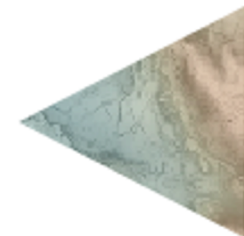


# ***(DE)TERMINOLOGISATION PROCESSES IN WINE TASTING NOTES : HOW EXPRESSIVE ARE CANONICAL AND NON- CANONICAL HEDONIC MARKERS?***

Panel « Subjectivity and Expressivity in LSP-Research »  
Tartu & online – 13 May 2022





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# STRUCTURE OF THE PRESENTATION

1. Scientific context and research questions
  2. Terms and non-terms in sensory discourses
  3. From sensory terms to hedonic markers: the hidden dimension?
  4. Conclusions and perspectives
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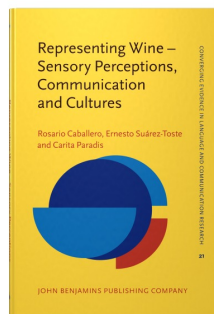
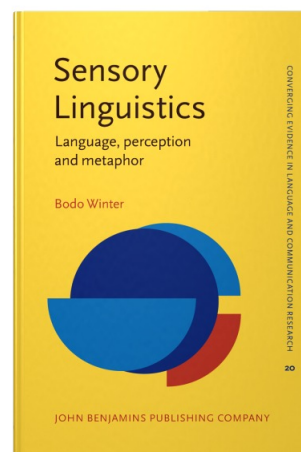
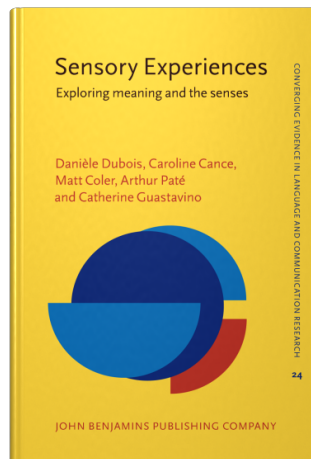
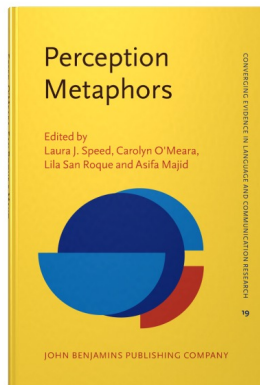
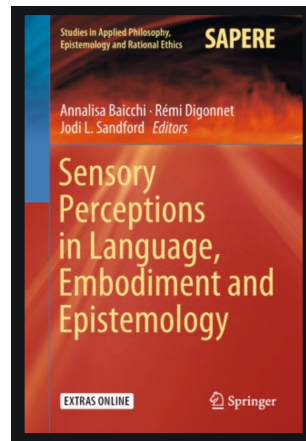
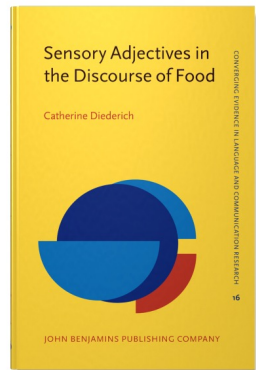
# 1. SCIENTIFIC CONTEXT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

***The « local » starting point:***

***winespeak as a research object for linguists***

- strong interest in a multidisciplinary approach of winespeak at the intersection of chemistry, sensory analysis, psychology ... and linguistics in various forms (literature overview in Wislocka Breit 2014)
- new forms of digital communication on wine: blogs, internet forums by wine lovers, apps with two major consequences :
  - New fuzzy definitions of prescriptive and descriptive / marketing / evaluative discourses on wine
  - New focus on (personalized) recommendation
- Increased interest in the cultural aspects of wine tasting with a focus on cognitive processes

