

ISLE Workshop:
Investigating stance constructions

Abstracts

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Additives with Attitude: The *me-too* construction and the Minimal Stance Differentialia

The so-called additive construction (*me too, I think so too, I don't like it either*, and related structures) highlights an enduring mystery concerning the rules, if any, which govern the use of additives. The additive construction is deemed obligatory in some contexts (Kaplan 1984), but is considered either optional or pragmatically inappropriate in others (Eckardt & Fränkel 2012). What is the relevant context for the use of this construction? This paper seeks to identify the structural, cognitive, and interactional factors that govern the use of the *me-too* construction, a type of additive construction. Key to this approach is the recognition that language users use constructions strategically, not only to express their thoughts and enact their stances, but also to coordinate their stances with the stances taken by others. This may be analyzed in terms of the dialogic syntax (Du Bois 2014) of stance alignment (Du Bois 2007), in line with the recent developments in the analysis of dynamic processes of meaning negotiation in interaction (Ginzburg 2012; Gregoromichelaki & Kempson 2013).

In this paper, I argue that the use of the additive construction cannot be adequately characterized by conventional accounts that focus on the addition of referential content (Eckardt & Fränkel 2012). Rather, I argue for the importance of analyzing additive constructions in relation to the alignment of epistemic and affective stance in dialogic interaction. I show that stance constructions like the *me-too* construction require attention to stance relativity, involving the speakers' epistemic, modal, and affective stance in relation to the parallel stance of their interlocutor (Du Bois 2007, 2014). A pragmatic principle of autonomy requires the current speaker to distinguish her stance from that of a prior interlocutor. As distance between the propositional content of the respective utterances approaches zero, the requirement for a Minimum Stance Differential kicks in, becoming virtually obligatory. Thus, the dynamics of stance alignment triggers a pragmatic process which invokes a pragmatic, not syntactic, requirement for use of the additive construction.

The empirical basis for this paper draws on extensive analysis of additive constructions in the data of naturally occurring spoken language use, based on the Santa Barbara Corpus (Du Bois et al. 2000-2005). I provide quantitative corpus evidence to show that the additive construction is regularly characterized by (i) first person subject; (ii) affective or epistemic stance/positioning verbs; (iii) pro-forms and ellipsis; (iv) right edge or sentence-final position, and (v) accenting of the Minimum Stance Differential marker and deaccenting of the residue.

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Evelien Keizer (University of Vienna)

Stance adverbs in Functional Discourse Grammar

The aim of this paper is to show how so-called “stance adverbs” (e.g. *briefly, frankly, sadly, allegedly, hopefully, possibly, obviously* and *cleverly*) are dealt with in Functional Discourse Grammar (FDG; Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008). As is well-known, these adverbs form a very heterogeneous group, in terms of both function and syntactic behaviour. This paper will show that each subclass of stance adverbs belongs to (“modifies”) a specific layer within the clause (or rather within the Discourse Act in FDG), and will supply the discourse-pragmatic, semantic and syntactic criteria used to determine the appropriate layer of analysis. The discussion will be based on data retrieved from two corpora of contemporary English (the BYU-British National Corpus (Davies 2004) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies 2008)), which will be analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

After a brief introduction to the relevant features of theory of FDG, in particular to its top-down organization and its various levels and layers of analysis, the criteria for assigning stance adverbials to a particular layer will be discussed. These criteria include the various discourse-pragmatic and modal function(s) of these adverbs (stylistic, illocutionary, attitudinal, hearsay, volitional, epistemic, evidential; e.g. Fraser 1996; Biber et al. 1999; Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008; Halliday & Matthiessen 2014), their truth-conditionality (e.g. Ifantidou 1993; Keizer forthcoming a), and their syntactic behaviour (with regard to clefting, coordination, questioning, pronominalization and ellipsis, modification, embedding, and (relative) clausal position; cf. Quirk et al. 1985; Espinal 1991; Cinque 1999; Ernst 2002; Keizer forthcoming b).

