Part IV

Constructions and discourse

8 The constructional underpinnings of viewpoint blends

The *Past* + *now* in language and literature

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8.1 Introduction

The co-occurrence of a past tense verb with a proximal temporal deictic has been identified as one of the formal features of free indirect style (FIS)[1] – that is, the type of discourse where there is a "transference of subjectivity from the discourse agent to the discourse referent" (Adamson 1995: 197). Within FIS, the *Past* + *now* serves to present events from the point of view of a "self" or a consciousness (other than the narrator) that is contextually available and prominent, as that character's thoughts, speech, or perceptions. As illustrated by the corpus examples, in non-literary contexts as well, *Past* + *now* marks a shift in perspective from the narrator to a vantage point close to or inside the narrated event(s).

In this chapter, I adopt a constructional approach (Fillmore *et al.* 1988; Kay and Fillmore 1999), arguing that it can accurately pinpoint the syntactic and semantic source of the viewpoint effect associated with the pattern in all its manifestations. From a conceptual integration perspective, the constructional analysis proposed here serves as a detailed blueprint of the mappings that give rise to a particular kind of blended space; more precisely, I shall argue that constructionally triggered coercion (resolving the interpretational conflict in the *Past* + *now* pattern) can be rendered, in blending terms, as a specific type of compression relation in the blended space that represents the shifted interpretation.

Both literary and non-literary uses occur in a narrative, monologic (i.e. non-conversational) text type (Fillmore 1981; Banfield 1982). In a constructional framework, such discoursal properties (including textual and register characteristics) conventionally associated with a form are incorporated into the meaning pole of the corresponding construction, alongside purely semantic information (Goldberg 1995: 7; Fried and Östman 2004). "Meaning" in Construction Grammar thus stands for "all the *conventionalized* aspects of a construction's

function, which may include not only properties of the situation described by the utterance, but also properties of the discourse in which the utterance is found . . . and of the pragmatic situation of the interlocutors" (Croft and Cruse 2004: 258).

In all versions of Construction Grammar,[2] constructions, as learned pairings of meaning and form of a non-derivational nature, are taken to pertain to all levels of grammatical analysis, from morphemes to phrasal patterns; the network of constructions "captures our grammatical knowledge of language *in toto*, i.e. it's constructions all the way down" (Goldberg 2006: 18). Although most construction-based analyses have focused on sentence-level phenomena (at best encompassing bi-clausal constructions such as conditionals – for example, Fillmore 1990; Dancygier and Sweetser 2005), the need to extend construction grammar to larger pieces of discourse ("all the way up," we might say) has been noted in the literature. Östman (2005: 125), for instance, suggests that certain discourse patterns represent conventionalizations of specific linguistic properties, which place them on an equal footing with the conventionalized patterns known as "grammar." In Östman's terms, a discourse construction specifically represents an association of a particular text type (such as argumentative, descriptive, narrative) with a particular genre (for example, recipes, obituaries, fairy tales).

Returning to FIS, in addition to the *Past + now* pattern (the "*was – now* paradox" in Adamson's [1995] terms), other formal features associated with this kind of narrative include the following:

a) Constructions such as inversion, exclamative sentences, topicalization, adverb-preposing and right dislocation – in general, phenomena normally associated with main/non-embedded clauses (e.g. *The way to the Regent's Park Tube station – could they tell her the way to Regent's Park Tube station – Maisie Johnson wanted to know* [V. Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*]).
b) Parentheticals with verbs of communication or mental state (e.g. *Only wool gathering, she protested, flushing a little*. [V. Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*]).
c) Definite articles and demonstratives with no referent in the preceding discourse, and also pronouns, even reflexive ones, without an antecedent (cf Brinton 1995) (e.g. *Within himself his will was coiled like a beast, hidden under the darkness* [D. H. Lawrence, *The Rainbow*]).

In the present framework, all these formal realizations of FIS[3] would be treated as different constructions (or families of constructions), which in a narrative may share a semantic-pragmatic value – that is, the shifted viewpoint. The overarching requirement for a narrative context (or "text type") and the actual coexistence of all of these features in some genres (e.g. the nineteenth-century novel) might even uphold the suggestion that FIS has grammaticalized into a large-size construction, consisting of a text type that comprises all the configurations above and is associated with specific literary genres. Here,

however, arguments are restricted to the constructional properties of the *Past* + *now* pattern.

The interpretation of *Past* + *now*, as suggested above, may be seen as a result of coercion, technically defined as the resolution of conflict between constructional and lexical meaning (Michaelis 2005a, 2005b). In blending terms now, resolution of (apparent) conflict is often achieved through the mechanism of compression, whereby elements that are conceptually separate in the input spaces are construed as one in the blended space. The construction at hand cues a particular kind of compression, namely compression of a time relation. The dynamic, continuously updated character of such blending networks renders them particularly suitable for representing meaning in a narrative, where formal clues may often give conflicting instructions even within the same sentence (as is the case with FIS). The fact that, in *Past* + *now* and in FIS, as a whole, these instructions relate precisely to viewpoint, which has been defined as a feature of mental spaces,[4] further justifies the semantic anatomy of this construction in terms of blending. A blending analysis serves to embed FIS in a paradigm of speech and thought representation modes, highlighting differences and similarities in a principled way. As shown, for instance, in Vandelanotte (this volume), FIS shares with the direct and indirect modes the existence of two deictic centers, but only in FIS and in the direct mode is viewpoint located in the space of the reported clause, thus distanced from the current (narrator) space.

