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Combining corpus and experimental methods to gain new insights into APPRAISAL in spoken discourse

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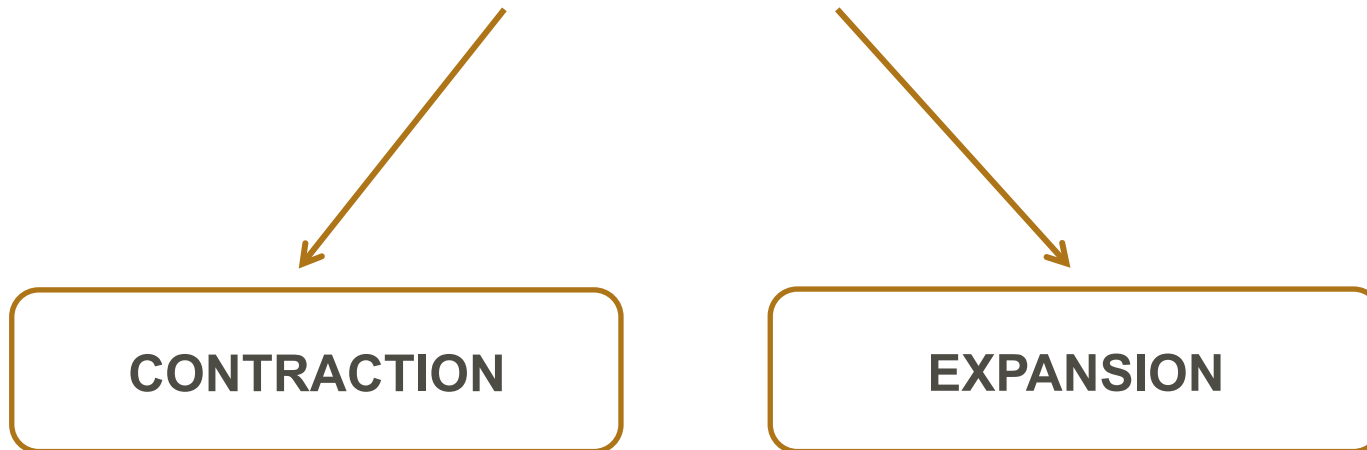
Appraisal theory (Martin & White, 2005)

- APPRAISAL theory has been widely used to study evaluation in (mainly) written texts
- The category of ENGAGEMENT



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CONTRACTION

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*Look at those hands, are they small hands? And, [Marco Rubio] referred to my hands: 'If they're small, something else must be small.' **I guarantee** you, there's **no** problem. **I guarantee.***



EXPANSION

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***I think** the only difference between me and the other candidates is that I'm more honest and my women are more beautiful.*



CTP constructions

- Epistemic-evidential complement-taking predicate (CTP) constructions:
 - *I think* COMPLEMENT
 - *I wasn't certain* COMPLEMENT
 - *I doubt* COMPLEMENT
 - *I believe* COMPLEMENT
 - *I know* COMPLEMENT
 - etc.



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 - *I believe* COMPLEMENT
 - ***I know* COMPLEMENT**
 - etc.



Challenges in classifying CTP constructions

- Evaluation is highly context-dependent (e.g. Bednarek, 2006; Hunston, 2011; Paradis et al., 2012; Thompson & Alba-Juez, 2014)
- Fuoli (forthcoming)
 - *believe* functions both as marker of EXPANSION and CONTRACTION in corporate discourse
- CTPs serve multiple pragmatic functions (e.g. Aijmer, 2014; Boye & Harder, 2007; Brinton, 2008; Kaltenböck, 2013; Simon-Vandenberg, 2000; Thompson & Mulac, 1991; Van Bogaert, 2009)



Research questions

1. What are the dialogic functions of first-person epistemic-evidential CTP constructions in spoken discourse?
2. What linguistic and extra-linguistic factors determine the dialogic function of the constructions?



