Intersubjectification and clause periphery

Elizabeth Closs Traugott
Stanford University

Ways of identifying subjectification and especially intersubjectification are discussed using data from the history of English no doubt and surely. These adverbs arose out of non-modal expressions and were recruited for use as epistemic adverbs and metadiscursive markers. The data are shown not to support the hypothesis that expressions at left periphery are likely to be subjective (oriented toward turn-taking and discourse coherence), those at right periphery intersubjective (oriented toward turn-giving or elicitation of response, and toward the Addressee’s stance and participation in the communicative situation.). While no doubt is subjective at both left and right periphery, surely is intersubjective at both peripheries.

1. Introduction*

In recent years there has been extensive discussion of possible correlations between position in the clause or intonation unit and expressions with subjective and intersubjective meanings. Much of the discussion has been language specific, but a few attempts have been made to develop cross-linguistic hypotheses. One such attempt is:

Expressions at left periphery are likely to be subjective, those at right periphery intersubjective (Beeching, Degand, Detges, Traugott, and Waltereit 2009)

The hypothesis assumes a basically asymmetric view of the clause. On this view, the left periphery (LP) characteristically hosts discourse-coherence markers such as topic and topicalization markers. It also hosts turn-taking functions in which the Speaker takes the floor, thus preempting talk for the “ego”. By contrast, the right periphery (RP) expresses Addressee-oriented interpersonal turn-giving functions in which the Speaker pays attention to the “alter”, cedes a turn, etc. The hypothesis encompasses linguistic expressions that are both “internal” and “external” to the clause. In the first case, (inter)subjective expressions may coincide with predicate
and argument structure elements at the periphery or “edge” of the proposition. For example, Detges and Waltereit (2011) argue that in French, tonic stress on the subject may have different meanings at LP and RP. At LP it serves anaphoric and contrastive functions, i.e. links with prior discourse (1a), while at RP it may comment on what has been said, but essentially opens up a turn (1b).

(1) French
   a. *Moi, je ne sais pas.*
      ‘[As for me] I don’t know’
   b. *Je ne sais pas, moi.*
      ‘I don’t know’ [I am skeptical] (Detges and Waltereit 2011)

(Inter)subjective expressions that are “external” to the proposition precede or follow it. Degand and Fagard (2011) show that in French conversation *alors* marks a topic-shift at LP (2) while at RP it marks a conclusion and request for confirmation (3):

(2) *et euh / elle a grandi et puis elle commence un/ elle commence un petit peu à parler // *alors* elle dit euh // elle dit doudou pour tout ce qu’elle aime
   ‘and er / she grew up and then she starts a / she starts to talk a little // *alors* she says er / she says ‘doudou’ for all the things she likes’
   (Degand and Fagard 2011: 36)

(3) L1 *ben oui je pense bien*
   L2 *ah il y avait des chambres inoccupées *alors*
   L1 *ouais ouais*
   ‘L1 well yes I think so. L2 oh there were unoccupied rooms *alors*. L1 yeah yeah’ (Degand and Fagard 2011: 48)

In either case the hypothesis predicts that from a historical perspective expressions recruited to LP are likely to undergo subjectification, while those recruited to RP are likely to undergo intersubjectification. In this paper I test the hypothesis with reference to the development of two modal adverbs of certainty (Simon-Vandenbergen and Aijmer 2007) in English: *no doubt* and *surely*. In Present Day English both may be used clause-medially, where they have an epistemic modal function, and clause-externally, i.e. “outside” the proposition, where they both serve metadiscursive functions in the sense of expressing Speaker’s stance toward the proposition in the “core” of the clause (subjective). In addition, *surely* may seek agreement from the Addressee (intersubjective). Both adverbs counterexemplify the asymmetric hypothesis, but do so in different ways. This suggests that, as noted in Detges and Waltereit (2011) and Degand and Fagard (2011), the hypothesized correlation between subjectivity and LP, and intersubjectivity and RP is robust, but not deterministic.
I begin by outlining some broad issues in the study of intersubjectification (Section 2) and go on to discuss the development of the two modal adverbs (Section 3). In Section 4 the findings are briefly related to the much-debated broader issue of whether the changes involve grammaticalization or pragmatalization, and in Section 5 the question of how to operationalize (inter)subjectification is raised. Section 6 summarizes and makes suggestions for further research. Throughout I assume that metadiscursive markers such as no doubt and surely used clause-externally are part of grammar understood as a communicative, usage-based system (see Bybee 2006), and that language change is usage change (see Croft 2000).

2. Intersubjectification

In my view intersubjectification is a process of change. It is the development of markers that encode the Speaker’s (or Writer’s) attention to the cognitive stances and social identities of the Addressee (Traugott 2003:124). These markers arise out of expressions with non-intersubjective meanings. The intersubjective meaning is typically one of the polysemy of a multifunctional expression.