The perhaps obvious point is that a theory like Construction Grammar, which focuses on the subtleties of the relationship between meaning and form, can and should feed directly into a theory such as blending, which produces fine-grained representations of semantic content. The constructional ramifications of mental space networks involving viewpoint and stance should be addressed explicitly (see also Dancygier, this volume), since particular space configurations would receive empirical support from the (possibly) systematic reflexes of space structure into linguistic form. The present chapter aims to contribute in this direction.

8.2 The *Past* + *now* in non-literary use[5]

All varieties of FIS (i.e. represented speech, thought, or perception, e.g. Examples (1), (2) and (3) respectively) are uniformly marked by the coexistence of past tense verbs with present time deictics. Despite the differences among individual analyses of FIS, researchers agree that this pattern is one of the formal features of the style, correlating with an interpretation in which events (whether speech, or thought, or perception events) are presented as experienced rather than reported (Banfield 1982; Adamson 1995; Brinton 1995; Wright 1995; Bosseaux 2004).

(1) Mr Woodhouse . . . commended her very much for thinking of sending for Perry, and only regretted that she had not done it . . . It was a pity, **perhaps**, that he had not come last night; for, though the child **seemed** well **now** – very well considering – it would probably have been better if Perry had seen it.

(Jane Austen, *Emma*, cited in Adamson 1995)

(2) **Today** she **did not want** him.

(D. H. Lawrence, *The First Lady Chatterley*, cited in Banfield 1982)

(3) They **now saw**, tied to the fence, Ratliff's buckboard and team.

(William Faulkner, *The Hamlet*, cited in Banfield 1982)

A corpus search (British National Corpus) reveals, however, that far from being restricted to FIS, the pattern occurs in a wide variety of non-literary texts as well. In summary (see note 5), for combinations of selected verbs with *now*, the search showed that although their number is higher in literary texts, they occur in different types of non-literary contexts with the same semantic-pragmatic effect. The analysis of the corpus data further showed that the preferred order of verb and deictic varies among verbs: The *was–now* order, for instance, is the preferred one, regardless of whether *be* functions as the copula, the *be* of the progressive, or of the passive (all of these were counted as instances of the construction at hand), while the preferred order for the other verbs is with the deictic preceding the verb (e.g. *now felt*, *now saw*, *now thought*). While this parameter is significant in a usage-based study and important for the formal description of the construction, it will be ignored in the rest of the analysis, since it does not seem to entail a significant semantic difference.[6] The frequency and distribution of the pattern as a function of the particular verb also show significant variation; compared to *was–now*, whose hits exceed 3,000, *now felt*, *now thought*, and *now saw* all have fewer than 100 occurrences. These results are certainly consistent with certain combinations being more conventionalized instances of the general pattern, which may be stored independently and in addition to it (as suggested by Goldberg 2006: 55).

In the non-literary instances, the *Past* + *now* pattern once again serves to shift the perspective to a vantage point close to or inside the narrated events, with an effect of zooming in on the events. The other consciousness, which anchors the viewpoint alignment, need not be so readily available, as in (4), or can be collective, as in (5); the perspective, however, is no less shifted, and the perception of the English team in (5) no less presented as experienced (or "represented") than in (3) above. Similarly, interpreting (4) conjures up a participant at the scene, for whom the fear is experienced (or at least closely observed), rather than merely reported.

(4) For over an hour the meeting wrestled with an undefined problem in the order. None had thought to specify how many shirt buttons could be undone and fear **was now** patently manifest that some uncontrollable disorder would be let loose should more than one button be opened to reveal 'chest hair, or even a medallion'.

(M. Young, *An Inside Job: Policing and Police Culture in Britain*)

(5) The batsman failed to survive the over though, Gooch managing to hold onto a slip catch. Waqar Younis thus joined Wasim Akram, the victorious Lord's pair together again. England, defeated by these two then, **now saw** Akram go for a duck, a nifty piece of stumping by Russell from a curving, cutting ball from his captain.

(*Wisden Cricket Monthly*, periodical)

In FIS, therefore, the interpretational shift results unavoidably in viewpoint alignment with the consciousness or Self prominently available in the novel (Fludernik 1993: 204), and is on occasion sustained throughout the narration, with the aid of the other formal means characteristic of the style. In non-literary examples, on the other hand, in the absence of a prominent consciousness to whom the shifted content can be attributed as speech, or thought, or perception, the interpretation simply amounts to narrating events from a close-by, insider's perspective (presupposing a participant or close observer, whether explicit or implicit).

Represented speech and thought are easier to identify, and may be considered more prototypical instances of shifted narration. Represented perception, on the other hand, presents more of a challenge in being unambiguously interpreted as the physical or mental content (conception) of a consciousness located at a different vantage point from the narrator's. Evidence to the effect that all instances of the *Past + now* pattern mark a shift in perspective, even in the absence of other formal clues – as has been suggested here for Examples (3), (4), and (5) – comes from corpus examples such as (6) and (7); these accommodate the shift in the following discourse, formally marking it with expressions appropriate only to the shifted interpretation.

