Expressions of stance-to-text: Discourse management markers as stance markers

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to suggest that pragmatic markers of stance-to-text should be an area of inquiry in stance studies and thought of as a subset of grammatical stance markers. Stance-to-text markers are metalinguistic discourse management markers (Fraser, 2009) that are used to comment on the speaker/writer's view of the coherence, given certain norms, of the speaker/writer's own or of others' contribution to the discourse. The paper builds on Traugott (2019) and explores the issues with reference to the development of a set of expressions that in clause-initial position have been said to be used as topic-shift markers (Mittwoch et al., 2002, p. 779): *by the way*, *incidentally* and *parenthetically*, with focus on combinations with *Oh*. In the case of *Oh, by the way*, the marker has recently been used to signal disaffiliation from perceived inconsistencies in an (often) institutional Other's discourse. Data are drawn from the following electronic corpora: EEBO 1470s-1690s, COHA 1810-2009 and COCA 1990-2017.

Keywords: stance-to-text, discourse management markers, pragmatic markers, topic-shift, disaffiliation

1. Introduction

(1)   Alice's conscience forced her to mention things at the trial, but not to stress them. The Wasp gift for making everything sound trivial, as when we introduce momentous subjects with *Oh, by the way*, enabled Alice to testify about a highly incriminating fact in such a way that the prosecution missed its significance entirely. (1992 King, *A Wasp looks at Lizzie Borden,* National Review [COCA])

Florence King, an American essayist and novelist, does not cite her sources, but presumably the transcript of Lizzie Borden's trial (Pearson, 1937) was one of them as there are several verbatim quotes from it. There were newspaper reports at the time not only of the trial but of the inquest and preliminary hearing that preceded. However, the "momentous subject", the fact that Lizzie Borden burned a dress, was not mentioned prior to the trial according to the trial transcript (Pearson, 1937, p. 161). The transcript itself does not provide evidence that Alice Russell (or anybody else) used *Oh, by the way*. Nor does King say she did. For King *Oh, by the way* is a prototypical index of understatement. However, it is likely that, by selecting it, she also indexes her own stance of disalignment with Alice Russell's brief report and presumably also Borden's acquittal.[1] How this kind of stance-to-text marker arose is explored in the present paper.

My main theoretical proposals are that: (i) stance-to-text is an important area of inquiry, (ii) the overlap between aspects of work on stance and aspects of work on discourse markers should be more fully acknowledged than is currently often the case, and (iii) in English stance-to-text can be manifested by expressions that range from relatively contentful and literal adverbs, e.g. *incidentally*, to relatively pragmatic non-compositional discourse management markers, e.g. *Oh, by the way.*

Stance-to-text markers are used to comment on the speaker's view of the coherence, given certain norms, of the speaker/writer's or an Other's contribution to the discourse (see also, in this issue, Kiesling on *just sayin'* and *I mean* and Van linden on justificational *no chance*, *no wonder*). Such markers have to date not received much attention from researchers on stance. For example, stance-to-text is not included in the detailed chapter on the grammatical marking of stance in Biber et al. (1999, Chapter 12) in which epistemic stance markers such as *clearly* or style stance markers such as *frankly* are discussed. The metalinguistic text-marking set of stance markers includes indices of topic orientation (Fraser, 2009): return to a previous topic (*returning to*, *anyway*), continuation of topic (*as I was saying*), introduction of a new topic (*on a different note*, *but*), and digression from the current topic (*incidentally*, *by the way*). These and other expressions were identified as discourse markers in Fraser (1988 *et passim*) and later as discourse

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[1] Lizzie Borden was tried and acquitted in 1893 for the 1892 axe murders of her father and stepmother in Fall River, Massachusetts.

management markers in Fraser (2009),[2] even though they differ considerably in lexical specificity and semantic opacity. *On a different note*, for example, is relatively compositional and restricted in its use as a topic shifter, while *but* is not compositional and is considerably less restricted in its use.

In the later part of the twentieth century researchers on expressions with pragmatic effect appeared to be working in two different traditions, although examples overlapped (e.g. *in fact*, *actually*). Biber and Finegan (1988) drew attention to adverbial stance markers in English, most of which are relatively contentful (*frankly*, *certainly*), Schiffrin (1987) and Fraser (1988) to discourse markers (*well*, *y'know*, *by the way*), which are pragmatic and relatively underspecified semantically. Since then, there has been a tendency to do research either in a stance marker framework or in a discourse marker framework. However, in more recent years there has been a partial convergence of research on stance markers with that on discourse markers in Schiffrin's broad sense, as in Thompson (2002), Fitzmaurice (2004), Boye & Harder (2007) and Sakita (2013). In their special issue of *Journal of Pragmatics* on "Stance-marking and stance-taking in Asian languages", Iwasaki & Yap (2015) integrate discourse markers into the general discussion of subjectivity, intersubjectivity and stance. Citing Biber and Finegan (1989) among others, Thompson argues that complement taking predicates like *I think*, *I guess* are "epistemic/evidential/evaluative formulas performing stance work", not main clauses. Boye & Harder (2007) suggest that complement taking predicates that are stance markers are "secondary" in the sense that, like grammatical markers, they do not express "the point" of the utterance and are therefore not challengeable/addressable (2007, p. 578).[3] Although the titles of Fitzmaurice's and Sakita's papers are "From stance markers to discourse markers" and "Discourse markers as stance markers", respectively, and imply that there is or at least may be a difference between stance and discourse markers, neither author discusses differences. Fitzmaurice is concerned with the cumulative, additive shifts in the eighteenth century from subjective and relatively literal epistemic uses of e.g. *you see* to formulaic and eventually interactional uses. Sakita investigates *well* as a "resource for the management of relationships among stances" (2013, p. 81).

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[2] For the distinction between discourse markers and discourse management markers proposed in Fraser (2009), see section 2.1 below.
[3] For details, see Van linden, this issue.

Here I propose that similarities be acknowledged between adverbial stance markers and pragmatic markers. In particular, I propose that discourse management markers in Fraser's (2009) sense of a subset of pragmatic markers be recognized as stance-to-text markers. My case study is the development of a set of expressions that have been said to "signal the informational status of their clause" and to "indicate a change of topic or digression, generally suggesting that the new information is less important" (Mittwoch et al., 2002, p. 779): *by the way*, *incidentally* and *parenthetically,* and combinations with *Oh*. I will suggest that *parenthetically* is better classified as a style stance marker (see Biber et al., 1999; Conrad & Biber, 2000) rather than as a topic-shifter or discourse marker.

My approach is broadly constructionalist (see e.g. Goldberg, 2006, 2019) and historical (see e.g. Traugott & Trousdale, 2013). Historical constructionalist approaches to discourse markers include Enghels (2018) on changes in the use of the Spanish "epistemic stance marker" *sabes*, Traugott (2018) on *after all* and Traugott (2019) on the so-called "digressive" topic-shifting markers *by the way*, *incidentally* and *parenthetically* that are discussed from a different perspective in the present paper. Here the focus is on their use as stance markers, and combinations with *Oh* are discussed in greater depth.

