

## Stance and Subjectivity

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*Stance may be understood as the semiotic means by which we indicate our orientation to states of affairs, usually framed in terms of evaluation (e.g., moral obligation and epistemic possibility) or intentionality (e.g., desire and memory, fear and doubt). Using data from Q'eqchi'-Maya and English, stance is operationalized in terms of complement-taking predicates and the grammatical category of status. Using frameworks from Goffman and Jakobson, it is argued that these lexical and grammatical domains disambiguate principals from animators (here called the commitment event and the speech event, respectively). It is argued that stances may be crosslinguistically grouped and ordered as a function of the degree to which the commitment event subsumes, or coincides with, the narrated event. And it is argued that "subjectivity in language" is not the issue; rather, research should focus on the intersection of a crosslinguistic account of commitment events and community-specific understandings of a speaker's contribution to event construal. [Stance, subjectivity, participant roles, grammatical categories, status, evidentiality, Q'eqchi'-Maya]*

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The setting is the Q'eqchi'-Maya village of Ch'inahab' in highland Guatemala.<sup>1</sup> The protagonist is Maynor, a three-year-old boy known for his angry antics. One morning, he pushes his tiny chair over, narrowly missing the anthropologist's outstretched foot. His ten-year-old cousin, visiting for breakfast, is the only family member who notices. "Ay dios," ('Goodness!') she exclaims, calling the boy's mother's attention to his misbehavior, "Xten raj li roq' laj Maynor" ('Maynor would have hit his foot'). Maynor's mother rights the chair and then asks the little boy point blank: "Ma taawaj li la" ('Do you want the stinging nettle?'). Maynor sits back down, shaking his head, eyes on his mother, frowning. The anthropologist moves his foot out of range.

In this example, the girl uses the counterfactual clitic *raj* to describe Maynor's action. Without this clitic, her utterance could simply be glossed as 'Maynor (has) hit his foot', indicating that in the world of the speech event, the girl is committed to the truth of the narrated event.<sup>2</sup> With the counterfactual clitic, however, she signals that she is committed to the truth of the narrated event in a world other than that of the speech event. In effect, she says, "In another world (but not in this one), Maynor hit the anthropologist's foot."

This counterfactual clitic, then, serves to distinguish a speech event from what I call a *commitment event*. In so doing, it allows this little girl to inhabit two participant roles that are usually indistinguishable: the role of *animator* (articulating an utterance in this world—the speech event) and the role of *principal* (committed to the truth of the proposition expressed by her utterance in another world—the commitment event).

Furthermore, by shifting her commitment to another world with the clitic *raj*, the girl invites the inference that in this world (i.e., the world in which she is an animator), she

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is committed to the negation of the narrated event. This little girl, then, has revealed two opposing yet not contradictory commitments: in another world Maynor did hit the anthropologist's foot, but in this world he did not.

Indeed, the girl's separation into animator and principal invites a separation of Maynor into *actor* (the narrated figure of certain actions) and *agent* (the effecting or intending subject underlying those actions). That is to say, in the world in which the girl is a principal and the boy is an agent, Maynor did carry out an action (hitting the anthropologist's foot). But in the world in which the girl is an animator and the boy is an actor, Maynor did not carry out this action. In effect, the girl's utterance allows a range of interpretations involving attributions of more or less cause and intention: from 'Maynor intended to hit his foot' to 'Maynor tried to hit his foot' to 'Maynor would have hit his foot' to 'Maynor almost hit his foot'.

Lastly, it is important to note how Maynor's mother interpreted his actions as they were described to her by the girl: Maynor was enough of an agent to be responsible, such that he is culpable, such that the stinging nettle as a threat is allowable. Indeed, diachronically, the counterfactual clitic *raj* is probably a grammaticalization of *rajbal*, a nominalization of the verb of desire (*ajok*). Ethnopsychologically, many speakers interpret an utterance involving the clitic *raj* with an utterance involving the verb *ajok*. In this way, just as Maynor's action was subject to public articulation, so is this public articulation subject to a psychological interpretation. With her rhetorical question, 'Do you want the stinging nettle?', Maynor's mother seems to have calibrated the private desire underlying his action to the public consequences of its possible outcome, thereby pointing out to him how a maternal calculus can transform desire into pain, or willfulness into sting.

Let us step back from this microanalysis of the brief interaction between a Q'eqchi'-speaking boy and his mother, to the theoretical framework in which it has been described. As is well known, Erving Goffman (1981) decomposed the role of speaker into several more basic roles: *animator* (the one who says the words), *author* (the one who composes the words said), and *principal* (the one who is committed to what the words say). Roman Jakobson (1990) defined grammatical categories in terms of a number of basic events: *speech event* (the world in which speaking occurs), *narrated event* (the world spoken about), and *narrated speech event* (a spoken-about world in which speaking occurs). These sets of roles and events may be interrelated. For example, as the grammatical category of person characterizes the participants in the narrated event relative to the participants in the speech event (thereby disambiguating figures, or participants in the narrated event, from speakers), reported speech characterizes the narrated speech event, or source event, relative to the speech event (thereby disambiguating authors from animators). That is to say, certain relations among Goffman's participant roles are salient enough to be encoded in Jakobson's grammatical categories.

This article combines Goffman's notion of roles with Jakobson's notion of events to show how a number of resources in natural languages—in particular, grammatical categories such as mood (or deontic modality) and status (or epistemic modality), and lexical categories such as complement-taking predicates (e.g., 'believe', 'want', 'fear')—disambiguate principals from animators.<sup>3</sup> These categories characterize a commitment event (the realm of principals) toward a narrated event (the realm of figures) relative to a speech event (the realm of animators). Indeed, an adequate characterization of these categories requires an understanding of these three event types. I further show that commitment events are particular instances of stance taking, when the idea of stance has been semiotically operationalized and cross-linguistically theorized.

Furthermore, I argue that the notional features underlying the grammatical and lexical forms marking stance may be scaled as a function of the degree to which the commitment event subsumes the narrated event (such that the two events may be considered a single event).<sup>4</sup> Using data from English and Q'eqchi'-Maya, I demonstrate this ontological subsumption in the case of status by differentiating the relative

scope of operators marking status, and in the case of complement-taking predicates by differentiating the relative tightness of complement–predicate constructions—the degree to which they look like a single clause. Thus, in contrast to scholars who suggest that epistemic modality indicates a degree of distance between the speaker and what she is saying—that is, between a speech event and a narrated event (Akatsuka 1985; Botne 1997; Givón 1982, 1994; González Calvo 1995; *inter alia*)—I argue that these grammatical and lexical forms actually turn on the degree of distance between the commitment event and the narrated event. The common view that epistemic modality depends on the “speaker’s commitment to what she is saying” misconstrues the locus of commitment insofar as it takes speaker to be a primitive role, rather than the bundling together of a set of more basic, analytically distinguishable roles.

The first section reviews the ways *stance* has been used in the linguistics and linguistic anthropology literature. The resemblance such uses bear to one another, and to earlier notions such as *attitude*, are pointed out and contrasted with how *stance* is used in this article. The next section discusses the relationship of Goffman’s notions of principal, animator, and author to the systems offered by Varro and Jakobson. I introduce a modified set of these notions to operationalize what I mean by *stance*. The following section exemplifies *stance* in two crosslinguistic form–functional domains: status (or epistemic modality), and complement-taking predicates. The formal and functional regularities of these domains are used to characterize the notional features underlying the grammatical and lexical expression of *stance* and to account for the logic underlying this expression. In the conclusion, evidentials are briefly contrasted with status, and hence source events with commitment events, in order to show how the analysis undertaken here may be generalized. Finally, the notion of *second-order stances*, or *metastances*, is introduced as a means of capturing certain key features of subjectivity not explicitly treated in this article.

