

Viewpoint in Language

A Multimodal Perspective

Edited by

Barbara Dancygier

and

Eve Sweetser

For Irene, a traveller in
a landscape /
shared whose perspective
and is always a tell
much love
Eve



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3 Negation, stance verbs, and intersubjectivity

Barbara Dancygier

This chapter reconsiders some widely held views on negation, in the context of the mental spaces framework. Specifically, I develop the idea of inherent “alternativity” of negation to show its function as a viewpoint device, and, more specifically, as a stance-marking form. Also, I consider some constructions involving negation to explain its intersubjective role and the way it is used to negotiate various viewpoints available in the specific context. I also show how this approach can clarify the confusion surrounding the interpretation of constructional forms such as Neg-Raising or metalinguistic negation.

3.1 Negation, mental spaces, and intersubjectivity

In the mental spaces framework, negation has come to be treated as the primary example of alternativity (Fauconnier 1994 [1985], 1997; Sweetser 2006). The negative particle *not* is thus said to set up two alternative spaces, rather than just one: the negative space described in the sentence and its positive alternative. Indeed, the main reason for using linguistic negation seems to be to counter a contextually available claim or belief, or to present that claim or belief as potentially assertable. In now-classic examples such as (1):

- (1) There is no milk in the fridge. (Fauconnier 1994 [1985])

the mental space described (no milk) typically makes sense in the context where the presence of the milk is expected or cognitively accessible (hence the potential interpretation of [1] as a request or complaint). Whichever one of the possible interpretations is chosen, it will crucially rely on the mental space alternative to (1), such that the milk is (will, was, should be) in the fridge. This approach is essentially different from the truth-functional one in that it does not limit its interest to the speaker’s commitment to truth or falsehood of one of two incompatible instantiations of a proposition, focusing instead on the way in which the speaker exploits negative constructions to evoke and use their alternatives. In a sense, this approach also uses the contextually available information in specific ways, without necessarily relying on implicature or other

relevance-related phenomena, or treating all oppositions of meaning in a uniform way (cf Jeffries 2010).

In this chapter I argue that the alternativity of negation also makes it possible to see negation as a marker of epistemic stance, and that there are various contexts in which the type of stance is built into a specific mental space network. One could argue that a positive equivalent of (1), such as *There is milk in the fridge*, could also be a marker of stance when the speaker is questioning the hearer's assumption expressed earlier or marking surprise. But when negation is used there is no doubt – partly with respect to the alternative set-up evoked – that there are at least two options on the table, and the speaker as well as other participants may be variously epistemically aligned with the alternatives. Furthermore, negation can prompt complex intersubjective networks involving stances available in the Ground. But even the simplest case such as (1) involves a level of discourse where the speaker and the hearer both have access to the positive alternative.

The alternativity approach to negation also offers an explanation of the use of grammatical devices relying on the availability of the alternative space, as in Example (2),

- (2) I didn't buy a car. There was no room for **it** in the garage.

where the pronoun *it* refers to an instance of the category *car* inhabiting the negated space where the purchase has actually been made. As this chapter argues, negative forms participate in various grammatical constructions relying on much more than truth and falsehood. There is a variety of such constructions, but I will focus specifically on those related to stance expressions and intersubjectivity (for other examples of negative constructions, see Oakley 2005).

Possibly the best instantiation of the space evocation power of negation is the consistent use of negation as a narrative device in Joseph Heller's *Catch 22* (1955). A full analysis of negation in the novel is beyond the goals of this chapter, but just one quote will do for now (in reading, it is important to keep in mind that the club has not been mentioned in the text until now).

- (3) [Nately] was crazy, too, and had gone every free day to work on the officers' club that Yossarian had *not* helped build. Actually there were many officers' clubs that Yossarian had *not* helped build, but he was proudest of the one in Pianosa. It was a sturdy and complex monument to his powers of determination. (p. 27)

The space this fragment sets up is the shared effort of all officers in Pianosa in building a club for themselves. One might expect that Yossarian, as an officer, would participate in the work and be proud of the result, but he is proud precisely because all was done without his help. Yossarian's consistent refusal

to be ‘positive’ about any aspect of the war period is thus underscored by his alignment with a space that negates every other officer’s experience.

Alternativity is sometimes also expressed lexically, as in Wisława Szymborska’s poem *Atlantis* (1997), which starts with *They were or they weren’t, On an island or not, An ocean or not an ocean swallowed them up or it didn’t*. The use of *or* makes the consideration of the two alternative spaces equally explicit, and the construction further underlines not just the contrast, but also the epistemic stance, whereby either one of the alternatives may hold. The explicit reliance on alternativity of negation in this case, as in possible colloquial expressions of this kind, such as *He’ll marry her or maybe he won’t*, is a form of epistemic statement where both options are available, and thus truth and falsehood are backgrounded even further. In fact, the poem, which is a list of parallel alternative statements, can be naturally read as a comment on our lack of epistemic grounds to speak of mythical places such as Atlantis (cf Dancygier 2010); similarly, the ‘marriage’ example may be understood as a complaint about the man’s unwillingness to make a commitment. Examples like this suggest that negation itself can be seen as an epistemic stance device, one that may favor one of the alternatives, or reject one, or not mark any of them with positive stance.

The alternativity of negation naturally explains most uses of negation in available literature (e.g. Horn 1985, 1989). In fact, it also explains the uses in which negation moderates the commitment of the speaker, rather than the facts in question. In the example considered by Sweetser (2006), repeated here as (4), the speaker/narrator is not prepared to judge the actual appreciation of the listeners, but notes both the effort and its positive result.

- (4) I will not say that they all appreciated the music which they heard, but they were intent on appearing to do so... and they were not unsuccessful. (Trollope, *The Warden*)

The irony and caution of the narrator’s words result from the use of negation in ways that play on the alternative evaluations, and not on facts. Crucially, in such contexts the use of negation does not rely on truth and falsehood, but has a moderating and distancing effect instead. It is interesting to note that alternativity of negation can be exploited in this way in view of Davies’ proposal (1979) that negation suggests two polarized values, such as “0” and “1,” with a cline of modal stances in between. It appears that explicitly juxtaposing the alternatives has the effect of opening up the entire range of modal possibilities and degrees of epistemic commitment.

