Stance moods in spoken English: Evidentiality and affect in British and American conversation*

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Abstract

This study presents results from a corpus-based analysis of the expression of attitude, emotion, certainty and doubt (stance) in a large corpus of British and American conversation. Stance marker frequencies were assessed through an automated procedure for identifying stanced lexical items occurring in particular grammatical frames. The frequencies were analyzed with a multi-variate statistical procedure known as factor analysis which identifies co-occurrence patterns (factors). These factors can be understood to be the most salient moods of stance. Three factors were identified as characteristic: 1) informal AFFECT (American dialect-based), 2) boulomaic planning (American work-based) versus small talk (British dialect-based), and 3) hedged opinion (British dialect-based). Social norms were identified by examining the factors in light of discourse context and interpersonal relationships among speakers. Cross-cultural misunderstandings seemed particularly likely in work contexts, where Americans preferred boulomaic verbs (want, need), and British preferred evidentials (know, maybe). Differences in informal adult conversations are also potentially important, where Americans used many more affect markers (such as love, crazy). More work on pragmatic or functional domains using multi-variate analysis is proposed in the conclusion.

Keywords: stance; hedging; affect; dialect; hedging; attitude

1.   Background and aim of the study

Stance is an area of enduring interest to linguists. In some ways, the concept of stance is the perfect linguistic construct: In looking at stance, we are investigating the space in language where literal, figurative, and functional meanings intersect. For example, *maybe* literally expresses possibility or

uncertainty, but it can be used in conversation to suggest '*maybe we should eat*', estimate '*there were maybe five people*', or hedge '*I don't know. Maybe.*'

The social norms for stance use are systematically different across cultures (see Precht 2000; Precht to appear). This systematicity suggests that we have an ingrained system—a shorthand, if you will—for expressing our emotions and attitudes. The resources of language enable a virtually unlimited number of ways in which we could express ourselves, however, my results suggest that we are culturally 'programmed' to use a very limited, very specific subset of these options. My previous analysis found more than 1,400 different stanced words in English, and yet we use only about 150 words for ninety percent of our stance expression (Precht to appear). Although we have a myriad of options for expressing our emotions, attitudes, and commitments, we tend to use the same small set of stance markers repeatedly. Our expression of stance, I would argue, is shaped by culture and custom—we are socialized to use particular stance markers in particular ways.

The use of particular stance markers is only one part of our socialization in stance. We adjust stance use for context and audience, and to frame the way others perceive us. Critical linguists have interpreted stance as one way in which language encodes the interlocutors' relationship. Fairclough argues that, rather than straightforwardly coding certainty, doubt and attitudes, stance is the 'point of intersection in discourse between the signification of reality and the enactment of social relations—or in terms of the systemic functional linguistics, between the ideational and interpersonal functions of language' (Fairclough 1992: 160). He suggests that stance markers code key elements of the interlocutors' relationship such as solidarity, affinity, and other power relationships: 'expressing high affinity may have little to do with one's commitment to a proposition, but a lot to do with a desire to show solidarity. Conversely . . . low affinity with a proposition may express lack of power, rather than lack of conviction or knowledge' (Fairclough 1992: 159). Consider the following example:

(1)   A: Do you want a sack lunch?
      B: I don't know probably something greasy is what it looks like.

Speaker B uses hedges in his response, but these do not show a lack of conviction or knowledge. Critical linguists might interpret these instead as an indication that B has less power than A. Evidential markers such as *I don't know* can be seen to be showing the degree of certainty or the attitude of the speaker. In example (1), the mental verb *know* is used to show the speaker's attitude rather than his level of certainty. Nuyts (2001) suggests that we need to interpret such markers as (inter)subjective, and that we need to interpret stance simultaneously as objective and subjective markers.

The following study is an attempt to do just that. The study focuses on stance differences in British and American conversations among friends, family and at work. Stance moods are compared by identifying markers of stance that tend to occur together.[1] I am defining 'mood' as the set of stance markers that occur together and which communicate the tenor of a conversation. I also argue that stance mood indexes the relationship between interlocutors. To identify the sets of stance markers that occur together, I have chosen to use what is often viewed as the objective approach to language study: computational and statistical analysis. The interpretation of those results, though, is from a social constructionist perspective. This balance of quantitative and qualitative analysis is intended to take advantage of the strengths of both approaches. The interpretation of the data is based on the assumption from Martin (2000) that stance expression is not merely subjective, but that it is an interpersonal experience. Stance is therefore interpreted in terms of the relationship between the speakers, the relative status of speakers, and the presentation of self.

