This handout summarizes the results of our Jan 19 in-class experiment on adjectives and scale-structures. The design is inspired by that of Syrett et al., but much different in its execution. The results are consistent with their theory, and could be strengthened; some of the messy places are arguably due to shortcomings in my materials and the unusual experimental setting. \( N = 45 \).

1 Fillers

**Training item.**

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Hand me the red one.
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**Filler.** Checks that the definite really does presuppose uniqueness. The 8 A/B responses could indicate that the experimental setting makes uniqueness less relevant.
2 Open-scale adjectives

Hand me the big one.  

Expected result for open-scale adjective.  

Striking that there seems to be no interference from the standard for ‘bigness’ relevant for item 2.
3 Minimal-standard (lower-closed) adjectives

Clearly felicitous minimal standard adjective, for comparison with item 5.

Pretty much the expected result for minimal standard adjective: both cups striped means that the striped one is undefined. Maybe not as strong as expected. Similar to most previous years.

2016: In the direction of the expected result, which says both cups striped means that the striped one is undefined, but not as strong as expected. Many people probably interpreted striped as ‘more striped’.
4 Maximal-standard (upper-closed) adjectives

Clearly felicitous maximal standard adjective, for comparison with item 8.

Clear result for the maximal standard adjective!

2020: Not a very clear result for the maximal standard adjective. Compare with 2019, where the bars are both more clearly bent, and with 2015, where one is almost straight.

2019: Clear result for the maximal standard adjective, but this is partly the result of the items being close to each other. Similar to 2018. Compare with 2015’s results, just below.

2015: Not a clear result for the maximal standard adjective: many seemed to interpret *straight* as *more straight*.
5 Other items

Expected result for a maximal adjective like *empty*.

Interesting shift from item 9. If A is pragmatically empty, then why didn’t this interfere in 9?