

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)

Journal of Pragmatics

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/pragma

It's funny because ...: From clause-combining pattern to projector construction in French talk-in-interaction

Simona Pekarek Doehler*, Agnes Löfgren

Center of Applied Linguistics, Institute of Language Sciences, FLSH, University of Neuchâtel, Pierre-à-Mazel 7, CH-2000, Neuchâtel, Switzerland



ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 5 August 2025

Received in revised form 27 February 2026

Accepted 3 March 2026

Keywords:

Social interaction

Because-clauses

Pragmatic marker

(in)subordination

Projection

Pragmaticalization

French

ABSTRACT

This paper offers an interactional multimodal analysis of linguistic usage patterns comprising *parce que* 'because' in conversational French, focusing on instances that can be schematized as [assessment + *parce que* + clause/multi-unit stretch of talk]. While *because*-clauses represent a prototypical case of subordination, previous research has shown that these are not always grammatically subordinate but can be used in pragmatic ways to perform stand-alone social actions. This paper expands on these findings by identifying two distinct usage patterns of the focal structure. In pattern I, *parce que* links two actions—an assessment and an account for the assessment—hence working as a pragmatic marker. Pattern II, in turn, shows a highly routinized format, the first part of which, [*c'est* + adjective + *parce que*], works as a semi-fixed, formulaic projector construction that serves to orient co-participants' attention to upcoming talk and to frame that talk in terms of the speaker's stance. *Parce que* here is semantically strongly reduced and has become part of a pragmatic projection routine. We further suggest that occurrences of a similar structure—[*c'est* + adj] without *parce que* (e.g., *c'est intéressant* 'it's interesting', followed by a (multi-unit) stretch of talk)—may be placed further down the path on a continuum of pragmaticalization. We discuss implications of these findings for the relationship between what “on prima facie grounds” (Evans, 2007: 367) formally appear to be main and subordinate clauses, and suggest that pattern II (and its variant without *parce que*) may have evolved through repeated implementation of the conversational assessment-account routine materializing in pattern I.

© 2026 The Authors. Published by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

'Because'-clauses represent a prototypical case of subordination. However, subordination is not a clear-cut issue. Current debates revolve around a continuum between full subordination and 'insubordination', that is, “the conventionalized main-clause use of what, on prima facie grounds, appear to be formally subordinate clauses” (Evans, 2007: 367), raising the issue of degrees of autonomy between what formally appear as 'main' and 'subordinate' clauses. Yet, how different degrees of autonomy are related to different discourse or interactional functions remains an open question (but see Pekarek Doehler and Horlacher, 2025). This paper offers an interactional perspective on patterns comprising *parce que* 'because' in naturally

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: simona.pekarek@unine.ch (S. Pekarek Doehler), agnes.loefgren@unine.ch (A. Löfgren).

occurring conversational French, focusing on instances that can be schematized as follows: [assessment + *parce que* + clause/multi-unit stretch of talk].

Research has shown that ‘because’ and its equivalents may be related to pragmatic, rather than grammatical, linkage. In such cases, ‘because’ can be used, for instance, to account for a previous action, such as a request (Couper-Kuhlen, 2012; Debaisieux, 2016; Li, 2016; Lindström and Londen, 2008). This is found with one type of use of the focal pattern in our data: the *parce que*-clause initiates an account for a just prior assessment. However, the data also shows the frequent occurrence of a different type of use, in which *parce que* is part of a routinized projector construction: [*c’est* + adj. + *parce que*]. We analyze both types of usage patterns, identify their formal differences in terms of syntax, lexicon, prosody, and co-occurring bodily conduct. As to their pragmatic functions, we argue that (a) in the first pattern *parce que* links two actions—an assessment and an account—hence working as a pragmatic marker, along the lines attested for other languages (see above). We suggest that (b) the latter pattern represents a routinized format, the first part of which, [*c’est* + adj. + *parce que*], functioning as a formulaic projector construction that serves to orient co-participants’ attention to upcoming talk and to frame that talk in terms of the speaker’s stance; prosodic properties (i.e., disfluencies following *parce que*) and speakers’ bodily conduct suggest that *parce que* ‘belongs’ to the projector construction, rather than introducing subsequent talk. We hence interpret this pattern as a case of pragmaticalization, that is, “the development of discourse-pragmatic functions, especially those related to the speaker’s subjective or intersubjective stance, from lexical or grammatical sources.” (Traugott, 2002, 264). Interestingly, this pattern shows strong functional parallels as well as some lexico-syntactic resemblance with an interactional routine of the type *it’s funny uh:: uh Bud played at San Mar-*, documented for English by Couper-Kuhlen and Thompson (2008: 453), in which the assessment phase [*it’s* + adj.] works as a story preface. We suggest that, for French, this structure without *parce que* as a linking element between the assessment phrase and what follows may represent a further step on the pragmaticalization path of the projector construction.

2. Previous research

In this section, we outline previous research on ‘because’-clauses and show how such research has contributed to the theorization on subordination and insubordination (section 2.1). Thereafter, we review the literature on projector constructions (section 2.2).

2.1. Because-tokens in social interaction

Clauses introduced by ‘because’ and its equivalents in different languages have typically been treated as one type of adverbial subordination (overview in Gast and Diessel, 2012). The grammatically subordinate ‘because’-clause introduces a cause/reason for what is expressed in the main clause, providing background information to that main clause (e.g., Thompson et al., 2007). Subordination itself has been defined as a type of clause-combination that involves dependence and embedding, meaning that the subordinate clause cannot be fully comprehended on its own and that it functions as a part of another clause (Van Valin, 1984). This is the case of canonical uses of ‘because’-clauses such as in ‘he fell because I pushed him’, where ‘because’ functions as a subordinating conjunction establishing a causal link between a main and a subordinate clause.

However, embeddedness and dependency do not always go hand in hand (Van Valin, 1984), resulting in a continuum of subordination—an issue that has recently attracted much attention in research on ‘insubordination’ (Evans and Watanabe, 2016; Beijering et al., 2019). Research in interactional linguistics has documented the pragmatic behaviors of ‘because’-clauses that can be placed on a continuum of subordination in a range of languages. For instance, work on German and English has shown that free-standing ‘because’-clauses (in German: *wenn*) produced by the same speaker as prior talk can serve the purpose of countering recipients’ doubts or disagreement (Günthner, 1996); when produced by a next speaker, they can serve to display agreement or affiliation (Ford, 1994; Günthner, 1996; Couper-Kuhlen, 2011).

Of central concern for our purpose here are existing observations on the use of ‘because’-clauses through which the speakers provide an account for their prior statement or action, as evidenced, for instance, by Couper-Kuhlen (2012) for English, Günthner (1996) for German, Li (2016) for Mandarin, and Lindström and Londen (2008) for Swedish. In these cases, instead of establishing a syntactic link between a main and a subordinate clause, and working as a subordinating conjunction, ‘because’ builds a pragmatic connection between two actions (see also Couper-Kuhlen, 2011; Debaisieux, 2016; Li, 2016; Rönnqvist, 2024), working as a pragmatic connector. The status of ‘because’-tokens as subordinating conjunctions has hence been challenged for certain occurrences, and some authors consider them as connectives (Lindström and Londen, 2008; Moeschler, 1986), conjunctions (Debaisieux, 2016) or discourse particles (Gohl and Günthner, 1999; Rönnqvist, 2024).

French *parce que* ‘because’-clauses have been studied within different epistemological frameworks, attributing different pragmatic ‘values’ to syntactically independent *parce que* clauses, ranging from argumentative to contrastive (Hancock, 1997), and/or foregrounding their role as parenthetical inserts (Debaisieux, 1994; Hancock, 1997). Many studies on French focus on spoken language use and inform on the grammatical status (micro- or macrosyntactic, e.g., Debaisieux, 1994) of *parce que* clauses or the local relations expressed by the subordinating conjunction. Interactionally oriented work on L1 French *parce que*-clauses is, however, lacking (but see Juillet, 2024, on L2 French).

