



## Negation, grammaticalization and subjectification:

The development of polar, modal  
and mirative *no way* constructions

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# 0. Introduction

- Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 849):
- *no way* evolved through bleaching of original **manner** meaning into:
  - “idiomatic phrase” expressing “**emphatic negative response** to question or other speech act”
  - **emphatic negator** integrated into clause structure:
    - (1) **No way** is that a diamond! (Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 849)
- **but** also:
  - clausal modifiers with *no way* expressing **modal-polar** meanings:
    - (2) I still think there’s **no way** the DI could be involved in her death. (WB)
  - *no way* expressing **mirativity**:
    - (3) You woke up at 10? **NO WAY!** (www.Urban Dictionary)

# 0. Introduction: aims of talk

- lexical uses of *way* > grammatical operators containing PI + *way*
- starting hypothesis: 2 main paths of grammaticalization:

## 1) > **polarity** particles

- with ***no way*** and **negation + *any way***
- with wide and narrow scope
  - (4) *In **no way** can the anorexic woman accept the humanness of her body.*
  - (5) *Divers **no-way** mortal excrescences and ulcers in the throat (1686)*

## 2) > **modal-polar** clausal modifiers:

- *there is **no way***
- with proposition in scope
  - (6) ***There's no way** it was a domestic murder. (WB)*

# 0. Introduction

- remaining question: where do **mirative** uses of *no way* come from?  
'impossible. I really can't imagine how that could be true' (www.Urban Dictionary)
- (7) Milo: *Just my luck she's taken.*  
Felix: *Eh, no, Milo. Sabrina's single.*  
Milo: **No way.** *So I still have a shot with her?* (General Hospital: 25 March 2013)
- (8) *From far in the distance a figure appeared by the side of the road. 'A hitchhiker!' said Ellie excitedly. 'Yeah, **no way,**' said Julia.* (WB)
- which **grammaticalization** path?
- which **semantic** motivations?

# Structure of talk

1. Data
2. Path I: polarity particles
3. Path II: modal-polar clausal modifiers
4. Mirative uses
5. Conclusion

# 1. Data

Subperiod of English	Time span	Corpus	Number of words (millions)
Old English (OE)	750–1150	<i>York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose (YCOE)</i>	1.45
Middle English (ME)	1150–1500	<i>Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English, Second Edition (PPCME)</i>	1.16
Early Modern English (EModE)	1500–1710	<i>Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Early Modern English (PPCEME)</i>	1.79
Late Modern English (LModE)	1710–1920	<i>Corpus of Late Modern English texts (Extended version) (CLMETEV)</i>	15.01
Present-day English (PDE)	2002-2003; 2004-2005	<i>WordbanksOnline (WB)</i> (only BrBooks)	76.06

OE: exhaustive searches (599 tokens of way): no relevant cxns!

ME: exhaustive searches (961 tokens of way)

EModE: exhaustive searches (1663 tokens of way)

LModE & PDE: searches on *a|any|some|what|which|no way(s)*

## 2. Path I: Polarity particles

- **EME** (m1 only): emphatic negation pattern: *ne ... nanes weis* (GEN.SG)
- typically associated with VP with **modal** verb
  - (9) *For ne schalt þu nanes weis . þeos ilke twa cumforz min & þe worldes . þe loie of þe hali gast . & þe flesches frofre hebben to gedere* (CMANCRIW-1,II.81.972)  
'For you shall no way have these same two consolations together, mine and the world's, the joy of the Holy Ghost and the comfort of the flesh.'
  - (10) *hit beo se open sunne . þt he hit ne mæze nanes weis allunge wið seggen .* (CMANCRIW-1,II.69.759)  
'It is such a clear sin that he can no way deny it, in any way.'
- can trigger **inversion** (together with *ne*)
  - (11) *þah se feor & se forð ha mahen beon i-stopen in sotliche to luuien. þt nanes-weis ne schulen ha stewen hare heorten ne et-stutten ne et-stonden þe strengðe of mine swenges.* (CMMARGA,79.389)  
'nevertheless, they may have walked so far and so much to live foolishly that they should no way restrain their hearts, nor hinder or halt the strength of my blows.'

