

On the plurality of verbs

Attitudes of knowledge and belief

Days 4 and 5: Refining find (and friends)

Natasha Korotkova (Utrecht)
<https://natasha-korotkova.github.io/>

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Slides



Handout



- ▶ Knowledge ascriptions:
 - ▶ Empirical domain: veridical and factive predicates
 - ▶ Main focus: the factivity inference through the lens of presupposition projection
- ▶ Come-to-know predicates: dedicated class of cognitive factives
 - ▶ aspect: change-of-state eventualities with preparatory process
 - ▶ evidence: dedicated evidential requirements mirroring those of evidential language more broadly

- ▶ Empirical focus: English *find* (+ brief cross-linguistic excursion)

(1) Pranav found this tea ✓delicious/# Assamese.

- ▶ Previous literature: *find*-verbs as subjective counterparts of *think*-verbs (with some exceptions; Fusco et al. 2025; Franzén 2021; Khoo 2026; Sæbø 2009)
- ▶ Central claims:
 - ▶ *find*: belongs to the new class, ‘characterizing verbs’
 - ▶ *find*: achievement predicate referring to a complex eventuality of judgment formation triggered by an encounter

- ▶ Dutch Research Council project “The grammar of opinion”
(PI: Korotkova)
- ▶ Goal: linguistic properties of *find*-verbs in several European lgs



Luca Jerad Rafia



Ilia Iliev



Shubhi Nand

Introduction

Subjective attitudes I

- Subjective/evaluative language: expressions of **opinion** rather than **fact** (Kennedy 2013; Lasersohn 2005, 2017; Vardomskaya 2018; van Wijnbergen-Huitink 2016 a.o.)

(2) Subjective

- a. a **delicious** tea
- b. **lugubrious** music

(3) Objective

- a. a **deciduous** tree
- b. an **even** number

- Diagnosing subjectivity: faultless disagreement

- (4) A. This puerh tea is from the Yunnan province of China. [Ordinary dis/t]
 B. No, it's isn't.
- (5) A. This puerh tea is delicious. [Faultless dis/t]
 B. No, it isn't.

Subjective attitudes II

- ▶ Approaches to subjective predicates (big issue: subjectivity vs. vagueness)
 - ▶ **Exceptionalism** (incl. various versions of contextualism and relativism): subjectivity is semantic, SPs have special denotations (e.g., judge/assessor-sensitive $\llbracket \text{delicious} \rrbracket^{\langle j, w \rangle} = \lambda x. \text{DELICIOUS}(x, \langle j, w \rangle)$)
 - ▶ **Unexceptionalism**: subjectivity is pragmatic, SPs assimilated to ordinary intersective predicates ($\llbracket \text{delicious} \rrbracket^w = \lambda x. \text{DELICIOUS}(x, w)$)

NB subjective predicates aren't homogeneous (Briesen 2019; Kaiser and Lee 2017; McNally and Stojanovic 2017; Liao et al. 2016)

Subjective attitudes III

- ▶ Find-verbs: only **subjective complements** (Bouchard 2012; Coppock 2018; Kennedy and Willer 2016; Sæbø 2009; Stephenson 2007; Umbach 2021 a.o.)
 - ▶ English *find*
 - ▶ German *finden* (Frühauf 2015; Lande 2009; Reis 2013)
 - ▶ Dutch *vinden*
 - ▶ Bulgarian *namira*
 - ▶ Catalan *trobar*
 - ▶ Italian *trovare*
 - ▶ French *trouver* (Bouchard 2012)
 - ▶ Swedish *tycka* (Coppock 2018)
 - ▶ Norwegian *synes* (Lande 2009; Sæbø 2009)
 - ▶ Portuguese *achar* (Mendes and Kendrick 2024)
- ▶ Embedding under *find*: often viewed as a diagnostic of subjectivity and evidence that language treats subjective language as special (not considered: other restrictions of *find*-verbs that may prevent some predicates from appearing in their complements)

Subjective attitudes IV

- English subjective *find*: almost exclusively **small clauses** ($\approx$ special syntax, Borkin 1973; see also discussion in Bouchard 2012; Vardomskaya 2018)

- (6) a. We **think** that this event is ✓**fabulous** / ✓ **bi-annual**. [ENGLISH]
 b. We **find** this event ✓**fabulous** / # **bi-annual**.