In this paper, we seek to shed additional light on clause-combining patterns involving ‘because’ and their functions as well as on the grammatical nature of ‘because’-tokens. We identify an additional pattern of relationship between what formally appear as clauses, in which *parce que* is used together with the semi-fixed assessment phrase [*c’est* + adj.] as a projector construction that highlights an upcoming stretch of talk as particularly noteworthy and frames it in terms of speaker stance, often working as a preface to storytelling.

2.2. Projector constructions

Projection is a fundamental principle of language use. Grammatical projection relates to the fact that grammatical elements make certain continuations more expectable than others; action projection refers to cases in which first actions make certain next actions more expectable than others (Auer, 2005). The occurrence of a transitive verb, for instance, projects an object; a question projects an answer as a relevant next action. Previous research has shown how grammatical patterns may routinize as pragmatic devices for projecting actions and turn trajectories: ‘projector constructions’. For instance, initial pieces of pseudo-cleft constructions can be used as ‘autonomous’ fragments serving interactional-organizational purposes, such as framing the incipient discourse as reporting an action or an event (Hopper, 2001), often projecting a multi-unit turn (Hopper and Thompson, 2008; Günthner, 2011; Pekarek Doehler, 2011) or displaying the speaker’s stance towards their upcoming talk (Hopper, 2001; Maschler and Pekarek Doehler, 2022).

This latter point shows that projection does not only operate on a syntactic, or actional, level but speakers may also project their emotional or evaluative stance towards upcoming talk. For instance, storytellers use story prefaces to demonstrate their stance towards the story that will follow and thus facilitate appropriate uptake from the recipients in terms of affiliation (Sacks, 1974; Selting, 2010). Assessments are well suited for that purpose, as they are privileged places for entailing heightened mutual orientation (Goodwin and Goodwin, 1987). It has been demonstrated that participants sometimes frame upcoming talk through *evaluative prefaces* that are extraposed to the subsequent talk, such as ‘it’s funny’. Couper-Kuhlen and Thompson (2008) document that such prefaces can occur without any syntactic link to subsequent talk (no subordinating ‘that’), often consist of semi-fixed patterns ([it’s + evaluative adjective/noun]), are prospectively oriented in that they announce an upcoming assessable (i.e., an object of the assessment, cf. Goodwin and Goodwin, 1987: 10) that was absent in prior talk, and can introduce a stretch of talk of various length. This is in line with our [*c’est* + adj. + *parce que*] pattern.

3. Data and method

The data stems from a corpus of approximately 20 h of ordinary conversation between two to four participants, mostly students, in a university cafeteria in a French-speaking region. The data was collected by university students engaged as research assistants; recordings were done by two cameras, set at two different angles, completed by an additional microphone set on the table between the participants who were having drinks or snacks during breaks. The participants gave their informed consent to recording and the use of the recorded material for research purposes.

The data was transcribed according to Jeffersonian transcription conventions (Jefferson, 2004), complemented by Mondada’s (2018) conventions for bodily conduct (see Appendix). Our interactional linguistic analysis (Couper-Kuhlen and Selting, 2018) is based on a collection of 101 occurrences of assessments followed by a *parce que*-introduced stretch of talk across the whole database. The collection was established based on an automatic search for *parce que* in the transcribed data; it includes each occurrence of *parce que* that corresponds to two criteria: (a) It is preceded by a clause accomplishing an assessment, (b) it introduces a clause or a longer stretch of talk (i.e., aborted utterances or non-verbal completions following *parce que* were excluded). Based on a sequential analysis of each occurrence in the collection, we established two sub-collections: i) assessments followed by a *parce que*-introduced account for the assessment (N = 75), ii) assessments projecting a clause/longer stretch of talk in the format of [*c’est* ‘it’s’ + adj.+ *parce que* ‘because’] (N = 26). We refer to these as patterns I and II respectively.

In what follows, we begin by discussing pattern I (section 4). This allows us then to determine the distinctive features of pattern II (section 5).

4. Analysis of pattern I: assessments followed by *parce que*-introduced accounts

In this section, we analyze uses where the *parce que*-clause accounts for a prior assessment by the same speaker. We identify four distinctive features of this pattern. First, the lexical make-up of the assessment is heterogeneous rather than uniform. Second, semantically and syntactically, the assessment preceding the *parce que* includes the assessable (i.e., the object of the assessment, cf. Goodwin and Goodwin, 1987: 10) and is typically complex, for instance involving both an emotional stance display (e.g., *mais c’est bien* ‘but it’s good’, ex. 1 below) and a situation towards which that stance is held (e.g., in the form of an embedded clause, ex. 1). Third, the assessment is backward-looking, that is, it relates to prior discourse (often through discourse-deictic means, e.g., *cette* ‘this’, ex. 1). Fourth, if there are hesitations or bodily hiatus (Pekarek Doehler, 2021) during the production, these occur after the main clause and before the *parce-que*-initiated account, suggesting that *parce que* and the subsequent clause ‘go together’. These formal features contrast with what we find in the routinized projection format (i.e., pattern II).

In extract 1, Nathan (NAT) and his professor (PRO) are discussing a draft of Nathan's master thesis. The professor has started to evaluate the text (l.1). The focal structure (in bold) occurs in lines 6–10.

Extract 1: PC23_01:30

01 PRO: là on doit- on doit y °améliorer°.
there one needs- one needs to improve

02 NAT: ouais
yeah

03 (1.0)

04 PRO: mais **alors** eu:h==
but PRT

05 NAT: =mais au fait je-ce qui serait [bien]
but in fact I what would be good

06 PRO: **[*mais] c'est bien**
but it's good
 pro *gesture LH--->

07 **#que vous ayez cette perception.*#**
that you have this perception
 pro ---->*LH home position-->
 fig #figure 1a #figure 1b



Fig. 1a



Fig. 1b

08 (.)

09 PRO: ***parce que# c'est-c'est justement* ça**
because it's it's exactly this
 pro -->*gesture LH-----*
 fig #figure 1c



Fig. 1c

10 **qu'il faut faire quoi,=**
that one needs to do PRT

11 NAT: =ouais j'ai remarqué ((turn continues))
yeah I noticed

In response to the professor's evaluation of the text (l.1), Nathan tries to take the floor (l.5) while the professor begins to produce another assessment followed by an account (ll.6–11). The backward-looking nature of the assessment is indexed through the demonstrative *cette perception* 'this perception' (l.7), pointing back to Nathan's own prior assessment of his text. The assessment is syntactically complex and content-wise elaborate, as it comprises the assessable, i.e., the object of the

assessment: It consists of [assessment phrase + assessable], to which the subsequent *parce que*-clause introduces an account.

In the present case, the *parce que*-clause is incrementally added-on (Ono and Thompson, 2012, on increments): The assessment ends on final falling intonation (l.7), which coincides with not only a syntactic but also a pragmatic completion point (a *complex transition relevance place*, Ford, Fox & Thompson, 1996). The *parce que*-introduced clause accounts for this assessment. In other words, through this increment, the speaker justifies why he has just made the assessment. The assessment and the *parce que*-introduced account implement two distinct actions, further separated by a small pause (l.8) and a break in the speaker's gestural behavior, as his left hand returns to home position (Sacks and Schegloff, 2002; see l.7, fig. 1b) before re-starting to gesticulate while producing the *parce que*-introduced clause (fig. 1c). These gestural moves are significant as gesture return to home has been associated with sequence closure or action completion (Mondada, 2007; Sidnell, 2005) and bodily hiati have been shown to be one means through which speakers delimit actions and units of talk (Pekarek Doehler, 2021).

What we see are thus two separate, stand-alone actions—albeit pragmatically linked via *parce que*—, designed as such by the prosodic and bodily-visual break between the two. Just as attested in prior research on similar phenomena in other languages (section 2.1), *parce que* here works as a pragmatic connective, linking two actions, rather than a subordinating conjunction.

