jacoby, 1994; MacLeod, 1998; Augustinova, Parris & Ferrand, 2019; but see Melara & Algom, 2003), and can be absent or even reversed (e.g., Dalrymple-Alford, 1972; Goldfarb & Henik, 2007; Kalanthroff & Henik, 2013).

Converging information hypothesis of facilitation

Extant models of Stroop performance (e.g., models by Cohen, Dunbar, & McClelland, 1990; Melara & Algom; 2003; Phaf, Van der Heijden, & Hudson, 1990; Roelofs 2003) describe facilitation and interference as stemming from the same

1
2
3 mechanisms. These models posit that information from the colour and word
4
5 dimensions converge on Congruent trials and diverge on Incongruent trials.
6
7 Converging and diverging of information results in facilitation and interference
8
9 respectively. Thus, in this view, the information from the word dimension of a
10
11 Congruent trial aids in stimulus processing and thus improves task performance on
12
13 that trial since it converges with information from the colour (i.e., both word and
14
15 colour provide evidence towards the same response). Smaller facilitation effects are
16
17 accounted for within the context of the parallel distributed processing models of
18
19 Stroop task performance (e.g. Cohen, Dunbar, & McClelland, 1990).
20
21
22
23
24

25 *Inadvertent reading*

26
27 An alternative account to the converging information account of facilitation is the
28
29 inadvertent reading hypothesis (Dunbar & MacLeod, 1984; Kane & Engle, 2003;
30
31 MacLeod & MacDonald, 2000). This account postulates that on some trials,
32
33 participants fail in the goal of ignoring the word and inadvertently respond to the
34
35 meaning of the word. When this happens on incongruent trials it results in an
36
37 incorrect response (which are ignored in analyses of correct response latencies), but
38
39 on Congruent trials, they manifest as a fast correct response since reading is
40
41 generally faster than colour naming (MacLeod, 1991). As these trials are classified
42
43 as correct trials, they are then included in the calculation of overall response times
44
45 for Congruent trials, contributing to the measured facilitation effect. Therefore,
46
47 individual differences in participants' tendencies for goal failure has an effect on the
48
49 calculation of congruent trials, but not incongruent trials, which can explain the
50
51 inconsistency in the measurement of Stroop facilitation in the literature and also the
52
53 asymmetrical magnitude of the two effects (MacLeod & MacDonald, 2000).
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 The converging information and inadvertent reading accounts of facilitation
4 both provide reasonable accounts of existing data. However, there is reason to
5 believe that facilitation effects might be smaller than originally thought; indeed, there
6 is reason to believe that facilitation effects in their entirety are the result of an
7 experimental confound present in all previous experiments. If this were shown to be
8 true, the above accounts of Stroop facilitation would be redundant.
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17

18 *Colour-response contingency and colour-word correlation*

19
20 The role of contingency learning in the Stroop task has been highlighted by Schmidt
21 and colleagues (e.g., Schmidt, 2013; Schmidt 2016; Schmidt, Crump, Cheesman, &
22 Besner, 2007; Schmidt & De Houwer, 2012). Contingency learning refers to how the
23 probability of each word-response pairing is implicitly learnt and subsequently used
24 to predict a response upon further encounters with the word. For example, if the
25 word 'green' is more often presented in red, the response to red will be predicted
26 whenever the word 'green' is encountered in the future, facilitating responses when
27 this prediction is correct (Schmidt, et al., 2007). In typical Stroop task designs
28 involving Congruent and Incongruent trials, an equal number of each type of trial is
29 displayed while presenting each possible word-colour combination (Dishon-Berkovits
30 & Algom, 2000). The left half of Figure 1 (labelled "standard design") shows an
31 example of the frequency of each colour and word combination in such a design.
32 Equal numbers of Congruent (italicised numbers) and Incongruent trials leads to a
33 higher frequency of each word being displayed in its corresponding colour compared
34 to another colour (e.g., nine instances of 'yellow' in yellow vs three instances of
35 'yellow' in blue), further speeding responses to congruent stimuli. Thus, even though
36 the number of Congruent and Incongruent trials are equal, measures of Stroop
37 facilitation will have been unintentionally inflated by contingency effects.
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 Another factor that is confounded in such a design is colour-word *correlation*
4
5 (Dishon-Berkovits & Algom, 2000; Melara & Algom, 2003; Algom & Chajut, 2019).
6
7 The idea of correlation is similar to the concept of contingency, with the distinction
8
9 being that while the latter refers to word-response pairings, the former refers to the
10
11 pairings between the colours and words. However, the mechanisms underlying the
12
13 two are different. Contingency learning posits that the specific word-response
14
15 association results in faster responses, a purely associative learning account. On the
16
17 other hand, the correlation account refers to the perceived probability of each
18
19 irrelevant word would appear in each available colour. If the perceived probability of
20
21 a word appearing in any of the available colours is not random then a colour-word
22
23 correlation is created (Dishon-Berkovits & Algom, 2000). In such cases, the identity
24
25 of the word can become a reliable source of information in predicting what the colour
26
27 will be. Thus, it would be beneficial for the cognitive system to allocate some
28
29 attentional resource to the word reading task, instead of ignoring the word dimension
30
31 as instructed. As a result a large Stroop effect ensues.
32
33
34
35
36
37

38 Indeed, Dishon-Berkovits and Algom (2000) repeatedly showed that the
39
40 Stroop effect (difference between Incongruent and Congruent) was eliminated in
41
42 designs where the two dimensions making up the target were randomly selected
43
44 (i.e., zero correlation). Along with other studies like that of Schmidt and Besner
45
46 (2008), this is evidence that Stroop interference can be explained by the design of
47
48 the tasks which confound correlation and contingency. The present study aims to
49
50 extend this by focusing on facilitation, which has not been a focus of studies in the
51
52 literature and also using the classic colour-word Stroop task (Dishon-Berkovits &
53
54 Algom, 2000 used variants of the Stroop task, the spatially separated word-word task
55
56 and the picture-word task).
57
58
59
60

[Figure 1 somewhere here]

As mentioned earlier, one way for empirical studies to control contingency and correlation effects is by ensuring each word-colour combination occurs equally often (e.g., De Houwer, 2003; Dishon-Berkovits & Algom, 2000; Hasshim & Parris, 2014; 2015; Schmidt & Cheesman, 2005). The right half of Figure 1 (labelled “alternative design”) shows an example frequency table of such a manipulation. However, this also means that the number of Congruent and Incongruent trials would not be equal (e.g., there are two times more Incongruent trials than Congruent trials). Thus, it is unclear whether this imbalance in the number of Congruent and Incongruent trials in the experiment would have any influence on any measured effect (this idea, *Proportion Congruency* is discussed in the next section). In two of the studies that included a suitable neutral condition to enable the computation of Stroop facilitation, and controlled for response contingency, Hasshim and Parris (2014) reported no facilitation effects in a manual response paradigm, while Hasshim and Parris (2015) reported facilitation effects using an oculomotor response paradigm.