(6) when most Jewish thinkers' minds were somewhere between the atrocities of the Holocaust and the fearfully questionable use of the Bomb. Further, Israel **was now** a reality – "next year in Jerusalem" for millions had been fulfilled; but the reaction of the Arab world was very hostile – Suez was **months away**...

(D. Loranne and C. Rawlins, *Leonard Cohen: Prophet of the Heart*)

(7) A week later Maxine arrived for her next consultation. So eager was she to experience another session of past life regression that she was fifteen minutes early for her appointment! I explained to her that,

although I could make no promises, since she **now felt** more confident about the technique, it was quite possible that **this** session would reveal the cause of her phobia. As she was now used to the technique, Maxine slipped quickly and easily into the regression. **This** time she told me that she was a lad called . . .

(U. Markham, *Hypnosis Regression Therapy*)

The proximal deictics in (7), unambiguously anchored to the present of the characters, and the temporal modifier in (6), whose landmark is clearly the time of the narrated events, support the shifted interpretation originating with the *Past + now* and are certainly consistent with an analysis that treats it as a viewpoint construction.

When the verb does not express physical perception, but rather denotes a cognitive or mental process, the interpretation favors an end-of-the-process reading, which profiles the final moment of the process or the initialization of the resulting state – for example, (8) and (9); Example (7) could also have such a reading.

(8) with himself in the first and third person. "They suspect me of something – it is in the air – I am keeping something back. Vincent is hiding something that cannot stand the light." This narrative flexibility indicates the extent to which he **now saw** himself as a character in his own drama. To put it another way, he was aware of the idea of divided consciousness, much discussed in his day, and here and elsewhere he can be seen applying it to his own actions.

(P. Callow, *Van Gogh: A Life*)

(9) "You British!" said Penny Black, shaking her head in despair. She herself was British, in fact, but having spent several years as a graduate student in California, where she had been converted to radical feminism, she **now thought** of herself as spiritually an American, and tried as far as possible to speak like one.

(D. Lodge, *Nice Work*)

In Example (5), the event is presented as the "current," co-temporal with the act of perception, experience of the third person character. In (8), in contrast, the "current" mental attitude of van Gogh is construed as the end phase of a cognitive process that has been going on for some time. This interpretation appears, in fact, to be one way of resolving the semantic conflict between punctual *now* and an inherently non-punctual, stative predicate (see also the discussion on the progressive in section 8.3).[7]

Literary FIS as a genre has been associated with third person narration, the choice of pronouns resolved differently from spatiotemporal deictics. However, some of the formal features of FIS appear in first person narratives as well, with

the same semantic-pragmatic effects – for example, non-anaphoric reflexives in novels narrated in the first person (Brinton 1995: 179). The *Past + now* pattern also appears in first person narration, earlier in fact than in third (Adamson 1995), and in non-fictional autobiography, as in (10):

(10) The same things which I knew before **came now** in another manner, with Light and Sense, and Seriousness to my Heart . . .
(Baxter, *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, cited in Adamson 1995)

The zooming in on the past events, the shift in perspective regularly effected by the *Past + now* pattern in all the preceding examples is equally effected in first person examples. As observed by Adamson (1995: 203–4), the most common form of narrative in everyday language is in fact first person, and in such narrations, the *I* is both deictic and pronominal, standing simultaneously for narrator and character. In this context, subjectivity is transferred to our past self, especially if the narrated events are acts of consciousness or states of feelings. Although FIS is by definition restricted to third person (Bally 1912), this being a component of the grammaticalized profile of the genre, its historical prototype may well lie in first person narratives, fictional or not, featuring viewpoint shifting constructions. The first vs third person distinction, therefore, might not be so absolute or even critical for shifted narration in general.

Before turning to the constructional analysis, it should be noted that the *Past + now* pattern may also appear in the progressive form – for example, (11). The small number of hits for the *Past progressive + now*, equally low in literary and non-literary texts, both for the same verbs that were checked in the simple past and also for other, otherwise very frequent, verbs, such as *come*, *try*, suggests in fact that the (simple) *Past + now* is the more conventional pattern of the two. The shift in perspective and the alignment with the consciousness of the other is present in examples with the progressive as well, and, if anything, is even more pronounced in a way consistent with the function of the progressive I outline in the following section.

(11) She must have done something for which she **was now being made** to pay. Spending most of each day in the house, she had no one except Maria to talk to and Maria was not worth the effort. She would rather talk to Pilade though she knew **this** was only a sophisticated way of talking to herself.
(A biography of Kylie Minogue)

In the next section, I examine separately the contribution of each component – that is, the past, the progressive, and the proximal deictic, showing that, although motivated, the overall interpretation should be attributed to the pattern as a whole.