### Stance Reviewed

The term *stance* is currently used in the literature in a number of ways. Perhaps the most common use is to refer to a kind of interpretive horizon, akin to a *Weltanschauung* or ideology: a way of categorizing and judging experience particular to a group or individual that turns on some notion of the good or true (Ash 2001; Helmers 1998). For example, some scholars use *social stance* to refer to the ethical horizon of a group relative to language, thereby implicating *stance* in linguistic ideologies (Chaves 2001; Hekland 2000; Stephan 2000). Other scholars talk about *authorial stance* as the ideology, or set of beliefs and values, of authors insofar as it affects how they position themselves both in a text and to a text (Abdulla 1999; Hunston and Thompson 2000; Hyland 1999; Lafford 2001). Some scholars use *(inter)personal stance* to refer to the particular perspectives of participants in a speech event—that is, what they know and want relative to other participants insofar as their relative overlap affects discursive sequencing, inference, and so on (Strauss 2002; Vidal and Klein 1998; Warnick 1997). And some scholars, following Daniel Dennett (1987), refer to the *intentional stance* of humankind—that is, the tendency of humans as a species to interpret social behavior in terms of putative mental states, such as belief, desire, and fear (Budwig 2000; Khalidi 1995; Reboul 2000). In short, such uses range from lay understandings of *stance* (no different from newspaper articles that refer to a presidential candidate’s “stance toward human rights”) to relatively technical linguistic understandings of *stance* (e.g., the relative symmetry of participants’ knowledge insofar as it affects the identifiability of referents) to relatively philosophical understandings of *stance* (e.g., a species-specific cognitive disposition).<sup>5</sup>

Besides this focus on ethical, authorial, interpersonal, and intentional stances, much research discusses various *stance* markers or *stance* indicators—that is, semiotic resources for marking the speaker’s *stance* or attitude toward narrated states of affairs. These commonly include intonation, exclamations, modal adverbs, discourse particles, hedges, adjectives, verbs of mentation, and so on (Aksu-Koc and Alici 2000; Biber

and Finegan 1989; Dimmendaal 1996; Johnson 2001; Tracy and Tracy 1998; Wichmann 2001). For example, Noriko Akatsuka (1997, 1999) has examined the way speakers use conditionals to indicate the relative desirability, or positive versus negative value, of a particular entity or state of affairs. More often, however, linguistic forms are studied in regard to their indication of epistemic stances. These are usually studied in reference to the speaker's certainty of the truth of a proposition (Aksu-Koc and Alici 2000; Field 1997; González Calvo 1995; King and Nadasdi 1999; Ueda 1996; Vet 1994; Yoshimi 1997), but sometimes also in reference to the speaker's evidence for a proposition (Mushin 1997, 1998, 2001). Lastly, in conjunction with these analyses of epistemic stance, the term *affective stance* is often used, usually in reference to the speaker's mood or feeling (Field 1997; Kataoka 1995; Rangkupan 2001; Takahashi 1997; Yoshimi 1997).

As may be seen from these uses, stance is not so much a new topic in linguistics as it is a new name for what is often called the speaker's *attitude, view, or evaluation*. For example, Otto Jespersen says that the grammatical category of mood expresses "certain attitudes of the mind of the speaker towards the contents of the sentence" (1965:313). Jakobson, quoting Victor Vinogradov, characterizes mood as reflecting "the speaker's view of the character of the connection between the action and the actor or the goal" (1990:391). And V. N. Vološinov characterizes Anton Marty's understanding of evaluation as "the expression of a speaker's individual attitude toward the subject matter of his discourse" (1973:105). In some sense, then, current uses of stance generalize this older notion of attitude from the grammatical category of mood—still often understood to be the exemplary locus of its expression—to other linguistic forms. Indeed, the use of terms such as *attitude* and *stance* by linguists resonates with a much older philosophical trend. For example, these definitions of mood and evaluation may be compared with Immanuel Kant's definition of modality, which turns on a distinction between cognitive faculties and things, or thought and content: "The principals of modality . . . add to the concept of a thing, . . . of which otherwise they say nothing, the cognitive faculty from which it springs and in which it has its seat" (1964:252).

There is a deep resonance, then, between Western metaphysics, classic works in linguistics, and the recent research reviewed above, particularly in the pervasive distinction between cognitive faculty and thing (à la Kant), judgment and content (à la Frege), attitude and proposition (à la logicians), and stance and assertion (à la linguistic anthropologists). Although these are not necessarily unjustified dichotomies, they can easily lead to a conflation of semiotic function (indexical/denotational), discursive function (expressive/referential), ontological bias (mind/world), ideological bias (subjective/objective or peculiar/normal), and semiotic expression (grammatical operator/lexical predicate). Of course, the dangers of most of these conflations are old hat to linguistic anthropologists (cf. Jakobson 1960; Whorf 1956b). Indeed, Vološinov long ago railed against what he considered a facile and incorrect "disjunction between referential meaning and evaluation" (1973:105), suggesting instead that all forms serve both functions.

Relatedly, this literature typically assumes two main types of attitude or stance: the deontic and the epistemic. For example, Kant lists "the permitted and the forbidden" under modality in his *Critique of Practical Reason* (1993:69), and he lists "possibility and necessity" under modality in his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1964:252). Jespersen distinguished between two kinds of notional domains underlying mood: those with and without "an element of will" (1965:320–321). And modern linguists distinguish between deontic and epistemic modality as encoded in the verbal categories of mood and status, respectively (cf. Bybee and Fleischman 1995; Lyons 1977; Palmer 1986; Van Valin and LaPolla 1997). Even when divisions used by linguists break with the deontic versus epistemic distinction, they turn to another widely used and analogous contrast: affective versus epistemic. This distinction has its origins in the psychological rather than philosophical literature and is akin to lay distinctions between feeling and thought, passion and reason, and emotion and cognition (cf. Lutz 1988). Indeed, the grammatical category of mood, which marks the notional domain of deontic modality, is closely related to the term *affective*, which invokes the psychological notions of mood

and feeling. Again, although these distinctions may be warranted, it is important to enumerate their assumptions and map out their limitations rather than simply presuppose them in our theoretical framework.

In some sense, then, as the terms themselves indicate, the turn from attitude to stance is in keeping with other trends in linguistics and anthropology: from an emphasis on the private, subjective, and psychological (attitude) to an emphasis on the public, intersubjective, and embodied (stance). Thus, although the recent literature on stance has its origins in very old distinctions and runs the danger of recapitulating very old connotations, it makes a number of important contributions. Most compelling is its taking often-understudied linguistic forms (e.g., particles) and examining their (usually) nonreferential functions in real-time interactions while paying specific attention to context (social relations, gender roles, cultural values, language ideologies, etc.). In this way, with a few caveats (discussed in the next paragraph), much of this research contributes to our understanding of the relationship between subjectivity and language, discourse and grammar, and semiotics and culture.

In this article, I do not discuss the discursive and social functions of these forms, the grammatical particularities of their expression, or the cultural context of their use—topics I have treated elsewhere (Kockelman 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c). Rather, I offer a more specific definition of stance based in Goffman's roles and Jakobson's events: the indication of a commitment event to a narrated event relative to a speech event. In delimiting the scope of what we mean by stance, I seek to increase its explanatory power. By elucidating the expression of stance in two crosslinguistic form-functional domains—status operators and complement-taking predicates—I show how the formal means by which stance is expressed can be used to characterize both its underlying notional domain and the logic of its expression. Lastly, by examining crosslinguistic and language-particular species of stance, I show how we can avoid not only positing binary distinctions between kinds of stance (affective/epistemic and deontic/epistemic), but also conflating different kinds of functions and biases (semiotic and discursive, ontological and ideological, etc.).

### Stance Operationalized: Elements from Goffman, Varro, and Jakobson

This section draws from frameworks offered by Goffman, Varro, and Jakobson to define and operationalize the semiotic realization of stance. I show how Goffman's decomposition of the speaker into participant roles (principal, animator, and author) may be used in conjunction with Varro's decomposition of the agent into stages of action (supporting, acting, and creating) and Jakobson's description of the events underlying grammatical categories (speech event, narrated event, and narrated speech event) to create a semiotically grounded crosslinguistically useful concept of stance.

As just mentioned, Goffman (1981) decomposes the lay understanding of speaker into a number of more basic participant roles: animator, author, and principal.<sup>6</sup> With his notion of principal, in particular, Goffman tries to account for the authority, often understood as intentionality, underlying an utterance: the belief or epistemic commitment underlying an assertion, the desire or deontic commitment underlying a command, the feeling or expressive commitment underlying an exclamation, and so on.

