ON A CERTAIN NOMINAL USE OF BECAUSE-CLAUSES:
JUST BECAUSE BECAUSE-CLAUSES CAN SUBSTITUTE
FOR THAT-CLAUSES DOES NOT MEAN THAT
THIS IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE

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This paper is concerned with the grammatical construction exemplified by the sentence used as the subtitle, Just because because-clauses can substitute for that-clauses does not mean that this is always possible, where the because-clause is used as a nominal clause. It is shown that, syntactically, this construction derives from the blending of a construction with a that-clause as subject and one with an adverbial because-clause, and that, semantically, the construction is used to deny the inferential process of drawing a certain conclusion from a certain factual premise and to express some doubt about the validity of the conclusion as well. Through a close investigation of this particular construction and some related matters, it is suggested that the syntax of a grammatical construction is constrained in such a way that the construction is used for exactly the purpose it is expected to serve.*

1. INTRODUCTION. Because-clauses, though normally adverbial, can be used nominally, substituting for that-clauses. A well-known example is the reason is because, exemplified in 1:

(1) a. The reason why I'm late is because I missed the bus. (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 4th ed., p. 1046)

b. The reason they're following you is not because you're providing some mysterious leadership. It's because you're following them. (L. Iacocca, Iacocca: An Autobiography, pp. 58-59)

Despite prescriptive objections to using because for that, this use is widely seen both in speech and in writing, and it is also mentioned in one way or another in most, if not all, English usage guides and dictionaries.

There is another nominal use of because to which little attention has

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been paid, compared with *the reason is because*. Observe the following examples:

(2) a. Just because advanced civilizations *can* exist on other planets doesn’t mean that they *do*. (J. McCaleb, *That’s Your Opinion*, pp. 24-25)

b. Because the covert narrator has entree into a character’s mind does not mean he constantly exercises it. (S. Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, p. 213)

c. ‘Okay, okay. I’m sorry. But just because I screwed up on the Second Law of Reference doesn’t mean it’s all right for you to play fast and loose with citations.’ (A. M. Zwicky, ‘On Referring’, p. 122)

Here again the *because*-clause is used instead of a *that*-clause. In such examples as these, the focusing adverb *just* is often attached to the *because*-clause, but it is optional, as suggested by 2b. The difference between 1 and 2 is obvious: in 1 the *because*-clause is the complement of the verb *be*; in 2 it is the subject of the verb *mean* (which, of course, can take a *that*-clause as its subject). In this paper, I will refer to the constructions exemplified in 1 and 2 as the complement-*because* construction and the subject-*because* construction respectively.

As far as I know, the subject-*because* construction, unlike the complement-*because* construction, has never undergone a thorough grammatical analysis.¹ It is true that there are a few grammar books, such as Miyata 1970 and Quirk et al. 1985, that give examples of the construction, but they do not discuss, let alone make clear, its *raison d’être*: what function the construction performs and why it has the form it does.

This paper is concerned with the syntax and semantics of the subject-*because* construction. Section 2 points out two grammatical characteristics of the construction. Sections 3 and 4 explain why the construction has such characteristics. The results of these two sections show that the nominal use of *because*-clauses must satisfy certain syntactic and semantic conditions. Section 5 argues that similar conditions apply to the nominal use of *if*-clauses, discussed at length in Omuro 1985. Section 6 takes up reason and concessive adverbials other than *because*, and ex-

¹ For grammatical analyses of the complement-*because* construction, see Otsuka (1938: 155-60) and Bolinger (1980: 172-74) for example. The latter’s analysis will be touched upon in Section 4.
2. TWO GRAMMATICAL CHARACTERISTICS. The subject-\textit{because} construction has two important characteristics that should be pointed out here to understand its use better.

