

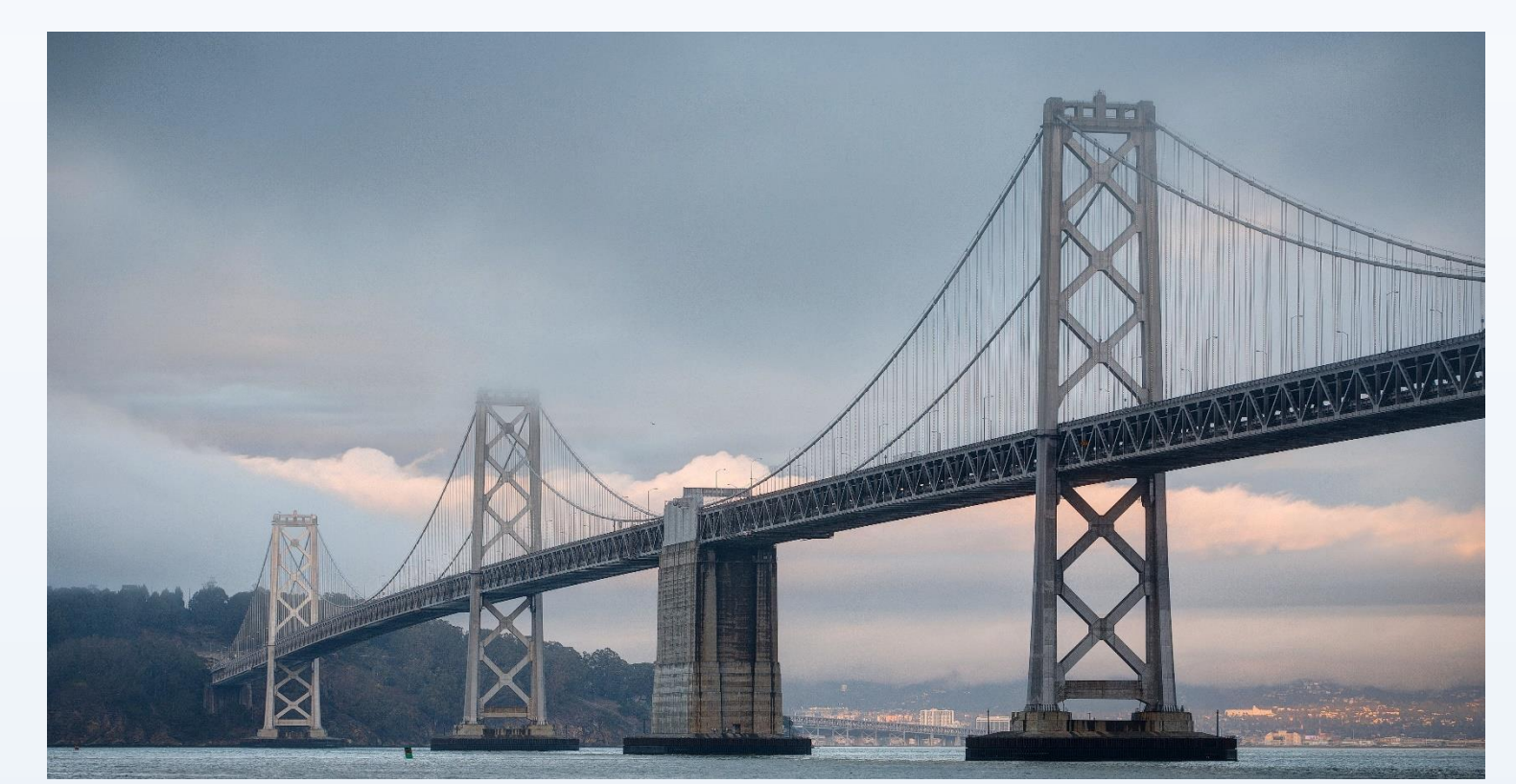
Left and right dislocation across bridging types

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Introduction

In its original formulation [1], bridging is described as a strategy to accommodate the given-new structure in cases where some content is given for the speaker, but not for the hearer (cf. [2]):

(1) In the group there was one person missing. It was Mary who left. [1]

In (1), the speaker is required to **build a bridge** from the given information “X was missing” to the new information “X left”.