Each of these participant roles may be inhabited by one or more entities who themselves need not be human (in the species sense), individuals (in the biophysical sense), or even temporally or spatially present in the speech event itself; and the same individual does not necessarily inhabit all roles at once. For example, in reported speech authors and principals are disambiguated from animators, and in presidential addresses principals and animators are disambiguated from authors (Goffman 1981:145–146). Indeed, such roles can be inhabited by less than an individual, as when, for example, we speak metaphorically of the lips animating what the mind authors and the heart "principals."

Crucial to this decomposition of roles are Goffman's interrelated notions of distance, displacement, and embedding (1981:148). *Distance* describes how pronouns—particularly *I*, which projects the speaker as figure into the event being narrated—allow more than one set of participant roles to be active at once: those belonging to the figure and those belonging to the speaker. In other words, there can be a figured animator, author, and principal (insofar as such roles are denoted in the world spoken about), just as there can be a grounded animator, author, and principal (insofar as such roles are indexed in the world of speaking).

*Displacement* describes the magnitude and type of distance that can separate the figure and its denoted participant roles from the speaker and its indexed participant roles. Not only may the figure be different from the speaker (in the case of second- and third-person pronouns, etc.), but the activities of “principaling,” animating, or authoring predicated of the figure may be in a remote or recent past, immediate or distal future, or possible or probable world (relative to the world of speaking).

Lastly, *embedding* describes the infinitely recursive properties of decomposition, distance, and displacement. These are most succinctly exemplified in utterances such as “He believes she told him I wanted to go to the movies” (said with eyes rolling in exasperation, while crossing one's fingers behind one's back). That is, any number of sets of distanced participant roles may be open at once, with various individuals inhabiting the roles in each set and each bearing its own relations, with more or less displacement, to the addressing self—the current self of the animator, the seemingly unadorned entity that always seems to lie one step beyond the reach of language (cf. Goffman 1959).<sup>7</sup>

In a completely different context, Varro (1938) in his discussion of Latin describes three “stages of action,” which are so eerily similar to Goffman's notions of participant roles and so relevant for understanding agency—that bugbear of social theory—that he is worth quoting at length:

The third stage of action is, they say, that in which they *faciunt* ‘make’ something: in this, on account of the likeness among *agere* ‘to act’ and *gerere* ‘to carry or carry on’, a certain error is committed by those who think that it is only one thing. For a person can *facere* something and not *agere* it, as a poet *facit* ‘makes’ a play and does not act it, and on the other hand the actor *agit* ‘acts’ it and does not make it, and so a play *fit* ‘is made’ by the poet, not acted, and *agitur* ‘is acted’ by the actor, not made. On the other hand, the general [*imperator*], in that he is said to *gerere* ‘carry on’ affairs, in this neither *facit* ‘makes’ nor *agit* ‘acts’, but *gerit* ‘carries on’, that is, supports, a meaning transferred from those who *gerunt* ‘carry’ burdens, because they support them. [1938:245]<sup>8</sup>

Varro's decomposition of action is almost isomorphic to Goffman's decomposition of the speaker: as making is to authoring, acting is to animating, and supporting is to principaling. Varro stipulates that we must keep separate the mode of designing an action, the mode of undertaking the action, and the mode of bearing (responsibility for) the action. Indeed, just as in Goffman's discussion of the principal, there is even a psychological and social ambiguity underlying Varro's notion of supporting—as a mode of intending, being committed to, or bearing responsibility for an action. Only when a single individual inhabits all three of Goffman's roles or engages in all three of Varro's stages of action do we have a prototypical speaker or actor. In both cases, the prototype—though relatively infrequently instantiated in actual practice—is taken in lay understandings to constitute the category's entire extension. Agency, then, should probably be understood as a culture's understanding of the conditions for and consequences of being implicated in one or more of these stages of action. For example, if a single individual is implicated in each stage, he or she can be responsible for the outcome of the action—worthy of praise or blame, subject to pride or shame.

However, Goffman and Varro's perspectives are distinct along a number of axes. While Goffman is focused on inhabitable roles, Varro is focused on modes of action: the overlap would be perfect had Varro spoken about the actor, maker, and supporter (as roles) or had Goffman spoken about animating, authoring, and principaling (as

actions). Moreover, Varro's account may be thought of as subsuming Goffman's, insofar as speaking is always a species of acting but acting is not always a species of speaking. On the other hand, Varro does not introduce notions such as distance, displacement, and embedding, and hence the real power of Goffman's perspective is not reached (and may never be in nonlinguistic action or nondisplaceable semiosis).

Besides being of general interest in its relationship to Goffman's work, Varro's theory of action is important for the present argument insofar as our actions are figured in discourse (cf. Anscombe 1976 *passim* on the relation between intention and "acting under a description"). That is, just as one may be an actual actor decomposed into three stages of action, one may be a figured actor, whose stages of action are explicitly characterized in conversation. In particular, as demonstrated by the relation between Maynor's action and his cousin's utterance, how we characterize supporters of action in talk is directly related to how we characterize principals of talk in talk.<sup>9</sup>

In his influential classification of verbal categories, Jakobson (1990) introduced the distinction among speech event, narrated event, and narrated speech event (which he discussed only in the context of evidentials). He hinged his definition of *shifters* on this distinction: grammatical categories that characterize these events and their participants without reference to the speech event are nonshifters, and those that do so with reference to the speech event are shifters. Thus, gender and aspect are nonshifters because they make no reference to the speech event. In contrast, person and tense are shifters: the former characterizes the participants in the narrated event with reference to the participants in the speech event, and the latter characterizes the time of the narrated event with reference to the time of the speech event.

In what follows, I combine the systems of Goffman and Jakobson to explain how certain relations between disambiguated (animator, author, and principal) and distanced (indexed speaker versus denoted figure) roles are crosslinguistically grammaticalized or lexicalized.<sup>10</sup> I also address the relative displacement allowed by such grammaticalization and lexicalization, and discuss the logic underlying it. In particular, focusing on the grammatical category of status and complement-taking predicates, I show how these linguistic resources serve to characterize a commitment event toward a narrated event relative to a speech event.

### Stance Exemplified: Complementation in Q'eqchi' and English

It is well known that across languages the semantic structure of complement-taking predicates correlates in a relatively systematic way with the morphosyntactic structure of their complements (Givón 1980; Foley and Van Valin, Jr., 1984; Silverstein 1976a, 1993; Van Valin, Jr., and LaPolla 1997). In particular, the closer the semantic relation between the narrated events denoted by a predicate and its complement, the more the morphosyntactic encoding of the predicate-complement construction appears as a single clause.

This iconicity may be demonstrated in English by comparing two kinds of encoded commitment events: full-clause constructions involving the verb *believe*, and nonfinite constructions involving the verb *want*. An example of a full-clause complement in English is the clause following the complementizer *that* in the sentence *John believes that Mary might have been a witch*. In full-clause constructions, the subject of the complement verb may be different from that of the main verb, and the timing and truth value of the action denoted by the complement verb may be different from that of the action denoted by the main verb: *John* is the subject of *believe* while *Mary* is the subject of *be*; and John's belief is true at the time of the utterance, while Mary's being a witch is possibly true before the time of the utterance. In other words, the grammatical encoding of these two events (each of which can be distinctly inflected for person-number and tense-aspect-modality) resembles the semantic relation denoted by this encoding (Mary's being a witch is a relatively distinct event from John's believing it).

An example of a nonfinite complement in English is the verb *be* in the sentence *John wants to be a warlock*. Unlike in full-clause constructions, the subject of the complement

verb is the same as that of the main verb, and the timing and truth value of the action denoted by the complement verb is directly related to that of the action denoted by the main verb: *John* is the subject of both *want* and *be*, and John's being a warlock is constrained by the timing and truth value of John's desire. Again, the grammatical encoding of these two events (in which the complement cannot be distinctly inflected for person–number and tense–aspect–modality) resembles the semantic relation denoted by this encoding (John's becoming a warlock is directly related to his desire to be a warlock).

As the event of wanting is more closely implicated in the event wanted than the event of believing is implicated in the event believed, predicate–complement constructions in which the verb *want* is implicated are more like a single clause than predicate–complement constructions in which the verb *believe* is implicated. This form–functional iconicity presents a range of relative tightness along which complement-taking predicates can be scaled relative to one another. In the John and Mary example, predicate–complement constructions involving *want* are tighter than those involving *believe*: their morphosyntactic encoding looks more like a single clause, and the events encoded look more like a single event. This is the logic underlying the lexical expression of stance.

