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# The outcome-sensitivity of reasonable” – semantic, pragmatic, or evidence for bias?

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## Abstract

The paper presents evidence in favour of the outcome-sensitivity of the expression ”reasonable” (and others like it), and explores whether this constitutes a semantic phenomenon, a pragmatic one, or neither - and would thus simply be evidence of an outcome bias. This is of incredible importance to the law, in particular the Common Law, where the reasonable person standard plays a very prominent role. The data (total N> 7400) has been collected in the US, Japan and Germany.

**Keywords:** semantics/ pragmatics distinction, interpretation of outcome, sensitivity, pragmatic v. bias, cross, cultural research, legal language

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