2.   Corpus and methodology

This study combines computational, quantitative and qualitative methods, much as other multi-dimensional studies have done (Biber 1988; Biber and Finegan 1989; Atkinson 1999; Precht 2000). Multi-dimensional analysis has proven to be a valuable tool in identifying complex relationships in language. It is, however, sensitive to several features: corpus design, operationalization of constructs, and statistical method. This section outlines the procedures for handling each of these areas.

2.1.   *Corpus design*

In order to compare stance in British and American conversation, a large corpus of spoken language is needed. The spoken section of the Longman Corpus of Spoken and Written English (LCSWE) is ideal for this study because of its size and dialect representation. Three contexts were chosen for analysis from the LCSWE: conversation among related and non-related adults, conversation among family members, and conversation at work. The bulk of the corpus is made up of adult conversations, as is evident from Table 1. Family conversations are defined as those among related speakers and which are intergenerational. The work conversations are from a variety of contexts and professions: from teachers to retail clerks to engineers. The composition of the corpus is as follows:

Table 1.   *Composition of the corpus*

Corpus description	Number of texts	Number of words
American conversation	**265**	**1,514,000**
Adults	**145**	750,000
Families	**63**	290,000
Work	**57**	465,000
British conversation	**262**	**1,455,000**
Adults	**150**	887,000
Families	**55**	315,000
Work	**57**	253,000
Total	**527**	2,969,000

In order to appreciate the size of this corpus, it may be helpful to consider that the speed of spoken language is often estimated to be 7,000 words per hour. At this rate, this corpus contains approximately 425 hours of conversation.

2.2.   *Operationalizing stance*

The challenge of operationalizing the construct of stance has been met by researchers in different ways. The construct of stance subsumes other categories that have been investigated jointly and separately, such as hedges (Hyland 2000; Huebler 1983; Salager-Meyer 1994, 1995), evidentiality (Chafe 1986; Nuyts 2001), vague language (Channell 1994), attitude (Hyland 1999; Vande Kopple 1985; Biber et al. 1999), affect (Martin 2000; Biber and Finegan 1988, 1989), and modality (Palmer 1979; Hoye 1997).

Biber et al. (1999) break stance into three categories: epistemic (related to certainty, doubt, actuality, source of knowledge, imprecision, viewpoint, and limitation), affect (related to states, evaluations, emotions and attitudes), and manner (related to style of speaking). This general framework was used to collect a very large set of stanced words in English. Epistemic stance markers would include mental verbs, such as *think, know* and *believe*, as well as measures of certainty, such as *probably* and *sure*. Affect markers are linked to APPRAISAL, as discussed in Martin (2000), and show emotion (as in *love, want*), JUDGMENT (making moral assessments, as in *bad, good, cool*) and APPRECIATION (making aesthetic assessments, as in *beautiful, lovely*). In all, more than 1,400 markers of stance were collected from other studies, from the corpus texts themselves, and from reference materials such as *The Concise Roget's International Thesaurus*, (Chapman 1994). Assigning stance markers to semantic categories is not

straightforward, and so the words collected were not assigned to a single category.

Several studies found important differences related to the grammatical context or part of speech (Salager-Meyer 1995; Hyland 1996; Hunston and Sinclair 2000; Biber et al. 1999). I therefore felt it was essential to be able to identify clausal constructions following verbs, subject marking of verbs (first, second or third person), and other grammatical constructions surrounding stance words. Such analysis was untenable by hand, so I wrote a computer program, *StanceSearch*, which automatically and reliably identifies stance markers.[2] This program is capable of distinguishing between stanced and non-stanced meanings though the use of grammatical and lexical context. For example, the program can distinguish between the stanced use of *clear* in 'the meaning is *clear*' and the non-stanced meaning in '*clear* glass'. *StanceSearch* distinguishes between first, second, and third person subjects, and between negated and non-negated verbs: Separate counts are created, then, for *I can, you can, I can't*, and *you can't*. The computer program also identifies the clausal construction following many verbs, such that *think* followed by a that-clause is computed separately from think followed by a wh-clause. For a more in-depth description of the computer program, see Precht (2000).

2.3. *Statistical analyses*

This study uses a multi-dimensional statistical analysis. For this paper I have written a relatively non-technical description. For a more detailed technical description, see Biber (1988) or Precht (2000). Multi-dimensional statistical analysis focuses on finding patterns in data. This technique has already proven to be a valuable tool in identifying complex relationships in language, through such work as Biber (1988) and Atkinson (1999). Biber and Finegan (1989) and Precht (2000) have already used multivariate analysis to find patterns among stance markers across a variety of contexts. A statistical technique known as factor analysis can be used to find stance markers that tend to occur together. I am arguing in this paper that these co-occurrence patterns are stance 'moods', and that they provide information on cultural differences in stance expression.