# Cognitive Linguistics as reference framework



- **Prototype semantics** (ten Hacken 2010, 2015, Gautier 2018)
- **Conceptual metaphors** (Speed et al. 2019)
- **Frame semantics and CxG** (Bach 2021a, b)
- **Cultural (Cognitive) Linguistics** (Sharifian 2017): as « a recently developed discipline with multidisciplinary origins that explores the relationship between language and cultural conceptualisations. In particular, Cultural Linguistics explores the features of human languages that **encode culturally constructed conceptualisations of the whole range of human experience.** »

## ***A research challenge:***

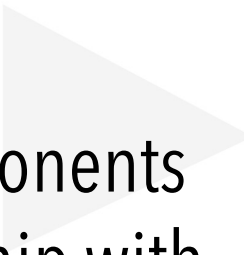

- Traditional winespeak is « just » the tip of the iceberg:

« When you were a little kid, did anyone have to teach you to taste your milk? Did you have someone read you glowing reviews of the chocolate milk in your sippy cup? OK, if you're my age you didn't have a sippy cup, but you get the point -- **if something tastes good, you know it.** And when you smell or taste something stinky, **do you know it's stinky or does someone have to tell you it's stinky?** So, why do we need experts (and I am one of those) to teach, tell and advise us on what wine tastes like? » (Marlene Rossman, wine writer, 2008)

“I originally became interested in the topic because I found people at dinner parties, usually men, would hold up a glass of wine, letting the candlelight shine through, swirl it around, and make some pronouncement such as ‘This is soft and sensuous – quite an improvement over the 67’s, which were unstylish and flabby. Another diner guest might reply: “Yes, it’s soft, but I would say it’s graceful rather than sensuous.’ A brief discussion might then follow on which adjectives, sensuous or graceful, best fits the wine. **I had assumed that the the words had little or no meaning, and that this kind of verbal display served largely to amuse or possibly to impress other people** (Lehrer 1975, 901)



## ***Research questions:***

- How to challenge the traditional objectivist approach in terminology by challenging its relevance for sensory terms?
  - How to illustrate the strengths of a more constructional and empirical approach which seems to be 'natural' in all domains linked with sensory perceptions (Cance et al. 2009, Maxim 2009, Morange 2009, Vion 2009)?
  - How to capture the evaluative and emotional components in wine descriptions and to describe their relationship with hedonic markers?
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## 2. TERMS AND NON-TERMS IN SENSORY DISCOURSES

### *Sensory discourses as LSP-research object*

- A new definition of LSP-research **beyond vertical and horizontal** classifications from traditional approaches (Gautier 2014, 2019, Bach 2021 a, b):
  - *Multidimensional / multimodal stimulus* as a starting point (here: wine) (vs. an academic or a professional field)
  - Sensory *experience*
  - *Verbalization* of the experience relying on linguistic resources entailing terminology (but not only terminology!) and on memorization
  - *Communicative intention* depending on situation / context

## ***What is and what place for sensory terminology?***

- **Wine terminology** is often confused with **(wine) sensory descriptors**. Can wine descriptors be described on **a mere objectivist** basis? (1)

"The use of wine tasting descriptors allows the taster to qualitatively relate the aromas and flavors that the taster experiences and can be used in **assessing** the overall quality of wine. Wine writers, like Karen MacNeil, author of The Wine Bible, differentiate wine tasters from casual enthusiasts; tasters attempt to give an objective description of the wine's taste (often taking a systematic approach to tasting), casual enthusiasts **appreciate wine** but pause their examination sooner than tasters." (Wikipedia, Wine tasting descriptors)