Bridging is pervasive in language, and this poster tests the connection between bridging phenomena and left- (LD) and right-dislocation (RD) in Catalan.

Goal and Hypothesis

Our goal is to understand how the different information functions of LDs and RDs interact with different bridging contexts.

We will test the hypothesis that ‘bridging distance’ between a dislocated referent and its antecedent correlates with dislocation types: near-identity bridges (EPITHETS, and HYPERNYMS) would favor RD, whereas non-identity bridges (SET MEMBERSHIP, NECESSARY PART, and OPTIONAL PART/ROLE) would favor LD.

Bridging types

Near-identity reference:

- Hypernym (fruit-watermelon)
- Epithet (John-that idiot)

Non-identity reference:

- Necessary Part (train-wagon)
- Optional Part (kitchen-coffee maker)
- Necessary Role (murder-murderer)
- Optional Role (death-murderer)

Experiment 1:

- A **judgment task** involving (direct object) **dislocations** (LD or RD) in **five bridging contexts**: HYPERNYM, SET MEMBERSHIP, EPITHET, NECESSARY PART, and OPTIONAL ROLE. 29 native Catalan speakers evaluated 30 written target items (context sentence followed by LD and RD, presented at the same time) over a 10-point Likert scale. 1920 answers were collected. Online at Ibex Farm.

Results (Fig. 1):

- Linear mixed-effects model (answer variable=*score*, random factors=*participant*, *item*, independent variables=*bridging type*, *dislocation type*):
- highly significant effect ($p < 0.0001$) for dislocation type: RD is preferred to LD (best rated option in all bridging types, except for NECESSARY PART and SET MEMBERSHIP, Fig. 1).
- highly significant ($p < 0.0001$) interaction between bridging type and dislocation: EPITHET, HYPERONYM, AND OPTIONAL ROLE receive higher ratings with RD than LD does.

Experiment 2:

- A **judgment task** involving (direct object) **dislocations** (LD or RD) in **five bridging contexts**: HYPERNYM, SET MEMBERSHIP, EPITHET, NECESSARY PART, and **OPTIONAL PART**. The **grammatical function** of the bridging antecedent (subj vs. obj) also varied. 47 native Catalan speakers evaluated 30 both **written and oral target items** (context sentence followed by either LD or RD) over a 10-point Likert scale. All items were checked for always involving a subordinate rhetoric relation. Each informant was presented with a randomized different list of target items. 1420 answers were collected. Online at Ibex Farm.

Results (Fig. 2):

- No significant difference between models with and without grammatical function ($Pr\ 0.4963 > Chi2\ 0.4628$).
- Linear mixed-effects models show a highly significant ($p < 0.0001$) interaction between bridging type and dislocation:
- LD in SET MEMBERSHIP, NECESSARY PART and OPTIONAL PART receives higher ratings than RD does. RD in EPITHET and HYPERNYM receives higher ratings than LD does.