First, this construction has as its main verb what may be called a 'verb of inference'. Among this class of verbs are \textit{mean}, \textit{prove}, \textit{show}, \textit{establish}, \textit{guarantee}, and so on. Although \textit{mean} is probably used most frequently as the main verb of the subject-\textit{because} construction, it can be replaced with another verb of inference without affecting the intended meaning of the construction itself. Thus, observe the following examples, where \textit{prove} and \textit{guarantee} are used as main verbs:

(3) Just because something \textit{can} exist doesn’t prove that it \textit{does} exist. (J. McCaleb, \textit{That’s Your Opinion}, p. 23)

(4) Just because there is a West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics each year does not guarantee that formal work will survive, any more than the existence of Democratic People’s Republics guarantees that democracy will survive. (G. K. Pullum, ‘Formal Linguistics Meets the Boojum’, p. 137)

Verbs of inference can take \textit{that}-clauses as their subjects and objects; that is, they can appear in the syntactic configuration \textit{That} \textit{S1-}\textit{V-}\textit{that S2}. Semantically, the subject clause \textit{S1} represents a premise from which to draw a conclusion, while the object clause \textit{S2} represents a conclusion drawn from the premise. I simply point out here that this fact has a great deal to do with why a verb of inference allows a \textit{because}-clause subject instead of a \textit{that}-clause subject.

In this connection, the verb \textit{be} also allows a \textit{because}-clause subject, as in 5:

(5) a. Because men are still incapable of being angels is no good reason why they should be ants.
   (E. A. Mowrer; requoted from \textit{Webster’s Third New International Dictionary}, p. 194)

b. Because they [=the classics] are dead languages is no reason why they should be dealt with in a dead educational technique. (J. Hilton, \textit{Good-bye, Mr. Chips}; requoted from Miyata 1970: 357)

\textit{Be} has the same function as verbs of inference in that it can link two propositions inferentially, as shown by the fact that sentence 6, for exam-
ple, has almost the same meaning as the *if-then* sentence in 7.\(^2\)

(6) To say that an operation is lexically governed is to say that its application or manner of application depends on the presence in a clause of a particular predicate.

(J. McClosky, 'Syntactic Theory', p. 46)

(7) If an operation is lexically governed, then its application or manner of application depends on the presence in a clause of a particular predicate.

For this reason, I take *be* as used in examples like 5 and 6 to be an instance of verbs of inference.\(^3\)

The second characteristic of the subject-*because* construction is that, as we can see from the above examples, it has the form of a negative sentence; in fact, it must be a negative sentence. Thus, for example, a *because*-clause can substitute for the *that*-clause subject of the negative sentence in 8a, but not for that of the affirmative sentence in 9a or 10a:

(8)  
   a. That John is rich doesn’t mean that he is happy.
   b. *(Just) because John is rich doesn’t mean that he is happy.

(9)  
   a. That John is liked by all the students means that he is a good teacher.
   b. *(Just) because John is liked by all the students means that he is a good teacher.

(10)  
   a. That John is absent means that he is sick.
   b. *(Just) because John is absent means that he is sick.

This fact, together with the fact that the *because*-clause subject is often preceded by the focusing adverb *just*, is very important in considering the grammar of this construction.

3. **Semantics.** In this section, I discuss the meaning of the subject-*because* construction, going in particular into the question of what semantic property of *because*-clauses relates to the fact that a verb of in-

\(^2\) In 6 *to say* can also be deleted.

\(^3\) Nobuhiro Kaga has pointed out to me the following example, where the causative verb *make* takes a *because*-clause subject:

\(\text{(i)}\) ‘Just because you donate a sperm and an egg doesn’t make you a parent,’…

(*Time*, August 27, 1990, p. 41)

While *make* takes a ‘small-clause’ complement instead of a *that*-clause complement, it is used in (i) in the same sense as *guarantee* as a verb of inference. This use of *make* can in fact be regarded as inferential, in that it serves to indicate what conclusion should or should not be drawn from what premise.
ference is used in the construction.

For this purpose, let us first consider the meaning and use of adverbial *because-*clauses. Take the following sentence, quoted from Kanbayashi (1989: 48):

(11) John smokes, because he has cigarettes in his house.

As Kanbayashi observes, this sentence is ambiguous and can be read in two ways:

(12) John's having cigarettes in his house causes him to smoke.
(13) John must be a smoker, in view of the fact that he has cigarettes in his house.

