

The meaning of separability

Evaluating semantic hypotheses on (in)separable verbs in contemporary Dutch

ANN-SOPHIE VRIELYNCK (FNRS – UNIVERSITY OF LIÈGE/ANTWERP)

Verb-particle constructions

- Non-verbal element + verb
 - e.g., *onder-gaan* ('go down; under-go'), *over-lopen* ('over-flow; go through')

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- Dutch: two types
 1. Separable
 2. Inseparable

(In)separable verbs

SEPARABLE COMPLEX VERB (SCV)

e.g., *Hij **zaagt** de boom om.* ('He cuts down the tree.')

(In)separable verbs

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INSEPARABLE COMPLEX VERB (ICV)

e.g., *Ze **omarmt** hem.* ('She embraces him.')

- Main stress on base verb
- No separation

The meaning of separability?

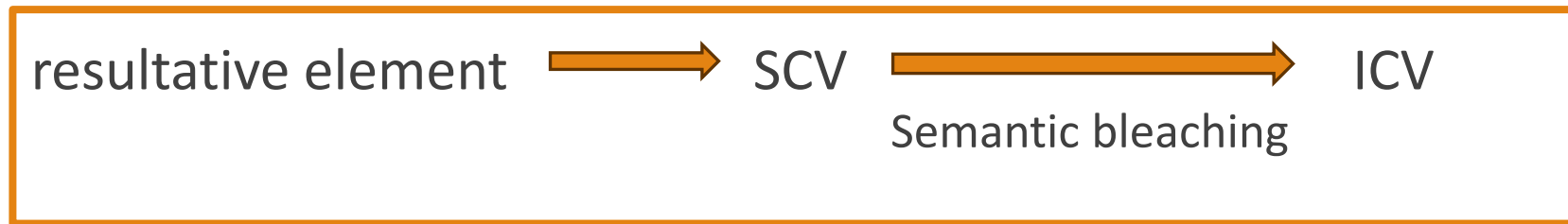
1) Booij (2002)

- Grammaticalization process



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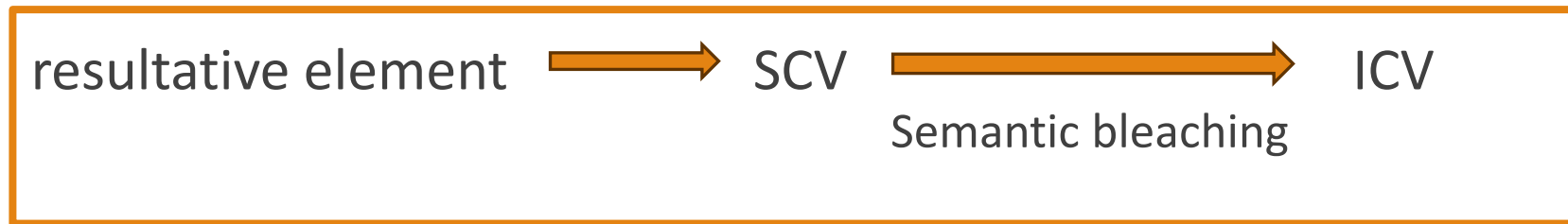
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- Meaning of separability?
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 - ICV = abstract, aspectual

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➤ Meaning of separability?

- SCV = concrete, spatial
- ICV = abstract, aspectual

e.g., *Het bos doorlopen* ('walk through the forest')

e.g., *De cursus doorlopen* ('complete the course')

But, counterexamples (Blom 2004, 2005)

SCV - ABSTRACT

- **opzoeken**

→ e.g., *de informatie opzoeken* ('look up the information')

- **inlopen**

→ e.g., *je schoenen inlopen* ('wear in one's shoes')

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ICV - CONCRETE

- doorzoeken

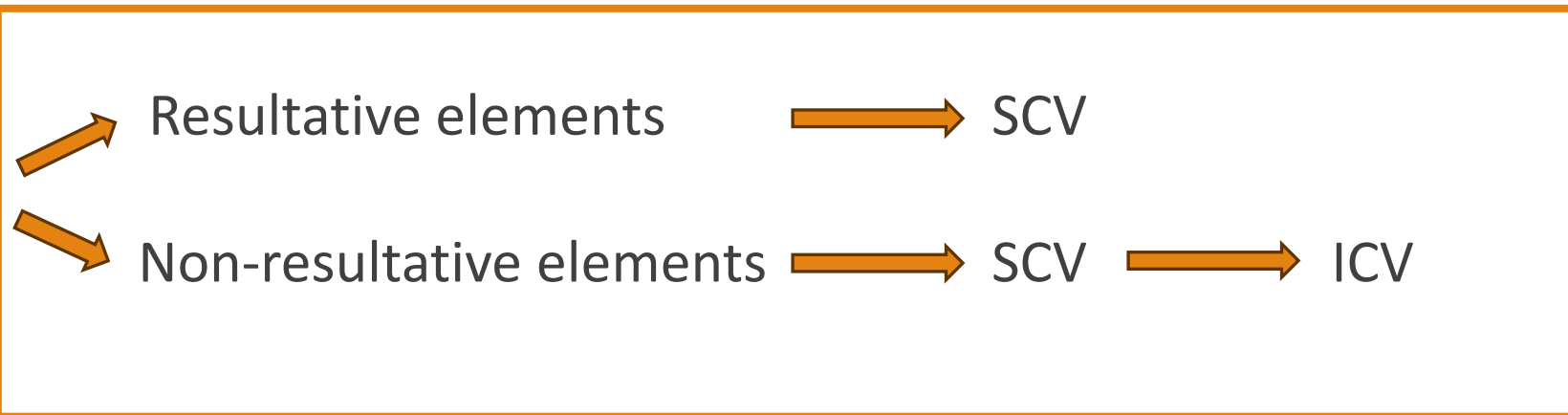
→ e.g., *het huis doorzoeken* ('search (trough) the house')