Factor analysis is used to identify groups of stance markers that tend to occur together in transcripts. Because this study is cross-dialectal, we can expect both context and dialect to be key determining factors. If dialect is, indeed, a main feature, we would expect the British and American conversation transcripts to fall naturally into separate dialect-based groups.

If dialect is not a main contributor to stance differences, we would expect the transcripts to fall naturally into context- or function-oriented groups.

A factor analysis on all 1,400 potential stance markers would be uninterpretable, so some weeding out must occur before running the statistics. The first step is to eliminate all but the most frequent stance markers. A cut-off level of .14 times per 1,000 words (approximately once an hour) was used. The second step is to use the communalities of the stance markers to exclude variables; a communality identifies the degree to which the stance marker is helpful in distinguishing between the groups. Stance markers with communalities below .10 are eliminated from the analysis.

The factor analysis was run with a principal components extraction on the correlation matrix, and with a Promax rotation, very much as described in Biber (1988). The factor scores were computed with the standardized variables which had at least .30 loading. For variables that loaded on more than one factor, only the highest loading (without regard for negative or positive value) was used in computing factor scores.

The factor score is a measure of prototypicality for each transcribed conversation in the corpus. Conversation transcripts have a factor score for each factor, and the factor scores represent the degree to which the conversation is representative of that factor. The relationship between factors, dialects, and subsection of the corpus can be examined by averaging the factor scores for each dialect and each subsection. From these averages we can determine which dialect or subsection is most closely aligned with a particular factor.

3.   Results

This section describes the method by which the factors were determined, introduces the factors, and reports the means for each of the dialects and subsections of the corpus.

3.1   *Determination of factors*

A preliminary factor analysis was performed on 126 variables with frequencies above .14 occurrences per 1,000 words. This analysis provides the eigenvalues, which determine the number of factors to be extracted (see Figure 1). The number of factors can be determined from the scree plot if there seems to be a natural break in the eigenvalues or if it is clear that the plot becomes flat at a particular point. As is evident from Figure 1, the scree plot flattens after the third component, and so three factors were extracted.
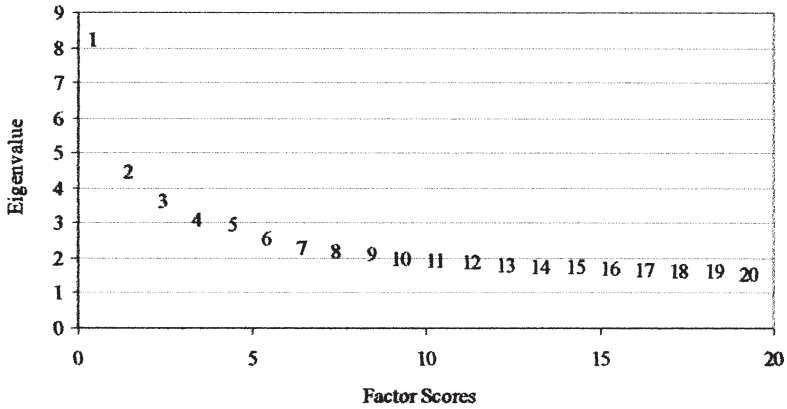
Figure 1.   *Scree plot of eigenvalues*

Fifty-eight variables with communalities below .10 in this initial factor analysis were eliminated. The factor analysis was then repeated with the remaining 68 variables. Table 2 summarizes the results of the three-factor solution. Person marking, negation, and other essential grammatical properties are identified where necessary.

The groupings of the stance markers (*factors*) are based on correlations between stance markers. Each factor can potentially have two sets of stance markers which occur in complementary distribution; these sets of stance markers are designated as 'positive' and 'negative' to distinguish them from each other. Texts in the corpus with high frequencies on the positive set of stance markers tend to have low frequencies for the negative set, and vice versa. The number of factors is determined by examining the scree plot of the eigenvalues and identifying where breaks in the curve occur.

3.1.   *Mean scores for dialect and subsection of the corpus*

The relationship between the factors, dialects, and subsection of the corpus is explored through factor scores. The means for the factor scores are reported in Table 3. The mean scores in Table 3 can be used to identify differences and similarities across dialects and sub-sections of the corpus. For factors 1 and 2, both the dialect and subsection means are quite far apart. From this, we can hypothesize that the Americans and the British use different stance markers for the stance moods here. For factor 3, the means are closer for both dialect and subsections. The qualitative analysis in section 4 is necessary to make finer distinctions among and analyses of these factors.