In the first reading, the speaker is saying that there is a causal relation between John's smoking and his having cigarettes in his house. In the second reading, as the epistemic use of *must* explicitly shows, the speaker is inferring from John's having cigarettes in his house that he smokes.4 For convenience' sake, I refer to the former type of reading as the causal reading and the latter type as the inferential reading.5

These two readings are based on different forms of logic. The logic underlying the causal reading of 11 is as follows:

(14) a. If A then B: If John has cigarettes in his house, he smokes.
    b. A: John has cigarettes in his house.
    c. Therefore B: Therefore, John smokes.

This is an instance of deduction; i.e., the conclusion follows necessarily from the premises. Generally, in the causal reading of *B because A*, to say that A is the reason for B implies that A is a sufficient condition for B.

On the other hand, the inferential reading can be characterized in terms of what Peirce 1940 calls abduction. According to Peirce, abduction is the process of forming an explanatory hypothesis, and it has the following form of inference (1940: 151):

'The surprising fact, C, is observed;
But if A were true, C would be a matter of course, 
Hence, there is reason to suspect that A is true.'

To put it simply:

(15) C
    If A then C
    Therefore A

Here A is a hypothesis to explain the fact C. But the validity of A is not necessarily guaranteed, since there may be other hypotheses from which C follows and which are not compatible with A. Thus abduction is probable inference; i.e., while the major premise is an evident fact, the minor premise is only probable and hence so is the conclusion. Now, applying schema 15 to the inferential reading of 11 makes clear the reasoning behind it:

(16) a. John has cigarettes in his house.
    b. If John smokes, he has [must have] cigarettes in his house.
    c. Therefore, John smokes [must be a smoker].

First of all, the speaker of 11 notices that John has cigarettes in his house, wondering why. It then occurs to him that the fact will be most naturally explained by supposing that John smokes, because he knows that smokers generally have cigarettes in their houses. So he concludes that John smokes. In short, in the inferential reading of A because C, C provides not a reason for A, but, to quote Peirce again, 'reason to suspect that A is true'.

Sentences with because-clauses are not always ambiguous like 11. Even in such an ambiguous sentence as 11, intonation can serve to disambiguate the interpretation; i.e., in the inferential reading, comma intonation is necessary at the end of the main clause, whereas in the causal reading, it is optional. Thus if 11 is uttered with commaless intonation, it is interpreted only causally. Here I will not go further into the problem of intonation, on which see especially Sweetser (1990: 82-86).
does not know the actual state of the ground, as in the case of *The ground must be wet, because it has rained.* The fact that 18 is ambiguous while 17 is not rests on the fact that a causal relationship must be from cause to effect, whereas an inference can be drawn either from cause to effect or from effect to cause (cf. Jespersen 1949: 399).

Note in this regard that Peirce's formulation of abduction applies only to inferences from effect to cause, and not inferences from cause to effect. Thus, the reasoning behind the inferential reading of 18 is not 19 but rather 20:

(19)  
  a. It has rained.  
  b. If the ground is wet, it must have rained.  
  c. Therefore, the ground must be wet.  

(20)  
  a. It has rained.  
  b. If it has rained, the ground must be wet.  
  c. Therefore, the ground must be wet.  

That is, in the inferential reading of 18 the main clause represents not a hypothesis to explain the fact described in the *because*-clause, but merely a likely consequence inferred from the fact. Nevertheless, the inference in 20 is no different from abduction in that the minor premise, and therefore the conclusion too, is only probable rather than evident. I will henceforth use the notion of abduction in a wider sense than Peirce so that it can also cover cases of probable inference from cause to effect.

Let us now turn to the subject-*because* construction. It should first be noticed that this construction is interpreted as the negative counterpart of the inferential reading. For example, the meaning of sentence 21 corresponds to 22a, not to 22b:

(21)  
  (Just) because John has cigarettes in his house does not mean that he smokes.  