Proportion congruency

When the design of the Stroop task is manipulated as described above, other interrelated factors are affected as well. Proportion congruency refers to the proportion of trial types making up an experiment. As described earlier, researchers typically strive to have equal numbers of each trial type in their experiments, which then affects contingency and correlation. Controlling for contingency and correlation as shown in the alternative design depicted in Figure 1 would lead to an unequal number of each trial type in the experiment.

Having different proportion of trial types is in fact one key manipulation in studies demonstrating strategic control of attention (e.g., Cheesman & Merikle, 1986;

1
2
3 Lindsay & Jacoby, 1994; Logan & Zbrodoff, 1979; West & Baylis, 1998). In these
4
5 studies, the list-wise proportion congruency is manipulated by administering blocks
6
7 made up mostly Congruent or mostly Incongruent trials. These studies demonstrate
8
9 that the Stroop effect is larger when the block is made up of mostly (typically ~80%)
10
11 Congruent trials compared to blocks with mostly Incongruent trials. The explanation
12
13 given for this phenomenon was one of strategic top-down control. When most trials
14
15 encountered are Congruent, attentional resources are biased towards word reading
16
17 since the word is predictive of the correct response. This results in faster responses
18
19 to Congruent trials and inflates the measurement of the Stroop effect in those blocks.
20
21
22
23

24
25 However, it has been argued that the resultant biased contingency of such
26
27 blocks might explain the proportion congruency effect (see Bugg, Jacoby, &
28
29 Channani, 2011; Schmidt & Besner, 2008; and Schmidt & Lemercier, 2018, for in-
30
31 depth discussions of this issue). A popular paradigm in exploring this involves the
32
33 use of two sets of stimuli with different word-response contingencies (item-level
34
35 proportion congruency). For example Blais and Bunge (2010); Bugg et al. (2011);
36
37 and Bugg, Jacoby, and Toth (2008), had one set of stimuli where contingency was
38
39 controlled, while manipulating the global proportion of Congruent and Incongruent
40
41 trials in the task by varying the number of such trials in a second set of stimuli. The
42
43 results from these studies indeed show that item-level proportion congruency can
44
45 account for the proportion congruency effect, suggesting that the effect is not due to
46
47 a general task-level shift in attentional control.
48
49

50
51 Lorentz et al. (2016) had a similar research question to the current study and
52
53 explored the effect of contingency on facilitation by utilising different baselines in two
54
55 sets of stimuli in the same procedure. Congruent and Incongruent trials had a
56
57 corresponding set of neutral trials, which matched their different contingencies, as
58
59
60

1
2
3 their baseline and they showed that contingency indeed influences facilitation.
4
5 Compared to their respective contingency-matched neutral conditions Lorentz et al.
6
7 showed that both facilitation (~40ms) and interference (65ms) were significant.
8
9
10 However, Lorentz et al. did not compare the contingency controlled effects to the
11
12 more common non-contingency controlled design and so the magnitude of the
13
14 contingency effect is not known. Moreover, they had participants respond with a
15
16 vocal response in their study which produces larger Stroop effects (Augustinova et
17
18 al., 2019; Parris et al., submitted) and it is therefore unknown what the magnitude of
19
20 the contingency effect is with either response type and whether facilitation effects will
21
22 remain with a manual response. Furthermore, their design did not control for colour-
23
24 response correlation.
25
26
27

28
29 Finally, as with all manipulations, such techniques have limitations. The use of
30
31 two sets of stimuli within an experiment necessitates the use of more response
32
33 options than is typical (e.g., Bugg, 2014 used 8 colours while Lorentz et al., 2016
34
35 used 9 colours) which might not be practical for manual response tasks as
36
37 remembering all the colour-button mappings induces greater memory load, and
38
39 affects task performance. Furthermore, this technique reduces the number of trials
40
41 that are used in measuring the effect of interest which reduces statistical power
42
43 (Braem et al., 2019)
44
45
46
47

48 *The current study*

49
50 The current research aimed to study the effects of word-response contingency and
51
52 word-colour correlation in a straightforward way. Experiment 1 compared the
53
54 magnitude of facilitation in a standard Stroop task design against an alternative
55
56 design where each word had an equal probability of appearing in each colour (see
57
58 Figure 1). In the alternative design there were no contingencies between the words
59
60

and responses and word-colour correlation was zero, but there were twice as many Incongruent trials as Congruent trials.

Experiment 2 compared the standard design to another alternative design in which the colour word of Incongruent trials appeared in only one specific colour throughout the task, matching the word-response contingency of Congruent trials (see Figure 2). This means that although there was a positive word-colour correlation, there was no word-response contingency and the number of Congruent and Incongruent trials were the same (a similar design was used in Hasshim & Parris, 2018). The two experiments allow for the investigation of the intertwining effects of word-response contingency, word-colour correlation, and proportion congruency on facilitation.

[Figure 2 somewhere here]

Theoretical implications

The main question being asked is what proportion of the Stroop facilitation effect is a by-product of the design of Stroop experiments which confound word-response contingency and word-colour correlation. The results will inform theoretical accounts of this long-established effect. Should there be no facilitation when contingency is controlled it would support the notion that facilitation is not a failure of cognitive control per se but a consequence of the computation of the statistical properties of the experimental context (Algom & Chajut, 2019; Schmidt 2013; 2019).

If facilitation effects are observed even when contingency and correlation are manipulated, we will have a better foundation from which to judge accounts of Stroop facilitation. The converging information and inadvertent reading hypotheses have different predictions as to how facilitation and interference effects manifest

1
2
3 throughout the RT distributions (Roelofs, 2010), which was tested with the data
4
5 obtained from this study.
6

7
8 Besides being informative in the ongoing discussion on how much the Stroop
9
10 effect is a reflection of cognitive flexibility and associative learning, the two
11
12 experiments might potentially be useful in understanding stimulus driven learning
13
14 processes. As detailed earlier, the two stimulus driven accounts of interest work by
15
16 slightly different mechanisms. The contingency learning account postulates a pure
17
18 associative learning mechanism of specific word-response pairings while in the
19
20 word-colour correlation account, performance is affected by individuals' perception
21
22 that some pairings occur more often than the other possible pairings. Comparing the
23
24 results of the two experiments will allow for the comparison of the two accounts.
25
26
27

28 29 **Experiment 1**

30 31 32 **Method**

33 34 35 *Participants*

36
37 60 individuals participated in Experiment 1. Participants were undergraduate
38
39 psychology students and received course credit for their participation. Data from 10
40
41 participants were excluded as they did not meet the accuracy threshold of 90%
42
43 correct answers overall as specified in the data exclusion criteria.
44
45

46
47 Prior to data collection, a target of 44 participants was set for the experiment.
48
49 Data collection sessions were advertised until the day this number was reached.
50
51 Additional participants who signed up on the last day were still able to participate.
52

53
54 The sample size was estimated based on the effect sizes (d s of 0.59, 0.63,
55
56 and 0.78) obtained in the measures of facilitation of Hasshim and Parris (2015),
57
58 using the jpower module of jamovi software (The jamovi project, 2019). The
59
60

CONTINGENCY AND CORRELATION IN STROOP

1.

