

# Insubordinated *puisque* in French. Grammaticalization, De-Grammaticalization, Reanalysis?

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## Abstract

*In Modern French, main-clause initial *puisque* is a discourse-marker which coexists with a homonymous subordinating causal connective. Diachronically, it has emerged from the latter through a process of insubordination. It is often assumed that the diachronies of discourse makers can be meaningfully described as grammaticalization processes. This view has been challenged by Detges & Waltereit (2009, 2016) on the grounds that grammar in the narrow sense (e.g. inflectional morphology) on the one hand and discourse markers and modal particles on the other are the outcome of different kinds of diachronic processes. For sentence-initial *puisque*, this question is further complicated by the fact that insubordination has been claimed to be a counter-example to basic assumptions of established grammaticalization theories. Against this backdrop, this article pursues two objectives. Firstly, an account will be given of the diachronic mechanisms that turned the subordinating connective *puisque* into a main-clause-initial item. It will be shown that the emergence of main-clause-initial *puisque* is brought about by a pragmatically motivated reanalysis whereby a frequent usage-effect was conventionalized as the construction's new meaning. This change took place in elaborative discourse contexts (see D'Hertefelt / Verstraete 2014) where subordinating *puisque* was used to negotiate the next move in discourse building. Secondly (and more importantly), I will discuss the question of whether this process can be meaningfully classified as an instance of grammaticalization.*

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## 1 Introduction

The topic of this study is the emergence of *puisque* as a particle introducing main clauses as in (1). This usage is remarkable since *puisque* in Modern French is also (and mainly) used as a subordinating causal conjunction (see section 3). Thus, main-clause-initial *puisque* in (1) is an example of insubordination, i.e. “the conventionalized main-clause use of what, on *prima facie* grounds, appear to be formally subordinate clauses” (Evans 2007: 367).

- (1) A: *Suis pas une intello come toi, moi, tu sais.* 1  
I.amnot an intellectual like you I you know  
I'm certainly not an intellectual like you, you know.
- Suis une femme femme. Simplette.* 2  
I.am a woman woman. simple-minded  
I'm a typical woman. Simple minded.'
- B: *Mais puisque tu as écrit un livre.* 3  
But *puisque* you have written a book  
'But you did write a book!'

(Adapted from Béatrix Beck 1988, *Stella Corfu*, p.39, cf. Frantext)

The function of main-clause-initial *puisque* in (1) can be broken down into three components. First, *puisque* expresses an act of refutation *R!* (in (1), speaker B refutes the assertion 'I am not an intellectual', previously made by her addressee). Second, *puisque* introduces a proposition *q* providing evidence in support of *R!* ('you wrote a book'). And third, *q* is presented as information that should be obvious to the addressee, i.e. it says something like 'please remember *q*' without giving full lexical expression to this proposition. This feature qualifies main-clause-initial *puisque* as a device for common ground management. Interestingly, the functional profile just sketched for *puisque* is also found in other main-clause-initial markers in Romance that have been brought about by insubordination. Cases in point are the Spanish particle *si* (originally a conditional conjunction meaning 'if') and the erstwhile complementizer *que*. Both items have functions which bear striking resemblances to those described for *puisque*.<sup>1</sup> In the following, Spanish versions of B's answer in (1), *puisque* is translated either as *si* (1'a) or as *que* (1'b).

(1'a) Sp. *si*

B: *j(Pero) si ya has escrito un libro!* 3  
 (but) *si* already have.2sg written a book  
 'But you did write a book!'

(1'b) Sp. *que*

B: *j(Pero) que ya has escrito un libro!* 3  
 (but) *que* already have.2sg written a book  
 'But you did write a book!'

It has been noted that *si* and *que* in Spanish can be translated by the German modal particle *doch* (see Schwenter 2016b). This also holds true for main-clause-initial *puisque*, as is shown in (1'c).

(1'c) German *doch*

B: *(Aber) du hast doch ein Buch geschrieben!* 3  
 (but) you have.2sg *doch* a book written  
 'But you did write a book.'

The particle *doch* in (1'c) exemplifies a functional feature shared by *puisque*, *si* and *que*. Modal particles are *illocutionary modifiers* in that they integrate speech acts into the common ground (Thurmair 1989; Jacobs 1999; Waltereit 1999, 2001, 2006, Abraham 2012). Thus *doch* in (1'c) signals to the addressee that she should be aware of the proposition asserted in line 3. But unlike main-clause-initial *puisque*, *si* and refutational *que*, which are all relatively infrequent (for *puisque*, which is extremely rare, see Detges/Gévaudan forthcoming), modal particles are very frequent in spoken German. Moreover, main-clause-initial erstwhile conjunctions like *puisque*, *si* and *que* are isolated items in their respective language, while the modal particles of German are organized as an (albeit heterogeneous) paradigm (Meisnitzer 2012; Schonjans 2013; Diewald 2013).