The structure of the paper is as follows. In section 2 some terminological issues concerning stance, discourse management markers, pragmatic markers and participants in interaction are considered. The data and methodology for the case study are briefly introduced in section 3. Section 4 outlines the development of *by the way*, *incidentally* and *parenthetically*. Section 5 focuses on the relatively recent development of the patterns *Oh, by the way* and *Oh, incidentally* and how these patterns differ from use of *by the way* and *incidentally* alone. Section 6 briefly suggests three ways in which the relationship between stance markers and pragmatic markers might be acknowledged. Finally, section 7 suggests some avenues for further research.

2. Some terminological issues

I begin with discussion of the terminology of 'stance marker', 'discourse management marker' and 'pragmatic marker' (section 2.1). In section 2.2 the roles of Speakers/Writers as participants in speech and thought representation are considered.

2.1. 'Stance marker', 'discourse management marker' and 'pragmatic marker'

In their pioneering paper on stance marking, Biber and Finegan (1988) analyzed adverbial expressions. In Biber and Finegan (1989) stance was extended from adverbials to include lexical as well as grammatical markers of attitudes, feelings and judgments, e.g. adjectives like *pretty* evaluate the noun they modify positively, while adjectives like *ugly* evaluate the noun they modify negatively. In later work, the term 'grammatical devices to express stance' was extended to semi-modals (*be going to*, *have to*) and a wide range of complement clause constructions with *to* that are used with modal-like meaning (*seem to*) or express attitude with a *that*-clauses (*expect that*) (Biber, 2004). Throughout these works, key to the concept of stance are "epistemic or attitudinal comments on propositional information" (Biber, 2004, p. 107). Among stance marking devices are 'style markers' (Biber et al., 1999; Conrad & Biber, 2000) that comment on a variety of ways in which the speaker presents their message (*frankly*, *sadly*).

Initially, work on stance markers was chiefly conducted within Biber's research project on differences in register. More recently it has also been conducted in the framework of Du Bois' (2007, p. 163) stance triangle. This triangle models stance and sociocultural value. The key elements of the triangle are:

(i) Positioning, which creates a relationship between the stance taker (often the speaker/writer (SP/W)) and the object of evaluation; positioning subsumes epistemic stance and modality, e.g. *I (don't) know*.

(ii) Evaluation, which subsumes affective and evaluative stance, e.g. *That's horrible*.

(iii) Alignment, often between SP/W and addressee/reader (AD/R); this accounts for the intersubjective nature of discourse, e.g. *I don't either*, *me too*.

Adverbials as a syntactic class have played only a small role in this line of work on stance.

Concurrently with work on stance many researchers drew on Schriffin's groundbreaking 1987 book, *Discourse Markers*, in which she presented a number of different kinds of expressions, among them *Oh*, *and*, *but* and *y'know*, and their role in conversation in guiding sequencing and

coherence. Fraser's detailed taxonomies of a larger set of 'pragmatic markers' have also been highly influential. His work is grounded in syntax, and examples are for the most part constructed. From the beginning Fraser (e.g. 1988, 1996, 2006) has used the term 'discourse marker' (DM) in the restricted sense of a marker that, for a sequence of discourse segments S1 and S2, marks the kind of relationship between messages that S2 encodes, e.g. elaboration (*and*, *in addition*), or contrast (*but*, *however*). The consequence of this characterization is that only clause-initial uses are considered, although medial and final uses may also be found, often with slightly different function. Fraser (2009) splits pragmatic markers into four types, including two types of DM, as specified in the following taxonomy of pragmatic markers:

(i) 'Basic pragmatic markers', which signal the intended illocutionary force of the utterance (e.g. *please*).

(ii) 'Commentary pragmatic markers'; these include 'evidential markers' (e.g. *certainly*) and 'manner-of-speaking markers' (e.g. *frankly*); the latter are roughly speaking the 'style stance markers' of Conrad & Biber (2000).

(iii) 'Discourse markers' (DMs), which signal a relation between the discourse segment and the prior discourse segment (e.g. contrastive *but*, elaborative *and*).

(iv) 'Discourse management markers' (DMMs), which "signal a metatextual comment on the structure of the discourse"; these include 'discourse structure markers', e.g. *I add*, and "topic orientation markers … by which the speaker's intentions concerning the immediate future topic of discourse can be conveyed" (e.g. *anyway*, *by the way*, *incidentally*, *parenthetically*) and 'attention markers' that "indicate that a topic change is in the making" (e.g. *anyway*, *now*, *oh*) (Fraser, 2009, p. 893).

As examples like *anyway* and *but* show, many DMs and DMMs are multi-functional (see Aijmer, 2002, p. 25, referring to 'discourse particles'). Here I adopt Fraser's (2009) DMM sub-classification, with focus on topic orientation markers used together with the 'attention marker' *Oh*.[4] I refer to the larger class of pragmatic markers as PMs. The terms D1 and D2 are used for discourse or utterance prior to the marker and following it, respectively.

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[4] Heritage (1984, 2016) considers *Oh* to be an index of change of state and topic-change in conversation, but in combinations with e.g. *by the way*, it appears to have primarily an attention-getting and challenging function (Aijmer, 2002, p. 151).

Clearly the overlap between adverbial stance markers and many pragmatic markers is substantial. There is also significant overlap between clauses such as Du Bois (2007) cites (e.g. *I (don't) know*) and what Brinton (2008) calls 'comment clauses' (e.g. *you see*) and which she regards as a subset of PMs "by virtue of their textual and interpersonal" functions in discourse (Brinton, 2008, p. 18). As stated above, it is the purpose of this paper to suggest ways in which the overlap between adverbial stance markers and pragmatic, specifically discourse management, markers might be addressed.

2.2. Speaker/Writer roles

By the way, *incidentally* and *parenthetically* are often used in represented quotations. Sometimes the layers are quite complex and from time to time it will be important to distinguish the roles that the SP/W represents in order to identify the source of an utterance D2 and the speaker responsible for the stance. Biber et al. (1999, p. 967) identify this issue in connection with fiction. While it is particularly noticeable there, it is also found in conversational narrative and reporting.

Some of the possible complexities can be illustrated with (2). In the science-fiction story "Ultra violet", the context is that a doctor has commented on the uniqueness of Richie De Hagen's programming implant. This implant was the invention of his parents.

(2)   De Hagen tried to smile. He was not going to get into a discussion of how his parents had developed this particular programming device … It was so typical of his parents to develop a new technology to compensate for their failings as human beings, and then to make a fortune out of it. **Oh, and by the way**, Richie boy, sorry about the side-effects. (2004 Young, *Ultraviolet night* [COHA])

The SP/W roles relevant here are (i) the narrator who originates the content and tells the story in third person, past tense, (ii) the cognizer, Richie De Hagen who, while declining to get into discussion with the doctor about his parents, thinks (in what is usually called 'free indirect

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thought') 'It was so typical of my parents to…' and pseudo-enacts[5] and (iii) his parents imagined as saying, in effect, 'Sorry about the side effects' in a way that is marked as flippant and irresponsible. De Hagen, who indexes with *Oh, by the way* his negative evaluation of what was allegedly said, by implication also evaluates its authors (his parents) negatively. As discussed in section 5.1, in examples like this, *Oh, by the way* is grounded in the cognizer in focus (De Hagen in (2)), not the alleged speakers (the parents). De Hagen conveys that he regards his parents' apology as unacceptable, and trivial, given the egregiousness of their failings.