Talmy Givón (1980) has noted that English complement-taking predicates may be ordered as follows (moving from looser to tighter constructions): *say* and *tell*; *think*, *know*, *believe*, *doubt*, and *learn*; *decide* and *agree*; *like*, *hope*, *expect*, *love*, and *hate*; *plan*, *intend*, and *try*. This list moves from predicates that may take full clauses, to those that may take both full clauses and infinitives, to those that may only take infinitives. This form–functional iconicity may also be generalized across languages (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:478–479) using the following hierarchy of potential constructions (ranging from denotata that are most like two events to denotata that are most like one event): unrelated events, sequential events, simultaneous events, conditionals (*if-then* constructions), reported speech (*say*), cognition (*know*, *think*), propositional attitude (*believe*, *consider*), perception (*see*, *hear*), jussive (*ask*, *order*), purposive (*go*, *come*), psych-action (*forget*, *want*), aspectual (*start*, *continue*), and causative (*let go*, *push open*).

I now exemplify this hierarchy in a less familiar language. Table 1 classifies complement-taking predicates in Q'eqchi'-Maya as a function of the types of complements they may take (see Kockelman 2003a for the details of this claim). Column 1 of the table lists nine relatively cohesive classes of complement-taking predicates; column 2 lists all the Q'eqchi' predicates that belong to each class for which I have discourse tokens, along with a brief English gloss. The various classes of complement-taking predicates are also ordered from bottom to top with respect to the morphosyntactic tightness of their predicate–complement constructions—that is, the degree to which such constructions look like a single clause.

Class 1 consists of transitive aspectual predicates (e.g., *choqok* 'to finish', *baanunk* 'to do'). Class 2 consists of psych-action predicates and has four subclasses: Class 2a consists of those turning on desire, need, and intention (e.g., *ajok* 'to want'). Class 2b consists of those constructed from the adverbs *sa* 'nicely' and *ra* 'poorly' in conjunction with a perception predicate from Class 7 (e.g., *ilok* 'to see'). Class 2c consists of those turning on fear and shame (e.g., *xiwank* 'to be scared'). Class 2d consists of those that involve a possessed heart (e.g., *naqk sa' ch'oolej* 'to remember'; literally, 'it falls into one's heart'). Class 3 consists of intransitive aspectual predicates (e.g., *ok* 'to begin'). Class 4 consists of purposive predicates turning on movement or position (e.g., *xik* 'to go'). Class 5 consists of intransitive affectual predicates and has three subclasses: Class 5a consists of those turning on bodily states (e.g., *lubk* 'to tire of'). Class 5b consists of the fear and shame predicates from Class 2c in their intransitive forms (e.g., *xiwak* 'to become scared'). Class 5c consists of more possessed-heart constructions (e.g., *ch'inank ch'oolej*, 'to become regretful'; literally, 'for one's heart to become small'). Class 6 consists of jussive predicates (e.g., *taqlank* 'to send'). Class 7 consists of the perception predicates used in Class 2b (e.g., *ilok* 'to see'). Class 8 consists of cognition



**Table 1**  
**Classes of predicate-complement constructions in Q'eqchi'-Maya.**

Class	Q'eqchi' predicates	Nonfinite	Full clause
<b>1. Transitive Aspectual</b>	<i>choyok/raqok</i> 'to finish', <i>kuyuk</i> 'to endure', <i>baanunk</i> 'to do', <i>kanabank/chanabank</i> 'to desist from', <i>yoobank/tikibank</i> 'to begin', <i>tz'aqonk</i> 'to take a turn at', <i>yalok</i> 'to try', <i>yeech'ink</i> 'to offer', <i>tzolok</i> 'to study how'	Ø (A)	
<b>2. Psych-Action</b>	<b>a) Desire, Need, and Intention:</b> <i>ajok li ru</i> 'to need', <i>ajok</i> 'to want', <i>rahink</i> 'to love/desire', <i>atawank</i> '(li ru)' 'to desire' <b>b) Transitive Affectual:</b> <i>sa/ra ilok</i> 'to like/not like to', <i>sa/ra abink</i> 'to be glad/sorry to hear', <i>sa/ra eek'ank</i> 'to feel good/bad about' <b>c) Fear and Shame:</b> <i>xiwank</i> 'to be scared', <i>xutaanank</i> 'to be ashamed' <b>d) Heart Predicates:</b> <i>naqk sa' ch'oolej</i> 'to remember', <i>sachk sa' ch'oolej</i> 'to forget', <i>alaak sa' ch'oolej</i> 'to decide', <i>chalk sa' ch'oolej</i> 'to agree'	Ø (A, PBP)	<i>naq</i>
<b>3. Intransitive Aspectual</b>	<i>raq'ek</i> 'to be finished', <i>ixtaak</i> 'to insist on', <i>okenk</i> 'to assist in', <i>ok</i> 'to begin', <i>ruuk</i> 'to be able', <i>yook</i> 'to be doing', <i>bayk</i> 'to be delayed in', <i>k'aayk</i> 'to be accustomed to'	<i>chi</i> (S)	
<b>4. Purposive (Movement)</b>	<i>xik</i> 'to go', <i>chalk</i> 'to come', <i>k'ulunk</i> 'to arrive/come', <i>hulak</i> 'to arrive', <i>kanaak</i> 'to stay', <i>elk</i> 'to leave', <i>nume'k</i> 'to pass by', <i>wank</i> 'to be located'	<i>chi</i> (S)	
<b>5. Intransitive Affectual</b>	<b>a) Bodily States:</b> <i>lubk/tawaak</i> 'to tire of', <i>titz'k</i> 'to get exasperated at', <i>jiq'e'k</i> 'to choke upon', <i>q'ixno'k</i> 'to grow angry/hot upon', <i>tiqwo'k</i> 'to overheat/anger', <i>josq'ok</i> 'to become angry' <b>b) Fear and Shame:</b> <i>xutaanak</i> 'to become ashamed', <i>xiwak</i> 'to become afraid' <b>c) Heart Predicates:</b> <i>ch'inank ch'oolej</i> 'to become regretful', <i>kiibank ch'oolej</i> 'to become conflicted', <i>po'k ch'oolej</i> 'to become dissuaded'	<i>chi</i> (S)	
<b>6. Jussive (Manipulative)</b>	<i>minok ru</i> 'to force', <i>tenq'ank</i> 'to help', <i>sebesink</i> 'to scare', <i>k'ehok</i> 'to put to', <i>k'aytesink</i> 'to make accustomed', <i>tenebank</i> 'to oblige', <i>q'abank</i> 'to falsely accuse', <i>seebank</i> 'to hurry/urge', <i>taqlank</i> 'to send', <i>boqok</i> 'to call', <i>ajok</i> 'to want', <i>yehok</i> 'to tell to', <i>chaqrabink</i> 'to order'	<i>chi</i> (O)	
<b>7. Perception</b>	<i>ilok</i> 'to see/look', <i>abink</i> 'to hear/listen', <i>eek'ank</i> 'to sense/feel'	<i>chi</i> (O)	<i>naq</i>
<b>8. Cognition</b>	<i>nawok</i> 'to know', <i>k'a'uxlank</i> 'to think', <i>kaqalink</i> 'to be envious', <i>na'link</i> 'to know', <i>tawok ru</i> 'to understand', <i>paabank</i> 'to believe', <i>oybenink</i> 'to expect'		<i>naq</i>
<b>9. Speaking</b>	<i>patz'ok</i> 'to ask', <i>sumenk ru aatin</i> 'to promise', <i>chaq'ok/chaq'bank</i> 'to reply', <i>yehok</i> 'to say', <i>yemank</i> 'it is said'		<i>naq</i>

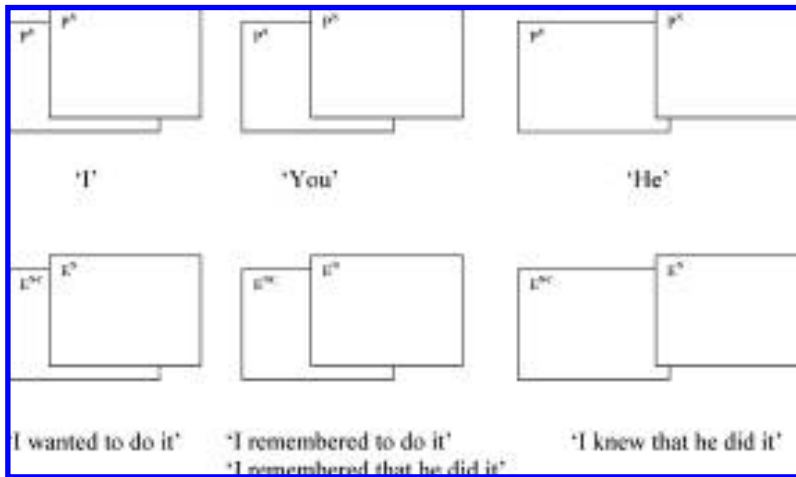


for tense–aspect or person–number. Unlike Example 2, however, the complement is cross-referenced by the absolutive affix (-Ø-) on the main verb as the third-person nonplural O-role argument. In this way, the complement is an argument of the main verb, and the A-role argument of the main verb—marked by the first-person ergative affix (-*inw*-)—is shared with the complement verb as the latter’s unexpressed S-role argument. This construction is thus an example of A-role control.

