

## Review by Boban Arsenijević

**Does the paper make a novel contribution to the understanding of the topic under investigation? [max 250 words]**

The paper makes a significant contribution to the relative clause analysis of causal clauses, and since these clauses are among the few types of subordinate clauses for which argued to be exempt from this analysis - also to the claim that all subordinate clauses are derived in terms of relativization, i.e. that clausal subordination equals relativization. The contribution is two fold: it provides a fully elaborate syntactic analysis following the principles of Cinque's (2013, 2020a,b) and Cecchetto & Donati's (2012) approaches to relativization, and a detailed model of the diachronic process that plausibly lead to the reanalysis of comparative / simulative clauses into causal clauses (while also contributing to refuting the argument that causal clauses are never introduced by typical relativizers).

**Is the empirical content of the paper sound (i.e. the data are collected and presented properly, the experiments are well designed, the statistics is well done, the examples contain no spelling mistakes, etc)? [max 400 words]**

The empirical content of the paper comes from Italian and is corpus-based, relying on a research of two corpora, MIDIA for the diacronic data and CORIS for the contemporary Italian, in addition to the introspective judgments of the author(s). Every example is specified for the source and period of occurrence. Arguments are supported by concrete quantitative data, including statistical tests where appropriate. The introspective and cited data that I was able to judge or otherwise check are also properly treated and valid. I noticed several typos, most notably in example (7a), it should probably be "he had a deadline" instead of "it had a deadline" (although this is likely imported from the cited work, and requires a [note] in addition to the correction.

**Is the argument coherent and sound, with no major flaws and/or shortcomings, within the context of the theoretical assumptions made by the author? [max 500 words]**

The arguments made are well supported by the provided empirical insights, and even stronger: the data presented even imply the theoretical views argued for. One aspect in which I see room for improvement concerns the ordering between the main and the subordinate clause. It is announced on page 18 that the two clause types, comparative / simulative and causal clauses, even when introduced by the same conjunction tend to occur in different orders with respect to the matrix clause. On page 26, this asymmetry is analytically addressed. I find this part insufficiently clearly and explicitly formulated, and have some doubt that it

indeed explains the observation. From what I understood, comparative / simulative clauses move to the comparative projection, while causal clauses do not. The questions that this raises include: How come causal clauses do not have to move to a causal projection? Does the movement have to do with information structure, i.e. with the fact that comparatives establish a correlation and causal clauses elaborate on an assertion? Why do causal clauses ever move, i.e. why do they ever precede the matrix clause - why is the correlation not perfect but rather tendential? Why do comparative clauses ever follow - why do they not always have to move to the relevant projection? Another issue stems from the use of the resumptive *così*. Although it is announced in footnote 8 that this is not to be discussed in the paper, it is actually considered on page 27, where it is observed that in line with the predictions of the analysis, comparative/simulative clauses license the resumptive more than the causal clauses. The line between resumption with relativization and the correlative construction is quite elusive. One relatively solid difference is that resumptives cannot be stressed / focal, while the pronoun in the correlative construction can. So I wonder to what extent it can be said that the comparative / simulative clauses actually make the correlative construction, and that grammaticalization into causal clauses involves also a change into actual adverbial relativization. Whether this question will be mentioned in the paper is on the author(s) to decide, but I think it is something worth thinking about. Finally, to establish the at-issueness of causal *si(/c)come* clauses, their use with the negation or focus marker is contrasted with *perché* and *come* clauses. A comparison is also needed with comparative / simulative *si(/c)come* clauses, because it may be something about the conjunction *si(/c)come* or the general underlying structure that is responsible for the effect.

**Are there any relevant scholarly works that have been overlooked by the author? If the answer is YES, please provide the full references.**  
Nothing that must be considered.

**Have you seen this paper, its content, the proposed analysis, or the conclusions published in other venues? [If your answer is YES, please add the relevant reference.]**  
No.

**If you accept the paper with minor revisions, please list the revisions you would advise (you are not required to proofread the paper) [max 500 words]**

I would not require any revisions, but the comments in the field about the

soundness of the arguments should be considered before submitting the final version.