Alternativity, though of a somewhat different kind, also lies at the root of the use of negation termed “metalinguistic negation” (see Horn 1985, 1989):

- (5) Grandma isn’t feeling lousy, Johnny, she is just a tad indisposed.

Horn argues that cases like (5) are not aligned with ordinary negation, because no proposition is in fact negated. The objection in the first clause (*Grandma isn't feeling lousy*) is not directed at the actual health of the grandmother, but at the choice of words, which does not show sufficient respect for Grandma. Horn's term, *metalinguistic negation*, has been useful in turning the semanticists' attention to overt comments on the linguistic form of utterances, but it avoids the question of why negation would be used differently in the propositional versus non-propositional cases. In a sense, the distinction is not the result of the actual differences in the kind of negation, but an attempt to maintain the assumption that negation is primarily propositional. It also fails to acknowledge the fact that metalinguistic negation occurs in a rather specific constructional format, where two alternative ways of presenting the "same" content are contrasted (*feeling lousy/a tad indisposed*). In other words, a sentence such as *Grandma isn't feeling lousy* would not carry a metalinguistic force on its own, since the construction typically profiles both the offending expression and its accepted alternative. In her discussion of negation and conditionals, Dancygier (1992, 1998) observes that the so-called metalinguistic uses of negation are crucially dependent on constructions where the questionable (and thus negated) expression is immediately followed by a proposed repair, and further, that the same constructional format is available to propositional negation, as in (6).

- (6) John wasn't born in Boston, but in Philadelphia.

In other words, this specific use of negation is not strictly metalinguistic, but, more broadly, metatextual, and requires that the offending expression has occurred in preceding discourse and is both quoted and negated, so that a repair can be offered.

What is of particular importance in this case is that the construction relies on its context in a rather specific way. The negated part of the utterance (*Grandma is feeling lousy, John was born in Boston*) is echoic – that is, repeated after being made available in preceding discourse. This suggests that there are two different ways in which the alternativity of negation uses the spaces available in the context. In a case like *There is no milk in the fridge*, the hearer's attention is drawn to desired or past presence of milk in the fridge, so that the alternative is prompted by the negation, while in a case like *John wasn't born in Boston*, the alternative is available in the immediate context and negated. As I will try to show below, the difference is important in terms of constructional features, and also in the epistemic consequences. Furthermore, a constructional approach to echoic mention and related phenomena, such as distancing or irony, can also clarify the many different ways in which echoic discourse is used.

In more recent work, examples like (4) and (6) were discussed by Verhagen (2005, 2006) as constructions relying on intersubjective mental space set-ups.

This approach clearly highlights the constructional nature of such usage and its primary goal of referring to utterances available in the immediate context. Verhagen is discussing such cases in terms of “intersubjectivity” to highlight the fact that the utterance may have different discourse sources, as in the cases discussed above.

The concepts of subjectivity and intersubjectivity are rather contentious ones, and they are both directly pertinent to the topic of this volume – viewpoint. There seem to be several dimensions that delineate different positions researchers take, but the one most important for this chapter is the issue of correlation of subjective meaning with specific linguistic forms. Langacker’s view (1985, 1987, 1990, 2006) is that subjectivity is a matter of offstage, implied viewing subject, situated in the context of the Ground – the broadly conceived situation of utterance, including the participants, their conversation record, location, and so on. This is also the sense that Coulson and Oakley (2005) use in their theoretical attempt to include discourse grounding in the analysis of mental spaces and blending. While Langacker’s view acknowledges the presence of both the speaker and the hearer, he is not interested in the way in which the negotiation of meaning across these subjectivities is coded in the utterance, and this is what Verhagen (2005, 2006) attempts to add to the picture. Thus Verhagen’s concept of intersubjectivity seeks to explain how specific constructions are used when one of the participants is arguing for a construal or reporting a construal proposed by another participant.

There is also the approach, represented primarily by Traugott (1989, 1995, 2003) and Traugott and Dasher (2005), whereby both concepts (subjectivity and intersubjectivity) are relevant in the explanation of the meanings of specific kinds of expressions. Subjectivity may be useful in accounting for the meaning of modals or deictic expressions, as shown in Ferrari and Sweetser (this volume), while intersubjectivity requires overt attention to the speaker and the hearer as discourse participants, not as conceptualizers (hence it is applicable in accounting for politeness, hedges, etc.). Consequently, Traugott’s view is different from both Langacker’s focus on offstage conceptualizations and Verhagen’s interest in argumentation. Furthermore, Traugott uses the same approach in accounting for semantic change, so that subjectified or intersubjectified meanings of specific forms may emerge through their historical development. Indeed, some combination of Traugott’s and Verhagen’s approaches is needed to explain the use of negation and its description as a stance device.

Verhagen focuses on the constructions that engage the speaker’s and the hearer’s viewpoint and are used to *argue* for a specific construal and negotiate it across different subjectivities. Among other things, Verhagen’s approach explains the crucial difference between sentential negation and morphological negation in (7) and (8).

- (7) Mary is not happy. On the contrary, she is feeling really depressed.
- (8) #Mary is a bit sad/unhappy. On the contrary, she is feeling really depressed. (Verhagen 2005)

The expression *on the contrary* is possible in the intersubjective case, where the speaker uses negation to oppose a positive opinion about Mary's mood that is available in the context; for comparison, the expressions in (8) can only be read as the speaker's own evaluations, and thus cannot be subject to further negotiation. Let us also note that intonation can further highlight the questioned expression. Clearly, there are many constructional features to rely on in distinguishing various types of negative constructions.

The alternativity of negation is the source of its functioning as an argumentative or stance device. There are, in fact, other similar examples of correlations between alternativity and stance, as in Dancygier and Sweetser's (1997, 2006) discussion of alternativity as the mental space configuration underlying the so-called predictive conditionals, such as *If you chill the cranberries after cooking them, the sauce will gel*. The alternativity of the set-up lies in the simultaneous evocation of two scenarios: chilling, followed by gelling, which is the scenario described in the sentence, or keeping warm without gelling (the alternative suggested by a predictive construction). As Dancygier and Sweetser argue, alternativity also opens the construction to the marking of stance, as in *If you had chilled the cranberries after cooking them, the sauce would have gelled*, where the past tense forms prompt an interpretation whereby the speaker believes that the cranberries have been kept warm. The stance thus marked could further extend over the following discourse, as in *and we could have had it with the turkey*. Dancygier and Sweetser also suggest that the possibility of marking stance in a conditional depends directly on the alternative set-up – if there are alternative scenarios, they are open to different evaluations in terms of predictability, probability, and so on. Since negation has been described as the ultimate prompt for alternative spaces, it is worth considering how the resulting set-up is then used for stance marking. This is one of the questions this chapter attempts to explore.