(22)  
  a. The fact that John has cigarettes in his house provides no reason to conclude that he smokes.  
  b. John's having cigarettes in his house is not the cause of his smoking.  

Since the inferential reading is based on abduction, we may safely say that the function of the subject-*because* construction is to deny the logic of abduction, which is deniable exactly because it is probable inference. Moreover, when we say that abduction is deniable, we also mean that the conclusion is deniable. Thus in the case of 21, the speaker not only denies the inferential process shown in 16, but at least doubts the conclusion that John smokes. That is, the subject-*because* construction is used
to deny the process of drawing a certain conclusion from a certain factual premise and to express some doubt about the validity of the conclusion as well. And it is this functional characteristic that requires the use of a verb of inference, which serves to indicate what conclusion should or should not be drawn from what premise.

It is also worth noting that, as against the subject-\textit{because} construction, the complement-\textit{because} construction permits only the causal reading. For example, the following sentence has interpretation 12, but not interpretation 13:

\begin{equation}
\text{(23) The reason why John smokes is because he has cigarettes in his house.}
\end{equation}

This point is further confirmed by the fact that sentence 17, which is interpreted only inferentially, cannot be paraphrased as follows:

\begin{equation}
\text{(24) *The reason why it has rained is because the ground is wet.}
\end{equation}

The complement-\textit{because} construction permits no inferential reading because the sentence following \textit{the reason why} represents a (presupposed) fact, not an inference (asserted to be true).

In this connection, compare the following type of subject-\textit{because} construction (viz. example 5b):

\begin{equation}
\text{(25) Because they [=the classics] are dead languages is no reason why they should be dealt with in a dead educational technique.}
\end{equation}

Here, as suggested by the epistemic property of \textit{should},
\footnote{The \textit{should} which occurs after the expression \textit{no reason why} can be regarded as an instance of what Quirk et al. (1985: 1014) call 'putative \textit{should}', which conveys the notion of a 'putative' situation and therefore has a nonfactual bias. Putative \textit{should} is often used after expressions of emotion. Compare (i) and (ii):

(i) I'm surprised that he \textit{should feel} lonely.
(ii) I'm surprised that he \textit{feels} lonely.

Quirk et al. comment: 'While [i] questions the loneliness, [ii] accepts it as true. Here, as often, the difference is mainly one of nuance, since the factual bias of the matrix clause overrides the doubt otherwise implicit in the \textit{should}-construction' (1985: 1014). See also footnote 14 below.} the sentence following \textit{no reason why} represents not a presupposed fact but an inference that could (but in fact should not) be drawn from the fact described in the \textit{because}-clause. Hence, as with sentence 21, a close paraphrase of 25 is this: \textit{The fact that they are dead languages is [provides] no reason to conclude that they should be dealt with in a dead educational technique}. In effect, the subject-\textit{because} construction, unlike the complement-\textit{because}
4. **Syntax.** In this section, I discuss what gives the subject-*because* construction the form it has, thereby answering the question of why it must be a negative sentence. Before entering directly into the issue, however, I would like to mention Bolinger's (1980: 172-74) analysis of the complement-*because* construction, which will be very informative in considering the syntax of the subject-*because* construction.

While arguing against a prescriptive view of *the reason is because* as 'illogical', Bolinger points out that the construction does not always replace *the reason is that*. For example, while *because* can take the place of *that* in 26, it cannot in 27:

(26) The reason I did it is {that/because} I wanted to.
(27) The reason I'm going to mention is {that/*because} it's getting late.

According to Bolinger, *the reason is because* is a syntactic blend of two constructions that can be used as immediate responses to a *why*-question. One is *the reason is that*, and the other is the adverbial-*because* construction:

(28) a. Why did you do it? — The reason (I did it) is that I wanted to.
    b. Why did you do it? — (It is) because I wanted to (that I did it).