- overspoelen

→ e.g., *het land overspoelen* ('wash over the land')

2) Blom (2004, 2005)

- Distinction resultative vs. non-resultative
- Two developments:



Resultativity

= **preverbal element** expresses a **result** or **change of state** that affects the direct object (transitive verb) or the subject (intransitive verb) (cf. Haeseryn et al. 1997)

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- e.g., *Hij **gooit** de voetbal **op**.* (tr.) ('He throws up the football')
- e.g., *De zon **gaat onder**.* (itr.) ('The sun sets')

But, counterexamples



But, counterexamples



However, **5 resultative ICVs**

- *Onderdrukken* ('suppress')
- *Onderwerpen* ('subject')
- *Overtuigen* ('convince')
- *Overreden* ('persuade')
- *Overhandigen* ('hand over')

Research questions

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→two-fold methodology

1) Corpus-based study

EVALUATING BOOIJ'S (2002) HYPOTHESIS

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 - But, limitations!

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 - But, limitations!
- **Alternative approach: *patiens*** as proxy for verb's meaning (cf. Frasinelli & Schulte im Walde 2019; Pijpops et al. 2021)
 - 'patiens' = direct object (active) or subject (passive)

Corpus study: methodology (2)

- **Step 1:** Collect corpus data
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 - SoNaR: Alpino-parses (van Noord 2006)
 - NITenTen20: Spacy's library *nl_core_news_sm* (Honnibal & Montani 2017)

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- **Step 2:** Automatic identification of patients
 - SoNaR: Alpino-parses (van Noord 2006)
 - NITenTen20: Spacy's library *nl_core_news_sm* (Honnibal & Montani 2017)
- **Step 3:** Concreteness of each patients (cf. Brysbaert et al. 2014)
 - Removed pronouns
 - Min. 10 attestations for each verb

Corpus study: analysis

	SCV	ICV	Total
<i>Door-</i>	52 (67.53%)	25 (32.47%)	77 (100%)
<i>Om-</i>	48 (64.86%)	26 (35.14%)	74 (100%)
<i>Over-</i>	45 (44.55%)	56 (55.45%)	101 (100%)
Total	144 (57.37%)	107 (42.63%)	251 (100%)

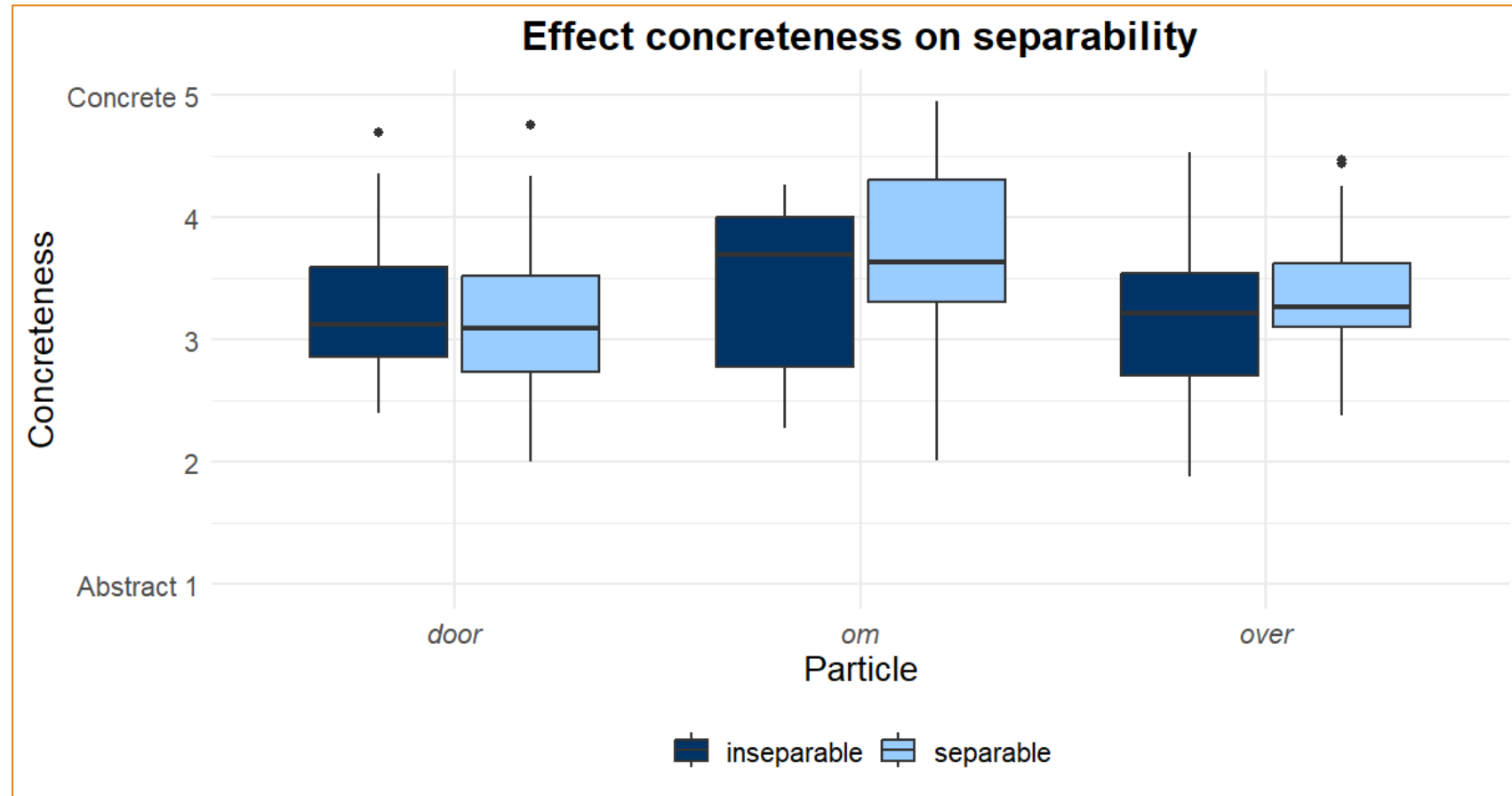
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- Average concreteness of each verb
- Binomial logistic regression (R package 'glm' (R Core Team 2023))

