Another Look at the Metalinguistic Because-Clause Construction

Another Look at the Metalinguistic *Because*-Clause Construction[*]
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1. Introduction

Hirose (1992) observes a certain metalinguistic use of *because*-clauses, as exemplified in (1):

> (1)   The Blackwell collection was reputed to be the most valuable private collection in the world.   *Reputed*, because no one outside of invited guests was permitted to see it.   (Hirose (1992:82))

The *because*-clause in the second sentence in (1) expresses the reason why the speaker used the word *reputed* in the preceding context.   The rest of the sentence comprises not of a main "clause" but of the word in question.   Not only is it appropriate to call the modified part "a clause" as it is not, but also what the *because*-clause modifies is not realized explicitly (i.e., it does not denote the reason that someone/something is reputed), as Hirose (1992:83) observes.   To the extent that the conjunction *because* does not connect two clauses, the construction is considered specific.   Following Hirose (1992), I will call this form-meaning correspondence the E-*because* construction, where "E" stands for "expression."

It may not be controversial that the most basic use of *because* is a causal one, as in (2a), while it is also well known that a *because*-clause may provide a premise from which to draw a conclusion, as in (2b):

> (2)   a.   The ground is wet because it has rained.
>   b.   It has rained, because the ground is wet.

I have proposed a constructional framework to account for both similarities and differences in these uses of *because* (e.g. Kanetani (2006b); also cf. Hirose (1999)) and concluded that differences between the causal *because*-clause construction (e.g. (2a)) and the reasoning *because*-clause construction (e.g. (2b)) result from the different ways of our construal of causal relation and inferential process while a similarity might be accounted for by metaphorical extension.[1]

[1] I avoid using the term "inferential" and use the term "reasoning" instead for reasons that I mentioned elsewhere (e.g. Kanetani (2006b, 2007)).   For example, distinctions between epistemic and speech act *because*-clauses (cf. Sweetser (1990)), I believe, is not necessary; they may be grouped into reasoning *because*-clauses.   The most important criterion to distinguish reasoning

Comparing these more general *because*-clause constructions (e.g. (2a, b)) with the E-*because* construction (e.g. (1)), we will have an apparent difficulty maintaining the proposal, however. That is, as we will see in section 3, the E-*because* construction is similar both to the causal *because*-clause construction and to the reasoning *because*-clause construction, which, in essence, distribute complimentarily. To this puzzle, I have already proposed some possible solutions (e.g. Kanetani (2005b, 2006a, 2009)). In the present work, I will present an alternative analysis, comparing the construction with what I will call the *it is because* construction (cf. Sawada (2004)). The construction, which is underlined, appears in the second conjunct in (3):

(3)   Stephanie is regularly offered geriatric roles and thinks <u>it is because she was brought up surrounded by archetypal elderly Englishwomen</u>...   (Sawada (2004:175))

Pointing out that the constructions are comparable for reasons to be discussed later, I will claim that functional characteristics that they share will solve the puzzle. In particular, I will emphasize that the *because*-clause used in (1) is a causal one, although it may be superficially similar to a reasoning one as well.

The present article is organized as follows. Section 2 summarizes the facts on the family of metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions. Section 3 compares the metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions with the causal/reasoning *because*-clause constructions and clarifies what the problem is. To solve the problem that arises in section 3, section 4 compares the construction with the *it is because* construction and proposes a possible solution. Finally section 5 concludes the discussion.

2.   Facts
2.1.   Functional Properties
As I pointed out in section 1, the E-*because* construction has an incomplete main clause and what the *because*-clause modifies does not appear explicitly. As Hirose (1992) points out, there exists a construction like (4), in which the *because*-clause modifies a full clause.

(4)   I say *reputed* because no one outside of invited guests was permitted to see it.

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because-clauses from causal ones is whether the main clause and the *because*-clause are both asserted as independent information units.