1
2
3 minimum desired power was specified as 0.9, with a minimally interesting effect size
4
5 (δ) of 0.5, and type I error rate (α) of 0.05.
6
7

8 Furthermore the statistical power of the analyses will also be improved by
9
10 having more trials per experiment compared to Hasshim and Parris (2015).
11
12 Increasing the number of trials improves statistical power in psychophysics
13
14 experiments like the Stroop task (Rouder & Haaf, 2018). The number of trials to be
15
16 used was determined by the time it typically takes participants complete similar
17
18 experiments in the lab and for each session to not exceed 30 minutes.
19
20
21

22 *Apparatus*

23
24 The experiment was programmed using PsychoPy software (Peirce et al., 2019) and
25
26 data collection was conducted online via Pavlovia.org. Participants were instructed to
27
28 perform the task using a desktop or laptop computer only. Responses were recorded
29
30 via participants pressing the G, H, and J keys on their keyboard, which corresponded
31
32 to one of the three possible colour responses.
33
34
35
36

37 *Design*

38
39 The experiment employed a 3 (Congruent, Neutral, & Incongruent) x 2 (standard
40
41 design & alternative design) within participants design. Each participant went through
42
43 blocks of trials from either the standard or alternative design (see Figure 1) first,
44
45 before going through blocks from the other design. The order of this was randomly
46
47 determined.
48
49
50

51 On each trial the properties of the target stimuli (its word and colour) was
52
53 generated corresponding to the numbers in Figures 1 (e.g., in standard design
54
55 blocks the number of each trial type will follow that of the left panel). Facilitation was
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 calculated by the difference between Neutral and Congruent trials, while interference
4
5 was calculated by the difference between Incongruent and Neutral trials.
6
7

8 9 *Stimuli*

10
11 Two sets of stimuli were used, with each set containing three colour words and three
12
13 neutral words (see Table 1 for the words and colours used in each set and the lexical
14
15 properties of the words). Participants encountered stimuli from one set in the first half
16
17 of the experiment (either standard or alternative design) and the other set in the
18
19 second half, the order of which was randomised.
20
21

22
23 To check that there are no carryover effects from the first half the experiment,
24
25 supplementary analyses splitting participants by the order of presentation design
26
27 were conducted to make sure that the pattern of results is consistent throughout the
28
29 experiment.
30
31

32 [Table 1 somewhere here]
33
34

35 36 *Procedure*

37
38 Participants went through 6 blocks of trials as follows: a practice block of 24 trials,
39
40 two experimental blocks of 135 trials each from one of the designs, another practice
41
42 block of 24 trials, and two experimental blocks of 135 trials each from the second
43
44 design. The resulting number of trials in each experiment was 588 (48 practice and
45
46 540 experimental trials). Practice trials consisted of hash symbols (e.g., ###,
47
48 #####) displayed in the three response colours. Each of the experimental blocks
49
50 consisted of Congruent, Incongruent, and Neutral trials.
51
52

53
54 On each trial, a grey fixation cross appeared at the centre of a black screen
55
56 for 500ms, followed by the Stroop stimuli which stayed visible for 2500ms or until a
57
58 response was made. If no response, or an incorrect response was made within
59
60

CONTINGENCY AND CORRELATION IN STROOP

1.

2500ms, an additional feedback screen in the form of the text 'incorrect' or 'no response' was shown for 1500ms. The feedback was in black text over a grey background. A 1000ms blank black screen concluded each trial.

A break was administered after each block with participants allowed to take as much time as they wanted (minimum of 5 seconds) before initiating the next block by pressing the space bar.

Data exclusion criteria

Only correct responses >200 ms were analysed as fast responses are assumed to be anticipatory. Since the task is relatively easy and similar research conducted in our lab have shown participants' performance to typically be ~95% accurate, data from any participants where < 90% of trials are valid were excluded. Error rates are not one of the main dependent variables of interest but were similarly analysed and reported.

Analysis plan

Within each experiment, a statistically significant ($p < .05$) difference between the facilitation effects between the two designs and a Bayes factor larger than 3 would be taken as support for the hypothesis that the measurement of facilitation is influenced by experiment design. Otherwise, it would be concluded that the hypothesis was not supported by the data, with a Bayes factor smaller than 0.33 (evidence for the null is 3 times that of the alternate hypothesis) indicating that correlation and contingency did not impact facilitation.

Facilitation was calculated for each participant by subtracting their mean response time (RT) on Congruent trials from their mean RT on Neutral trials, while interference was calculated from subtracting the mean RT of Neutral trials from that

CONTINGENCY AND CORRELATION IN STROOP

1:

1
2
3 of Incongruent trials. An omnibus 2 (Stroop effects: facilitation & interference) x 2
4
5 (design: standard & alternative) ANOVA was conducted with the main effects of the
6
7 Stroop effects indicating whether the facilitation and interference effects were
8
9 observed. A statistically significant interaction would suggest that the different
10
11 designs affect the measurement of Stroop effects, and this was explored in the
12
13 following planned comparison.
14
15

16
17 Since the main research question was whether facilitation is significantly
18
19 reduced in the alternative design compared to the standard design, a *t*-test was
20
21 conducted comparing the size of facilitation between the standard and alternative
22
23 design conditions. To complement the frequentist *t*-test comparison, a Bayes factor
24
25 (BF) was calculated with the using the Dienes Bayes factor calculator (Dienes 2011,
26
27 2014), with the prior distribution defined as a half-normal distribution with a maximum
28
29 probability at 0ms and standard deviation of 23ms. The value of the standard
30
31 deviation is based on the raw saccade latency effect size of facilitation in Hasshim
32
33 and Parris (2015). Using the estimated sample size and abovementioned prior
34
35 distribution, along with the previous study's standard error of 6.61ms, a sensitive
36
37 Bayes factor (>3 in favour of the theory) was estimated with a raw effect size of at
38
39 least 12.8ms. In addition to each calculated BF, robustness regions were also
40
41 reported to show the range of raw effect sizes where this criteria would be met. This
42
43 would illustrate whether conclusions drawn from the BF is sensitive to the priors
44
45 chosen.
46
47
48
49