3.2 Stance verbs

The concept of stance is clearly related to subjectivity, in that stance expressions are talked about as representations of the speaker's specific evaluation of assertability, built into specific expressions. It is possible to argue that 'stance' represents the kind of subjectivity where the speaker's viewpoint is directly coded in the expression, whether as a result of subjectification or another semantic change process. In this sense, expressions such as *I think*, modals, and past tense of modals (*may* versus *might*), are naturally treated as stance

expressions, but pronominal deictics may not be, though they are viewpoint expressions (cf Ferrari and Sweetser [this volume]; consider the difference between *this* and *that* or *I* and *you*). One recurring reason for analysts to talk about stance is to distinguish different degrees of stance commitment (though there are surely stance expressions that are not naturally graded).

The most-studied kind of stance is probably epistemic stance. In much of the work within cognitive linguistics, starting with Fillmore's discussion of conditionals as displaying neutral, negative, and positive epistemic stance (Fillmore 1990a, 1990b), through Sweetser's (1996) discussion of stance embedding, to Dancygier and Sweetser's (2005) analysis of conditionals, stance has been associated primarily with the choice of verb forms. In particular, past tense forms have often been described as marking "attitude," "distance," or "negative stance" when they signal doubt, politeness, counterfactuality, and related stance concepts. There is also some work on lexical expression of stance, as in Biber and Finegan's (1988) discussion of adverbial stance types or Kärkkäinen's (2003) discussion of the verb *think*. In fact, the verb *think* seems to be an ideal candidate for a stance marker, since it explicitly invokes mental attitudes not necessarily quantifiable in terms of truth and falsehood. At the same time, however, *think* is one of the most common verbs used in the constructions of represented speech and thought, and the contrasts between different constructions often downplay issues related to stance. *Think* has thus been discussed primarily with respect to the contrast between its *representational* uses, where someone's beliefs are being represented and can then be judged as true or false (*He thinks the earth is flat*), and the interpersonal or *subjectified* uses, which are grammaticalized expressions of stance (*I think, I guess . . .*) (cf Traugott 1989, 1995; Thompson and Mulac 1991; Vandelanotte 2009). Recent work by Wierzbicka (2006) and Brinton (2008) reviews a number of similar expressions (*I reckon, I believe, I find*, and many others), arguing for the fine stance differences they represent in English (in fact, Wierzbicka also observes that other languages express fewer varieties of stance). Weighing the degree of subjectification in such stance expressions against the degree to which they remain representational is often difficult, and relies at least to some degree on the choice of the pronoun. Expressions using the first person pronoun are more readily seen as subjectified, while the ones with third person pronouns are more naturally interpreted as representational.

However, as Verhagen proposes, sentences with stance that represent beliefs and epistemic attitudes of participants referred to via third person expressions are not free of subjective meanings. Specifically, Verhagen argues that constructions of represented speech and thought (STR) such as *X said/knew/thought that Y . . .* are intersubjective, and serve as instructions to entertain Y in the way X entertains it. However, the "reporting" function alone does not necessarily evoke subjectivity, and there are other ways to represent contextually available

stretches of discourse that are not like STR in attributing beliefs to participants. For example, recent work (Dancygier and Vandelanotte 2009) identifies usage referred to as “distanced discourse,” where specific discourse expressions are incorporated into the speaker’s discourse (as in specific forms of STR such as DIST, see Vandelanotte 2004a, 2004b, 2009, this volume) and co-opted into the speaker’s deictic viewpoint, while maintaining their discourse alignment with another speaker. It should be noted, then, that subjectivity or intersubjectivity may emerge independently of constructional patterns, while similar constructions may not be equally subjective or intersubjective.

The degree of incorporation into the speaker’s discourse is an important criterion in considering the meaning of “intersubjectivity,” especially in application to negation, as well as verbs like *think*. The “intersubjective” use of negation exemplified in (7) relies on the contextual availability of an evaluation of Mary’s current disposition as “happy”; similarly, reporting someone’s beliefs, as in *Jeremy thinks/says/believes the earth is flat*, ostensibly recalls those beliefs or reported words from the available context. While in both cases the speaker is relaying another utterance or opinion to the hearer, the degree of incorporation and the hearer involvement are different. While in the case of negating Mary being happy there is a clear argumentative goal of at least questioning an available belief, the reporting verb has no such built-in argumentative function (though it may acquire it, if the subject *Jeremy* is pronounced with contrastive intonation, or if *Jeremy* happens to have expressed a very unfavorable opinion of the hearer, as in *Jeremy says you are a liar*). Furthermore, in the clear-cut metalinguistic cases like *Grandma isn’t feeling lousy*, the hearer is presumably the exact person whose words are being echoed and questioned. Also, while reporting constructions have their own constructional features, they are not argumentative in that they do not require a repair, while the uses in (5), (6), and (7) do.

It might be suggested, then, that while “intersubjectivity” is a broad term covering a number of very different constructions, engaging subjective viewpoints of participants other than the speaker (including, but not limited to, the hearer), specific features of constructions further determine the degree to which an intersubjective set-up is also argumentative. More specifically, the way in which the hearer’s viewpoint is either foregrounded (as in [5], [6], or [7]) or practically absent (as in *He thinks the earth is flat* example) determines the argumentative aspects of the construction. In the same way, constructions that use negation as a stance device rely in very specific ways on the hearer’s subjectivity and discourse participation.