- Other lgs: also **full clauses** (all data ours unless indicated otherwise)

- (7) Magda **synes** at [NORWEGIAN]
 Magda **be.of.opinion** that
 $\approx$ 'Magda is of the opinion that ...'
- a. ✓...kjempesequoiatre-et er et **elegan-t** tre.
 g.sequoia.tree-DEF.N be.PRES INDEF.N **elegant-N** tree
 ... the giant sequoia is an elegant tree.'
- b. #...kjempesequoiatre-et er et **evergreen-N** tre.
 g.sequoia.tree-DEF.N be.PRES INDEF.N **evergreen-N** tree
 ... the giant sequoia is an evergreen tree.'

Subjective attitudes V

- ▶ Focus of inquiry: ferreting out what *find*-verbs reveal about subjective meaning
- ▶ Our take on subjectivity: for reasons of semantic composition, only pragmatic or relativist accounts work (Anand and Korotkova 2022; cf. Rudin 2025 for a similar point about epistemic modals)

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ORIGINAL RESEARCH



How to theorize about subjective language: a lesson from 'de re'

Pranav Anand¹ · Natasha Korotkova² 

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Subjective attitudes VI

- ▶ Common thread (Coppock 2018; Kennedy and Willer 2016, 2022; Muñoz 2019):
 - ▶ juxtaposition of *think-consider-find* on the scale of subjectivity (ultimately rooted in vagueness)
 - ▶ *find* as a species of *think* (shared by most accounts of *find*, e.g., Korotkova and Anand 2021; Stephenson 2007)

(8) $\llbracket \text{find} \rrbracket^w = \lambda x \lambda p : p \text{ is subjective. } \forall w' \in \text{dox}(x, w)[p(w')]$.

Subjective attitudes VII

► Subjectivity/scales/vagueness (data from Kennedy and Willer 2016)

(9) Kim finds ...

- a. ✓...Lee fascinating.
- b. #...Lee vegetarian, because the only animals he eats are oysters.
- c. #...the sum of two and two equal to four.

(10) Kim considers ...

- a. ✓...Lee fascinating.
- b. ✓...Lee vegetarian, because the only animals he eats are oysters.
- c. #...the sum of two and two equal to four.

(11) Kim thinks/believes that ...

- a. ✓...Lee is fascinating.
- b. ✓...Lee is vegetarian, because the only animals he eats are oysters.
- c. ✓...the sum of two and two is equal to four.

Subjective attitudes VIII

- ▶ Prediction: choice between *find* vs *consider* driven by Maximize Presupposition (Kennedy and Willer 2022)
- ▶ Empirical problem: predicates that are felicitous with both *find* and *consider* yield different readings (Soria-Ruiz 2021; Stojanovic and McNally 2023)

Subjective attitudes IX

- ▶ Further issues (often seen as related; Fusco et al. 2025; Khoo 2026; Sæbø 2009)
 - ▶ Is *find* extensional vs. intensional?
 - ▶ Does *find* encode a (doxastic) attitude?
- ▶ A fully reductionist account (in the spirit of Sæbø 2009): *find* equivalent to overt PPs

- (12)
- a. $\llbracket \text{find} \rrbracket^w = \lambda P_{\text{sett}} \lambda x. P(w)(x)$
 - b. $\llbracket \text{entertaining} \rrbracket^w = \lambda x \lambda j \lambda s. \text{ENTERTAINING}(x, j, s, w)$
 - c. Q finds (Catherine) Janeway entertaining.
 - d. $\llbracket \text{find Janeway entertaining} \rrbracket^w = \llbracket \text{find} \rrbracket^w (\llbracket \text{Janeway entertaining} \rrbracket^w)$
 $= \llbracket \text{find} \rrbracket^w (\lambda w \lambda j \lambda s. \text{ENTERTAINING}(\text{Janeway}, j, s, w))$
 $= \lambda x \lambda s. \text{ENTERTAINING}(\text{Janeway}, x, s, w).$
 - e. Catherine Janeway is entertaining to Q.
 - f. $\llbracket (12d) \rrbracket^w = \llbracket (12e) \rrbracket^w = \lambda s. \text{ENTERTAINING}(\text{Janeway}, Q, s, w)$

Subjective attitudes X

- ▶ Our agenda: *find* $\neq$ *think* (neither is *consider*; see Appendix)
- ▶ Concrete goals:
 - ▶ the linguistic profile of *find*(-verbs)
 - ▶ proposal rooted in event ontology and structured propositions

Core data

► Subjective *find*:

- 1 Small clause syntax: topic-comment structure ($\approx$ categorical judgment)
- 2 (Non-)intensionality
- 3 Lexical aspect: vanilla achievement predicate (not a progressive achievement)
- 4 Evidential restrictions: encounter/experience

► Other *finds*: a spin-off, Polysemy Workshop talk on Aug 14

- locative *find* DP: find the keys, find happiness
- judicial *find*: *find him innocent*
- factive/veridical *find*-that: *find that the vaccine works*
- ...