Sentence (4) conveys the virtually same meaning as the E-*because* construction in (1). Unlike the E-*because* construction, sentence (4) has a syntactically perfect main clause with a clear modification relation. The *because*-clause conveys the reason why the speaker (= *I*) used the expression *reputed* (= *say* reputed). Henceforth, I will call this type of construction the *I say* E *because* construction (or ISE-*because* construction, for short) to distinguish it from the E-*because* construction, and I will also use the term metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions to cover both the E-*because* construction and the ISE-*because* construction.[2]

As noted above, the ISE-*because* construction may be considered as a semantic equivalent to the E-*because* construction. Goldberg (1995:67) puts it, "if two constructions are syntactically distinct and S(emantically)-synonymous, then they must not be P(ragmatically)-synonymous." Along with this line, we may predict that the two constructions should be pragmatically distinct, and they indeed are.[3] Observe the contrast in (5a, b):[4]

(5) a. Unfortunately, a person in some cases can be HIV positive for

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[2] The term "metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions" may cover a wider range of family of constructions. Hirose (1992) observes that there exists yet another kind of metalinguistic *because*-clause construction, as exemplified in (i):

(i) Their [Ross and Lakoff's] famous example was "Floyd broke the glass", of which they said the deep structure was "It happened that Floyd did Floyd caused that the glass became broken." "Did" because all action verbs have embedded in them the verb "do."
(Hirose (1992:83))

Superficially, the second sentence in (i) seems to be the E-*because* construction of the same kind as example (1). However, as Hirose points out, it is Ross and Lakoff, not the speaker of this sentence that used the word "did," and therefore, this sentence may be equivalent in meaning to a sentence like (ii):

(ii) They say "did" because all action verbs have embedded in them the verb "do."

Sentence (ii) clearly is not an instance of the ISE-*because* construction, since the subject of the main clause, i.e. the speaker of "did," is not identical to the speaker of the sentence. It is, therefore, disputable whether the E-*because* construction in (i) could be treated on the same basis as the other instances of the E-*because* construction that appear in this article. In the present article, I will not go any further into this subject and limit the use of the term to the two constructions mentioned.
[3] The term "pragmatically" is used in a broad sense: The notion of pragmatics here is meant to include any functional aspects regarding the context of use other than the semantic meaning, such as information structures, discourse structures, etc.
[4] The original example that I found with my internet search is the ISE-*because* construction in (5b), of which I made the (IS)E-*because* constructions in (5a) and the E-*because* construction in (5b) and asked their grammaticality of an informant.

several years without having AIDS. (I say) unfortunately only because those diseases that are readily visible get treatment quicker.

   b. Unfortunately, perhaps, a person in some cases can be HIV positive for several years without having AIDS. When they finally get AIDS they are often able to work for some time, and with treatment live a fairly normal life for several years. *(I say) unfortunately only because those diseases that are readily visible get treatment quicker. (enzi.senate.gov/aidsaf2.htm)

In (5a), the speaker expresses the reason why he uses the word *unfortunately* shortly after he used the word, while in (5b), there is a considerable distance between the use of the word and the expression of its reason. Interestingly, in the former context, the ISE-*because* construction and the E-*because* construction are both acceptable, whereas in the latter context, only the ISE-*because* construction is possible. Following Lambrecht (1994), Kanetani (2009) accounts for this difference in acceptability in terms of the hearer's information processing load. Lambrecht (1994:93) notes, "in order for an addressee to be able to process the presupposition evoked by an utterance it is not only necessary that she be aware of the relevant set of presupposed propositions but that she have easy access to these propositions and to the elements of which they are composed." Along with this line, we may say that the phrase *I say* in the ISE-*because* construction activates the expression in the hearer's mind if it is assumed not to be active due to, for example, a considerable distance between the expression and the reason (see Kanetani (2009) for details).

    In sum, the ISE-*because* construction and the E-*because* construction are semantically equivalent but pragmatically distinct; the latter is more restricted in use than the former. This is a natural consequence from the formal markedness of the E-*because* construction. As I mentioned in section 1 and earlier in this subsection, the E-*because* construction is a syntactically anomalous, and hence specific, construction. This relation between the formal markedness and functional specification of the E-*because* construction may be accounted for by Konno's (2005) generalization as follows: If a grammatical form is marked with reference to the grammatical convention of a given language, then the function of that form is more specialized than that of the corresponding unmarked form(s) (Konno (2005:2)).