Extract 2 below presents a similar case. In the beginning of the extract, Penelope (PEN) is ending a positive evaluation of the instructions that they received for some coursework. In response, Danielle (DAN) makes a negative assessment of those instructions, followed by a *parce que*-introduced account (ll.6–11).

Extract 2: PC09_19:15

04 PEN: ça nous a donné un calendrier on sait ce qu'on doit faire
that gave us a schedule we know what we need to do

05 [jusqu'à]
until

06 DAN: [bah] (.) moi 'fin j'suis partagée sur comment il
well me I mean I feel ambivalent about how he

07 nous a présenté le truc en fait.
presented the thing to us actually

08 (.)

09 .hh parce que (0.7) t'sais j't'ai dit,
because you know I told you

10 il nous a juste expliqué le thème,
he just explained the theme

11 >il nous a introduit au thème,< (.)
he introduced us to the theme

12 il nous a rien dit d'autre.
he said nothing else to us

13 (.)

14 PEN: ouais?
Yeah

As in the previous extract, the assessment proper (ll.6–7) consists of both an assessment phrase (*moi je suis partagée* 'I feel ambivalent') and the assessable (*comment il nous a présenté le truc* 'how he presented the thing to us', the two being connected through *sur*, literally: 'on')— and this is a central difference to what we will observe in pattern II where the assessment proper does not contain an assessable. Here, the *parce que*-introduced stretch of talk works as an account for the prior assessment. Prosodic resources (final intonation on the assessment, followed by a pause and inbreath) present the assessment and the *parce que*-introduced account as two separate units. In this extract, a small pause follows *parce que*—that is, at a point of maximum grammatical control (Schegloff, 1996)—which serves as a floor-holder until the account is produced.

At times, we find occurrences of the assessment plus account pattern to be prosodically through-produced. The next excerpt occurs a couple of seconds after the prior one. Danielle is still talking about the vague instructions the teacher gave them (l.27). She then assesses this as, *d'un côté* 'on the one hand' (l.32) positive, as it gives the students a lot of freedom, letting them discover things by themselves:

Extract 3: PC09_19:40

27 DAN: et fait lire des lectures en fait sur le sujet pour nous dire
and makes (us) read readings actually on the topic to tell us

28 bah les différentes euh:: choses qu'ils vont [faire] sur=
well the different things that they are going to do on

29 PEN [ouais,]
yeah

30 DAN: =le sujet.°
the topic

31 (.)

32 DAN: +.h d'un >côté< j'trouve ça cool parce que ça nous fout pas
on the one hand I find this cool because it does not put
dan +turns head and gaze L-->

33 vraiment le stress+* =`fin* .h ça nous laisse découvrir par nous
really stress on us I mean it lets us discover on our
dan -->+turns head and gaze tow. PEN-->
pen *nods-*

34 même en fait (0.3) les choses qui ont été faites sur le sujet
own actually the things that were done on the subject

35 et tout *et nous inté*resser à ce qui nous intéresse? h.
and all and make us interested in what we are interested in
pen *nods-----*

36 (0.7)

37 DAN: mais (0.4) +de l'autre t'sais j'me dis?+ (1.1)que:: mhm:+
but on the other you know I tell myself that
dan -->+gaze down-----+head & gaze R.--+g.PEN-->

38 (0.4)j'aimerais bien (0.4)'fin savoi:r euh:
I'd really like to well know

39 >qu'est-ce qui< faut faire pour quand?
what we have to do for when

40 PEN: ouais.=
yeah

Contrary to the prior two excerpts, this one shows the assessment and the *parce-que*-introduced (complex) clause packaged together as one turn-constructional unit, with no prosodic break between the two. Also, the excerpt shows a shorter and structurally less complex assessment than the two preceding examples. However, the assessment is again backward-looking, i.e., it refers to a priorly mentioned issue—the fact that the teacher gives the students a lot of reading—which is indexed by the discourse-deictic *ça* 'that'. And it is hearable as an action in itself, which is then followed by a *parce que*-introduced account.

In this section, we have seen three representative examples of assessments followed by *parce que*-introduced accounts. The assessment and the *parce que*-introduced account accomplish two distinct actions, the latter being pragmatically related to the former through *parce que*—as a pragmatic connector, rather than a subordinating conjunction establishing a causal link between two utterances (cf. Debaisieux, 2016). Most often in our data, the *parce que*-clause is incrementally added on to a turn that has come to a complex transition relevance place, indexing that this preceding stretch of talk is grammatically, pragmatically, and prosodically complete. The two stretches of talk are hence displayed as separate units via prosody, pauses, and sometimes also through the speaker's bodily conduct. This pattern converges with previous research on social interactions in other languages that has demonstrated a pragmatic use of 'because'-clauses as accounts for a prior action (Couper-Kuhlen, 2012; Günthner, 1996; Li, 2016; Lindström and Londen, 2008; Rönnqvist, 2024).

5. Analysis of pattern II: [*c'est* + adj. + *parce que*] as a routinized format for projection

We now turn to the routinized, semi-fixed pattern [*c'est* 'it's' + adj. + *parce que*] that works as projector construction, foreshadowing further talk while displaying the speaker's stance towards that talk. This pattern—to our knowledge so far undocumented in L1 interaction (though see Juillet, 2024, for a similar phenomenon in L2 French)—shows a range of distinctive formal features that contrast with pattern I above. First, the assessment phrase solely consists of a *ce* 'it' (shortened to *c'*)—a designedly unspecified neutral pronoun (akin to a dummy pronoun), the third person form of the copula *être* 'to be', typically in present tense, plus an evaluative adjective that is semantically vague/generic. Second, in contrast to the extracts above, the segment preceding *parce que* does not provide the assessable, that is, it does not encode *what* is being

assessed. Third, the assessment is not backward-looking but prospectively announces something that will materialize as the assessable. Fourth, the assessment phrase and *parce que* are through-produced, that is, there is no prosodic break—nor any bodily hiatus—between the two; pauses or hesitations often occur not before but after the production of *parce que*, suggesting that the *parce que* is produced as part of the initial [c'est + adj. + *parce que*] pattern. Fifth, the pattern is followed by further talk of various length that can range from a simple clause to a complex multi-unit stretch of talk. Based on its lexicosemantic, prosodic and praxeological properties, we argue that the [c'est + adj. + *parce que*] pattern works as a semi-fixed, highly routinized projector construction. Stance displays often precede longer tellings, providing cues for how the recipient is expected to respond to the telling (sect. 2.2 above). This is exactly what we will show for our focal pattern: It announces something noteworthy, often functioning as a preface to a story or a longer telling.

We first analyze representative excerpts (5.1), then provide a schematic representation of the recurrent features of pattern II (5.2), and finally discuss its family resemblance with evaluative prefaces as analyzed by Couper-Kuhlen and Thompson (2008) (5.3).

5.1. Sequential analysis of pattern II

In extract 4, Ekti (EKT) and Joanna (JOA) are discussing the breakup of a common acquaintance. In the beginning of the extract, Ekti concludes that the couple were not a good match (ll.1–3). The focal structure is produced by Joanna in response on lines 4–9.