Similarly, subjectification is a process of change giving rise to expressions of the Speaker’s beliefs, and stance toward what is said (see Traugott 2010a; papers in Davidse, Vandelanotte, and Cuyckens 2010). (Inter)subjectification as processes of change that result in the development of expressions needs to be distinguished from (inter)subjectivity, in other words from the ambient contexts of Speaker-Addressee interaction that are the locus of linguistic change and to which linguistic change contributes. In other words, -ation needs to be distinguished from -ity, even though grammars are flexible and it may not always be possible to determine when a change has taken place.

To anticipate possible confusion, it should be noted that my views of (inter)subjectification focus on semasiological developments, that is, on meaning shifts over time. I therefore address a different question from Langacker, since he is concerned with cognitive profiling by a conceptualizer (Speaker/Hearer), especially in connection with subjectification (e.g. Langacker 1990, 2006; papers in Athanasiadou, Canakis, and Cornillie 2006). However, our perspectives on subjectification intersect (see De Smet and Verstraete 2006). López-Couso (2010) provides an excellent overview of different perspectives on (inter)subjectification, primarily from a European-American point of view. Onodera (2004) and Onodera and Suzuki (2007) provide detailed accounts of Japanese perspectives on (inter)subjectification. Since the right edge of the clause is rich in pragmatic markers in Japanese and many other Asian languages these languages call into question many generalizations based on European languages.
If we consider which functions of language are most likely to mark the Speaker’s attention to the intersubjective “face” of the interlocutors, these are likely to be of at least two types. One is related mainly to politeness (encoding of the Speaker’s appreciation and recognition of the Addressee’s social status, Jucker Forthcoming), the other mainly to metadiscursive functions such as turn-giving or elicitation of response, though these two functions clearly overlap at certain points in a linguistic system. The extent to which expressions are recruited in a language to serve politeness functions is highly dependent on social norms (see Onodera 2007, Nevala 2010). Most European languages have a range of politeness (and confrontation) formulae, such as please (< ‘if it please you’), you fool!, and a range of “hedging” markers which signal that the Speaker thinks the upcoming text may be socially sensitive in some way (see Jucker 1997 on the history of well in English). Most languages also have a range of taboo vocabulary. In a few languages, such as Japanese, there is in addition a highly nuanced system of Addressee honorifics used to express (non)intimacy with respect to the Addressee. Here lexical items for eating or food may come to be used as indexes of attention being paid to the Addressee, whether or not that individual is referred to in the predicate-argument structure (for an overview, see Traugott and Dasher 2002: Chapter 6).

My focus here is on the type of intersubjective marking involved in the use of expressions to signal agreement-seeking or turn-giving in metalinguistic ways as the discourse unfolds. To date, unlike politeness markers, these have not been singled out as expressions highly subject to socio-cultural ideologies (though they presumably intersect with them). Such metadiscursive uses are of course often hard to identify in earlier historical texts since these are all written. However, data from trials, plays, conversation in novels, and letters tend to represent language relatively close to speech, and can be excellent resources for investigation of such metadiscursive uses (Culpeper and Kytö 2010). I take the position here that if uptake by another interlocutor appears on a regular basis in such texts, then the marker is being used intersubjectively. Surely, discussed in the next section, is an example.

One difficulty in assessing whether a particular expression has been intersubjectified is that most metadiscursive intersubjective markers are multifunctional. Furthermore, they have usually gone through several stages of change from more to less referential meanings. Consider, for example, tag questions. These are a reduced form of questions. On the one hand they can be used to ask a genuine informational question requiring a Yes or No answer. On the other they may have metadiscursive functions. While use of tags for genuine requests for information are rare in Present Day English, in earlier English this function is more widely attested. Using the LION English Drama Collection, Hoffmann (2006: 16) cites:
These tags have not undergone intersubjectification because they do not differ semantically or pragmatically from their source structures. Being questions that seek information, they are intersubjective from the beginning. Most of the tags Hoffmann cites are not information questions, but metadiscursive ones. Some are subjectified expressions in that they express the Speaker’s attitude (solidarity, disapproval) toward something that has been said; they do not invite a response, e.g. (6) (from Hoffman 2001: 16):

(6) Oh! what, you are asleep, are you? — I’ll waken you, with a vengeance. (Knocks with his heel.) (1770 Isaac Bickerstaff: ‘Tis Well it’s no Worse)

The rise of what Holmes (1983) calls “facilitative” tags that invite the Addressee to contribute to the discourse (7), and of what Algeo (1988) calls “peremptory” tags that are designed to close off discourse (8), appears to be fairly recent. In (7) the teacher knows the answer and seeks only to involve the student, in (8) Kathleen (unsuccessfully) prompts closure of the topic (examples from Tottie and Hoffmann 2006: 301):

