



Introduction to the workshop

On the diachrony of causal clauses

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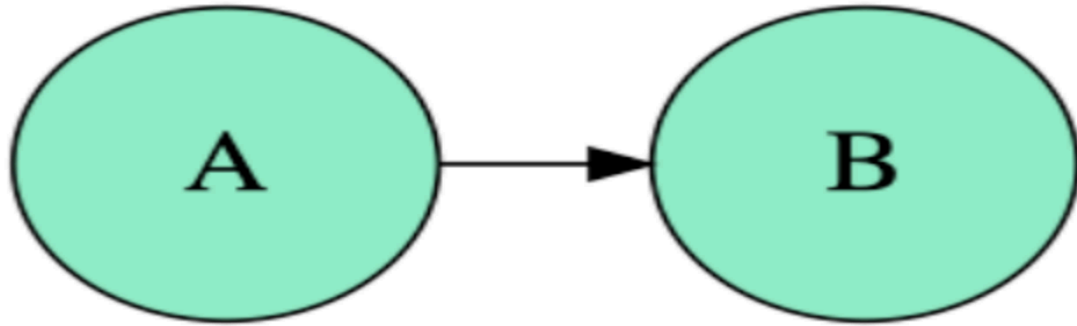
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Overview

1. Phenomenon
2. Motivation
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Phenomenon



Kangaroos
attack **because** they are
feeding tourists addicted to
carrots

"There was a guy who got his stomach gashed open and he wasn't even feeding them but ... they'd been to McDonalds 10 minutes before, so whether they still had the food smell on them I have no idea, but **for some reason** the kangaroo took to him."



Source: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-05-02/agro-kangaroos-addicted-to-carrots-attack-tourists/9716612> (29 June 2019)



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Motivation: Why causal clauses?

Basic definition: Causal clauses express a reason relation between two events, one of which (the dependent one) represents the reason for the other to take place (cf. Cristofaro 2003: 161).

Syntax: Reason relations can be expressed in two different ways:

- a) subordination
- b) coordination

Benefit I: Examining the diachrony of a) and b) will considerably help get a better understanding of adverbial clauses, embedding, subordination and recursion.

Semantics: Reason relations defined in linguistics terms may be distinct in nature:

- a) propositional
- b) epistemic
- c) illocutionary (= speech acts)

Benefit II: Investigating a)-c) diachronically will provide novel insights into the dynamics, the philosophy, and the perception of reasons.

Causal clauses: semantic variation

In her pioneering work, Sweetser (1990) distinguishes three types of causal clauses:

[1] content / propositional causal clauses:

John came back because he loved her.

[2] epistemic causal clauses:

John loved her, because he came back.

[3] speech act causal clauses:

What are you doing tonight, because there's a good movie on.

For a formal implementation of this idea, see Frey (2016).

Causal clauses: semantic variation

Diachronically, not much is known about how these three types come into being.

Research questions:

- a) Under what circumstances do propositional, epistemic and speech act causal clauses evolve?
- b) Do they develop according to a grammaticalization path?
(VP-adjuncts -> CP-adjuncts -> independent clauses)
- c) How can they be kept apart diachronically?
- d) Can all three patterns be attested in the oldest stages of natural languages?

Causal clauses: syntactic variation

Causal clauses can be introduced by different complementizers:

- French: *car, parce que, puisque*
- German: *weil, da, denn*
- Polish: *ponieważ, bo, jako że*

Research questions:

- a) How do adverbial clauses introduced by a dedicated causal complementizer emerge?
- b) To what extent are they restricted to a particular semantic interpretation (cf. Sweetser 1990, Frey 2016)?
- c) Why do natural languages need at least three different complementizers to express a causal meaning?