In addition, it will be shown how the theory of FDG deals with the distinction between extra-clausal (roughly speaking prosodically non-integrated) and clause-internal (roughly speaking prosodically integrated) uses of one and the same adverb (see Keizer forthcoming b). Clause-internal uses of stance adverbs will be analysed as modifiers belonging to a particular layer of analysis within a single Discourse Act, while extra-clausal uses will be analysed as separate (dependent or independent) Discourse Acts. It will be argued that these extra-clausal adverbs differ from intra-clausal ones not only prosodically (in the sense that they tend to form a separate Intonational Phrase), but also in having their own illocution, rhetorical and discourse-pragmatic functions and preferred position vis-à-vis the host.

It will be concluded that FDG, with its top-down organization and its many levels and layers, allows for a systematic and insightful analysis of the different subclasses of stance (and other) adverbs, which not only captures their specific functions (discourse-pragmatic, rhetorical and semantic), but also accounts for their formal (syntactic and prosodic) properties.

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Parenthetically it may be observed that ... Are there discourse structuring stance markers as well as discourse structuring discourse markers?

In their seminal paper on adverbial stance markers Conrad & Biber (2000) identify style stance adverbials that “comment on the manner of speaking ... state the way in which information is being presented or is meant to be understood”, e.g. *frankly* and *briefly*. Style stance adverbials have received little attention in later work, e.g. Englebretson (2007). The aim of the present paper is to identify a set of metalinguistic style stance markers that are used to comment on the speaker’s view of the coherence, given certain norms, of the speaker/writer’s contribution to the discourse. This set includes markers of topic orientation (Fraser 2009a): return to a previous topic (*returning to*), continuation (*as I was saying*), digression from the current topic (*incidentally*), and change of topic (*on a different note*). These and other expressions such as *anyway*, *by the way*, *as far as* are all identified as discourse markers (DMs) in Fraser (2009b). However, such titles as “From stance markers to discourse markers” (Fitzmaurice 2004) and “Discourse markers as stance markers” (Sakita 2013) imply that there is a difference between stance markers and DMs. Neither Fitzmaurice nor Sakita discuss the difference. I suggest that it can be specified with respect to three gradient continua: (i) low to high frequency; (ii) subjectivity to intersubjectivity; and (iii) contentful lexical specificity to procedural, pragmatic underspecificity. Stance markers are relatively low in frequency and (inter)subjectivity; they have some lexical specificity. By contrast, DMs are relatively high in frequency, (inter)subjectivity, and pragmatic underspecificity. Additionally, stance marker use may precede discourse marker use historically, but not vice versa. I explore these differences with reference to a set of expressions that can be used as topic-shifters (Mittwoch et al. 2002: 779): *parenthetically*, *incidentally*, and *by the way*. As stance markers, *parenthetically* and *incidentally* occur relatively infrequently and have mainly lexical meaning. While they are subjective, they are not used intersubjectively. By contrast, as a DM, *by the way*, which was in Early Modern English a stance marker, is now used comparatively frequently and is becoming increasingly procedural, subjective, and, in some contexts, intersubjective. Data are drawn from the following Brigham Young University corpora (<https://corpus.byu.edu>): BNC, COCA, COHA, EEBO, and TIME.

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Investment in stancetaking: *just sayin'* and *I mean*

As stance and stancetaking have become more central to analyses that account for patterns of language use, the need for a theoretical underpinning for stancetaking analyses has become more urgent, especially as linguists and other researchers begin to try to attempt quantitative as well as qualitative analyses of stancetaking in conversation. This paper briefly articulates such a theory, building on the advances of Du Bois (2007). I define stance as the relationship of an animator (in Goffman's 1981 terms) to a created figure in talk, the talk in the utterance, and the interlocutors in the speech event. I argue that each utterance is composed of three dimensions of stancetaking that are always present and represent one of these relationships: evaluation, investment, and alignment, respectively.

These dimensions can be motivated more completely by appealing to Jakobson's (1957/1971) notions of speech event and narrated event (see also Wortham & Reyes 2015; Kockelman 2004). In this view, a lower investment stance marks a mismatch between the narrated and speech events. In essence, investment could be thought of as something akin to the strength of an assertion, claim, or speech act, in which the animator is more responsible for it. Alignment shows a greater match between narrated events from different animators and contribution to the shared project of interaction (aka 'cooperation').