Extract 4: PC05_13.15

01 EKT: non mais i- ils se correspondaient pas.
no but they- they didn't match

02 franchement heu:: (0.5)
honestly

03 moi je les [+voyais pas du tout ensemble.]
I couldn't see them together at all

04 JOA: [mais *#c'est triste parce qu]*#e::# (.) il faut-
but it's sad because there has to be
ekt *gazes away-----*gazes at JOA
joa *gazes at EKT
joa +rubs eye and shakes head-->
fig #figure 2a #figure 2b



Fig. 2a



Fig. 2b

05 il faut un:e rupture,
there has to be a break-up

06 faut qu'il lui fasse du mal pour qu'elle
he has to hurt her in order for

07 se rende compte [que: finalement,]
to realize that in the end

08 EKT: [ouai:s.]
yeah

09 JOA: °(ouais non) ça +n'allait pas.°
(yeah no) it didn't work
joa -->+

10 (1.2)

11 EKT: °*ouais# c'est sûr.°
 yeah for sure
 ekt -->*gaze down w. sad facial expression-->
 fig #figure 2c



Fig. 2c

Not only is the assessment highly succinct (*c'est triste* 'it's sad'), but also the *parce que* is prosodically packaged as belonging to the same unit as the assessment: The focal structure is through-produced until after *parce que*, where a pause occurs. The final sound-stretch strengthens the sense of projection of more to come, adding to the syntactic projection emanating from the *parce que*. The fact that the co-participant does not take the turn during the subsequent short pause shows that she orients to more talk to come on the part of the current speaker. Note also that Joanna's gaze stays averted during the segment *c'est triste parce que*, and turns to Ekti right after that, which may be a further indicator that the assessment + *parce que* are produced as things that 'go together'.

Semantically, *parce que* is largely reduced: what follows *c'est triste* 'it's sad' can hardly be heard as a reason for something being sad, nor does it account for why Joanna produces the assessment 'it's sad': Rather, it specifies the very thing that Joanna considers as sad, i.e., it presents the assessable. This is not to say that *parce que* does not keep any nuances of a causal link on a metalinguistic level—but this semantic dimension seems considerably weaker than in pattern I (which can readily be paraphrased as: "I am saying X because Y"). Further, and as mentioned above, there are not two self-standing actions here. This is made particularly visible through the fact that the initial *ce* 'it' is working as a forward looking, cataphoric device, rather than a discourse anaphora tying back to prior talk. This actually means that 'it's sad' does not represent a full self-standing assessment as the reference of 'it' (i.e., the assessable) is undetermined, being specified only later in the subsequent clause or stretch of talk. In the current excerpt, what is qualified as sad by Joanna is not that the couple 'did not match' or that Ekti did not 'see them together', as expressed by Ekti in lines 1–3, but that there had to be a break-up and that the ex-boyfriend had to hurt the girl for her to realize that the relationship did not work, as expressed by Joanna in her subsequent talk (1.4–7). This forward-looking nature of *c'est triste* 'it's sad' is further enhanced by the turn-initial disjunct marker *mais* 'but' (cf. Jefferson 1978). *C'est triste* here, then, works as a prospective indexical (Goodwin, 1996): a designedly unspecified descriptive or evaluative phrase that announces (projects) an upcoming specification.

Importantly, the [*c'est* + adj. + *parce que*] format observably attracts the recipient's (Ekti) attention, as Ekti turns her gaze toward Joanna exactly at the end of that stretch averting it only at the end of Joanna's turn. The speaker (Joanna) in turn appears to await Ekti's display of attention: While her syllable lengthening on *parce que* may be due to overlap, it allows her to slightly delay the production of subsequent talk until having received Ekti's gaze and hence attention display. This suggests that the initial [*c'est* + adj. + *parce que*] pattern serves not only to project subsequent talk and frame it in terms of stance, but also works as an attention-getting device. Due to its evaluative nature, it is particularly suited for securing reciprocity and heightened orientation on the part of the coparticipant (cf. Goodwin and Goodwin, 1987: 7).

The framing of upcoming talk as reporting something sad materializes through several resources. In addition to the adjective *triste* 'sad', Joanna shakes her head and rubs her eye (11.4–9), thus multimodally enacting her emotional stance. After the production of the assessable, Ekti displays alignment (1.8, 11), and, through her sad look down to the side (1.9), also affiliation with Joanna's stance. In short, Joanna's initial stance display—here done *via* the projector construction—provides cues for the recipient, facilitating their uptake in terms of affiliation (cf. Sacks, 1974; Selting, 2010).

The extract illustrates how [*c'est* + adj. + *parce que*] works as a projector construction, framing what comes next in terms of speaker's stance. It shows a range of features that are typical for the assessment + *parce que* projecting pattern: The assessment is short, condensed in this recurrent [*c'est* + adj.] form, the *parce que* is prosodically packaged together with the assessment, *ce* 'it' (shortened to *c'*) is forward looking; the whole assessment phrase works as a prospective indexical. Also, semantically, *parce que* has lost its property of introducing a reason for what precedes (cf. Thompson et al., 2007)—be it in terms of content or action. Importantly, the information weight of what formally appears as a main clause (here: the assessment phrase) is 'light' whereas what formally looks like a *parce-que* introduced subordinate clause provides the main information. Finally, as we will see below (sect. 5.2), the adjective in the pattern is typically of a frequent and generic type.

Further support in favor of the claim that *parce que* is part of the projector construction comes from the fact that, recurrently, when aborting a turn for instance due to overlap, that abortion comes after *parce que* and not before. In Extract 5, Paul (PAU) is comparing the French president Macron to Charles de Gaulle, presenting de Gaulle as someone who 'would have reacted' (1.1). Sara (SAR) attempts to take the floor twice by means of *oui mais c'est drôle parce que*: 'yes but it's funny

because' (l.4) and *oui mais c'est marrant parce que* (*marrant* is synonymous with *drôle* 'funny') (l. 10), before she re-uses the format a third time, succeeding in getting the turn (l.15).

Extract 5: 2PC26_27:50

- 01 PAU: pour moi de gaulle aurait réagi,
to me de Gaulle would have reacted
- 02 euh et (.) et depuis l'premier jour il aurait été euh,
and and from the first day he would have been
- 03 (0.9)
- 04 SAR: oui mais c'est [drôle parce que:,]
yeah but it's funny because
- 05 PAU: [chuis au devant d'la scène] (.) pour dire
I'm at the front of the stage to say
- 06 qu'est-c'qui s'pa:sse [etcétéra,]
what's happening and so on
- 07 SAR: [mmh.]
yeah
- 08 (0.9)
- 09 PAU: et [macron n'avait (.) pas cette ex]périence=
and Macron didn't have this experience
- 10 SAR: [mais c'est marrant parce que:]
but it's funny because
- 11 PAU: =parce qu'il s'est (.) privé de toute expérience [politique,]=
because he never gave himself any political experience
- 12 SAR: [oui mais,]=
yes but
- 13 PAU: =&d- de la cinquième république.=
in the fifth republic
- 14 CLA: =mais en fait [il a prétendu euh:,]
but actually he pretended
- 15 SAR: [en même temps c'est drôle parce] que:: (pardon)
at the same time it's funny because
- 16 eh que >que< (tu dis) tout d'suite tu dis (.) de gaulle c'est
that that you say right away you say de Gaulle it's
- 17 hyper français de raisonner comme ça de [dire]=
super French to reason like that to say
- 18 CLA: [mmh.]
yeah
- 19 SAR: =mais en fait (c'est) (.) de gaulle [(aurait été) comme ça.]=
but actually it's de Gaulle would have been like that
- 20 JEA: [hahaha]=

Sara's use of *mais c'est drôle/marrant parce que*: as a means for getting the floor may be seen as a correlate to the pattern's functioning as an attention-getting device: Announcing something noteworthy may serve to gain access to the floor. Also, as shown in line 15, starting a turn with [*c'est* + adj. + *parce que*] has the potential of helping the speaker to move out of overlap, and hence to produce the projected subsequent talk 'in the clear'—talk, which, as we have seen above, bears the main information load. Furthermore, each of the three occurrences shows syllable lengthening at the end of *parce que*, augmenting the projection, but through-production of what precedes until that exact point. Finally, each is preceded by a disjunct marker (*oui mais* 'yes but', l.4, *mais* 'but', l.10 and *en même temps* 'at the same time', l.15) further qualifying the projection as possibly introducing something disjunct from prior talk. When Sara finally manages to get the floor and make her point, namely that it is typical (and funny) of French people to bring up de Gaulle in a discussion about French politics (ll.15 sq.), she receives affiliative laughter in response from Jeanne (ll.20, 22).