Fig. 1: Exp1 z-score means

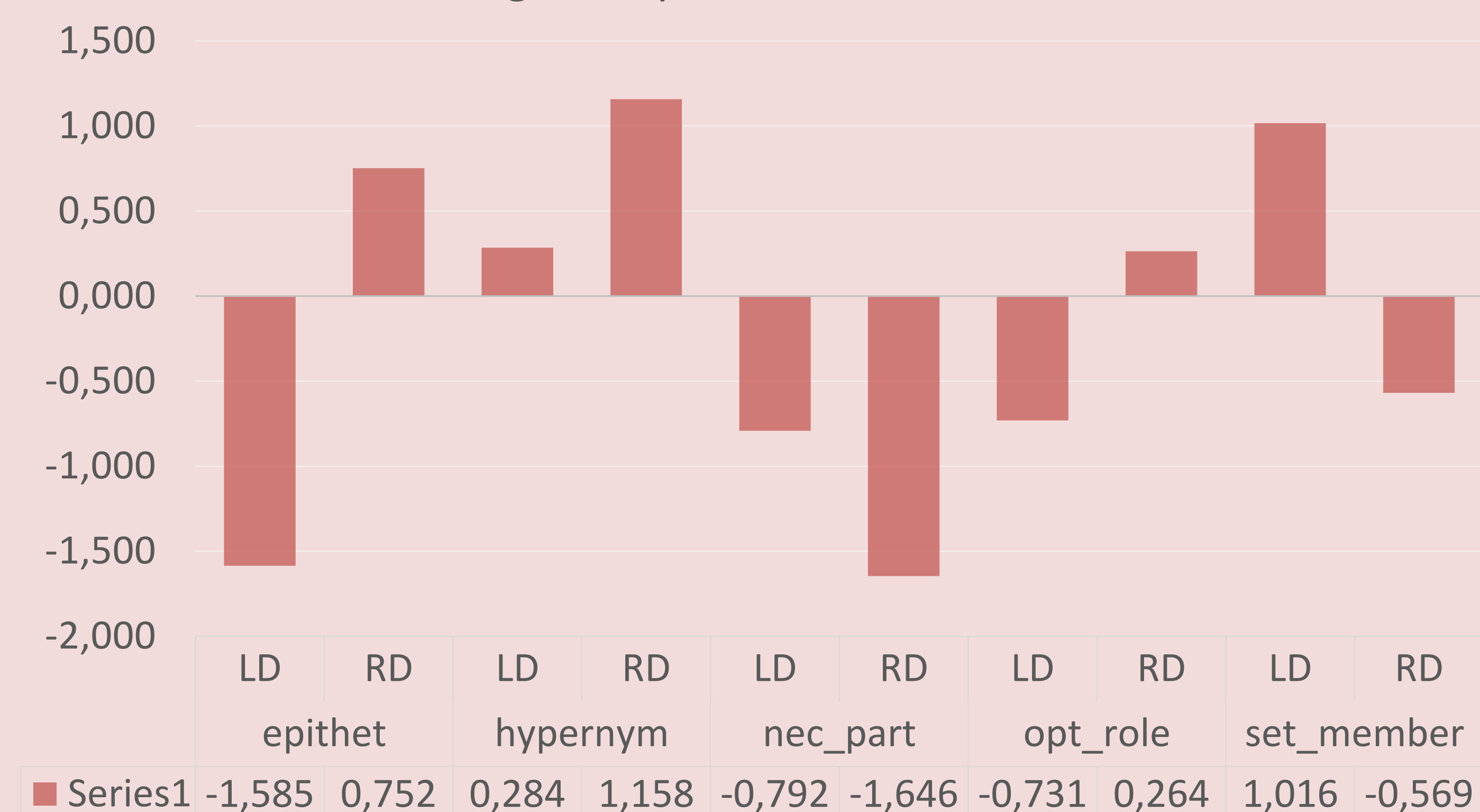
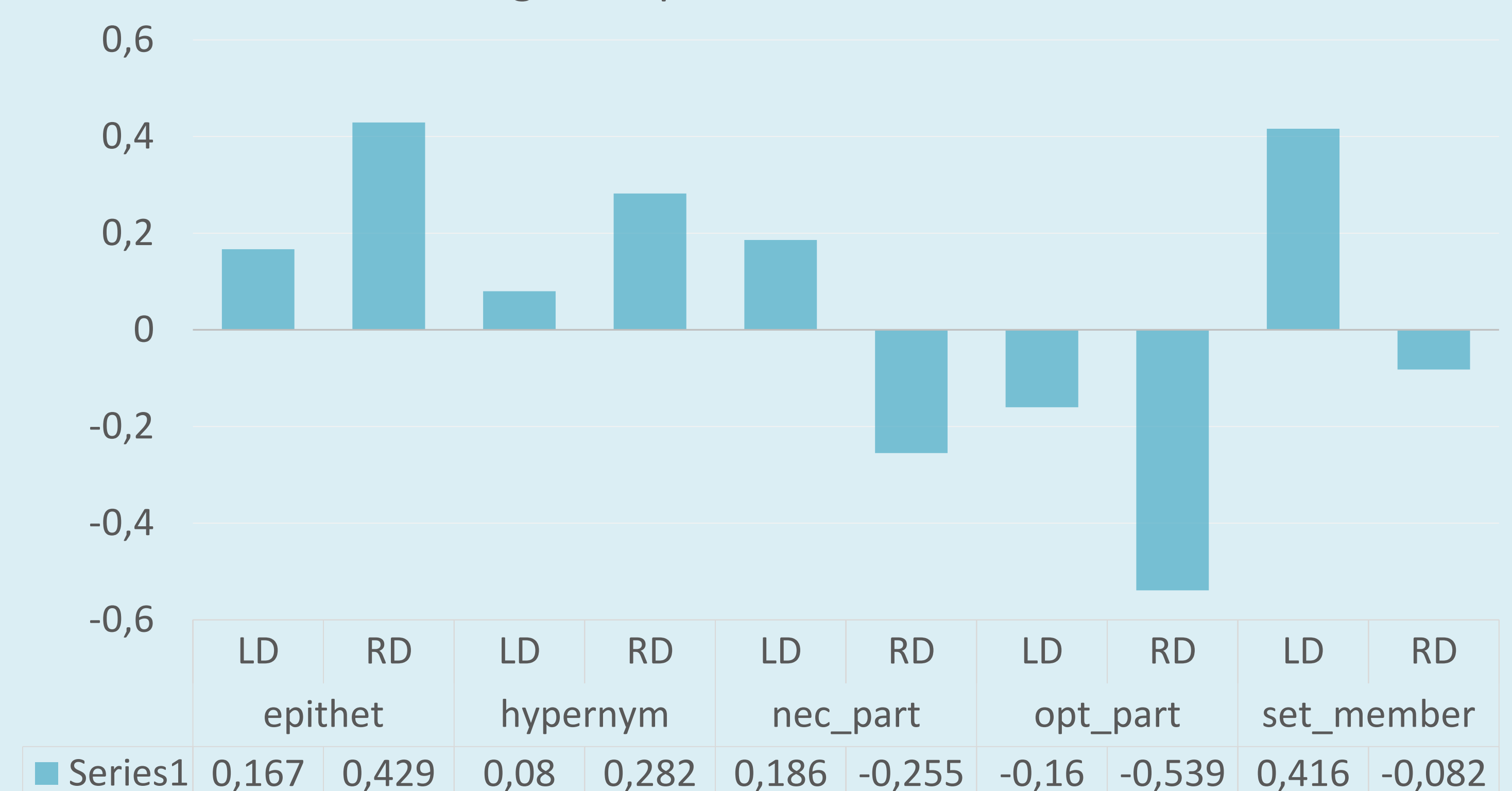