Here the nominal clause *that I wanted to* and the adverbial clause *because I wanted to* perform an identical semantic function in that both are used to specify why the speaker did a certain thing. And only in such cases can *because* substitute for *that*, as in 26. In 27, however, *that it's getting late* specifies what the speaker is going to mention, and not why he is going to mention it; in fact, the intended meaning of 27 cannot be conveyed by such a sentence as *It is because it's getting late that I'm going to mention the reason*, which would be unacceptable if it were to be read in the same way as 27. That is why *because* cannot be used there.

On the basis of Bolinger's analysis, we can say generally that a nominal *because*-clause derives from the blending of a nominal *that*-clause and an adverbial *because*-clause that perform an identical semantic function. If so, this applies also to the subject-*because* construction; i.e., as with the complement-*because* construction, it must presuppose not only a construction with a nominal *that*-clause but also one with an adverbial *because*-clause.
As expected, there are two basic constructions corresponding to the subject-\textit{because} construction. Take the following example:

\textbf{(29)} (Just) because John is rich doesn’t mean that he is happy. This sentence is based on construction 30a on the one hand and construction 30b on the other:

\textbf{(30)}  
\begin{itemize}
  \item a. That John is rich doesn’t mean that he is happy.
  \item b. Just because John is rich, it doesn’t mean that he is happy.
\end{itemize}

In 30b, the \textit{because}-clause is adverbial, and the sentence it introduces, \textit{John is rich}, serves as the antecedent of the subject pronoun \textit{it}; hence 30b includes the meaning of 30a in it.\textsuperscript{8} Note further that in 30 both \textit{that John is rich and just because John is rich} are inside the scope of the negative \textit{doesn’t mean}, since, as pointed out in the last section, the negative denies the inferential process of drawing a certain conclusion (i.e. that John is happy) from the premise described in these clauses; that is, 30 negates the inferential reading of 31, and so the negation ranges over the whole sentence, as shown in 32.\textsuperscript{9}

\textbf{(31)} John is happy, because he is rich.

\textbf{(32)} \text{NEG} [John is happy, because he is rich].

But this does not mean that the premise, John’s being rich, is denied; rather, it is admitted as a fact.

Thus both sentences in 30 have a meaning close to a concessive sentence like 33:

\textsuperscript{8} In the construction exemplified in 30b, the main clause is frequently introduced not by \textit{it} but by another pronoun such as \textit{this} or \textit{that}. For example:

\textbf{(i)} ... just because the computational mind and the phenomenological mind are both different domains of description from the physical body, this does not mean they are the same domain. (R. Jackendoff, \textit{Consciousness and the Computational Mind}, p. 18)

\textsuperscript{9} Note that 32 should not be confused with cases where the causal use of \textit{because} is inside the scope of negation. For example, if sentence (i) below is read with a falling-rising contour at the end of the sentence, it receives an interpretation in which the causal \textit{because} is inside the scope of negation (cf. Bing 1980):

\textbf{(i)} John isn’t happy because he is rich.

In this interpretation, what is negated is the supposed causal relation between John’s being happy and being rich; so (i) is paraphrased as in (ii) or (iii):

\textbf{(ii)} The reason why John is happy is not because he is rich.

\textbf{(iii)} It is not because he is rich that John is happy.

It is not the sentences in (i)-(iii) but those in 29 and 30 that express the meaning corresponding to representation 32, which is intended to indicate a case where the inferential \textit{because} is inside the scope of negation.
(33) Although John is rich, it doesn’t follow from that that he is happy.

In 33, though, the although-clause is outside the scope of negation (see Section 6), and the concessive meaning is simply due to the meaning of although itself. By contrast, in 30 the concessive meaning of the subject that-clause and the adverbial because-clause is due to the fact that they both serve to indicate a factual premise from which to draw an inference and at the same time they are in the scope of the negative doesn’t mean. In 30a the subject that-clause is in the scope of negation because it is the subject of doesn’t mean. In 30b, on the other hand, the adverbial because-clause is in the scope of negation because of the presence of the focusing adverb just, which can be used to extend negative scope to the phrase it modifies. As is often observed (cf. Davison 1970: 193; McCawley 1988: 549–552; etc.), adverbial because-clauses in sentence-initial position, unlike those in sentence-final position, are generally outside the scope of negation. But this does not apply in cases where they are preceded by such a focusing adverb as just.