There is then the issue of reporting verbs as stance expressions. Many verbs (*think*, *guess*, *believe*, etc.) have naturally been treated that way based on their meaning (see Kärkkäinen 2003), but can the category be extended over all verbs that can be used as matrix verbs in speech and thought representation,

including *announce*, *declare*, *claim*, *wonder*, *order*, or *mutter*? The answer will, naturally, depend on the definition of stance, but if it is defined as an expression of the represented speaker's viewpoint – epistemic, emotional, or interpersonal – then most of the cases fall into one broad category. Thus verbs such as *announce* or *declare* highlight the interpersonal or speech act aspect of the utterance, while *order* is much more than a performative verb, because it also profiles the represented speaker in an interpersonal relationship where the speaker has authority to issue commands. Moreover, while *mutter* has no influence on how the content is understood, it also represents the evoked speaker as reluctant or unwilling to speak out. This approach would present reporting verbs as participating in a variety of constructions that report the content, while being specific as to some stance taken by the reporting subject, but the “intersubjectivity” of these constructions does not rely crucially on negotiation or argumentation – that is, such constructions may be used to make content originating elsewhere available to the hearer in the course of the exchange, but the hearer's subjectivity and discourse participation are not affected. Unlike in the cases of intersubjective/metalinguistic negation, the hearer's viewpoint is not involved, and the speaker makes no attempt to signal her stance towards the expression quoted. It is then a case of representing multiple viewpoints and the represented speaker's stance, rather than argumentation. However, the use of negation with stance verbs may prompt argumentative meanings.

As should be clear from the discussion so far, subjectified uses of *think* or *guess* need not be seen as essentially different from the representational ones, at least with respect to the stance involved (I would, however, exclude *think about* from the discussion, as a verb of mental activity, not stance). The fact that there are effects of bleaching and pragmatic strengthening, and that the subjectified first person use appears in markedly specific constructional formats, is of course important, but it seems possible to assume that the stance made available by all such uses of *think* is similar enough to allow for some unified discussion, especially with respect to the role of negation. In the remainder of this section, I will consider some more common stance verbs and their interaction with negation.

The syntactic format and interpretation of all complementation constructions with stance verbs relies on the use of the stance verb in the matrix clause, or in the mental space that is higher in the network, and on a description of some state of affairs in the complement clause. The verbs vary in the nature and strength of their commitment, and they also exemplify various combinations of the strength of epistemic stance and emotional stance. At the same time, verbs expressing epistemic stance interact with negation as an independent stance device.

First, it seems useful to further distinguish epistemic stance, as in *think*, from assertive stance, as in *know*. *Know* expresses a stronger stance than that of

think, one that assumes some degree of verifiability or some available evidence, and the epistemic commitment of the speaker is stronger. However, the specific degree or source of certainty required to claim that one “knows” may be a subject of legal dispute, as in the court exchange quoted in *Harper’s Magazine* (November 2007, 26–29). The case concerns an Islamic charity that sued the US government for illegal surveillance, after a document indicating this was accidentally released. The Justice Department argued that the evidence of the document was inconclusive, and that the plaintiffs “think they know, but they don’t,” because only an official confirmation of surveillance could have given them the knowledge, and such a confirmation cannot be given for national security reasons. The argument presented explains that *[w]hen plaintiffs explain what they mean when they say they, in quotes “know,” they don’t know.* In the plaintiffs’ view, having a document indicating the wiretapping allows them to assert with certainty that surveillance happened, and they are thus relying on the general understanding of the stance marked by *know*. The lawyer argues that they only *think they know* – that is, they have a positive epistemic stance towards their belief, but there is no independent evidence of the belief being assertable as true. In other words, the lawyer presents “knowing” as a stance requiring evidence outside of the speaker’s conviction, but “thinking” as naturally representing the speaker’s mind alone. Stretched as his argument may be, it does rely on the sense of a difference between two stances.

Verbs such as *know*, *think*, *guess*, *doubt*, *hope*, or *wish* can thus be distinguished based on the type(s) of stance they represent (emotional, epistemic, or assertive) and the degree of commitment. As the examples below suggest, a stance verb can have a positive or a negative clause in its scope.

- (9) *know (I know she’s there/she’s not there)*
positive epistemic stance and positive assertive stance
- think (I think she’s there/she’s not there)*
positive epistemic or emotional stance and neutral assertive stance
- guess (I guess she’s there/she’s not there)*
neutral epistemic stance and neutral assertive stance
- doubt (I doubt that/if she’s there;?I doubt that she’s not there)*
negative epistemic stance
- hope (I hope she’s there/she’s not there)*
neutral epistemic stance and positive emotional stance
- wish (I wish she were there/she weren’t there)*
negative epistemic stance and positive emotional stance

While some of the verbs clearly express two stances, not all kinds of stances are marked by specific forms; for example, the emotional stance of *hope* and *wish* does not seem to require specific verb forms, but the negative epistemic stance is obligatorily marked through past verb forms in the embedded clause.

Dancygier and Sweetser (2005) thus point out that in examples such as (10) the layers of past morphology indicate the speaker's lack of expectation of the visit happening, while her positive emotional stance (expressed lexically in *wish*, along with epistemic distance) has no such grammatical indicators.

- (10) I wish I could visit London/had visited London.

Regardless of stance, complement clauses of constructions with stance verbs can contain negation (as the examples in [9] show), and thus suggest that the speaker has reasons to consider the positive counterpart space as a possibility. This is different from clauses that are positive, which are only subject to stance marking imposed by the stance verb. Because negation evokes a cognitively accessible positive scenario, the negative form naturally prompts for a construal where the stance expressed by the speaker emerges in response to an already communicated (and perhaps stance-free) positive construal. For example, *I hope she's there* is a straightforward case of stance marking with respect to the potential space of "her being there," but *I hope she isn't there* suggests that the positive scenario is present in the conversational background. In other words, stance constructions using negation in complementation spaces bring up alternativity in the same way as negative statements like (1) or (2). At the same time, the stance marked by the verb is projected down to the complement space; as a result, in cases like *doubt* (*I doubt that she isn't there*), negative stance of the stance verb "doubles" the negative part of the two-space construal in the complement space, and the stance of the construction overall may require more contextualization. Interestingly, this presents no problem with *wish*, where the primary stance is the emotional one, which does not directly clash with negation in the complement clause. However, negation not only gives rise to alternativity, but is also itself a stance marker, and thus interacts with stance verbs in interesting ways.