In sum, the excerpt confirms the routinized character of the pattern introducing a turn/telling in a way that at the same time projects what kind of telling it will be. The cut-offs after *parce que*, concurrently with prior observations of pausing at that moment in the turns-in-progress, further support the interpretation of [*c'est* + adj. + *parce que*] as one chunk. This is

here also corroborated by the fact that what follows *parce que* (1.16–19) cannot be heard as a syntactic continuation; the interjection *pardon* 'sorry', the subsequent filled pause *eh*, and the complementizer *que* 'that', all conspire to mark a break with what *parce que* may have projected on formal syntactic grounds.

The example below illustrates how speakers use the projector construction to introduce a longer telling. On line 1, Cédric (CED) asks Camille (CAM) how her boyfriend is doing. Camille, rather than producing the standard answer 'he's fine', embarks on a lengthy telling, which is framed by the projector construction *c'est un peu particulier parce que* 'it's a bit special because' (1.3). The telling concerns the working situation of Jack, who is unemployed, although he had gotten his hopes up about a position at the company Interdiscount.

Extract 6: PC07_01:30

- 01 CED: ET jack comment il va?
and Jack how is he doing
- 02 *(1.3)
- cam *gaze down-->
- 03 CAM: ***#ben: c'est un peu particulier parce que:: (0.5)*#tu sais il**
well it's a bit special because you know he
- cam -->*gaze away-----*gz down-->
- fig #figure 3a #figure 3b

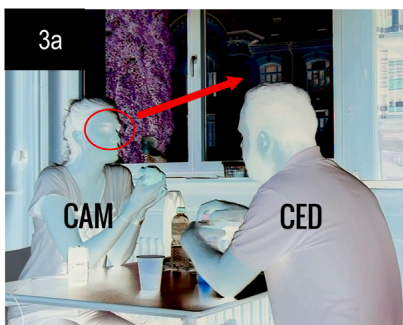


Fig. 3a

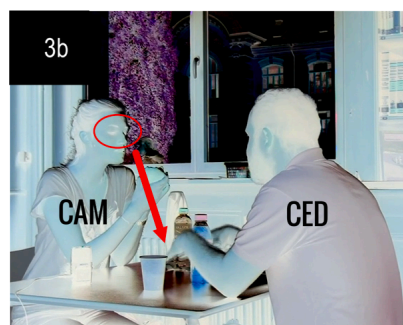


Fig. 3b

- 04 **s'était fait vachement d'espoir sur un job eumh:#* (0.7)eumh:**
had gotten his hopes high up about a job
- cam -->*
- fig #figure 3c

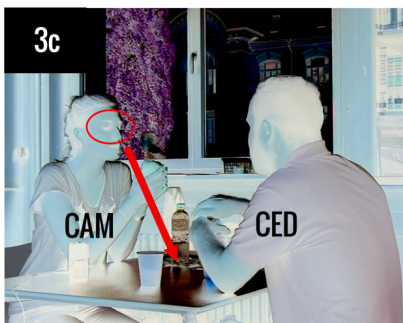


Fig. 3c

- 05 **(0.7) chez interdiscount.**
at Interdiscount
- 06 CED: ouais.
yeah
- 07 CAM: **et puis en fait euh:: i- il a reçu une réponse négative**
and then actually eh h- he got a negative response
- 08 **pour finir,**
in the end
09. ***(0.8) * et euh du coup il se retrouve de nouveau**
and eh so he once again finds himself
- ced *rais. eyebrs.*

- 10 °au chô^mage, °
unemployed
* (0.3) * et euh ben euh il lui reste pas
and eh well eh he does not have
ced *raise eyebrows.*
- 11 beaucoup de temps avant d'être à la fin de sa (période) tu
a lot of time before being at the end of his (duration) you
- 12 vois?=
see
- 13 CED: =ouais.
yeah
- 14 CAM: et on a::: (en)fin. une fille m'a parlé de ça,
and we well a girl spoke to me about that
- 15 une fille que j'ai rencontrée en cours,
a girl that I met in class
- 16 en fait tu as des formations qualifiantes
actually there are meriting educational programs
(9 lines omitted)
- 25 (0.5) mais il faut que il trouve un contrat d'apprentissage
but he has to find an apprenticeship contract
- 26 en entreprise,
at a company
- 27 (0.5)
- 28 CED: donc ce [serait] un: dans:=
so it would be a- in
- 29 CAM: [et::]
and
- 30 CED: =euh comment ça, [hRHRHr]
eh how that
- 31 CAM: [c'est un] c-f-c.
it's a CFC*

*certificat fédérale de capacité, i.e., 'federal certificate of capacity'. Swiss diploma of professional degree.

Here, [c'est + adj. + *parce que*] is not preceded by a disjunct marker, but by *ben* 'well'. In French, *ben* 'well' typically works as a preface to a disaligning response (Pekarek Doehler, 2022); here it serves to alert to an incipient non-straightforward response: Camille's response to Cédric's question is not the expected "he is doing fine" but a troubles telling about his work situation, introduced by her *ben*: *c'est un peu particulier* 'well it's a bit special'. The last syllable of *parce que* is once again lengthened, which strengthens the sense of projection, and followed by a pause that establishes a small prosodic disjuncture from what follows (l.3). The speaker's gaze behavior is again closely coordinated with the projector construction: Camille gazes away during its production, and then turns her gaze down only with the talk following *parce que* (l.3), packaging the assessment phrase and *parce que* together through her gaze conduct. As in the previous extracts, the main informational weight is not on what formally appears to be the main clause but on the whole stretch of talk that follows *parce que*.

The projective capacity of the focal pattern here reaches not simply over the subsequent clause, but over the whole telling; it creates the strong expectation of an upcoming specification of what is 'a bit special'. Importantly, the fact that there is such a projection allows the speaker to insert material that provides background information for what comes next, such as 'he had gotten his hopes up about a position at Interdiscount' (ll.3–5; see also ll.14 sq)—without that material being heard as random: Due to the initial projection, it is heard as setting the scene for the speaker's telling (cf. Pekarek Doehler, 2011).

The very strength of the projective capacities of the [c'est + adj. + *parce que*] piece is evidenced by the fact that the interlocutor Cédric refrains from taking the floor, and accompanies the troubles telling with continuers (ll.6, 13) and embodied displays of affiliation, as he raises his eyebrows (ll.9, 11) as a sign of negative evaluation (cf. Kaukomaa et al., 2014).

As evidenced in this excerpt, the projector construction allows the speaker to configure a complex multi-unit turn, and the recipient to navigate through its architecture and respond in appropriate ways. While still working as a projector construction and stance-framing device for subsequent talk, in this case the semantics of the adjective 'special', though downgraded through 'a bit', combined with the turn-initial *ben*: 'well', also alerts the recipient to the fact that the response will not be straightforward and will go against expectation. In other words: It works as a preface to a dispreferred response.

5.2. Overview of the design features of pattern II: [c'est + adj. + *parce que*]

The recurrence of the pattern and its semi-fixed character are evidenced in the schematic presentation shown in Table 1, which sums up all 26 occurrences found in the data (we excluded aborted segments, as in ex. 5, ll.4, 10). When read from left

to right, the Table shows the typical composition of the construction and its immediate environment. The projector construction is often prefaced by discourse particles (1st column) that most often serve as disjunct markers (e.g., *mais* 'but', *d'ailleurs* 'by the way') adding to the prospective orientation of the construction; these particles may occasionally mark alignment or disalignment with previous talk (*ben* 'well', *ouais* 'yeah'). These are followed by the third person neutral pronoun *ce* 'it' (shortened to *c'*) plus the verb *être* 'to be', most often in third person present tense *est* 'is',¹ that introduce the evaluative adjective. *Ce* is typically akin to a dummy pronoun, forward oriented rather than anaphoric in nature, which further strengthens the pattern's projective capacities. At times, the adjective is reinforced (or weakened) by a prepositioned intensifier (or modalizer). The evaluative phrase is immediately followed by *parce que*, after which there is often a slight break in the turn's progressivity, due to a final vowel lengthening, a pause and/or hesitation markers. The speaker's gaze and gestures are often coordinated to index a disjunction between [*c'est* + adj. + *parce que*] and what follows. The recipient does not treat the assessment as an action in and of itself, as evidenced by the fact that they refrain from responding until the speaker has produced what is being projected by the projector construction, which may range from a simple clause to a lengthy telling. Finally, the evaluative adjectives in the projector construction consist exclusively of frequent, often familiar and generic expressions that can be seen as prototypical exemplars for expressing an assessment in conversational French, with two single lexical items (*cool* and *chiant* 'annoying') making up 42 % (n = 11) of all occurrences. The lexico-semantic nature of the focal pattern, together with its prosodic compactness, strongly suggests that it works as a semi-fixed chunk.