The frequent use of just in the subject-because construction suggests that the construction is based on the adverbial-because construction exemplified in 30b. At the same time, the optionality of just suggests that it is also based on the that-clause construction exemplified in 30a, since, just as the that-clause subject does not require a focusing adverb, so the because-clause no longer requires one once it occupies the subject position.

I now turn to the question of why the subject-because construction must be a negative sentence, namely, why the following type of affirmative sentence is unacceptable:

(34) *(Just) because John is liked by all the students means that he is a good teacher.

If this sentence were acceptable, it would have to presuppose a construction with an adverbial because-clause as well as one with a nominal that-clause. It is obvious that it is based on 35:

(35) That John is liked by all the students means that he is a good teacher.

But is there any adverbial-because construction corresponding to 34? The only possible candidate might be 36, which sounds odd, however:

(36) *Because John is liked by all the students, it means that he is a good teacher.

Here it is of course intended to refer to John is liked by all the students.
The oddity of 36 comes from the fact that the because-clause receives the causal reading. Thus 36 purports to mean something like this: 'The fact that John is liked by all the students causes the same fact to mean that he is a good teacher.' But this does not make sense, let alone provide a paraphrase of the intended meaning of 34, i.e., 'John must be a good teacher, in view of the fact that he is liked by all the students'. Generally, because in sentence-initial position does not permit the inferential reading. Thus, sentence 37, unlike 17, is unacceptable, and sentence 38, unlike 18, receives only the causal reading:

(37) *Because the ground is wet, it has rained.

(38) Because it has rained, the ground is wet.

We then see that, even if 36 were acceptable, the because-clause would be different in semantic function from the subject that-clause in 35, which serves to indicate a factual premise from which to draw an inference. Therefore, the because-clause in 36 would not substitute for the subject that-clause in 35, as long as a nominal because-clause is a syntactic blend of a nominal that-clause and an adverbial because-clause that perform an identical semantic function.

Recall here that in 30b the sentence-initial because-clause allows the inferential reading, though in the negative sense that a particular conclusion should not be drawn from a particular fact. This is because, as mentioned above, the because-clause is modified by just and is in the scope of negation. It then follows that only when inside the scope of negation does a sentence-initial because-clause allow the inferential reading. Hence we can conclude that the subject-because construction must have the form of a negative sentence because a sentence-initial because-clause, whether used adverbially or nominally, cannot be compatible with the inference-related meaning of this construction unless it appears in a negative environment.

5. THE NOMINAL USE OF IF-CLAUSES. In the previous section, we have seen that a nominal because-clause is a syntactic blend of a nominal that-clause and an adverbial because-clause that perform an identical semantic function. A more general formulation of this would be to say that a nominalized adverbial clause derives from the blending of a nominal and an adverbial because-clause that perform an identical semantic function. Here I would like to show briefly that this generalization also applies to the nominal use of if-clauses, discussed at length in Omuro 1985.

Although if-clauses normally serve as adverbial clauses with a condi-
tional reading, they can be used for nominal whether-clauses, as in 39:

(39) I asked him [whether/if] he liked reading.

But this use is possible only in post-verbal position. Thus, compare the following examples, taken from Omuro (1985: 133):

(40) {Whether/*If} he eats cabbage or not simply doesn’t matter.
(41) I shall have to put inquiries in hand as to {whether/*if} anyone recently tried to obtain cocaine.
(42) The question {whether/*if} they’ll strike remains unanswered.

Why, then, can if substitute for whether only in post-verbal position?

According to Omuro, the reason is that, although the conditional meaning of if and the interrogative meaning of whether are different in most cases, their difference can be neutralized in post-verbal position, as can be seen, for example, from the following pair of sentences:

(43) a. Tell me if you can come.
    b. Tell me whether you can come.