2.2. Formal Properties
    In this subsection, I will investigate formal properties of the metalinguistic

because-clause constructions and show that they behave alike. First, their *because*-clauses do not appear in sentence-initial position. Consider the following example:

> (6) * Blackwell collection was reputed to be the most valuable private collection in the world. Because no one outside of the invited guests was permitted to see it, (I say) *reputed*.

As Hirose (1991) observes, sentence-initial *because*-clauses generally express the reason that is presupposed (also cf. Lakoff (1987)). In the metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions, the reason cannot be presupposed but rather must be asserted. Therefore, it is natural that sentence-initial *because*-clause is not allowed.

Second, as Hirose (1992) observes, the *because*-clause in the E-*because* construction can be paraphrased as *because of* NP, as exemplified in (7):

> (7) Talking about verbal defensiveness has proven to be a particularly effective way of making *linguists* defensive: "defensive" because of wide-scale disagreement concerning the validity of speech act interpretations which must necessarily be highly context dependent, intuitive, and, in addition, must confront the controversial problem of discerning a speaker's intention. (Hirose (1992:85))

In this example, the reason why the speaker used the word *defensive* is expressed by the *because of* phrase. This is also true of the ISE-*because* construction, as in (8):

> (8) This is an historic session for a number of reasons. This is the 26th special session in our special state's special history…. And, finally, I say historic because of the subjects at hand.
> (mt.gov/racicot/spch/SpecSess99.htm)

Third, metalinguistic *because*-clauses can be focalized by what Quirk et al. (1985) call exclusives, as exemplified in (9):[5]

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[5] As the data sources in examples (9) and (10) indicate, I found these data by doing internet searches using Google® search engine. I searched the exact phrases with wildcards (enclosed in quotes) "*I say * simply because*" and "*I say * because who*," respectively; hence, the original examples that I found on the internet were instances of the ISE-*because* construction. After finding these examples, I asked an informant whether he might accept the sentences without *I say*, and gained the judgments of the instances of the E-*because* construction in (9) and (10).

(9)   Figure 2 shows the theoretical response of the filter.   (I say) "theoretical", simply because it is unrealistic to expect any signal to be over 200dB down from the passband level.

(sound.westhost.com/project99.htm)

In (9), the *because*-clause is focalized by *simply*, which belongs to exclusives. According to Quirk et al. (1985:604), exclusives other than *simply* involve *just*, *only*, *precisely*, and the like.   Such focusing adverbs may focalize metalinguistic *because*-clauses.

Fourth, speech act constructions that convey statements (cf. Lakoff (1987)) can occur in metalinguistic *because*-clauses, as shown in (10):

(10)   …they serve for lunch the surprisingly delicious cucumber salad.   (I say) surprisingly, because who would think one could turn the big, fat American (instead of the slim, English variety) into anything one would want a lot more of.

(www.sfexaminer.com/templates/print.cfm?storyname=010704e_tower)

In (10), the rhetorical question, a kind of speech act construction that conveys a statement, appears in the metalinguistic *because*-clause.   I will discuss in more detail in section 4 speech act constructions of statements that appear in *because*-clauses (cf. fn. 14).
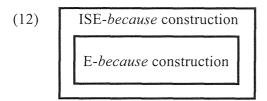
Thus, formal properties of the metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions may be summarized as follows:[6]

(11)   Metalinguistic *because*-clauses:
   a.   cannot appear in sentence-initial position,
   b.   may be replaced with *because of* NP,
   c.   may be preceded by exclusives, and
   d.   allow a speech act construction to occur in them.

2.3.   Relation of Constructions

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[6] Needless to say, those listed here may not be exhaustively formal.   For example, the restriction on the position of *because*-clause (= (11a)) and the occurrence of a speech act construction within the *because*-clause (= (11d)) reflect the pragmatic function of the metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions.   The co-occurrence of an exclusive with the *because*-clause (= (11c)) is accounted for by interactions of the meanings of the exclusives and the *because*-clause (cf. Kanetani (2007)).   By the term "formal properties," however, I simply mean surface configurations of elements resulting from such functional factors.

