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image: see

http://www.hockneypictures.com/works_photos.php

MIXED VIEWPOINT CONSTRUCTIONS OR ARE THEY?

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Mixed viewpoint constructions. Or are they?

Theoretical assumptions

Multiple viewpoints in discourse

Visual counterparts

Concluding thoughts

‘Mixed’ viewpoint ‘constructions’?

Questions that guided our reflections:

- (in what way) do MVCx involve **mixed** viewpoint?
 - does mixed viewpoint in text examples involve two (or more) viewpoints being *adopted* or *expressed simultaneously*?
- (in what way) can MVCx be considered **constructions**?
 - should we abandon the notion of construction and locate multiple viewpoint only at the level of *discourse*?

Mixed or multiple?

- compare ‘**dual voice**’ approach to free indirect speech/thought (e.g. Hernadi 1972; Vološinov 1973; Pascal 1977; Oltean 1995, 2003) in terms of e.g.
 - simultaneous presence of authorial and figural perspective (Hernadi)
 - *both* author *and* character speaking at the same time; a merging of two differently oriented speech acts (Vološinov)
 - evoking the person [character]... with incomparable vivacity [but also] communicating [the narrator’s] way of seeing and feeling (Pascal)

Local choices, global coherence

- if a narrator starts interpreting a character's thoughts, isn't s/he appropriating that discourse as his/her own?
- instead, we propose that
 - **multiple viewpoints** need to be managed as discourse unfolds
 - but these are **hierarchically ordered** such that at any one point a given viewpoint is selected for 'local' purposes (cf. Dancygier 2012 on viewpoint compression in stories)
 - needless to say, this is not to exclude ambiguity or vagueness in local viewpoint attribution (sometimes you need to 'back up' and reconsider)

The intersubjective management of viewpoint

- **intersubjectivity** understood
 - not so much in the sense of ‘getting into people’s heads’ (cf theory of mind)
 - but rather in the sense of a ‘**shared mind**’ (Zlatev et al 2008) relying on embodied and experiential contact with others, their actions and the motivations for and emotional responses to those actions
- cf. development of the **novel** as a genre (from early forms such as epistolary novels and intrusive narration) as a search for appropriate forms providing some sort of access to the minds (fictional or otherwise) of represented speakers/thinkers
 - emergence of MVCxs such as Free Indirect Speech as part of this evolution

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Standard types of representing speech, thought and feelings

- direct, e.g.
 - Then he was introduced to Andrea. “I couldn’t get over how lovely she is,” she told me.
- indirect, e.g.
 - At a news conference this morning in Dallas, Ross Perot said that he was sick and tired of the news media doubting his integrity.
- free indirect, e.g.
 - To-morrow was Monday, Monday, the beginning of another school week! (DH Lawrence, *Women in Love*)

A multitude of parameters

many parameters (lower-level constructions) on which concrete examples can vary in terms of alignment; difficult to fit into neatly packaged, 'all boxes ticking' construction types; e.g.

- Tense
- Pronouns, proper names
- Adverbs
- Syntactic embedding
- Clause sequence
- Modality and polarity
- Conjunction
- Expressive lexemes
- ...

see e.g. Leech and Short 1981,
Banfield 1982, Ehrlich 1990,
Fludernik 1993, Semino and
Short 2004, Vandelanotte 2009,
etc.

Diachronic perspective

- steps towards a more or less conventionalized constructional cluster
- you see authors and speakers trying out different parameters to manipulate in order to try and represent speech, thoughts and feelings; examples over the next slides:
 - **early 19th century illustrations of diachronic crystallization**, through gradual selection of those parameters that work best, into the forms as we now expect to see them used (e.g. ‘freer’ forms of Indirect Speech)
 - **flashback to Middle English**: forms of MVCxs arguably predate ‘the novel’ as a genre, as illustrated by the question of ‘FIST’ in Chaucer (e.g. Fludernik 1993, 1995)
 - **flashforward to present-day English**: emerging new forms