As has been shown in Detges & Gévaudan (forthcoming), there is yet another difference between main-clause-initial *puisque*, *si* and *que*, on the one hand, and genuine modal particles

<sup>1</sup> However, the full range of functions expressed by sentence-initial *que* is somewhat larger. See Gras & Sansiñena (2015) and Gévaudan (2014).

on the other. As pointed out above, *puisque*, *si* and *que* are conventional expressions of refutation. As such, they are directed against some foregoing argumentative move on the part of the addressee. Therefore, the utterances introduced by these elements are always the second parts of an adjacency pair. Their central function consists in "closing off an individual topic from further discussion" (Schwenter 2016a: 7). This is what makes them discourse markers in the classical definition given by Fraser (1999: 936); they "signal the relationship that the speaker intends between the utterance the D[iscourse] M[arker] introduces and the foregoing utterance". By contrast, the modal particle *doch* is not limited to acts of refutation (Kwon 2005; Thurmair 1989; Detges/Gévaudan forthcoming) and hence not contingent on a particular sequential pattern. Generally, modal particles depend on sentence mode rather than on particular discourse contexts (Kwon 2005, but see Rojas-Esponda 2013). This difference is directly reflected in the respective syntactic positions of discourse markers and modal particles: as pointed out in Fraser's (1999) definition, discourse markers, which connect two discourse units S1 and S2, are typically located at the beginning of the first sentence within S2. Modal particles in German, by contrast, are usually realized in the middle field of the sentence, close to the inflected predicate (cf. Thurmair 1989: 25-36). Thus, despite sharing certain similarities with modal particles, main-clause-initial *puisque*, *si* and *que* are ultimately discourse markers (see Detges/Gévaudan forthcoming).<sup>2</sup> In these constructions, common ground management, which is designed to enhance *R!*, is a function ancillary to the structuring of discourse.

It is often assumed that discourse markers (and modal particles) emerge through processes of grammaticalization (see Diwald 2011, Auer/Günthner 2003). This view has been challenged by Detges & Waltereit (2009, 2016) on the grounds that grammar in the narrow sense (e.g. inflectional morphology) on the one hand and discourse markers and modal particles on the other are the outcome of different kinds of diachronic processes (see section 2 below). For the discourse marker under discussion here, i.e. *puisque*, this question is further complicated by the fact that insubordination has been claimed to be a counter-example to basic assumptions of established grammaticalization theories (see Evans 2007; Mithun 2008). Against this backdrop, this article pursues two objectives. Firstly, an account will be given of the diachronic mechanisms that turned the subordinating connective *puisque* into a main-clause-initial item. Secondly (and more importantly), I will discuss the question of whether this process can be meaningfully classified as an instance of grammaticalization. Therefore, my analysis begins with a critical discussion of certain competing notions of grammaticalization and their implications, in turn, for current theories of insubordination.

## 2 Insubordination and grammaticalization

The question of what exactly grammaticalization is – both from an intensional and extensional perspective – is a much debated issue (see Detges/Waltereit 2016). By far the most coherent account of grammaticalization is Lehmann's (2002 [1982]) parameter model. Lehmann's model captures the overall direction of grammaticalization processes as a gradual loss of autonomy and an increasing dependence on a host. This also includes a tendency of "loose paratactic 'pragmatic' constructions [to] become syntacticized as subordinate clauses" (Evans 2007: 375, see also Mithun 2008: 69). Insubordination, in turn, challenges this view because it seems to represent the reverse case. Rather than losing in autonomy, insubordinated *puisque*, *si* and *que* in (1) and (1'a, b) have increased in scope in that they introduce main clauses rather than subordinate ones. This process is accompanied by a corollary loss in

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<sup>2</sup> The identification of modal particles and their distinction from other categories is a thorny enterprise, especially in languages where the notion of modal particle is not an established concept. For an example, see the contributions in Degand, Cornillie & Pietandrea (2013) and the review of this volume by Detges (2015).

bondedness. Moreover, as I will show in section 3 (below), *puisque* has gained rather than lost in semantic weight (see also Detges/Gévaudan forthcoming).

This is all the more remarkable as many authors include the diachrony of discourse markers (and modal particles) within a conception of grammaticalization which is wider than Lehmann's parameter model. In this vein, Auer & Günthner (2003: 20-21) point to the fact that the definition of what is and what is not grammaticalization is contingent on what is seen as grammar. Thus, they claim, Lehmann's model subscribes to a traditional view of grammar, developed in the 19th century, in which grammar is largely identified with inflectional morphology. By contrast, proponents of an enlarged (and seemingly more timely) concept of grammaticalization crucially also include "information processing, discourse management, and other abilities central to the linguistic pragmatics of focusing, topicalization, deixis, and discourse coherence" (Traugott 2003: 636). Items coming to serve these functions regularly experience increases in both frequency and semantic bleaching, thereby becoming part of 'grammar' in a wider sense. This view is further supported by Auer & Günthner (2003: 22-25), who observe that grammar is ultimately defined as "open" form. As these authors argue, discourse markers and core grammatical items both share a purely indexical nature; due to their conceptual-semantic "emptiness", both types of elements are open to usage in a potentially infinite number of contexts (Auer/Günthner 2003: 24). Against this view, Detges & Waltereit (2016) propose to maintain a distinction between grammaticalization *strictu sensu* (i.e. the emergence of core grammar) and the diachrony of discourse markers. Moreover, as the authors argue, the diachrony of modal particles represents yet a different case. According to Detges & Waltereit (2016), these three types of diachronies are the outcomes of different kinds of argumentative patterns. In particular, a) *discourse markers* go back to argumentative routines concerning the next move in discourse building, b) *modal particles* are the outcome of negotiations concerning the common ground, and c) *core grammar* in the "traditional" sense is brought about by argumentative routines concerning the relevance of pieces of conceptual information.