50
51 If the facilitation effect, as typically observed in the literature using the
52
53 standard design, was influenced by the confounding correlation and/or contingency
54
55 in the design, then a statistically significant effect would be expected, showing the
56
57 facilitation effect to be smaller or absent in the alternative design compared to the
58
59
60

CONTINGENCY AND CORRELATION IN STROOP

11

1
2
3 standard design. This result would suggest that task design influences the
4
5 measurement of facilitation and that it should be something future studies need to
6
7 consider. However, it is unclear from the current literature what the effect of
8
9 proportion congruency is independent of contingency and correlation. If proportion
10
11 congruency effects are due to contingency (Schmidt, 2018), which has been
12
13 controlled in the alternative design then there should be no effect of proportion
14
15 congruency. This means that smaller facilitation effects would be due to the lack of
16
17 contingency and correlation.
18
19

20
21 A non-significant difference between the two designs would suggest that
22
23 facilitation is not influenced by correlation and contingency. However, a less
24
25 parsimonious possibility is that proportion congruency and the combined effects of
26
27 correlation and contingency are of equal strengths and have opposing effects.
28
29

30 31 *Exploratory analyses (Stroop interference)*

32
33 Although not the main research question, there was the opportunity to explore
34
35 whether contingency and correlation has an effect on Stroop interference. These
36
37 analyses were exploratory, and the outcomes did not affect the conclusions drawn
38
39 from the main analysis. To answer this question, the same analyses were conducted
40
41 as before, but with the calculated interference effects instead of facilitation. For the
42
43 frequentist analyses, the alpha level was halved (.025) to account for increased Type
44
45 1 error in multiple comparisons. To calculate Bayes factors of the pairwise
46
47 comparisons a half-normal distribution with a maximum probability at 0ms and
48
49 standard deviation of 18ms was used as the priors. The value for the standard
50
51 deviation was taken from the raw effect size of similar trial types reported in Hasshim
52
53 and Parris (2015).
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30

Additionally, the effect of Stroop facilitation and interference on the response time (RT) distribution was also explored. Roelofs (2010) suggested that the inadvertent reading and converging information hypotheses predicted that facilitation affected the response time distribution differently. According to the converging information hypothesis, facilitation occurs on most trials and manifests as a general speeding up of RTs. Thus, when comparing the RT distributions of Congruent and Neutral trials, the shapes will be similar, but the entire distribution of Neutral trials will be shifted closer to that of that of the faster Congruent trials. Conversely, the inadvertent reading hypothesis states that facilitation results from a small number of Congruent trials that have very short RTs. This would then result in the RT distribution of Congruent and Neutral trials to be different on the faster RTs, and converge when the RTs are slower.

31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44

Roelofs (2010) applied Vincentized averaging on his data and observed that the effects of facilitation can be seen throughout the distribution, in line with the converging information hypothesis. The data from the current study were rank-ordered and grouped into 20% quantiles, and the mean RT of each quantile plotted to allow for a visual depiction of the effects of facilitation and interference throughout the RT distribution.

45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

To formally test these observations, the first and last quantiles of the facilitation effect were compared within each experiment. The inadvertent reading hypothesis would predict a larger effect in the first quantile, while the converging information hypothesis predicts that the effects at the two quantiles will be comparable.

Results

The mean RTs and error rates for each of the conditions are shown in Table 2¹. The omnibus 2 (Stroop effects: facilitation & interference) x 2 (design: standard and alternative) ANOVA revealed that the interaction was non-significant [$F(1,49) = 0.006, p = .940, \eta_p^2 < .001$]. The planned comparisons showed that the difference between the facilitation effects from the standard ($M = 30\text{ms}, SD = 35\text{ms}$) and alternative ($M = 18\text{ms}, SD = 49\text{ms}$) designs was non-significant [$t(49) = 1.37, p = .178, d = .193$]. The Bayes factor calculated with the previously specified prior distribution was $B = 1.45$, indicating that the evidence was insensitive. Sensitivity analysis postulating a maximum effect of up to seven times the plausible effect showed insensitive BFs of less than 3 throughout, meaning that the same inconclusive result would have been obtained, which indicates that the interpretation was not sensitive to the prior distribution chosen. Assuming the same standard error, a BF supporting the hypothesis of the alternate design reducing facilitation effects would only be obtained if the reduction was greater than 16ms.

The pre-specified analysis involving Stroop interference (incongruent – neutral) showed that the interference effects between the standard ($M = 65\text{ms}, SD = 62\text{ms}$) and alternative ($M = 54\text{ms}, SD = 52\text{ms}$) designs was non-significant [$t(49) = 1.11, p = .275, d = .156$]. The Bayes factor obtained using the specified priors was insensitive ($BF = 1.29$). Sensitivity analysis showed that an insensitive BF would have been obtained with a prior distribution scaled up to 95ms (a range of raw effect

¹ The supplementary materials report the RT analyses done separately for participants who went through the two orders of presentation (standard or alternative designs first) for both experiments. The results were largely similar to the original analyses, with the alternative designs showing smaller, but non-significant, facilitation effects in both experiments. The pattern for interference were also similar with the effects in Experiment 1 being numerically smaller, but non-significant. In Experiment 2, the pattern for interference effect was also similar, although only significant in the participants who did the alternative design first, while the effect did not reach significance ($p = .070$) in the participants who did the standard design first.

sizes larger than the observed interference effect in the standard design), which indicates that the interpretation is not sensitive to the chosen prior. Assuming the same standard error, a BF supporting the hypothesis of the alternate design reducing interference effects would only be obtained if the reduction was greater than 17ms.

Error rates

The omnibus 2 (Stroop effects: facilitation & interference) x 2 (design: standard and alternative) ANOVA for error rates revealed that the interaction was non-significant [$F(1,49) = 0.095, p = .759, \eta_p^2 = .002$]. The main effect of design was statistically significant [$F(1,49) = 10.75, p = .002, \eta_p^2 = .180$], and the main effect of Stroop effects were not [$F(1,49) = 0.783, p = .381, \eta_p^2 = .016$]. Post-hoc analysis revealed that error rates were higher in the standard compared to the alternative design [$t(49) = 3.28, p_{holm} = .002, d = .464$].

[Table 2 somewhere here]

Experiment 2

Method

Participants

61 participants were recruited from the same population as Experiment 1 and based on the same power analysis. Data from 12 participants were excluded for not meeting the 90% accuracy threshold.