8.3 *Past + now* as a construction

A constructional analysis, which assigns the interpretation to the pattern as such, competes with an account in which either or both of the parts in this expression are taken to be polysemous – that is, having extended meanings that allow them to co-occur. Starting with *now*, *Cobuild*, for instance, recognizes a function in which "now is used with the past tense, especially in novels and stories, to refer to the particular time in the past that you are speaking or writing about, as opposed to any later or earlier time" – the emphasis on "particular time" and "as opposed to a later or earlier time" presumably motivating the extension from the basic sense.[8] However, even if a polysemy treatment for *now* may motivate its presence in the previous examples, it fails to predict the essential condition associated with the pattern, namely its occurrence in a narrative context only, so that the dictionary definition above finds it necessary to specify this explicitly. Indeed, it is only in a monologic narrative context that the *Past + now* combination is possible, as shown by the unacceptability of (12) and (13).

(12) (?? I'm telling you,) George now appeared in the doorway.

(13) (?? I do not agree;) the error was now patently manifest.

In (12) and (13) we have a conversational context – that is, a context with an explicit speaker and addressee, which, according to Benveniste (1966) and Banfield (1982: 171), is precisely one feature that negatively characterizes the sentence of narration – the other being the absence of present (in the absence of the first part of the sentence, *now* can be taken to refer to the present of the narration – rather than the present of speaking – and hence the sentences become instances of shifted narration). In fact, even if *now* can function as a synonym of *at that time*, as suggested by its lexicographic treatment, it only (as opposed to its phrasal synonym) correlates with the shift in perspective that is characteristic of the expression. In addition, a polysemy, case-by-case analysis obscures the systematicity of this interpretation that is available to other proximal deictics as well (e.g. *today*, *this morning*, *this minute*, *this* year); although the research reported here has focused on the *Past + now* combination, the effect is the same with the other temporal deictics (e.g. [14]); specifying that the particular interpretation is available to all proximal deictics in this pattern allows us to avoid the proliferation of the same sense for a class of lexical items. Indeed, this has been one of the central arguments in favor of a constructional analysis in general (cf Goldberg 1995, 2006).

(14) Where **was** he **this morning**, for instance? Some committee, she never asked what.

(Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*)

In a constructional approach, therefore, *now* can be argued to retain to a large extent its basic semantics, while any differences are attributed to the constructional context. More precisely, I suggest that *now* still means "anchored to a present," except that its co-occurrence with the past tense verb rules out the possibility that this present is the present of the speaker; instead, it is interpreted as referring to the "present" of the narration, whether this is the present of a character in it or a depersonalized time frame to which the narration refers (as in [4]). In the first case, the event is interpreted as the *current* perception or experience of the third person character; in the second, as a close-by reconstruction.

A constructional analysis may therefore be justified on the basis of the conventional association of this interpretation with a specific discourse type, and of the interaction of specific lexical items with a grammatical category (i.e. the past), which results in a fairly productive semi-schematic construction.[9] This said, the current trend in lexical semantics is to shift the focus "from words as building blocks to usage events, in all their contextual detail" (cf Cuyckens *et al.* 2003: 21). In this sense, a polysemy account of *now* may well be compatible (and mutually informative) with the constructional approach advocated here. Recognizing a constructional pattern, however, allows us to address (and resolve) the apparent conflict in the interpretation by recourse to the mechanism of coercion, which I discuss shortly in more detail.

The other component in the construction, namely the past, resists a polysemy analysis on intuitive grounds. The past we find in shifted narrative, whether (auto)biographical or fictional, is clearly the same past we find in the non-shifted one. On the other hand, a polysemy link may be naturally assumed between the past of autobiographical or biographical narration – for example, (15), (16) – and the past of fictional narration – for example, (17).

(15) I was at work all day yesterday.

(16) He was the first of the Beatles to leave the band.

(17) The other three all lay flat in the cockpit now. Harry sat on the steering seat. He was looking ahead, steering out the channel . . .

(Ernest Hemingway, *To Have and Have Not*)

In the one case, the event is temporally anchored to the present of the narrator, or truly past with respect to the time of narration, while in the other, it is not. However, the unmarkedness of the past in fictional narratives has prompted many researchers (Benveniste 1966; Banfield 1982; Adamson 1995; Wright 1995) to adopt a semantic account that is based on distance rather than time: an event can be distant by being past or by being fictional, motivating the similarity in form. This literary-based analysis tallies with the cognitive treatment of the tense system in English (e.g. Langacker 1991: chapter 6). Langacker suggests

that the two formal oppositions – that is, past morpheme vs absence of the past morpheme, and presence vs absence of a modal – are conceptually characterized with respect to an epistemic model structured in terms of immediate reality, known (and unknown) reality, and non-reality. More precisely, the tense opposition is based on the concept of proximity so that "instead of 'present' and 'past' we can speak more generally of a proximal/distal contrast in the epistemic sphere. The import of the unmarked member is that the designated process is immediate to the speaker. Its overtly-marked counterpart – what we can now call the distal morpheme – conveys some sort of non-immediacy," temporal in the prototypical case, but possibly of other types as well (Langacker 1991: 245). In this view, the past morpheme indicates simply that the profiled process is not immediate to the speaker (an essentially epistemic characterization), and although its prototypical value invokes the time model, this is only *one* manifestation of its basic epistemic meaning. The occurrence of the past in fictional narratives, therefore, falls well within this basic meaning, and whether an extension from the temporal prototype or yet another contextually triggered elaboration, constitutes a well-motivated use.[10]