In the following, I will show for *puisque* how (and why) insubordination takes place. In particular, I will argue that the emergence of main-clause-initial *puisque* is brought about by a pragmatically motivated reanalysis whereby a certain frequent usage-effect is conventionalized as the construction's new meaning. As I will show, this change takes place in elaborative discourse units (D'Hertefelt/Verstraete 2014: 92) where subordinating *puisque* is used to negotiate the next move in discourse building.

### 3 Insubordinated *puisque* and its subordinating cognate

As has already been pointed out, main-clause-initial *puisque* can be traced back to a subordinating causal conjunction which is far more frequent in current French than its insubordinated cognate (according to Detges/Gévaudan forthcoming, the ratio is roughly 1 to 100). As a subordinating causal conjunction, *puisque* connects presupposed information (expressed in the subordinate clause *q*) to a main clause *p*, which, in turn, expresses some kind of *act*. This can be, among other things, a directive speech act (see (2a)), a question ((2b)), a conclusion ((2c)), or a formulation ((2d)) (see also Franken 1996, Detges 2013).

- (2)
- |    |   |                               |
|----|---|-------------------------------|
| a. | <i>Réponds-moi<sub>p</sub>, puisque tu sais tout<sub>q</sub>.</i>                           | <i>p</i> directive speech act |
|    | 'Answer me <sub>p</sub> , <i>puisque</i> you know everything <sub>q</sub> .'                |                               |
| b. | <i>Pourquoi attends-tu<sub>p</sub>, puisque tout est prêt<sub>q</sub>?</i>                  | <i>p</i> question             |
|    | 'What are you waiting for <sub>p</sub> , <i>puisque</i> everything is ready <sub>q</sub> .' |                               |
| c. | <i>Il est chez lui<sub>p</sub>, puisque la porte est ouverte<sub>q</sub>.</i>               | <i>p</i> conclusion           |
|    | 'He's home <sub>p</sub> , <i>puisque</i> the door is open <sub>q</sub> .'                   |                               |

- d. ... *le crime<sub>p</sub>*, ***puisqu'****il faut l'appeler par son nom<sub>q</sub>* ... *p* act of formulation  
 '... *crime<sub>p</sub>*, *puisque* one must call things by their names<sub>*q*</sub> ...'

As shown in these examples, *q* is information intended to justify *p*. Moreover, *puisque* indicates that *q* should be known to the hearer and that it therefore is an irrefutable argument in favour of *p*. In section 1 it was shown that main-clause-initial *puisque* is used for common ground management. What we see here is that this feature has been inherited from its diachronic source, the subordinating conjunction *puisque*.

In principle, the act expressed by *p* in subordinating *p puisque q* can also be a refutation. Thus the *R!* expressed in (1) by insubordinated *puisque* could also take the form of a propositionally expressed *p* of the kind 'this can't be so', 'this is irrelevant', 'you're not serious' etc.

- (1'd) B: ***Mais t'*** *es pas sérieuse là*  
 But you be.2sg NEG serious there  
 'But you can't be serious

***puisque tu as écrit un livre.***  
*puisque* you have written a book  
 since you wrote a book!

3

A comparison between insubordinated *puisque q* in (1) and its diachronic source *p puisque q* (in (2) and (1'd)) shows that both share certain functional properties, in particular a) the feature of being 'causal' (insofar as both provide justification by means of *q*), and b) the feature of being a tool for common ground management (in presenting *q* as obvious to the addressee). The first (and most obvious) difference between the two markers is a difference in scope; as an expression of *R!* (i.e. an act of refutation), *puisque q* is always the second part of an adjacency pair (see section 1). This means that *puisque q* – despite its main-clause status – is still highly context-dependent. However, this dependency is located at the level of discourse, whereas subordinating *puisque* is a marker of syntactic (and hence structural) dependency. In similar cases, Mithun (2008) consequently identifies insubordination with what she calls "dependency shift" (see also D'Hertefelt/Verstaete 2014). Thus, as a consequence of its insubordination, *puisque q* has experienced a widening of scope, thereby running counter to one of Lehmann's parameters. A second striking difference between main-clause-initial *puisque* and its subordinating cognate is that the latter provides a slot for *p* (usually a main clause). Main-clause-initial *puisque*, by contrast, lacks such a *p*. Moreover, the range of possible acts originally evoked by *p* has been narrowed down to just *R!*. Realizing *R!*, which is not expressed independently any more (due to the loss of *p*), has become part of the conventional meaning of insubordinated *puisque q* itself (see Detges & Gévaudan forthcoming). Thus, compared to its diachronic source, main-clause-initial *puisque* has undergone semantic enrichment rather than bleaching (see section 2 above). Moreover, insubordinated *puisque q* has incorporated the former slot for *p*, thereby losing part of the original syntagmatic compositionality of *p puisque q*. Such processes of condensation occur in the grammar and in the lexicon alike (see Lehmann 2005; Detges forthcoming). In section 5, I will argue that the insubordination process of *puisque q* qualifies as an instance of lexical change or, more precisely, as one of lexical reanalysis.

## 4 Insubordination as a diachronic process

According to Evans (2007), insubordination proceeds by four stages. A construction may be said to be insubordinated once it has reached stage C (for examples, see Evans 2007).