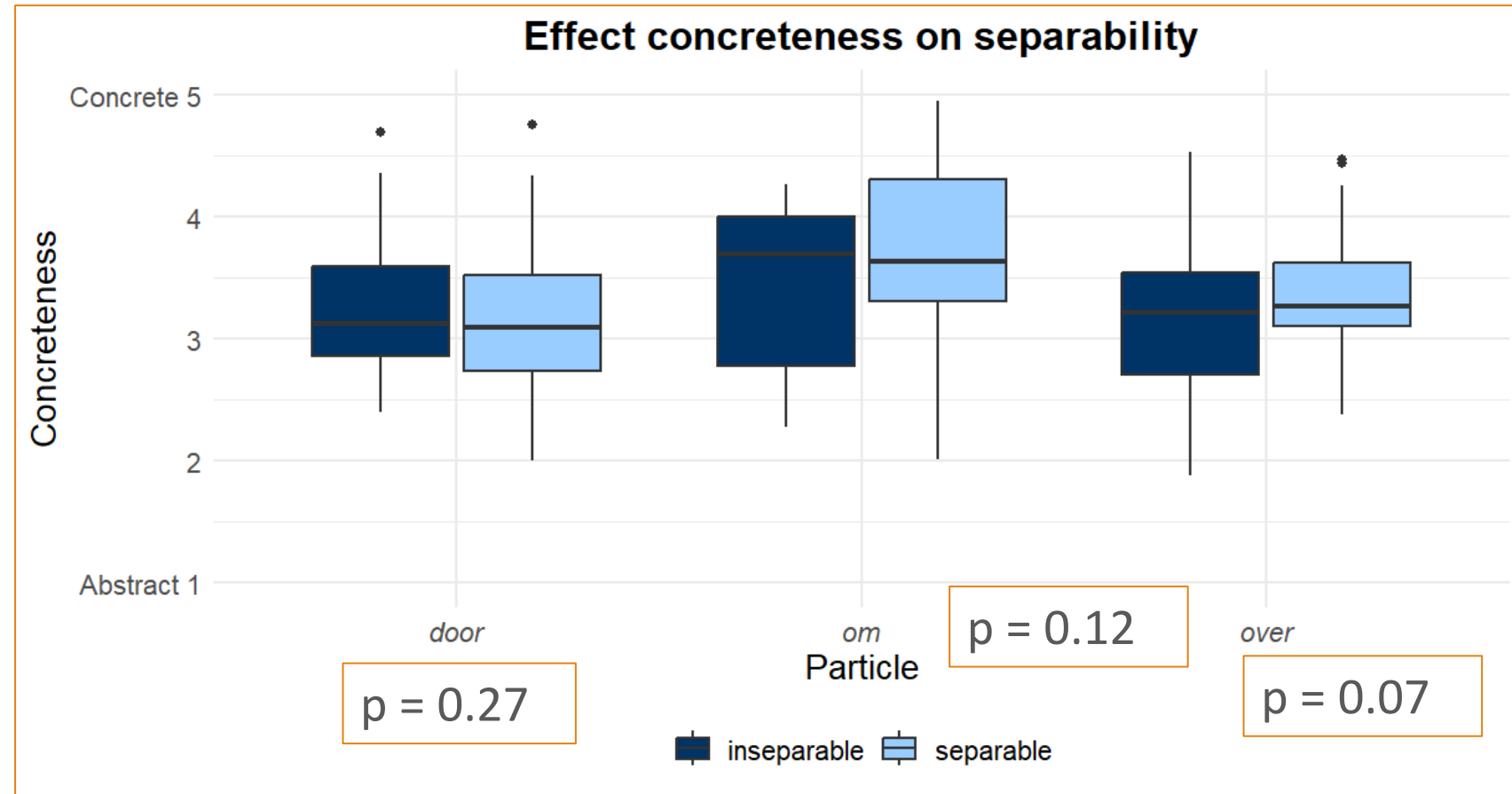
Corpus study: results

- Overall p-value = 0.102



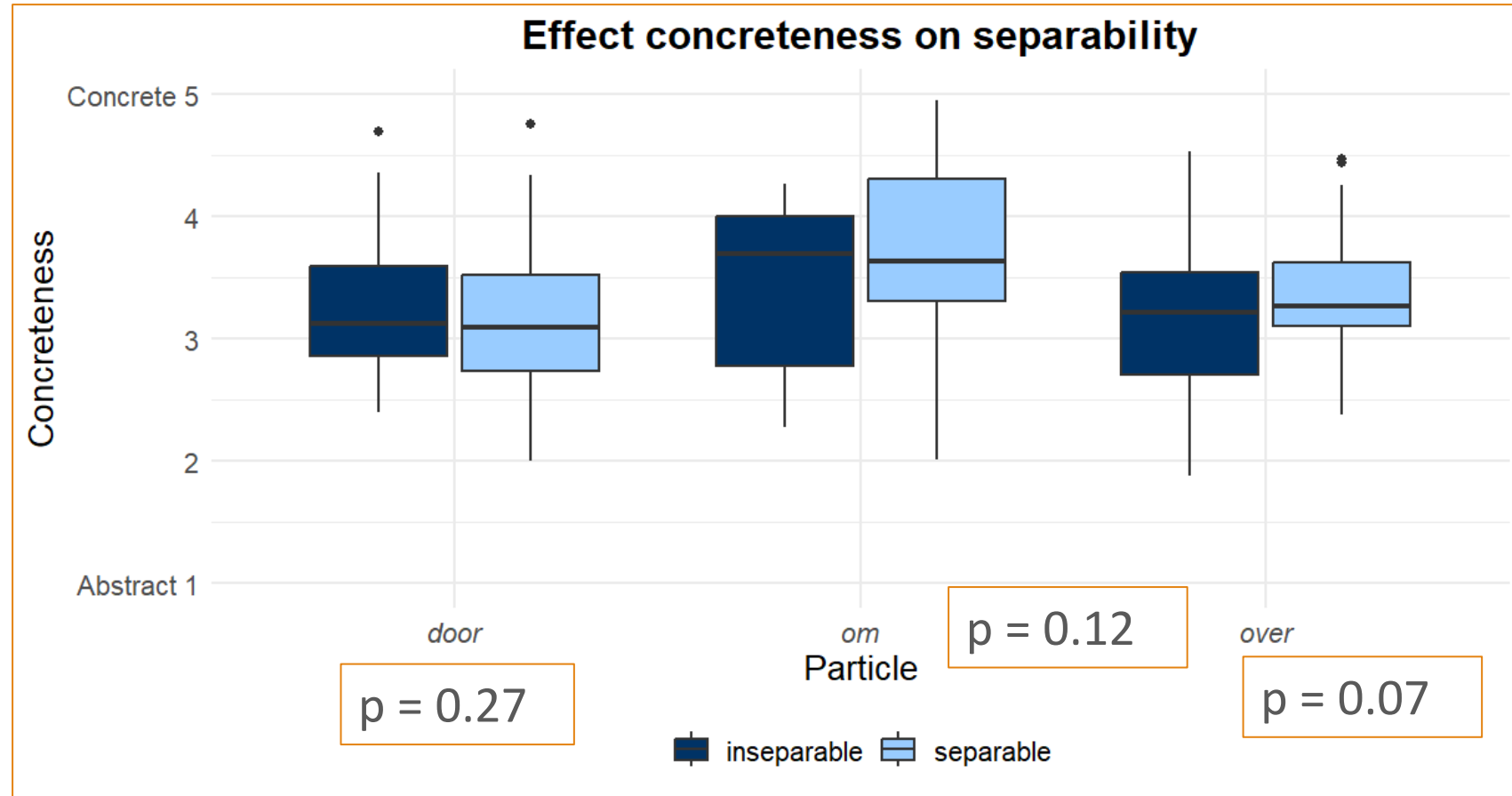
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Corpus study: results

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- *door-* vs. *om-/over-*



2) Experimental study

EVALUATING BOOIJ'S (2002) & BLOM'S (2004, 2005) HYPOTHESES

Experimental study: methodology

- **Forced-choice task**

Experimental study: methodology

- Forced-choice task
- Material
 - **Non-verbs** (*door-*, *om-*, and *over-*) (De Smet 2021; De Smet & Rosseel 2023; ChatGPT)
 - e.g., *doordriezen* (lit. ‘through-driezen’), *omhoten* (lit. ‘around-hoten’)

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 - **72 fill-in-the-blank sentences** with choice between SCV or ICV (ChatGPT)
 - Resultativity (*zodat* (‘so that’) vs. *en* (‘and’))
 - Concreteness (cf. Brysbaert et al. 2014)

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 - **144 filler items** (plural, past tense)

Experimental study: methodology (2)



Het volk ... de paradox, met het gevolg dat deze niet meer verwarrend is. (doordriezen)

- ☐ Het volk doordriest de paradox, met het gevolg dat deze niet meer verwarrend is.
- ☐ Het volk driest de paradox door, met het gevolg dat deze niet meer verwarrend is.