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Corpus study

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Experiment



Corpus study



Data

- The London-Lund Corpus of spoken British English
 - Spontaneous face-to-face conversations
 - Six texts of 5,000 words each:
 - » Conversations between equals (S.1.2, S.1.6, S.2.13)
 - » Conversations between disparates (S.3.1, S.3.2, S.3.3)
- We searched for first-person epistemic-evidential CTPs



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**246 CTP utterances with
19 different predicates**



Corpus analysis



Phase 1

The utterances were annotated in accordance with five factors



Phase 2

The utterances were annotated as either dialogically expansive or contractive



Comparison

The two annotations were compared to find correlations between the dialogic function of CTP constructions and the five factors



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1. Interlocutor status
2. Prosody
3. Presence of a co-occurring expansive marker
4. Presence of a co-occurring contractive marker
5. Type of complement clause



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- Fuoli's (forthcoming) step-wise method for annotating APPRAISAL
- Inter-coder reliability test



Corpus analysis



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I think with an expansive function

(A and B are discussing research centres in Europe)

B: *I think in VAustria*

A: *[m] . [m] . [m]*

B: *you have to find a good mVan and build on h\im . rather than . pick a place on the m\ap*

A: *yes*



I think with a contractive function

(B is complaining about the department)

*B: but once again I'm not surprised . **because I think it had been b/uilt \up into a very powerful instrument indVeed . [ə:m] with with you know four . four vice-presbyters five vice-presbyters with Coventry [ə:m ə:m] all chipping in . together***



I think with a contractive function

(B is complaining about the department)

*B: but once again I'm not surprised . because I think it had been b/uilt \up into a very powerful instrument **indVeed**. [ə:m] with with you know four . four vice-presbyters five vice-presbyters with Coventry [ə:m ə:m] all chipping in . together*



Key findings from corpus study

- First-person epistemic-evidential CTP constructions express both dialogic EXPANSION and CONTRACTION
- There are two linguistic factors and one extra-linguistic factor that most strongly correlate with dialogic function:
 - Interlocutor status
 - Presence of a co-occurring contractive marker
 - Prosodic marking of the first-person CTP



Experiment



Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. Utterances containing *I think* produced by equal-status speakers will be perceived as more expansive than utterances produced by higher-status speakers.

Hypothesis 2. Utterances containing *I think* only will be perceived as more expansive than utterances containing *I think* and an additional contractive marker.

Hypothesis 3. Utterances in which *I think* receives an accent on the verb will be perceived as more expansive than utterances in which the accent is on the pronoun, which in turn will be perceived as more expansive than utterances with no accent on *I think*.



Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. Utterances containing *I think* produced

FRIEND: I think you're wrong

BOSS: I think you're wrong



OPEN

CLOSE

speakers.

Hypothesis 2. Utterances containing *I think* only will be perceived as more expansive than utterances containing *I think* and an additional contractive marker.

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Hypothesis 1. Utterances containing *I think* produced

FRIEND: I think you're wrong

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OPEN

CLOSE

speakers.

I think you're wrong

I think you're **clearly** wrong



OPEN

CLOSE

Hypothesis 3. Utterances in which *I think* receives an accent on the verb will be perceived as more expansive than utterances in which the accent is on the pronoun, which in turn will be perceived as more expansive than utterances with no accent on *I think*.



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OPEN

CLOSE

Hypothesis 3. Utterances in which *I think* receives an

I **think** you're wrong

I think you're wrong

I think you're wrong



OPEN

CLOSE

utterances with no accent on *I think*.



Procedure

- PsychoPy
- Participants were seated in front of a laptop and given a set of headphones
- 36 imaginary conversations with another person
- The person expressed her opinion on something
- The participants both read and listened to the conversations



Stimuli

Context

You are working in human resources in London. You and your boss Mrs. Chambers are discussing why there are not so many people taking part in the company's social gatherings.

Conversation



MRS. CHAMBERS SAYS TO YOU:

People's don't seem to be interested in spending their Friday nights with the people they spend the whole week together with. There's so much more to do in the city.

*** I think it's obviously because we live in London **.*



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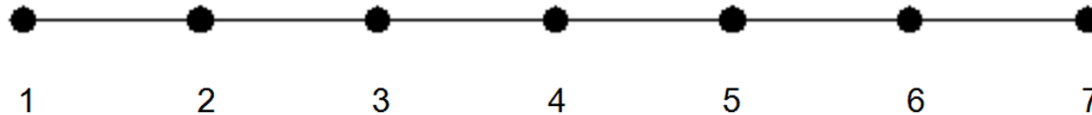
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*** I think it's obviously because we live in London **.*



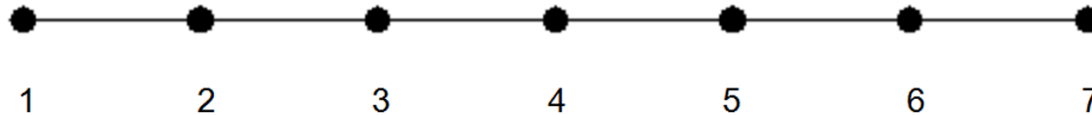
Question

To what extent would the person take a different opinion from you into consideration?