At the same time, stance constructions with negated complement clauses seem to be less sensitive to the source of alternativity. While examples like (6) and (7) were claimed to differ from (1) in terms of the direction in which alternativity is used in the construction (where negation either alerts the hearer to the alternative set-up or proposes a response to the hearer's original formulation), this distinction seems to be backgrounded in most of the negative examples in (9). In other words, *I wish she weren't there* may be said either because the speaker has some knowledge about "her" whereabouts, or because the hearer suggested it. However, in the case of *doubt*, it seems more likely that the negative complement clause relies on contextually available knowledge – possibly because of the rarity and/or markedness of the situation of expressing negative stance with respect to a negative belief. *Wish* does not pose such problems, because of its strong positive emotional stance, which overrides the negative epistemic stance.

The mental space set-up of stance constructions in general can thus be described as follows: the stance space is higher in the network, and it projects its stance into the complement space. The complement space can be split further into an alternative stance set-up when negation is present. Such a configuration seems to be closely correlated with the syntactic choices in the constructions – the stance verb is the matrix verb and the complement space is syntactically subordinate to it. However, there is also the question of the specific place of stance in a mental space network. Sweetser and Ferrari (this volume) discuss a number of cases of subjectified expressions in which stance has to be marked in the network, even though there may be no dedicated expression marking stance in the construction. This raises important questions about representation of stance in cases of advanced subjectification, and those where subjectification is less of an issue.

There seem to be several possibilities here. First, there are expressions like *Goodbye*, where grammaticalization processes have made the original constructional features invisible. Then there are cases where space builders such as *if* prompt the entire network of spaces that remains in the space builder's scope and thus is marked with stance. We can possibly extend this case to stance verbs like *think*, *doubt*, or *wish*, which also build their complement spaces and project stance to them. But there are also stance markers that appear on the clausal level, such as past tense in conditionals. For instance, *If I had a cat, I'd always feed him tuna* uses the past tense to strengthen the neutral stance of *if* into a negative stance, thus opening the sentence to an interpretation whereby the speaker does not have a cat. What such cases make clear is that stance is a composite phenomenon, and that a mental space network marked with stance by its space-builder such as *if* (which marks neutral rather than positive stance) is subject to further stance marking by clause-level forms (such as tense or negation). This opens a number of questions about the ways in which stance and subjectification are marked and how the markers are or are not constructionally salient. In this chapter, I am particularly interested in stance markers that also distinguish types of constructions.

In the cases where there is a stance-relevant space builder, as in the case of stance verbs, the constructional effects are visible in the embedded structure. For example, the influence of the higher stance space can be seen in the choice of the complementizer. In most cases, a zero-complementizer is acceptable, and then stance is not exerting any influence over the choice. But in the cases where the verb expresses negative or negated stance (like *doubt*, or *don't know*), *if* is the preferred complementizer, marking non-positive stance similarly to conditionals. As Dancygier (1998) suggests, *if* is a generic marker of unassertability, or neutral/negative stance, and it plays a similar stance-weakening role both in conditionals and in reported clauses (embedded questions and the like).

It also seems possible to argue that representational and subjectified uses of stance verbs like *think* both rely on the same set-up, and the difference between them is mostly visible in the first person versus third person usage. *I think he'll win* and *He thinks he'll win* may be perceived as different because the use of *I think* is more easily viewed as subjectified (as can be seen, for instance, in its near functional equivalence to a modal adverb such as *possibly* or *perhaps*),¹ and thus is primarily a stance expression. But they can also be viewed as quite similar in that epistemic stance is attributed in each case, but it is attributed to the speaker only in the first person usage. In the third person construction (as Verhagen shows), the speaker is not expressing her stance, but perhaps guessing, or perhaps reporting the stance attributed to another subject. The greater syntactic flexibility and grammaticalized status of *I think* seems to result from the simpler mental space configuration, with no need to use the speaker as the mediator between another speaker's stance and what is communicated to the hearer in the complement space. Furthermore, being more grammaticalized than other expressions with stance verbs, *I think* marks a range of positive stances, from epistemic evaluation, through degree of commitment (e.g. to a future action), to level of imposition (e.g. when a positive belief is toned down to a non-assertive stance).

3.3 Neg-Raising controversy

It has been argued repeatedly (also within Cognitive Grammar; cf Sumnicht 2004) that sentences such as *I think she's not there* and *I don't think she's there* mean (roughly) the same, as negation is “raised” from the embedded clause to the main clause. While the meaning similarity is easily recognizable, it is not clear why the direction of the so-called Neg-Raising should be up to the *think*-clause, and not down to the “being there” clause. It has also been noted that the versions differ in interpretation: *think that not X* expresses a lower level of uncertainty than *not think that X*; and, finally, it is not always the case that the pairs are indeed naturally interpreted in the same way. For example,

- (11) “I don't think I have anything to add.” (Trent Lott, commenting on Bush's Iraq plan)

is not readily interpretable as *I think I don't have anything to add*. Lott seems to be politely refusing to offer more comments, and thus the presence of *I don't think* is better explained as an added expression of subjectivity and not a matrix clause. Similarly, Example (12)

- (12) “I don't think I'm going to get into the hypotheticals, I'd rather wait and see.” (Donald Rumsfeld)

does not equal *I think I'm not going to get into the hypotheticals*. As Ferrari and Sweetser (this volume) point out, the expression *gonna* is itself a marker of subjectified meaning, so its interaction with *I think* is even more complicated in terms of stance, but Rumsfeld, like Lott, seems to be politely refusing something that reporters want him to do.

These remarks are further supported by Croft's (2001: 213) discussion of an attested example, *I don't think that ever before have the media played such a major role in a kidnapping*. As Croft points out, such examples cannot be explained via an implicature account advocated by Horn (1978), since an analysis such as "It is not the case that I think that ever before have the media played such a major role in a kidnapping" is not quite acceptable. I would like to add that the next step of the implicature account, whereby such a formulation leads to "I believe that never before have the media played such a major role in a kidnapping" is also not sufficiently accurate, since the epistemic stance of the *I don't think that X...* variant (even if it were acceptable) is much less positive than the *I believe not X* one. The assumption that there is little essential difference between *think* and *believe*, and that one can substitute for the other when negation is strategically placed to highlight the intended viewpoint, distorts a whole range of linguistic facts with regard to the concept of stance, and the numerous subtle varieties of levels and kinds of commitment. Finally, the implicature account does not add anything to the understanding of negation with stance verbs, except "translating" a somewhat outdated idea of a syntactic transformation into a pragmatic concept that has been in need of serious revamping since Relevance Theory. It seems that *I don't think* can be treated as a stance marker with respect to the entire syntactic structure in its scope, and thus any approach dissecting negation out of it distorts its actual usage.