Experimental study: participants

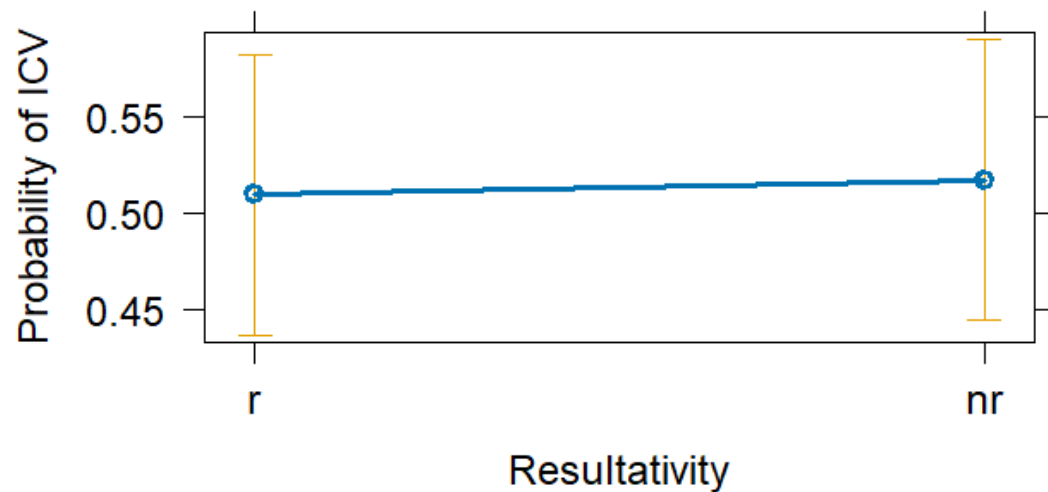
- $n = 105$
- 18-25 years old
- undergraduate students of language & literature program
- L1 = Dutch

Experimental study: analysis

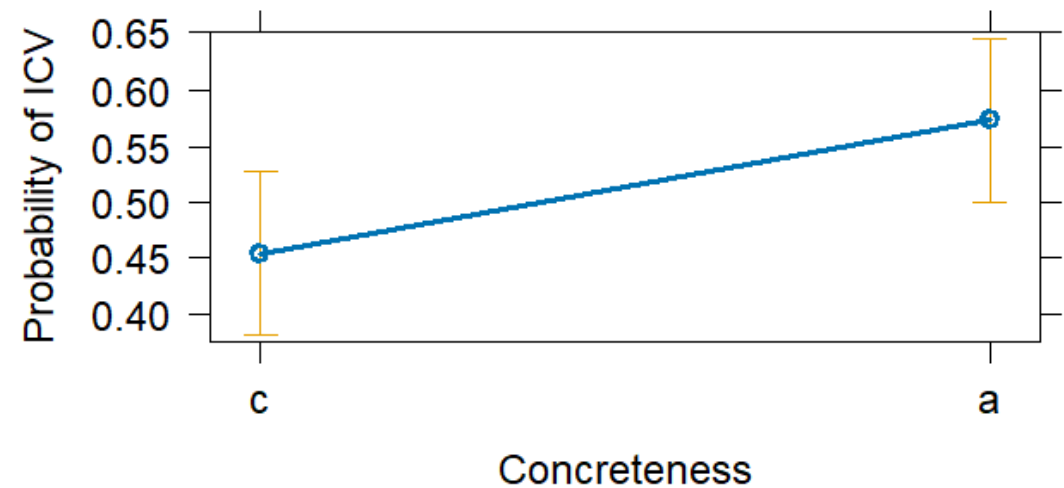
- Mixed effects regression model for each particle
- Factors
 - Concreteness & resultativity
 - Construction
 - Display order
 - Priming
 - Trial number
- Random effects
 - Participant & verb

Experimental study: results *om-*

Resultativity - separability effect (om-)

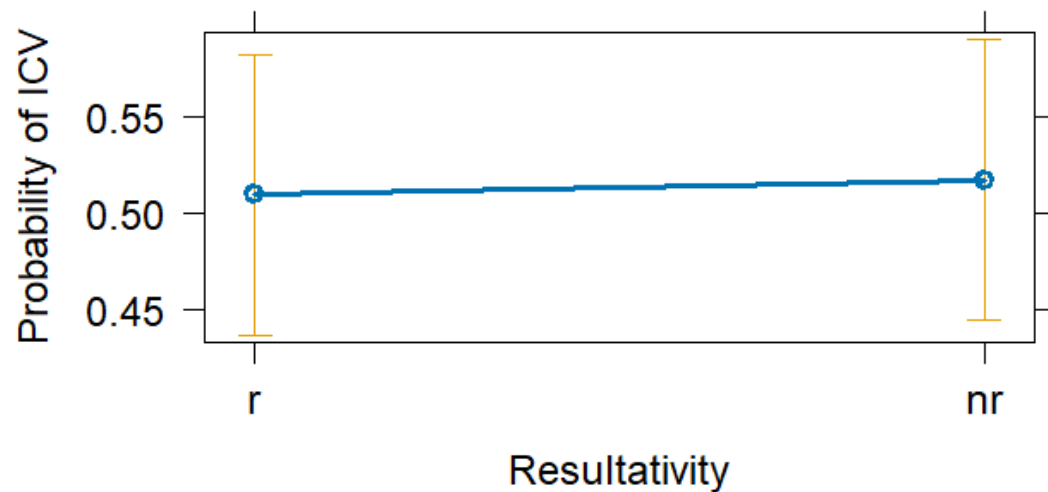


Concreteness - separability effect (om-)