<i>Subordination</i>	<i>Ellipsis</i>	<i>Conventional ellipsis</i>	<i>Reanalysis as main clause structure</i>
<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
Subordinate construc- tion	Ellipsis	Restriction of interpre- tation of elided mate- rial	Conventionalized main- clause use of formally subordinate structure

Table 1: The diachronic trajectory for insubordination (Evans 2007)

As is argued in Detges & Gévaudan (forthcoming), main-clause-initial *puisque* in present-day French is located at stage D of the cline. Firstly, insubordinated *puisque q* can be combined with *mais* 'but' (see (1), *mais puisque tu as écrit un livre* 'but you wrote a book'). The conjunction *mais* 'but' is a coordinating connective which can only be followed by main clauses, or alternatively, by material representing complete speech acts (*mais enfin!*, *mais voyons donc!* 'Oh, come on!'). This strongly suggests that *puisque q* has attained full main-clause status. Secondly, the authors argue, other Romance languages, e.g. Spanish, have subordinating conjunctions which function exactly like subordinating *puisque* in French (e.g. Sp. *ya que*, see Borzi/Detges 2011), but these conjunctions have not undergone insubordination and consequently cannot be used for refutational utterances as can main-clause-initial *puisque*. This clearly indicates that the latter has conventional status in French. In the following paragraphs, I will take a look at the diachronic process whereby main-clause-initial *puisque* emerged as an autonomous lexical item.

### 4.1. The corpus data

My inquiry is based on the Frantext Corpus, a large collection of mainly literary texts. Detges & Gévaudan (forthcoming) point out that in the sections of this corpus which cover the 20th and early 21st centuries, *puisque* occurs exclusively in fictitious orality, mainly in theatre plays and dialogic passages of narrative fiction. These passages usually have a pronouncedly informal flavor. This also holds true for the historical data found for main-clause-initial *puisque*. As shown in Table 2a, an isolated occurrence is attested for the second half of the 18th century, but the eventual consolidation sets in only towards the middle of the 19th century. While Table 2a gives the frequency of main-clause-initial *puisque* in absolute numbers, Table 2b normalizes these in accordance with the size of the respective subcorpus; thus, a value of 1 in Table 2b represents one occurrence of main-clause-initial *puisque* per 10,000,000 words in the subcorpus representing the indicated time-frame. Table 2c captures yet another aspect of the change by comparing the frequency of main-clause-initial *puisque* against that of its subordinating cognate. Thus, for example, the subcorpus for the period from 1781 to 1790 contains one instance of main-clause-initial *puisque* against 1,385 occurrences of subordinating *puisque*, of which the latter, larger number is plotted. At the other end of the development, i.e. during the decade from 1841 to 1850, this proportion has decreased to a mere 129 occurrences of subordinating *puisque* per one instance of main-clause-initial *puisque*, thereby attaining the modern ratio of one main-clause-initial *puisque* to roughly 100 instances of the subordinating cognate (Detges/Gévaudan, forthcoming).

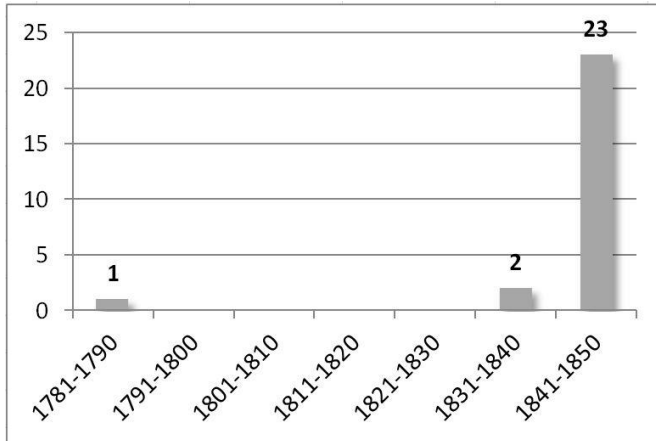


Table 2a: The rise of main-clause-initial *puisque* in the Frantext Corpus in absolute numbers

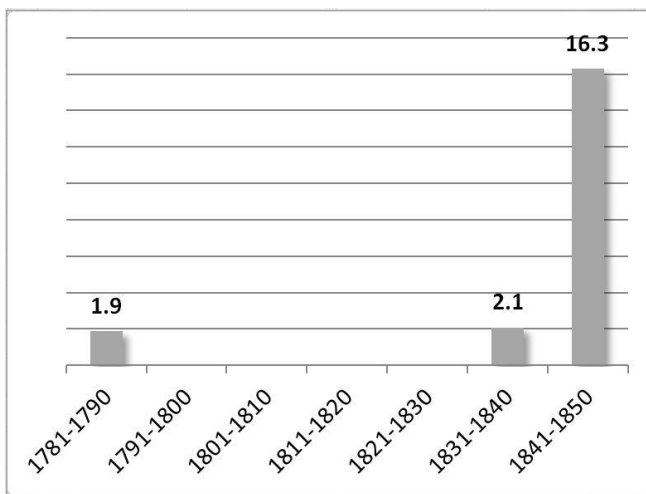


Table 2b: The rise of main-clause-initial *puisque*, frequencies normalized by subcorpus size