3. Data and methodology

Unless otherwise specified, the historical data are drawn manually from two corpora: EEBO-BYU (*Early English Books Online*, Davies, 2017), which comprises 755 million words from early print books published from the 1470s to the 1690s,[6] and COHA (*The Corpus of Historical American English*, Davies, 2010-), which comprises 400 million words from 1810–2009 in four main genres, fiction (including poetry and drama), newspapers, magazines and other non-fiction. Both these corpora are organized in decades. Contemporary data are drawn, also manually, from COCA (*The Corpus of Contemporary American English*, Davies 2008-), 540 million words from 1990-2017 in four genres: spoken (mainly TV and radio interviews), magazines, news and fiction.[7] In this corpus data are presented by year. All three corpora, EEBO-BYU, COHA and COCA, were originally compiled in their current searchable format by Mark Davies at Brigham Young University, and are available for free at english-corpora.org.

Searches were conducted for *by the way*, *incidentally* and *parenthetically*. Since patterns with *Oh* appeared to function differently from the expressions without *Oh*, searches were also conducted for each of the expressions following *Oh* both with and without comma. Stand-alone examples such as result from interruptions were not counted. Nor were examples followed by a noun phrase alone or greetings and well-wishing (e.g. *and by the way*, *congratulations*). Clause-initial

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[5] The term 'pseudo-enactment' is suggested in Vandelanotte (2009, p. 138) for a deliberately inaccurate rendition of what someone said that is presented as if it were a direct quotation.

[6] Because the texts are excerpts from printed books, dates given are for the date of printing, rather than of composition, e.g. Chaucer's work, written largely in the late 1300s, is dated 1485 because it is cited in Caxton's printed version.

[7] COCA has been expanded twice since the data used here were accessed (from March 2018 to February 2019). Since March 2020, COCA consists of 1.1 billion words and includes more genres, such as blogs.

tokens with finite verbs or imperatives were counted and also tokens in relative clauses after *which* and *who(m)*.[8] By "clause-initial" is meant occupying the position that precedes the subject, and optionally following a pragmatic marker such as *and*, *but*, *well*, *you know*, *Oh*.

4.   An outline of the development of *by the way*, *incidentally* and *parenthetically*

The histories of *by the way*, *incidentally*, *parenthetically* and also *by the by(e)*, which is now largely obsolete, are described in some detail in Traugott (2019). This section provides only brief sketches of the developments of *by the way*, *incidentally* and *parenthetically*. My aim is to provide sufficient background about the three adverb(ial)s for the discussion of patterns with *Oh* in section 5. It is suggested in section 4.3 that *parenthetically* is actually used rather differently than the other two, despite Mittwoch et al.'s (2002, p. 779) classification of all three as indicators of "a change of topic or digression", and despite the proposal in Traugott (2019) that *by the way*, *incidentally* and *parenthetically* form a loose-knit family of constructions. In that paper they were interpreted from the point of view of constructional schemas, not stance. The more fine-grained stance perspective has suggested the somewhat different interpretations that are proposed here.

Reference will be made to periods of English. Traditionally these are: Old English c650-1150, Middle English c1150-1500, Early Modern English 1500-1700, Modern English c1700-1970 and Present-day English c1970-present (PDE).

4.1. By the way

By the way originates in a locative/directional phrase that is attested in later Old English (*bi (þæm) weʒe* 'by/along/on (that) path/road'). The definite article was still emerging at this time and its demonstrative precursor was optional, hence the parentheses around '*þæm*/that'.

In the late Middle English period (1400-1500) two uses begin to be attested in EEBO-BYU that together were arguably enabling factors in the later development of metatextual DMM use. One context is 'talking-en-route'. In this context the path is understood as unimportant background to the profiled talking event:

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[8] The relevance of the relative clause distribution is discussed in section 4.1.

(3)   as they wente by the way abram said to his wif

'as they journeyed along the road Abraham said to his wife'

(1483 Caxton, *Legenda Aurea* [EEBO-BYU])

A second context is use of *by the way* in the figurative sense of 'in-the-course-of-presentation/argumentation', cf. the metaphor ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY (Kövecses, 2002, p. 94), from which one may digress. (4) is from a travelogue:

(4)   likewise of many others the which at this time iomit: this much i will say **by the way** that

this straight passethouer the coast of afrike to the troppike of cancer

'Likewise of many others which I omit at this time; this much I will say along the way, that this course passes the coast of Africa to the Tropic of Cancer'

(1568 Hacket, *New foundvvorlde* [EEBO-BYU])

A locutionary verb such as *say*, *mention* or a verb of cognition such as *note* appears in most of the examples.

In the seventeenth century, the Early Modern English period, fairly close to the time that DMM uses of *by the way* appear in the data, use of a third context becomes apparent in EEBO-BYU: relative-clause parentheticals, where *by the way* immediately follows the relativizer.[9] This position is notable because in other uses *by the way* typically occurs clause-medially after the finite verb or finally. The first tokens of *by the way* in a relative clause appear in EEBO-BYU in 1613 with the relativizer *which*. In the earliest examples, *by the way* is not used subjectively. In (5) *by the way* describes the structure of the pamphlet, not the author Featley's point of view.

(5)   i begin with your title: an answer to a pamphlet, intituled, the fisher catched in his owne net: in which, **by the way**, is shewed, that the protestant church was not so visible in all ages, as the true church ought to bee.

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[9] Use of *by the way* in relative clauses is reminiscent of the relative clause source of the comment clause *I gather* proposed in Brinton (2008, pp. 229-230).

'I begin with your title: An answer to a pamphlet entitled: The fisher caught in his own net, in which, along the way, is shown that the Protestant church was not so visible in all ages as the true church ought to be'.(1624 Featley, *The Romish fisher caught* [EEBO-BYU])

Example (6) from the 1640s suggests that SP/Ws were by mid-century beginning to use *by the way* after relativizers to express 'I note in passing', a subjective comment on the writer's argumentation strategy. The stance taken is that the elaboration provided is relatively unimportant.

