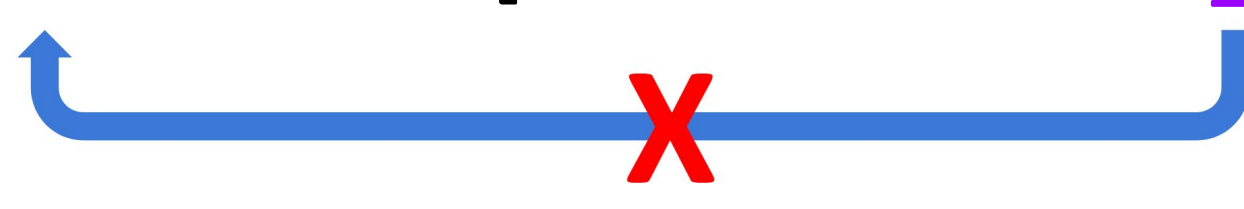



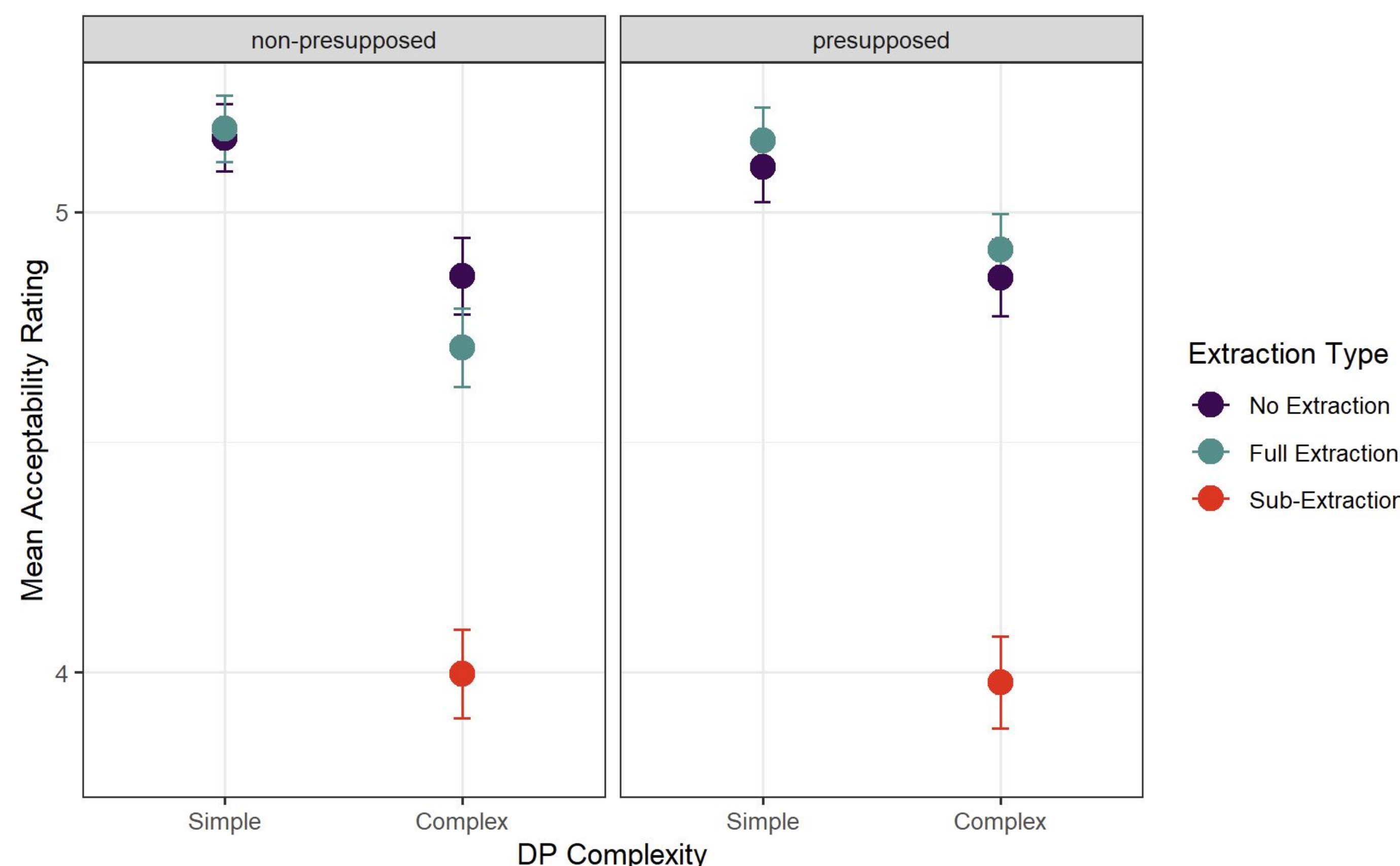
Research question: Is the acceptability of complex DP sub-extraction structures affected by the use of adjectival modifiers to manipulate information structure?