What matters for present purposes is that the narrative past represents a well-entrenched, conventional, and certainly motivated construction. It is obviously the past of narration that appears in the relevant slot of the *Past + now* pattern. And it is the construction at hand, rather than the polysemy of *now*, which accounts for the presentation of a non-immediate, not directly accessible event as if it were directly accessible; put differently, the cancelled part of the semantics of the proximal deictic (which no longer points to the speaker/narrator) is attributed to the construction as a whole, to its conventional co-occurrence with a past tense verb in a narrative context, resulting in a particular (shifted) interpretation. In construction grammar terms, this is therefore a case of coercion resolved on the basis of the "override principle" (Michaelis 2005b: 51; also Goldberg 1995: chapter 2). Coercion refers to the clash between the morphosyntactic and/or semantic properties of a word and those of the construction in which the word is embedded; the override principle stipulates that if a lexical item is semantically incompatible with its syntactic context, the meaning of the lexical item conforms to the meaning of the structure in which it is embedded.[11]

The constructional status of the *Past + now* pattern, so far argued exclusively on linguistic grounds, predicts that the association of the particular form (in a particular context) with the shifted interpretation is fully conventional; its discoursal properties should therefore be readily recognizable and the semantic/pragmatic effect directly accessible, independently of and in addition to its component parts. The diachronic variation in the use of the pattern may provide further support to its status as a constructional unit; a search through the TIME magazine corpus, for example, reveals that *was–now* is used with significant variation in frequency, with the peak of the curve centering in the decade of the 1940s (these results are summarized in Table 8.1 below). This variability in

journalistic discourse points to at least an idiom-like status for the construction at hand, consistent with its conventional association with particular semantics-pragmatics.[12]

Table 8.1 was–now *in TIME magazine*

Decade	1920	1930	**1940**	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	Total
No of hits	65	147	**440**	180	167	71	64	38	27	1199

The final component in this construction is the progressive. In line with earlier work (e.g. Lyons 1977, 1982), cognitive treatments (e.g. Langacker (1991: 207–11) analyze the progressive as coding a particular kind of construal, namely an internal perspective on the event, "as if one is watching it unfold rather than viewing it holistically as a unitary entity." The English progressive is thus described as an imperfectivizing construction, restricting the profile of a process to a series of component states that does not include the initial and final ones. The profiled part of the meaning is an internal state, or series of states, of the ongoing event, presupposing therefore an insider's vantage point. Note that this approach, whereby the progressive marks a particular construal, overrides the need to attribute special experiential pragmatics to this form distinct from its "truth-conditional" aspectual meaning, a distinction that has influenced earlier analyses (e.g. Ehrlich 1990).

It is presumably this semantics that has motivated the identification of the progressive as "one resource in the systematic combination of grammatical elements characterizing the linguistic structure of this style (i.e. FIS)" (Wright 1995: 153). We may therefore consider that it is a totally expected component in FIS (and shifted narration in general), making a predictable, compositional contribution to the overall interpretation. Still, the absence in such contexts – for example, (18) – of the normal reference time for the use of the progressive (*he was having dinner, when the phone rang*), licensed again by the narrative context, argues for this being a distinct use of the progressive.

(18) He slowly nodded, as if saying, Yes, but that isn't the point. He **was looking** hard at her. She **was being given** a warning, and from someone who **was taking** the responsibility for it. He might be a rather pitiable young man, and certainly an overtired and inadequately fed one, doing this job because he could not get another, but the weight of his position – the unhappy weight of it – **was speaking** through him . . .
(Doris Lessing, *The Fifth Child*, cited in Wright 1995)

Given the durative interpretation of the progressive (cf "profiles an internal state or series of component states"), punctual/momentary *now* appears to clash with it more prominently than with the simple past. Once again this semantic conflict

is resolved constructionally in favor of the embedding context – that is, *now* appears to neutralize the punctual aspect of its meaning and simply become a marker of the shifted viewpoint, in addition to the progressive. The double coercion thus renders the construction a highly marked and, therefore, powerful index of viewpoint. This is evidenced by the fact that in the instances found in the corpus the shift in perspective originating in the *Past progressive + now* is sustained in the following discourse more often than with the simple *Past + now*; while the shift may also persist with the simple past (Examples [6], [7]), this persistence is less frequent than with the progressive, where the shift is maintained much more systematically. The sustained shift may be marked by grammatical or lexical means, but it may also occur in their absence – that is, it may be only the *Past progressive + now* that triggers the shift and sustains it in the following discourse. Consider Examples (19), (20), and (21).

(19) veiled threat to Richard? A reminder that he should not take it for granted that he would in time succeed to England, Normandy and Anjou? If Richard insisted on keeping Aquitaine, would he have to give up his claim to inherit the rest? That Henry **was now thinking** of Richard's keeping his duchy is suggested by the plans he was making to install John as King of Ireland, but **what price would the Old King demand in return for this concession?** Richard was alarmed. Immediately after Christmas he obtained permission to return to Aquitaine and we . . .