- objectivization and its limits
- degree of precision and exhaustiveness

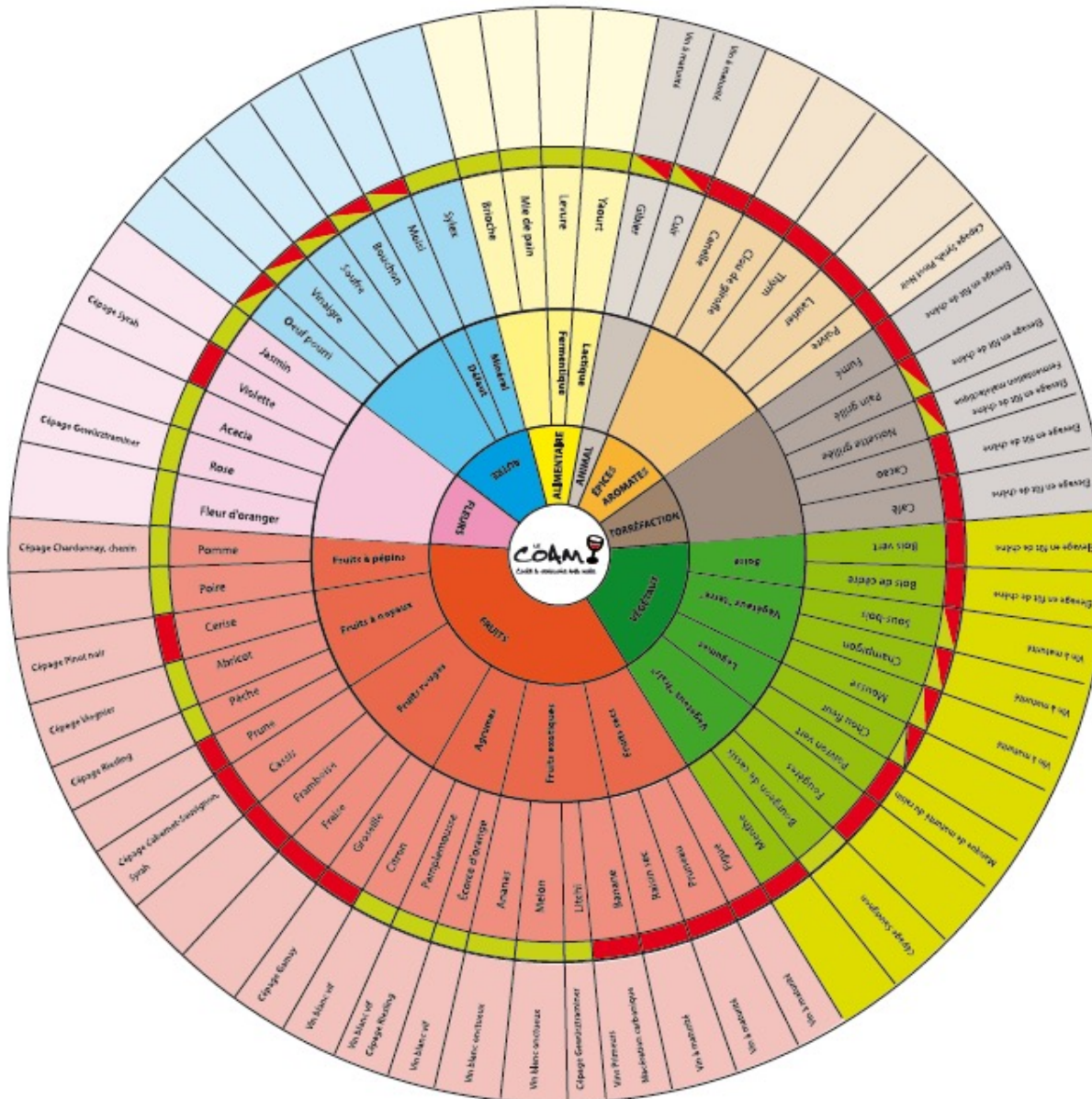


- Can wine descriptors be described on a mere objectivist basis? (2)

Words have meaning, but their definitions can be elastic, especially when it comes to wine terms and tasting notes. Certain terms crop up frequently to describe the flavor, aroma and texture of wine. **Slightly removed from their literal meaning**, these words and descriptions often refer to particular traits in wine

- terminologisation processes (non-literal meaning)
  - experienced-based categorization
- Three terminological levels (Gautier 2018) with overlapping zones :
    - Terms that can be defined on an **objectivist basis**: wine grapes, description of soil types, etc.
    - Sensory descriptors as such that are **prototypes**. These prototypes are also **represented by / associated with wine prototypes**. (Gautier Bach 2017, 2020)
    - Hedonic markers that are **not terms**.