(7) Teacher: Right, it’s two isn’t it?  
Pupil: Mm. (BNC-SDEM)

(8) Kathleen: How old’s your mum and dad?  
Unknown: (laughs)  
Kathleen: He don’t know neither.  
Unknown: They’re in their forties anyway, I think.  
Enid: That’s what I said.  
Kathleen: Well, we come to that conclusion, didn’t we?  
Unknown: Me dad’s think me dad’s forty seven. Me mum’s about forty three, forty four. (BNC-SDEM)

Tottie and Hoffmann (2006) compare the use of question tags in British and American spoken English as exemplified in the spoken component of the BNC and in the Longman Spoken American Corpus and find that only 3% of tags are informational questions. While tags are used in spoken British English nine times
more frequently than in spoken American speech, 50% of American English tags are facilitative, but in British English only 36% are. In both varieties only 1% are peremptory. The remainder are subjective uses. In sum, tag questions show that not all turn-givers are intersubjectified. Tags that ask informational questions are intersubjective but not intersubjectified. Intersubjectified expressions are pragmatic and metadiscursive, a part of the interpersonal functions of communicative grammar.

Another instructive domain is that of contrastive clause markers that mark counterexpectation, such as concessives. These are best understood as involving a dialogic viewpoint (see Schwenter 2000, drawing on e.g. Roulet 1984, Ducrot 1984, 1996, Verhagen 2005, Traugott 2010b) since they juxtapose states of affairs, whether introduced by another interlocutor or by the Speaker (treating her- or himself as another interlocutor, as in working an argument through, or in free indirect speech). Verhagen (2005) analyzes causal, concessive and contrastive connectives like but, as well as negatives like not, as intersubjective because they contribute to construal management and attempt to ensure that the interlocutor makes correct inferences. However, this leaves little room for the kinds of interactional, metadiscursive uses that many of these connectives develop in various languages. If causal and conditional meanings are intersubjective in Verhagen’s sense, then they are considerably less so than the later metadiscursive uses.1 Usually causal and conditional meanings are considered to be subjective. Degand and Fagard (2011) for example, discuss the fact that in contemporary French alors has three primary meanings: temporal, causal, and interactional (see also Hansen 2005). Derived from Latin illa hora ‘at that hour’, in Old French the expression was used as a connective in constructions of the form p alors q, signaling that the reference time of q is dependent on p. In the thirteenth and fourteenth century examples begin to appear with causal and then conditional meanings, and in the twentieth century with metadiscursive uses, such as shifts to new topics, or turn-taking signals. Degand and Fagard (2011) treat the shift of temporal alors to causal and conditional connectives as instances of subjectification (Speaker conceptualizes p, q in terms of cause or condition). They suggest that at left periphery alors is subjective and connects to prior discourse, but utterance-finally alors may be used to request confirmation (see also Hansen 1997:182), an intersubjective use:

(9) L1: alors j’avais trois ans depuis trois ans / et j’en vais avoir quatre-vingt-deux
    alors I was 3 years since 3 years / and I will be 82
    L2: ça fait quatre-vingt ans que tu habites ici alors?
        You’ve been living here for 80 years alors?
    L1: oui oui depuis quatre-vingt l- ans que j’habite ici
        yes yes since 80 years that I live here
'L1: So I was three years old (and have lived here ever since); I will be 82.
L2: You’ve been living here for 80 years then? L3. Yes, yes, I’ve lived here 80
years’. (Degand 2011)

Intersubjective uses of *alors* are further discussed in Degand (2011), in which it is
shown that in conversation (but not in writing) *alors* may be used turn-initially,
i.e. at LP, in the same way as it is used turn-finally: to facilitate a response, as in (9).

Like Degand and Fagard, I consider metadiscursive, interaction-seeking uses of
an expression to be intersubjective, not those that present alternative view-
points. In other words I distinguish dialogic from dialogal orientation (Schwenter
2000). Markers of dialogic orientation signal the extent to which Speakers contest,
refute, or build an argument toward alternative or different conclusions (e.g. *but*,
epistemic modal *in fact*, and, as will be discussed below, some uses of *no doubt*). I
take them to be oriented toward the Speaker’s perspective (*contra* Verhagen 2005).
Markers of dialogal orientation, on the other hand, signal the extent to which
turn-taking is facilitated (e.g. facilitating and peremptory question tags, uses of
*alors* at right periphery, and, as will be discussed below, some uses of *surely*). They
are oriented toward the Addressee’s stance and participation in the communicative
circumstance.