Sæbø's (2009) puzzle

- ▶ Subject/predicate asymmetry: subjective predicate must be in the main predicate position

- (13)
- a. ✓I find this 20-year old puerh delicious.
 - b. #I find this delicious puerh 20-year old.

- ▶ Original solution: difference in how attributive/predicative subjective predicates compose (wrong because overgenerates for regular embedding, Anand and Korotkova 2022)
- ▶ Our take: structured meaning

Characterizing verbs I

Upshot

- ▶ *Find*: overlooked syntactic differences with *think*
- ▶ Such differences: window on meaning

Characterizing verbs II

- ▶ English subjective *find*:
 - ▶ small clauses (clauses with an adjectival/nominal predicate without tense; first introduced by Williams 1975, see overview in Cardinaletti and Guasti 1995)
 - ▶ interpretational restrictions on embedded subjects (a very novel observation)
- ▶ Growing body of literature: syntactic shape of the complement impacts the meaning of the verb (see references in previous slides)
- ▶ Goal for *find*:
 - ▶ broaden comparison class to other similar verbs
 - ▶ exploit the small clause syntax to explain semantic asymmetries

Characterizing verbs III

► Two types of small clauses in English (Basilico 2003):

- perception verbs: *hear, observe, see*
- **characterizing verbs** (our term, brand-new): *consider, judge, deem, regard as, see as, remember as + find* (not discussed by Basilico)

(14) **Direction perception reports:**

Baby Toby heard/felt/noticed/observed/saw/watched [the Goblin king perform the magic dance].

(15) **Characterization reports:**

- a. Sisko considers [his new position a challenge / an honor / a pleasure cruise / a treat].
- b. Nowadays many governments consider/deem/find/judge [universities dangerous and unprofitable].
- c. Formal semanticists often characterize/classify/define/describe/regard/see/treat/view [attitude predicates as a species of modals].

Characterizing verbs IV

- ▶ Characterizing verbs: $\approx$ 'think of X as having a Y property'
 - ▶ strong nominals as subjects (weak-strong distinction goes back to Milsark 1979; see extensive overview in McNally 2020)
 - ▶ characterizing property as predicate ($\neq$ individual-level; hard to pin down)
- ▶ Proposal:
 - ▶ complements: topic-comment structure (or: categorical judgment, which presupposes existence of the object of judgment; Kuroda 1972, 1990; Ladusaw 1994; see papers in Abraham et al. 2020 for some cross-linguistic discussion)
 - ▶ semantics: structured propositions

Characterizing verbs V

- ▶ Strong nominals: constraints on interpretation & distribution (first proposed by Milsark 1979; see overview in McNally 2020)
 - ▶ Bare plurals: only the kind reading
 - ▶ Weak quantifiers (*no, many*): only the partitive reading

Characterizing verbs VI

- ▶ Bare plurals: multiple interpretations in English (Carlson 1980)
 - ▶ some constructions: an existential and a generic/kind reading
 - ▶ some other constructions, including individual-level predicates: only the generic reading (we don't subscribe to the classification, and use it descriptively, see e.g. Jäger 2001)

(16) Students are tired.

- a. =Some students are tired. [✓∃]
- b. =Students as a class are tired. [✓GEN]

(17) Unicorns are intelligent/entertaining.

- a. ≠Some unicorns are intelligent/entertaining. [#∃]
- b. =Unicorns as a species are intelligent/entertaining. [✓GEN]

Characterizing verbs VII

► Weak quantifiers:

- a classic, Boolean reading (often called existential)
- a partitive reading, paraphrasable as *many/no of X*

► We use *no* for simplicity (see discussion in Ladusaw 1994)

- weak reading: no existential import, compatible with an empty domain
- strong, partitive reading: requires that each member of the non-empty domain lacks the property denoted by the restrictor

(18) No Starfleet captain was well-dressed.