Table 1

Schematic representation of all occurrences of the projector construction in the data (n = 26). Headings in parentheses indicate optional but recurrent elements.

(Discourse markers)	<i>c'est</i> /'it is'	(Intensifier)	Adjective	<i>parce que</i> 'because'	(break)	Subsequent talk
<i>mais</i> 'but' <i>ben</i> 'well' <i>d'ailleurs</i> 'by the way' <i>à part cela</i> 'by the way' <i>oui/ouais</i> 'yes/yeah' etc.	<i>Ce</i> (3rd ps neutral pronoun) + <i>être</i> 'to be' (most often in 3rd ps present tense: <i>est</i> 'is')	Adverbs such as: <i>assez</i> 'rather' <i>trop</i> 'too/very' <i>hyper</i> 'hyper/super' <i>un peu</i> 'a bit'	<i>cool</i> 'cool' x 6 <i>chiant</i> 'annoying' x 5 <i>intéressant</i> 'interesting' x 3 <i>facile</i> 'easy' x 2 <i>bizarre</i> 'strange' x 2 <i>drôle</i> 'funny' x 2 <i>dommage</i> 'a shame' <i>dingue</i> 'crazy' <i>triste</i> 'sad' <i>marrant</i> 'funny' <i>idiot</i> 'idiotic' <i>particulier</i> 'special'		Lengthening on last vowel of <i>parce que</i> Pause Repair initiator Bodily hiati	Sometimes a clause; often a multi-unit stretch of talk, a telling

Out of the total 101 cases of assessments followed by *parce que* in our collection, 26 % (N = 26) are made up of this pattern. This, and its recurrent features, as shown in Table 1, evidence that what we are observing is a recurrent conversational routine through which speakers project further talk of a certain type and frame it in terms of their own evaluative stance, alerting recipients to noticeable upcoming talk and to how that talk is to be received (e.g., as a 'cool', 'annoying', 'sad' telling, etc.).

5.3. Losing *parce que*: a continuum of pragmaticalization?

In this last section, we broaden our scope by highlighting the similarity of our projector construction to what has been referred to as evaluative prefaces by Couper-Kuhlen and Thompson (2008) for American English conversation, as in *it's funny* (.) *she never called* (section 2.2 above). The authors relate this to extraposition (*it's funny that she never called*). We have found that this latter structure—with no formal link between the preface and what follows—also occurs in French and functions in the same way as the [*c'est* + adj. + *parce que*]-projector construction described in sections 5.1 and 5.2 above. This raises the question of whether the two formal structures are related by family resemblance (cf. Hopper, 2001), or actually pertain to the same functional pattern, located at different points on a continuum of pragmaticalization.

Consider excerpts 7 and 8, the former with, and the latter without, *parce que*. In extract 7, Ekti (EKT) and Joanna (JOA) just closed a conversation about cell phones when Ekti remarks on an acquaintance ('Éloise', l.11) passing by, and then introduces a new topic prefaced by the disjunct marker *à part ça* 'besides that/by the way' followed by the assessment *c'est trop marrant* 'it's so funny':

¹ We found one occurrence of *ce serait* 'it would be', one *ça doit être* 'that must be', and two *ça c'est* 'that is' functioning exactly as the *c'est*-structures. These are included in our total of 26 occurrences.

Extract 7: PC5_10:00

10 (0.5)
 11 EKT: a:h il y a (eloise) qui vient de passer °avant.°
 ah there was Éloise who just passed by
 12 (3.0)
 13 EKT: >à part ça c'est trop marrant parce que vu qu'on est ici
 by the way it's so funny because since we are here
 14 il y a tout le monde qui est en train de nous regarder.
 everyone is looking at us
 15 t'as vu le:: (0.5) la réaction des gens,
 did you see people's reactions?
 16 (1.1)
 17 JOA: ouais ((turn continued))
 yeah

Given its sequential context after the closing of a prior activity and topic, the focal structure is involved in opening a new sequence and initiating a new topic. This is highlighted through the turn-initial *à part ça* 'by the way' and by the cataphoric nature of *ce* 'it': What is *marrant* 'funny' is that everyone is looking at them (ll.13–15). Typical for our focal pattern, the *parce que* has lost not only its syntactic function as a subordinator, but also to a large extent its semantic property of marking a causal linkage: It appears as if the projecting evaluative phrase and the slot of talk that fulfills the projection could as well be merely juxtaposed: 'it's funny \emptyset since we are here everyone is looking at us'. In other words, in this pattern, participants use *parce que* to establish a mere pro-forma clausal relation between two stretches with at best only a very weak causal component.

Extract 8 below illustrates exactly that type of juxtaposition – without *parce que*. It shows a lexically identical assessment phrase as extract 7, *c'est trop marrant* 'it's so funny', yet without a subsequent *parce que* or any complementizer such as *que* 'that' (as in extraposition). The extract features four students discussing the different nationalities of classmates. Caroline (CAR) just asked Lise (LIS) whether she is Chinese, and Lise responds affirmatively (l.5). She then produces the focal structure on lines 10–12:

Extract 8: 2PC11_07:30

05 [cent pour cent]
 hundred percent
 04 CAR: [↑ah no:::n.]=
 no way
 05 CAR: =↑cent?
 hundred
 06 (0.3)
 07 LIS: ouais.
 yeah
 08 (0.3)
 09 CAR: non.=
 no way
 10 LIS: =t'sais qu'c'est trop marrant ma mère quand elle s'est mariée
 you know that it's so funny my mother when she got married
 11 (0.2) elle a pas dû changer d'nom d'famille parc- qu'elle
 she didn't have to change her surname because she
 12 avait déjà l'm(h)ême n(h)om d'f(h)amille que mon père=
 already had the same surname as my father
 13 CAR: =a[h::]=
 oh
 14 ALB: [mpfhh]=

The assessment phrase, here embedded in a construction that marks the speaker's high implication of the interlocutor (*tu sais que* 'you know that', e.g., Dostie 2004), is used as a projecting device, announcing something funny to come, namely the fact that Lise's mother didn't have to change her surname because her family name was the same as her husband's. And it is received as such by Alba (ALB) (L14), who responds with a laughter token. While the evaluative framing device occurs here without *parce que*, it functions just like the [*c'est* + adj. + *parce que*] projector construction: It introduces a telling, framing it in terms of the speaker's stance and by the same token marking it as particularly noteworthy. This resonates with what Couper-Kuhlen and Thompson (2008: 453–454) mention in their study that focusses on extrapositions: "considered in terms of social action, a construction like *it's funny because*, if it projects a story, accomplishes the same social action as does a simple *it's funny*".