Apparatus and Design

The apparatus used was the same as that of Experiment 1, while the design was also similar, apart from the makeup of trials in the alternative design which followed the example on the right panel of Figure 2. Blocks of trials in this alternative design

1
2
3 thus had equal number of Congruent and Incongruent trials, while also controlling for
4
5 contingency (but introduce correlation).
6
7

8 As with Experiment 1, facilitation was calculated by the difference between
9
10 Neutral and Congruent trials, while interference was calculated by the difference
11
12 between Incongruent and Neutral trials.
13
14

15 *Stimuli, Procedure, and Data exclusion criteria*

16
17 The details of the stimuli, procedure and the data exclusion criteria were exactly the
18
19 same as those of Experiment 1.
20
21
22

23 *Analysis plan*

24
25 Similar to Experiment 1, an omnibus 2 (Stroop effects: facilitation & interference) x 2
26
27 (design: standard & alternative) ANOVA was conducted. A planned t-test between
28
29 the size of facilitation in the standard and alternative design was also conducted, and
30
31 its corresponding BF was calculated using the same prior as Experiment 1.
32
33
34

35 This comparison will further elucidate the effects of task design on the
36
37 measurement of facilitation. If facilitation were found to be smaller in the alternative
38
39 design, not only does it suggest that the facilitation effect is influenced by the design
40
41 of an experiment, but that facilitation observed in studies employing the standard
42
43 design were due to learnt word-response contingency. If the facilitation effects
44
45 between the two designs were not statistically different, it would suggest that
46
47 facilitation is not influenced by task design. However the role of correlation might be
48
49 a factor as the correlation in the alternative design (contingency coefficient $C = 0.58$)
50
51 was even higher than that of the standard design ($C=0.31$).
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Results

The omnibus 2 (Stroop effects: facilitation & interference) x 2 (design: standard and alternative) ANOVA revealed that the interaction was statistically significant [$F(1,48) = 6.67, p = .013, \eta_p^2 = .122$]. The planned comparisons showed that the difference between the facilitation effects from the standard ($M = 10\text{ms}, SD = 44\text{ms}$) and alternative ($M = 19\text{ms}, SD = 38\text{ms}$) designs was non-significant [$t(48) = -1.07, p = .290, d = -.153, BF = 0.18$]. This indicates that there was no significant difference between the size of facilitation measured in the two designs with Bayes factors indicating evidence for the null hypothesis. Sensitivity analysis indicated that this interpretation holds for a prior distribution scaled to at least 12 ms (i.e., the BF is $>1/3$ with prior estimates smaller than 12 ms). As the result of interest is evidence for the alternate hypothesis, this does not affect the interpretation that the alternate design does not reduce facilitation effect².

Interference effects between the standard ($M = 72\text{ms}, SD = 63\text{ms}$) and alternative ($M = 38\text{ms}, SD = 54\text{ms}$) designs was significant with the Bayes factor indicated evidence for a difference [$t(48) = 3.20, p = .002, d = .458, BF = 45.68$]. Sensitivity analysis postulating a maximum effect of seven times the plausible effect showed BFs of more than 3 throughout, meaning that the interpretation was not sensitive to the prior distribution chosen.

Error rates

The omnibus 2 (Stroop effects: facilitation & interference) x 2 (design: standard and alternative) ANOVA for error rates revealed that interaction was non-significant [$F(1,48) = 1.218, p = .275, \eta_p^2 = .025$]. The main effects of design [$F(1,48)$

² The BF analysis used a half-normal distribution to reflect the directional hypothesis, akin to a one-tailed test. However, since raw effects indicated a larger value in the alternative design, we repeated the original analysis using a normal distribution, which resulted in a BF of 0.569. This does not change the interpretation that the alternative design did not reduce facilitation.

= 0.055, $p = .815$, $\eta_p^2 = .001$], and Stroop effects were non-significant as well
[$F(1,48) = 1.063$, $p = .308$, $\eta_p^2 = .022$].

Response time distribution

The pattern of mean facilitation effects of the rank-ordered RTs (see Figure 3) did not support the inadvertent reading hypothesis as facilitation effects did not decrease through the quantiles. The comparison between the facilitation effects at the first and last quantiles were statistically non-significant for both the designs of Experiment 2 [standard: $t(48) = -0.476$, $p = .636$, $d = -.068$; alternate: $t(48) = 1.95$, $p = .057$, $d = .279$] and in the standard design of Experiment 1 [$t(49) = 1.25$, $p = .216$, $d = .177$]. In the alternative design of Experiment 1, this difference was statistically significant [$t(49) = 2.53$, $p = .015$, $d = .358$].

[Figure 3 somewhere here]

General Discussion

The aim of the current study was to explore whether the magnitude of Stroop effects is influenced by the imbalance of stimuli pairings inherent to some common task designs. The primary process of interest was facilitation as it has not been previously explored directly in this context. Experiment 1 compared the standard Stroop task design with one that controlled for colour-word correlation and word-response contingency, which necessitated twice the number of incongruent trials compared to congruent trials. Experiment 2 had equal numbers of each trial-type and controlled for word-response contingency, but not colour-word correlation. Since a direct comparison of the two ways of controlling for contingency effects has not been previously made for interference effects, these were also analysed in secondary analyses.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Although visual inspection of the mean RTs of the different conditions (see Figure 4) showed the expected pattern of results, with smaller Stroop effects seen in the two alternative designs compared to the standard design, the inferential statistics comparing the effects of facilitation and interference between the two designs in each experiment showed that only the difference in interference effects for Experiment 2 was statistically significant. For facilitation, the BFs obtained were insensitive in Experiment 1, and even indicated evidence for no difference in Experiment 2. For Stroop interference, the difference between the measured effects in the two designs was not statistically significant in Experiment 1, with the BF obtained being insensitive, while in Experiment 2, interference was significantly smaller in the alternative design, with the BF also indicating evidence for a difference.

[Figure 4 somewhere here]

For the primary aim of studying the effects of facilitation, the RT data in Experiment 2 provide evidence supporting the null hypothesis that larger facilitation effects are not observed in the standard design, suggesting that word-response contingency effects do not affect the measurement of facilitation in manual response Stroop tasks. Our results were however insensitive with regards to the influence of colour-word correlation on performance. We further explored the distribution of RTs to investigate whether inadvertent reading could be the mechanism by which the Stroop facilitation effect occurs. If this is the case, larger facilitation effects would be expected to be observed in trials with faster RTs. This theoretical prediction was not observed. Our results do not therefore support the inadvertent reading hypothesis of Stroop facilitation effects. As depicted in Figure 3 the pattern of results was also not fully consistent with the predictions of the converging information hypothesis either.

1
2
3 In the standard design in both experiments, there is a visible decrease in facilitation
4 from quantile four to quantile five, and it is unclear why this might be the case. For a
5 more detailed inspection of the effects on RT distributions, a more formal technique
6 such as ex-Gaussian analysis, which requires much more data points (e.g., see
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Hasshim, Downes, Bate, & Parris, 2019), would be necessary.