In order to demonstrate these dimensions, I show how this stancetaking model best explains the use of two English phrasal discourse markers: *just sayin(g)* and *I mean*. *Just* is a versatile lexical item that in general works as a downtowner, and by itself can be used to reduce what it modifies on a scale, often presupposing that the modified item is not high on some scale. So *I'm just sayin'* suggests that the act of saying is lower on some scale than some other act of uttering, such as *insisting* or *arguing*. This downgrading of the verb *say* is a reflexive distancing of the animator from the principal. Put another way, it separates the narrated event and the speech event. The syntactically integrated version of this phrase has changed to a standalone discourse marker that appears utterance-finally, which in interaction tends to be a way of leveling criticism without taking responsibility for the critical force of the utterance. I show how this use is used for this function in Twitter posts.

I mean is shown by Maynard (2013) to defend complaints against criticism, and appear in similar sequences as self-repairs. In terms of stancetaking, this view suggests that *I mean* functions to signal aspects of investment and alignment. In terms of investment, the *I mean* prefaced utterance invests the speaker further in the complaint, even while they might be revising the complaint. In alignment, it modulates a potential disalignment with the animator of the previous turn. I expand this view to investigate how *I mean* is used as a complete turn, and in other contexts. In these contexts *I mean* tends to lose its connection with complaint, but retain its stancetaking functions for investment and alignment. Data for this phrase comes from both Twitter posts and a conversation among eight women, each recorded on a separate track.

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The diachrony of stance constructions with ‘no’ *chance* and ‘no’ *wonder*

This paper compares the diachronic development of stance constructions containing a negative quantifier + *chance* (henceforth ‘no’ *chance*) with that observed for stance constructions featuring ‘no’ *wonder*, focusing on their formal and semantic-discursive properties. While these ‘no’ + noun strings differ in semantic type of attitudinal assessment, with ‘no’ *wonder* expressing mirative appraisal (cf. Gentens et al. 2016) and ‘no’ *chance* expressing deontic, epistemic or (non-attitudinal) dynamic meaning (cf. Van linden & Brems 2017), they are similar in showing both complement constructions (1a)-(2a) and adverbial uses (1b)-(2b), as well as setting up a discourse schema expressing both speaker attitude and discourse organization: the speaker uses the structures to assess a proposition (P), and motivates this assessment by an explicit justification (J). In (2b), however, the epistemic qualifier interacts with the modal marking in P, yielding the interpretation ‘no chance Hoddle learned...’.

- (1) a. *It’s no wonder* [Norwegians hunt whale.]_P [There’s nothing else left to catch.]_J
(WB) (Van linden et al. 2016: 385)
- b. [And his wife was an alcoholic]_P, and *no wonder*, [if she knew what kind of man he was.]_J (WB) (Gentens et al. 2016: 126)
- (2) a. She had been weeping, he could see that, but *there was no chance* [that she would cry now]_P [because the apartment was filled with Agency staff [...].]_J
(WB)
- b. You would have thought [Hoddle might have learned something during his time out of the game, that he might have quietly reflected on his past errors of judgment and resolved to tread a little more warily in future.]_P *No chance*. [Within minutes, he had committed two classic blunders and reconfirmed the old belief that [...].]_J (WB)

‘No’ *chance* adverbials also show a different use, expressing an emphatic negative response to a question or another speech act (3), a use also observed for ‘no’ *way* (cf. Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 849; Davidse et al. 2014). Many cases of sentence-initial ‘no’ *chance*, however, do not function as adverbials, but are in fact elliptical clauses, combining with a range of complements formally much more diverse than with ‘no’ *wonder*, like *to*-infinitives and *of* V-*ing* complements.