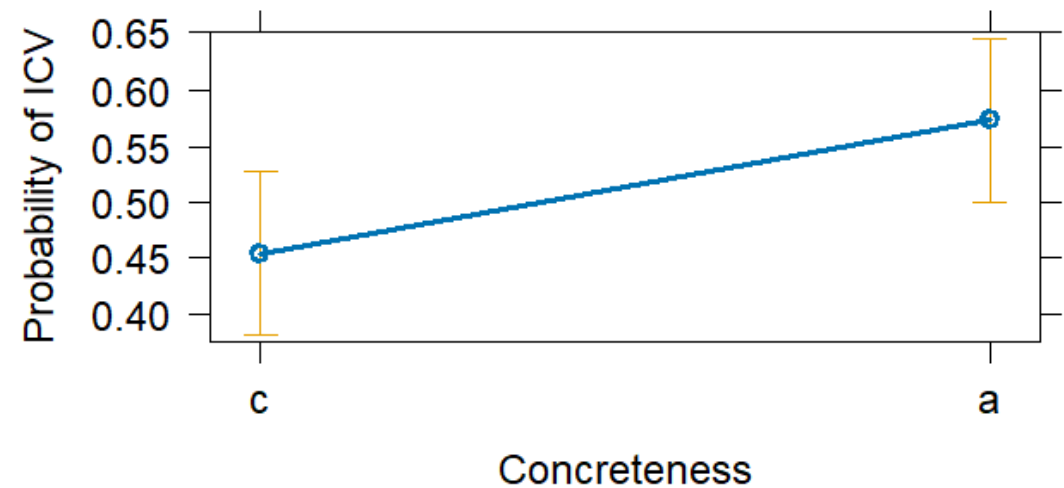
Experimental study: results *om-*

Resultativity - separability effect (om-)



$p = 0.73$

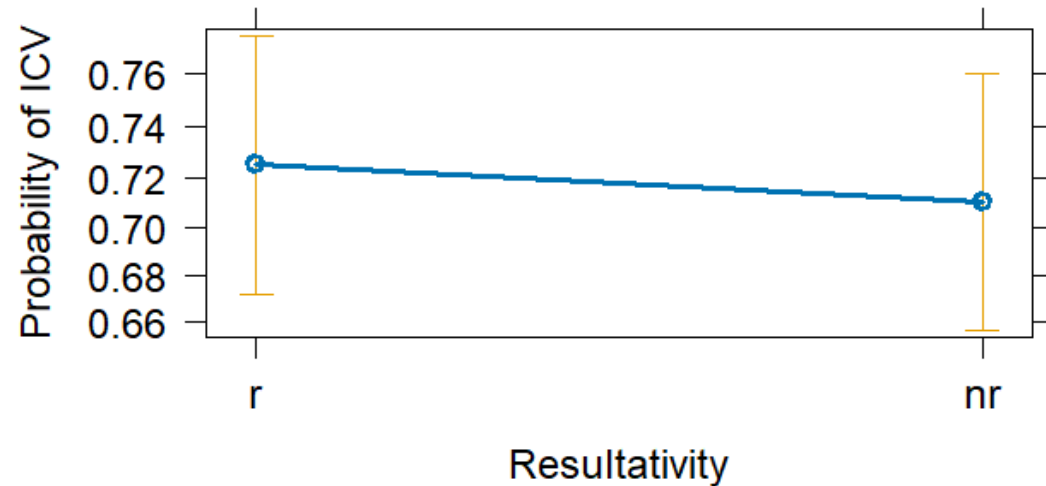
Concreteness - separability effect (om-)



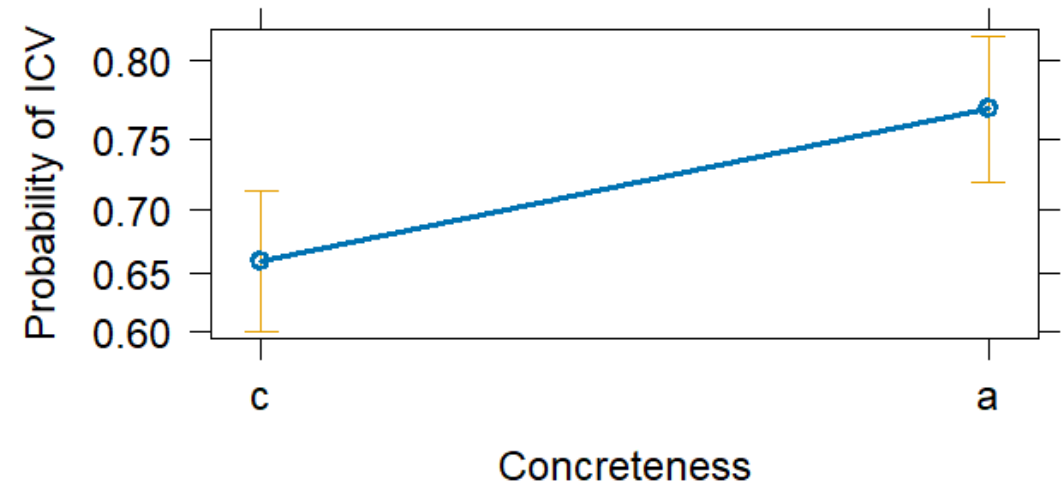
$p = 4.35e-07***$

Experimental study: results *over-*

Resultativity - separability effect (over-)