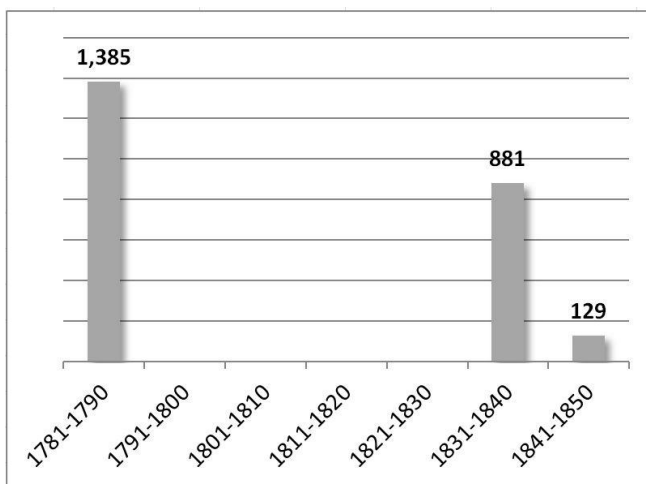


Table 2c: The proportion of subordinating *puisque* to main-clause-initial *puisque*

While interpreting these data, it is important to keep in mind that they do not really document the usage of main-clause-initial *puisque* in spontaneous colloquial speech. What they do show is the latter's occurrence in literary fiction. Specifically, they do not document the moment of change and the subsequent progressive entrenchment of its result, but simply the increasing use of insubordinated *puisque* as a stylistic device to create the illusion of

spontaneous orality. If this assessment is correct, then *puisque* was entrenched in oral usage before the 1780s, and it diffused into literary writing from the 1840s onwards. Even at this point, it was used only by a handful of authors (see Table 3). Significantly, all of the authors mentioned in Table 3 are in one way or another proponents of realist tendencies, aiming at faithfully depicting colloquial language. In the table, the integer values first following the author names indicate the absolute number of occurrences of main-clause-initial *puisque* found for the respective author. Then, the decimal number in the following column is a normalized value rendering the number of occurrences of main-clause-initial *puisque* per 10,000,000 words in the works of the respective author between 1841 and 1850. Finally, the rightmost column contains the ratio of subordinating *puisque* to main-clause-initial *puisque*; thus, the value 41.8 in the first row indicates that in the works of Alexandre Dumas Père, subordinating *puisque* occurs 41.8 times more frequently than its main-clause-initial cognate. The author-specific figures given in the last two columns must, of course, be interpreted against the average values represented in Tables 2b and 2c. The "best" scores in both respects are found for Eugène Marin Labiche; in the Frantext-Corpus, this author is represented by only a single work, the theatre-play *Embrassons-nous, Folleville!* This vaudeville comedy is only 12,392 words long, but it contains extremely fast and lively dialogal exchanges full of conflicts and controversies — an ideal environment for the usage of main-clause-initial *puisque*.

	absolute frequency	per 10,000,000 words by author	proportional domination by subordinated <i>puisque</i>
Alexandre Dumas Père	6	66.2	41.8
George Sand	6	25.5	166.0
Eugène Marin Labiche	4	3,227.9	1.2
Eugène Sue	3	21.6	153.0
Gustave Flaubert	2	33.3	65.0
Honoré de Balzac	2	4.5	178.0

Table 3: Authors using main-clause-initial *puisque* in the Frantext Corpus (1841-1850)

Although the actual process of insubordination, i.e. the reanalysis of subordinating *puisque* as a main-clause-initial item, cannot be directly observed in the available textual evidence, these data do nevertheless allow us to make plausible hypotheses about this process.

## 4.2 Insubordination and Ellipsis

In line with Evans (2007), it is commonly held that insubordination is brought about by main clause ellipsis. This view is somewhat relativized by Mithun (2008: 107) and especially by D'Hertefelt & Verstraete (2013), who show that subordinating adverbial (adjunct) and complement constructions may arguably also be affected by other mechanisms of change. In the following subsections (4.2.1–4.2.4), I will argue that in the case of *puisque*, insubordination is an instance of reanalysis rather than of ellipsis. Reanalysis is commonly defined as "change in the structure of an expression [...] that does not involve any immediate modification of its surface structure" (Langacker 1977: 58). Therefore, what we have to look for are contexts where subordinating *puisque* *q* is used independently of a propositionally expressed main clause *p*. Moreover, these contexts have to be pragmatically plausible and, above all, sufficiently frequent in number to explain the conventionalization of the innovative usage.



#### 4.2.1 Dyadic dependence in question-answer pairs

As pointed out in Detges & Gévaudan (forthcoming), drawing on Franken (1996), subordinating *puisque* allows the elliptical omission of *p*. By far the most frequent case of genuine main clause ellipsis is found in examples like (4), where the speaker gives an affirmative answer to a foregoing question. What is omitted in this case is an overt expression of consent, standardly a holophrastic 'yes' or an affirmative repetition of the proposition contained in the foregoing question ('Yes (I will (come (on Saturday))))).

- (4) - *Ainsi vous viendrez samedi?* 1  
 So you will.come Saturday  
 'So, you will come on Saturday?'  
 - *Puisque Mme de Morcef m' en prie.* 2  
*Puisque* Mme de Morcef me of.it asks  
 'Since [*puisque*] Mme de Morcef asks me to.'

(Alexandre Dumas Père 1846: *Le Comte de Monte, Cristo*, cf. Frantext)

(4) is an example of dyadic dependence (see Sansiñena, De Smet & Cornillie 2015). In such cases, an overt realization of the element omitted would be a mere repetition of given information ('Yes, I will come on Saturday, *because ...*') and would therefore not contribute to the progression of the interaction. As is pointed out in Sansiñena, De Smet & Cornillie (2015) ellipses of this kind express connectivity to the foregoing discourse; in (4), omission of *p* therefore signals coherence between a question and the subsequent answer. However, this is possible only in contexts where the elided element is an expression of consent. Therefore, this case is irrelevant for explaining the emergence of refutational *puisque*.