Fig. 2: Exp2 z-scores means



Discussion

While Exp 1 shows that RD scores are significantly higher than LD scores overall, even in bridging cases typically suited for LD, Exp 2 does not seem to confirm this result. While RD ratings are very similar, LD ones are much better in Exp 2. This may be due to the presence of auditory stimuli in Exp 2, which for instance might have favored a contrastive reading of the LD (and hence made LD more acceptable, [4]). We leave the testing of this hypothesis to future research.

The hypothesis that ‘bridging distance’ between a dislocated referent and its antecedent correlates with dislocation is confirmed in both experiments: RD is rated higher with EPITHETS and HYPERNYMS ([5], and LD is rated higher with OPTIONAL/NECESSARY PART and SET MEMBERSHIP (CF. [2]).

Both experiments show that poset relations cannot be the key factor underlying LD (against [3]): leaving aside OPTIONAL ROLE, all bridging types are poset relations, but still RD rates better than LD with EPITHETS and HYPERNYMS, which are highly salient poset relations.

Conclusions

There is a correlation between bridging types and dislocation types:

- near-identity \leftrightarrow RD (cf. [6])
- non-identity \leftrightarrow LD

Posets are not the key factor favoring LD.

Control for prosody and discourse relation affects the results of Exp2.

Acknowledgments

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References

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