Table 2.   *Summary of the factorial structure (features in parentheses were not used in the computation of factor scores)*

Factor 1		Factor 2		Factor 3	
like + amount	0.62	I guess	0.58	sort of	0.53
cool	0.59	maybe	0.56	I mean	0.52
she likes	0.58	I need to	0.55	I think + no clause	0.50
kind of	0.55	(kind of	0.47)	I think that	0.49
totally	0.52	(pretty	0.47)	actually	0.46
weird	0.51	**sure**	0.46	a lot	0.43
pretty	0.50	I have to	0.43	obviously	0.41
crazy	0.49	(real	0.39)	of course	0.35
shit	0.48	good	0.39	it would	0.34
wow	0.44	you want to	0.38	(quite	0.33)
real	0.40	you need to	0.38	absolutely	0.33
(I guess	0.40)	I can	0.35	probably	0.32
you know wh-	0.38	I need	0.35	interesting	0.32
I like	0.37	I want to	0.34		
funny	0.36	I could	0.33	(no negative features)	
I love	0.34	I was thinking	0.33		
fun	0.31	you need	0.33		
right?	0.31	(wow	0.31)		
(I want to	0.30)	I know if	0.31		
		(you know wh-	0.31)		
anyway	−0.31	I must	−0.31		
(bloody	−0.31)	fucking	−0.31		
(sort of	−0.34)	about	−0.33		
(lovely	−0.36)	I suppose	−0.37		
(I suppose	−0.34)	(perhaps	−0.35)		
perhaps	−0.40	lovely	−0.42		
(quite	−0.43)	bloody	−0.42		
a bit	−0.51	(sort of	−0.44)		
		a bit	−0.51		

4.0   Interpretation of factors

The factors identified in section three are the key to understanding stance in this corpus. The factors group the stance markers which tend to occur together in conversations, and form the structure for identifying the main moods of conversation in the corpus. An initial glance at these factors already suggests the nature of these moods. The following section examines texts with high factor scores in order to classify these moods in greater detail.

In the introduction, I argued that stance moods are indicative of cultural norms. In section four, I identify cultural norms through the factors. I use the relationships between the interlocutors, their relative status, and their presentation of self to identify cultural norms for particular contexts. To

Table 3. *Means for dialect and subsection*

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
American (overall)	3.63	1.52	–0.51
adult	5.32	0.82	0.49
family	2.42	0.96	–1.99
work	0.68	3.90	–1.42
British (overall)	–3.82	–1.59	0.53
adult	–3.39	–1.72	0.88
family	–4.43	–2.59	–1.51
work	–4.46	–0.01	1.82

make these conclusions, a close analysis of the transcripts with high factor scores is made.

In order to interpret a factor, at least five variables must load on the factor (Biber, 1988). Because only the negative loadings for factor 2 have more than five variables (after removing variables which load more highly on another variable), the negative loadings on factor 2 can be interpreted.

4.1. *Factor 1: Informal affect*

The mood of the first factor is informal and full of emotion with markers such as *I love, I like, crazy, weird, fun, funny, shit*, and *wow*. Example (2) is an excerpt from a conversation transcript with a high score for factor 1.[3]

(2)
F1:   I loathed Saturday morning and all cartoons . . .
F2:   Oh, *I loved* all those . . .
F3:   This was on daytime TV and I remember summertime . . .
F2:   That's all *I liked* cartoons, and Shazam and Land of the Lost.
M1:   Shazam.
F1:   I can't remember like well those aren't cartoons . . . Those are . . .
F3:   *You know what,* Sheila? I remember Land of the Lost when it was Paul and Sarah watched it . . .
F2:   *I love* Land of the Lost.

American adult subsection of corpus

In this conversation, several characteristics common in factor 1 conversations are evident. First, although speakers may disagree, they make little or no attempt to change each others' minds. Speaker F3 'loathes' cartoons, but the other speakers simply ignore (rather than argue with) this opinion. Speakers in these texts easily express opinions which contradict others, but resolution of differing opinions is seldom sought.

Another element common to factor 1 texts that is evident in this example is the framing of topics or stories with affect markers. The content or stories in the conversations are often fronted and backed with affect markers from factor 1. This framing is clearly shown in the following conversation where M1 finishes the story of a practical joke, and then M2 tells a story about a similar practical joke.

(3)   M1:   And then finally he's waking up and they took a picture of him and like the cans are like just about ready to tumble over, it's really *cool* looking like he's like . . .

M2:   Oh man, *I wanted* to see it.