## 2. Path I: Polarity particles

- LME (m3-m4): mainly (*ne/not*) ... *no way*, *be* ('by') *no way*, *in no way*
- continued association with VP with **modal** verb; in between AUX and predicate

(12) *For mannys flesche ys so wyld and lusty to synne, þat hyt **wyll no way** leue his lust and serue þe soule tyll hit be chastet wyth penance;* (CMMIRK,67.1832)  
'For man's flesh is so wild and desirous of sin that it will no way desist from its lust and serve the soul until it is cleansed with penance.'
- *by/in no way*:
  - also positioned after predicate

(13) *& sche **wold not** consentyn **in no way*** (CMKEMPE,3.34)
  - sometimes used 'thetically' (Kaltenböck, Heine & Kuteva 2011)

(14) *Then was þys woman agrysed of þe blod, and **wold** haue weschyn hit away; but scho myght **not, be no way**, tyll scho had schryuen hur of þat synne.* (CMMIRK,90.2430)

(15) *þou **schalt not** bere **no** false wyttenes, **by no way**.* ' (CMMIRK,103.2795)

## 2. Path I: Polarity particles

- origins?
- in ME: *no way* in paradigmatic opposition with other GEN phrases consisting of determiner and 'way', functioning as adjuncts:
  - *eanis-/anes weis*: in any way (CMMARGA,77.362)
  - *euches weis*: in each way (CMANCRIW-1,II.162.2217)
  - *oðer-weis*: 'in another way' (CMLAMBX1,31.374)
  - *summes-weis*: 'in some way' (CMSAWLES,175.139)
  - *bis weis*: 'in this way' (CMANCRIW-2,II.277.514)
  - *nanes weis*: 'in no way'
- *no way*: from EME on, typically used with abstract, grammatical (polar) meaning, while other variants express lexical meaning ('manner')
- compare OE: *oðres weges* 'by another road'  
*syððan wendon him suðweard oðres weges eall be westan.* (YCOE o4, ChronE [Plummer]:1016.29)

## 2. Path I: Polarity particles

- EModE: emphatic negation patterns: *no way(s)*, negation + *any way(s)*
  - used in VPs **with** and **without modals** (wide scope)
    - (16) *he **can no way** be disobliged* (PPCEME)
    - (17) *For this obedience **is no way** founded in fear, but in love and reverence* (PPCEME)
    - (18) ***Nor was** he **any way** troubled with the Spleen.* (PPCEME)
  - also in front of complement to subject (narrow scope)
    - (19) *And the Wife can be **no ways** Happy, unless she be governed by a prudent Lord* (PPCEME)
    - (20) *He who in amassing Riches proposeth only to himself the end of avoiding Poverty is **no way** solicitous to obtain power.* (PPCEME)
- extension of scopal potential of emphatic negation

## 2. Path I: Polarity particles

- LModE: *no way, no ways, in no way; not any way(s), not in any way*
- continues patterns of EModE (in VP with and without modals, in front of CoSu)
  - (21) *Anne did not make another exhibition of jealousy; but it was **not** that she was reconciled to her situation, or **in any way** free from uneasiness* (CLMETEV, 1710-1780)
  - (22) *innocent victims whose entry upon this dismal life can **in no way** be attributed to any act of their own will* (CLMETEV, 1780-1850)
  - (23) *We **no way** pledged to this part of the world, or to it alone* (CLMETEV, 1850-1920)
- ! a few inversion-triggering uses of *no way*
  - (24) ***no way** can it defend a living man from death* (CLMETEV, 1780-1850)
- note also: narrow scope and fronting
  - (25) ***in no way** inconsistent with that chapter are my concluding remarks* (CLMETEV, 1850-1920)