Even if if is taken in the conditional sense, 43a conveys virtually the same meaning as 43b, since both if and whether serve to express the speaker’s uncertainty as to whether the addressee can come. Omuro points out that, under the circumstances provided by such examples as 43, an if-clause is converted from adverbial to nominal on the basis of the nominal use of a whether-clause. In other words, a nominal if-clause derives from the blending of a nominal whether-clause and an adverbial if-clause that perform an identical semantic function.

6. SINCE- AND ALTHOUGH-CLAUSES. In this section, I first point out that reason and concessive adverbials introduced by since and although cannot be used nominally as in the case of because, and then explain why this is so.11

Since, like because, can be used inferentially:

(44) It has [must have] rained, since the ground is wet.

This use, in the case of since, is allowed even in sentence-initial position (cf. example 37):

10 Omuro’s explanation, though, is more formal, based on Kajita’s 1977 ‘dynamic model of syntax’.
11 I will not take up another reason conjunction, as, because what applies to since mostly applies also to as. As Schourup and Waida (1988: 98) note, though, ‘AS is unusual with this meaning [i.e. the same meaning as SINCE] in most dialects of American English, especially in conversation’.
(45) Since the ground is wet, it must have rained. (Jespersen 1949: 399)
In spite of its inferential use, *since* cannot be substituted for *because* in the subject-*because* construction:

(46) *(Just) since the ground is wet doesn't mean that it has rained.
With *although*, the construction in 47 has a similar meaning to the subject-*because* construction, which, as noted in Section 4, is interpreted as a sort of concessive sentence:

(47) Although John is rich, it doesn't mean that he is happy.
Furthermore, the *although*-clause is the same as the *that*-clause subject in 48 in that they both convey factual information:

(48) That John is rich doesn't mean that he is happy.
Nevertheless, such a construction as 49 is not permitted:

(49) *Although John is rich doesn't mean that he is happy.
The unacceptability of 46 and 49 has something to do with negative scope. As pointed out in Section 4, the subject position of *doesn't mean* is inside the scope of the negation. But, unlike *because*-clauses, *since- and although*-clauses are not allowed to be inside the scope of negation. Thus, for example, while 50a is ambiguous as to negative scope (cf. footnote 9), 51a is not:

(50) a. John is not happy because he is rich.
   b. NEG [John is happy] because he is rich.
   c. NEG [John is happy because he is rich].
(51) a. John is not happy {since/although} he is rich.
   b. NEG [John is happy] {since/although} he is rich.
   c. *NEG [John is happy {since/although} he is rich].
Note also that *since and although*, unlike *because*, cannot be modified by such a focusing adverb as *just*, which can make negative scope extend to the phrase it modifies:

12 Unlike *although*, conditional *if* expresses uncertainty:
   (i) If John is rich, it doesn't mean that he is happy.
Because uncertainty conflicts with factuality, the *if*-clause in (i) cannot take the place of the *that*-clause subject in 48:
   (ii) *If John is rich doesn't mean that he is happy.
13 A reviewer has pointed out to me the unacceptability of the following examples, suggesting that not only must *since*-clauses be outside the scope of negation, but they must also be outside the scope of modal expressions and questions:
   (i) *John left, possibly since it was late.
   (ii) *Did John leave since it was late?
(52) The classics should not be dealt with in a dead educational technique just {because/*since/*although} they are dead languages.14

(53) Just {because/*since/*although} the classics are dead languages, {it doesn’t follow/this doesn’t mean} that they should be dealt with in a dead educational technique.

The explanation that has recourse to negative scope, however, will not be sufficient, because we could not explain the unacceptability of a sentence like 54, the intended meaning of which is the same as 45, and which is an affirmative sentence:

(54) *Since the ground is wet means that it has rained.

Recall that, in the case of because, the unacceptability of a similar type of affirmative sentence, namely 34, is explained by saying that sentence-initial because cannot be used inferentially unless it appears in a negative environment, and that this property is not compatible with the inference-related meaning of the subject-because construction. But, as mentioned above, since can be used inferentially even in sentence-initial position, and in fact the following type of sentence is acceptable (cf. example 36):

(55) Since John is liked by all the students, it means that he is a good teacher.