- Whenever Nia suggests a name I always think of some tosser I knew when I was at school and say “*No chance*.” (WB)

While adverbial uses of ‘no’ *wonder* already appeared in Late Middle English, taking over the discourse-schematic properties of their clausal counterparts (Gentens et al. 2016), *chance* was borrowed into the language in Early Middle English (OED), with the earliest complement constructions observed in Early Modern English only (no adverbial uses yet), all in happenstance contexts, cf. the source constructions of the stance adverbials *perhaps* and *maybe* (López-Couso & Méndez-Naya 2017).

This paper will trace the diachronic development of ‘no’ *chance* structures based on the Penn Historical Corpora, the Corpus of Early Modern English Texts, and the Corpus of Late Modern English Texts 3.0. Synchronic data are drawn from WordbanksOnline (WB). Its synchronic-diachronic perspective will enable us to assess the relative explanatory power of Thetical versus Sentence Grammar (Kaltenböck et al. 2011) and primary versus secondary discourse status (Boye & Harder 2012).

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Speaker attitude and -ly adverbs over the Modern English period

Present-day English makes major use of adverbs for the expression of speaker attitude, following what has been described as the adverbialization of speaker attitude (Swan 1988: 538, 1997).

Adverbs are usually categorized syntactically according to the status of the constituent they modify, a major distinction being made between VP-modifying adverbs and sentence adverbs. Other major categories are adjective modifiers and adverb modifiers, which, as Cinque (1999: 139) observes, are perhaps the least studied. These major types of adverb are illustrated by constructions with *curiously* in (1).

- (1) a. the crowds of men and women stared at them *curiously*. (Hardy 1894) [VP-adverb]
b. sometimes fastened in front, *curiously*, by a buckle instead of laces (Keynes, 1919)
[Sentence adverb]
c. a *curiously* pervasive smell of kid gloves (Woolf, 1920) [Adjective-modifying adverb]
d. a very fair audience (for the place which is out of the way) gathered *curiously* quickly
(Morris 1887) [Adverb-modifying adverb]

The emergence of sentence adverbs from VP adverbs via inferencing and scope expansion has been well documented (e.g. Swan 1988; Traugott 1995; Killie 2015). The history of the [Adverb-Adjective] construction in English (1c) has been studied mostly from the perspective of degree and intensification (e.g. Peters 1994; Ito and Tagliamonte 2003; Broccias 2012) and less attention has been paid to the evaluative semantics. This paper focuses on the rise of evaluative -ly adverbs in this [Adverb-Adjective] construction.

Many of these adverbs are both evaluative and degree, the relation between adverb and semantic category being many-to-many (cf. Paradis 2008: 318). The construction begins to increase significantly in type frequency towards the end of the seventeenth century, and becomes remarkably productive from the early nineteenth century onwards. It is suggested that the consolidation in the late sixteenth century of pre-verbal position as the default for adverbs (Rissanen 1999: 268-269; Breivik & Swan 1994; Nevalainen 1994) facilitated this increase. In the twentieth century the construction declines a little, but remains highly productive in some genres of formal written language.

It is shown that productivity increases when the construction is already well established with a set of frequent adverbs. Existing adverbs are recruited into the construction and new ones are coined, and in both cases analogy looks like a key mechanism. But there appear also to be both collocational effects whereby the semantics of the adjective in context coerce the interpretation of the adverb, and constructional effects leading to the adverb acquiring degree functions. Finally, the relationships between the four adverb types in (1) are briefly discussed from the perspective of the encoding of speaker attitude.

The historical data for the study are from a 4.5m-word corpus of largely informal English of the period 1600-1930 that includes letters, drama, diaries, and journals. It contains texts from *A Corpus of English Dialogues 1560-1760*, *A Corpus of Early English Correspondence* (CEEC), *A Corpus of*

Late Modern English Prose (CLMEP), *A Corpus of Late Modern English Texts (CLMET3.0)*, *The Innsbruck Computer Archive of Machine-Readable English Texts (ICAMET)*, *The Newdigate Newsletters* (Hines 1994), *The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts (HC)*, and other historical texts from sources such as the Victorian Play Project. Further data drawn on come from relevant sections of the *Archer Corpus* and *The Old Bailey Corpus*.

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