## 2. Path I: Polarity particles

- PDE: *no way, no ways, in no way, not in any way*
- 66.5 %: uses with no inversion, continuing patterns of ModE
- ! but also in initial position: (26) **No way** *I would ever be pregnant.* (WB)
- 9 % inversion-triggering uses: *(in) no way*
  - (27) *'You didn't view any houses?' 'Houses?' Ted almost squawked. 'No. Absolutely not. Absolutely **no way** did we view any houses.'* (WB)
  - (28) **In no way** *is it permanent.* (WB)
- 5.5 %: thetical uses
  - (29) *'It wouldn't have been her, **no way.**'* (WB)
  - (30) *And Tilly, even knowing her mother-in-law would surely harangue her and her Ted would probably take himself off to the pub and they were no nearer getting a house than ever, knew she wouldn't swap her life for Hannah's --- **no way. No bloody way.*** (WB)

## 2. Path I: Polarity particles

- ! 19 %: *no way*: emphatic negative response to question or other speech act
- probably enabled by increase in uses ‘detached’ from proposition:
  - fronting of *no way* before proposition
  - thetical uses of *no way*

(31) *I admit I think Lyn is a bit odd, but killing babies? **No way!** Never!* (WB)

(32) *'There is another way. You could come here. Join me?' ' **No way.** I 'm sorry.'* (WB)

(33) *'You ever use heroin?' '**No way.**'* (WB)

- note: metalinguistic recognition of ‘not at all’ meaning:

(34) *'Would it be forward of me to invite you back to my place for a coffee?' he asked ...  
'Oh, thanks, Ed, but no.' 'Is that "**no way**"?' 'No. It's no, as in, "not now".'* (WB)

## 2. Path I: Polarity particles

PI	1150–1500 ME		1500–1710 EModE		1710–1920 LModE		1993–	PDE
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
no inversion	24	<b>82.8</b>	19	<b>100</b>	154	<b>97.5</b>	171	<b>66.5</b>
+ inversion	2	<b>6.9</b>	0	<b>0</b>	4	<b>2.5</b>	24	<b>9</b>
thetical	3	<b>10.3</b>	0	<b>0</b>	0	<b>0</b>	14	<b>5.5</b>
response	0	<b>0</b>	0	<b>0</b>	0	<b>0</b>	48	<b>19</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>100</b>

Types of use of PI particles from ME to PDE

# 3. Path II: Modal-polar clausal modifiers

- PDE: newly emerged grammatical uses of *there BE no way*
- clausal modal-polar modifiers: discourse secondary (Boye & Harder 2012)
  - (35) *I thought **there was no way** she could increase her cruelty. (WB)*
    - *\*There was no way she could increase her cruelty, was there?*
    - *\*There was no way ... . Really?*
- lexical discourse primary source: *way* ('manner, opportunity') + relative clause:
  - (36) *if **there's a way** I could get to know the river people at once (CLMET 1850-1920)*
    - *There is a way I could get to know the river people at once, is there?*
    - *There is a way ... . Really?*
- no 'manner, means, opportunity' > inability/impossibility > nonvolition/nondesirability > nonlikelihood (Narrog 2012)
- scenario supported by larger relative percentages of impossibility/inability

### 3. Path II: Modal-polar clausal modifiers

- inability/impossibility (almost all p's contain modal *could*): 135 tokens – 63%  
(37) ***There is no way*** Jenny ***could*** have timed that attack so as to come out of it alive. (WB)
- absence of permission or volition, prohibition: 61 tokens – 28%  
(38) ***There is no way***, repeat, ***no way***, you're going to go charging after those people in Costa Rica until we've laid this all out in front of Richie Cagnia and the SAC in New York. (WB)  
(39) ***there is no way*** you ***should*** allow him to go on doing that. He must not be able to choose where and when he is going to come at you (WB)
- epistemic (certain that not p) (p typically without modal): 19 tokens - 9%  
(40) *there was* ***no way*** all those sell-by dates ***were*** idle threats (WB)