3. **A case study comparing *no doubt* and *surely***

I take as my case study the development of modals adverbs *no doubt* and *surely*
at LP and RP. These are among twenty-two epistemic adverbs of certainty that
Simon-Vandenbergen and Aijmer (2007) list. Of these *certainly* is the most fre-
quent. It is also the highest on the scale of certainty, while *no doubt* and *surely*
are weaker, closer to adverbs of probability. Of this class, which they call “*surely*
adverbs”, Biber and Finegan say:

> they serve to invite affirmation and to seclude certain assertions from polite dis-
> pute … By presenting information as if it were obvious, Speakers encourage its
> acceptance and minimize the need for supporting evidence. (Biber and Finegan
> 1988: 19)

Biber and Finegan do not distinguish among adverbs of certainty, nor do they
comment on differences in meaning that depend on position. They do, howev-
er, treat them as “stance adverbs”. For Biber “stance” refers to “personal feelings,
attitudes, value judgments, or assessments” (Biber et al. 1999:966), a primarily
subjective perspective. On the other hand, Englebretson (2007) refers to “stance-
taking” as interactional position-taking actively engaged in by language users as
they communicate with each other. Here “taking” implies activity, negotiation, and Englebretson’s is a mainly intersubjective interpretation of stance, highlighting Speakers’ attention to Addressee. My approach is largely consistent with Englebretson’s, but with focus on change.

For purposes of discussion of no doubt and surely, LP and RP are understood to be external to the proposition, i.e. to the clausal predicate-argument structure. The total range of slots available and the constraints on their order at either LP or RP in English remains to be investigated. However, it appears that at LP the two adverbs may follow interjections and connectives like why, and, but, and that, and immediately precede topic-shifters, as in (10):

(10) but surely as far as developers are concerned, wrong answers are a valuable as correct answers when … (http://www.studiosoft.co.uk, accessed July 18th 2011)

Sources of data used here are MED, the Helsinki Corpus (1510–1710), and CLMETEV (1710–1920). The Helsinki Corpus contains data from a large range of text types and is approximately one and a half million words long; it is divided into three sections of equal length, the dates for which are 1500–1570, 1570–1640, and 1640–1710. CLMETEV is based largely on literary texts and totals just under fifteen million words. It is divided into three sections: 1710–1780 (about three million words), 1780–1850 (about five and three quarter million words), and 1850–1920 (about six and a quarter million words).

3.1 No doubt and surely in Present Day English

Discussing data from ICE-GB and FLOB, Simon-Vandenbergen (2007) analyzes no doubt in Present Day British English in terms not only of epistemic certainty but also of rhetorical stance. She notes that it is rare at RP. Here it may be used as an “afterthought. Its perfunctory character is emphasized by its very frequent occurrence in a syntactically incomplete sentence” (subversion, no doubt) (p. 14). She suggests that in this position it may imply “high degree of predictability”, hence ridicule, sarcasm ([re dinner] At the Chelsea Kitchen again, no doubt) (p. 17). It is often used with a following but-clause (it was a shocking thing no doubt, but…) where it concedes the truth “in order to posit the counter-argument in a context of dialogic argumentation” (p. 16) and may convey more certainty than other contexts (p. 30).

In several papers, Downing analyzes surely in Present Day British English, both spoken (e.g. 2001 on use with personal pronouns) and as it is represented in crime fiction (2009). Some uses identified are primarily subjective, most notably what she calls an “evidentiality marker” use that indexes the state of the
Speaker’s knowledge, and a “mirative” use, which marks the Speaker’s coming into awareness, at the moment of speaking, of a “state of affairs of which the SP was up to then unaware” (Downing 2001:277). There are also strongly intersubjective uses. One is a challenging, “fighting word” use (Oh you CAN grate the cheese surely), that Downing finds mainly with second person pronouns (p.265), and that disfavors medial position. The other use seeks agreement or corroboration (Surely he must be worried?) (p.268). Downing finds this meaning associated mainly with first person plural, and third person pronoun subjects. This “agreement-seeking” use is the one most often identified with surely (see e.g. Greenbaum 1969, Biber and Finegan 1988, Swan 1988). The intersubjective uses are exemplified in the literature with surely at both LP and RP.

3.2 No doubt and surely in the history of English

Historically, no doubt and surely are borrowings from French around 1300. Both were used as strong adverbs of certainty in the first few centuries, but by 1710 there is some evidence that both adverbs had undergone weakening, mainly at LP, to ‘probably’. This is part of a general semantic shift involving adverbs of certainty identified in González-Álvarez (1996) and Wierzbicka (2006), and tested in Bromhead (2009). Wierzbicka (2006) attributes the change to a cultural shift in Britain from belief in truth and faith to the search for empirical evidence. However, it should be noted that certainly and undoubtedly were barely affected by this change and are far less multifunctional than no doubt and surely. Indeed, certainly increased dramatically in frequency after other adverbs of certainty weakened or were lost.