#### 4.2.2 Extralinguistic realization of *R!*

A case standardly discussed in the literature on *puisque* is a constellation in which the act otherwise represented by *p* can only be recovered in the extralinguistic context (see Detges/Gévaudan forthcoming, Franken 1996). Thus, a speaker may offer a gift to her addressee while declaring *puisque vous m'avez aidé* 'because you helped me'. In such a case, *puisque q* provides a justification for the gesture of presenting the gift, i.e. for an extralinguistic act. For a source of insubordinated *puisque*, we need cases where *p* is omitted in contexts of a refutation. Such contexts do exist in my corpus, but they are not very frequent. As a case in point, consider (5).

- (5) - *eh bien! Tu auras tes cinq cents francs, dit Andrea* 1  
 -eh-bien you will.get your five hundred francs, said Andrea  
 'All right! You're going to get your five hundred francs, said Andrea,  
*mais c'est lourd pour moi, mon pauvre Caderousse ... tu abuses* 2  
 but it's heavy four me my poor Caderousse ... you abuse  
 but it's a lot for me, my poor Caderousse ... you're taking advantage  
 - *bah! Dit Caderousse, puisque tu puises dans des coffres* 3  
*bah!* said Caderousse, because you draw on INDEF money.bags  
*bah!*, said Caderousse, because you can draw on purses

*qui n' ont pas de fonds*  
 that NEG have NEG INDEF bottoms  
 that are bottomless.'

4

(Alexandre Dumas Père 1846: *Le Comte de Monte Cristo*, p. 329, cf. Frantext)

In line 4, Caderousse rejects Andrea's assertion 'you're taking advantage' by an interjection (*bah!*), which is halfway between a conventional linguistic expression and a non-linguistic gesture. What makes this example a candidate for a bridging context is the fact that the act of refutation expressed here is not realized by propositional material. However, contexts of this kind are too rare to explain the eventual conventionalization of main-clause-initial *puisque*. More often, *p* is realized by an explicit cursing formula, such as *pardieu!*, *mille tonnerres!* etc. As interjections, these formulae are grammatically incomplete; nevertheless they are conventional expressions of *R!* and can therefore not be considered as ellipses.

#### 4.2.3 Subordinating (*p*) *puisque q* as an elaborative device

The notion of elaboration refers to a discourse relation where a unit of discourse is used to "elaborate on or clarify an aspect of their previous discourse to guarantee proper understanding" (D'Hertefelt/Verstraete 2014: 92). As pointed out by D'Hertefelt & Verstraete (2014), elaborative uses are particularly likely to turn subordinating constructions into insubordinated ones. Independently of this hypothesis, it is standardly assumed in the literature on causal connectives that the latter are typically used in exactly this kind of context. Thus Diessel & Hetterle (2011), drawing on the seminal work by Ford (1993), provide the following example as the prototypical use of a causal construction in interaction.

- |     |    |  |   |
|-----|----|--|---|
| (7) | A: | <i>Did you get ye:r/ ... your first pay check from it?</i> | 1 |
|     | A: | <i>At least?</i>   | 2 |
|     | B: | <i>No, I won't be paid for a couple of weeks yet.</i>      | 3 |
|     | A: | <i>Oh, ... w'l/</i>  | 4 |
|     | B: | <b><i>Cause</i></b> <i>it takes a long time.</i>           | 5 |
|     | A: | <i>At least it's in the bank.</i>                          | 6 |
|     | B: | <i>Yeah it will be.</i>                                    | 7 |

In this example, the clause introduced by *cause* in line 5 is an elaboration of B's assertion made in line 3. Moreover, in the sequential ordering of the conversation in (7), it has a specific interactional function: in line 4, speaker A indicates lack of comprehension (or doubt) as regards B's previous assertion. It is this interactional problem that triggers B's elaborative contribution introduced by *cause* in line 5. This example illustrates that causal clauses are typically used as *reactive repairs* to interactional problems. As is argued in Diessel & Hetterle (2011), following Ford (1993), this scenario explains certain cross-linguistic structural features of causal clauses. These are overwhelmingly realized in postposition, and – given that they typically occur as *post-hoc* reactions – their syntactic integration into the preceding main clause is relatively loose (see (7)). Therefore, cross-linguistically, causal clauses tend to be main clauses rather than subordinate ones. As for causal *puisque* in French, only the last prediction is not fully borne out (see Detges 2013; Weidhaas 2014): as a conjunction introducing presupposed information, *puisque* is a subordinating connective. As an outcome of insubordination, however, *puisque q* was upgraded to main-clause status by undergoing syntactic reanalysis in exactly the contexts instantiated by (7). As a case in point, consider (8).

- (8) - [...] *mais cette femme est des amies d'Aramis.* 1  
 [...] but this woman is of.the friends.FEM of-Aramis  
 'But this woman is one of Aramis' friends.'
- *Je n'en sais rien.* 2  
 I NEG-of.it know nothing  
 'I don't know anything about that.'
- *Puisqu' elle loge chez lui.* 3  
*Puisque* she is.housed with him  
 'Because/but she lives with him.'