Example 4 shows the perception predicate *ilok* (‘to see’) occurring with a nonfinite complement and the complementizer *chi*. Again, the complement verb is not inflected for tense–aspect or person–number. Importantly, although the complement is not an argument of the main verb (hence the predictable presence of the complementizer *chi*), the O-role argument of the main verb—marked by the first-person nonplural absolutive affix (-*in*-)—is shared with the complement verb as the latter’s unexpressed S-role argument. This construction is thus an example of O-role control. Lastly, Example 5 shows the possessed-heart construction *naqk sa’ ch’oolej* (‘to drop into one’s heart’, ‘to remember’) with a nonfinite complement without a complementizer. Again, the complement verb is not inflected for tense–aspect or person–number. The complement is, however, cross-referenced by the absolutive affix (-Ø-) on the main verb as the third-person nonplural S-role argument. The possessor of the heart is shared with the complement verb as the latter’s unexpressed S-role argument. This construction is thus an example of possessed-body-part control.

I use the following criteria to order these classes with respect to tightness (from bottom to top). First, the more operators (such as tense, aspect, and mood) and arguments the main verb shares with its complement, the more the construction looks like a single clause and the tighter it is. Thus, constructions involving nonfinite complements (which are not independently specified for mood, aspect, or tense) are tighter than constructions involving full-clause complements (which are independently specified). For this reason, Classes 7 through 9 are ordered below Classes 1 through 6, and Class 2 is ordered below Class 1. Second, the complementizer *chi* is absent when the complement is an argument of the main verb (its subject or object) and present when it is not. Thus, constructions involving nonfinite complements without the complementizer *chi* are tighter than constructions with it, and Classes 3 through 7 are ordered below Classes 1 and 2. Third, when a nonfinite complement is not an argument of the main verb—as in Classes 3 through 7—constructions involving O-role control are less tight than those involving S-role control. This is because in S-role control the privileged syntactic argument of the main verb is shared by the complement verb, whereas in O-role control the privileged syntactic argument of the main verb is not (see Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:460). For this reason, Classes 6 and 7 are ordered below Classes 3 through 5. Fourth, classes of predicates that may take more than one kind of complement are ordered by the tightest kind of complement they may take. Hence, even though verbs in Class 2 may take full-clause complements just as verbs in Classes 7 through 9 do, verbs in Class 2 may also take nonfinite complements without the complementizer *chi*. For this reason, Class 2 is ordered directly below Class 1, whereas Classes 7 through 9 are ordered at the very bottom of the hierarchy.

In light of the previous discussion of Goffman’s notion of principal, I focus on those classes of complement-taking predicates that may be construed as denoting commitment events, or stances: psych-action (Class 2), intransitive affectual (Class 5), perceptual (Class 7), and cognitive (Class 8). These are covert grammatical categories (cf. Whorf 1956b), distinguished by the kinds of complements they may take or, in the case of subclasses (transitive affectuals, heart predicates, etc.), the form of the predicate itself. They do not correspond to distinctions that speakers of Q’eqchi’ would explicitly make, nor are there any superordinate lexemes that would pick out these four types, or six subtypes, of stances—or even the genus of stance itself. Nonetheless, these types and subtypes may be compared with the “European American Social Science Model of Mind” (see D’Andrade 1995; Lillard 1998), whose five parts are lexicalized in English as perception, thought, feeling, wish, and intention. Thus, the covert categories of Q’eqchi’ accord with but are not isomorphic to the classes within



**Figure 1**  
Relative subsumption of person ( $P^N/P^S$ ) and stance ( $E^N/E^{NC}$ ) compared.

the interclausal relations hierarchy, a crosslinguistic form–functional domain. Moreover, they are comparable to but not identical with a Western ethnopsychological typology.

If we take these complement-taking predicates to denote commitment events—the most lexically elaborated domain for marking stances—then we can see the logic that orders stances: the more the narrated commitment event (the complement-taking predicate) subsumes the narrated event (the complement), the more the construction encoding them looks like a single clause. In this way, just as person can be ordered as a function of the degree to which the narrated event subsumes the speech event (cf. Benveniste 1971; Silverstein 1981), stance (when denoted) can be ordered as a function of the degree to which the narrated commitment event subsumes the narrated event. This is illustrated in Figure 1. It thus appears that the best way to group and order intentional stances is by the degree to which the stance toward an event is implicated in the event itself. Although I am not theorizing intentionality here but merely its most overt encoding in natural languages, this point has broader implications insofar as understandings of intentionality are often grounded in, if not derived from, these overt encodings.<sup>12</sup>

Having discussed complement-taking predicates as the exemplary locus of stance, I now discuss verbal categories as a segue to the issue of status. As is well known (Bybee 1985; Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:40–52), verbal categories (such as tense, aspect, and mood) across languages embody a form–functional iconicity by which their semantic or logical scope is iconic to their morphological placement: operators with larger semantic scope are expressed at a farther distance from the predicate they modify than are operators with narrower semantic scope. Thus, across languages, one finds the following order of verbal categories (beginning with those that appear closest to the predicate they modify): aspect, (internal) negation/directionals, directionals/mood, (external) negation, tense/status, evidentials, and illocutionary force. (The slash indicates that the two operators cannot be ordered relative to each other.) Hence, if a language has distinct forms marking aspect and tense, and if both of these appear on the same side of the predicate they modify, the one marking aspect will tend to be closer to the predicate than the one marking tense, and so on.

In other words, there is a relationship between the relative scope of operators and the relative tightness of complement-taking predicates: this ordering of verbal categories is isomorphic to the hierarchy of interclausal relations described above. Just

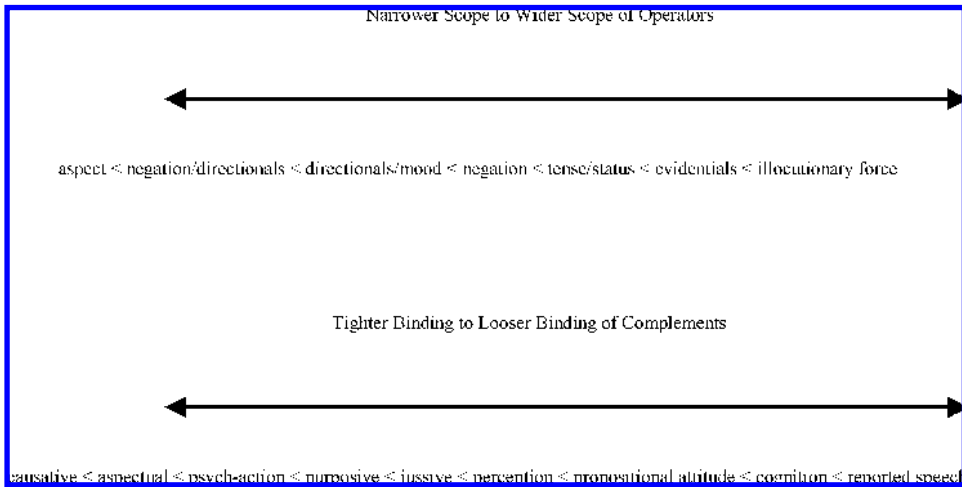


Figure 2  
Operator scope and interclausal tightness compared.

as complement-taking predicates that denote aspect or psych-action are involved in tighter constructions than complement-taking predicates that denote propositional attitudes or reported speech, operators that encode aspect or mood have narrower scope than operators that encode status or illocutionary force. Such a fact should not be surprising, for it is well known that many verbal operators historically arise from the grammaticalization of complement-taking predicates (Bybee 1985; Willett 1988; inter alia). The mapping of the relative scope of verbal operators onto the relative tightness of complement-taking predicates is shown in Figure 2.