### 3. Path II: Modal-polar clausal modifiers

- origins?
- presence of untypical lexical contexts with *there's a way*  
(41) *if **there's a way** I could get to know the river people at once* (CLMET 1850-1920)
- recent **analogical** pull from common constructions like *there's no doubt* (De Wolf, Davidse & Van linden fthc), *there's no question* (Davidse & De Wolf 2012)  
(42) ***there was no question** that he personally was to capture and fight the great machine.* (CLMETEV, 1850-1920)  
(43) *But **there was no way** I was ready to get really involved.* (WB)
- but **functional similarity** with path of **adverbial** emphatic negator also factor (frequency of modals in *there's no way* + p reminiscent of pattern that started with *ne ... nanes weis* in Middle English)  
→ even though modal meanings more foregrounded in *there's no way* clause, also partly interpretable as 'renewal' in cycle of emphatic negative markers

## 4. Mirativity

- mirativity: speaker assessment as “unexpected”, surprising, incongruent (DeLancey 2011: 369)

(44) *Two. A Gavioli on our gallopers and we've just bought a Limonaire at auction.' -- 'No way! You've got a carousel?'* (WB)

(45) *From far in the distance a figure appeared by the side of the road. 'A hitchhiker!' said Ellie excitedly. 'Yeah, no way,' said Julia.* (WB)

- ‘mirativity’ expressed by *no way* is reaction to **interlocutor’s utterance** or to **something in the context** that speaker wouldn’t have thought possible, had not the verbal or physical context confronted him/her with it (McGregor 1997: 246)

## 4. Mirativity

- origin?
- mirative use originates primarily in response use of emphatic negator, strongly 'interactionally' motivated:

mirative overtones in negative responses (i) > mirative responses (ii)

(i) 'No,' Frank said, 'you can't put me in there.' The policeman smiled. He pointed again. **No way**, son,' Frank said. 'I'm not going in there.' (WB) ('how can you tell me to go in there')

(ii) 'apparently Tatty and Ellis are romantically involved.' **No way!** I thought Ellis and Posy were sorta close?' (WB)

- also activates modal meaning ('impossible') persisting in (*there's*) *no way*
- note: mirative overtones in some clausal modal-polar modifier uses (iii):

(iii) 'Are you serious? I can't do it. You know I'd screw it up! Damn it, Nick, this is what you do. **There's no way** I can pull it off.' (WB) ('how could you suggest it')

## 4. Mirativity

- emergence of mirative uses with **positive** polarity:
- confirmative, denoting **non-im**possibility of a thing somebody said "no way" to

(46) *Daphne: I'm pregnant!*

*Fred: **No way!***

*Daphne: **Yes way!*** (<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=yes%20way>)

- defiance of previously said "no way" ([http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/yes\\_way](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/yes_way))

(47) *Mr. Mackey: Not this time, Eric! You've got to learn to respect your little friends! You're gonna have detention for two weeks!*

*Cartman: **No way!***

*Mr. Mackey: **Yes way!** M'kay, and that settles it! (South Park: 12 April 2000)*

(48) *Aidan: All right. All right, I hear you. I'll stay put for now until I'm well enough to make my escape. So, ladies, I'll call you if I need anything, ok?*

*Kendall: No. ... Maureen and I stay here with you.*

*Aidan: **No way.***

*Maria: **Way.** (All My Children: 9 January 2003)*

# 5. Conclusion

- *(there's) no way* belongs to set of *(there's) no doubt/question, it's no wonder*
- show – hitherto neglected – importance of **negation** to **grammaticalization** of these expressions conveying **polar**, **modal** and/or **mirative** meanings
- factors?
  - (i) similarity in **coding** strings
  - (ii) cognitive and linguistic interaction between concepts:
    - **negation** emphasizes that a fact is **contrary to expectation** (Wason 1965: 7)
    - **mirativity** marks **(un)expectedness** of SoA or p
    - **modality** assesses dynamic and epistemic '**(im)possibility**' of SoA or p
  - (iii) **emphatic** effect: → expressive, speaker-related and discourse-oriented meanings
    - *no way*: emphatic negation
    - *no doubt/question/wonder*: emphatically positive: 'not uncertain', 'not unexpected'

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