M1:   And he's like going . . .

M2:   That's *funny*. That reminds me of like these people that I knew when I was like a senior and like, I *kind of* partied with them but there was this one guy who was *like* two years younger than us . . .

[skip to the end of M2's story]

M2:   He would just like try so he can get up. But he 's just like all he's like wrapped up in this *shit*.

M1:   That's too *funny.*

M2:   It was it was *weird* because I wasn't really paying attention to him . . .
'cause I, but I saw him get up.

American adult subsection of corpus

Both of the stories are concluded by the listener commenting that the story was *funny*. This pattern seems to correspond to Labov's story evaluation, but the evaluation seems be made just as often by the listener as by the story teller. Stance markers such as *cool, wow, crazy, funny*, and *fun* are very common evaluations in factor 1 stories. This cooperation between the speakers could show the cooperative nature of factor 1 conversations. Speakers jointly construct stories in the conversations in this factor.

Another characteristic of factor 1 conversations is the relative absence of evidentiality markers. *Like + an amount* and *pretty* could be categorized as hedges or evidentials, but in fact are used more to estimate than to hedge assertions. Past work on stance has found evidentiality to be closely tied to politeness (Hyland 2000), and this connection may be part of the explanation for the low occurrence of evidentials. The interlocutors know each other well in these conversations, and it would seem that the level of familiarity leads to fewer politeness markers.