Both no doubt and surely are attested at LP, Medially, and in Response from the beginnings, but neither appears at RP until the early eighteenth century, and then only rarely. In CLMETEV no doubt appears at RP in only 3.5% of the instances in the first period, rising to 13.5% in the second part and to just under 15% in the third. Surely appears at RP in less than 2% of the instances in the first period, 2.5% in the second period, and under 7% in the third. The figures from the third period are relatively consistent with contemporary data. Simon-Vandenbergen and Aijmer (2007) find that uses of no doubt at RP are 4% in ICE-GB and 13% in FLOB. Downing (2001) finds that 6% of surely used with pronoun subjects appear at RP in BNC.

No doubt derives from French sans doute ‘without fear, with certainty’, and ultimately from Latin dubitare ‘to waver’. It is originally not an adverb but an NP, used in a formula such as It is/I have no doubt (that/but):
(11) a. Certes…it nys no doute that it nys right worthy to ben reverenced.
   ‘Certainly … there is no doubt that it is very honorable to be respected’
   (?a1425(c1380) Chaucer Bo.(Benson-Robinson) 3.pr.9.42 [MED])

   b. [with reference to a horse] [do X] and there is no doubt but he will
   keep his pace to your full contentment. (1615 Markham, Country
   Contentments [HC cehand2b])

Similar formulae (There is no doubt, I have no doubt) are still used in Present Day
English.

However, no doubt has also been used as an adverb since c.1400. In (12), an
early example, it is strongly epistemic, as are other adverbs of certainty at the time:

(12) a. No doute þei hadde plente of þis oynement.
   ‘No question, they had plenty of this ointment’
   (c1400 Bk.Mother (Bod 416) 140/18 [MED])

   b. And no doubt there may infinit examples be brought. (1593 Gifford,
   Handbook on Witches [HC cehand2a])

In the CLMETEV I corpus no doubt is sometimes used epistemically at LP as in (13).

(13) and lulled me, as no doubt he hopes, into a fatal security. (1740 Richardson,
   Pamela)

Here truth is at issue. However, in the majority of cases it is used metadiscursively.
In (14) no doubt is used as what Lenker (2010) calls an “epistemic linker”, the func-
tion of which is primarily rhetorical. Matilda makes a metadiscursive comment that
appears to engage Bianca, but there is no expectation of up-take, nor indeed does
Bianca respond to this comment (her response is to the question May I know…?).

(14) “Oh! no doubt,” said Matilda; “you are a very discreet personage! May I
   know what YOU would have asked him?”
   “A bystander often sees more of the game than those that play,” answered
   Bianca. (1764 Walpole, Castle of Otranto)

This use of no doubt is subjective, commenting on prior verbal interactions. It mo-
dalizes, and thereby down-plays, you are a very discreet personage.

No doubt also appears in concessive argumentation, a subjective use which
becomes increasingly common over time:

(15) Here the MANICHAEAN system occurs as a proper hypothesis to solve the
difficulty: and no doubt, in some respects, it is very spesious, and has more
probability than the common hypothesis. But if we consider, on the other
hand … (1779 Hume, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion)
The same uses are found at RP. In (16) the Speaker asserts the rightness of his judgment, setting aside possible objections, and in (17) the Speaker concedes the Addressee’s assessment of Hafen Slawkenbergius, only to set it aside in favor of his own:

(16) Why, … what signifies all you say? The matter’s over with her, no doubt; and she likes it. (1740 Richardson, Pamela)

(17) there is a fund in him, no doubt: but in my opinion, the best … the most amusing part of Hafen Slawkenbergius is his tales. (1759–57 Sterne, Tristram Shandy)

These are primarily subjective uses. With respect to its origins, no doubt can be said to have been grammaticalized (from NP to adverb), and semantically subjectified. It has not developed distinctly intersubjective meanings in any position.

Although also an adverb of certainty, surely has had a rather different history. In earlier texts it is used as an epistemic modal. As such it is higher on the epistemic scale than no doubt, and is roughly equivalent to verily, as in (18):

(18) The Lord said: … Surely they shall not see the land which I sware vnto their fathers. (1611 King James Bible [HC ceotest2])

It may also be used to seek agreement, as in (19), which comes from a letter to his daughter by Sir Thomas More when he was imprisoned for treason. Like (14) it illustrates epistemic linking use. Unlike in (14), which is also second person address, up-take appears to be expected — More implies he desires an acknowledgement or even an answer such as ‘I will be strong for you’:

(19) The more weke that man is, the more is the strenght of God in his saueguard declared… Surely Megge a fainter hearte than thy fraile father hath, canst you not haue. (?1537 More, Correspondence [HC cepriv1])

There are also examples of the use of surely in challenges:

(20) Pray oblige her ladyship. She is your guest surely, sir, you may be freest with your dutiful wife. (1740 Richardson, Pamela)

In CLMETEV I there is an example of surely used in a concessive argument:

(21) there needs nothing more to give a strong presumption of falsehood. Yes, reply I, here are metaphysics surely: but they are all on your side. (1751 Hume, Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals)

This is consistent with its early uses as a high certainty adverb, but there are none in the later periods, when surely has become a weaker epistemic and is used increasingly for intersubjective agreement-seeking and challenging. Over time there
is evidence of increased use of *surely* for managing interpersonal expectations, particularly for seeking uptake/corroboration by the Addressee, often that something is not true or will not happen. Typically the clause is marked as a question intonationally (by ‘?’), not by syntactic inversion:

(22) “But, you won’t take advantage of me, *surely*, Sir Arthur?” said Mr. Case. 
(1796–1801 Edgeworth, *The Parent’s Assistant*)

As a modal adverb, *no doubt* is essentially oriented inward to the Speaker’s inferences and arguments (hence it would be unsuitable in (18)), while *surely* is essentially oriented outward to the Addressee (hence its unsuitability in concessives). The different orientations are very clear in:

(23) Whereupon, he wished me a good morning and withdrew, disconcerted and offended, *no doubt*; but *surely* it was not my fault. (1848 A. Brontë, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*)

In (23) while *no doubt* conveys ‘as I think/grant’, *surely* conveys ‘please agree with me’.

Both *no doubt* and *surely* underwent subjectification with respect to their original meanings. *Surely* was further intersubjectified. *No doubt* is subjective and internally oriented at both LP and RP, while *surely* may be intersubjective and externally oriented at both LP and RP.

The hypothesis that there is an asymmetry between LP and RP may be globally correct in that LP favors subjective elements, while RP favors intersubjective ones, but the pair of adverbs discussed here confirms that the asymmetry is not categorical. Furthermore, modality can be expressed at either edge. Hansen (2005) shows that French *enfin* may appear at LP as an intersubjective metadiscursive marker, and Degand (2011) that *alors* may do so likewise. It should be noted, however, that in these cases intersubjective uses at LP developed late, mainly in conversation, and are very infrequent. This suggests that LP may be somewhat marked for intersubjective uses of expressions.

4. **Intersubjectification and grammaticalization**

In Traugott (1995) I suggested that the development of discourse markers such as *indeed, in fact, and actually* at LP (where they serve a reformulation function) out of more concrete expressions is a case of grammaticalization. In 1995 I defined discourse markers narrowly, as expressions of sequential relations that link the upcoming clause to the prior one (see Fraser 1988). Since then it has become clear that a large number of pragmatic linkers including those that have the metadiscursive function of agreement-seeking, have undergone similar histories. The main
reason for my proposal that the development of discourse markers/modal linkers is an instance of grammaticalization is that, like modal and aspectual auxiliaries or case markers, they initially derive from referential expressions. As epistemic adverbs they acquire partly “procedural” functions. That is they are abstract, schematic expressions that cue how the Speaker conceptualizes relationships within the clause and between clauses, and how the Addressee is to interpret the clause. When epistemic adverbs are recruited to LP or RP as epistemic linkers, they retain some modal characteristics, but are also used in ways that are even more abstract and “procedural” than epistemic adverbs. Since grammaticalization is essentially a process by which more contentful, referential material becomes more schematic and non-referential, cueing the Addressee to the relationships between elements in a clause and to the Speaker’s perspective on what is said, it can be thought of as the development of procedural functions. This view of grammaticalization regards it as functional change, and privileges expansion (Himmelmann 2004).

However, several scholars, starting with Erman and Kotsinas (1993) and Aijmer (1996) have argued that the development of discourse and other pragmatic markers is not a case of grammaticalization, but of pragmaticalization. This proposal in part reflects a different perspective on what grammaticalization is. Those who argue that the development of discourse markers is a case of grammaticalization assume that grammaticalization is primarily a functional change, i.e. about meaning and about the role of grammatical markers. Those who argue that the development of discourse markers is a case of pragmaticalization, not grammaticalization, assume that grammaticalization is a formal change, in which reduction and increase in dependency are defining characteristics (cf. Lehmann 1995, Haspelmath 2004). In many European languages pragmatic markers become less dependent (e.g. surely, no doubt, well, I think, and in fact may all be intonationally disjunct in their function as pragmatic markers). This violates the criterion of grammaticalization as increased dependency, and so such markers are assumed not to be instances of grammaticalization. However, since many pragmatic markers with similar functions are clitics at RP in Japanese (see Onodera 2004) they do not violate increased dependency, which suggests that no cross-linguistic generalizations can be made about whether or not grammaticalization is involved.