The main issue in distinguishing differently negated versions of *I think* constructions is first establishing what negation is doing in the stance space and the complement space. In terms of alternative space set-ups, it plays a different role depending on the level of embedding in the network. *I don't think* negates the stance the verb expresses, and thus presents the speaker's stance as negative (rather than positive), in a situation where positive stance might be expected or desired (alternative space). In the cases of (11) and (12), the stance expressed is that of weakening the speaker's commitment to make a refusal sound polite, but neither expression can be naturally paraphrased with an expression of positive stance. In other words, negative stance towards doing X is not the same as a positive commitment towards not doing X, because in the latter case the alternativity is marked elsewhere. The difference is clearly seen in other instances of stance marking, such as the contrast between *You mustn't smoke here* and *You don't have to smoke here* (obligation to not smoke versus lack of obligation to smoke), and though it is less clear in the case of *I think*,

it is still a valid distinction. With the stance marked by *I don't think* projecting downwards into the complement space, it is natural to interpret the situation described there as negative (e.g. in [11], the speaker will presumably not say much more), but the alternativity is not between having something to add or not, but between wanting to continue one's comments or not, and not wanting to do so naturally implies not doing it. The use of negation described above further confirms that, while negation is a stance-related marker, it is also the primary marker of alternativity, and as such can add alternativity to expressions of stance, while also adding specificity to how stance is expressed.

Corpus search reveals that sentences with positive stance towards negative complement spaces (*I think I don't X*) are not common; also, those that occur often express another stance in X.

- (13) I think I don't have a problem with gangster movies per se, it's just that some of them are too gory (ramblings-n-more.blogspot.com/2005/09/couple-of-good-films.html)

Possibly the most common combination is something like *I think he doesn't want X*, where negation cannot really migrate upwards, because the wrong stance of the wrong subject would thus be negated.

To sum up, a Neg-Raising account does not explain the ways in which *think not X* versus *not think X* sentences differ. It also does not account for other uses of *think* with negation (see below); it does not extend naturally to include other stance verbs; and it does not explain the interaction between negation and stance.

3.4 Negation in the stance space

I will thus assume that expressions in which a stance verb appears with negation genuinely profile an alternative-stance space set-up, rather than merely projecting negative stance into the complement. That is, an expression such as *I don't know* sets up two alternative stance spaces, “knowing” and “not knowing,” and the stance (positive or negative) is then projected into the complement space (*she is there*).

- (14) I don't know if she's there.
 I don't think she's there.
 ??I don't guess she's there.
 ?I don't hope she is there.
 I don't doubt she is there.

Some “special effects” need to be noticed here, especially the difficulty in finding natural contexts where *hope* and *guess* can be negated. While essentially any stance can be questioned, it is possible that expressions of neutral stance

are less likely to be negated, given that there is so little commitment involved in the stance verb itself. *Guess* is a less troublesome example here, since it seems to be used now as a somewhat less committed variant of *think*. It is not common in standard discourse, but it clearly emerges from the subjectified *I guess* – a cousin of *I think*.

- (15) I still live in a nice house, so **I don't guess** I'm broke. (www.scenedaily.com/news/articles/sprintcupseries/waltrip_i_dont_think_were_doing_anything_wrong.html)

However, it is worth noting how contextually available assumptions can affect the interpretation of *I don't think*.

- (16) – Tucker, does the strategy seem to be working to you?
 – Yes. **I don't think** it's a foolish strategy at all... To this point
 Kerry's vision consists of getting the UN in there, which **I don't think**
 most serious people **think** is a solution.

In this fragment from a CNN interview, Tucker Carlson is gently prompted to criticize the US strategy towards assumed weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. He does not go along with it, and thus his first *I don't think* is a form of a rebuttal, something like “you suggest I might think it is a foolish strategy, but I don't.” It is thus negating a positive stance towards the evaluation of the strategy as foolish, but it is also responding to the interviewer's suggested attribution of the positive stance to Tucker. In a way, the wording is expressing a negative stance both subjectively and intersubjectively. This is different from his second *I don't think*, which is a straightforward and unprompted expression of negative stance (towards other people's stance). The “double” stance marking of the first *I don't think*, however, calls for an explanation. It seems that the alternativity of negation opens such a possibility. The negated stance is an expression of the speaker's subjectivity, but the alternative positive stance towards the same complement space is an alternative that has been suggested and is now overtly rejected. Negation in the stance space may thus be different from negation in the complement space in that it exploits alternativity for more complex stance attribution. As I suggested above, there are two ways in which alternativity of negation is used: either one uses negation to alert the hearer to the alternative (as in *There's no milk in the fridge*), or a contextually activated assumption prompts negation as a way to overtly state the alternative, possibly as an expression of the speaker's belief or stance. In the case of the stance space, which is higher in the network, the available contextual alternatives are not located lower in the same network, but are intersubjectively picked up from another network in the discourse. As a result, they are naturally read as refutations of another subject's stance or intended attribution of stance, depending on the direction of activation. Example (17) illustrates such cases further.

- (17) – What **do you hope** the mainstream audiences will learn about this artistic/bohemian culture . . .
 – **I don't hope** they learn anything. . . I don't know who goes to see films and why. (<http://romanticmovies.about.com/library/weekly/aa042602b.htm>)

The interviewer's question presents the speaker as "hoping," and asks for a specific elaboration of the complement space of *hope*. The speaker, however, rejects the stance as part of his intention in film-making. The expression *I don't hope* is thus formulating a negative alternative to the assumed hopeful stance suggested by the interviewer. As a result, the director refuses to answer the question as it was stated.

A particularly interesting case of intersubjective negation is presented in (18).

