Peter J. Grund, *The sociopragmatics of stance: Community, language, and the witness depositions from the Salem witch trials* (Pragmatics & Beyond New Series 329). Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2021. Pp. ix + 246. ISBN 9789027258236.

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Grund's research monograph *The Sociopragmatics of Stance* lies at the intersection of two research areas that have been gaining attention over the last two decades: historical sociolinguistics and the study of stance. These two topics are combined in this study to present a rich and multilayered picture of the expression of stance in the witness depositions from the Salem witchcraft trials. The book presents novel insight into how stance is expressed in early modern text. Written from a sociopragmatic perspective, it emphasises the role of context for the expression and understanding of stance. This covers textual context – differences between different groups of depositions and narrative themes in them – as well as the broader social context – the identities of the deponents, the recorders and their roles in the ongoing trials.

The research monograph is structured into nine chapters. After a brief introduction (chapter 1, pp. 1–13), chapter 2 presents an overview of the witness depositions from the Salem witch trials (pp. 15–42). The chapter includes a rich contextualisation of the data through discussions of the historical background of the production of the depositions and the different groups of individuals that were involved in the process. Crucially, these groups include not only the deponents but also the deposition recorders, whose role is explored in detail in the analysis. Throughout the monograph, the type of deposition, the deponent and the recorder are discussed as the three main factors influencing stance in the depositions.

Chapter 3 (pp. 43–72) introduces the theoretical framing of the individuals involved in the Salem witch trials as a community of practice (CoP). Relying on Wenger's (1998) well-known criteria of joint enterprise, mutual engagement and shared repertoire, Grund demonstrates that all three are present in the case of the Salem witch trials. The joint enterprise takes the form of dealing with the perceived threat posed through witchcraft, which led to the prosecution of alleged witches. Mutual engagement is given to varying degrees across the participants, ranging from very active involvement in the trials to more peripheral involvement with low degrees of direct interaction. And the shared repertoire can be found in the legal practices, texts and discourses used in the context of the trials. The chapter also includes a discussion of the different groups of members and their varying degree of participation in the community, ranging from core members to active, peripheral and outside members. These distinctions and the status of selected individuals are prominent themes in later chapters.

In chapter 4 (pp. 73–86), Grund presents his method and the theoretical background on stance. His analysis is based on 457 witness depositions, which are analysed through a

combination of what is called 'text-driven' (referring to the manual reading of passages) and corpus-assisted approaches (p. 79). More specifically, wordlists of all depositions were created with *WordSmith 6*, which were used to identify potential stance features. These potential features were then checked based on concordances and contextual readings of relevant passages. Additional stance features were identified through close reading of the depositions, which resulted in the identification of expressions that are not overtly stance-related but still express stance in the depositions. An example of this is *in my heart*, which can be used to express sincerity and, by echoing biblical formulations, aligns the deponent with religious beliefs that were central to the community. In this chapter, Grund also discusses the methodological challenges of studying stance in general and in historical texts in particular.

The theoretical discussion of stance is presented in section 4.2. Given the central status of stance for the study, as well as the large number of (sometimes conflicting) conceptualisations of it, this theoretical background is quite brief. At the beginning of section 4.2, Grund briefly introduces the wide range of approaches to stance and states that his study draws on different approaches, rather than adopting just one. He rejects a strict 'grammar of stance' approach, in which the analysis is restricted to a fixed set of overtly expressed stance features, in favour of an approach that recognises that stance features can take many different forms and that their interpretation depends on context. In order to evade some of the problems of a very open functional approach to stance – in particular the fact that any linguistic form can potentially be interpreted as expressing stance if the open approach is taken to its extreme – the study focuses on three functional domains: the evaluation of experiences and actors; the boosting and downplaying of experience; and the indication of the source of knowledge and information. Each domain is analysed in a separate chapter from chapter 5 to 7, which include a dedicated discussion of the operationalisation of the respective type of stance for the analysis.

The first of these, evaluation of experience, is analysed in chapter 5 (pp. 87–112). The analysis covers the evaluation of both central events and actors. Central events relate to incidents that constitute grounds for suspicion against a potential witch, such as diseases and deaths, as well as direct afflictions by alleged witches and their spectral apparitions. The evaluation of central actors can be either negative, e.g. when testifying against an accused, or positive, e.g. when a deponent acts as a character witness in favour of an accused. The focus of the chapter lies in evaluative expressions that describe events or actors through evaluative adjectives or verbs. In this part of the analysis, a clearer definition of which expressions were included would have been helpful at times. As it is, some of the examples raise questions concerning the inclusion and exclusion of potential stance features. For instance, example 1 includes the phrase 'in A sudden, **terible, & strange, unusuall maner**' (original emphasis, pp. 87–8). Here, three of the four adjectives were treated as evaluative stance features, but the fourth, *sudden*, was not. Likewise, example 5 includes the phrase 'was greatly swolen & exceeding **painfull**' (original emphasis, p. 92), where the adjective *painfull* was included, without the intensifier *exceeding*, and where the coordinated adjective *(greatly) swolen* was not