As noted, the planned secondary analyses did reveal a smaller interference effect in the alternative design of Experiment 2 where contingency was controlled compared to the standard design. This effect was not statistically significant in Experiment 1 in which both contingency and correlation were controlled. At first blush, the significant results from the RT analyses of interference effects in Experiment 2 suggests that when word-response contingency is controlled for, Stroop interference is reduced. However, the potential influences of correlation and proportion congruency should be carefully considered since they are intertwined, and their independent influence cannot be easily ascertained. As stated in the introduction, although the alternative design of Experiment 2 controlled for word-response contingency and had equal number of congruent and incongruent trials, it also had an even higher colour-word correlation coefficient compared to the standard design. According to Dishon-Berkovits and Algom (2000) correlation disrupts the selective attention process as it makes the irrelevant word dimension a more reliable source of information, encouraging attention to be focused on it. Thus, increasing correlation would be expected to result in increased interference. However, the opposite was observed in Experiment 2, which suggests that the predicted effect of correlation was not observed. Alternatively, it is possible that the interference-increasing effect of correlation might have been hidden by the interference-reducing effects of contingency; an account that explains the lack of an effect on interference

1
2
3 in Experiment 1. It is also possible that the effect of correlation is smaller in
4
5 conventional colour-word Stroop tasks compared to the Stroop-like tasks used in
6
7 Dishon-Berkovits and Algom (2000).
8
9

10 Analysis of the error rates showed an effect of task design in Experiment 1 but
11
12 not Experiment 2, the reverse of what was observed in the RT data. This might
13
14 suggest that the alternative designs of both experiments did have the predicted
15
16 effects, but there was a trade-off between responding quickly and accurately, and
17
18 the effect of task design is only observable in the RT or error data. The finding of an
19
20 effect of task design in Experiment 1, when contingency and correlation was
21
22 controlled, but not in Experiment 2 when only contingency was controlled indicates
23
24 that it is correlation that drives the effect in the error rate data.
25
26
27

28 In conclusion, the results of the current study show that word-response
29
30 contingency does not significantly affect the measurement of facilitation in the Stroop
31
32 task. They do however show that contingency affects Stroop interference and
33
34 indicate a possible effect of correlation on Stroop task accuracy. The findings provide
35
36 further support of the idea that bottom-up associative learning processes influence
37
38 the measurement of Stroop effects (e.g., Schmidt 2019; Algom & Chajut, 2019) and
39
40 highlights the importance of considering correlation and contingency in task designs
41
42
43
44
45 in studies that aim to study the processes involved in performing the Stroop task.
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Supplementary Material

The Supplementary Material is available at: qjep.sagepub.com

Data Accessibility Statement

The data and materials from the present experiment are publicly available at the

Open Science Framework website: <https://osf.io/tfeq6/>

Peer Review Version

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

References

- 1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
- Algom, D., & Chajut, E. (2019). Reclaiming the Stroop effect back from Control to Input-Driven Attention and Perception. *Frontiers in psychology, 10*.
- Augustinova, M., Parris, B. A., & Ferrand, L. (2019). The loci of Stroop interference and facilitation effects with manual and vocal responses. *Frontiers in Psychology, 10*.
- Blais, C., & Bunge, S. (2010). Behavioral and neural evidence for item-specific performance monitoring. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience, 22*(12), 2758-2767.
- Braem, S., Bugg, J. M., Schmidt, J. R., Crump, M. J., Weissman, D. H., Notebaert, W., & Egner, T. (2019). Measuring adaptive control in conflict tasks. *Trends in cognitive sciences. 23*(9), 769-783.
- Brown, T. L. (2011). The relationship between Stroop interference and facilitation effects: Statistical artifacts, baselines, and a reassessment. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance, 37*(1), 85.
- Bugg, J. M. (2014). Conflict-triggered top-down control: Default mode, last resort, or no such thing?. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition, 40*(2), 567.
- Bugg, J. M., Jacoby, L. L., & Chanani, S. (2011). Why it is too early to lose control in accounts of item-specific proportion congruency effects. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance, 37*(3), 844.
- Bugg, J. M., Jacoby, L. L., & Toth, J. P. (2008). Multiple levels of control in the Stroop task. *Memory & cognition, 36*(8), 1484-1494.

Cheesman, J., & Merikle, P. M. (1986). Distinguishing conscious from unconscious perceptual processes. *Canadian Journal of Psychology/Revue Canadienne de Psychologie*, 40(4), 343.

Cohen, J. D., Dunbar, K., & McClelland, J. L. (1990). On the control of automatic processes: a parallel distributed processing account of the Stroop effect. *Psychological Review*, 97(3), 332.

Dalrymple-Alford, E. C. (1968). Interlingual interference in a color-naming task. *Psychonomic Science*, 10(6), 215-216.

Dalrymple-Alford, E. C. (1972). Associative facilitation and interference in the Stroop color-word task. *Perception & Psychophysics*, 11(4), 274-276.

De Houwer, J. (2003). On the role of stimulus-response and stimulus-stimulus compatibility in the Stroop effect. *Memory & Cognition*, 31(3), 353-359.

Dienes, Z. (2011). Bayesian versus orthodox statistics: Which side are you on?. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 6(3), 274-290.

Dienes, Z. (2014). Using Bayes to get the most out of non-significant results. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 5, 781.

Dishon-Berkovits, M., & Algom, D. (2000). The Stroop effect: It is not the robust phenomenon that you have thought it to be. *Memory & Cognition*, 28(8), 1437-1449.

Dunbar, K., & MacLeod, C. M. (1984). A horse race of a different color: Stroop interference patterns with transformed words. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, 10(5), 622.

Glaser, M. O., & Glaser, W. R. (1982). Time course analysis of the Stroop phenomenon. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, 8(6), 875-894.

- 1
2
3 Goldfarb, L., & Henik, A. (2007). Evidence for task conflict in the Stroop effect.
4
5 *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*,
6
7 33(5), 1170-1176.
8
9
10 Hasshim, N., Downes, M., Bate, S., & Parris, B. A. (2019). Response time
11
12 distribution analysis of semantic and response interference in a manual
13
14 response Stroop task. *Experimental Psychology*, 66(3), 231-238.
15
16
17 Hasshim, N., & Parris, B. A. (2014). Two-to-one color-response mapping and the
18
19 presence of semantic conflict in the Stroop task. *Frontiers in psychology*, 5,
20
21 1157.
22
23
24 Hasshim, N., & Parris, B. A. (2015). Assessing stimulus–stimulus (semantic) conflict
25
26 in the Stroop task using saccadic two-to-one color response mapping and
27
28 prerresponse pupillary measures. *Attention, Perception, & Psychophysics*,
29
30 77(8), 2601-2610.
31
32
33 Hasshim, N., & Parris, B. A. (2018). Trial type mixing substantially reduces the
34
35 response set effect in the Stroop task. *Acta Psychologica*, 189, 43-53.
36
37
38 The jamovi project (2019). *jamovi* (Version 0.9) [Computer Software]. Retrieved from
39
40 <https://www.jamovi.org>
41
42
43 Kalanthroff, E., & Henik, A. (2013). Individual but not fragile: Individual differences in
44
45 task control predict Stroop facilitation. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 22(2),
46
47 413-419.
48
49
50 Kane, M. J., & Engle, R. W. (2003). Working-memory capacity and the control of
51
52 attention: the contributions of goal neglect, response competition, and task set
53
54 to Stroop interference. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 132(1),
55
56 47.
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 Klein, G. S. (1964). Semantic power measured through the interference of words
4
5 with color-naming. *The American Journal of Psychology*, 77(4), 576-588.
6
7