The theoretical differences in perspective of proponents of grammaticalization as functional change on the one hand and as formal change on the other is discussed in Kiparsky (2012) and Traugott (2010c). As Kiparsky points out, these perspectives are in principle not contradictory because they ask different questions, one about how function changes, the other about how form changes. However, the proposal that the development is a case of pragmaticalization also in part reflects a profoundly different view of what grammar is. For proponents of pragmaticalization “grammar” is a term usually reserved for “core” structures, whereas in
my view “grammar” is communicative and covers the full range of expressions in a language (see also Diewald 2011). In a recent issue of *Linguistics* (Degand and Simon-Vandenbergen 2011) a number of different researchers from different theoretical traditions and discussing different languages concluded that discourse markers (in the broad sense of pragmatic markers) involve grammaticalization and that pragmaticalization is not needed as a separate process. At best, it is a subclass of grammaticalization the members of which have primarily pragmatic meaning (Prévost 2011).

From a functional perspective on grammaticalization, epistemic linkers are highly procedural grammatical markers. Since intersubjectification is the development of interpersonal meanings, it is strongly pragmatic in function. Those instances of intersubjectification that are paired with changes leading to expressions with procedural function intersect with grammaticalization. Other instances that are paired with changes leading to expressions with contentful function, such as taboo terms, intersect with lexical change.

5. Operationalizing subjectification and intersubjectification

One of the most difficult problems is how to find objective criteria for pragmatics in written corpora, absent information about prosody and absent the ability to ask interlocutors what they meant or to do experiments. Identifying subjectification and intersubjectification is particularly problematic because subjectivity and intersubjectivity are ambient in all communication. Torres Cacoullos and Schwenter (2007) suggested some criteria for subjectification in the specific case of the development of Old Spanish *a pesar de* ‘to the regret of’ > ‘in spite of’ > ‘although’ (concessive) in the context of *que* ‘that’. These criteria are increase in coreferentiality of an adnominal argument of *a pesar de* with the subject (entailing realignment of opposition from external to internal), development of subjunctive uses in the subordinate clause (entailing development association with irrealis meaning), and preposing of *a pesar de* (entailing scope increase). In the case of *surely* or *no doubt* operationalizing subjectification is somewhat easier. The question can be asked where the certainty is located: in a referent that serves as an argument of the proposition, or in the Speaker. In

> (24) he who understands those principles … has always, in the darkest circumstances, a star in sight by which he may direct his course *surely*. (1829 Southey, *Sir Thomas More*)

*Surely* is an adverb of manner ‘with certainty’ that is not subjectified, since *he* is the one who is sure in his actions, not the Speaker (who would be sure/infer that
something is the case, not be sure/infer how to achieve something). The optimal paraphrase of (24) is (25a) not (25b):

(25) a. by which he may be sure/certain in directing his course
   b. by which I infer that he may direct his course.

Subjectification of surely can be identified with the appearance in texts of new uses such as (18), in which the Speaker’s perspective can or must be interpreted. Such interpretations are of course dependent on context, and on cues, when reliable, such as punctuation. In many cases, contexts larger than the immediate clause need to be taken into consideration (see Traugott Forthcoming).

In the case of intersubjectification as I define it, and as it has been applied here to the study of surely, a useful heuristic for identifying the development of intersubjective meaning is the appearance of uses that can be paraphrased as ‘and I hope/want you to agree/understand’. This differentiates it clearly from subjectification.

Another useful criterion, but by no means a necessary or sufficient one, is whether or not there is up-take (where such uptake is possible in a text). Examples of no doubt do not call for a response and normally do not get one. Indeed the Speaker often continues (not only in concessive examples with but also in examples with conjunction, e.g. and in (16)). This has the effect of blocking off further discussion of the proposition over which no doubt scopes (see (14) in which Matilda does not wait for or seem to expect a response, but rather follows her comment with a question). On the other hand, surely seeks response and prototypically gets one if the Addressee is (presented as being) present. In the case of (23) the Addressee is the imagined reader, and therefore there is no response in the text, but in the case of (22) there is an Addressee and a response. (22) is repeated here in (26) with the beginning of the lengthy response it elicits:

(26) “But, you won’t take advantage of me, surely, Sir Arthur?” said Mr. Case, forgetting his own principles.
   “I shall not take advantage of you, as you would have taken of this honest man…”

See also (27) below. In sum, intersubjective markers, especially when used at RP, can be expected to elicit responses more readily than subjective ones. This criterion by hypothesis holds only for outcomes of intersubjectification that relate to turn-taking, specifically response-eliciting strategies. By hypothesis it is not useful for the kind of social deixis exhibited by Japanese polite styles, which is not related to turn-taking or -giving.
6. Conclusion and suggestions for further research

No doubt and surely arose out of non-modal expressions; they were recruited for use as epistemic adverbs and linkers. Use at RP is a relatively late development, and infrequent. As a modal linker no doubt is subjective at both LP and RP, meaning at first ‘I am sure that’ and later ‘I infer that’. Surely may likewise be subjective, but it may from early times be intersubjective at both LP and RP, meaning ‘I want you to agree’. Therefore no doubt and surely are further examples in addition to Tottie and Hoffmann’s (2006) on tags, and Hansen’s (2005) and Degand’s (2011) on French that counterexemplify the hypothesis that “Expressions at left periphery are likely to be subjective, those at right periphery intersubjective”. However, the hypothesis is stated only as a tendency. As a generalization covering many domains including information-structuring, connectives of various types, turn-takers and turn–givers, it appears to be robust.