(J. Gillingham, *Richard the Lionheart*)

(20) A few fragments of carrot were still lying about near the spring, but he had left these untouched and was eating the grass not far from the gnarled crabapple tree. They approached and he looked up. Hazel said nothing and began to feed beside him. He **was now regretting** that he had brought Bigwig. In the darkness before morning and the first shock of discovering that Fiver was gone, Bigwig had been a comfort and a stand-by. But **now**, as he saw Fiver, small and familiar, incapable of hurting anyone or of . . .

(Richard Adams, *Watership Down*)

(21) or in a crowd? Alas, solitude is not very likely, there is so little of it in life, so what can we expect after death! After all, the dead far outnumber the living! At best, existence after death would resemble the interlude she **was now experiencing** while reclining in a deckchair: from all sides, she would hear the continuous babble of female voices. Eternity as the sound of endless babble: one could of course imagine worse things, but the idea of hearing women's voices forever, continuously, without end . . .

(Popular lore, *Esquire*)

In (19), the shift is sustained by the inversion construction appearing in a non-direct speech context, whose content is attributed to Henry, while in (20), it is supported lexically by another *now*. But even in (21), without any additional marking, the following text is interpreted as the thoughts of the third person character. The possible readings of the text preceding or following a passage containing explicit markers of shifted narration is an issue addressed in the literature, especially from a literary angle (e.g. Ehrlich 1990; Sotirova 2004), and, in fact, there seems to be agreement that assigning point of view to unmarked passages is possible in general.[13] Further discussion of this issue is certainly beyond our present scope. What I have tried to show is simply that a constructional, coercion-based analysis may provide some motivation for the highly marked, shift-amplifying aspect of the *Past progressive* + *now* pattern.

8.4 Mental space structure and the *Past* + *now* construction

Mental Space Theory has been applied to the analysis of FIS by Sanders and Redeker (1996), who observe that a wide range of perspectivization phenomena, including point of view in discourse, can be accounted for by the embedding of mental spaces and the transference of viewpoint from one to the other. In a narrative text, the reality of the narrator is the basic mental space, the Base Space, which is the starting point of the discourse representation. Every time the narrator lets the characters speak or present their thoughts, experiences, and so on, an embedded mental space is created within the Base Space. In this framework, they describe the three basic modes of representing speech and thought, namely, direct, indirect and free indirect, as well as a fourth mode, which they label "implicit perspective" (accounting for cases where without direct, indirect, or free indirect representation, there is still perspectivization of the presented events).

Two points in their analysis are important for the present discussion. First, they stipulate that the default interpretation for FIS is one in which viewpoint is located in the embedded (rather than the base) space, which is also the space in focus.[14] Although this is in agreement with much of the literary and linguistic literature, given the conflicting clues in FIS (tense and choice of pronouns are determined by the Base Space, while deictics and expressive elements by the embedded space), the location of viewpoint should in principle be open and susceptible to either interpretation. In fact, as argued by Vandelanotte (2004), FIS involves two separate deictic centers, even if none is fully operational; nevertheless, "the sayer/cognizant-related features actually outnumber and outweigh the speaker-related ones" (Vandelanotte 2004: 493; see also Traugott and Pratt 1980), placing FIS, as a discourse mode, closer to direct than to indirect speech or thought. So both of these linguistic analyses converge on a treatment of FIS

as incorporating a default perspective based on the character rather than the narrator.[15] For example, in (22) (Example [5] from Sanders and Redeker 1996),

(22) He heard something and turned around. There were the three Englishmen again. Now, could they really be tourists?

the most natural interpretation is that the character referred to by *he* already knows the three Englishmen and is thus able to refer to them by the definite description.[16]

In the following discussion, I essentially adopt this analysis, which, after all, reflects the basic intuition that FIS, and, more generally, shifted narration, involves transference of subjectivity *from* narrator *to* character, and not the other way round. However, Sanders and Redeker's approach to the mental space structure of FIS is made without any reference to the specific formal marking that serves to set up the embedded space and trigger the shifted interpretation. What I suggest is that the shift in viewpoint associated with FIS as a whole is effected in different ways, depending on the particular formal cluster that triggers it. While the *Past + now* pattern, which has been the main focus here, is a central feature in the expression of FIS, and of shifted narration in general, there are, as noted, other formal indices of an FIS interpretation. Importantly, although all or some of these features may coexist in a given passage, the presence of one of them may also be enough to support the shifted reading. It stands to reason, therefore, that in each case meaning is constructed through a different route, involving different mental space configurations, vital relations, and cross-space links (Fauconnier and Turner 2002). Indeed, as shown in Sweetser (2005), similar (end-point) mental space structures may be prompted or built in quite different ways. Whatever the space structure may be for an example like (23), it obviously involves complex identity relations for the referring pronouns appearing in an inverted question, which is embedded in a non-direct speech context, thus precluding a Base Space interpretation.