(Alexandre Dumas Père 1844: *Les trois mousquetaires*, p.142, cf. Frantext)

In this example, *p* and *puisque q* occur in different turns. Like *cause* in (7), subordinating causal *puisque q* is an elaborative reaction to an objection raised by the addressee. In elaborative contexts such as in (7) and (8), the contributions introduced by *cause* and *puisque* are ambiguous: on the one hand, they provide *post-hoc* justifications for a contribution previously made by the speaker (line 1 in (8)). On the other hand, their main function is to refute an objection raised by the addressee (line 2 in (8)). It was argued above that the ties existing between the reactive causal clause and the foregoing *p* are relatively weak. Therefore, elaborative uses in the manner of (8) qualify as privileged bridging contexts for a syntactic reanalysis of subordinating causal *puisque*, turning the latter into a main-clause-initial expression of refutation. In particular, the context in (8) satisfies the "principle of relevant usage effect" (Detges forthcoming, see also the "principle of reference", Detges & Waltereit 2002) inasmuch as both analyses yield the same relevant interpretation. Before the change, the relevant interpretation, i.e. refutation, is an implicature; after the change, it is part of the conventional meaning of *puisque* (see Detges, forthcoming). For the reasons laid out in 4.1., we lack authentic data documenting elaborative uses in 18th- and 19th-century spoken French. Furthermore, to the best of my knowledge, corpus studies on elaborative *puisque* in spoken varieties of the modern language do not yet exist. However, as we shall see in the next section, the hypothesis just proposed becomes more plausible in light of certain preferred usage patterns of main-clause-initial *puisque* in modern French.

#### 4.2.4 Main-clause-initial *puisque* in interaction

The elaborative uses of causal connectives in (7) and (8) are part of a sequentially ordered interactional pattern consisting of three steps: a) speaker A makes a contribution, e.g. an assertion (line 1 in (8)); b) speaker B raises an objection to this contribution (line 2 in (8)); and c) speaker A invalidates B's objection by providing a *post-hoc* repair of his original contribution. As shown in Detges & Gévaudan (forthcoming), this is similar to certain extremely frequent uses of main-clause-initial *puisque* in modern French. An example is the following:

- (9) *Puis, quelques jours plus tard* 1  
 Then, some days later  
 'Then, a couple of days later,
- Lindon sur un ton légèrement insidieux:* 2  
 Lindon, on a tone slightly devious  
 Lindon [asks me] in a slightly devious tone:

<i>Au fait , la petite lettre que je vous avais</i>	3
in.the fact, the little letter which I you had	
Actually, that little letter which I had	
<i>demandé d'écrire, vous l'avez envoyée?</i>	4
asked of-write, you it-have sent?	
asked you to write, did you post it?	
<i>Oui, dis-je, bien sûr. Il ouvre de grands yeux:</i>	5
Yes, say-I, very sure. He opens of big eyes:	
Yes, I say, of course. He looks at me with wide eyes:	
<i>Ah bon, vous l'avez vraiment fait?</i>	6
Ah good, you it-have really done?	
Oh, well, you really did, didn't you?	
<i>Puisque je vous le dis, répondez-je.</i>	7
Puisque I to.you it say, answer-I.	
But I'm telling you, I reply.	

(Jean Echenoz 2001, *Jérôme Lindon*, p. 41, cf. Frantext)

In (9), *puisque q* is the last element of a sequentially ordered, three-step schema: a) speaker A makes an assertion ('Yes, of course', line 5), b) speaker B expresses doubt as to the validity of this assertion ('You really did, didn't you?', line 6), whereupon c) speaker A refutes B's objection by referring back to his own previous assertion ('*Puisque* I'm telling you', line 7). The function of *puisque q* in this context is to abort an attempt made by the addressee to further pursue a topic that should already have been settled (Detges/Gévaudan forthcoming). This constellation, where *q* is a phrase built on a first-person speech-act verb, is extremely frequent in Modern French; as Detges & Gévaudan point out, it represents roughly 70% of the overall occurrences of *puisque* in their corpus (20th and early 21st century). Note that the translation given for *puisque* in (4) by Detges/Gévaudan (forthcoming) is 'but', which reflects the interpretation that *puisque q* is aimed at refuting the foregoing utterance - this translation is licensed by the conventional meaning of insubordinated *puisque* in 20th-century French. In another interpretation, however, *puisque* can be understood as elaborating on A's original assertion ('Yes ... of course', line 3). In this analysis, *puisque* in line 7 is still a subordinating causal conjunction linking *q* ('I'm telling you') to a *p* uttered in a previous turn. In light of example (9) it could seem that (main-)clause-initial *puisque* is not an autonomous construction, but simply a variant of subordinating causal *puisque* adapted to the context (see, e.g. Franken 1996). However, this is not the case. As a consequence of reanalysis, refutational *puisque q* can appear in contexts where a causal interpretation in the manner of (7) and (8) can be ruled out.

(10) - <i>d'abord, dit le comte De Chabannes, le nom de votre ami?</i>	1
first, said the count De Chabannes, the name of your friend	
'To start with, said the Count of Chabannes, what is your friend's name?'	
- <i>feu mon ami s'appelle Ulric Stanislas De Rouvres</i>	2
late my friend himself-calls Ulric Stanislas De Rouvres	
'My late friend's name is Ulric Stanilslas De Rouvres'	

- *Ulric De Rouvres, dirent les convives, mais il est mort!* 3  
 Ulric de Rouvres, said the guests, but he is dead  
 'Ulric de Rouvres, said the guests, but he is dead!'