- (18) I had an abortion when I was 20 years old. I don't regret it at all. Sometimes I think about how my life would have been different had I not aborted, but **never in the sense that I wish my life were different** than it is now. **I don't wish** I had ended up on welfare, **I don't wish** I'd created an emotional and financial strain for my family and **I don't wish not to have** the wonderful partner I have now. (www.imnotsorry.net/2010/09/06/marnis_story)

The blogger comments on the ways in which having an abortion helped her avoid stressful consequences of having an unwanted child. When she refers to the alternative "abortion space," though, she does not frame it as her presumed opponents might (they might think she feels remorse and actually regrets having done it). On the contrary, she builds on the counterfactual meaning of *wish* by describing all the unwanted situations that she thinks she has avoided. While she uses *I don't wish* to reject the regretful thoughts attributed to her, she is in some sense mocking and refuting what the opponents of abortion might be saying to her. Consequently, her repeated negation of *wish* has a double argumentative function – rejecting regret, and also fleshing out her reasons why she still stands by her choice. Interestingly, in the final clause (*I don't wish not to have . . .*) the complement space is itself negative. I will discuss more such cases below.

The mechanism of refutation that relies on negating attributed stance is an interesting instance of a variety of language processes relying on the so-called "echoic mention" (Sperber and Wilson 1991 [1981], 1995 [1986]). While the literal understanding of echoic use as a repetition of an utterance that can easily be accessed in the context is often weakened to various kinds of discourse grounding and evocation (see Tobin and Israel and Vandelanotte in this volume; Dancygier 1998; Dancygier and Vandelanotte 2009), the case of

stance refutation may be even further removed from it in that often it is not in the basic sense a “recall” of a specific utterance, but may be a speaker’s formulation of what the speaker perceives as a stance attributed to her. Besides the pragmatic specificity of these uses, we should also note the role of salient constructional features, recurring in a range of constructions.

3.5 Negation in both spaces

I argued above that negation in the stance space has a different function from negation of the complement space. The differences are best seen in examples where both spaces are negated. Such examples are quite rare, and they all seem to suggest a similar set-up.

- (19) **I don't think I won't have slumps** like this again, but I will never fully give up on myself. (Blogger describes hardships of dieting; www.blurry.com/~lil_miss_chub/day/2003/11/30)
- (20) I don't think about nor am I concerned with political correctness. **I don't think I won't offend someone.** (www.seleda.com/feb01/bawza.shtml)
- (21) **I don't think he can't write songs**, either. It's just that, (in my opinion, I never said everybody's) he should get somebody else to sing and play. (www.radioparadise.com/content.php?name=songinfo&song_id=2787)

All these examples are argumentative, responding to assumptions activated in the background. In (19), the writer responds to the assumption “in the air” that she might believe (perhaps naively) that she “won’t have slumps like that.” She rejects the attribution of that belief, knowing that slumps might happen in spite of her best intentions, but she is nevertheless optimistic about the final result.

Examples (20) and (21) are similar: someone may assume “I think he can’t write songs” or “I think I won’t offend,” but in fact this is not my assumed epistemic stance. Such constructions are thus intersubjective on both levels. The negative belief in the complement space is being attributed to the writer, in response to the previously activated positive alternative (you had a slump once, so you will have more; if you act this way, you expect to offend; people think he can write songs). The writer or blogger then rejects the attribution of the negative belief to her, by negating her stance to it. The overall interpretation might be in agreement with the general “two negatives make a positive” rule, but the complex construal offered does much more than this – it develops the argument from its inception all the way to the blogger’s standpoint.

Even more importantly, sentence (20) is using a positive polarity item *someone* in its negative embedded clause (*I won't offend someone*). This seems to result directly from the reading I propose – “Contrary to what is being suggested, I think I might offend someone” – and to confirm the fact that the negation in the clause does not have the predicate *offend someone* in its scope, and it marks stance only. In other words, the situation of “not offending anyone” is not under discussion at all. The blogger acknowledges that others may expect her to be concerned about potential offences, but she rejects that concern, and so the two uses of negation reject these two stances (the expectations others have and her rejection of these expectations as valid). It is thus possible for the positive polarity item to remain unaffected under negation in its clause.

What seems to be interesting here is that such examples of “double” negation (in the stance space and the complement space) are in fact available only in cases where the complement space is not a straightforward description of a state of affairs subject to stance evaluation, but counts as stance expression itself. In a sense, the intersubjective set-up described above (with the positive alternative activated in the discourse) is doubled in (19)–(21) – it appears once in the stance space, and then in the complement space. Such examples are extremely rare, but they are possible when discourse makes such an argumentative set-up possible. We should note further that with the argumentative role of negation in both spaces, stance marking is not only doubled, but also “stacked.” The negative stance expressed in the higher clause/space projects into the complement space, but the complement space is marked for stance as well, and thus it becomes possible to express a stance towards a stance. This is possible when the construction can dedicate a clausal level to each stance expression, and even if the only stance marking in the lower space is via negation. The interpretation then emerges through the interaction between alternative (negative) set-ups in the network and assumptions available elsewhere in the discourse – for example, in the hearer’s words or assumed beliefs of other participants. In other words, the alternativity of negation is the source of argumentative uses of stance, as it allows for projections of stance not only up and down the network, but also “sideways” – through the alternatives. When the alternatives are signaled in the discourse, the argumentative function of negation prevails.

3.6 Constructional compositionality and stance

As the above review of negation suggests, its uses, while invariably relying on alternativity, interact with stance, and also express stance. Negative stance may be signaled in different ways – past tense verb forms and lexical expressions prevail – but it may be suggested via alternativity as well, for the purposes of argumentation. Even more importantly, there are constructional aspects of

stance expression that need to be considered. In earlier work, I have argued for the constructional nature of so-called metalinguistic negation (refutation and repair), but there are many other constructional formats to be considered. For example, stance adverbs such as *admittedly*, *possibly*, or *undoubtedly* can appear sentence-internally or sentence-initially, and the sentence-initial ones, when separated by intonation, are often described as disjuncts – adverbials that provide the speaker's comment on the entirety of the sentence. The syntactic separation of disjuncts is often connected to their scope over the whole sentence, but it should be added that their constructional slot is also paired with the highest position in the mental space set-up, which often holds stance spaces. Other syntactic constructions using stance adjectives as predicates behave similarly, as can be seen in Verhagen's (2005) discussion of so-called *it*-extraposition ("It is possible that X" format instead of "That X is possible"), which suggests that the construction favors an argumentative set-up. The evidence provided by negation, disjuncts, or extraposition clearly supports the need for a broad discussion of constructional correlates of argumentative and stance-related meanings.