Question

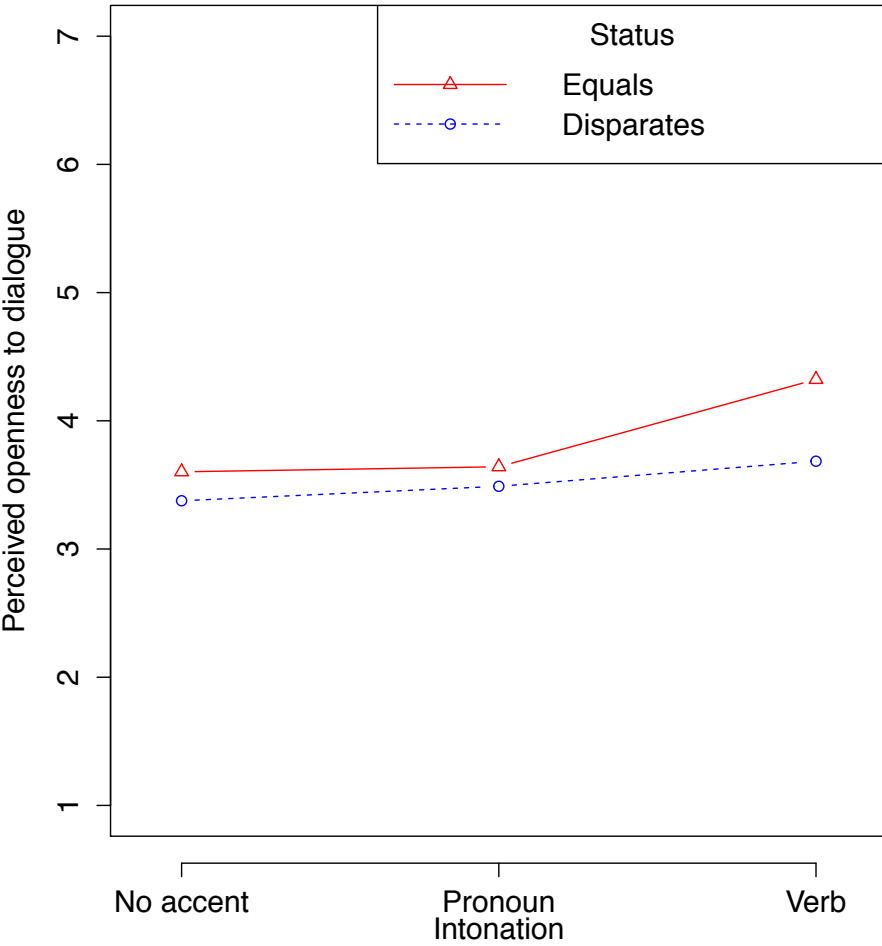
To what extent would the person take a different opinion from you into consideration?