Islands and Information Structure

- Some syntactic domains are **islands**: they do not allow a gap in a filler-gap dependency [1]
(1) *Which artist did [the book about _] sell out?

- Islandhood may derive from syntactic constraints [1]
- An alternative: islandhood is derived from **information structure** (IS) clashes between **non-presupposed** and **presupposed** information [2]
(2) *Which artist did [the book about _] sell out?

- Prior work shows that subject island effects are not reducible to construction-specific IS differences [6]
- Islands are a subset of how IS affects extraction [7]
- Constraints on extraction of elements from Complex DPs have been argued for since Ross (1967) [1]
- IS theories predict that manipulating a DP's IS should affect acceptability [2]

Acceptability Judgment Results

- Ran acceptability judgment task on Prolific (N=80)
- Rated 40 experimental items and 70 fillers on a 6-point scale



- Sub-extraction conditions consistently have lower means
- Similar sub-extraction means regardless of presuppositionality
- Sentences overall acceptable (i.e., upper half of 6-point scale)
- Full extraction acceptability varies with presuppositionality

Items and Conditions

- Manipulated IS by using presuppositional modifiers in wh-extraction from Complex DP objects

No extraction

A	Simple P	The mayor delayed a specific proposal.
B	Simple N	The mayor delayed a complex proposal.
C	Complex P	The mayor delayed a specific proposal about the election.
D	Complex N	The mayor delayed a complex proposal about the election.

Full extraction

E	Simple P	Which specific proposal did the mayor delay?
F	Simple N	Which complex proposal did the mayor delay?
G	Complex P	Which specific proposal about the election did the mayor delay?
H	Complex N	Which complex proposal about the election did the mayor delay?

Sub-extraction

I	Complex P	Which election did the mayor delay a specific proposal about?
J	Complex N	Which election did the mayor delay a complex proposal about?

Calculating Sub-extraction Penalties

- Made use of a super-additive design to clarify other sources of unacceptability in island structures [3-5]
- By isolating the acceptability costs of position, complexity, etc., residual unacceptability can be properly identified [4]

Acceptability Cost	Calculation	
	Non-presupposed	Presupposed
Cost of complexity	B - D	A - C
Cost of wh-extraction	B - F	A - E
Combined cost	(B - D) + (B - F)	(A - C) + (A - E)
Cost of sub-extraction	B - J	A - I
Residual cost	(B - J) - Combined	(A - I) - Combined