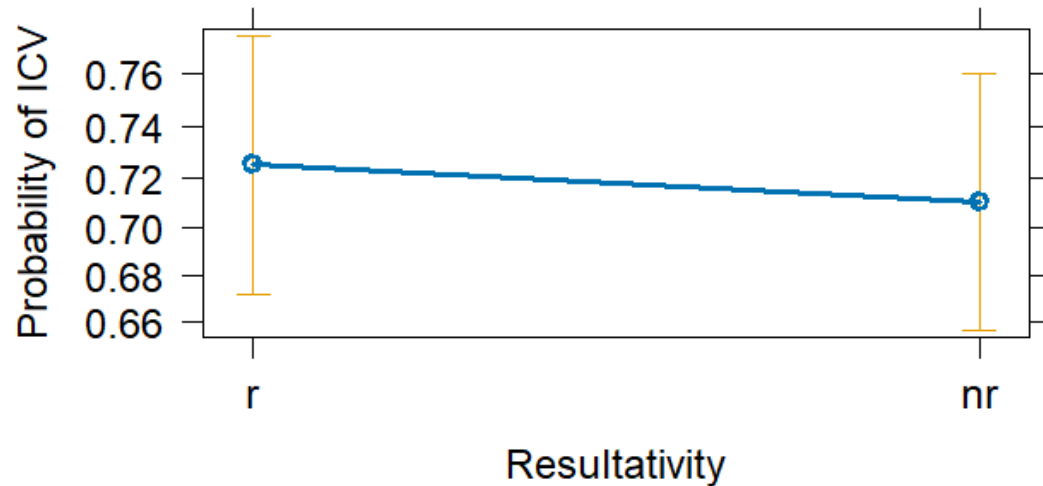


Concreteness - separability effect (over-)



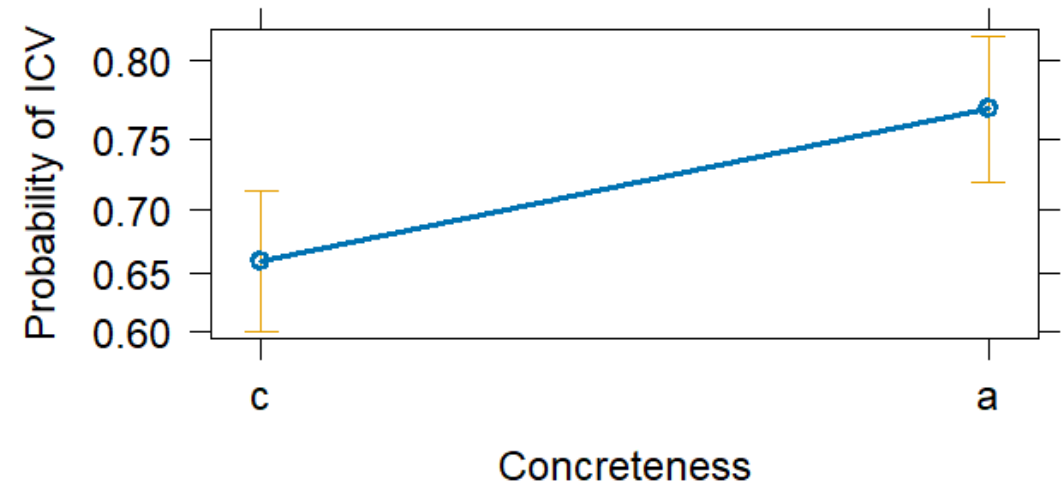
Experimental study: results *over-*

Resultativity - separability effect (over-)



$p = 0.44$

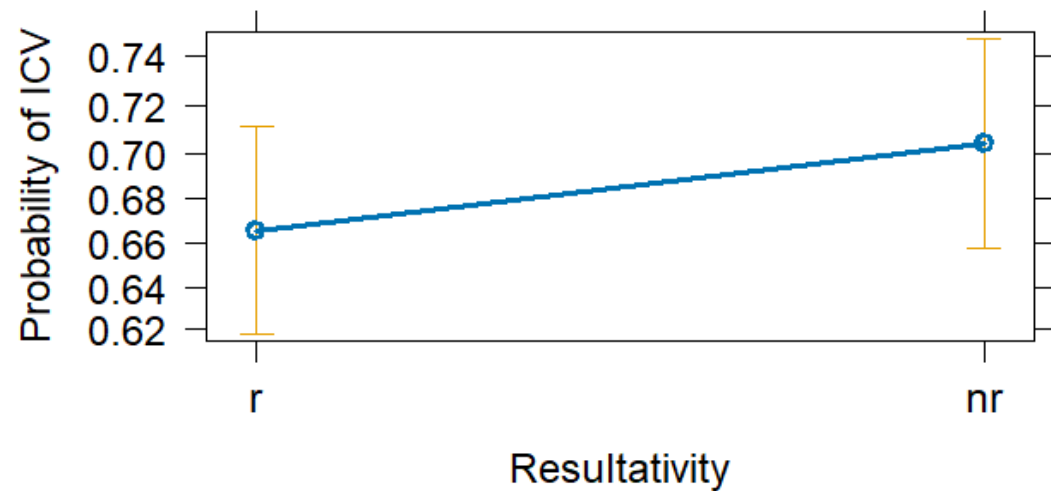
Concreteness - separability effect (over-)