(6)   [arguing against new church directories about bowing and kneeling] that bowing or adoration is directly forbidden once (which, **by the way**, is as much the defining of a ceremony … as any prescription of kneeling or bowing can be).(1646 Hammond, *A view of the nevv [new]directorie* [EEBO-BYU])

By 1650 the distributional factors mentioned above appear to have been converging: use of *by the way* in talk-by-the-way scenarios, in metaphorical text-as-journey scenarios and in relative clauses elaborating on text structure. In all of these contexts, *by the way* is syntactically an adverbial. Before 1650 only a few scattered examples appear in the data with *by the way* in clause-initial position and subjective topic-shifting meaning, but from 1650 on, several examples are attested in several texts, e.g. (7). Note the use of *I observe* after *by the way*; the author of this advice to his son combines the locutionary/cognitive context with use of *by the way* in clause-initial position:

(7)   bees turn not droanes, nor courages ever abate or degenerate: **by the way**, I observe that none have ever arrived to an eminent grandeur, but who began very young.
'bees do not turn into drones, nor does courage ever abate or degenerate; by the way, I observe that no-one has ever achieved eminent grandeur, except those who began when they were very young'
(1661 Argyll, *Instruction to a son* [EEBO-BYU; Traugott, 2019, ex.9a])

By the way in (7) could be interpreted as the adverbial 'in passing', as in (4) and (5) above, in which case it is syntactically clause-internal. More probably, given the number of examples appearing in texts clause-initially around this time, it is to be interpreted as indexing topic-shift, i.e. as a stance-to-text marker/DMM. The assembly (Petré, forthcoming) of factors supporting the stance-to-text analysis is:

(i) Clause-initial position.

(ii) Absence of any mention or implication of a path, either literal or metaphorical.

(iii) Subjectivity: SP/W indexes the upcoming segment as (a) a new discourse-topic, (b) a relatively unimportant aside or add-on (if the content is in fact serious and important, this is a hedged use).

Turning now to COHA, in the early nineteenth century uses of *by the way* when it appears clause-initially as a DMM attest to a new distribution: D2 often introduces or elaborates on a problem (8a) or comments on a situation in a more or less disapproving/disparaging way (8b).

(8)   a.   You are too passionately fond of poetry; -- he of musick. **By the way**, that puts me in mind of our quarrel last summer. (1823 Neal, *Randolph, A novel* [COHA])

        b.   After this, she kindly offered to supply all his train of camels … All this time, the man, who, **by the way** might have rendered this lovely young woman some assistance, stood gazing in silent astonishment. (1817 Cox, *Femalescripture biographies* [COHA])

Most of the early examples in COHA involve comments on situations (8a) or third persons (8b). However, a few refer to second persons and in these cases *by the way* can be interpreted as serving not only to index a change to a negatively evaluated topic, but as introducing an intersubjective hedge, as in (7) and (8a).

In sum, *by the way* was originally used as a locational adverbial ('along the way'). Over time it came to be used as a DMM indexing topic-shift, and, in many instances in the US data, also indexing SP/W's attempt to mitigate a shift to increasingly face-threatening content.[10]

4.2. Incidentally

By the way and the now obsolete *by the by(e)* both originated in locational adverbials. In Early Modern English several manner adverbs were borrowed that later came to be used as stance markers, among them *incidentally*. This appears in EEBO-BYU in the 1610s meaning 'by chance' and 'in passing' and is used in typical adverbial position: medially and finally. Of the 76 tokens in the corpus, only one is clause-initial. In 70 of the examples *incidentally* is used to comment on discourse practices (15 collocate with *mention*).

In COHA there are 3,260 hits for *incidentally*. The first examples in COHA used in clause-initial position appear in the 1860s. In these examples *incidentally* is an adverb of manner. In the 1870's examples appear that are both initial and could be grounded in SP/W's stance. By the 1880s unambiguous stance-to-text uses appear. In (9) *incidentally* signals a topic-shift and the writer's opinion, not that the railroads are hastening good work in an incidental manner:

(9)   henceforth the army will deal more with spasmodic outbreaks and discontent of factions than with powerful tribes as a whole. **Incidentally**, the railroads are hastening a good work.(1882 *Atlantic Monthly* [COHA]).

In the first 100 tokens of *incidentally* in COHA from the 1950s,[11] 54 appear clause-initially. Because six of the tokens are ambiguous between a literal manner adverb reading and a DMM,

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[10] John Heritage points out (p.c.) that Schegloff & Sacks (1973) show that in conversation *by the way* can be used as a marker of "mis-placed" action: it is used to mean 'I forgot to say'. Such uses are almost non-existent in the data. There may be a slight time delay in some TV shows before someone is introduced, but they have presumably not been forgotten. In COHA such instances are represented as involving fake forgetting, e.g. in (i), the represented speaker dismisses a woman because "There's just a chance this may be a man's job and we want to go to it unhampered." This is followed by:

(i)   He turned to the door with his warm smile. "*By the way*, I've got some news I forgot. I know where your father got the money to pay his poker debts". (1936 Raine, *Crooked trails and straight* [COHA])

'He' clearly only pretends to have forgotten and *by the way* is a hedge on a sensitive topic.

they were not counted, leaving 48 unambiguous DMM tokens in initial position. 45 of the 48 clause-initial tokens occur at a continuing turn (93.7% of clause-initial uses) (10a, b). Eight of the 48 tokens introduce a question in D2 (16.6%) (10a), and five introduce a D2 with negative syntax (10.4%) (10b). The remaining tokens appear to be neutral or positive in stance. If conversation is represented, narrators often describe the attitude of the represented SP, as in (10a) (*testily*):

(10)   a.   "That sounds pretty confusing to me," Nash said suspiciously. "**Incidentally**, Griffin," he added testily, "do you have to keep throwing your sea duty up to us?" (1956 Brinkley, *Don't go near the water* [COHA])

       b.   No, really, I don't want you to have to make any effort at all. **Incidentally** Jim Barnes isn't going to be able to come to the banquet either. (1952 Leiber, *The moon is green* [COHA])

By way of comparison, out of the first 100 tokens of *by the way*[12] in COHA from the 1950s, 52 are clause-initial. In only two of these (both *and by the way*) is there ambiguity between DMM and a literal directional or manner reading (3.9%). 28 of the 52 clause-initial DMMs occur at a continuing turn like (8a) above) (53.8% of clause-initial uses), 24 at a change of SP turn. 22 introduce a question (42.3%) and five a syntactic negative (9.6%). The remaining examples are either stance neutral or offhand additions to D1. The distributional differences between *by the way* and *incidentally* are summarized in Table 1.

	# cl-initial	ambiguous	cont. turn	Q in D2	Neg in D2
by the way	52	3.9%	53.8%	42.3%	9.6%
incidentally	48	11.1%	93.7%	16.6%	10.4%

Table 1. Distribution of tokens of *by the way* and *incidentally* in the first 100 hits in COHA, 1950-1959

The main points of difference are that:

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[11] Eligible tokens for this section are clause-initial and exclude examples preceded by *Oh* (see section 5). There is a total of 310 tokens of *incidentally* for 1950.

[12] As in the case of *incidentally*, eligible tokens for this are clause-initial and exclude examples preceded by *Oh*. There is a total of 448 tokens of *by the way* for 1950.

(i) some clause-initial tokens of *incidentally* are ambiguous between adverb and DMM use, compared to very few of *by the way*;

(ii) almost all clause-initial tokens of *incidentally* are used at a continuing turn, compared to just over half of the clause-initial tokens of *by the way*; and

(iii) 16.6% of the clause-initial tokens of *incidentally* introduce a question in D2, compared to 42.3% of initial *by the way*.

The first point confirms that *by the way* is older and better entrenched as a DMM than *incidentally*. The third underscores the greater likelihood of *by the way* than *incidentally* to be used before potentially face-threatening D2s.