I observed in section 2.1 that the E-*because* construction is a semantic equivalent to the ISE-*because* construction but the latter is a more general construction.   In terms of inheritance link proposed by Goldberg (1995), we may posit a subpart link between the constructions, with which the former inherits information from the latter (cf. (Kanetani (2005b, 2006a, 2009)).   According to Goldberg (1995:78), "a subpart link is posited when one construction is a proper subpart of another construction and exists independently."   Thus, we may illustrate the relation between the constructions as follows:

(12)

ISE-*because* construction
E-*because* construction

As illustrated in (12), the E-*because* construction is subsumed under the ISE-*because* construction.   Taking the E-*because* construction as a proper subpart of the ISE-*because* construction, we may straightforwardly account for (i) their syntactic whole-part relation, i.e., the form of the ISE-*because* construction includes that of the E-*because* construction (section 2.1), (ii) their semantic synonymity (section 2.1), (iii) their pragmatic difference (section 2.1), and (iv) their shared formal properties (section 2.2).   The overwrapping area in (12) indicates facts (i), (ii), and (iv); the remainder, fact (iii).   Thus, except their pragmatic (or discourse functional) difference discussed in section 2.1, what holds in the ISE-*because* construction also holds in the E-*because* construction (cf. Kanetani (2009)).

So far, I have described the relation between the E-*because* construction and the ISE-*because* construction with making clear their similarities and differences. The next step is to compare the metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions with more general constructions with *because*, i.e. the causal *because*-clause construction and the reasoning *because*-clause construction.   Given the relation of the metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions in (12), all that we have to do is to compare the ISE-*because* construction with the causal/reasoning *because*-clause constructions, as the findings from the comparison will also hold true of the E-*because* construction.   In the following section, therefore, I will compare the ISE-*because* construction with the causal/reasoning *because*-clause constructions.

3.   Comparison with the Causal/Reasoning *Because*-Clause Constructions

In section 2.2, I observed four formal properties of the metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions, as listed in (11) above.   To clarify what the problem

is, in this section, I examine the causal and reasoning *because*-clause constructions, more general constructions with *because*-clauses, from these points of view.

First, causal *because*-clauses can appear in sentence-initial position, as in (13a), but reasoning ones cannot, as in (13b):

> (13) a.   Because it has rained, the ground is wet.   (Hirose (1991:27))
>   (cf. The ground is wet because it has rained. (= (2a)))
>   b. * Because the ground is wet, it has rained.   (Hirose (1991:27))
>   (cf. It has rained, because the ground is wet. (= (2b)))

It should be noted that in terms of construction grammar, sentences like (13a) and (2a) should be treated as distinct constructions because of their formal differences. Thus, I argued in Kanetani (2006) that the (schematic) causal *because*-clause construction instantiates two (specific) constructions, i.e. [C(lause)$_2$ *because* C$_1$] (e.g. (2a)) and [*Because* C$_1$, C$_2$] (e.g. (13a)).   As sentence-initial *because*-clauses are generally presupposed (e.g. Hirose (1991), Lakoff (1987)), these constructions are distinguished information-structurally.   I will return to this issue in section 4.

Second, causal *because*-clauses, but not reasoning ones, can be replaced with a *because of* phrase, as demonstrated by the following contrast:

> (14) a.   He's not coming to class because of (his) sickness.
>   b.   Because of bad weather conditions, today's helicopter flight has been canceled.   (*Genius* s.v. *flight*)
>   c. * He's not coming to class, because of his having just called from San Diego.   (Rutherford (1970:105))

Third, only causal *because*-clauses may be focalized by exclusives, as exemplified in (15a-c):

> (15) a.   He went to college simply because his parents asked him to.
>   (Schourup and Waida (1988:95))
>   b.   Simply because Japan appears to be different[,] we should guard against reversing the image by suggesting that none of the standard elements of Japanese work practices is present in the West, and that workplace conflict is rare in Japan.   (BNC)
>   c. * It has rained, just because the ground is wet.

Fourth, speech act constructions of statements, e.g. topicalization, inverted

exclamations, etc., may appear in reasoning *because*-clauses, as in (16c), but they are generally prohibited in causal *because*-clauses, as in (16a, b):

(16) a. * He's not going out for dinner because Japanese food, his wife is cooking. (cf. He's not going out for dinner because his wife is cooking Japanese food. (Hooper and Thompson (1973:494)))

    b. * Because isn't it a beautiful day, we should go on a picnic.