- a. = There were no Starfleet captains present, therefore, no Starfleet captain was well-dressed. [✓Boolean]
- b. = For every St. captain present, they were not well-dressed. [✓partitive]

(19) No unicorn is intelligent/entertaining.

- a. ≠ There are no unicorns, so no unicorn is intelligent/entertaining. [#Boolean]
- b. = For every unicorn, each of them is not intelligent/entertaining. [✓partitive]

Characterizing verbs VIII

- ▶ Embedded subjects of characterizing clauses: signature behavior of strong nominals

- ▶ bare plurals: only the kind interpretation
- ▶ quantifiers: only the partitive interpretation

(20) The teacher considers/deems/judges students tired.

- a. $\neq$ For some students, the teacher considers/deems/judges them tired. [# $\exists$]
- b. $=$ For students as a kind, the teacher considers/deems/judges them tired.
[✓GEN]

(21) Q considered/deemed/judged no Starfleet captain well-dressed.

- a. $\neq$ Q thought that no Starfleet captains were present, so he considered/deemed/judged no Starfleet captain well-dressed. [#Boolean]
- b. $=$ For every Starfleet captain present, Q considered/deemed/judged them not well-dressed. [✓partitive]

- ▶ *Think*-verbs: no such restrictions

Characterizing verbs IX

► *Find*: same pattern

- (22) a. Q finds humans intelligent. [# $\exists$, ✓GEN]
b. Q finds no unicorn intelligent, # because there are no unicorns.
[#Boolean, ✓partitive]

► But if we look only at *find*, we will think that it is selectional restrictions!

- Many subjective predicates: what is often called individual-level predicates (Anand and Korotkova 2022; Pearson 2013; we don't know if non i-level subj.predicates exist)
- Individual-level predicates: strong subjects (Ladusaw 1994; Jäger 2001)
- *Find*-complements: always individual-level predicates

Characterizing verbs X

- ▶ Towards an explanation: embedded subjects are topics (drawing on Basilico 2003; Cohen and Erteschik-Shir 2002; Jäger 2001)
 - ▶ Existential readings of bare plurals: non-referential, hence blocked
 - ▶ Independent discussion of strong nominals
- ▶ Characterizing clauses: topic-comment structure

Bottom line

- ▶ Syntax: needs to be taken seriously
- ▶ Subjects: help uncover semantic and syntactic properties of *find*
- ▶ Characterizing verbs of as a class: restrictions on embedded subjects & predicates
- ▶ Such restrictions not present with *that*-clauses

(Non-)intensionality I

Upshot

- ▶ Previous literature: *find* as a species of *think*
- ▶ Incorrect prediction: interpretation of referential DPs
- ▶ Our take: *find* is/resembles emotive factives

(Non-)intensionality II

- ▶ Hallmark of intensional environments (Farkas 1997; Musan 1997; Percus 2000):
 - ▶ **subject position** (S): 'de re'/'de dicto' ambiguities, can be evaluated wrt attitude worlds or higher world ($\neq$ scope due to Double Vision cases; Quine 1956 and later work)
 - ▶ **predicate position** (P): only 'de dicto', must be evaluated wrt attitude worlds (though see Schwager 2009)

(Non-)intensionality III

► Subject position with *find*: no 'de dicto'(23) The Scared Hiker Case

While hiking in the dark, your companion Kit became scared of what he thought was a mountain lion. You saw, however, that it was a tree.

- a. ✓Kit thought that [a tree trunk]_{de re} / [a mountain lion]_{de dicto} was frightening.
- b. ✓Kit found [a tree trunk]_{de re} frightening.
- c. #Kit found [a mountain lion]_{de dicto} frightening .

- (24) a. ✓Kit thought that [a frightening mountain lion]_{de dicto} was dangerous, even though it was just a harmless tree.
- b. #Kit found [a frightening mountain lion]_{de re} dangerous, even though it was just a harmless tree.

NB (for syntacticians: lack of 'de dicto' for subject positions could be traced to subject-to-object raising, in line with the analysis of prolepsis in, e.g., Japanese and Korean; Lohninger et al. 2022; Yoon 2007)

(Non-)intensionality IV

- ▶ Predicate position with *find*: complex pattern (some data discussed by Bouchard 2012; Coppock 2018; Ducrot 1975)
 - ▶ **objective content**: simultaneous ‘de re’ + ‘de dicto’
 - ▶ **subjective content**: true ‘de dicto’

(25) The Uplifting Movie Case

Pascal and you watched Moonage Daydream together, Brett Morgen’s documentary about David Bowie. You loved it, he didn’t. Additionally, you disagree about the nature of the movie—while you know it was a documentary, he mistakenly thinks that he watched a mockumentary.

