

On the linguistic landscape of subjectivity

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Subjective, or judge-dependent, expressions in natural language form a heterogeneous class. The differences concern whether they can be embedded under subjective attitude verbs like 'find' in their bare and/or comparative form, whether they allow for an overt expression of the judge argument, and more. One property of a subclass of subjective predicates — the core group of predicates of personal taste ('tasty', 'fun' etc.) is that they give rise to so-called 'direct experience requirement' (Pearson 2013 a.o.). In earlier work (Bylinina 2016), I implemented this requirement as a lexical presupposition of predicates of personal taste that indirectly references an experience event. This presupposition is meant to have consequences for the behaviour of such predicates: ability to take overt 'judge arguments', requirement for evidential marking in languages like Japanese, possibly more. This suggests that there are two clear-cut classes of subjective predicates: ones that have internal, experience-based meaning, and ones for which this is not the case. In this talk, I will discuss problems with such view.