Negation, grammaticalization and subjectification:

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

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0. Introduction

- *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:
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subperiod of English</th>
<th>Time span</th>
<th>Corpus</th>
<th>Number of words (millions)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old English (OE)</td>
<td>750–1150</td>
<td>York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose (YCOE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle English (ME)</td>
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<td>Late Modern English (LModE)</td>
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<td>Corpus of Late Modern English texts (Extended version) (CLMETEV)</td>
<td>15.01</td>
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<td>Present-day English (PDE)</td>
<td>2002-2003; 2004-2005</td>
<td>WordbanksOnline (WB) (only BrBooks)</td>
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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 habben 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) *pah se feor & se forð ha mahen beon i-stopen in sotliche to luuien. þt nanes-weis ne schulen ha stwen 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 wey, be (‘by’) no wey, in no wey
- continued association with VP with modal verb; in between AUX and predicate
  (12) For mannys flesche ys so wyld and lusty to synne, pat hyt wyll no way leue his lust and serue be 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 wey:
  - also positioned after predicate
    (13) & sche wold not consentyn in no wey (CMKEMPE,3.34)
  - sometimes used ‘thetically’ (Kaltenböck, Heine & Kuteva 2011)
    (14) Then was pys woman agrysed of be blod, and wold haue weschyn hit away; but scho myght not, be no way, tyll scho had schryuen hur of pat synne.
    (CMMIRK,90.2430)
    (15) pou 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)
  1. (16) *he can no way be disobliged* (PPCEME)
  2. (17) *For this obedience is no way founded in fear, but in love and reverence* (PPCEME)
  3. (18) *Nor was he any way troubled with the Spleen.* (PPCEME)

- also in front of complement to subject (narrow scope)
  1. (19) *And the Wife can be no ways Happy, unless she be governed by a prudent Lord* (PPCEME)
  2. (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
  - theoretical 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

<table>
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<tr>
<th>PI</th>
<th>1150–1500 ME</th>
<th>1500–1710</th>
<th>1710–1920</th>
<th>1993–</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
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<tr>
<td>no inversion</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>158</td>
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</table>

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. *\(\text{(WB)}\)*

- 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. *\(\text{(WB)}\)*
  (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 *\(\text{(WB)}\)*

- 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 *\(\text{(WB)}\)*
3. Path II: Modal-polar clausal modifiers

- origins?
- presence of untypical lexical contexts with *there's a way*
  
  \[(41) \text{if there's a way I could get to know the river people at once (CLMET 1850-1920)}\]

- 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)
  
  \[(42) \text{there was no question that he personally was to capture and fight the great machine. (CLMETEV, 1850-1920)}\]

  \[(43) \text{But there was no way I was ready to get really involved. (WB)}\]

- 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)

  \[\rightarrow\] 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-impossibility of a thing somebody said "no way" to

(46)  
**Daphne:** I'm pregnant!  
**Fred:** *No 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](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/yes_way))

(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](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/yes_way))
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 ‘**(i)m)possibility’** of SoA or p
  (iii) emphatic effect: \( \Rightarrow \) expressive, speaker-related and discourse-oriented meanings
    - *no way*: emphatic negation
    - *no doubt/question/wonder*: emphatically positive: ‘not uncertain’, ‘not unexpected’
References


• Davidse, Kristin, Simon De Wolf & An Van linden. The development of the modal and discourse marker uses of *(it/there is/I have) no doubt.* Forthc. *Journal of Historical Pragmatics.*