In COCA use of *incidentally* in any function is infrequent compared with use of *by the way* (there are 2,333 tokens of *incidentally* in all positions and functions, compared to 18,360 of *by the way*). In written data its stance-to-text use is still sometimes difficult to distinguish from the adverb of manner use. While *incidentally* is a borrowed word and is primarily used in written registers, it also appears in the spoken component of COCA (e.g. 14 out of 269 tokens in 2017 (5.2%), seven out of 108 tokens in 2016 (6.5%) and seven out of 45 tokens in 2015 (15.5%)).

In sum, from 1900 on, clause-initial *incidentally* in general meets the criteria for metatextual markers that index stance-to-text, like *by the way*. It is used:

(i) subjectively and can be paraphrased by 'I say it is coincidental that';

(ii) to signal a topic change; and

(iii) to imply that the new topic is not of particular significance.

However, although clause-initial *incidentally* can in some cases be paraphrased by *by the way*, and like *by the way*, can be used with *Oh*, it differs from it in several other respects; in particular, it is dispreferred in contentious contexts.

4.3. Parenthetically

Parenthetically appears as an adverb of manner in late Early Modern English. There are four examples in EEBO-BYU, of which one is given here as (11):

(11)   in this place very fittely may i bring in that ['what'] i omitted, but as (**parenthetically** to insert it by the way) that is, although men must regarde in all reuerence and feare, howe and what speeches they passe against a prince, (1591 Cottesford, *A treatise against traitors* [EEBO-BYU; Traugott, 2019, ex. (29)])

In (11) p*arenthetically* is used with *by the way*. Whereas the latter can be interpreted as 'in the linear course of the discourse', *parenthetically* is conceptualized as an aside that provides additional information.

Like *incidentally*, *parenthetically* is found clause-initially in COHA from the 1860s on. In COHA there are 41 tokens of *parenthetically* used clause-initially out of a total of 157 hits (26.1%) and 38 in COCA out of a total of 155 hits (24.5%). Most can unambiguously be understood as SP/W's comment on how he or she understands the relationship of D2 to D1: as an aside that provides a detail concerning what precedes.

(12)   Prune puree … when canned in plain cans as baby food, swelled the can so soon after canning as to make its canning almost impossible. **Parenthetically**, now that all baby foods come in glass jars, many do not recall that at first all baby foods were packed in cans. (1965 Kohman, *Canorama of a chemist* [COHA])

The relevance of the content of D2 following *parenthetically* is closer to the content of D1 than in most cases of *by the way* or *incidentally*. *Parenthetically* is used metatextually, but:

   (i) It is rarely used to index topic-shift; rather, it is used to index elaboration of D1.
   (ii) It is not used to introduce requests or other face-threatening language.
   (iii) It does not co-occur with *Oh* in the data.

(iv) It is at least partially semantically contentful and truth-conditional ('in a parenthetical manner') and only minimally pragmatic although subjectivity is inferable in certain contexts.

(v) It often occurs before, within or after an impersonal or personal editorial comment based in SP/W's perspective such as *it is only fair to say that* (there are 20 such editorial complementation comments in COHA out of a total of 157 tokens in all positions and functions (12.7%)).

Use with complementation is not unique to *parenthetically*-- in COHA there are three examples of *it may be observed, by the way*, and one of *it may be said, incidentally,* for example, but the tokens of these kinds of expressions with *by the way* and *incidentally* are scattered. The 20 impersonal editorial comments together with 29 more personal editorial comments in COHA such as *I must not forget to remark ... that, I will mention ... that*, where *parenthetically* may precede (13) or follow reveal that the profile of *parenthetically* is strongly editorial:

(13)   [the floors] are so bad that they must be covered with carpets whether the occupants wish it or no. **Parenthetically**, I may state, that the carpenter's trade in New York city is in a melancholy state. (1875 Cook, *Beds and tables* [COHA])

The characteristic uses of *parenthetically* noted above are found in COCA as well as in COHA and suggest that clause-initial use of *parenthetically* is not as subjective and pragmatic as is typical of most DMMs. Furthermore, although substitution by *by the way* or *incidentally* is intuitively acceptable in some cases such as (12), it does not index a stance-to-text that is either positive or negative in D2 and to which some response is anticipated. Rather, it appears to be used as a style marker, indexing the manner in which text is being presented. This is explicitly stated in:

(14)   Colette's a name I know primarily from books, so I've never really been able to reconcile the author of the gunshot with the one of Retreat from Love (what a book, **parenthetically** speaking). (2017 Camus, *Silence of Paris* [COCA])

Clauses introduced by *parenthetically* are typically factual reports the importance of which is not minimized, but which are marked as elaborating asides:

(15)   so long as the FCC renews that license without any kind of qualitative judgment, no competitor is likely to get a foot in the door. **Parenthetically**, it is only fair to note that networks, although… have nevertheless shown themselves over the years to be the chief custodian of the industry's conscience in public service programing. (1958 Costello, *Whose interests interest the FCC?* [COHA])

Parenthetically is strongly associated with written register. Of the 154 tokens in COCA, only 24 appear in the spoken subcorpora, and of the 37 tokens in clause-initial position, only six appear in the spoken component. Many are associated with a metatextual comment such as *I might add/say*, *let me explain*, either preceding or following, as in (16):

(16)   [about earthquakes predicted for San Francisco] We don't need to constantly frighten them. And **parenthetically**, let me just say, I wish some of these seismologists would stop predicting all of these things. (1990 *ABC_Nighttime* [COCA])

In the interests of parity in the analysis of the three adverbials discussed here, the decades of the 1930s and 1950s attest to the largest number of tokens of *parenthetically* in COHA (18 in each decade). Of the total of 18 tokens in 1950, ten occur in clause-initial position, none of them in the spoken component. Two introduce a syntactically negative D2, but there are no examples of face-threatening questions.

To summarize this section, both *by the way* and, far less frequently, *incidentally*, may be used in clause-initial position as DMMs and stance-to-text markers indexing topic-shift. In addition, *by the way* may be used to index SP/W's negative evaluation of the content of the upcoming clause. In contrast, *parenthetically* may be used in clause-initial position as a style stance marker.

5. The rise and uses of *Oh, by the way* and *Oh, incidentally*

I turn now to an analysis of *Oh* used with *by the way* (section 5.1) and *incidentally* (5.2). The combination is always clause-initial. It is only rarely attested in the data, but despite the paucity of examples, *Oh, by the way* and *Oh, incidentally* are of considerable interest as two stance markers are combined. Constraints on combinations of pragmatic markers have received considerable attention (see e.g. Fraser, 2015; Lohmann & Koops, 2016; Haselow, 2019). However, the historical non-compositional conventionalization of combinations has been little studied since Schourup (2001) investigated the development of *Oh well* as an expression of resignation. An exception is Waltereit (2007) on the development of the French expressions *bon ben*, which is used to signal a "rupture" in the discourse, and *enfin bref*, which is used to signal that a synthesizing reformulation is upcoming. To my knowledge there has been no discussion of combinations of stance markers in the stance literature. The present section focuses on how combinations may become conventionalized with different pragmatics from those of the component parts.