Embedding, quotation marks, punctuation

- The orator bustled up to him, and, drawing him partly aside, **inquired “On which side he voted?”** Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and, rising, on tiptoe, **inquired in his ear “Whether he was Federal or Democrat?”** (Washington Irving, “Rip Van Winkle”)
- It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order; and, having assumed a tenfold austerity of brow, **demanding again of the unknown culprit, what he came there for, and whom he was seeking?** (Washington Irving, “Rip Van Winkle”)

Quotation marks, non-embedded

- Quit Kellynch Hall. The hint was immediately taken up by Mr Shepherd, whose interest was involved in the reality of Sir Walter's retrenching, and who was perfectly persuaded that nothing would be done without a change of abode. – “Since the idea had been started in the very quarter which ought to dictate, he had no scruple,” he said, “in confessing his judgement to be entirely on that side...” (Jane Austen, *Persuasion*)

Quotation marks, non-embedded, dialect and a little help from the author

- He went at great length into an account of the dangers I had escaped, chiefly, as he insinuated, by means of his own experience, exertion, and sagacity. “What was to come of **me** now, when **my** better angel, in **his (Andrew’s)** person, was removed from **my** side, it was,” he said, “sad and **sair** to conjecture; that the Bailie was **nae** better than just **naeboddy** at a pinch, or something **waur**, ...”
(Walter Scott, *Rob Roy*)
- I-narrator Francis Osbaldistone
- Andrew is the narrator’s servant telling the narrator’s father how he helped to preserve the life of his son Francis during their adventures in Scotland

Flashback to Middle English: MVCx in Chaucer

Daun john hym maketh feeste and murye cheere,
And he hym tolde agayn, ful specially,
How he hadde wel yboght and graciously,
Thanked be god, al hool his marchandise;
Save that he moste, in alle maner wise,
Maken a chevyssaunce, as for his beste,
And thanne he sholde been in joye and reste.
(“The Shipman’s Tale”, 342-348)

Brother John receives him warmly and entertains him well, and the merchant in turn told how favorably he had bought his goods, **God be thanked; except that he must without fail secure a loan; and then he should be in joy and rest.**

Flashforward to present-day English: Innovations in the quotative system

- more or less recent forms such as *go, be like, be all* (see e.g. Vandelanotte & Davidse 2009) as new ways of managing multiple viewpoints and ‘performing’ or embodying them expressively
- *this is me*: recent inner-city London innovation (see e.g. Fox 2012) added to the repertoire;
over-marking of viewpoints

they sprayed the spray yeh [S: mm]
like just to check that it weren't anything.
bruv when I say they were smelling weed
this is him. **this is them** "what's that smell that's coming out?"
this is him "oh i dunno like it must be d.d. thing"
this is them. but on the back yeh what he didn't see yeh it had
weed spray.. yeah?
but no like weed spray what you use to spray the weed like .
like it was called weed spray that's the smell of it yeh [Z: mhm]
so the man's looking at it now proper staring at it
and **he's thinking** "weed spray"?
and **this is him** "yeh yeh like you know weed spray give you a
nice smell like"
and the man just was so dumb
he went "yeh yeh my friend"
bang put it in a bag.
let them go.

Flashforward to now: Innovations in the quotative system

- *this is me* exploited, along with posh accents and slang terms (*innit, blud, like, and shit*), for comic effect (incongruity)
- *said no one ever* as a popular shortcut to evoke unrealistic viewpoints

video clip: see

<http://youtu.be/ZL2TncW43os>

for more, see playlist at

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEB9B312129C1286B>

images: see [Google](#)

Ambiguity

- constructional meaning is not stable even in the most standard cases
- one and the same (lower-level) form can mean different things depending on the network of spaces the construction represents
 - first two examples: 'speakerhood'
 - longer textual example: multiple ambiguities in a passage from a contemporary novel

Ambiguity: speakerhood (1)

He started off on Aragon – **had I read** Le Paysan de Paris? **Did I remember** the Passage Jouffroy in Paris? What **did I think** of St. Jean Perse? Or Nadja of Breton? **Had I been** to Knossus yet? **I ought to stay** a few weeks at least – he would take me over the island from one end to another. He was a very hale and hearty fellow and when he understood that **I liked to eat and drink** he beamed most approvingly. (Henry Miller, *The Colossus of Maroussi*)