Evidentiality is also, of course, connected to certainty. One may use an evidential marker such as *know* or *guess* to indicate the precise degree of confidence that one has in the veracity of an assertion. Using such markers is crucial when one is likely to be challenged or questioned; the lack of
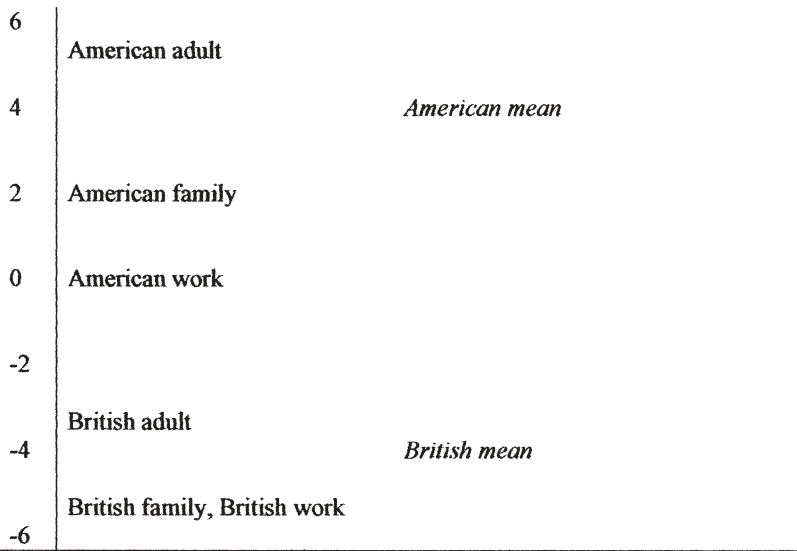
```
6
  |   American adult
  |
4 |                              American mean
  |
  |
2 |   American family
  |
  |
0 |   American work
  |
  |
-2|
  |
  |   British adult
-4|                              British mean
  |
  |   British family, British work
-6|_____
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Figure 2. *Mean scores for factor 1 for each dialect and subsection*
Factor 1 dialect (F = 193.0, p<.0001), subsection (F = 20.43, p<.0001)

evidentials suggests that the relationship between interlocutors is such that challenges are somewhat rare, and so evidentials are not needed. If this is indeed the case, then one of the norms of factor 1 conversations would seem to be to avoid challenging each other.

   Factor 1 is particularly related to American adult conversations. Figure 2 charts the factor score means for both dialect and subsection of the corpus; the top of chart indicates that factor 1 stance markers are relatively common in the dialect or subsection, while the bottom indicates a relative absence of these stance markers. The American mean for factor 1 is considerably higher than the British mean, and the differences are marked in all subsections. The implications of these differences are potentially important. The British might feel that Americans express more affect than they are comfortable with; work contexts may be particularly affected by this, because the Americans express more affect at work than the British do in even intimate, family contexts. Americans might feel that the British are distant or aloof because of their relative absence of these features.[4]

4.2.   *Factor 2: Boulomaic planning versus small talk*

Positive polarity: The mood of the positive half of the second factor is full of *want* and *need* verbs, a category of modality that Hoye (1997) calls

boulomaic modality verbs. These verbs are often used in planning, as in the following example:

(4)   F1:   They've changed the format of it.
      F2:   Okay.
      F1:   So *you* might *want to* watch them the first time. It takes about forty to forty-five . . .
      F2:   Okay.
      F1:   And then what we're gonna do Betty is we're gonna come back over here and just get as many students as *we can* here and test them too.
      F2:   Okay so *you do need* me then. I was gonna say if you only have the two tests and you . . .
      F1:   Well, you know, you won't be testing that first hour, *maybe* the second hour.
      F2:   Mm hmm.
      [skip to end of interchange]
      F1:   Thursday and Friday is about all the time *I can* commit. And then if the student . . .
      F2:   Level, yeah . . .
      F1:   So.
      F2:   Okay *I* just *wanted to* make *sure* that if *you needed* somebody desperately, you know . . .
      F1:   We've got, we've got two people to do it, but if *you want to* come just to see it . . .
      F2:   Mm, hmm . . .

                        American work subsection of the corpus

The boulomaic verbs and modals are used here for making offers (*I/we* + *can, could, want to*), and stating obligations (*I/we* + *have to, need to*), and assessing others' contributions (*you* + *need, want to*). There is often a status difference between interlocutors, and when these verbs focus on the needs of the higher status speaker, the effect is to direct the work of the lower status speaker. In Example (4), F1 is F2's boss, and the interaction is focused on when F2 should work. Another option for the speakers would have been to use epistemic mental verbs such as *think* and *know* ('*do you think* I should come in' versus '*do you need* me *to* come in'). The boulomaic verbs seem to put the relationship between the interlocutors on a personal level, and may be used to minimize the difference in status between the speakers.

   At other times, though, the speakers do not seem to be minimizing status differences. At such times there seem to be fewer boulomaic verbs and more hedges and modals. The following example shows the ways that the hedges and modal verbs work together in a conversation in which M1 asks his boss, M2, for staffing help.

(5) M1: But I only I . . . I . . . I . . . only found nine people who would do
            it, I . . . I . . . did all before Christmas and if *I could* find three
            others that would be probably best, but I'm not . . .

     M2: Well, I may give it some thought, I bet you *I could* find
            somebody else for you.

     M1: All right.

     M2: If *you need to*.

     M1: Yeah, cause then *I could* . . .

     M2: *Maybe maybe* somebody from the organization, *maybe* Sheila
            might want to do it, although she's running around so much it's
            kind of hard.

<div align="right">American work subsection of corpus</div>

The speakers here use hedges for different reasons. M1 needs to admit pro-
blems accomplishing a task. His boss, M2, is unsure that he can solve the
problem. The only boulomaic modality verb is focused on the employee's
need and it increases the sense of a status difference. The focus here is on
the needs of the employee, and the speakers do not minimize their status
difference as in the previous example.

Whether the stance markers are used to increase or decrease social
distance, there does seem to be a strong pattern of status difference between
speakers. The speakers use boulomaic modality verbs, modals and
hedges to negotiate differences, sometimes to minimize it, at other times to
accentuate it.

American work contexts have by far the highest mean factor 2 score
(Figure 3). That factor 2 is work related is perhaps not surprising; what
is surprising is that British work conversations have so few of these
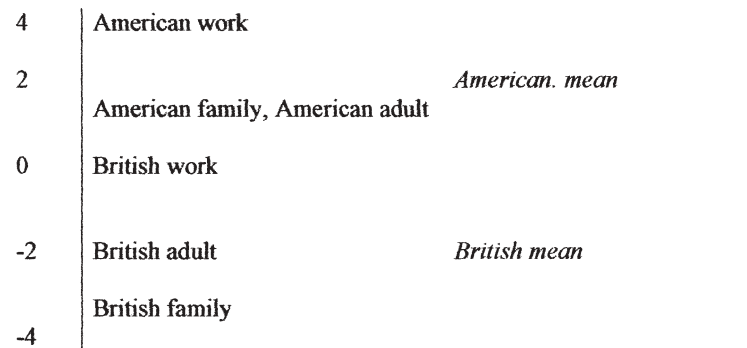stance markers. Because the stance markers are used to negotiate status

```
 4  │ American work
    │
 2  │                                   American. mean
    │ American family, American adult
    │
 0  │ British work
    │
    │
-2  │ British adult                   British mean
    │
    │ British family
-4  │
    └─────────────────────────────────────────
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Figure 3.   *Mean scores of factor 2 for each dialect and subsection*
Factor 2 dialect (F = 36.12, p<.0001), subsection (F = 10.02, p = .0001)

differences, the potential for cross-cultural misunderstanding seems particularly important in this factor. If status differences in work situations are handled in an unfamiliar way, conflicts could ensue.