If so, how should we explain the unacceptability of 54?

Generally, as Schourup and Waida (1988: 97) observe, since-clauses are not used with expressions and grammatical constructions that make them focused. In this connection, Schourup and Waida (1988: 108–09) say that since-clauses cannot be focused because they convey background or given information, i.e. information assumed by the speaker to be known to the hearer. A similar point is also made in Poutsma (1904: 464) (I am grateful to the reviewer for referring me to Poutsma). But I will be arguing below in the text that, contrary to Schourup and Waida and Poutsma, since-clauses (and although-clauses as well) are asserted as if they were independent clauses. The explanation to be offered as to why since-clauses are outside the scope of negation will also cover cases like (i) and (ii).

14 Notice that in 52, unlike the case of 50, because is used inferentially, agreeing with the ‘putative’ or inferential sense of should (cf. footnote 7). The should in such a negative sentence as 52 is inside the scope of negation and implies that there is no reason to draw a certain inference. Hence 52 is semantically equivalent to 53 and 25. I note in passing that should is used similarly in an interrogative sentence like (i):

(i) Why should I be surprised?

This sentence is a rhetorical question and pragmatically implies (ii), which in turn is paraphrased as in (iii):

(ii) [There is/I see] no reason why I should be surprised.

(iii) [There is/I see] no reason to infer that I should be surprised.
It is important to notice in this regard that sentence-initial because-clauses and subject that-clauses are generally presupposed, whereas since- and although-clauses are not; they are asserted like main clauses. This point will become clear if we consider Ross's (1973: 161-63) observation about the syntactic behavior of 'performative-like' expressions such as I gather and I take it (that S). These expressions are used primarily to weaken assertions; hence they are not generally used in subordinate clauses:

(56) *They realize that I {gather/take it} that you were sick.
(57) *Bill's claim that I {gather/take it} that we will file early is ridiculous.

Ross observes that although- and since-clauses are different from because-clauses (and other adverbials) in that they allow I gather and I take it to occur in them:

(58) {Although/Since/*Because} I {gather/take it} that you and Miss Pecan are acquainted, I will be happy.

In the light of the function of the expressions I gather and I take it, the acceptability contrast in 58 shows that, unlike sentence-initial because-clauses, although- and since-clauses are asserted as if they were independent clauses.15

If so, it is exactly because of this semantic property that although- and since-clauses are neither influenced by negation nor allowed to appear in subject position. That is, just as negative scope does not range over two independent clauses, so it does not extend to although- or since-clauses; and just as it is impossible to assert and presuppose something at the same time, so it is impossible for although- or since-clauses to appear in the presupposed subject position of verbs of inference. Hence the unacceptability of sentences 46, 49, and 54.

7. CONCLUSION. The subject-because construction exhibits an apparent discrepancy between grammatical form and function in that the subject position is occupied by a because-clause, which normally functions adverbially.

This paper has shown that this apparent discrepancy is due to the fact

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15 Cf. also Nakau (1984: 135-37) and Lakoff (1987: 473-81). As Nakau notes, because-clauses in sentence-final position allow I gather and I take it to occur in them:

(i) I will be happy, because I {take it/gather} that you and Miss Pecan are acquainted.
that the subject-\textit{because} construction derives from the blending of a construction with a \textit{that}-clause as subject and one with an adverbial \textit{because}-clause. In general, whether two independent constructions blend or not depends on whether they perform an identical semantic function. We have seen in this regard that the two basic constructions corresponding to the subject-\textit{because} construction perform an identical semantic function in that they are both used to deny the inferential process of drawing a certain conclusion from a certain factual premise and to express some doubt about the validity of the conclusion as well. This semantic function is carried over into the subject-\textit{because} construction and restricts the distribution of \textit{because}-clause subjects so that they can occur only in the subject position of negative sentences with verbs of inference.

Through the investigation of the subject-\textit{because} construction and some related matters, I hope to have shown that the syntax of a grammatical construction is constrained in such a way that the construction is used for exactly the purpose it is expected to serve.

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