Oh has been studied as an expression of information management (Schiffrin, 1987), change-of-state (Heritage, 1984, 2002) and "affect and emotionality" as well as discourse regulation (Aijmer, 2002). While *Oh* may be "backward-oriented" and preferred in response to another's prior discourse (D1), *by the way* and especially *incidentally* are preferred in turn-continuation and are "forward" oriented to the upcoming discourse D2.

5.1. Oh, by the way
Oh + by the way is attested in COHA from the 1820s on, but there are only a few examples in each decade. The first two examples, in the 1820s, are spelled *O, by the way*. Later examples are spelled with *Oh* and there are a few *Oh by the way* without comma (10 tokens, all from 1950 on), suggesting that at least some writers (or editors) conceive of the expression as a non-compositional chunk. COCA attests *Oh, by the way* with comma (283 tokens) and *oh by the way* without comma (24 tokens). I treat the spellings together as OBTW.

In COHA the total number of tokens of OBTW is small: 172 over the years 1810-2006 in both spellings and punctuations (only two in the 1820s and none in the 1810s and 1830s). In every decade they are far fewer in number than the tokens of initial *by the way*. For example, in the

decade of the 1950s, when both the initial DMM *by the way* and *Oh, by the way* were well entrenched, there are 448 examples in COHA of initial *by the way* with stance-to-text meaning, of which only 20 are preceded by *Oh* (4.5%). In COCA 2017 there are 414 tokens of clause-initial *by the way* with stance-to-text meaning, of which only 16 are preceded by *Oh* (3.9%).

In the first decade in COHA in which OBTW appears, there are two tokens of OBTW. Both appear in the same 1823 text. One is a fictional postscript to a letter. In the body of the letter, the writer chastises AD (Jane) for leaving her letter unsealed and goes on to plot marriage arrangements for a suitor of Jane's that will supposedly allow her to maintain her independence as well as availability for marriage to someone else.

(17)   P. S. – Don't forget to seal your answer. **O – by the way**, you are under a mistake; Miss Ramsay is not a yankee girl. She has only the yankee temper, with a little southern heat, superadded. (1823 Neal, *Randolph* [COHA])

The first part of the postscript (*Don't forget to seal your answer*) refers back directly to the writer's own immediately prior message, and *you are under a mistake* more distantly to Jane's prior letter. The writer introduces a direct challenge to AD's face denying the validity of what Jane wrote and providing a correction. The *O – by the way* is used to present this challenge as an afterthought not only by putting it in the postscript, but also by downplaying its importance with *by the way*. In other words, the letter-writer draws attention to the new topic, from which she disaffiliates. OBTW in (17), as in many other examples, illustrates linkage to a prior utterance, such as Heritage (2002) finds in contemporary conversational data in connection with *Oh*. It is, however, used at a continuing turn.

OBTW is typically used to mitigate D2, as in (17). In (18) Harry appears to attempt to soften his peremptory *You must get something* with an offer of quail not only with *Oh, by the way*, but also with the modal *may* and *if you choose*:

(18)   "I've brought a round of cold spiced beef, but I'm not going to cut that up for supper; we shall want it to take along for luncheon -- you must get something! **Oh, by the way**, you

may let the girls pick half a dozen quail and broil them, if you choose!" "Quail! do you say? and where'll I git quail, I'd be pleased to know?" "Out of that gamebag," answered Harry. (1845 Herbert, *Warwick Woodlands* [COHA])

Despite Harry's attempt to downplay the force of his directive, AD responds with a somewhat testy request for more information. Here OBTW is understood to preface a D2 that is likely to in some way offend or disturb AD.

53 out of the 172 examples of OBTW (30.8%) in COHA introduce questions. More specifically, of the 18 eligible examples of clause-initial OBTW in the 1950s, seven introduce questions (38.8%), and two introduce a syntactic negative in D2 (11.1%). These percentages are similar to those for *by the way* alone in section 4.1. In these questions, speakers are represented as asking for favors or information, i.e. imposing on the AD, especially if the information sought relates to investigation of an illicit situation. In (19) the narrator asks in a studiedly offhand manner a leading question about a wall TV that has raised suspicions and that he has been asked to investigate (*Oh, by the way, where's this wall TV place?*). His question leads to the discovery that the alleged wall TV is an eye that records and spies on everything that goes on the café.

(19)   When I paid for my breakfast I half turned away, then turned back casually. "**Oh, by the way**," I said. "Where's this wall TV place?" "This what?" she said. "You know," I said. "Color TV like a picture you hang on a wall." All the color faded from her face. Her eyes went past me, staring. I turned in the direction she was staring, and on the wall above the plateglass front of the cafe was a picture…. "I don't know what you're talking about," I heard the waitress say, her voice edged with fear. (1959 Graham, *The gallery* [COHA])

(19) illustrates two characteristics of use of OBTW in COHA from the mid twentieth century on: (i) represented turn-initial indexing that a sensitive topic is upcoming and that SP is hedging and (ii) narrator's signaling to the reader of SP's deliberate intentionality with a comment about casual manner.

The examples so far suggest that OH + BY THE WAY (which I call OBTW1) from the early eighteenth century to the present is used in a broadly compositional way: the prior communication D1 is indexed by *Oh*, and upcoming D2 is hedged by *by the way*. This is the use King appears to have had in mind when she referred to "[t]he Wasp gift for making everything sound trivial, as when we introduce momentous subjects with *Oh, by the way*" cited in (1) at the beginning of this paper. It is strange that King uses OBTW as a prototype of Wasp thinking, considering that it occurs relatively infrequently in the data. She may also have had in mind a newer, less compositional use that appears in restricted contexts in the early twentieth century and that is strikingly more disaffiliating and confrontational.

In the new use, what I call OBTW2 introduces a D2 that is a fake rendition of what someone said (a pseudo-enactment) and in no way hedged. The reader deduces that the represented speaker probably did not actually use the expression *Oh, by the way*. The "as if" aspect of the expression is explicitly drawn to attention in a 1925 excerpt from *Time,* in which the represented speaker is an abstract body, the Senate. The excerpt concerns an amendment to an Appropriation Bill. This amendment, which raised legislators' salaries about 25% was added to the Bill and passed without discussion:[13]

(20)   The whole affair was carried off in the most offhand manner, as if the Senate were remarking: "**Oh, by the way**, of course we deserve more pay." (1925 *Time* 1925/03/02 [TIME-BYU])

This use of OBTW2 has a performance aspect to it and is mocking, parodic. It claims the narrator's epistemic authority on the common good and appropriate mores. From the 1950s on, but most especially since 2000, as attested by COCA, OBTW2 has been used to signal SP/W's disalignment with perceived inconsistencies between what some other person(s) said or did (the pseudo-enacted content of D2) and what they should have done or said they would do (the content of D1).

Characteristics of OBTW2 use are:

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[13] I consider "the whole affair" to be the discussion of the amendment and a generalized D1.

(i) OBTW2 links D1 and D2 that concern the behaviors of a third person or Other.

(ii) OBTW2 is unlikely to have been used by the represented Other; instead, it expresses the cognizing speaker's stance.