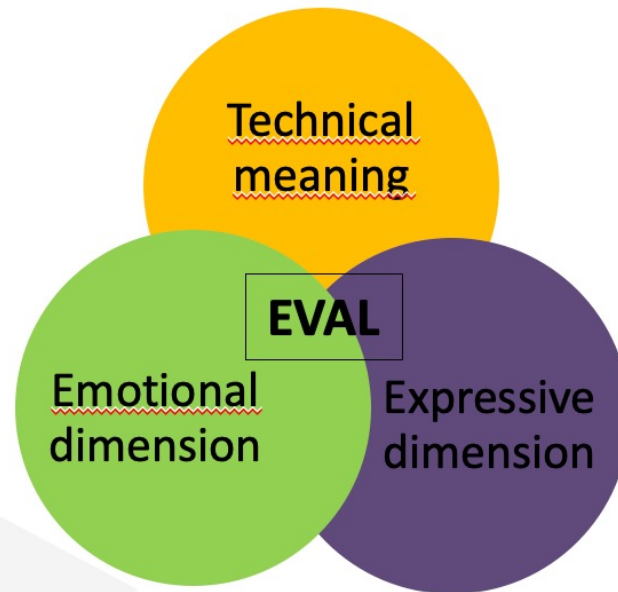
***Wine descriptors are prototype-based and culture sensitive***



il y a ce qui est  
Meursault qui est  
vraiment une **référence**  
mondiale pour les  
Chardonnay avec le côté  
beurré brioché un peu  
gras toute **la famille** des  
vins avec **la même**  
**palette aromatique** ici  
on dit que ça  
*\*beursaulte* alors  
*\*beursauter* (corpus  
Bach 2017)

### 3. FROM SENSORY TERMS TO HEDONIC MARKERS: THE HIDDEN DIMENSION?

Wine drinking is *basically an aesthetic experience*; so quite naturally, the **evaluative dimension is the most important one**. In fact, the evaluative dimension **permeates every other** dimension, even 'descriptive' ones. (Lehrer 1975 : 903, souligné par nous, LG)



# Constructing wine descriptors prototypes

## *Subjectivity as definitory level*

Emotions	Expressivity	Evaluation
<b>Experiential</b> level [«Any mental experience that has high intensity and high hedonic content», Treen <i>et al.</i> 2018, 2]	<b>Enunciative</b> level	<b>Pragmatic</b> level
6 basic emotions: <b>happiness</b> , sadness, fear, anger, <b>surprise</b> and <b>disgust</b> (Ekman 1972), completed list (Ekman 1990): amusement, <b>contempt</b> , <b>contentment</b> , embarrassment, excitement, guilt, pride in achievement, relief, <b>satisfaction</b> , <b>sensory pleasure</b> , and shame	Expressive <b>vocabulary verbalizing</b> emotions	<b>Recommendation vocabulary</b>

## ***A brief case study on minerality in German***

- Enological starting point (Deneulin *et al.* 2014, Gautier *et al.* 2015, Domont 2019):

Minerality tends to refer to notions that **cannot easily be described** in terms of fruit or spice. For some, minerality comes across as a smoky, struck-match note. For others, it's akin to petrichor, the smell of rain on earth or stone. Mineral became fashionable as a descriptor, and is now almost meaningless due to overuse. Champagne and Chablis can seemingly taste of chalk, and Riesling can have notes of slate, but it's better to spell these things out. If you come across this word, it almost always refers to subtle, stony flavors, mostly in acidic whites.