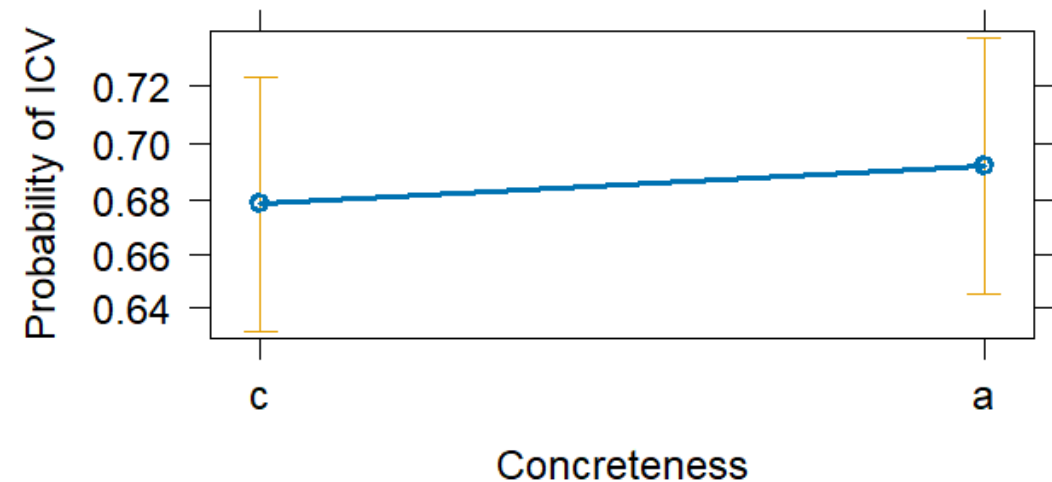
$p = 5.13e-07***$

Experimental study: results *door-*

Resultativity - separability effect (door-)

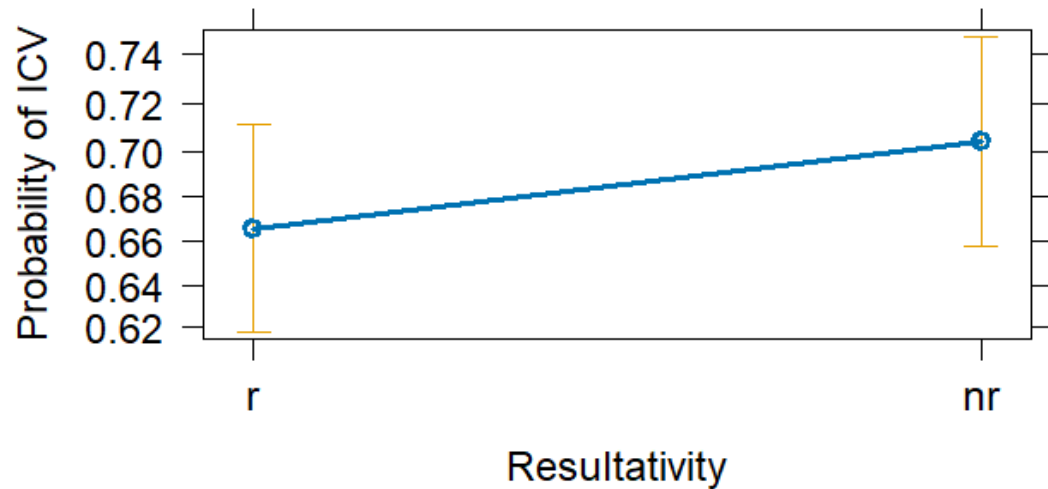


Concreteness - separability effect (door-)



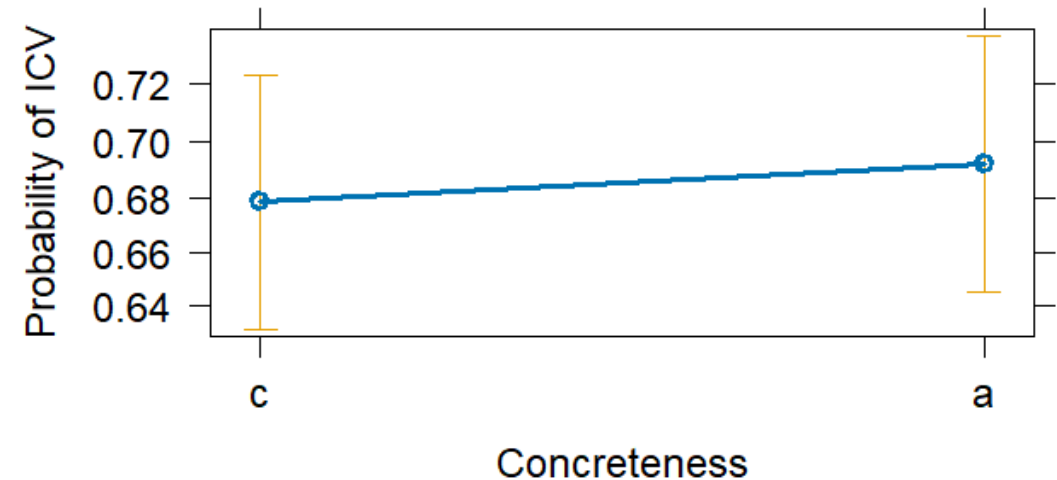
Experimental study: results *door-*

Resultativity - separability effect (door-)



$p = 0.05.$

Concreteness - separability effect (door-)



$p = 0.50$

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- Differences between **individual particles**
 - *Door-* more salient resultative meaning vs. *om-* and *over-*

Thank you!

QUESTIONS?

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