- a. ✓Pascal thought that [the uplifting documentary]_{de re} was [a depressing mockumentary]_{de dicto}.
- b. #Pascal found [the uplifting documentary]_{de re} [a depressing mockumentary]_{de dicto}.
- c. #Pascal found *Moonage Daydream* [a depressing mockumentary]_{de dicto}.
- d. #Pascal found *Moonage Daydream* a [depressing]_{de dicto} [documentary]_{de re}.

(Non-)intensionality V

- Against extensional *find* (+SOT data in other languages, worry raised by Sæbø 2009)

- (26) #The uplifting documentary is depressing.
(adapted from Anand and Korotkova 2022:623)
- (27) a. ✓Pascal thought that [the uplifting documentary]_{de re} was
[depressing]_{de dicto}.
b. ✓Pascal found [the uplifting documentary]_{de re} [depressing]_{de dicto}.
- (28) a. #The deciduous tree is evergreen.
b. ✓ Mordecai believes that [the deciduous tree]_{de re} is [evergreen]_{de dicto}.
(Anand and Korotkova 2022:625)

(Non-)intensionality VI

- Pattern: very nearly like emotive factives, with the nature of the attitude supplied by the subjective predicate (support for non-doxastic *find* along the lines of Franzén 2020, 2021; Khoo 2026, plus intensionality)

(29) Q finds Janeway an entertaining human.
 → Janeway is a human at w_0 .
 #Q finds J. an entertaining human, even though she is a Vulcan.
 → $\forall w' \in \text{Dox}(Q, w_0)$, Janeway is a human w' .
 #Q finds J. an entertaining human, even though he believes she is a Vulcan.
 → Q judges Janeway as entertaining.
 #Q finds J. an entertaining human, even though he finds her boring.

(30) Q doesn't find Janeway an entertaining human.
 →, Janeway is a human at (w_0).
 #Q doesn't find J. an entertaining human, because she is a Vulcan.
 → $\forall w' \in \text{Dox}(Q, w_0)$, Janeway is a human w' .
 #Q doesn't find J. an entertaining human, because he believes she is a Vulcan.
 → Q judges Janeway as entertaining.
 ✓Q doesn't find J. an entertaining human, in fact he thinks she is very boring (for a human).

(Non-)intensionality VII

► Pattern summary

- predicate position (P), objective content: evaluated with respect to both worlds (pattern partially discussed in Bouchard 2012; Coppock 2018)
 - predicate position (P), subjective content: only attitude worlds ('de dicto')
 - subject position (S), objective & subjective: only higher world ('de re')
-
- *Find*-verbs: similar to emotive factives (modulo the interpretation of subjective content in the predicate position, which is not-at-issue with factives and at-issue with *find*)

(Non-)intensionality VIII

Bottom line

- ▶ Robust pattern: only subjective content in predicate position allows 'de dicto'
- ▶ Verdict: *find*-verbs are a species of factives (for syntacticians: data for subjects amenable to a different explanation)

Achievement *find* I

Upshot

- ▶ *Find*: overlooked aspectual differences with *think*
 - ▶ *Think*: state (and sometimes an activity)
 - ▶ *Find*: achievement (pace Vardomsкая 2018)
- ▶ Such differences: indicative of underpinning event structure

Achievement *find* II

- ▶ Lexical aspect (Aktionsart) (Vendler 1957; see overview in Filip 2020)
 - ▶ window on the event composition and argument structure of the predicates
 - ▶ helps group verbs into linguistically useful categories and make predictions about their behavior
- ▶ Attitude verbs: Neo-Davidsonian predicates of events (Hacquard 2010)
- ▶ Aspect of attitude predicates: very much understudied (though see Bondarenko et al. 2024; Özyıldız 2021 on its role in question embedding and Anand and Korotkova 2024; Korotkova and Anand 2024; Rawlins and White 2019; Zuchewicz 2020 on change-of-state factives)
- ▶ English: *find* $\neq$ *think* aspectually (pace Vardomsкая 2018)

Achievement *find* III

- ▶ Achievement predicates: punctual, change-of-state eventualities
(Dowty 1979; Kearns 2003; Piñón 1997; Rothstein 2004)
 - ▶ Telic: encode culminations
 - ▶ Non-durative: lack duration
 - ▶ Non-dynamic: lack progression

Achievement *find* IV

- Find: not a state (unlike *think*)

The Fleeting Beauty Case:

We're watching an unusually bright meteor shower, with several fireballs and even one purple star.