Returning to Goffman and Jakobson, we can see that any complement-taking predicate denoting a stance (and hence constituting a lexicalized principal) may be understood as a *narrated commitment event* ( $E^{NC}$ ); its complement may be understood as a *narrated event* ( $E^N$ ). Any mood or status operator may be understood as encoding a *commitment event* ( $E^C$ ), and its predicate may be understood as a *narrated event* ( $E^N$ ). This set of relations is illustrated in Figure 3.

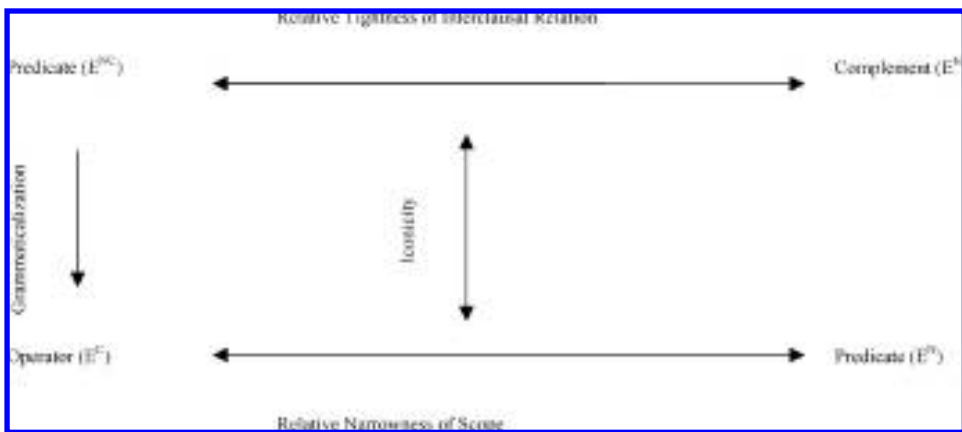


Figure 3  
Predicate complements and operator predicates compared.

### Stance Exemplified: Status in Q'eqchi'

To justify these points using data from Q'eqchi', I now turn to one other domain of language in which a commitment event is encoded: the grammatical category of status as expressed by a set of five clitics, one of which is central to my opening example. These modal clitics may be thought of as operators that take clauses as their arguments. In Q'eqchi', a clause usually consists of a predicate (e.g., an intransitive verb), the obligatory arguments of this predicate (e.g., a grammatical subject), the obligatory grammatical categories that occur with this predicate (e.g., tense, aspect, and mood), and any nonobligatory arguments that may occur (e.g., adjuncts such as prepositional phrases, adverbs, and relational nouns). Modal clitics usually occur after the predicate and before any arguments or adjuncts. However, if some constituent (such as an argument or adjunct) has been preposed into the verb-initial focus position for the purpose of emphasis, relativization, or questioning, the modal clitic occurs after the preposed constituent. In other words, although modal clitics have grammatical scope over clauses, they have informational scope only over the foci of utterances—that part of an utterance that is being asserted or questioned. These points are illustrated in the following examples. (The modal clitics of interest are in **boldface**.)

- (6) *x-Ø-hulak*                      *chaq ewer*  
 Perf-Abs(3s)-arrive hither yesterday  
 'He arrived yesterday'
- (7) *x-Ø-hulak*                      ***pe'*** *chaq ewer*  
 Perf-Abs(3s)-arrive F hither yesterday  
 'He did arrive yesterday' or 'He arrived yesterday!'
- (8) *ani* ***pe'*** *x-Ø-hulak*                      *chaq ewer*  
 who F Perf-Abs(3s)-arrive hither yesterday  
 'Who arrived yesterday?!'
- (9) ***moko*** *a'an* ***ta*** ***pe'*** *x-Ø-hulak*                      *chaq ewer*  
 NF that NF F Perf-Abs(3s)-arrive hither yesterday  
 'That is not what he wants!'

Example 6 shows a clause consisting of the intransitive predicate *hulak* ('to arrive'), its obligatory argument (marked on the predicate with the third-person-singular absolutive infix *-Ø-*), its obligatory operator (marked on the predicate with the perfective-aspect prefix *x-*), the directional particle *chaq* ('hither'), and the temporal adverb *ewer* ('yesterday'). Example 7 shows the clause from Example 6 being operated on by the factual clitic *pe'*. Example 8 shows the clause from Example 6 being operated on by the factual clitic *pe'* in preposed position after the Wh-word *ani* ('who'). Lastly, Example 9 shows the nonfactual clitic *moko* . . . *ta* occurring with the factual clitic *pe'*. Here two modal clitics occur together, indicating that the modal clitics do not form a paradigm, but rather a set.

When occurring with declarative illocutionary force, the clause in Example 6 may function as an assertion and thereby express a proposition (p) that may be true or false depending on whether the state of affairs it denotes corresponds with the world. To phrase this in terms of communication rather than logic, such an assertion indicates the speaker's commitment to the truth of p, or at least its unchallengeability, at the time of the utterance. Unmarked assertions—that is, utterances with declarative illocutionary force and no modal clitics—indicate, then, that the world in which one is committed to the truth of a proposition is identical to the world in which one expresses that proposition. Or, using the terminology introduced in the previous section, we can say that in an unmarked assertion, the status of the commitment event is left unspecified and is thereby usually indistinguishable from the speech event.

My reason for using this elaborate terminology to make such a simple observation is that the modal clitics, when operating on a clause uttered with declarative illocutionary force, specify the status of the commitment event and thereby serve to distinguish it from the speech event. That is to say, in assertions with marked status—indicated

**Table 2**  
**Semantic meaning of modal clitics when contrasted with unmarked status and valence.**

Form	Name	Grammatically signals	Scope
∅	Unmarked	In a nonspecified world, speaker is committed to the truth of p	
<i>pe'</i>	Factual	In <b>this</b> world, speaker is committed to the truth of p	
<i>tana</i>	Afactual	In a <b>possible</b> world, speaker is committed to the truth of p	
<i>taxaq</i>	Optative	In a <b>wished-for</b> world, speaker is committed to the truth of p	
<i>raj</i>	Counterfactual	In <b>another</b> world, speaker is committed to the truth of p	
<i>moko . . . ta</i>	Nonfactual	In a nonspecified world, speaker is committed to the truth of <b>not</b> p	

by the presence of modal clitics—the locale of a commitment event is specified and thereby usually differentiated from the speech event.

In Q'eqchi', there are four modal clitics that encode the status of the speaker's commitment event. The factual clitic *pe'* signals that the commitment event is in this world (i.e., the world of the speech event) and therefore markedly encodes what is usually assumed. This is expressed in the glosses of Example 7 by either the presence of the verb *do* (addressee-directed function: insistive or contradictive) or the presence of the exclamation mark (speaker-directed function: surprisitive or dubitive). The afactual clitic *tana* signals that the commitment event is in a possible world. If the factual clitic in Example 7 were replaced with the afactual clitic, it would be glossed as 'Perhaps he arrived yesterday'. The optative clitic *taxaq* signals that the commitment event is in a wished-for world. If the factual clitic in Example 7 were replaced with the optative clitic, it would be glossed as 'If only he had arrived yesterday'. Finally, the counterfactual clitic *raj* signals that the commitment world is in another world (i.e., a world other than the speech event). If the factual clitic in Example 7 were replaced with the counterfactual clitic, it would be glossed as 'He would have arrived yesterday'.

The shifter nature of factual and counterfactual clitics can be seen in the fact that the status of the commitment event is specified with reference to the speech event. In contrast, the optative and afactual clitics specify the status of the commitment event without reference to the speech event. Although the nonfactual clitic *moko . . . ta* belongs to this set by way of its grammatical distribution, notionally it marks constituent-scope negation and thereby specifies the logical valence of the narrated world rather than the status of the commitment world. This is expressed in the gloss of Example 9 by the word *not*. Such a distinction is mirrored by its form and distribution: not only is the nonfactual clitic the only circumfixed form, but as revealed by Example 9, all the other modal clitics have scope over it. Lastly, all these modal clitics contrast with unmarked status and unmarked valence (signaled by the absence of a modal clitic), which leave the location of a commitment world and the valence of a narrated world unspecified. These facts are summarized in Table 2.