Negative polarity: The negative polarity of factor 2 has stance markers such as *lovely* and *bloody* that are stereotypically seen as British. The factor is difficult to interpret because it has few stance markers with loadings higher than .35. What does seem clear is that the factor has the same story-telling and gossiping texts of factor 1. For example:

(6)   M1:   They got this *bloody* knife . . . and cut half the *bloody* cheese, I
                   thought . . . I mean, I'm not a polite person when it comes to
                   food am I? . . . Must of had about two ounces on the *bloody*
                   plate!
        M2:   Haven't got the thing on now have you, while you . . . feeding
                   your self up?
        M1:   No.
        M1:   And then, when he was eating the, putting the marmalade on his
                   toast in the hotel . . . the knife . . .
        M2:   And licked the knife!
        M1:   Ooh, oh! I mean you do that sort of thing at home don't you,
                   but . . .
        F1:   You scallywag!
        M1:   Oh Christ! . . . It's just how he was brought up *I suppose.*
                                        British adult subsection of corpus

The stories in this factor do not seem to have the pat evaluations at the end that the American stories had: If the evaluation has stance at all, it is more often evidential (as with *I suppose*) than affective.

The subsection of the corpus with the strongest expression of the negative polarity of factor 2 is British adult conversation (see Figure 3). In comparison with its American corpus counterpoint in factor 1, factor 2 has fewer affect markers and more evidentials.

4.3.   *Factor 3: Hedged opinion*

This factor is clearly the most evidential of all the factors in the study. Factor 3 is made up primarily of hedges: adverbial (*probably*), verbal (*I + think, think that, don't think that*), and modal (*it/he/she + could, would*). The following conversation is a fairly typical factor 3 interchange:

(7)   M1:   That's right. *I mean*, those are just . . . we just went out and
                   chucked a few fucking trees down.
        M2:   They're not real then Barry?

M1: No, the trees are . . . the er . . . things tied on to them aren't.
M2: Oh.
M1: But er . . .
M2: Yeah . . . *I think*, it's *quite actually*, it needs a bit of character.
M3: *I mean*, that'll cover . . .
M1: Yeah.
M3: If you did that in *quite* a few places . . .
M1: Yeah.
M3: Throughout the room it *would* cover your cracks and your holes . . .
M1: Yeah.
M1: *I mean*, what we initially wanted to do with all this was cover this whole area in, in greenery and have this as a *sort of* restaurant type.

<div align="right">British work subsection of corpus</div>

In this exchange, contractors (M2 and M3) are visiting a nightclub, and the owner (M1) is describing the work he's done on his own. The contractor's opinion ('I think it's quite actually it needs a bit of character') seems fairly hedged. The hedged opinions seem to be used to avoid insulting the owner's work rather than to navigate status differences.

This factor has two discourse markers which seem to function as hedges: *actually* and *I mean*. It can be argued that they lessen the pragmatic force in discourse and are used in the same way as *I think* and *probably*. In the above example, these markers seem to work in just such a way.

In addition to hedging, factor 3 has three adverbial evidentials that are used for emphasis: *absolutely, obviously*, and *of course*. The markers seem to function to mark logical connections and to emphasize shared experience. Consider the following example:

(8) M: How's Carris taken all this now?
     F: Well seemingly she's erm . . .
     M: *A bit* resigned to it now?
     F: *A bit* more resigned, there's another, there's another *sort of* . . . erm . . . possibility, *I mean* if they sold their house quickly *of course* then, you know they'd come down here *obviously* and they'd try and look for something, but it's not likely that they'd sell their house that quickly . . .
     M: No.
     F: But if they did and . . .
     M: They sell it . . .
     F: You know they'd all come down, but if they don't . . . erm . . .

M: Christopher *would* travel . . .

F: Possibility is that Marilyn *would* stay up there for another year with Carris, you know in their house, and Timothy *of course* and . . . erm . . . then *sort of* move down here . . .

<div align="right">British family subsection of corpus</div>

In this conversation, F adds evidential adverbials in places where the interlocutors may share expectations or background information. When F says '*obviously* they'd try to look for something', what is obvious is either the norms of home ownership (one buys a new house after selling the old one), or other information that M knows (they are planning to buy a house). The evidential emphatics seem to be used for solidarity in emphasizing shared norms or experiences.

These emphatics seem to be particularly British. Evidential adverbials are rarely used either for logical connection or to frame propositions in American conversation. This method of marking stance may be off-putting to Americans. If an American does not know the social norm that is referred to or the background information, the evidential adverbs may come across as sounding superior or presumptuous.