(23) The way to the Regent's Park Tube station – could they tell her the way to Regent's Park Tube station – Maisie Johnson wanted to know.
(Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*)

But the mental space configuration of (23) cannot be the same as the mental space configuration set up by the *Past + now* construction – that is, while they both result in a shifted interpretation, they reach it through a different route. In the same line, Janzen (this volume) analyzes an ASL construction of viewpoint shifting, formally realized in terms of mentally rotated (as opposed to static) space. This fully grammaticalized construction is "prototypically used in the narrative past," which renders it directly comparable to FIS in terms of its semantic import, although the interpretation relies on totally different formal

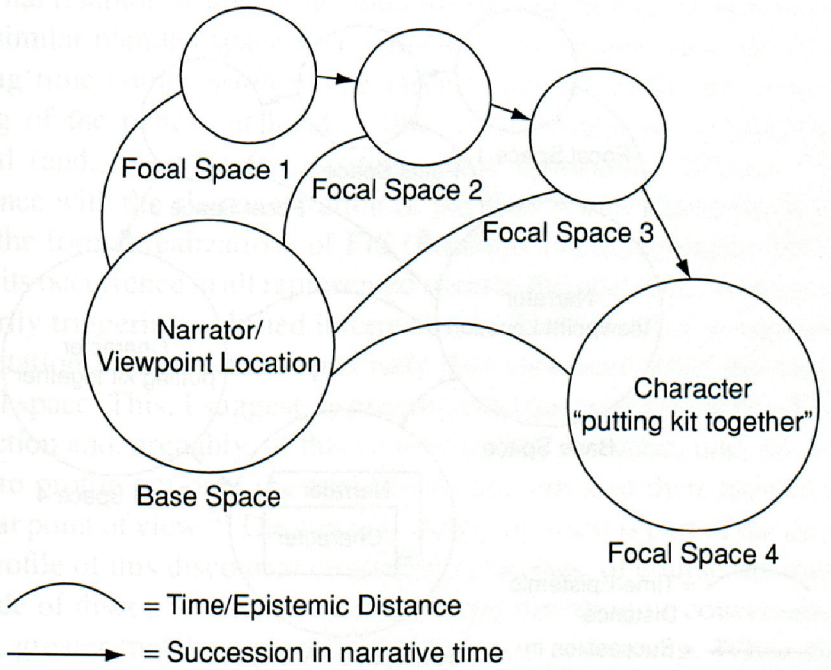

Figure 8.1

clues – for example, 180-degree spatial rotation rather than manipulation of a time relationship. I now turn to the *Past* + *now* construction, aiming to show that the conceptual integration network in this case relies directly – and more straightforwardly than for (23) – on the compression of time vital relations.[17]

The embedding context for *Past* + *now*, as shown in the previous sections, is the context (construction) of the past narrative. This entails a default construal in which the narrator is located in a different space from the character and the narrated events, viewing them from a distance. In the case of biographical narration (or of true deictic past), the viewpoint space and the narrated space are therefore separated by time, while in fictional narration and depending on the analysis assigned to the past, they are separated by metaphorical time or epistemic distance. As argued in Dancygier and Vandelanotte (2009), we are capable of conceptualizing two spaces at the same time, which may be separated by space, time, or epistemic distance, and which may often contain apparently contradictory representations (see also Fauconnier and Turner 2002: chapter 5). In ordinary (non-shifted) third person narration – and even in first person narration – the narrator's space (i.e. the viewpoint space) is backgrounded, the focal space (in Sanders and Redeker's terms) being the space of the narrated events.[18] So the first part of the passage in (24) (up to the *Past* + *now*) prompts an interpretation that can be sketched as in Figure 8.1.

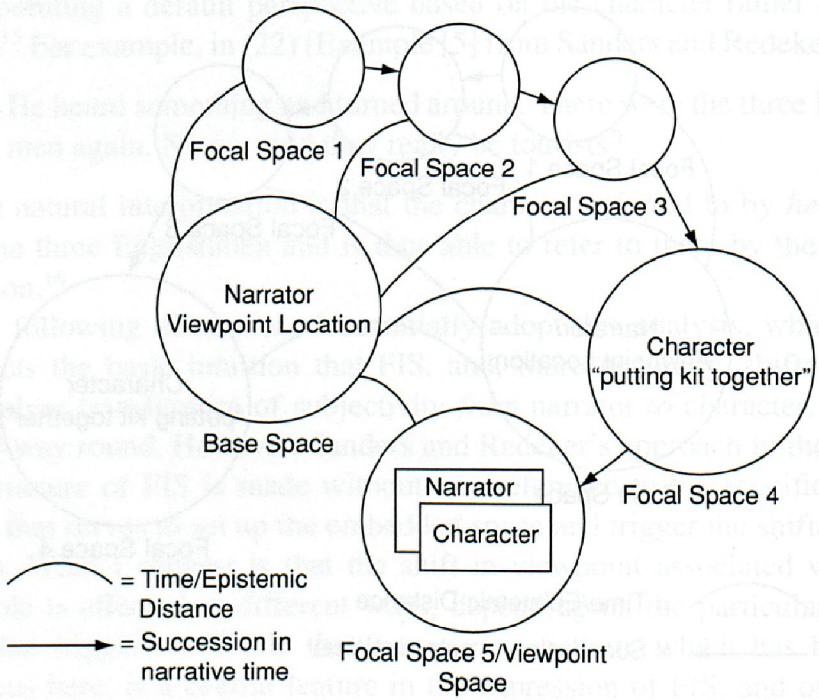

Figure 8.2

(24) A few years ago I wrote a little book called *Discovering Backpacking*. Just before Christmas I was intrigued to get a letter in careful dictionary English from Kenya, saying that the sender had read my book and **was now putting** some kit together along the lines I had suggested. However, one piece of equipment was causing him a problem – a survival bag. Where could he obtain one, and how much would it cost?