8 Lindsay, D. S., & Jacoby, L. L. (1994). Stroop process dissociations: The relationship
9
10 between facilitation and interference. *Journal of Experimental Psychology:*
11
12 *Human Perception and Performance*, 20(2), 219-234.
13

14 Lorentz, E., McKibben, T., Ekstrand, C., Gould, L., Anton, K., & Borowsky, R. (2016).
15
16 Disentangling genuine semantic Stroop effects in reading from contingency
17
18 effects: On the need for two neutral baselines. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7,
19
20 386.
21
22

23 Logan, G. D., & Zbrodoff, N. J. (1979). When it helps to be misled: Facilitative effects
24
25 of increasing the frequency of conflicting stimuli in a Stroop-like task. *Memory*
26
27 & *Cognition*, 7(3), 166-174.
28
29

30 MacLeod, C. M. (1991). Half a century of research on the Stroop effect: An
31
32 integrative review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 109(2), 163-203.
33

34 MacLeod, C. M. (1992). The Stroop task: The "gold standard" of attentional
35
36 measures. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 121(1), 12-14.
37
38

39 Macleod, C. M. (1998). Training on integrated versus separated Stroop tasks: The
40
41 progression of interference and facilitation. *Memory & Cognition*, 26(2), 201-
42
43 211.
44
45

46 MacLeod, C. M., & MacDonald, P. A. (2000). Interdimensional interference in the
47
48 Stroop effect: Uncovering the cognitive and neural anatomy of attention.
49
50 *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 4(10), 383-391.
51
52

53 Melara, R. D., & Algom, D. (2003). Driven by information: a tectonic theory of Stroop
54
55 effects. *Psychological Review*, 110(3), 422-471.
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 Parris, B.A., Hasshim, N., Wadsley, M., Augustinova, M., & Ferrand, L. (submitted).

4
5 A critical review of methods and evidence for levels of processing contributing
6
7 to colour-word Stroop effects and the implications for the loci of attentional
8
9 selection
10

11
12 Peirce, J., Gray, J. R., Simpson, S., MacAskill, M., Höchenberger, R., Sogo, H.,
13
14 Kastman, E., & Lindeløv, J. K. (2019). PsychoPy2: Experiments in behavior
15
16 made easy. *Behavior Research Methods*, *51*(1), 195-203.
17

18
19 Phaf, R. H., Van der Heijden, A. H. C., & Hudson, P. T. (1990). SLAM: A
20
21 connectionist model for attention in visual selection tasks. *Cognitive*
22
23 *Psychology*, *22*(3), 273-341.
24

25
26 Roelofs, A. (2003). Goal-referenced selection of verbal action: modeling attentional
27
28 control in the Stroop task. *Psychological Review*, *110*(1), 88-125.
29

30
31 Roelofs, A. (2010). Attention and facilitation: Converging information versus
32
33 inadvertent reading in Stroop task performance. *Journal of Experimental*
34
35 *Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, *36*(2), 411.
36

37
38 Rouder, J. N., & Haaf, J. M. (2018). Power, dominance, and constraint: A note on the
39
40 appeal of different design traditions. *Advances in Methods and Practices in*
41
42 *Psychological Science*, *1*(1), 19-26.
43

44
45 Schmidt, J. R. (2013). The Parallel Episodic Processing (PEP) model: Dissociating
46
47 contingency and conflict adaptation in the item-specific proportion congruent
48
49 paradigm. *Acta Psychologica*, *142*(1), 119-126.
50

51
52 Schmidt, J. R. (2016). Proportion congruency and practice: A contingency learning
53
54 account of asymmetric list shifting effects. *Journal of Experimental*
55
56 *Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, *42*(9), 1496.
57
58
59
60

CONTINGENCY AND CORRELATION IN STROOP

3.

Schmidt, J. R. (2019). Evidence against conflict monitoring and adaptation: An updated review. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 26(3), 753-771.

Schmidt, J. R., & Besner, D. (2008). The Stroop effect: why proportion congruent has nothing to do with congruency and everything to do with contingency. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 34(3), 514.

Schmidt, J. R., & Cheesman, J. (2005). Dissociating stimulus-stimulus and response-response effects in the Stroop task. *Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology/Revue Canadienne de Psychologie Expérimentale*, 59(2), 132.

Schmidt, J. R., Crump, M. J., Cheesman, J., & Besner, D. (2007). Contingency learning without awareness: Evidence for implicit control. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 16(2), 421-435.

Schmidt, J. R., & De Houwer, J. (2012). Contingency learning with evaluative stimuli. *Experimental Psychology*, 59 (4), 175.

Schmidt, J. R., & Lemerrier, C. (2019). Context-specific proportion congruent effects: Compound-cue contingency learning in disguise. *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 72(5), 1119-1130.

Sharma, D., & McKenna, F. P. (1998). Differential components of the manual and vocal Stroop tasks. *Memory & Cognition*, 26(5), 1033-1040.

Stroop, J. R. (1935). Studies of interference in serial verbal reactions. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 18(6), 643-662

West, R., & Baylis, G. C. (1998). Effects of increased response dominance and contextual disintegration on the Stroop interference effect in older adults. *Psychology and Aging*, 13(2), 206.

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Makeup of trials in Experiment 1

Note. Italicised numbers indicate Congruent trials. The standard design has equal number of Congruent and Incongruent trials which result in unequal word-response contingency and word-colour correlation. The alternative design has twice as many Incongruent trials as Congruent trials which result in equal contingency and correlation of zero.

Figure 2. Makeup of trials in Experiment 2

Note: The standard design is the same as that of Experiment 1. In the alternative design each colour word appears in only one incongruent colour and its congruent colour resulting in equal numbers of Congruent and Incongruent trials and each colour word having an equal (50%) chance of appearing in one congruent or one incongruent colour. However, since each word appears in only one incongruent colour and not the other, there is a correlation bias in that e.g., only the words white and blue will predict a white response, whereas the word red will not.