- (31) Ongoing, non-habitual simple present: ✓*think*, #*find*
- ✓Right now I think that the the purple shooting star is dazzling/exquisite/glorious.
 - #Right now I find the the purple shooting star dazzling/exquisite/glorious.
- (32) *For*-adverbials: ✓*think*, #*find*
- For a minute/moment/split second, I thought that the purple shooting star was disappointing/distressing/ominous, but then came to adore it.
 - #For a minute/moment/split second, I found the purple shooting star disappointing/distressing/ominous, but then came to adore it.

Achievement *find* V► Find: a simple, instantaneous achievement

- (33) **In-adverbials:** #*find*
 #In a minute/fraction of a second, I found the purple shooting star
 dazzling/glorious/ominous.
- (34) **The progressive:** #*find*
 #I was finding the purple shooting star dazzling/glorious/ominous.
 #The more I looked at it, the more I was finding the purple shooting star
 dazzling/glorious/ominous.
- (35) **Almost:** ✓counterfactual, #scalar (see references and discussion of
almost-ambiguities in Grob 2022)
 I never hated him, though. I almost found him very charming and handsome.
(web)
 = I could have found him charming and handsome, but didn't. [counterfactual]
 ≠ I started finding him charming and handsome, but didn't finish. [scalar]

Achievement *find* VI

NB Characterizing verbs may differ: some are states

- (36) a. Right now I consider the purple shooting star ominous.
b. Right now I regard you as a friend.

Achievement *find* VII

Q So why think that *find* could be a state?

A The generic conspiracy: simple present, bare plurals ...

(37) Q finds humans entertaining.

► We'll come back to this!

Achievement *find* VIII

Bottom line

- ▶ Aspect: needs to be taken seriously
- ▶ Achievement predicates:
 - ▶ complex eventualities
 - ▶ often with a causal structure (cf. Nadathur 2023; Nadathur and Siegal 2025)
- ▶ *Find*: more complex than *think*

Evidence/encounter I

Upshot

- ▶ Previous literature: various stances on the experience requirement of *find*
- ▶ Our not-so-novel observation: *find*-verbs encode evidential restrictions (Anand and Korotkova 2018; Korotkova and Anand 2021)
- ▶ These restrictions: part of event structure

Evidence/encounter II

- ▶ Proposal: *find* encodes firsthand experience (put forth, but not argued for, by Stephenson 2007 and first suggested by Borkin 1973)
- (38) #Natasha **found** the pu-erh you just brewed **delicious**, but she never tried it.
 - ▶ Counter-proposal: *find* selects for predicates that trigger their own experience requirement ('acquaintance inference'), e.g., *delicious* or *beautiful* (Bylinina 2017; Muñoz 2019)
- (39) #The pu-erh you just brewed is **delicious**, but I never tried it.
 - ▶ Defense of the original proposal:
 - ▶ *find*: allows complements without independent experiential constraints (Korotkova and Anand 2021)
 - ▶ encounter: part of event structure
 - ▶ This requirement: part of a large family of Acquaintance Inferences (term from Ninan 2014)
 - ▶ May 2027, MIT: Acquaintance-themed workshop

Evidence/encounter III

► The Authentic Food case

- (40) Context 1 (experience): *The speaker has tried the food.*
 Context 2 (lack of experience): *The speaker read reviews about this restaurant.*
- The food at this restaurant is **authentic**.
 Context 1: ✓, Context 2: ✓
 - I **think** that the food in this restaurant is **authentic**.
 Context 1: ✓ (focus on *think*), Context 2: ✓
 - I **find** the food in this restaurant **authentic**.
 Context 1: ✓, Context 2: #
- Same pattern with other non-experiential predicates: *bumpy* (Solt 2018), *challenging*, *competitive*, *difficult* ... (possibly all *tough*-movement predicates)
- NB *Think*-verbs: no evidential restrictions (same goes for *believe*, which is simply weaker; Koev 2025)
- Such data: robust pattern across languages

Evidence/encounter IV

- ▶ Some accounts: *find* simply requires good grounds. but no experience (a simplification of ?)
- ▶ Incorrect prediction: *find* should be felicitous in stereotypical reasoning cases

(41) The Stereotypical Reasoning case

There is a new academic boycott. You don't believe in such measures, as they only breed hatred and polarization and ultimately don't target the real perpetrators.