included. While there may be reasons for these decisions, the rationale behind the classifications does not become entirely clear to the reader. Nevertheless, the chapter convincingly presents two kinds of results. On the one hand, it presents lists of evaluative stance resources found in the depositions; on the other hand, it identifies first patterns across the different groups of depositions, which are further explored in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 6 (pp. 113–43) presents the analysis of the second functional domain, the intensification and downplaying of experience. This includes both established degree modifiers, such as *greatly* and *hardly*, as well as some expressions whose degree modification function is context-dependent, such as the above-mentioned expression *in my heart*. After introducing the classification of the modifiers and their overall distribution, Grund discusses the results in more detail. Multal modifiers – i.e. modifiers which express a degree that is between moderate and maximal, such as *greatly* – are the most common type of degree modifiers in the data, and they receive most attention. They are analysed with respect to the narrative contexts in which they occur and the recorder of the deposition. The results indicate that more than half of all multal modifiers occur in the context of descriptions of witchcraft, more specifically, narratives of affliction, and that one recorder, Thomas Putnam, is responsible for a very considerable proportion of these instances (292 out of the 388 multals that occur in the narrative context of witchcraft, p. 135).

The third functional domain, the indication of source of information, is analysed in chapter 7 (pp. 145–75). The analysis is structured along four different categories of evidentiality: sensory, inference, assumption and quotative. Introducing the classification, Grund argues for a broad view of evidentially that is not limited to instances in which an evidential has scope over the proposition. Instead, in line with a sociopragmatic approach, the guiding question is whether a construction is interpreted as expressing the source of information when it is read in its textual and pragmatic context (pp. 149–50). In the Salem depositions, quotative evidentials are the most frequent group of expressions, followed by sensory evidentials. While sensory evidentials present (claims of) first-hand experience of the deponents, quotative evidentials introduce reports of what deponents heard others say. Such reports can refer to (alleged) statements by the accused, as well as to hearsay statements by others about the accused. Grund discusses these different cases on the basis of extracts from the depositions and he pays close attention to the specific constellation of accused, deponent and recorder. For instance, he observes that the core and associated accusers often use evidentials that express direct observation and reported interactions with the accused and their spectral apparitions, a strategy that places them in a prominent position within the CoP.

Chapter 8 (pp. 177–211) builds on the previous three chapters by presenting an analysis that covers all three functional domains – evaluation, intensification and evidentiality – and that focuses on differences between different groups of depositions. Four groups are distinguished: (i) depositions of affliction; (ii) depositions endorsing the accusers; (iii) depositions of mysterious events, disease, death and suspicious

behaviour; and (iv) depositions endorsing the accused. They differ from each other not only with respect to the content of the deposition, but they also show considerable differences with respect to the identity of the deponent and the recorders. For instance, about half of all depositions of affliction come from only six inner-core deponents, which in turn were written by very few recorders, among them Thomas Putnam, who alone is the (co-)author of about seventy of them (pp. 179–80). The analysis identifies very strong parallels between these depositions, which are rich in accounts of direct affliction, visual evidence, vague language and factual statements, and which show striking similarities in terms of content and formulation. In contrast, the depositions from the group of mysterious events, disease, death and suspicious behaviour are far more varied in content as well as in stance strategies. Grund argues that the different patterns found in the depositions can be seen as stance profiles which, at least in some cases, form part of deliberate and strategic acts of positioning (p. 211). Thomas Putnam, in particular, is identified as a very influential individual, who is likely to have shaped the way in which depositions were written and interpreted in the Salem witch trials by recording a very large number of them (almost a quarter of the depositions in the study, many for the core group of deponents).

The conclusion of the book (chapter 9, pp. 213–22) summarises the main findings of the study and points out broader implications concerning the need for contextualised studies of stance, as well as for synchronic-historical research more generally.

Overall, the book presents a very convincing, multilayered analysis of stance in the Salem witch trials, which focuses on three different factors that influence how stance is expressed: the type of deposition, the deponent and the recorder. Drawing on the author's great familiarity with the depositions and the Salem trials in general, the analysis is incredibly rich in background information on the trials. By tracing different actors across different depositions and time, Grund is able to show not only how they differ in their expression of stance, but also how they may have been instrumental in the development of events through their shaping of the depositions. In this respect, the study makes a contribution that goes beyond the linguistic study of stance in a given historical setting.