Causal clauses and other adverbial clauses

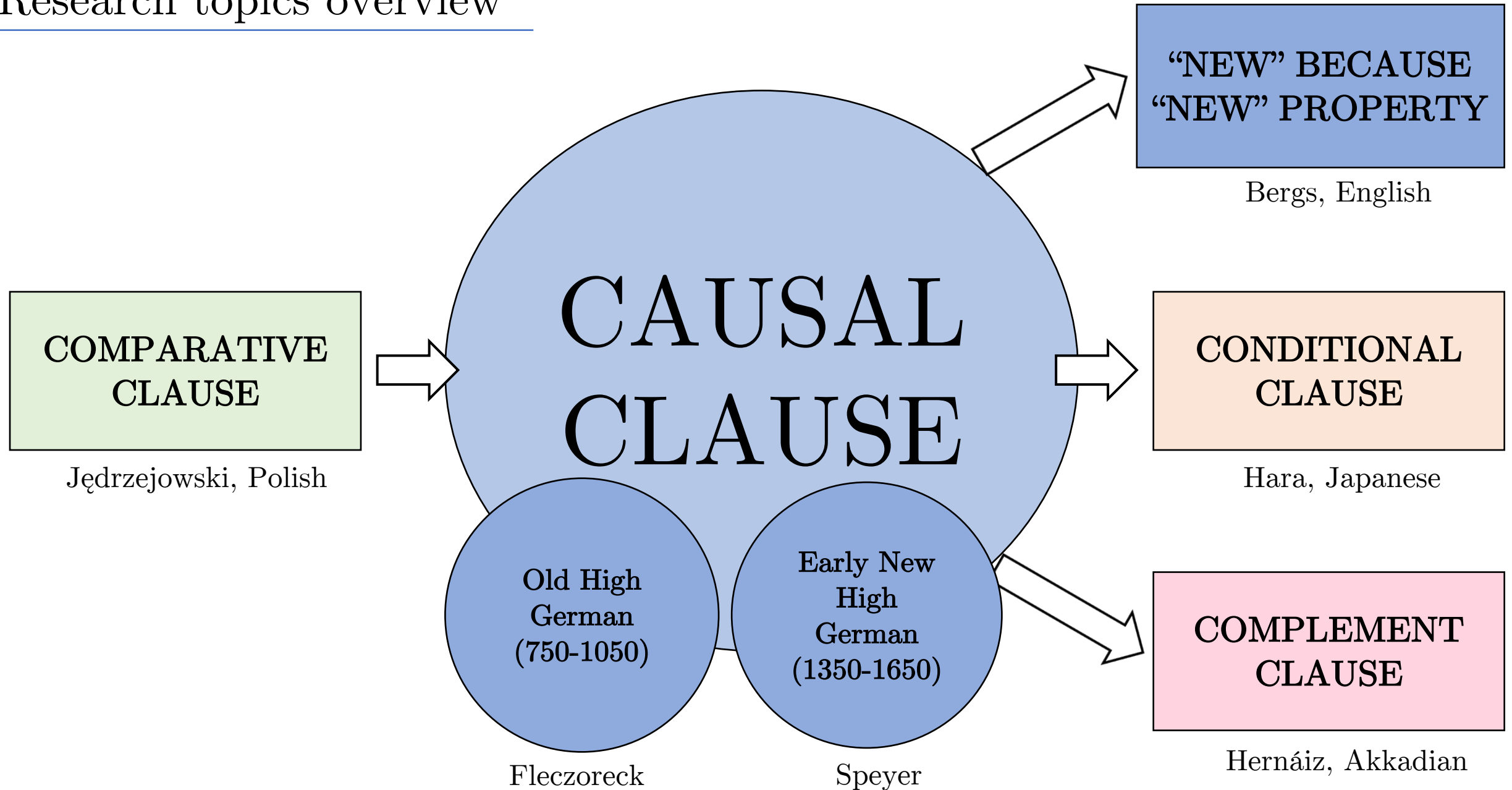
It is well known that causal clauses can share selected properties with other types of adverbial clauses:

- i) concessive clauses (König & Siemund 2000),
- ii) purpose clauses (Sæbo 1991),
- iii) temporal clauses (Traugott & König 19991).

Research questions:

- a) Which types of adverbial clauses can develop into causal clauses?
- b) What contextual properties facilitate the development of causal clauses?
- c) Why are causal clauses finite?
- d) To what extent can causal clauses develop into other types of adverbial clauses or subordinate clauses in general?

Research topics overview



Schedule (as of: 29 June 2019)

Session I – Chair: Łukasz Jędrzejowski	
10:40-11:10	Introduction by convenors
11:15-11:45	Yurie Hara, Waseda University (invited speaker) From settledness to unsettledness: A diachronic change of causality and conditionality in Japanese
11:50-12:20	Constanze Fleczonek, Leibniz University Hannover Causal clauses in Old High German
12:25-12:55	Lunch
Session II – Chair: Constanze Fleczonek	
13:00-13:30	Augustin Speyer, Saarland University (invited speaker) Searching factors for the embedding of causal clauses in the history of German
13:35-14:05	Alexander Bergs, Osnabrück University <i>Because, weil, porque</i> : Tracing the diachrony of ‘new’ causal conjunctions
14:10-14:40	Łukasz Jędrzejowski, University of Cologne On the diachrony of causal <i>jako-że</i> -clauses in Polish
14:45-15:15	Rodrigo Hernáiz, University of Barcelona Causal clauses as source for sentential complementation: Methodological issues
15:15-15:45	Tea break
Session III – Chair: Łukasz Jędrzejowski	
15:50-16:50	Discussion
17:00-18:00	Plenary

Organizational matters

- Yurie Hara's talk via video, discussion via Skype
- Presentation time: talk 20 min. + discussion 10 min.
- Pictures
- Dinner
- Proceedings

Thank you!



Source: <https://animals.sandiegozoo.org/animals/kangaroo-and-wallaby> (as of: 30 June 2019)