- ✓ This new academic boycott is meaningless and reprehensible. I've no idea what exactly it amounts to, but I don't need to.
- ✓ I consider this new academic boycott meaningless and reprehensible. I've no idea what exactly it amounts to, but I don't need to.
- ✗ I find this new academic boycott meaningless and reprehensible. I've no idea what exactly it amounts to, but I don't need to.
- ✗ I abhor/detest/dislike/hate this new academic boycott. I've no idea what exactly it amounts to, but I don't need to.

Evidence/encounter V

- ▶ Evidential grounding: also applicable to vivid/simulation cases (cf. discussion in Vardomskaya 2018 on *find*)
- ▶ The Lived Experience case (think of it simulation)

(42) [The Black Death is a 14th century epidemic of bubonic plague in Europe.]

Context 1: *An out-of-the-blue remark.*

✓ Context 2: *The speaker was immersed in archival work, reading historical accounts, practically living in the events, etc.*

I **found** the Black Death **devastating**.

▶ Find-verbs:

- ▶ **vividness** requirements: often proposed for e.g. *remember* and *imagine* (Liefke 2023, 2024; Stephenson 2010; Vendler 1979)
- ▶ we need a good account of those independently!
- ▶ with *find*: clearly facilitated by affect

Evidence/encounter VI

► Constraints on *find*

- closely related to psychological predicates
- may be couched in terms of **ideal grounding** (Cariani 2022)
- interact semantically with other **evidential expressions**, including epistemic modals (Anand and Korotkova 2018; Korotkova and Anand 2021)

Evidence/encounter VII

- ▶ Further support for experience: the stative *find* conspiracy
 - ▶ *Find*: compatible with simple present, w/ generic reading
 - ▶ This reading: only possible when experience is repeatable

(43) *A stowaway on an alien ship, leaving Earth for good, muses about what they'll miss. They couldn't bring any photographs, and there is no technology that would allow them to see their home planet.* (modeled after the case of Jan Rodrick in Arthur C. Clarke's *Childhood's End*)

- a. #I find the Matterhorn beautiful/easy to climb, even though I'll never see it again.
- b. ✓The Matterhorn beautiful/easy to climb, even though I'll never see it again.



Evidence/encounter VIII

- ▶ Maybe *find* is just an experiential predicate? No attitude encoded?
- ▶ No! Experience is not main point of an utterance, as diagnosed by answerhood patterns (QUD notion of at-issueness; Simons et al. 2017; Tonhauser 2013; Tonhauser et al. 2013)

- (44)
- a. **QUD about opinion:**
NATASHA: What do you think about the mapo tofu I made last night?
PRANAV: ✓I found it authentic.
 - b. **QUD about experience:**
NATASHA: I made mapo tofu yesterday. Have you tried it?
PRANAV: ??I found it authentic.

- ▶ Experience requirement: projects in the same way as classical presuppositions (Anand and Korotkova 2018); can be treated as a novel not-at-issue contribution

NB Evidential restrictions in language are almost always peripheral to the main point of an utterance, at least by default (Korotkova 2020, accepted; Murray 2014)

Evidence/encounter IX

Bottom line

- ▶ Robust cross-linguistic pattern: *find*-verbs require experience (experience $\neq$ specificity; see Appendix)
- ▶ Verdict: this inference is semantically encoded (see Appendix on coercion)

Taking stock

Find: a distinguished linguistic profile not shared by *think*-verbs

- ▶ Small clause syntax + subject restrictions: property of characterizing verbs
- ▶ Behavior of referential DPs: similar to emotive factives
- ▶ Event structure: vanilla achievement predicate
- ▶ Experience: part of event structure, similar to psych predicates

Goal:

- ▶ derive this constellation of properties in a principled way

Proposal

Upshot

Find talks about a complex eventuality of opinion-formation grounded in experience.

See handout.