**The term is always positive and suggests complexity.**

(<https://www.winemag.com/gallery/wine-tasting-terms-and-what-they-really-mean/#gallery-carousel-12>)

# mineralisch as a descriptor « among others »:

- Well-known scenario: soil > mineral salts > *terroir* (Gautier / Parizot 2022)  
> minerality in wine



HEINER LOBENBERG ÜBER:

## Brauneberger Riesling J trocken 2020

Lobenberg: Die Nase ist erstaunlich fein und elegant, für den anderswo enorm fruchtexpressiven Jahrgang ist dieser Wein hier unglaublich steinig, feinziseliert, sehr dezent und total geschliffen. Elegante weiße Frucht mit zarten gelbfruchtigen Einflüssen, Mirabelle, Aprikose, weißer Pfirsich, ein Hauch von Muschelschalen und Meersalz. Die Finesse des J ist wunderschön, ich liebe das sehr. Diese schlanke Silhouette, dieses ultrafeine, schieferwürzig, feinsalzige, geradezu schwebende. Kaum jemand arbeitet diese Feinheiten von Brauneberg so geschliffen und präzise heraus wie Oliver. Er ist schon ein großer Künstler was das angeht. Griffig, zupackend und mit deutlich erhöhter Präsenz am Gaumen gegenüber dem zuvor probierten Gutswein. Der J hat schon deutlich mehr Substanz und Rückgrat, aber eben vor allem durch sein feines mineralisches Skelett und nicht durch Wucht oder duftiges Aroma. 94-95/100

94-95  
/100

- Technical « objectivistic » dimension around the semantic field of « stone » : *steinig, geschliffen, Muschelschalen, Meersalz*
- Evaluative dimension: *fein und elegant, schlanke Silhouette, ultrafein, schieferwürzig...*
- Hedonistic dimension: *griffig, zupackend, Präsenz am Gaumen*

## **mineralisch as a descriptor « among others »:**

- **Fossilization processes** in language use leading to a kind of determinologisation:

- Mostly (always?) used in formulaic chains of descriptors:

und dort ernten wir hum sehr selektiv Rieslinge die **sehr komplex sehr würzig sehr schieferig sehr mineralisch sehr salzig** sind (DE\_VG\_TH\_01)

- Positive end evaluation due to the combinatorics with axiological adjectives

Sonnenbegünstigte Schiefer-Steillagen prägen diesen trockenen Riesling von der Mosel. Er präsentiert sich **elegant mit feinen mineralischen Noten** und verweilt noch lange angenehm am Gaumen. Er eignet sich besonders zu frischem Salat, Fisch, Vorspeisen und hellem Fleisch. Trinktemperatur: 10-12°C

## **mineralisch as a descriptor « among others »:**

- Drifting towards stereotypisation, especially *mineralisch* as a feminine wine quality

die Wurzel bei der Alten Reben sind 25 Meter lang die gehen also sehr tief in die Erde bei dem blauen Stein geht es schwer da gehen sie wie einen Fall Wurzeln nach unten und bei rot und grau bleiben sie relativ weit oben und deswegen sind die hier diese beiden etwas fruchtiger und der ist mineralischer (DE\_VG\_MO\_01)

oft ist es so dass **die Damen eher die roten Schiefer und die Herren den blauen Schiefer bevorzugen** (DE\_VG\_MO\_01)



## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

### *For LSP-research*

- Towards a **re-examination**, that begun a long time ago (Lerat 1995), of **specialized discourses** in their relations 1) with the non-specialized use of language (**ordinary use?**) and 2) with the theoretical and methodological achievements of linguistic research, especially within the **cognitive framework**
- Towards a **re-theorization of terminology** from a non-normative perspective, accepting variation, synonymy, connotations, etc.
- Towards the recognition of a **"consumer" terminology** likely to constitute a "system" with both conceptual and emotional-expressive-evaluative content?



## ***Especially for sensory discourses***

- Taking **oenological discourse** out of its status of "esoteric curiosity" and making it an object of study with its own functioning that must be brought to light

In fact, I have listened to a number of entertaining conversations about wine, always involving men, the obvious purpose being to show off one's knowledge, experience and expertise. (Lehrer 1975 : 901)

- Extending the **spectrum to other sensory discourses**, including senses that are less often called upon (touch for textures) and holistic approaches (urban environments)
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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!**

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