The parallelism between the two structures with or without *parce que* provides further evidence for the semantic erosion of *parce que* as used in our focal projector construction. This has interesting implications for the status of *parce que*, which we turn to in the discussion below. Most importantly, however, it suggests that the two formal patterns, rather than being different constructions, may be part of a continuum where the version without *parce que* is further down along the path of pragmaticalization: the [*c'est* + adj. + (*parce que*) + clause/telling] structure has routinized to an extent that there is no need for the connective element anymore.²

6. Discussion

In this study, we have analyzed two usage types of a structure that can be schematized as follows: [assessment + *parce que* + clause/multi-unit stretch of talk]. Although the two usage types formally resemble each other, they present important differences in terms of pragmatic functioning and lexico-syntactic composition. Characteristic for pattern I is: (a) the assessment comes in a wide range of forms, often complex; (b) the assessable is either made explicit in the assessment proper or is referred to through backward-looking discourse anaphora. This type of usage can be seen as situated on a continuum between full syntactic insubordination and full independence (see Pekarek Doehler and Horlacher, 2025, for a cline of insubordination): Neither is there a syntactic relation between the two actions or stretches of talk, nor are they fully autonomous, as *parce que* introduces an account for the preceding assessment. The pattern shows in fact a case of *pragmatic dependence* between two stretches of talk, where *parce que* 'because' ceases to work as a subordinating conjunction and acquires the status of a pragmatic marker, still semantically conferring 'reason for', but not at the level of what is expressed in the preceding clause (as in its subordinating use, cf. Thompson et al., 2007), but at the level of the action performed by that clause.

Pattern II, by contrast, does not show a combination of two stand-alone actions, but it does not show a syntactic dependence either. Instead, [*c'est* + adj. + *parce que*] works as a projector construction, announcing more to come, framing that talk in terms of the speaker's stance and thus making it particularly noticeable, often attracting coparticipants' attention to an incipient telling or other multi-unit stretch of talk. In contrast to pattern I, the assessment in pattern II shows (a) strong lexico-syntactic consistency, being formatted as [*c'est* 'it's' + adj.], with adjectives typically stemming from an inventory of frequent and generic evaluative terms, such as *cool* or *drôle* 'funny'; (b) the assessable does not precede but follows *parce que*. *Parce que* hence does not link two actions; instead, it is part of a formulaic chunk that projects more to come, in which it has fully lost its reading as introducing a 'reason for', as in its classical subordination use. Evidence for the chunk-like nature of this piece is provided not only by its recurrence and structural as well as lexico-semantic consistency, but also by the fact that it is consistently prosodically and bodily-visually indexed as 'going together'. Finally, the informational load is light in what on formal grounds appears to be the "main clause" (i.e., the assessment phrase), while the main communicative and informational value is expressed in the formally "subordinate" clause. These observations concur to provide robust grounds for concluding that in pattern II *parce que* is part of a highly routinized semi-fixed projector construction [*c'est* + adj. + *parce que*]. In this sense, it represents a 'social action format' (Fox 2007), that is, a grammatical usage pattern specialized for accomplishing and coordinating actions in interaction (see also Pekarek Doehler, 2022, on 'multimodal action formats').

In conclusion, let us venture down a path that calls for future research: What we observe through the comparison of two apparently formally related [assessment + *parce que* + clause/stretch of talk] patterns may be a possible pragmaticalization path: A conversational routine of the type [assessment + *parce que*-introduced account for the assessment] has, through repeated interactional use, evolved into a semi-fixed fragment, serving the purpose of projecting stance and securing recipients' attention for upcoming (lengthy) talk— and the related functioning of the structure without *parce que* may simply represent a further step in that pragmaticalization, where [*c'est* 'it's'+adjective] alone works as a projecting device. If that were the case, it would provide evidence for speakers' repeated confrontation to social-interactional needs, such as projection and anticipation of actions, to work as a driving force for grammar (cf. Pekarek Doehler, 2021). Such evidence would represent a crucial contribution to the intellectual program of interactional linguistics "to better understand how languages are shaped by interaction" (Selting and Couper-Kuhlen, 2001, p. 3).

² We thank one of the reviewers of this paper for having drawn our attention to this possibility.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Simona Pekarek Doehler: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Supervision, Project administration, Methodology, Investigation, Funding acquisition, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Agnes Löfgren:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Formal analysis, Data curation.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Acknowledgement

This research was conducted as part of a project financed by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNFS), entitled *Emergent grammar for conversation: adverbial (in)subordination at the grammar-body interface*, grant nb. 10001F_214982.

Appendix

Transcription conventions for verbal conduct

[]	start and end of overlap
=	Latching
(.)	Pause of approximately one tenth of a second
(0.7)	Measured pause in seconds and tenths of seconds
Wo-	truncated word
wo:rd	syllable lengthening
?	rising final intonation
.	falling final intonation
,	continuing intonation
<u>Word</u>	accentuation
°word°	softer than surrounding speech
WORD	Louder than surrounding speech
w↑ord	Marked high rise in pitch
>word<	faster than surrounding talk
.h/h.	in-breath/out-breath
h/(h)	Laughter token
(Word)	uncertain hearing
((comment))	transcriber's comment

Transcription conventions for embodied conduct

* */++/	Symbols such as these indicate start and end of embodied conduct
*->	Continuation of the described embodied conduct
->*	End of the described embodied conduct
#	Indicates the location of a framegrab (figure) relative to the verbal transcript

Data availability

The authors do not have permission to share data.

References

- Auer, P., 2005. Projection in interaction and projection in grammar. *Text* 25 (1), 7–36. <https://doi.org/10.1515/text.2005.25.1.7>.
- Beijering, K., Kaltenböck, G., Sansiñena, M., 2019. *Insubordination: Theoretical and Empirical Issues*. De Gruyter.
- Couper-Kuhlen, E., 2011. When turns start with because: an exercise in interactional syntax. In: Meurman-Solin, A., Lenker, U. (Eds.), *Connectives in Synchrony and Diachrony in European Languages (Studies in Variation, Contacts and Change in English, No. 8)*. Varieng.
- Couper-Kuhlen, E., 2012. Turn continuation and clause combinations. *Discourse Proc.* 49 (3–4), 273–299. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0163853X.2012.664111>.
- Couper-Kuhlen, E., Selting, M., 2018. *Interactional Linguistics: Studying Language in Social Interaction*. Cambridge University Press.
- Couper-Kuhlen, E., Thompson, S.A., 2008. On assessing situations and events in conversation: ‘extraposition’ and its relatives. *Discourse Stud.* 10 (4), 443–467. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445608091882>.
- Debaisieux, J.-M., 1994. *Le Fonctionnement De "Parce Que" En Français Parlé Contemporain: Description Linguistique Et Implications Didactiques*. Université de Nancy. PhD Thesis.
- Debaisieux, J.-M., 2016. Toward a global approach to discourse uses of conjunctions in spoken French. *Lang. Sci.* 58, 79–94. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langsci.2016.04.001>.
- Dostie, G., 2004. In: *Pragmaticalisation Et Marqueurs Discursifs: Analyse Sémantique Et Traitement Lexicographique*, 1ère édition. De Boeck.
- Evans, N., 2007. Insubordination and its uses. In: Nikolaeva, I. (Ed.), *Finiteness: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations*. Oxford University Press, pp. 366–431.