                                       (Lakoff (1987:474))

    c. I think we have more or less solved the problem for donkeys here, because those we haven't got, we know about. (*Guardian* [online])

As briefly observed above, the two instances of the causal *because*-clause construction commonly have all the properties other than the first one (cf. a- and b-sentences in (14)-(16)); the reasoning *because*-clause construction shows the opposite grammaticality with regard to these properties (cf. c-sentences in (14)-(16)). The first one is the criterion to distinguish the two types of the causal *because*-clause constructions. Therefore, other things being equal, the causal *because*-clause constructions (regardless the position of the *because*-clause) and the reasoning *because*-clause distribute complimentarily in terms of their replaceablity with a *because of* phrase, their focalizability, and their tolerance for speech act constructions of statements.

    Recall what we observed on metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions in section 2.2, repeated here as in (17):

(17) Metalinguistic *because*-clauses:
    a. cannot appear in sentence-initial position,
    b. may be replaced with *because of* NP,
    c. may be preceded by exclusives, and
    d. allows a speech act construction to occur in it.

The facts summarized in (17) and the observation so far in this subsection suggest that metalinguistic *because*-clauses are similar to causal ones in terms of their replaceability with a *because of* phrase (= (17b)) and focalizability (= (17c)), on one hand, and similar to reasoning ones in terms of the occurrence of speech act constructions (= (17d)), on the other.[7] A question arises: How can we handle the bilateral characteristics of metalinguistic *because*-clauses?

    To the puzzle, I have proposed three possible solutions in the framework of

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[7] As for the position of the *because*-clause (= (17a)), I will discuss later.

construction grammar in Kanetani (2005b, 2006a, 2009). These rely, respectively, on (i) postulating two types (i.e. causal type and reasoning type) of ISE-*because* constructions (Kanetani (2005b)), (ii) inheriting information multiply from the causal *because*-clause construction and the reasoning *because*-clause construction (Kanetani (2006a)), and (iii) inheriting information singly from the causal *because*-clause construction (Kanetani (2009)). Intuitively speaking, the meaning of the ISE-*because* construction should be considered a causal one, since its *because*-clause denotes a *reason* for the speaker's choice of a particular expression in the preceding context, not a base for reasoning, not a base or premise for reasoning.[8] Hence, postulating the ISE-*because* construction as an instance of the reasoning *because*-clause construction, as I did in Kanetani (2005b), is not plausible. For the same reason, Kanetani's (2006a) approach also seems implausible. Thus, of the three analyses above, only Kanetani's (2009) analysis seems to be tenable. By relating the ISE-*because* construction exclusively to the causal *because*-clause construction, the question that I raised above about the bilateral characteristics of metalinguistic *because*-clauses may be simplified as follows: Why are speech act constructions allowed in metalinguistic *because*-clauses? That is, of the formal properties listed in (17a-d), all that we have to account for is the one described in (17d). The properties in (17b, c) may be accounted for by the causal meaning that metalinguistic *because*-clauses have. The one in (17a) is accounted for in terms of information structure. More specifically, of the two types of the causal *because*-clause construction, the one whose *because*-clause occupies sentence-initial position (e.g. (13a)) cannot instantiate the ISE-*because* construction (cf. (6)).

Thus, assuming that the metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions are related neither to the reasoning *because*-clause construction nor to the causal *because*-clause construction with sentence-initial *because*-clause for the reasons discussed above, I will consider a possible alternative to Kanetani's (2009) account in the following section.

4. Comparison with the *It Is Because* Construction

As mentioned in the previous section, I have proposed three explanations for the bilateral behavior of the ISE-*because* construction of which only Kanetani's

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[8] Nobuhiro Kaga (p.c.) pointed out that relating the ISE-*because* construction to the reasoning *because*-clause (Kanetani's (2005b, 2006a)) is doubtful, because the ISE-*because* construction does not convey a reasoning sense and for this reason there seems no motivation to relate them. I then proposed an inheritance model in Kanetani (2009) that accounts for the bilateral characteristics of the metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions without relying on the reasoning *because*-clause construction. I thank him for making this point.