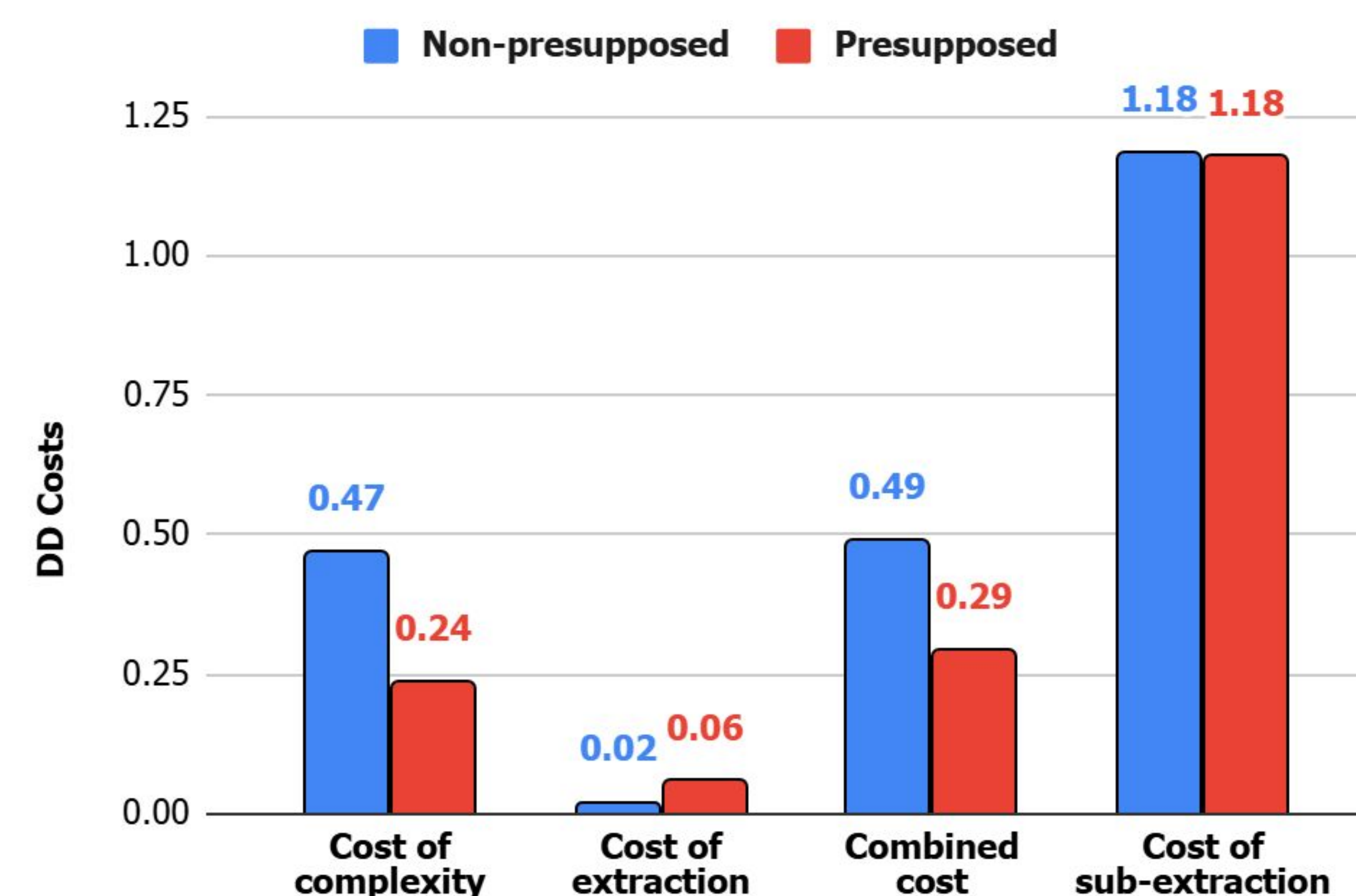
Discussion

- Replicated standard acceptability differences between types of extraction (no extraction, full extraction, sub-extraction)
- DD score differences reflect systematic presuppositionality differences in costs of complexity and extraction
- Provides no support to IS accounts of extraction and islands
- Serves as an application of an island super-additivity design to non-island extraction structures
- Possibility of analyzing data by modifier to examine whether they serve as confounds
 - e.g., *individual* (DD=0.48) vs. *particular* (DD=1.00)
 - e.g., *famous* (DD=0.01) vs. *noteworthy* (DD=0.97)
- Future direction = construct preceding contexts to alter presuppositionality instead of using modifiers

References

- [1] Ross, J. R. (1967). Constraints on variables in syntax.
[2] Abeillé, A., Hemforth, B., Winckel, E., & Gibson, E. (2020). Extraction from subjects: Differences in acceptability depend on the discourse function of the construction. *Cognition*, 204, 104293.
[3] Sprouse, J. (2007). A program for experimental syntax: Finding the relationship between acceptability and grammatical knowledge [Doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park].
[4] Sprouse, J., Wagers, M., & Phillips, C. (2012). A test of the relation between working-memory capacity and syntactic island effects. *Language*, 88(1), 82-123.
[5] Sprouse, J., Fukuda, S., Ono, H., & Kluender, R. (2011). Reverse island effects and the backward search for a licenser in multiple wh-questions. *Syntax*, 14(2), 179-203.
[6] Kogan, M., Cartner, M., Webster, N., Wagers, M., & Sichel, I. (2025, March 27-29). *Subject islands are not caused by information structure clashes: cross-constructural evidence* [Poster]. 38th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing, College Park, MD.
[7] Vincent, J. W., Sichel, I., & Wagers, M. W. (2022). Extraction from English RCs and cross-linguistic similarities in the environments that facilitate extraction. *Languages*, 7(2), 117.

Sub-extraction Penalty Results



- DD costs above defined in terms of 6-point rating means
- Differences between costs of complexity and extraction in non-presupposed vs. presupposed DPs
- Similar costs of sub-extraction across levels
- Non-presupp. vs. presupp. residual costs (DD=0.69, DD=0.89)