- Evans, N., Watanabe, H., 2016. Insubordination. *Benjamins*.
- Ford, C.E., 1994. Dialogic aspects of talk and writing: because on the interactional-edited continuum. *Text*. *Talk* 14 (4), 531–554. <https://doi.org/10.1515/text.1.1994.14.4.531>.
- Ford, C.E., Fox, B.A., Thompson, S.A., 1996. Practices in the construction of turns: the ‘TCU’ revisited. *Pragmatics* 6 (3), 427–454. <https://doi.org/10.1075/prag.6.3.07for>.
- Fox, B., 2007. Principles shaping grammatical practices: an exploration. *Discour. Stud.* 9 (3), 299–318. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445607076201>.
- Gast, V., Diessel, H., 2012. The typology of clause linkage: status quo, challenges, prospects. In: Gast, V., Diessel, H. (Eds.), *Clause Linkage in Cross-Linguistic Perspective: Data-Driven Approaches to Cross-Clause Syntax*. Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 1–36.
- Günthner, S., 1996. From subordination to coordination? verb-second position in German causal and concessive constructions. *Pragmatics* 6 (3), 323–356. <https://doi.org/10.1075/prag.6.3.05gun>. *Benjamins*.
- Günthner, S., 2011. Between emergence and sedimentation: projecting constructions in German interactions. In: Auer, P., Pfänder, S. (Eds.), *Constructions: Emerging and Emergent*. de Gruyter, pp. 156–185.
- Gohl, C., Günthner, S., 1999. Grammatikalisierung von weil als Diskursmarker in der gesprochenen Sprache. *Z. Sprachwiss.* 18 (1), 39–75. <https://doi.org/10.1515/zfsw.1999.18.1.39/html>.
- Goodwin, C., Goodwin, M.H., 1987. Concurrent operations on talk: notes on the interactive organization of assessments. *IPRA Pap. Pragm.* 1 (1), 1–55. <https://doi.org/10.1075/iprapip.1.1.01goo>.
- Goodwin, C., 1996. Transparent vision. In: Ochs, E., Schegloff, E.A., Thompson, S. (Eds.), *Interaction and Grammar*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 370–404.
- Hancock, V., 1997. Parce que: Un connecteur macro-syntaxique. *Acquis. Interact. Langue Étrangère* 9, 117–145. <https://doi.org/10.4000/aile.731>.
- Hopper, P.J., 2001. Grammatical constructions and their discourse origins: prototype or family resemblance? In: Pütz, M., Neimeier, S., Dirven, R. (Eds.), *Applied Cognitive Linguistics I: Theory and Language Acquisition*. Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 109–129.
- Hopper, P.J., Thompson, S.A., 2008. Projectability and clause combining in interaction. In: Laury, R. (Ed.), *Crosslinguistic Studies of Clause Combining: the Multifunctionality of Conjunctions*. *Benjamins*, pp. 99–123.
- Jefferson, G., 1978. Sequential aspects of storytelling in conversation. In: Schenkein, J. (Ed.), *Studies in the Organization of Conversational Interaction*. Academic Press, pp. 219–248.
- Jefferson, G., 2004. Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction. In: Lerner, G.H. (Ed.), *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the First Generation*. *Benjamins*, pp. 13–31.
- Juillet, M., 2024. L’emploi de parce que micro-syntaxique en français L2: une étude interactionnelle et multimodale. 9e Congrès Mondial de Linguistique Française. SHS Web Conf 191. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202419101008.01008.2024>.
- Kaukoma, T., Peräkylä, A., Ruusuvuori, J., 2014. Foreshadowing a problem. Turn-opening frowns in conversation. *J. Pragmat.* 71, 132–147. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2014.08.002>.
- Li, X., 2016. Some discourse-interactional uses of yinwei ‘because’ and its multimodal production in Mandarin conversation. *Lang. Sci.* 58, 51–78. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langsci.2016.04.005>.
- Lindström, J., Londen, A.-M., 2008. Constructing reasoning: the connectives för att (causal), så att (consecutive) and men att (adversative) in Swedish conversations. In: *Constructional Organization*. *Benjamins*, pp. 105–152.
- Maschler, Y., Pekarek Doehler, S., 2022. Pseudo-cleft-like structures in Hebrew and French conversation: the syntax-lexicon-body interface. *Lingua* 280, 103397. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lingua.2022.103397>.
- Moeschler, J., 1986. Connecteurs pragmatiques, lois de discours et stratégies interprétatives: parce que et la justification énonciative. *Cahie. Linguist. Française* 7.
- Mondada, L., 2007. Multimodal resources for turn-taking: pointing and the emergence of possible next speakers. *Discourse Stud.* 9 (2), 194–225.
- Mondada, L., 2018. Conventions for Multimodal Transcription from. https://franoesistik.philhist.unibas.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/franoesistik/mondada_multimodal_conventions.pdf. (Accessed 8 July 2025).
- Ono, T., Thompson, S.A. (Eds.), 2012. A cross-linguistic, multi-modal, grammaticization perspective on turn continuation in conversation. *Discourse Process*. 49 (3–4). Special issue.
- Pekarek Doehler, S., 2011. Clause-combining and the sequencing of actions. In: Laury, R., Suzuki, R. (Eds.), *Subordination in Conversation*. *Benjamins*, pp. 103–148. <https://doi.org/10.1075/slsi.24.06doe>.
- Pekarek Doehler, S., 2021. How grammar grows out of social interaction: from multi-unit to single unit question. *Open Linguist.* 7, 837–864. <https://doi.org/10.1515/opli-2020-0150>.
- Pekarek Doehler, S., 2022. Multimodal action formats for managing preference: *chais pas* ‘dunno’ plus gaze conduct in dispreferred responses to questions. *J. Pragmat.* 197, 81–99. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2022.05.010>.
- Pekarek Doehler, S., Horlacher, A.-S., 2025. An interactional grammar of insubordination: the case of French *si* ‘if’-clauses. In: Steensig, J., Jørgensen, M., Lindström, J., Mikkelsen, N., Suomalainen, K., Sandager Sørensen, S. (Eds.), *Grammar in Action*. *Benjamins*, pp. 332–365.
- Rönnqvist, S., 2024. Securing sufficient uptake and sequence progression – *för att* (‘because’)-prefaced self-continuations and gesture in Swedish talk-in-interaction. *J. Pragmat.* 230, 41–59. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2024.06.012>.
- Sacks, H., 1974. An analysis of the course of a joke’s telling. In: Bauman, R., Sherzer, J. (Eds.), *Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 337–353.
- Sacks, H., Schegloff, E.A., 2002. [1975]). Home position. *Gesture* 2 (2), 133–146. <https://doi.org/10.1075/gest.2.2.02sac>.
- Schegloff, E.A., 1996. Turn organization: one intersection of grammar and interaction. In: Ochs, E., Schegloff, E.A., Thompson, S.A. (Eds.), *Interaction and Grammar*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 52–133.
- Selting, M., 2010. Affectivity in conversational storytelling. *Pragmatics* 20 (2), 229–277. <https://doi.org/10.1075/prag.20.2.06sel>.
- Selting, M., Couper-Kuhlen, E. (Eds.), 2001. *Studies in Interactional Linguistics*. *Benjamins*.
- Sidnell, J., 2005. Gesture in the pursuit and display of recognition: a Caribbean case study. *Semiotica* 156, 55–87. <https://doi.org/10.1515/semi.2005.2005.156.55>.
- Thompson, S.A., Longacre, R.E., Hwang, S.J., 2007. Adverbial clauses. In: Shopen, T. (Ed.), *Language Typology and Syntactic Description*, second ed. Cambridge University Press, pp. 237–300.
- Van Valin, R., 1984. A typology of syntactic relations in clause linkage. *Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*. Berkeley Linguistics Society, pp. 542–558.

SIMONA PEKAREK DOEHLER is professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland. In her research she seeks to understand how participants to talk-in-interaction use grammatical constructions combined with bodily conduct as resources to accomplish social actions and how, in turn, linguistic and communicative resources (in particular second language interactional competence) emerge from the process of interaction in situ and over time. Her current research interests are reflected in the recent Special Issues that she co-edited: *The grammar-body interface in social interaction* (*Frontiers in Psychology/Communication*, 2021), *Longitudinal studies in Conversation Analysis (ROLSI, 2021)*, *Early responses: Projection and the temporal coordination of actions* (*Discourse Processes*, 2021).

AGNES LÖFGREN is a linguist specialized in multimodal interaction analysis. She has been working on Swedish and French, holds a PhD in language and culture (Linköping University, 2023) and is a certified speech and language pathologist (Uppsala University, 2016). She pursues a postdoc on syntax in social interaction (French) at the University of Neuchâtel in Switzerland, and participates in a research project on syntax and the body at Linköping University in Sweden. She also works as a lecturer in the Division of Speech and Language pathology, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden. She is the author of the monograph *Bodies to suit the music: Depictions in opera rehearsals* (2023). Her work has been published in *Journal of Pragmatics*, *Research on Social Interaction, Discourse Studies*, etc.