(2009) analysis seems tenable. In this section, I propose a fourth, and new, possibility, by comparing the ISE-*because* construction with the *it is because* construction (e.g. (3), repeated here as in (18)).[9]

> (18) Stephanie is regularly offered geriatric roles and thinks <u>it is because</u>
>   <u>she was brought up surrounded by archetypal elderly</u>
>   <u>Englishwomen</u>…   (= (3))

As with the ISE-*because* construction -- an instance of the causal *because*-clause construction -- the *it is because* construction expresses a reason for the statement mentioned earlier. Hence, these constructions may be comparable in that they both include causal *because*-clauses. Not only the semantic comparability but also information-structural characteristics are shared in these constructions. I will eventually argue that such shared semantic and information-structural properties of the constructions will provide a solution to the puzzle.

In what follows, to see that the construction is comparable with the ISE-*because* construction, let us briefly review Sawada's (2004) observation on the *it is because* construction. First, according to Sawada, only when certain skepticism arises out of the statement in the preceding context is the *it is because* construction naturally used. Compare the following examples:

> (19) a.   My father likes cats. It is because they are cute.
>   (Sawada (2004:174))
>   b.   My father likes animals, but he doesn't like dogs very much. It
>   is because he got bitten by a dog when he was a little boy.
>   (Sawada (2004:179))

According to Sawada, though the examples are both grammatical, native speakers prefer the *it is because* construction used in a context like (19b) to that used in a context like (19a). The reason is that from the preceding statement in (19b), the question naturally arises why he doesn't like dogs (although he likes animals in general). The *because*-clause of the *it is because* construction is a causal one in that it provides a reason for the question that may arise in the hearer.[10]

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[9] However, I will leave it for the future research to examine which (the present or Kanetani's (2009)) analysis is more plausible.

[10] An anonymous reviewer provides the following examples:

(i)   Tom must love her.   *It is because he came back to her.
(ii)   A: Are you free tonight?
       B: Do you want to go out with me?

Second, Sawada observes that the *it is because* construction emphasizes the uniqueness of the reason expressed. He observes that saying that *it is because Q that P* entails that "if not Q, then not P (p.175)."[11] That is, by using the *it is because* construction, the speaker denies the existence of other possible reasons than what is expressed. This focalization mechanism is similar to the one that works when a *because*-clause is focalized by an exclusive (for details, see Kanetani (2007)). Given the general focalizability of causal *because*-clauses by exclusives (e.g. (15a)), it could be plausible to view the *it is because* construction as an instance of the causal construction.

Third, Sawada notes that the *it is because* construction is a colloquial construction and should not be used when objectivity is required. In this connection, Sawada argues that the *it is because* construction expresses a subjective reason, referring especially to its frequent collocations with a preceding *if*-clause, as exemplified in (20):

(20)   If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.   (Sawada (2004:179))

According to Sawada, the *if*-clause in (20) does not mark the speaker's commitment to the truth of the proposition denoted in the protasis, but simply indicates that the speaker wonders whether the given proposition is true or not. He thus suggests that the protasis in (20) *if we have no peace*, for example, may be paraphrased as *if it is true that we have no peace* (p. 178). As this paraphrase suggests, certain skepticism arises about the truth of the proposition, behind which, Sawada argues, lies a *why*-question posed by the hearer like *why do we have no peace*. Towards such a question evoked by the protasis, the speaker expresses his own opinion in the apodosis. Hence, the reason provided is subjective.

To summarize Sawada's argument, the *it is because* construction is used to give an account to the skepticism that is assumed to exist in the hearer, expressing the reason that is subjectively singled out by the speaker. Thus, the *it is because* construction could be included in the family of causal *because*-clause constructions

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A: * No, it's because I want you to help with my homework.

(Ikarashi (this volume))

The *because*-clauses used in the *it is because* construction in (i) and (ii) correspond to Sweetser's (1990) epistemic and speech act *because*-clauses, respectively. The ungrammaticality of these examples suggests that the *it is because* construction is not related to the reasoning *because*-clause construction, and hence supports the view that the *it is because* construction should be related exclusively to the causal *because*-clause construction (cf. fn. 12).