One aspect that leaves open some questions is the application of the community of practice framework. As mentioned above, chapter 3 presents the argument for describing the Salem witchcraft trials as a CoP, given that there is evidence of joint enterprise, mutual engagement and a shared repertoire. While the argument concerning these three criteria is convincing, there seem to be some aspects that make the individuals involved in the Salem witchcraft trials a somewhat untypical CoP. For instance, the fact that two opposing groups – the accusers and the accused – are part of the community cannot easily be represented in Wenger's model. This leads to a certain ambivalence in the book with respect to the status of the accused and their supporters within the CoP. In chapter 3 (pp. 67–9), Grund argues that the accused should be classified as active members and, thus, as part of the CoP, stating that conflicts between members of a CoP are not unusual and, thus, do not pose an obstacle for applying the CoP framework. However, formulations in later chapters tend to rhetorically exclude the accused and their supporters from the CoP. For instance, on p. 127 the formulation

'The same resources could thus be used to both align and disalign with the Salem CoP' places the accused outside the CoP, in as far as aligning with the accused equals disaligning with the community. Similar formulations can be found in other places (e.g. 'deponents who expressed disalignment' on p. 155, 'disaligning or disrupting the CoP' on p. 175). While the book convincingly points out the challenges and limitations of applying Wenger's framework to historical contexts in general and this specific case in particular, it misses the chance to further develop the framework so that it could account for the specific dynamics of the case more clearly. This does not pose a problem for the analysis of stance that is presented in the book, but the development of an extended framework would have been welcome, given that this could very well prove to be helpful for the study of stance in other situations in which opposing groups negotiate their positions through stance-taking.

The results of the study point to several areas that would provide a fruitful basis for further research. An example of this is the use of formulaic expressions. In several parts of the analysis, Grund identifies recurring formulations that can be observed across different depositions. For some of these patterns, their link to existing models of legal writing is mentioned (for instance, the formula *testifieth and saith*; see p. 19), but given that the study focuses on the very rich material of the Salem witness depositions, in-depth comparisons with the language used in depositions from other cases were not included in the analysis. It would certainly be interesting to trace the use of formulaic language across time and place in order to see how the models provided from England, e.g. through guidebooks (see p. 20), were adopted and further developed in North America. Comparing the results from the Salem depositions to depositions from other North American trials would also show to what extent the shared repertoire of the Salem CoP is specific to this community, and to what extent it is perhaps based on more general models of legal language that some members of the community may have been familiar with.

Grund's profound knowledge of the material and of the trials more generally is evident throughout the book. Far from presenting decontextualised observations about the occurrence of stance expressions, he manages to trace each example that is presented in the study and interpret it in light of the actors involved in its creation and the use of the deposition from which it is taken. Throughout the book, he convincingly demonstrates how the type of deposition, the deponent and the recorder all influence how stance is expressed. The overall conclusion for future research must be that without taking such contextual factors into account, we cannot fully understand stance.

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Elly van Gelderen, *Third factors in language variation and change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022. Pp. xvi + 222. ISBN 9781108831161.

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In *Three Factors in Language Design*, Chomsky (2005) broke with much previous theorizing by eschewing the traditional dichotomy of genes versus environment. These, he suggested, did not exhaust the range of influences determining the growth of language in the individual: we should also acknowledge a third set of principles, universal but not specific to the human language faculty or even to human cognition. The following years have seen a flurry of work aiming to clarify and establish the nature and effects of this 'third factor'. Until now, however, there has been no systematic attempt to do so in the domain of language change. This is exactly what Elly van Gelderen's book *Third Factors in Language Variation and Change* aims to do.

Two putative third-factor principles take centre stage in this book. The first is the labelling algorithm that determines how a phrase receives its label, which has been central to Chomsky's work over the last decade (e.g. 2013, 2015). Van Gelderen suggests in this book that the pressure to receive an appropriate label can also act as a causal factor in language change. The second principle, following Chomsky *et al.* (2019), is determinacy: informally stated, there can be only one instance of a given syntactic object in a given workspace/phase. In the book, van Gelderen explores the consequences of these two principles, alone or combined, in accounting for a variety of syntactic changes. The book's empirical domain ranges widely, but most attention is paid to the histories of the Germanic and Romance languages, and English in particular.

After a scene-setting introduction ('The shift towards a minimal UG', pp. 1–28), chapter 2 is devoted to the diachronic effects of the labelling requirement (pp. 29–61). Here van Gelderen revisits her own earlier work on the subject and object cycles (van Gelderen 2011), arguing that spec-to-head reanalyses (e.g. of a subject pronoun) are advantageous from a labelling perspective because they resolve a situation in which previously two phrasal syntactic objects were merged, yielding a potential labelling clash which could otherwise only be resolved by feature sharing. A series of other grammaticalization phenomena, involving demonstratives, Q-particles and negation, are argued to be amenable to a similar account.