One of the questions raised above concerned the actual argumentative force of constructions that Verhagen labels "intersubjective." It seems clear from the review above that there is a cline of argumentative or inferential impact among such constructions. While *John thinks that X* does require that X be construed from the point of view of John, any further complication of the constructional allocation of stance (via negation in any of the spaces or both, choice of reporting verb and complementizer, the change of pronoun to *I*, which opens the construction to subjectified reading, etc.) adds a level of argumentative complexity. What I want to suggest is that the concept of intersubjectivity is best approached not only in terms of types of constructions that clearly involve the speaker's and the hearer's subjectivities, which is what Verhagen has proposed, but also in terms of constructional compositionality. The devices I have looked at here (very briefly in some cases) include various uses of negation, stance verbs, complementizers, clauses, and pronouns. What seems to emerge from the overview is the observation that argumentative complexity increases with constructional complexity. In other words, all these devices bring their own stance-related contributions to the expressions, but stance marking itself, while possibly intersubjective, is not necessarily argumentative. The argumentative power of a construction emerges out of the complexity of the constructional means used to represent different stances. Stance verbs themselves are not high on that scale, but when accompanied by negation in one of the spaces, they increase their argumentative power, and the constructions with negation in both spaces are clearly the ones negotiating stance across different mental spaces and subjectivities. These correlations seem to support the idea of constructional

compositionality (Dancygier and Sweetser 2005), in that the argumentative complexity of a construction emerges out of the lower-level constructional choices that prompt specific construals.

This view is supported by examples of constructions that increase stance-allocation complexities even further. These are specialized constructions that place the stance expression in a higher space and also in a higher clause – hence I will refer to them as *stance-stacking constructions*. The cases of disjuncts and *it*-extraposition mentioned above seem to have just that effect: making sure that the stance is located in the highest syntactic slot and projects over the utterance as a whole. The cases of negation discussed above are more complex, because their task is to make the scope of stance more specific, possibly applying to a phrase and not the whole clause. Classical examples of external negation are a case in point, as in *It is not the case that X* versus *not X*. In fact, such constructions can easily be used as a paraphrase of some of the examples discussed above, as in *It is not the case that/I'm not saying that/I'm not suggesting/It is not that I think that he can't write songs*. Furthermore, negation is the only stance expression that can be “extracted” out of a counterfactual conditional, which relies on negative stance. For example, a sentence such as *If you hadn't helped, I would have been fired* can be paraphrased as *If it hadn't been for your help, I would have been fired*, or *If not for you, I would have been fired*. Apart from focusing on a selected aspect of a conditional space, the construction *if not for X* (see Dancygier and Sweetser 2005) seems to have no other role but to highlight the negative stance by extracting it out of the scope of the subject of the *if*-clause and thus making it clear that the stance is expressed by the speaker, rather than being attributed to the subject.

What such constructions do is set up a new clause at the head of the construction, with verbs like *be*, *say*, or *suggest*, which can be construed as upholding negative stance to a possible interpretation of a discourse fragment without adding much lexical content. The additional negative marker of stance is then placed in the clause, to separate this level of stance marking from stances potentially represented lower in the construction. The fact that these constructions use negation in a higher clause specifically added for that purpose further reinforces the question of the correlation between the placement of stance in constructions and its participation in grammaticalized expressions such as those discussed by Ferrari and Sweetser (this volume).

There are clearly many ways in which a construction may represent stance, but there are still many unanswered questions about the possible correlation between constructionally available overt means of precise allocation of stance to various discourse participants, real or construed, and the subjectification processes that in fact “hide” stance from the constructional form. While the cases discussed here occupy the “constructionally overt” end of the spectrum,

the cases discussed by Sweetser and Ferrari address the other end, and the correlation emerging out of the comparison clearly suggests that the need for stance to be projected to spaces lower down in the network makes it natural to suppose that stance spaces should appear high in the network, whether there is a constructional correlate to this phenomenon or not. Interestingly, the case of *I think* is particularly helpful here. Distinguishing the representational uses of *I think he lied* from the subjectified ones is largely based on the meaning of the complement clause – the more interpersonal its impact, the more likely *I think* will be read as subjectified. However, there are also constructional correlates (see Thompson and Mulac 1991; Vandelanotte 2009), such as the possibility of the *I think* clause being moved to the end of the sentence (*He lied, I think*). What this constructional variant suggests is that the subjectified/grammaticalized *I think* may not require to be placed at the head of the construction, and it is still clear that the stance affects the matrix clause *He lied*, rather than the next sentence. This may in fact be a correlation that further research might test – the higher the level of grammaticalization, the fewer constructional correlates of subjectification. In other words, complex stance markers such as *I think/I don't think* remain “outside” the clausal syntax.

Also, we can further postulate that in a narrative flow a sentence *He lied* can easily be interpreted as a case of free indirect discourse, such that the thought about a lie is part of a stretch of narrative where a character's thoughts are being represented. In such a case, the stance remains that of the narrative “cognizer,” but it is difficult to distinguish whether the utterance should be treated as subjectified or representational, and what remains constant is the fact that the cognizer's epistemic stance is being represented somehow. One explanation for this ambiguity might be that in the absence of constructional signals, what remains salient is the viewpoint associated with the current cognizer, and the viewpoint assumes the availability of some epistemic stance, without necessarily distinguishing subtle levels of stance commitment. The conclusion might be that compositional constructions provide means for very precise allocation of stance, while grammaticalized forms package stance economically into expressions, but there is also a broad area of usage where interpreting a text can proceed smoothly with just a minimal assumption of epistemic viewpoint. This kind of usage may in fact be the default case, similar to Langacker's Ground, where the details of stance are not salient enough to warrant a complex construal. It might be argued, then, that the constructions that Verhagen refers to as intersubjective explicitly evoke multiple viewpoints in the Ground (which otherwise remain assumed as default), while the specific argumentative impact of any such construction further relies on one of the two options outlined above: either there are constructional means (verb forms, stacked clauses, refutation/repair sequences, etc.) that make stance allocation more specific, or stance and commitment are packaged into grammaticalized forms of subjectification.

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