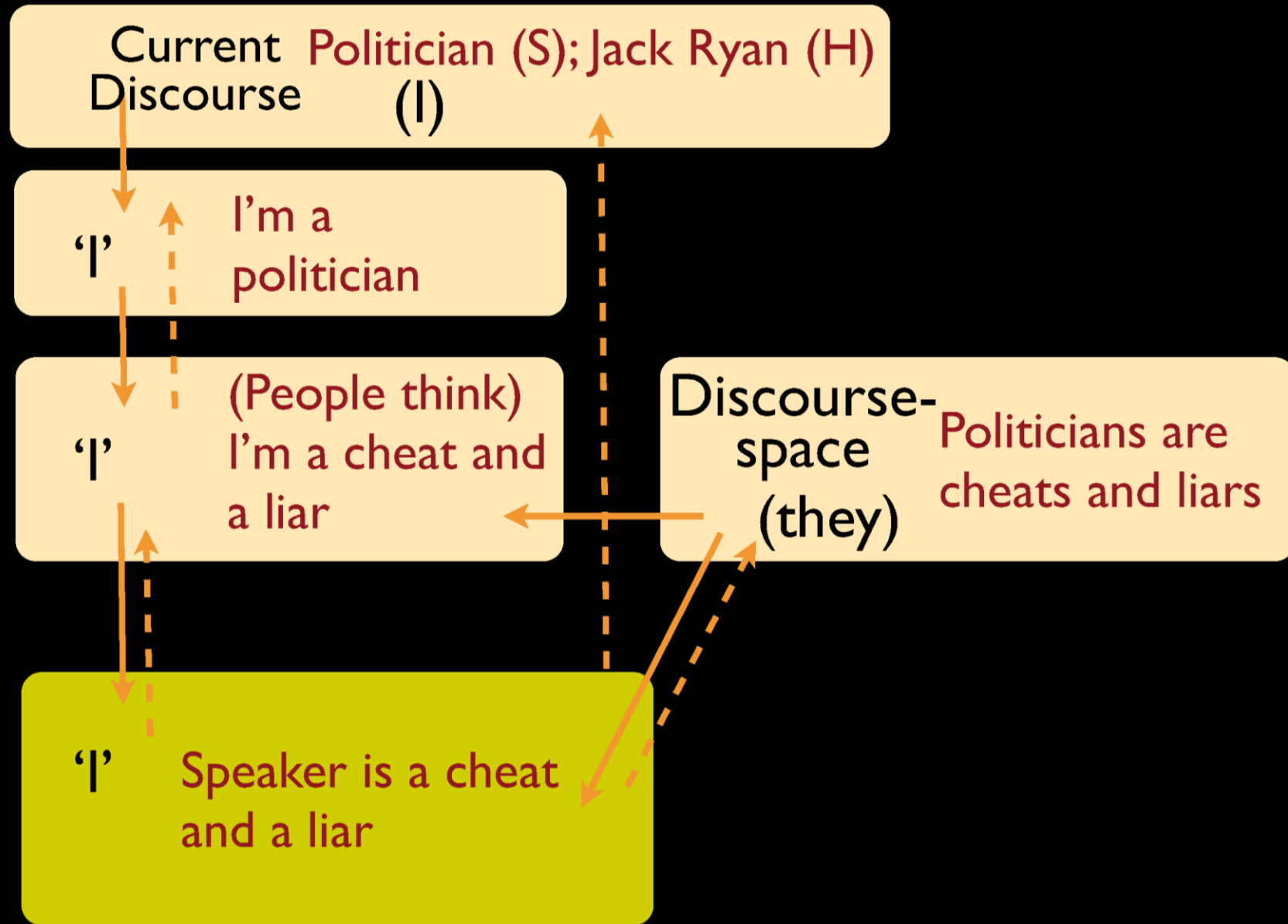
- ‘distancing’ indirect speech (Vandelanotte 2004, 2009, 2012)
- the pronoun cross-links the 1st person narrator/character in the SV-space with the addressee (*you*) in the embedded discourse space
- the pronoun “I” is thus not cross-linked to the actual speaker, only to the addressee and the narrator

Ambiguity: speakerhood (2)

I am a politician, which means that I'm a cheat and a liar, and when I'm not kissing babies I'm stealing their lollipops, but it also means that I have options.

