Englebretson, Robert (ed.) (2007) *Stancetaking in Discourse*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins. Pp. 323. [Pragmatics & Beyond New Series 164].

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The title of *Stancetaking in Discourse* reveals the basic tenets of the book: throughout the volume stance is regarded as a situated, interactional process actively engaged in by language users communicating with each other. The book sets out to explore how speakers, and also writers, take stances in natural discourse (p. 2). In general, defining stance is a messy endeavour, as the term has a wide scholarly circulation with a variety of different meanings and other terms like subjectivity, evaluation and appraisal have been used for stance type of phenomena. Moreover, stance cannot be tied to single linguistic markers, but different linguistic features and their combinations may contribute to stance in discourse. For instance, adverbials, modals, evaluative adjectives and nouns, complement clauses and complement taking predicates have been shown to index stance (p. 17), and the studies in this volume introduce a couple of other linguistic phenomena including voice, generalizing grammatical subjects and questions.

Although this volume does not aim at a monolithic understanding of stance either (p. 1), it makes a lot of sense of the phenomenon and is an indispensable companion to every stance scholar. The volume is based on the work presented at the 10th Biennial Rice Linguistics Symposium held at Rice University in 2004, and it contains an introductory article by the editor plus nine research articles by scholars focusing mostly on English but also on Indonesian and Finnish. The interpretations and understandings concerning stance and stancetaking discussed in the book are highly relevant beyond language boundaries, and the volume offers an insightful guidebook to what stance is, how it creates social meanings and how it could be studied. The approaches adopted in the individual studies range from corpus linguistics and sociolinguistics to field linguistics and conversation analysis, from written texts to talk-in-interaction, and from qualitative to quantitative analyses, even combining the two in some cases.

Two articles in particular stand out as major theoretical contributions and models for the analysis of stance in discourse. These are Robert

Englebretson's "Stancetaking in discourse: An introduction" (pp. 1–25) and John W. Du Bois's "The stance triangle" (pp. 139–182). Englebretson first approaches stance as an everyday concept, surveying the occurrences of the lemma *stance* in the *Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English* (SBCSAE) and the *British National Corpus* (BNC). On the basis of the qualitative analysis of the tokens in the corpora, he arrives at five conceptual principles defining stance: (1) stancetaking occurs on three levels as physical action, personal attitude/belief/evaluation and social morality; (2) stance is public and perceivable, interpretable and available for inspection by others; (3) stance is interactional and it is collaboratively constructed among participants with respect to other stances; (4) stance is indexical, evoking aspects of the broader sociocultural frameworks or physical contexts; and (5) stance is consequential, leading to real consequences for the persons or institutions involved (p. 6).

Du Bois assembles an analytic toolkit for stance researchers, the stance triangle, which posits that stance is to be understood as three acts in one. Rather than being three different types of stance as suggested in many studies, for Du Bois, evaluation, positioning and alignment represent different aspects of the same stance act, so that taking a stance means that the stancetaker (1) evaluates an object, (2) positions a subject (usually the self), and (3) aligns with other subjects. Thus, Du Bois offers the following definition of stance, which I think describes the general understanding of stance in the other articles of this book:

> Stance is a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and aligning with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field (p. 163).

The rest of the articles are arranged so that the first four papers adopt a specific approach to linguistics: corpus linguistics, sociolinguistics, field linguistics/grammatical description and discourse linguistics (p. 20). The last four papers, on the other hand, focus on particular aspects of stance with conversation analytic methods. Moreover, the last four papers are all written by members of the stance research group at the University of Oulu, which has perhaps been Englebretson's strongest motivation for keeping and describing them together as a group; these papers also subscribe to Du Bois's ideas concerning stancetaking as an intersubjective, socially constructed activity presented in this volume.

The first set of articles begins with Susan Hunston's "Using a corpus to investigate stance quantitatively and qualitatively" (pp. 27–48). The problem she raises concerns the difficulty of locating stance in discourse, since evaluative meanings do not occur in discrete items alone but are cumulatively produced across whole phrases and units of meanings (p. 39). She shows how the problem of locating stance can be solved by corpus linguistic methods. In her approach, quantitative analyses of word choice and reoccurring patterns of language use based on plentiful corpus data provide the background for the informed qualitative reading and interpretation of stance in a particular text sample. Both methodologies are needed and they can be fruitfully combined, as Hunston shows.

Barbara Johnstone's "Linking identity and dialect through stancetaking" (pp. 49–68) employs a dialogic text from a sociolinguistic interview to show how a dialect identity emerges as a resource for and through stancetaking. The dialect under scrutiny is that of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which is associated with distinctive linguistic features by linguists and non-linguists alike. Pittsburghers talk about their dialect often and in many contexts (p. 55), and in the dialogue Johnstone analyses a mother and her 13-year-old daughter discuss their use of "Pittsburghese". During the talk they make claims about their own use of dialect speech and perform local pronunciations in order to establish their authority or to undermine the other person's authority to make insider claims about the dialect. Thus, Johnstone's analysis links epistemic stance-moves with dialect use and local dialect identity.