[11] Sawada includes seeming cleft sentences into instances of the *it is because* construction (cf. fn. 12).

(cf. fn. 10).[12]   If so, sentences (21a-c) could be seen as instances of the causal *because*-clause construction with distinctive syntactic and information-structural representations:[13]

(21) a.   He's not coming to class because he's sick.
      b.   Because he's sick, he's not coming to class.
      c.   … it is because she was brought up surrounded by archetypal elderly Englishwomen…

In (21a), the contents of the main clause and the *because*-clause are both presupposed and the causal relation is asserted; in (21b), the content of the *because*-clause is presupposed; in (21c), the content of the *because*-clause is asserted.

Interestingly, however, the *it is because* construction allows speech act constructions to occur in its *because*-clause, as exemplified in (22):

(22)   Why is stretching so important to fitness? *It is because not only does stretching decrease the chance of injury, it can help to recover from injury.*

(www.improvingyourworld.com/health/why_stretching_is_so_
important_to_itness_002316.html)

The *it is because* construction in (22) gives an answer to the preceding *why*-question, and thus the *because*-clause is considered a causal one.   Crucially, negative

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[12] Following Nakau (1994), Kanetani (2009), for example, treats a sentence like (ia) as a clefted *because*-clause, claiming that causal *because*-clauses may be clefted, as in (ia), but the reasoning *because*-clauses cannot, as in (ib).

(i) a.   It's because he's sick that he's not coming to class.
     b. * It's because his wife told me that he's not coming to class.

(Nakau (1994:162))

Thus, simply assuming that any difference between sentences (ia) and (ii) result from clefting, I ignored them and did not take the *it is because* construction as an independent construction.

(ii)   He's not coming to class because he's sick.

By contrast, as noted in fn. 11, Sawada (2004) treats a sentence like (ia) as an instance of the *it is because* construction, and therefore distinguishes it from a sentence like (ii).   At the present point, however, I do not have enough evidence to discuss which is better.   Note incidentally that no matter which approach is taken, the *because*-clause in (ia) can be seen as a causal one.

[13] It may be disputable whether the *it is because* construction may be treated as an instance of the causal *because*-clause construction as specific as the other two instances or it should be treated as a more specific instance than the other two.   I will leave this issue for a future research.

preposing, a kind of speech act construction that conveys a statement, appears in the *because*-clause. As its very name indicates, clauses in which a speech act construction occurs perform a speech act independently, and hence Lakoff (1987) calls such subordinate clauses "performative subordinate clauses."[14] According to Lakoff (1987:477), "performative subordinate clauses perform two functions at once. They perform a speech act that conventionally conveys a statement, and they give the content of that statement as a reason for the first statement." In (22), for example, the performative *because*-clause conveys the statement that stretching does not only decrease the chance of injury but also can help to recover from injury. At the same time, the content of that statement acts as a reason for the preceding *why*-question. If, as we discussed above, the *because*-clause of the *it is because* construction conveys a speaker's assertion, it will not be surprising that speech act constructions may occur in its *because*-clause (cf. Hooper and Thompson (1973)). Therefore, the description on the occurrence of speech act constructions of statements in *because*-clauses should be revised as follows: Speech act constructions that convey statements may occur in *because*-clauses of the *it is because* construction as well as in reasoning *because*-clauses. That is, just because a speech act construction occurs in the *because*-clause does not mean that it is a reasoning one.[15]

With the formal and functional characteristics of the *it is because* construction in mind, let us compare the construction with the ISE-*because* construction and answer the question how we can deal with the bilateral

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[14] Constructions such as negative preposing and topicalization are sometimes called "root transformations (e.g. Emonds (1969), Hooper and Thompson (1973))" or "main clause phenomena (e.g. Green (1976))". Given that the constructions may appear in subordinate clauses and perform speech act independently, the term "speech act constructions (Lakoff (1987))" seems to best describe the facts.

