Introduction

Intonational meanings and context dependency: different perspectives
- Intonational contours always have context-dependent effects on meanings [1].
- At least some types of intonational contours have context independent effects on meanings [3].
- e.g. L^*+H in English: scalar values, speaker uncertainty → conventional implicature

What other types of intonational contours have such conventionalized effects? What kinds of meaning contributions do they make? How do they operate?

Main Argument

There are qualitatively different types of context independent intonational convention signaled by terminal contour (e.g. L^* H-H%) + sentence type (e.g. Declarative). They signal stable attitudinal meanings (e.g. speaker authority, politeness, stance, etc.) across diverse contents and contexts.

Methods

A series of perception experiments with stimuli:
- Representing diverse sentence types (16 polar-Qs & wh-Qs, 7 declaratives, 8 imperatives), contents (4 types of biases), and contexts
- Produced by diverse speakers (6 in total), and acoustically manipulated in terminal contours

Stimuli

Each of the 31 sentences manipulated to yield:
- 3 types of terminal contours (rising: L^* H-H%, level: H^* H-L%, falling: H^* L-L%)