- *puisque je vous dis feu mon ami, répliqua tranquillement Tristan.* 4  
*puisque* I you say late my friend, replied calmly Tristan  
 'Puisque I said 'my LATE friend', Tristan calmly replied.'

(Henry Murger 1851, *Scènes de la vie parisienne*, p. 5, cf. Frantext)

In (10), *puisque q* cannot be linked back to an independent act *p* somewhere in the foregoing discourse. For this reason, a causal interpretation is excluded for *puisque*. At the same time, however, its usage still follows the three-step schema observed in (7), (8) and (9): *puisque q* refutes an objection raised by the addressee(s) to a foregoing utterance made by the speaker. As mentioned above, this is still its most important function in modern French. In spite of lacking direct evidence from spoken 18th- and 19th-century French, we may therefore conclude that this sequential schema most probably provided the context for the reanalysis of subordinating causal *puisque* as a main-clause-initial particle expressing refutation. If this view is correct, then this reanalysis was usage-driven, motivated by an argumentational dialogal pattern whose rationale is negotiating the next move in discourse building (as claimed by Detges/Waltereit 2016).

## 5 Insubordination, grammaticalization, reanalysis

In the literature, some authors propose to replace the concept of insubordination with that of dependency shift (Mithun 2008, D'Hertefelt & Verstaete 2014, see also Section 3 above). According to proponents of this position, the diachronic change from subordinating conjunction to main-clause-initial discourse marker is more appropriately captured as a shift from syntactic dependence on a main clause to dependence on specific discourse environments. This view is largely confirmed by the change described in the previous sections: sentences introduced by refutational *puisque* overwhelmingly occur as part of the discourse pattern described in section 4.2.4. Analyzing similar changes for Swedish and Danish, D'Hertefelt & Verstraete (2014: 95-96) wonder whether these constructions may legitimately be viewed as 'independent' main clauses.<sup>3</sup> The account proposed here adds another facet to this question: as I have shown in section 4.2.3., already as a subordinating causal conjunction, *puisque* is highly discourse-dependent to start with. As an outcome of the reanalysis described in section 4.2.3., it becomes *more* discourse-dependent. This is reflected in the respective frequencies of the two constructions. While subordinating *puisque* has 2,943 matches in the Frantext subcorpus for the period between 1841 and 1850, main-clause-initial *puisque* only occurs 23 times (this corresponds more or less to the proportion of roughly 1 to 100 given by Detges & Gévaudan for the 20th and the early 21st century). Thus, the notion of increased discourse-dependence is not tantamount to "loss in autonomy" in the sense described by Lehmann's (2002) parameters. Rather, what it amounts to is a specialization in function. By contrast, grammaticalization in the narrow sense (see section 2 above) generally leads to a rise in frequency (Detges & Waltereit 2016), brought about by a generalization of potential contexts (Bybee et al., 1994: 289-292). Concomitantly, grammaticalization in the narrow sense entails semantic attrition, whereas *puisque* – as shown in section 3 – has gained in semantic weight. By the same token, however, specialization in function is not de-gramma-

<sup>3</sup> This view seems far too strong because it confuses syntactic status with discourse function. Thus, any main clause introduced by a discourse marker is dependent on the foregoing context.

ticalization; rather, reanalyses of the kind described in section 4.2.3. can affect grammar and lexicon alike (see Detges forthcoming). Moreover, as an outcome of the change described above, *p puisque q* loses its slot for *p* – indeed, loss in internal compositionality is a common outcome of reanalysis – in the lexicon as well as in grammar.

For a correct assessment of the insubordination process of *puisque q*, it is important to distinguish two aspects. On the one hand, the change has an obvious syntagmatic dimension, insofar as *puisque*'s original potential to licence a biclausal structure (*p puisque q*) is reduced to a monoclausal pattern (*puisque q*). This is what is captured by the notion of "insubordination". On the other hand, however, this change is ultimately brought about by a reinterpretation of the element at the core of the original biclausal construction, i.e. *puisque*. Thus, the decisive single factor in the change is the semantic shift affecting *puisque*, transforming it from a causal item into a marker of refutation. Semantic reanalyses of this kind, affecting single items, are generally viewed as lexical change. A similar case in point are meaning shifts affecting individual verbs which then lead to new valency patterns for those verbs. Cases like these are adequately captured under the headings of lexical change and of subsequent lexicalization of a new syntagmatic pattern along with a new lexical meaning. This conclusion, in turn, sheds new light on the debate surrounding the question of whether the notion of grammaticalization should be extended to include the development of discourse markers; as mentioned above (in section 2), the main argument for this position is that the diachronies of discourse markers normally include semantic bleaching accompanied by an increase in frequency. This view thus rests on the tacit assumption that these two criteria are more central to grammaticalization than other parameters of Lehmann's model. However, in the case analyzed here, neither semantic bleaching nor increased frequencies have a role to play. Likewise, main-clause-initial *puisque*, with its highly specialized discourse function, challenges the notion that the marker's meaning is more open after the change than before (Auer/Günthner 2003, see above, section 2) since *puisque* loses its syntactic slot for *p* and is subject to stronger contextual constraints. Nevertheless, main-clause-initial *puisque* is an ordinary discourse marker. Thus, unless grammaticalization is defined in a circular way as any kind of change that produces grammar, this case seriously calls into question the notion that discourse markers arise through grammaticalization.

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