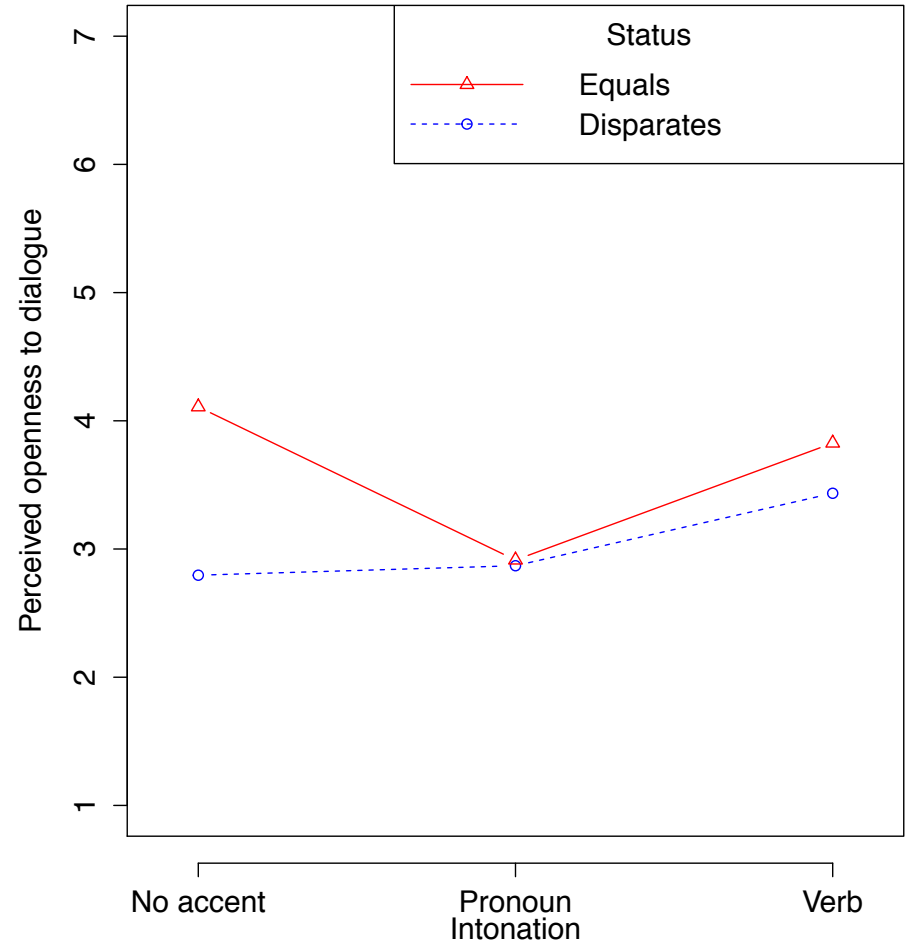
Perceived openness to dialogue



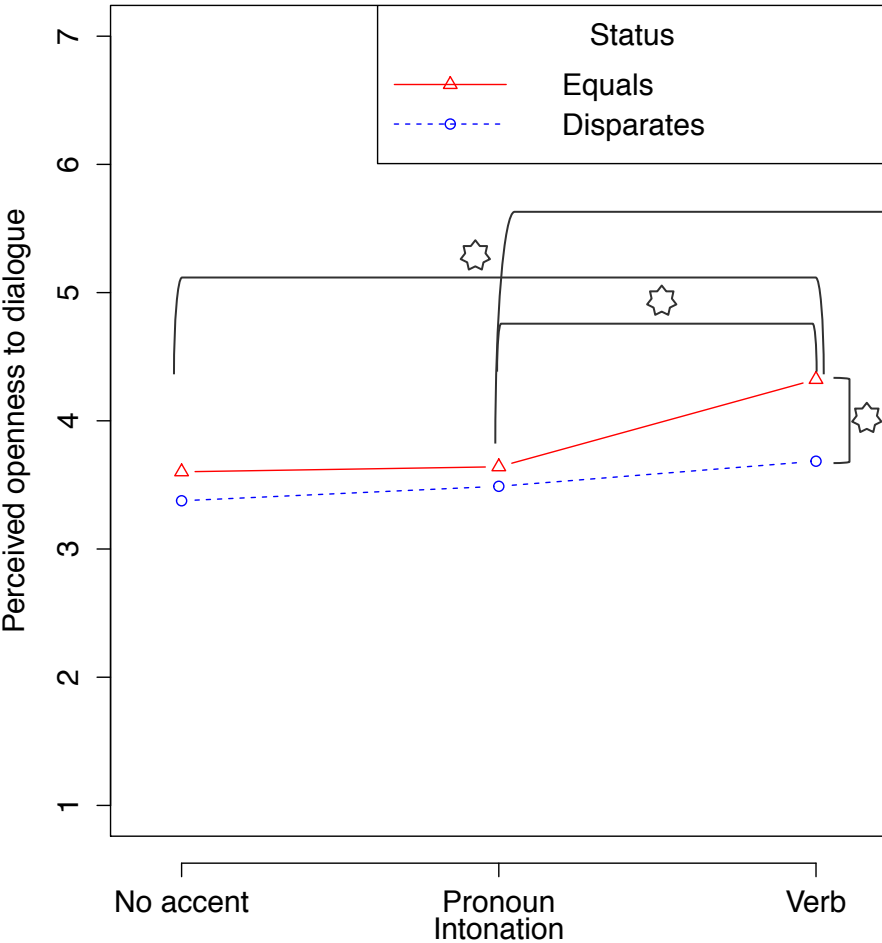
Without additional contractive marker



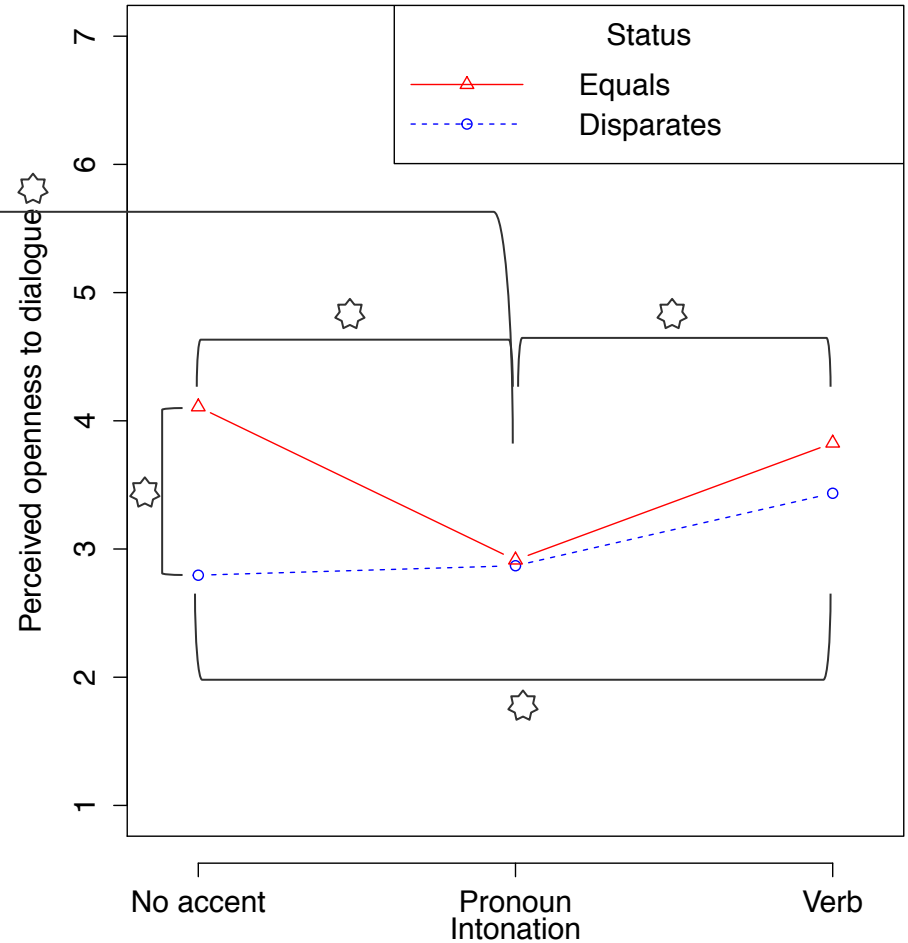
With additional contractive marker



Without additional contractive marker



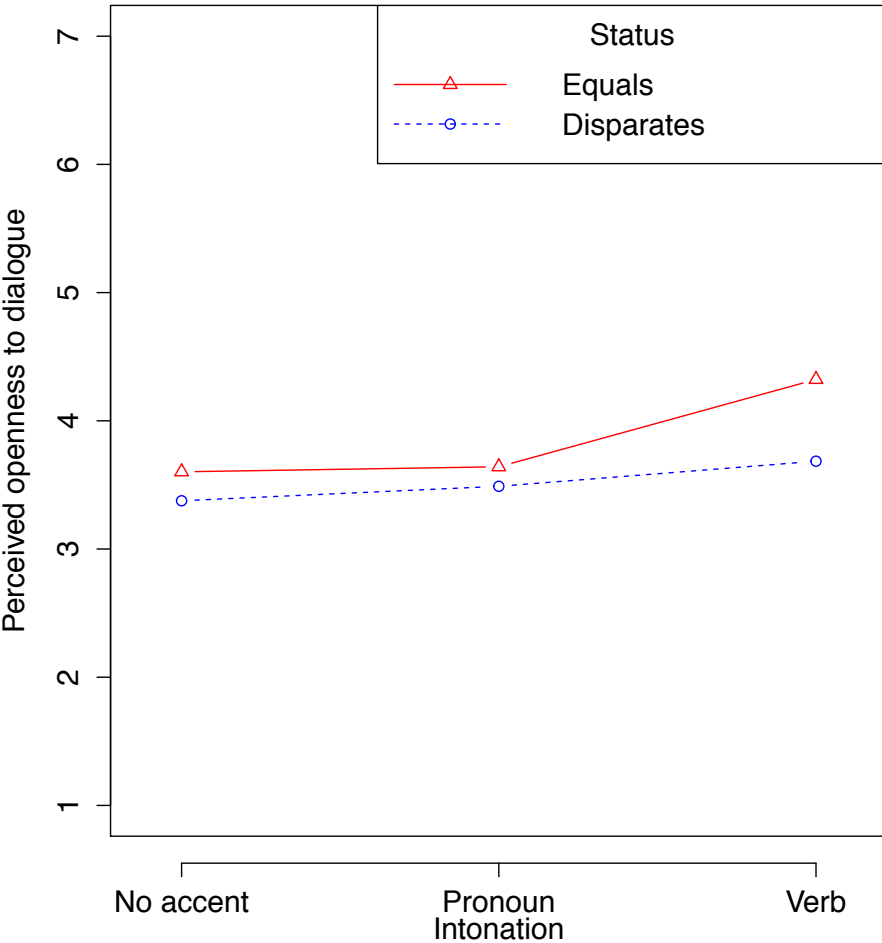
With additional contractive marker



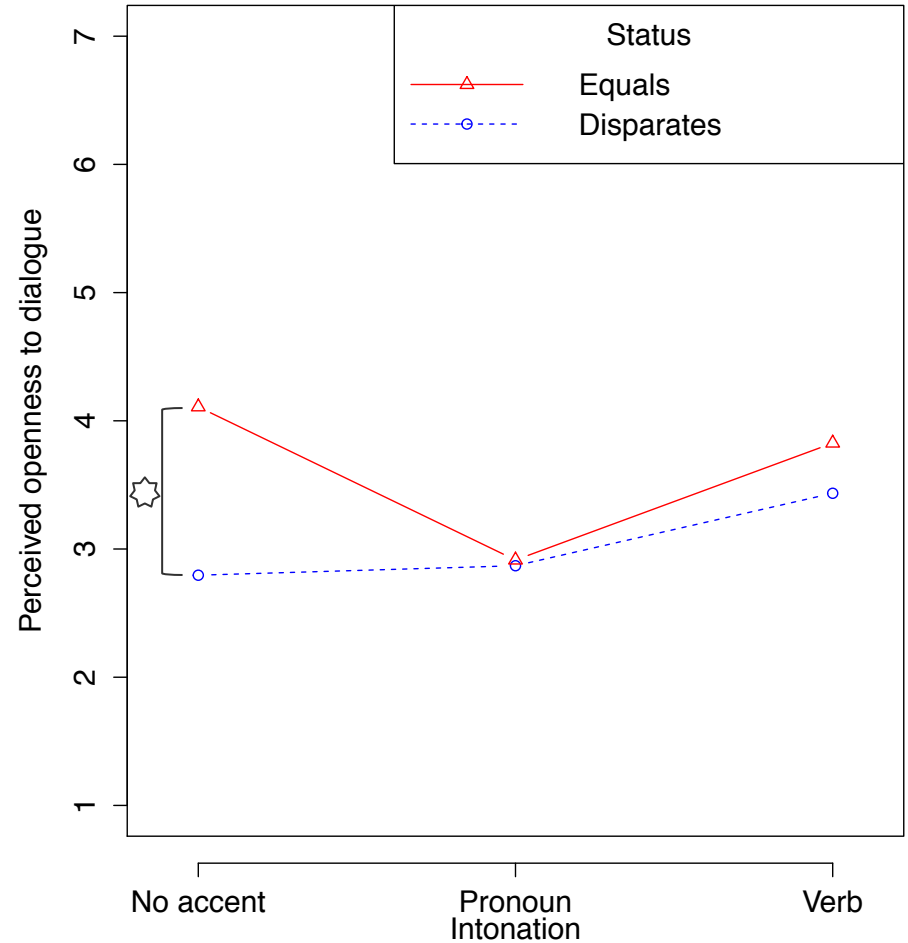
- Hypothesis 1 -> supported
- Hypotheses 2 and 3 -> partially supported



Without additional contractive marker



With additional contractive marker



FRIEND: I think you're **clearly** wrong
BOSS: I think you're **clearly** wrong



Conclusions

- First-person epistemic-evidential CTP constructions express both dialogic EXPANSION and CONTRACTION, depending on:
 - i. the meaning of the CTP itself
 - ii. the relationship between the interlocutors
 - iii. the presence or absence of other stance markers
 - iv. the prosodic marking of the first-person CTP



The article

- Published in a special issue of *Corpora* on corpus-based approaches to evaluation late 2016 (co-edited by Susan Hunston and Stanislaw Roszkowski)
- The manuscript can be downloaded from Nele Põldvere's Lund University or Academia page





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