[15] Takahashi (2012) makes a similar point. Against my (2005a) view that only *because*-clauses used in the "inferential construction (or *suiron koubun*, as written in Japanese)" are allowed to perform an illocutionary act separated from its main clause, Takahashi (2012:195) claims that "the facts do not seem so straightforward," pointing out that "not much inference seems involved" in the following sentence, for example:

(i)　　... we support the Party, we pay for the party, we have a right to democracy in the Party because never forget it is our Party too, I move.　　　　　(Takahashi (2012:183))

The *because*-clause in (i) is a performative one, as a rhetorical imperative occurs therein. I take Takahashi's claim correct and this is a reason that I avoid using the term "inferential," as noted in fn.1, and use the term "reasoning" in later works (for details, see in particular Kanetani (2006b)). Presumably, the Japanese term *suiron* (translated as either 'inferential' or 'reasoning') used in my earlier works without good definition is misleading. Note, however, that sentence (i) is not an instance of the *it is because* construction. In my analysis, the *because*-clause that appears in (i) may be called a reasoning *because*-clause. I thank Hiroaki Konno for calling my attention to Takahashi's work.

characteristics of the ISE-*because* construction. The metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions are used to express the reason why the speaker used a certain expression in the context that precedes. In other words, the speaker will not use the construction unless such a question is assumed to exist, because to do so may interrupt the flow of speech, violating Grice's principle of quantity: Do not make your contribution more informative than is required (Grice (1989:26)). Recall that the *it is because* construction is most naturally used when certain skepticism arises from the preceding statement, according to Sawada (2004). In this regard, the ISE-*because* construction and the *it is because* construction should have similar discourse-functional specifications. The former construction is used to explain the reason why the speaker uses a particular expression; the latter to give an answer to the (general) *why*-question that may arise in the hearer. In short, they are both context-dependent and are used when a certain *why*-question is assumed to exist in the hearer from the contexts that precede.

From the comparability of these constructions, we may conclude that metalinguistic *because*-clauses are causal ones whose content the speaker subjectively asserts. Therefore, as with the *because*-clause of the *it is because* construction, metalinguistic *because*-clauses may be performative.

It should be noted that Kanetani's (2009) analysis postulates a relation between the ISE-*because* construction with the causal *because*-clause construction with a sentence-final *because*-clause. However, if the *it is because* construction were included in the causal *because*-clause construction, the ISE-*because* construction might be related to the *it is because* construction, rather than the causal *because*-clause construction with the form of [C_2 *because* C_1], for the following reasons. First, the constructions both semantically express causal relations. Second, the constructions have common purposes of use, i.e. to give an answer to an alleged question emerging from the preceding context. Third, their *because*-clauses are both asserted for the sake of their functions.

5. Conclusion

In this article, as a possible alternative to Kanetani (2009), I presented an account to the question why metalinguistic *because*-clauses can be performative despite their causal meaning. Drawing on the comparison with the *it is because* construction, a putative instance of the causal *because*-clause construction, I claimed that some causal *because*-clauses may be performative, and pointed out functional similarities between the ISE-*because* construction and the *it is because* construction. Given their comparability, the answer may be straightforward. Like the *it is because* construction, metalinguistic *because*-clause constructions are

used to express the speaker's opinion when a certain *why*-question is assumed to arise in the hearer from the contexts that precede. Hence, the *because*-clause may be performative.

It should be noted that the proposal that I made in this article is a speculative and hence preliminary one, as I did not examine its adequacy in the present article (cf. fn. 9). For future research, therefore, I will leave the following issues. First, it is necessary to investigate the *it is because* construction in detail if we see it as an independent construction and as an instance of the causal *because*-clause construction. Second, (if the present proposal is on the right track,) we need to consider what kind of constructional network may be posited between the ISE-*because* construction and the *it is because* construction and what motivates it. Third, we need to investigate what, if any, role the phrase *it is* plays in the *it is because* construction, as we did so for *I say* in the ISE-*because* construction. Besides, it is not clear at present how we can describe relations between the *it is because* construction and the causal *because*-clause construction in general (i.e. relations of constructions (21a-c) and/or a relation of the *it is because* construction with the schematic causal *because*-clause construction). It is after doing these that we may safely say that the ISE-*because* construction and the *it is because* construction are truly commensurable and we may assess which analysis, the present or Kanetani's (2009), is more plausible.

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