(periodical, domain: leisure, unsigned)

But the occurrence of *now* in the context of past shifts the viewpoint to the space of the narrated event, collapsing the viewpoint of the narrator (external or separate up to this point) with that of the other consciousness, and in this way zooming in on the event (in this example, the putting together of the kit to which the narrator, and therefore the reader, is construed as a witness). This is achieved precisely by the present time deictic, which triggers in the blend the compression of the time (and, by extension, the space) distance separating the viewpoint from the focal space (Figure 8.2). The narrative continues then from this new blended space, which becomes the Viewpoint Space, at least for a while, as evidenced by the inverted question, whose content is clearly attributed to the sender of the letter.[19]

What I suggest, then, is that the coerced interpretation of the *Past + now* construction corresponds directly to a blend resulting from the compression of

a time vital relation; while all the other formal realizations of FIS may result in a very similar blended space with collapsed viewpoints (and, by implication, involving time compression of the input spaces as well), the constructional meaning of the pattern at hand *is* time compression or the abolishment of temporal (and, by extension, spatial and/or epistemic) distance. This is in accordance with the characterization of the *Past* + *now* cluster as prototypical among the formal realizations of FIS (Banfield 1982; Adamson 1995), on the basis of its occurrence in all represented speech, thought, and perception, and its necessarily triggering a shifted interpretation. Further, what is captured by the representation in Figure 8.2 is precisely that viewpoint itself becomes part of the focal space. This, I suggest, is precisely the raison d'être of the *Past* + *now* construction and, arguably, of this type of shifted narration, and, by extension, of FIS: to profile not only the narrated events, but also their narration from a particular point of view.[20] The fact that viewpoint itself is part of the designation or the profile of this discoursal construction implies, of course, its markedness as a mode of discourse (as opposed to simple narration or conversation), and, perhaps, greater metalinguistic awareness in its processing. While this study does not extend in this direction, these points can be tested empirically and may open lines for further inquiry.

8.5 Conclusion

Discoursally motivated constructions – that is, conventional associations of form with a particular discourse type, may provide a principled account of formal combinations that deviate from the expected syntactic and semantic norms. *Past* + *now* as a formal cluster is only possible in a narrative context, defined as non-conversational and non-present; in this context, it evokes a shift to the perspective of a consciousness other than the narrator's (including, as shown, the narrator's past self); as shown in some examples, the shift may persist in the following discourse, even without any other formal marking, further justifying an analysis that can extend to chunks of language larger than the sentence.

As a literary style, FIS is characterized by the *Past* + *now* pattern, along with other constructions and expressions. As suggested earlier, we may even postulate a more extended or higher-level narrative construction, comprising all the formal reflexes associated with FIS, whose semantic-pragmatic import is to narrate from the point of view of the character. Although not all constructional theories would accommodate chunks larger than the sentence and include diverse formal realizations as a single construction, such an analysis seems plausible on intuitive grounds; as is evident from some of the preceding examples, the occurrence of one of these constructions or expressions in an earlier stretch primes certain expectations as to the occurrence of another later

on. In support of this, it is worth mentioning another conventional expectation in FIS, namely the frequent occurrence of epistemic adverbs – for example, *surely*, *perhaps*, or *of course* – whose expression of judgment is attributed to the character, as in (25).

(25) When there are fifteen people sitting down to dinner, one cannot keep things waiting for ever. **She was now beginning** to feel annoyed with them for being so late; it was inconsiderate of them . . . Yet **of course** tonight, of all nights, out they went, and they came in late . . .
(Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, p. 58, cited in Bosseaux 2004)

To the extent that these can be defined as a lexical set, or a kind of drop list from a particular semantic domain, they can be accommodated in the analysis of the large-scale construction as its *lexical* fillers. Since all versions of the theory allow for both grammatical *and* lexical fillers, Construction Grammar appears ideally suited for the analysis of such conventional discourse patterns, provided Construction Grammar extends in this direction.

Discoursally based constructions may be seen as originating in the concept of "idioms with a pragmatic point" (in Fillmore *et al.*'s [1988] classification of idiomatic expressions). Like *once upon a time* (a typical example of the category), *Past + now* evokes a specialized discourse context, and any motivational account of the contribution of its parts can be given only in reference to this context. The semantics of the past, the progressive, and *now* figure centrally in such an account; as argued here, the interpretation associated with the pattern can be analyzed in terms of constructional coercion, resolving the conflict with the deictic in the case of the simple past, and, additionally, with the punctual meaning in the case of the progressive. The coerced interpretation cues a particular kind of blended space, which captures the two most central features in the makeup of the construction. First, a collapsed viewpoint interpretation (as in Figure 8.2) presupposes and relies on the availability of a separate conceptualization of the narrator's and the character's viewpoint spaces (as in Figure 8.1); in this way, the notion of the necessary embedding context for the construction and, in general, for FIS is given actual pragmatic content. Second, viewpoint, as already stated, is part of the profile of the *Past + now* construction; this, in turn, is consistent with the instantly recognizable shift in perspective associated with this form.

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