Figure 3. Mean facilitation effects at each quantile in both experiments. Vertical axes in milliseconds.

Figure 4. Mean RTs of each trial-type condition in the two experiments. Vertical axes in milliseconds.

		COLOUR					COLOUR		
		yellow	green	red			blue	pink	white
yellow		30	15	15	blue		20	20	20
green		15	30	15	pink		20	20	20
red		15	15	30	white		20	20	20
motion		10	10	10	soon		10	10	10
close		10	10	10	quiet		10	10	10
due		10	10	10	times		10	10	10
Standard design					Alternative design				

Figure 1. Makeup of trials in Experiment 1

Note. Italicised numbers indicate Congruent trials. The standard design has equal number of Congruent and Incongruent trials which result in unequal word-response contingency and word-colour correlation. The alternative design has twice as many Incongruent trials as Congruent trials which result in equal contingency and correlation of zero.

WORD	COLOUR				COLOUR		
	yellow	green	red		blue	pink	white
yellow	30	15	15	blue	30	30	0
green	15	30	15	pink	0	30	30
red	15	15	30	white	30	0	30
motion	10	10	10	soon	10	10	10
close	10	10	10	quiet	10	10	10
due	10	10	10	times	10	10	10

Standard design Alternative design

Figure 2. Makeup of trials in Experiment 2

Note: The standard design is the same as that of Experiment 1. In the alternative design each colour word appears in only one incongruent colour and its congruent colour resulting in equal numbers of Congruent and Incongruent trials and each colour word having an equal (50%) chance of appearing in one congruent or one incongruent colour. However, since each word appears in only one incongruent colour and not the other, there is a correlation bias in that e.g., only the words white and blue will predict a white response, whereas the word red will not.

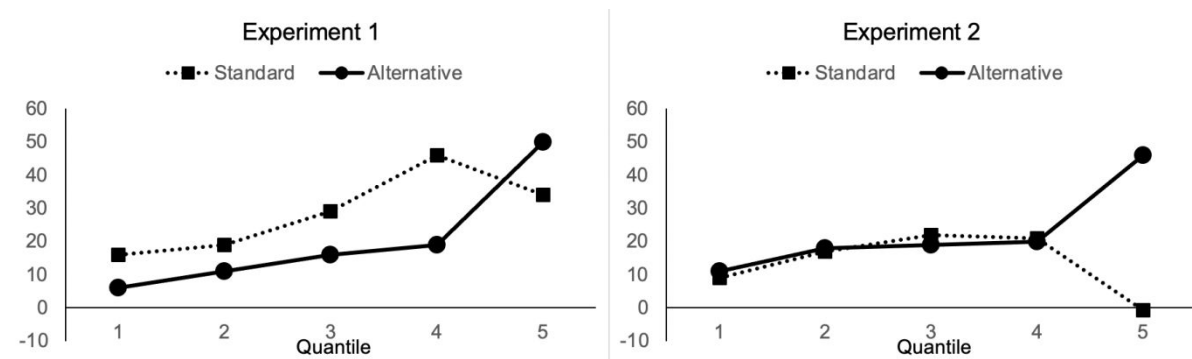


Figure 3. Mean facilitation effects at each quantile in both experiments. Vertical axes in milliseconds.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

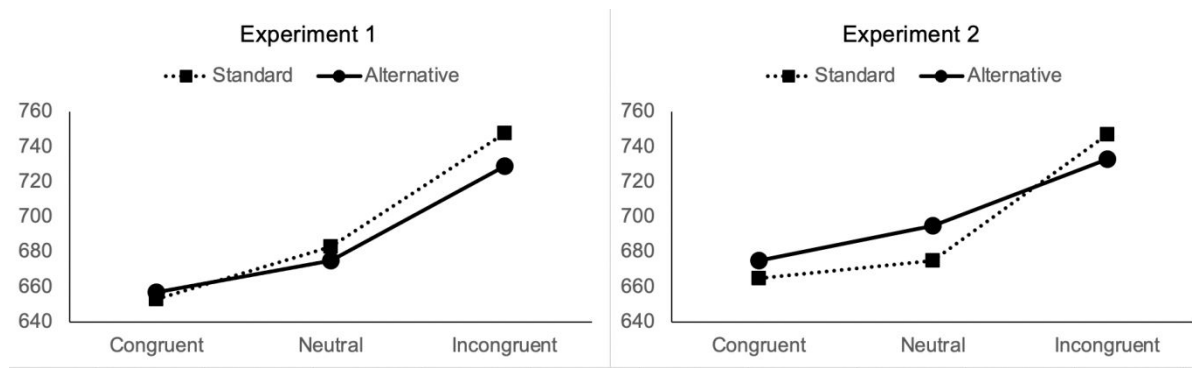


Figure 4. Mean RTs of each trial-type condition in the two experiments. Vertical axes in milliseconds.

Table 1

Length and frequency details of the word stimuli used, taken from the English Lexicon

Project (Balota et al. 2007)

		Word	Length	HAL frequency	log Hal frequency
Set 1	Colour	yellow	6	19319	9.87
		green	5	90773	11.42
		red	3	103819	11.55
	Neutral	motion	6	19183	9.86
		close	5	84927	11.35
		due	3	100775	11.52
Set 2	Colour	blue	4	89005	11.40
		pink	4	13066	9.48
		white	5	149742	11.92
	Neutral	soon	4	90301	11.41
		quiet	5	13086	9.48
		times	5	156832	11.96

Table 2

Descriptive statistics of response times in milliseconds (and error rates in %) of all conditions in both experiments

	Standard design			Alternative design		
	Congruent	Neutral	Incongruent	Congruent	Neutral	Incongruent
Experiment 1 (N = 50)						
Mean	653 (2.73)	683 (4.24)	748 (6.27)	657 (4.00)	675 (4.44)	729 (5.12)
SD	128 (2.20)	131 (3.30)	161 (4.12)	134 (3.60)	135 (2.81)	152 (3.16)
Minimum	444 (0.0)	451 (0.0)	453 (0.0)	419 (0.0)	428 (0.0)	455 (0.0)
Maximum	1229 (7.78)	1238 (13.33)	1335 (16.67)	973 (15.0)	1051 (12.22)	1128 (12.50)
Experiment 2 (N = 49)						
Mean	665 (3.90)	675 (4.31)	747 (6.01)	675 (3.38)	695 (4.54)	733 (5.67)
SD	117 (3.64)	118 (3.12)	141 (4.20)	141 (2.84)	135 (3.35)	143 (4.17)
Minimum	498 (0.0)	518 (0.0)	542 (0.0)	482 (0.0)	484 (0.0)	502 (0.0)
Maximum	1065 (12.22)	1125 (11.11)	1186 (16.67)	1060 (11.11)	1083 (12.22)	1079 (17.78)