This study brings to mind several topics for further research. One is that it seems likely that the correlations hold more strongly for some domains than others. Information-structuring may be more tightly correlated with subjective meanings at LP than more interactive discourse-management markers. A related research question is what counts as “periphery”, “edge” or indeed “initial” and “final”? It appears that the answer may differ depending on the domain investigated. For example, information-structuring markers tend to be aligned to the LP and RP of the proposition (the predicate and argument structure), as shown by Detges and Waltereit’s (2011) discussion of tonic (contrastive) stress on French subject pronouns, illustrated in (1). Topic-restricting markers such as as far as, as for when immediately followed by N have a similar function in English (see Rickford, Mendoza-Denton, Wasow, and Espinoza 1995 for the development of as far as N). A further question concerns what sequences specific “edge” phenomena may occur in. For example, no doubt and surely are LP of the clause, but they follow interjections, address forms, connectives like and, but, why, and that, and occasionally topicalized adverbs, e.g.:

(27) “But with your talents, boy, surely you are not going to throw away your chances of a great name?”

“I care nothing for a great name, father,” said John. “I shall win a greater victory than any that Parliament can give me.” (1897 Caine, The Christian)

They may precede metadiscursive inferential then as in:

(28) Surely then, when his honourable friend spoke of the calamities of St. Domingo … it ill became him to be the person to cry out for further
importations! (1839 Clarkson, History of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade)

Although the corpus data do not attest such examples, it is easy to construct ones at RP that precede a tag, e.g. (22) could be modified as:

(29) “But, you won’t take advantage of me, surely, will you, Sir Arthur?”

Most importantly, cross-linguistic research of morphosyntactic phenomena at LP and RP needs to be done to determine how generalizable the findings from European languages are. For example, many Asian languages have a wide array of particles that have developed at RP. This appears to be an areal phenomenon, not a function of word order since it is true of both Japanese (an OV language) and Chinese (a VO language) (see e.g. Yap, Matthews, and Horie 2004). The asymmetric hypothesis discussed here contrasts with analyses of Japanese, in which a more symmetric “layered” model is often adopted. Subjective expressions are modeled in a layer outside of a propositional “core”, and intersubjective ones outside of the subjective layer, permitting both intersubjective and subjective elements to precede or follow the core, but with the intersubjective elements always on the farthest edge (Onodera 2004, Shinzato 2007, and papers in Onodera and Suzuki 2007). Indeed, initial position has been hypothesized to be “best for expressing not only subjectivity but also intersubjectivity” (Onodera 2007: 260).

Notes

* Many thanks to two anonymous reviewers and especially to Liesbeth Degand for comments on an earlier version. Various aspects of this paper were presented in 2010 at the Universities of Hong Kong, Manchester, and Newcastle, and at the 4th Conference on Language, Discourse, and Cognition in Taipei, and in 2011 at the Workshop on Historical Pragmatics at Gakushuin University, Tokyo and the Pragmatics Association of Japan in Kyoto. I have benefited from discussion of the issues in these venues and especially with Noriko Onodera and Yuko Higashiizumi.

1. This is not in itself a disadvantage. I have argued for degrees of subjectification, and there are doubtless degrees of intersubjectification. The problem is that Verhagen does not consider the types of metadiscursive markers discussed here.

2. State of knowledge is usually considered epistemic, however, while “evidentiality” is associated with source of knowledge (Aikhenvald 2004).

3. The term “procedural” derives from Blakemore (1987), but in adopting this term I do not also adopt Relevance Theory. In early work Blakemore made a sharp distinction between “conceptual” and “procedural” expressions, but subsequently the continuum between the two has been recognized (Nicolle 1998).
4. Since current punctuation practices developed only in the late eighteenth century, and have usually been imposed by editors on earlier texts, great caution must be used in relying on punctuation (see Moore 2011 on aspects of editing early English).

5. This is a revision of Onodera’s (2004) hypothesis that LP is associated with subjectivity in Japanese.

Sources

BNC. *The British National Corpus, Spoken*. 2005. Distributed by Oxford University Computing Services on behalf of the BNC Consortium.


References


All rights reserved


Author’s address

Elizabeth Closs Traugott
Stanford University
Margaret Jacks Hall, Building 460, Room 127
Stanford CA 94305–2150
USA
traugott@stanford.edu