This factor does not have affective marking, which is particularly noteworthy in the above example. The story of Carris is a sad one, yet F uses far more evidentials than affect markers in her speech. This use may suggest that a high number of evidentials, as in example (8), communicate affect among British speakers. Again, this style of speech may be misinterpreted by Americans, as in the above example, where F may be cast as unfeeling or unsympathetic.
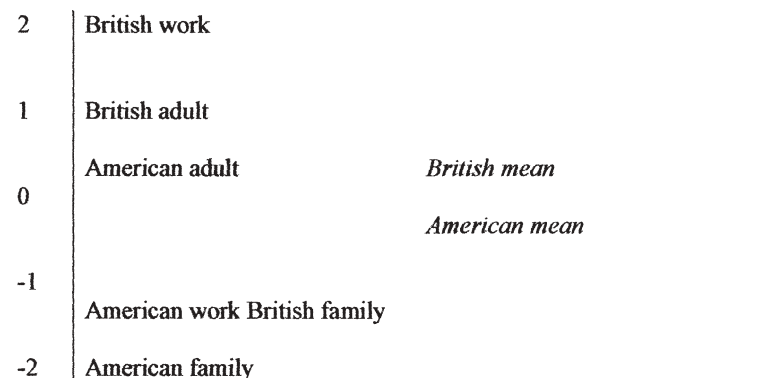
2	British work	
1	British adult	
0	American adult	*British mean*
		American mean
-1		
	American work British family	
-2	American family	

Figure 4.   *Mean scores of factor 3 for each dialect and subsection*
Factor 3, dialect (F = 4.34, p = .01), subsection (F = 3.69, p<.05)

Conclusion

This study has used a factor analysis procedure to identify the stance moods in British and American English conversation. The factor analysis procedure groups stance markers into sets which tend to occur together.

In the introduction I argued that the stance moods were related to larger cultural norms for the expression of evidentiality and affect. This argument was based on the assumption that stance use is socialized, and different dialects could end up using different stance markers to express the same stance mood. I have used a social constructionist approach in interpreting the data, focusing on finding patterns in the relationships between interlocutors, their relative status, and presentation of self.

The factors did indeed seem to show both mood and the ways in which British and Americans have different socialization patterns for expressing evidentiality and affect. In general conversation among adults, the Americans tended to use much more affect, and tended to use a small, pat set of affect markers as evaluations at the end of stories. The British tended to use more evidentials overall, and seemed to increase the number and intensity of evidentials to show involvement. Status differences seemed to be handled differently by the British and the Americans: The Americans used boulomaic (*want, need*) modality, while the British used evidentials. When teaching business English to non-native speakers, it might indeed be possible to identify these norms for students, and provide models for interactions.

The results suggest that cross-cultural miscommunication seems possible in both general adult conversations and in work contexts. In general adult conversation, the British may interpret the higher level of affect as inappropriately intimate or insincere. The Americans might interpret the evidentials as showing certainty, doubt, and even a lack of involvement, whereas they seem to be used by the British to show involvement. In work contexts, the British might find the American use of boulomaic verbs to be inappropriately personal.

The results also suggest that a multi-variate analysis of dialect difference may be a valuable avenue to pursue in examining other dialects. Some aspects of dialect difference may be obvious, such as the use of *bloody* and *lovely* by British, but multi-variate techniques are able to identify other areas which are less obvious. In the study presented here, it was possible to characterize frequent stance markers, such as *I want to* and *sort of*, by dialect on the basis of complex co-occurrence patterns. If a corpus of African-American vernacular English could be created, it would be most interesting to compare that with other dialects of English.

This study is one of the first to extend multi-variate analysis into a functional domain. Factor analysis seems particularly well suited to such analysis because it is able to identify for the researcher the places in texts where interesting patterns are occurring in the data. The data can be interpreted in terms of functions or, as I have shown here, in terms of social construction. More work crossing such boundaries might be a way to understand language in new and exciting ways.

Footnotes

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1.   I am using the term 'mood' because it seems broad enough to encompass many functions and pragmatic interpretations. 'Mood' is intended to encompass both affective and epistemic qualities.

2.   The term 'stance marker' is used throughout to indicate a stanced word in a grammatical context.

3.   In examples (2) to (8), the factor's stance markers are identified with *italics*. The gender of the speaker is identified with M (male) or F (female), plus a number.

4.   The factor scores on which this is based were determined by summing the standardized values of the high loading variables for this factor. See section 3.3 for a description of the statistical procedure, and Table 2 for list of all factor means.

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