(The Hunt for Red October)

sarcastic echo of what other people say about politicians



Multiple ambiguities

I open the window, turn up the volume. I pass two cars at once (...)

I will come home and the door will be open, wide. The babysitter will be gone and there will be silence. (...) At the steps up to Toph's room there will be blood. Blood on the walls, handprints soaked in blood. A note to me, from Stephen, taunting; maybe a videotape of everth– I will be to blame. (...) There will be a hearing, a trial, a short trial –

How did you come to meet this man, this baby-sitter?

We found a posting, on a bulletin board.

And how long did your interview of him take?

Ten, twenty minutes. (...)

(Dave Eggers, *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*)

- discourse type (speech/thought)
- tense
- determiners
- person

NARRATIVE SPACES AND EMBEDDING

SV-space

Narrator: Dave / I
present

MN-space

Narrator: Dave / I
present tense
Dave's life

NSI

Narrator: Dave / I
driving to San Francisco

NS2 - crime

Narrator: Dave / I
imagined future
baby-sitter (killer)
Toph (victim)

NS3 - trial

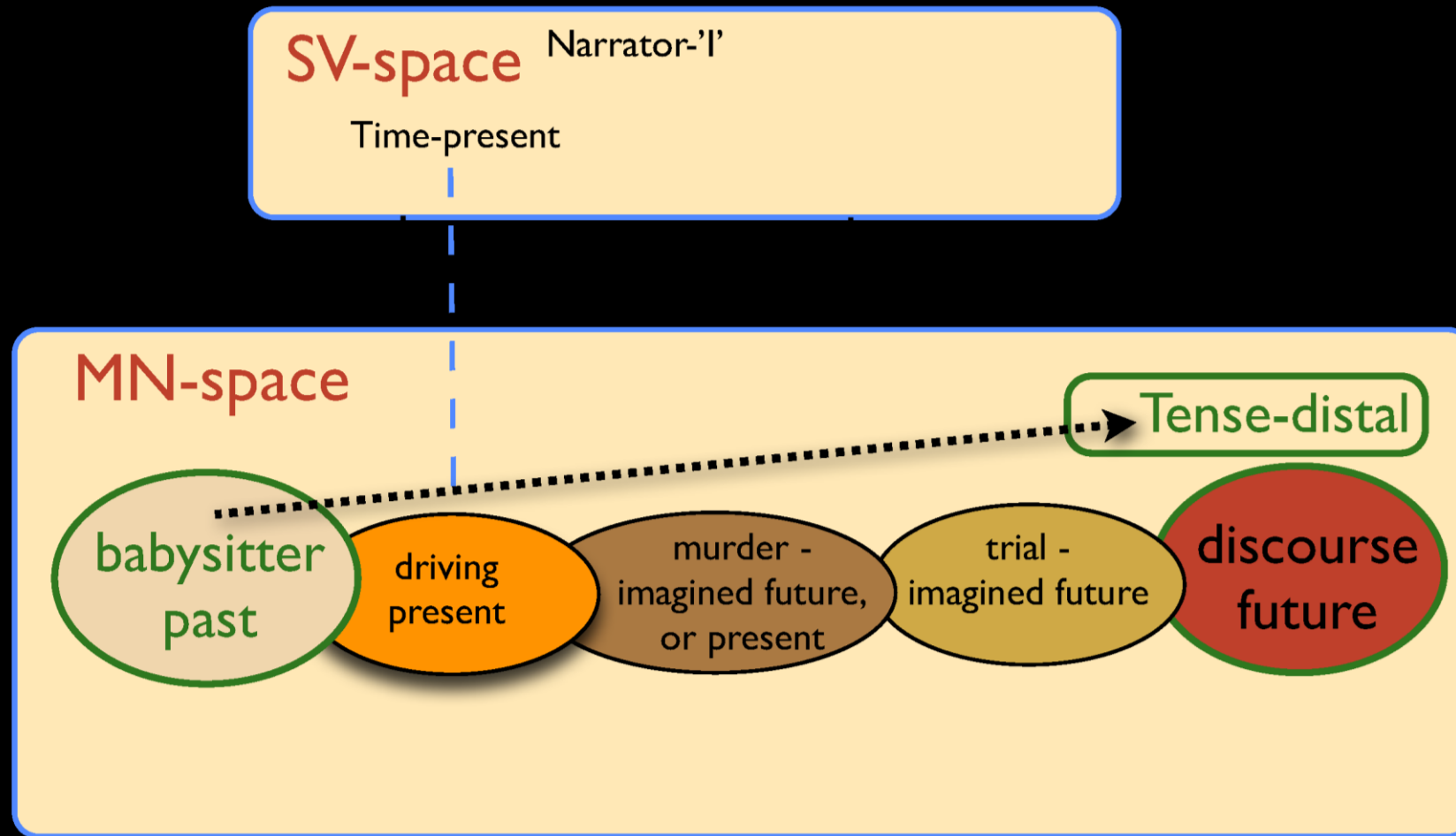
Narrator: Dave / I

NS3-discourse space

S1: Dave

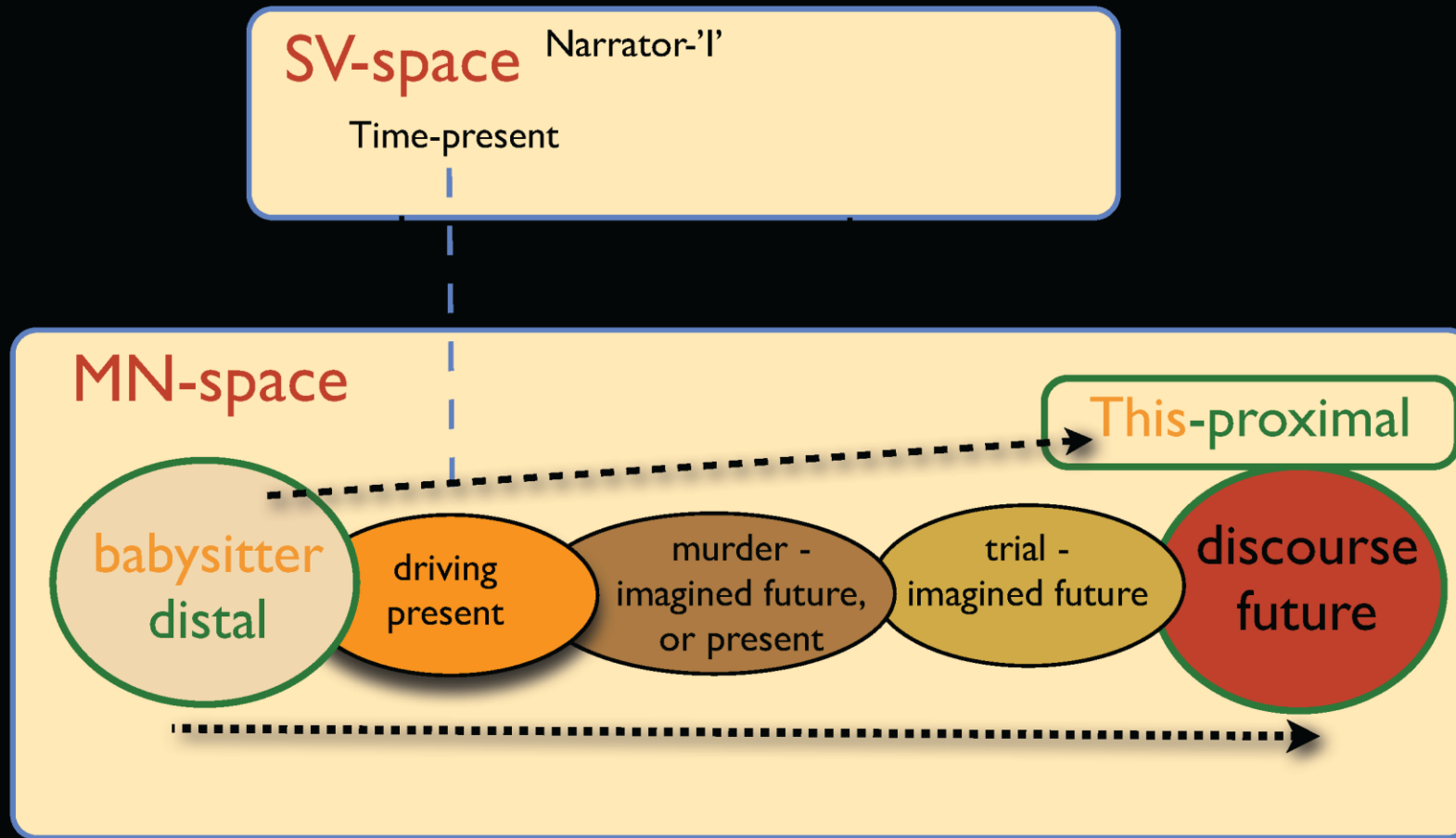
S2: prosecutor

NARRATIVE SPACES AND TENSE



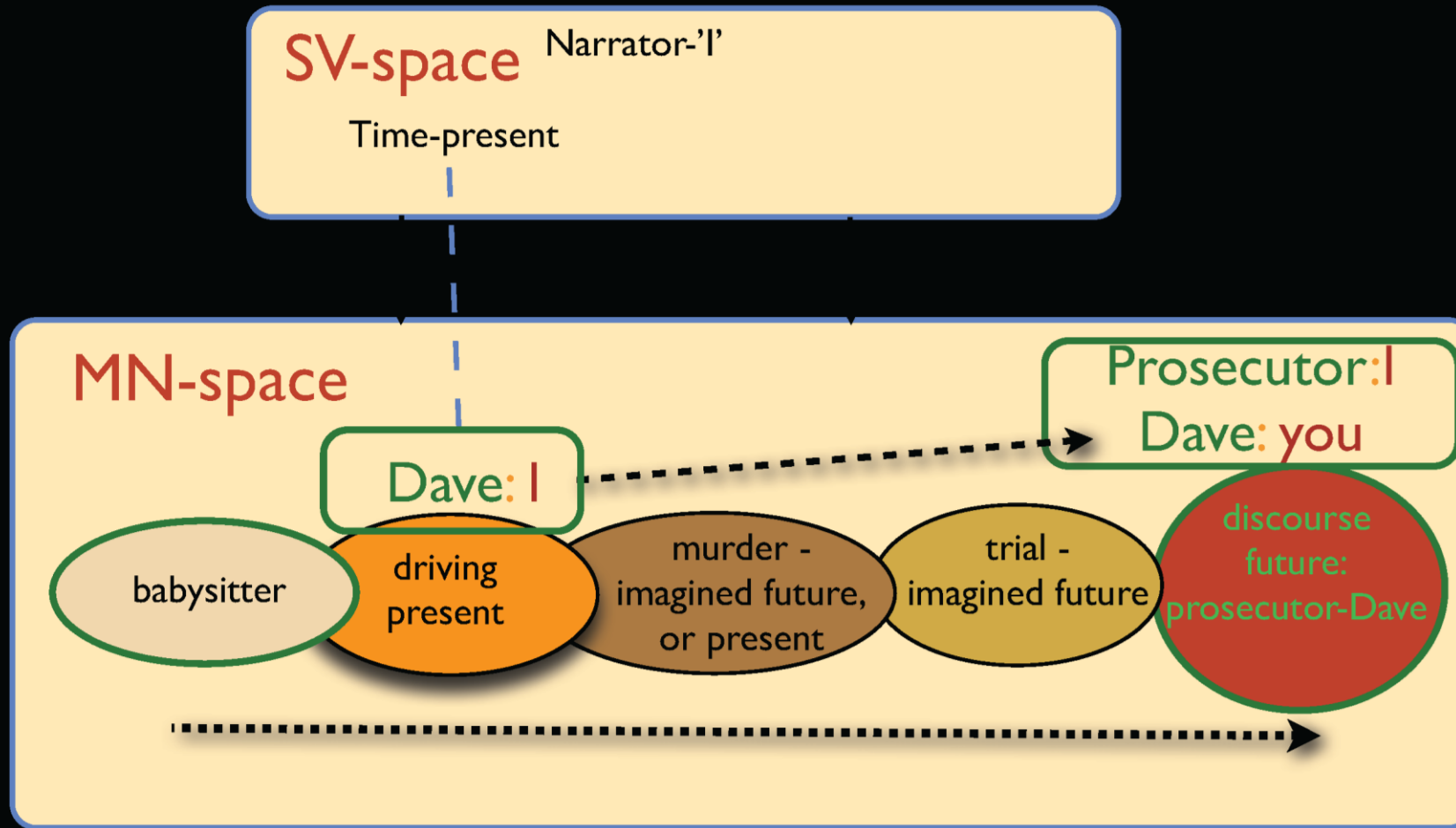
How **did you come** to meet this man, this babysitter?