Robert Englebretson's "Grammatical resources for special purposes: Some aspects of stancetaking in colloquial Indonesian conversation" (pp. 69–110) uses field linguistic methods to establish and explain the use of three frequent Indonesian grammatical features as reflecting patterns of stancetaking. He focuses on first-person singular referring expressions, the –*nya* clitic and the verbal diathesis (voice), which as such are well-documented grammatical categories in traditional Indonesian reference grammars but only in terms of being cognitively-oriented, propositional systems for coding information (p. 72). Englebretson, on the other hand, has two points of departure for his argument: first, stancetaking is a pervasive activity in all language use, and second, grammar is motivated and shaped by language use (p. 69). The main purpose of the paper stems from these presuppositions, as Englebretson's work highlights the interactional nature of the grammatical categories studied and shows how

the categories are used to manage identity, epistemicity and positioning respectively.

Joanne Scheibman's "Subjective and intersubjective uses of generalizations in English conversations" (pp. 111–138) focuses on generalising grammatical subjects referring to classes or groups (e.g. *and all these teachers* *are coming in and saying*; *your people…tortured him to death*). Her analysis suggests that generalizations are not referential descriptions of the world, but they are used subjectively and intersubjectively to express individual, interactive and sociocultural stances. For instance, *they* subjects often convey speakers' evaluative stances, creating ingroup solidarity and othering outsiders. Generalizations, thus, animate and reflect broader societal discourses.

The section of four papers by the stance research group of Oulu opens up with Elise Kärkkäinen's "The role of *I guess* in conversational stancetaking" (pp. 183–219), which discusses *I guess* as an epistemic/evidential fragment frequently used in American English but not so frequently in British English. It emerges from the analysis that from the subjective speaker perspective *I guess* indexes a reasoning or an inferential process of the speaker, i.e. epistemic stance and changes in epistemic stance. Moreover, *I guess* has intersubjective functions in that it, for instance, arises from some evidence or stimulus gleaned by the speaker from the ongoing or prior turn(s), from the physical environment of the speech situation or from the wider social context. From the intersubjective perspective, *I guess* may also invite others to take a stance (p. 212). Kärkkäinen concludes that, on the one hand, stance marking can be rather routinized, as speakers use only a small set of markers, *I guess* being one of them. On the other hand, frequent markers do not express a clear, unambiguous stance, but they have to be analysed in terms of a complex process that the participants orient to (p. 213).

Mirka Raunionmaa's "Stance markers in spoken Finnish: *Minun mielestä* and *minusta* in assessments" (pp. 221–252) deals with a Finnish phrase comparable to *I guess* or rather *I think* in particular. This paper also focuses on the intersubjective aspects of stancetaking. Raunionmaa notes that the stance markers *minun mielestä/minusta* are often embedded in or followed by assessments, which already contribute to stancetaking on their own. Consequently, she asks, "What is it that makes stance markers relevant in assessments?" (p. 228). The answer is that they orient participants to the stancetaking, signalling that such an activity is now taking place. More specifically, the phrases *minun mielestä* and *minusta*

project disagreement and transitions to first assessments across turns or within an extended turn, and they can be seen to alleviate the potential risks of disagreeing or moving from non-evaluative to explicitly evaluative talk by acknowledging that other possible stances exist (p. 247).

Tiina Keisanen's "Stancetaking as an interactional activity: Challenging the prior speaker" (pp. 253–281) studies the social-interactional processes of alignment and disalignment in everyday speech events extracted from the *Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English*. Disaligning is operationalized as negative *yes/no* interrogatives and tag questions disrupting the alignment with the previous turn. These forms challenge the prior turn by displaying doubt towards a claim or stance expressed previously. Moreover, Keisanen's analysis pays attention to the affective dimension of prosodic turn-design features as well as to delays, repair initiators and reformulations that often indicate problems in turn transition. These occur also with interrogatives, which may be due to the fact that interrogatives foreground something that was not originally meant to be challengeable information. Thus, Keisanen concludes that discourse participants seem to be held responsible for anything that they produce in interaction, even if only implicitly (p. 277).

Pentti Haddington's "Positioning and alignment as activities of stancetaking in news interviews" (pp. 283–317) concentrates on describing the linguistic, sequential and turn organizational features of positioning and alignment in British and American news interviews. In this context positioning is defined as the interviewer's forward-looking intersubjective activity of designing difficult questions and creating a problematic interactional context for the interviewee (p. 283). Aligning refers to a range of convergent and divergent positions that the interactants can take vis-à-vis each other (p. 285). Significantly, the interviewees tend to repeat certain linguistic patterns in order to align with the question. Not that surprisingly perhaps, a combination of a stance marker (e.g. *I don't think*) and a recycled unit from the question is a particularly frequent pattern (p. 290). Although the studies in this volume emphasise stancetaking in everyday interaction as a joint negotiation where participants do not usually converse with predetermined stances in mind, Haddington points out that news interviews are a different genre. Since their main purpose is to give a hard time for the interviewee, the interviewer does in fact come to the situation with prepared questions and specific stances in mind.

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