Let me provide a skeletal example of more-complicated commitment events using the factual clitic *pe'* (Kockelman 2003b). With unmarked illocutionary force, the factive clitic *pe'* may be used to assert p in the context of the addressee's noncommitment to p or commitment to not p, serving as either an insistive or a contradictive. It may also be used to exclaim p when the speaker has recently learned of p, creating the context of the speaker's prior or current noncommitment to p and serving as either a surprisitive or a dubitive. Lastly, the factive clitic *pe'* may be used to exclaim p when the speaker has recently learned of p, in the context of the speaker's learning of p being in question, thereby serving as a satiative.

In sum, when a speaker encodes the status of her commitment to a narrated event, she invites us to infer another's commitment to an inverted narrated event—that is, the negation of the narrated event. This other can be the current or previous speaker or addressee. In this sense, there are symmetries between the speaker-directed and addressee-directed functions of *pe'*: surprise is the mirror image of insistence, and doubt is the mirror image of contradiction. Relatedly, speaker-directed functions turn on the indexical creation of context, whereas addressee-directed functions turn on the indexical presupposition of context (Silverstein 1976b for the distinction between indexical creation and presupposition). Hence the commitment events of one participant are directly implicated in the commitment events of another participant—or of the same participant one moment before. Commitment events thus turn on the relationship between participants, and disjunctures between commitment events often serve to index more complicated mental states such as surprise and doubt.

One may wonder what notional domain underlies and unifies these operators. In particular, it is tempting to see the movement from factivity to afactivity to optativity to counterfactivity as unifiable and orderable relative to a notion of epistemic certainty: the degree of overlap between speech event and commitment event. This would be in keeping with the notion of an “epistemic scale” as theorized by Givón (1982, 1994) and Akatsuka (1985) and as presupposed by Role and Reference Grammar (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997). In particular, Givón (1982, 1994) postulates an epistemic scale ranging from propositions assumed to be true (presupposition), propositions strongly asserted to be true (realis assertion), propositions weakly asserted (irrealis assertion), and propositions strongly asserted to be false (negative assertion). His evidence for such a scale is that the evidentiary quantification of propositions typically falls within the realis assertion range of this scale, and the modal-certainty quantification of propositions (i.e., a grammaticalized subjunctive) typically falls within the irrealis assertion range of this scale (Givón 1982:26). He claims that underlying this scale is a notion of addressee unchallengeability and/or speaker certainty (Givón 1994:268).

Akatsuka (1985:625) proposes a similar scale relating the domains of realis and irrealis assertions, suggesting that they form a continuum ranging from positive conviction to surprise (new knowledge), uncertainty, and negative conviction. She finds support for this scale in the fact that the antecedents of conditionals can fall anywhere within the irrealis assertion range (Akatsuka 1985:635–636). For this reason, she thinks the notional domain underlying the epistemic scale is the “speaker's subjective evaluation of the ontological reality of a given situation” (Akatsuka 1985:635). These theorists agree that there is a crosslinguistic notional domain that turns on degrees of subjective certainty.

However, as I have argued elsewhere (Kockelman 2003b), the single dimension that underlies this set of operators is actually the relative disjuncture between commitment event and narrated event (i.e., the degree to which the narrated event and the commitment event are presented as ontologically distinct). As discussed above, the Q'eqchi' clitics can co-occur; in particular, the factual, afactual, and optative clitics may occur with the counterfactual clitic when they have scope over it, but not vice versa. Likewise, the factual, afactual, optative, and counterfactual clitics may occur with the nonfactual clitic when they have scope over it, but not vice versa. In other words, the scope of these status markers recapitulates the tightness of interclausal relations, just as the types of status markers recapitulate (in a coarse-grained fashion) the types of complement-taking predicates.

### Conclusion

My goal in this article has been to link participant roles and morphosyntax to subjectivity in a way that tacks between language-specific and crosslinguistic categories. Although subjectivity can be construed in a number of ways, my emphasis has been on stances—those semiotically indicated modes of evaluative and intentional commitment that speakers take toward states of affairs, from epistemic possibility and necessity to deontic permission and obligation, from fear and desire to memory and



disgust. In this way, I have been focused on what seemingly moral, epistemic, and psychological modes of subjectivity have in common, insofar as they are expressed in morphosyntax and the lexicon.

This focus has been semiotically sharpened by examining various types of grammatical categories and lexical forms that characterize the relationships among commitment events, narrated events, and speech events. In particular, I have discussed both the degree of displacement with which the commitment event may be specified relative to the speech event, and the degree of displacement with which the narrated event may be specified relative to the commitment event. I have used these events and their displacement to identify, classify, and order various types of stance. To conclude, I want to widen the scope of the foregoing analysis by using it to frame an understanding of evidentiality and second-order stances.

Just as status turns on the disambiguation of a commitment event from a speech event (or principal from animator), evidentials may be understood as turning on the disambiguation of what I call a *source event* from a speech event (or author from animator). In this way, although evidentials are usually lumped together with status under the broad term *modality* (as mentioned in the introduction), they encode radically different features. I briefly consider why this happens, how to distinguish the two phenomena, and what predictions are warranted by analogy to my discussion of the relationship between grammatical categories and complement-taking predicates.

By encoding a disjunction between the commitment event and the speech event, markers of status imply a disjunction between the source event and the speech event. That is, to say I am weakly committed to a proposition invites the defeasible implicature that my source of evidence is not very strong. Similarly, by encoding a disjunction between the source event and the speech event, evidential markers imply a disjuncture between the commitment event and the speech event. That is, to say that my source of evidence is weak is to invite the defeasible implicature that I am weakly committed to a proposition. To differentiate, then, one must inquire into the kinds of scalar implicatures that evidentials and status allow for: If an evidential encodes a weak source event, it implies a not-strong source event (to say “I heard the source of a noise” implies I did not see it); and if a status marker encodes a weak commitment event, it implies a not-strong commitment event (to say “It may happen” implies it is not the case that it must happen). If it is true that we should understand source events by analogy to commitment events, and if we assume that markers of evidentiality arise historically from the grammaticalization of complement-taking predicates, we can predict that evidential markers whose source events are perceptual (seen, heard, sensed) should have narrower scope than evidential markers whose source events are cognitive (inferred, reasoned, remembered), which should have narrower scope than evidential markers whose source events are reportative (hearsay, secondhand account, thirdhand account, myth, etc.). This is predicted by the fact that perceptual predicates have narrower scope than cognitive predicates, which have narrower scope than speech predicates. In short, one should probably distinguish between source-based stance taking (which turns on the disjuncture between source event and speech event) and commitment-based stance taking (which turns on the disjuncture between commitment event and speech event). Although commitment-based stance taking is the focus of this article, source-based stance taking deserves an analogous but analytically distinct treatment.

In this article, I have been focused on what might be termed *first-order stances*—that is, the stances we take toward states of affairs. However, as my opening example shows and as my survey of the literature underscores, the next crucial step is to introduce *second-order stances*, or *metastances*—that is, the stances we take toward our own and others’ stances. In particular, I have not examined the interaction of grammatical categories encoding stances (mood and status) with lexical forms denoting stances (complement-taking predicates), nor the potentially infinite embeddings that such interactions are a condition for, nor speakers’ understandings and evaluations of stances themselves (Kockelman 2002, 2003c). Such “commitments to commitments” are crucial to understanding various modes of reflexive subjectivity or selfhood: choice

(desiring particular desires); empathy (feeling others' feelings); conscience (evaluating one's own motivations); and ethnopsychology (local understanding of stances themselves).