(iii) The content of D1 preceding OBTW2 invokes or describes appropriate, normative behavior that could contribute to the common good.

(iv) The content of D2 following OBTW2 is pseudo-enacted. SP/W considers it inappropriate.

(v) Behaviors typically involve what someone else said.

These characteristics seem not to have been developed for *by the way* on its own.

A particularly striking instance of reenactment is the excerpt in (21). In this television news interview the relevant participants are Mike Dixon, his ex-girlfriend Richelle Shetina, whose dance partner friend has been murdered, and the Detective. In this excerpt Dixon gives a bland, measured statement about what Shetina said to him, which the detective reenacts dramatically. The interviewer interprets the Detective's move as expression of stance-to-text (*you are throwing it in his face*), but Shetina rejects this analysis and claims it as stance to Dixon (*there was an ugliness from him to me*).

(21)   DOCTOR-MIKE-DIXON: She was like, hey, do you want to put this [relationship] back together? And I was like, yeah, I do. And so let's plan a trip, blah, blah, blah. The next day she's like, hey, sorry, I'm in love with my dance partner. DETECTIVE ZACH-JOH: He still loves her. He's got a lot of feelings for her. But boom, she drops the hammer on him and says, **oh, by the way**, I'm in love with my dance partner. RYAN-SMITH: (Off-camera) Some would say, well, you're throwing it in his face a little bit. RICHELLE-SHETINA: Well, no, I wasn't throwing it in his face. There was, you know, an ugliness from him to me. RYAN-SMITH (Voiceover): Dixon seems like a likely suspect, but he has an alibi the night of Sonnier's murder.[14] (2016 *ABC 20/20* [COCA; Traugott, 2019, ex. (15b), expanded])

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[14] Dixon was later convicted of having hired a friend to kill the dance-partner.

Here the detective reveals his stance to Dixon's earlier rendering of what Shetina said with the theatrical scene-setting *boom, she drops the hammer on him*, and adds the trivializing *oh by the way* introduction to her statement *I'm in love with my dance partner*. He presents *Oh, by the way* as if she had used it herself, but in the light of *boom* and *she drops the hammer*, it is more likely to index his view that what she said was reprehensible and inconsistent with her *do you want to put this back together*? Note that Dixon does not represent her as saying she wanted to get back together, but her initiation of the idea is implied to indicate a wish to do so.

Another example of OBTW2 being used by a cognizer to point to indexing incompatibility between potential morality and actual practice and to negatively assess what the speaker perceives as inappropriately flippant talk is (22).

(22) "You can't tell me you couldn't give a three-day lead on this, five days? ... You don't just dump these (seniors) and say, '**Oh, by the way**, you've got to be out'... This is absolutely just tragic." (2016 *Detroit Free Press* [COCA])

Not all scenarios from which SP/W indexes disaffiliation are linguistic. In (23) the writer, an advocate for people with disabilities, draws attention to the lack of representation in ads of people in wheelchairs with a rhetorical question and appeals to the reader/viewer to think critically about the visual content of ads:

(23) [Advocating adding images of disability to ads] Have you noticed how often you see a lady in a business suit using a pay phone at the airport or a guy waiting on customers or someone going into a store - **and, oh by the way**, they're sitting in a wheelchair? It's about time we PWDs[15] started getting aggressive about our public image. (1995 *Accent on Living* [COCA])

In sum, *Oh* in OBTW1 is used fairly consistently from the early nineteenth century on to draw attention to and strengthen the SP/W/cognizer's disalignment from D2 that *by the way* on its own

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[15] Persons with disabilities.

can convey only weakly. Development of OBTW2 can be seen as the outcome of focus on the increasingly challenging nature of content used in D2, combined with the "digressive", trivializing effect of *by the way*. While an OBTW2-introduced D2 always links back to D1, evoked or specified, OBTW2 itself indexes that SP is mocking D2 and pseudo-enacting it. *By the way* is no longer used as a hedge, but rather as a challenge. This suggests partial chunking and idiomatization of the original combination.

Finally, it may be noted that OBTW2 appears to be a resource for largely indirect confrontation and for avoiding being accused of misrepresentation or libel, since the alleged quotation is marked as not true to the original. This is a hypothesis that deserves detailed investigation. Use of OBTW2 is clearly intentional. It typically occurs in narrative about a third person (which may be used within spoken interaction) and is not addressed to a second person's face. It suggests an area of fruitful research into the relationship between disaffiliative stances and various types of verbal aggression (see e.g. Bousfield & Locher, 2008; Dynel, 2015).

5.2. Oh, incidentally

There are fewer tokens of *Oh, incidentally* in the corpora. Only ten tokens of this expression appear in COHA from the late 1940s on, including example (24) from a movie script:

(24)   Thank you, my dear. Well, that is about all for now. **Oh, incidentally**, while we are in rehearsal, I wish you wouldn't be so demonstrative. (1949 *Barkleys of Broadway* [COHA; Traugott, 2019, ex. (28)])

AD's demonstrativeness continues to be a topic, and D2 (*while we are in rehearsal, I wish you wouldn't be so demonstrative*) is by no means taken as a chance, incidental comment. Like many uses of OBTW1, to which it may be analogized, it functions as a hedge and elicits a series of responses.

In COCA there are 11 tokens of *Oh, incidentally*. One of them, like OBTW2, introduces a pseudo-reenactment of content that the narrator and the character Lama, the pilot of a rescue helicopter in the Himalayas, consider unacceptable:

(25)   Then, and only then, did they [the rescued Germans] speak to him [Lama]. **Oh, incidentally**, they said, we left a Sherpa boy behind. Lama's blood ran cold. Would the Germans have abandoned a German guide? (1996 *News: Associated Press* [COCA])

6. Discussion

The main objective of this paper has been to propose that stance-to-text be included as one of the several types of stance that SP/Ws project. Like many other stance markers that have been investigated to date, those discussed here are adverbial in origin. While my focus has been on stance research, I have also proposed that researchers on DMMs and pragmatic markers in general pay more attention than has been common in the past to the nuanced aspects of stances that the markers can be used to convey.

As mentioned in section 2.1, the structural characteristics of stance devices have been shown to be very varied. Biber et al. (1999, p. 971) cite adverbs, phrases and clauses. In addition to nouns, verbs and adjectives, among stance marking devices that have been cited are procedural ones,[16] some of which are also used as examples in work on pragmatic markers, e.g. *you see*, *I guess* (see Du Bois, 2007). Paralinguistic devices such as loudness, pitch, duration can also be used to express stance (Biber et al., 1999, p. 966). The defining characteristic of stance markers is that "[i]n addition to communicating propositional content, speakers and writers commonly express personal feelings, attitudes, value judgment, or assessments" (Biber et al., 1999, p. 966).