Outlook

► Find-verbs

- ① select for opinion-complements
- ② pattern like emotive factives with respect to projection
- ③ pattern like achievement predicates
- ④ lexically encode event of encounter
- ⑤ require strong nominals in the complement

► Proposal

- ① argument structure
- ② event composition
- ③ topic-comment division of labor in the complement

Saucerful of *finds*

- ▶ Polysemy of *find* (see Vardomsкая 2018 for some discussion)
 - ▶ DP complements: *find the treasure/find a starman waiting in the sky*
 - ▶ small clause complements: *find delicious*
 - ▶ infinitival complements: *find to be false*
 - ▶ clausal complements: *find that the Sun rotates faster near the equator*
- ▶ All senses:
 - ▶ the 'encounter' component
 - ▶ change-of-state
 - ▶ further support for a knowledge-based analysis
- ▶ Desideratum for a theory: capture this semantic core (cf. Djärv 2023 on *know*; Wimmer 2024 on *believe*)
 - ▶ similar event structure
 - ▶ amenable to the same general treatment
 - ▶ polysemy isn't random! we need more research on the polysemy of attitudes!

Outstanding issues

- ▶ What is the cross-linguistic behavior of *find*-verbs? (come work with us!)
- ▶ 'Pure' opinion verbs: a lexical gap (for all we know)
- ▶ Such gaps: help uncover conceptual architecture (cf. the widely discussed case of *not ... all*, Enguehard and Spector 2021; Maldonado et al. 2024)
- ▶ Find and concepts: how is 'judgment' different from 'belief'? (cf. Khoo 2025)

Experience $\neq$ specificity

- *Find* licenses **non-specific** subjects (see Farkas and Brasoveanu 2019 for an overview)

- The Needle in a Haystack case

(45) Context: *Ormus Cama, a starting musician, is mixing a recording involving many people singing in unison. He detects that someone is off-key, but with a sufficiently large number of voices and highly similar voices, it may be hard to know how many.*

- a. ✓ Ormus **found** at least one singer **off-key**.
- b. # Ormus **found** two singers **off-key**.

(46) Context: *Sampling some freshly made guacamole, a foodie determines that some subset of the avocados were not ready to be mashed.*

- a. ✓ The foodie **found** at least one avocado **under-ripe**.
- b. # The foodie **found** two avocados **under-ripe**.

- Experience is required, specificity is not

Experience: encoding vs. coercing

- ▶ Our key argument: *find* takes non-experiential predicates
- ▶ Maybe *find* doesn't encode experience, but selects for predicates that encode it and coerces *authentic* into something more experiential?
 - ▶ Taste predicates have been argued to take experiencer arguments, thematically (Bylinina 2017; Schaffer 2011; see also Kaiser and Lee 2017)
 - ▶ Diagnostic: overt PPs, *tasty to*
- ▶ Prediction: if *find* does the same as overt 'judge' PPs (cf. Sæbø 2009), all predicates that embed under *find* should take overt PPs
- ▶ Prediction not borne out: no good way to predict which predicates take overt 'judge' PPs

Upshot

- ▶ *Consider*: stronger than *think*, weaker than *find* (Coppock 2018; Kennedy and Willer 2022; Muñoz 2019)
- ▶ Empirical picture: linguistic profile different from *find* and *think*

Reconsidering *consider* II

► Old observation

- Ban on purely objective complements (unlike vanilla doxastics)
- Semantic selection for vague complements (including subjective language)

- (47)
- a. Kim #**considers**/# **finds** the sum of two and two **equal to four**.
 - b. Kim ✓**considers**/# **finds** Lee **vegetarian**, because the only animals he eats are oysters. (Kennedy and Willer 2016)

Reconsidering *consider* III

► Novel observations

- Standard **intensional effects** ('de dicto' in predicate position)
- **No experience** requirement (like *think*)
- Only **strong nominals** as small clause subjects
- **Question embedding**, including with DPs (interpretation different from rogatives like *ask* or responsiveness like *find out*)

- (48) Based on her performance in court, Sven ✓**considers**/# **finds** Maria **a good lawyer**, even though she's a prosecutor.
- (49) *Jake Sisko, after watching his closest friend and his high-ranking officer father, but never serving himself:*
- a. ✓A career in Starfleet is **difficult**.
 - b. I ✓**consider**/# **found**/**find** a career in Starfleet **difficult**.
- (50) Have you ever **considered** whether androids could experience emotions?

Reconsidering *consider* IV

Bottom line

- ▶ Verdict: *consider* belongs to a natural class of inquisitive predicates along with *ponder*, *contemplate*, *deliberate* (see discussion in Roberts 2021)
- ▶ Aspiration: derive vagueness with small clauses from the inquisitive component

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