Such second-order stances should not, however, be seen as the next step in analysis; rather, they should be understood as part and parcel of the first step. In particular, as the literature review suggests, scholars often use the term *stance (marker)* to refer to any linguistic form that seems to imply an evaluation—without, however, specifying the criteria for determining where description (the state of affairs) ends and evaluation (the speaker's stance toward the state of affairs) begins. This allows the analyst's untheorized notions of intentionality and value—with, perhaps, some reference to a Cartesian subject (through Benveniste and Lyons) or a Kantian person (through Jespersen and Jakobson)—to play a determinate role in analysis. In short, scholars' own (second-order) stances are maximally implicated in their analysis of others' (first-order) stances.<sup>13</sup>

This article has attempted to minimize such analyst-based effects by accounting for stance in terms of crosslinguistic categories, whose properties (e.g., expression, grouping, scaling) are characterized by social and semiotic features (e.g., participant roles and morphosyntax) rather than psychological or metaphysical ones (e.g., evaluation or subjectivity). However, in addition to minimizing analyst-based effects, we must also maximize speaker-based effects by employing local understandings of what it means to be a person. In particular, any robust account of personhood must ground itself not only in the intentional and evaluative aspects of being human, but also in the self-reflexive aspects: the fact that our understanding of who we are (as intentional and evaluative beings) is partially constitutive of who we are (cf. Lucy 1993; Taylor 1989). Ironically, although reflexivity is one of the defining characteristics of human subjectivity, or personhood, it drops out of analysts' accounts of stance even though stance is understood to be the exemplary locus of the linguistic encoding of subjectivity.

The question is how to bring reflexivity, as a defining characteristic of personhood, into our account of stance. One way is to supplement the crosslinguistic account of stance provided in this article with a community-specific account. In particular, if by *event construal* we mean the way in which the event of signing contributes to the sign of an event, then we should examine speaker-based understandings of stance markers as any sign that members of a community associate with a speaker's personal contribution to event construal (where *stances* are possible kinds of personal contributions).<sup>14</sup>

In this light, perhaps the defining characteristic of stance markers (from a community-specific perspective) is that although in practice they are intersubjectively or interpersonally constituted (like any other sign involved in communication), ideologically they are understood by speakers to be subjective or personal. Indeed, I would hypothesize that it is precisely the discrepancy between these two levels that enables many of the most important functions of these signs. In this way, the linguistic emphasis on the study of "subjectivity in language" should be reformulated to focus on the relationship between the language of subjectivity and the subjectivity of language, or the relation between formal structures and discursive practices that seem to mark modes of subjectivity and speakers' understandings of and strategies with these structures and practices. Stance, then, stands at the intersection of a crosslinguistic account of commitment events and a community-specific understanding of a speaker's contribution to event construal. To construe stance in any other way risks projecting the psychological and metaphysical presumptions of the analyst onto the social and semiotic practices of the actor.

## Notes

1. Data used in this article came from almost two years of fieldwork I carried out between 1997 and 2001, mainly in the Q'eqchi'-speaking village of Ch'inahab', in the Department of

Alta Verapaz, Guatemala. My research and studies were graciously funded by a Culture and Cognition Training Grant from the National Science Foundation, a STAR Fellowship from the Environmental Protection Agency, a James McCawley Fellowship from the Linguistic Society of America, and a CASPIC dissertation write-up grant from the MacArthur Foundation. This article has benefited from suggestions made by Anya Bernstein, John Lucy, Robin Shoaps, Michael Silverstein, two anonymous reviewers for the *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, and Mary Bucholtz. In addition, I had the opportunity to present these ideas at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in the Netherlands in 2003, and the article has benefited from questions, comments, and criticisms by Penny Brown, Nick Enfield, and Stephen Levinson.

2. Although my use of *world* bears a family resemblance to the logical notion of “possible world” (see McCawley 1993 and references therein), it is not equivalent to it.

3. I use the term *status* in the sense of Role and Reference Grammar (which is similar to the way Kant defined modality, and the ways modern linguists define epistemic modality), not in the sense of Whorf and Jakobson. In Role and Reference Grammar (Van Valen and La Polla 1997:41), *status* is a clausal operator that includes epistemic modality and external, or “broad-scope,” negation. By contrast, Whorf (1956a) discusses four types of *status* in Hopi: affirmative *status* (grammatically unmarked and occurring with declaratory sentences), negative *status* (similar to English *not*), interrogatory *status* (yes/no questions), and indefinite *status* (both Wh-questions and indefinite assertions with Wh-words). *Status* as Whorf uses it is a Hopi-specific category that encodes features belonging to the grammatical categories of illocutionary force, *status* (as I use it), and valence (or negation). Jakobson (1990), following Whorf’s account, characterizes *status* as qualitatively characterizing the narrated event without reference to the speech event and symbolizes it as En.

4. I use *subsumes* throughout the article in the rough sense of ‘is implicated in’, ‘overlaps with’, ‘coincides with’, or ‘relates to’.

5. Although I did not come across such uses, I assume *stance* is also used in its most mundane sense: how a person’s body is positioned when standing.

6. Goffman’s decomposition of the speaker is theorized in tandem with the hearers’ involvement, and the set of relations between all participants and the current speaker is called the “participation framework” (1981). See, for example, Goodwin (1990), Hanks (1996), and Levinson (1988) for further explorations of participation.

7. Goffman notes that certain unqualified utterances, such as “Shut the window” or “The rain has started,” are commonly “heard as representing in some direct way the current desire, belief, perception, or intention of whoever animates the utterances. The current self of the person who animates seems inevitably involved in some way—what might be called the ‘addressing self’” (1981:147).

8. Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 B.C.) was a Roman scholar who wrote some 620 books, ranging from treatises on agriculture and anomaly to the treatise on the Latin language quoted here.

9. To qualify the preceding discussion, I acknowledge that a decomposition of the speaker into animator, author, and principal (or a decomposition of agency into acting, making, and supporting) is perhaps as likely to be grounded in a folk ideology as is the dichotomization of *stance* into affect and cognition. This decomposition is probably grounded in a notion of instigating (animator) a means (author) for the sake of an end (principal), and hence goes back at least as far as Aristotle. It is also distinctly related to Peirce’s notion of a dynamic object (animator) determining a sign (author) for the sake of an interpretant (principal). I think the best way to understand Goffman and Varro is by way of a Peircean understanding of the sign: the animator expresses the carrier; the author composes the carrier–object relation, and the principal commits to the interpretant of the carrier–object relation. (Indeed, this is the only way I know to explain why there should be exactly three, and not two or twenty, participant roles.)

10. Irvine (1996) has analyzed the relationship between Goffman’s participant roles and Jakobson’s grammatical categories in a comparable way—although her emphasis is on voice, not *stance*, and on discourse, not grammar.

11. The notional conventions I use in this article are as follows: F (factual clitic), NF (non-factual clitic), Perf (perfective aspect), Pres (present-habitual tense–aspect), Abs(1s) (absolute case, first-person singular), Abs(3s) (absolute case, third-person singular), Erg(1s) (ergative case, first-person singular), Erg(3s) (ergative case, third-person singular), Erg(1p) (ergative case, first-person plural), Neg (broad-scope negation particle), Comp (complementizer).

12. This conclusion is surprisingly absent in works by philosophers of mind, although their data is primarily morphosyntactic (see Brentano 1995; Ryle 1949; Searle 1983).

13. Although observer effects may be relatively small when studying domains such as time and space (for which we have the well-worked-out language of physics), they are relatively large when studying domains such as mind and value (which have no well-worked-out language at all). It may be that observer effects regarding the boundaries of description and evaluation are minimized when English-speaking scholars study speakers of English, insofar as both analysts and analyzed may assume similar taxonomies and definitions of value and mind. However, the accuracy of this fit cannot simply be assumed. The overlap itself should be theorized and understood as problematic rather than felicitous.

14. As Whorf and others have pointed out, it is easier to say *beautiful green apples* than *green beautiful apples* because *beautiful*, which has wider scope, is more evaluative than *green* (or because *green* is more descriptive than *beautiful*). One could probably order every adjective in English along such a scale, such that adjectives with wider scope would fall into a notional domain of features of the signing event, while adjectives with narrower scope would fall into a notional domain of features of the event signed. In short, there is a formal-notional domain here—operators with scope over NPs—that accords with our intuitions regarding what constitutes an evaluative versus a descriptive predicate and hence with where we would draw the line between features of the event signed (e.g., *green*) and features of the signing event (e.g., *beautiful*). Indeed, markers of stance are essentially these wide-scope predicates when they have something to do with subjectivity: whether they have scope over NP operators (*good*, *beautiful*, etc.), VP operators (*must*, *certainly*, etc.), or clauses (*believe that*, *want that*, etc.).

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