NARRATIVE SPACES AND DETERMINERS



How did you come to meet **this** man, **this** babysitter?

NARRATIVE SPACES AND PRONOUNS



How did **you** come to meet this man, this babysitter?

Was-now: not a paradox

- was-now 'paradox' (Adamson 1995; cf. also Banfield 1982, Nikiforidou 2012)
- in fact not confusing; local choices contributing to global coherence
- 'now' as 'resumptive' (Dancygier 2012) or discourse-organizing: taking you back to the current narrative space

Was-now

He **now** lived, for the most part, retired in the country, with one sister, for whom he had a very tender affection. This lady was **now** somewhat past the age of thirty. (Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones*)

Was-now

She sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue. Her head was leaned against the window curtains and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty cretonne. She was tired. . . .

. . . One time there used to be a field there . . . Still they seemed to have been rather happy **then**. Her father was not so bad **then**; and besides, her mother was alive. That was a long time ago; she and her brothers and sisters were all grown up; her mother was dead. Tizzie Dunn was dead, too, and the Waters had gone back to England. Everything changes. **Now** she was going to go away like the others, to leave her home. (James Joyce, *Dubliners*, “Eveline”)

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- parallel to textual examples:
 - multiple viewpoints
 - often organized to reflect the current focus of the artefact
 - and global coherence
- Cf. comments by David Hockney, e.g.
 - video clips: see <http://youtu.be/sD123svCFHQ>
and http://www.hockneypictures.com/tv-video/video_wolds.php
 - on *Pearblossom Highway*:
You the viewer feel involved in it and feel close to it
 - on multi-channel, multi-perspective video pieces:
We're making a denser picture for you the viewer: you will... you feel more of a participant looking at it actually than you do if there's just one shot... It makes you look at it a little more carefully...

Multiple viewpoints in art

images:

Picasso, The Kiss ([google](#))

David Hockney ([photographic collages](#))

David Hockney ([The Jugglers](#): multi-channel video piece)

David Hockney's 'Perspective Diagram' ([FT article](#))

Multiple viewpoints in a Chinese scroll

David Hockney describing one corner of a Chinese scroll featuring multiple shifting viewpoints:

video clip: see

<http://youtu.be/mrFDGct4kH8>

image: see

<http://digitalcollections.library.ubc.ca/cdm/singleitem/collection/tokugawa/id/104>

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Concluding thoughts

- multiple viewpoints are the norm, not the exception
 - they are organized into networks and hierarchies
 - so that a general organizing frame can guide comprehension
 - maintaining the intersubjectivity of the construal
-
- narrative discourse is an example of such multiplicity, but not unique



Thank you for listening

IMAGE ♦ STEFAAN DHEEDENE | SUN SET (FOR A VETERAN ABSTRACTIONIST)

(picture taken by Lieven Vandelanotte at Deweer Gallery's exhibition 'Re-opening')

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