Characterizations of pragmatic markers have evolved over the years (for an overview, see Brinton, 2017, Chapter 1), but most researchers would agree that structurally they are procedural, not contentful or propositional like nouns, verbs and adjectives, that is, they function as "linguistic 'road-signs'" to guide AD/R toward the intended interpretations" (Hansen, 1998, p. 199). Structurally, pragmatic markers tend to be short or "small", although they may be phrasal (*by the way*) or clausal (*I mean*) in origin. They do not function as arguments of clauses and may be prosodically detached from their host clauses. Therefore, they are often considered to be "outside" syntactic structure as it is traditionally understood, or loosely attached to it. They tend

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[16] Biber et al. (1999) refer to "grammatical" stance markers.

to be mobile and to have scope over the whole clause or even discourse, especially in initial position. They are multifunctional and may be used by SP/Ws to express "attitudes, judgments, expectations, and demands as well as aspects of social exchange" (Brinton, 2017, p. 11).

Given the similarities between the functional characterizations outlined in the last two paragraphs, the question arises how the relationship between stance markers and pragmatic markers might best be conceptualized. Three approaches to the partial overlap between them are mentioned here, and the third is suggested to be the most viable:

(i) There is a division of labor between stance markers and pragmatic markers.
(ii) Procedural stance markers and pragmatic markers belong to Thetical Grammar.
(iii)   Pragmatic markers are a subset of procedural stance markers.

In the first approach stance markers might be defined as primarily contentful and relatively infrequent, while pragmatic markers might be defined as primarily procedural and relatively frequent. If a division of labor of this kind were to be adopted, even if contentfulness and frequency were considered to be poles on a continuum rather than absolutes, *I guess* and *I see* would not count as stance markers, as they are fully procedural and pragmatic (when used in the relevant pragmatic sense), and *incidentally* and *parenthetically* would not count as pragmatic markers, as they are mainly contentful. Historically, shifts could be identified from relatively contentful, infrequent stance markers to pragmatic markers, such as *by the way*. However, such a division of labor would ignore the essential functional overlap between the two categories and would be inconsistent with the kind of constructional approach taken in this paper. From a constructional perspective, constructions can be interpreted as forming a complex dynamic "network of interrelated knowledge within our hyper-dimensional conceptual space" (Goldberg, 2019, p. 36). Intuitively, the hypothetical division of labor does not reflect language users' knowledge of this kind. This conclusion can be tested experimentally.

The second approach would be to consider that procedural stance markers and pragmatic markers have been coopted into the Thetical Grammar domain of Discourse Grammar proposed by Kaltenböck et al. (2011) and Heine et al. (2017). Discourse Grammar "is composed of all the

linguistic resources that are available for constructing spoken or written (or signed) texts" (Heine, 2013, p. 1214). It consists of two components that are not mutually exclusive: Sentence Grammar, which is the domain of traditional syntax, and Thetical Grammar, which is the domain of various kinds of social exchange formulae, vocatives, imperatives, interjections and other expressions that "have non-restrictive or metacommunicative meaning that is not part of the sentence meaning" (Heine, 2013, p. 1225). The pragmatic marker uses of *by the way*, *incidentally* and *parenthetically* in clause-initial position have some of the properties that have been associated with "theticals" (Kaltenböck et al., 2011; Heine, 2013). Specifically, they:

(i) have scope over the whole clause,

(ii) do not function as arguments of the clause,

(iii) are syntactically independent and

(iv) prosodically are in many cases treated as separate intonation units (comma in writing).

Theticals have been hypothesized to be spontaneously "coopted" from Sentence Grammar, by which is meant that they do not develop gradually in the way grammaticalized items do (Heine, 2013, p. 1224). Furthermore, Heine (2013, p. 1223) states that "for the rise of DMs, cooptation seems to be a requirement". It is clear that the history and uses of clause-initial *by the way*, *incidentally* and *parenthetically* discussed here and of pragmatic markers in general do not conform to traditional views of grammaticalization as unidirectional reduction (see e.g. Heine et al., 1991; Lehmann, 2015[1995]). But there is no evidence that an adverbial was instantaneously coopted in a way that the cooptation hypothesis implies, for example that *by the way* was used in clause-initial position as a DMM without having been used there earlier in a non-DMM function. Instead, there is extensive evidence that the changes were gradual in the sense that they occurred micro-step by micro-step in increasingly expanding contexts (Traugott & Trousdale, 2010, p. 23; De Smet, 2013). Discussion above in section 4.1 shows that the enabling contexts for the development of DMM *by the way* include contextual reinterpretation of location as background for discursive acts, figurative uses as expressions of the concept of text as journey, use in relative clauses and use of adverbial *by the way* in clause-initial position. Potential ambiguity in this position enabled its reinterpretation as a DMM. Likewise, ambiguity of *incidentally* in clause-initial position enabled its reinterpretation. A constructional approach can account for the

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multitudes of patterns that make up a language system and for the micro-changes that lead to details within this system, without requiring that two domains within Discourse Grammar are distinguished.

The third approach would be to consider that because pragmatic markers convey "attitudes, judgments, expectations, and demands" like stance markers, they are a subset of procedural stance markers. The title of Sakita's (2013) paper, "Discourse markers as stance markers" captures this idea, provided "discourse marker" is understood broadly (as in her paper) as "pragmatic marker". This approach would call for researchers on stance to pay attention to pragmatic markers in general, and DMMs such as *by the way* and *oh, by the way* that index stance-to-text in particular. It would also call for researchers on pragmatic markers to pay more attention than has often been paid in the past to stance and indexing of attitudes.

7. Suggestions for future research

In this paper I have argued that researchers on stance should include stance-to-text in their work and that likewise researchers on pragmatic markers should include stance. Much remains to be done in both areas of research. I suggest several lines of inquiry that arise directly from the present study.

(i) In this paper stance-to-text markers/DMMs have been investigated in clause-initial position only. Like other stance and pragmatic markers, *by the way*, *incidentally* and *parenthetically* are also used in other positions in the clause, notably post-finite verb and clause-finally. Comparison of uses in these positions deserves study. In clause-final position *by the way* tends to index offhand remarks more often than disalignment, and *parenthetically* appears to be used only as a manner adverb. So one question to pursue is whether there are predictable differences in the strength and kinds of stances associated with different pragmatic marker positions (see also Haselow, 2019).

(ii) Focus has been on usage in American English since 1800. Comparison with data in BNC-BYU suggests that the functions identified in contemporary American English for *by the way*, OBTW1 and OBTW2 are similar in British English. Detailed comparison with use in

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other varieties of English would provide insight into how markers of stance-to-text may vary in different varieties of English.

(iii) Another dimension of stance/pragmatic marking that deserves to be investigated is the degree of investment with which the markers discussed are used to emphatically disalign the (represented) SP/W/cognizer from a pseudo-enacted quotation (see Kiesling, this issue).

(iv) So is the extent to which OBTW2 is used as a resource in confrontational discourse and verbal aggression and its affect.

(v) A comparative study of the history of *Oh well* would be valuable as it has also been identified as a non-compositional pragmatic marker (Schourup, 2001). *Oh well* is a fairly high frequency combination (Lohmann & Koops, 2016, p. 429) that signals resignation (Schourup, 2001, p. 1031) and has partially similar contextual uses to *Oh, by the way*. A comparison is likely to sharpen the analysis of both constructions.

(vi) Finally, a study is needed to explore what DMMs occur cross-linguistically and whether the proposal that they are a subset of stance markers is valid for languages other than English.

Corpora

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