On because: phonological variants and their pragmatic functions in a corpus of Bolton (Lancashire) English

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Daniel Huber
University of Toulouse
CLLE-ERSS, CNRS UMR 5263
daniel.huber@univ-tlse2.fr

1 Introduction

This chapter intends to analyse patterns of full and reduced forms of *because* in Bolton (Lancashire) English, as observed in 350 occurrences collected from 5 hours of semi-guided and free conversations in the corpus of spoken Lancashire English of the PAC programme (Durand & Pukli 2004, Durand & Przewozny 2012, 2015). These patterns of full and reduced forms will be shown to be a function of the formality of context, the age of the speaker and the pragmatic function of *because*. While the data can be regarded as relatively small, they are varied enough to make sense of the observable patterns in terms of apparent-time changes (Labov 1966, 1972), both as far as the phonological variants of *because* and its pragmatic uses are concerned. The paper presents a number of pragmatic/discourse functions of *because* in contemporary English in order to correlate the various forms with the different functions of *because*. First, it will be demonstrated that there are many variants available to native speakers and that it is simplistic to expect reduced forms to be consistently more frequent in informal contexts for all speakers. As a matter of fact, both disyllabic and monosyllabic variants occur in both formal and informal situations for virtually all speakers in the corpus, and it is only with the younger speakers in the corpus that monosyllabic variants predominate (in both contexts). Secondly, the paper will demonstrate that younger speakers use *because* in an extended range of pragmatic functions. With respect to a particular discourse pattern, the data in the corpus provide important new insights as to their analysis. Finally, it will be shown that both the incidence and the range of meanings of the monosyllabic variant '*cos* are related to the age of the speaker. Except for the oldest speaker in the data, all speakers used monosyllabic forms of *because*, although their frequency increases in younger speakers.

2 The Bolton (Lancashire) corpus of the PAC programme

Data for the following discussion derive from the Bolton (Lancashire) corpus of the PAC Programme (see Durand & Przewozny 2012, 2015 and "Introductory chapter" to this volume). The recordings for the Bolton (Lancashire) PAC corpus were made in late 2002, by Emilie Noël. The corpus comprises of 10 speakers, aged between 23 and 83 years at the time of recording. Speaker identifiers are ordered in function of their age at the time of recording (indicated in brackets): JM1 (23); MD1 (23); DK1 (29); ST1 (30); LB1 (38); SC1 (40); PK1 (58); MC1 (71); LC1 (77); MO1 (83). All except DK1 (29) are female speakers. All speakers are native speakers of the variety, given that they were born and bred in and around Bolton and had not spent extensive periods away from the location. Informants were recruited following the networking

principle (Milroy & Milroy 1985), informants are family members, friends and acquaintances or friends of friends. Their relationships are shown below:

(1) The network of informants in the Bolton (Lancashire) PAC corpus (informants are in bold, association lines mark a relationship)

MO (83) —— LC (77)
　　　　　　　　　—MC (71)

PK (58)　　　　　SC (40)　　　MD's mother —— LB (38)

DK (29)　——　MD (23)

　　　　ST (30)　　JM (23)
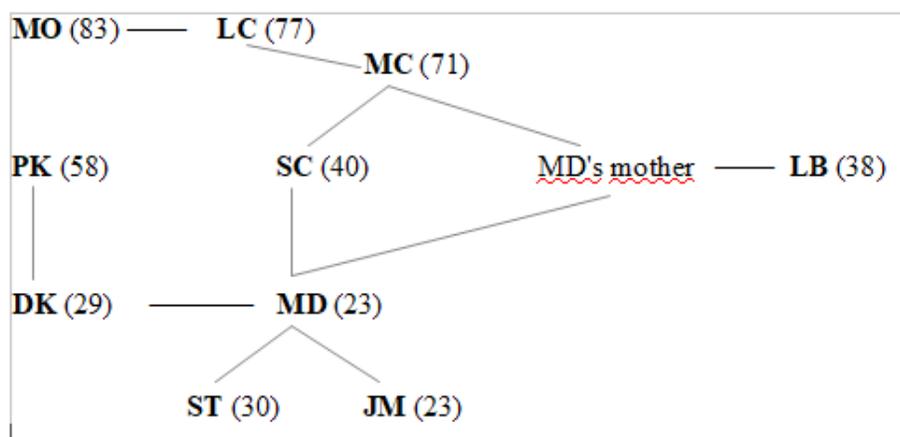
All speakers had to do the following 5 tasks in the PAC protocol: reading out a word list aimed at revealing their formal vowel inventory and another word list aimed at their formal consonant inventory; reading out a text passage designed to contain various phonological features of formal spoken English (such as linking and intrusive r, tapping); a formal, guided conversation (concerning education, childhood, pastime and professional life, among other subjects) as well as an informal, non-guided conversation. While the formal conversation is conducted by the researcher (marked "F" in the transcriptions below, for "fieldworker"), the informal one is typically between two people who know each other well (family ties, friends). The protocol was thus designed to ensure a wide coverage of speech styles going from their most formal (word lists) to fairly uncontrolled styles (informal conversation). Since the word lists and the reading task did not contain instances of *because*, the following discussion is based on the occurrences of *because* in the formal and the informal conversations. One speaker, ST1 (30), was finally discarded from the present analysis because her files are incomplete: she only had the guided conversation so no comparison would have been possible between her more formal and informal styles with respect to the incidence of variant forms of *because.*

The total length of the Bolton (Lancashire) corpus can be broken down as follows. The guided conversations of the 9 interlocutors run to 8,386 seconds (nearly 140 minutes), with a mean length of 932 seconds (15,5 mins) per conversation, the informal conversations run longer, to 9,568 seconds (nearly 160 minutes), with a mean length of 1,060 seconds (just short of 18 mins). The table below summarizes the length of the individual conversations:

(2)　　Length of conversations in PAC Bolton (Lancashire) corpus

SPEAKER ID	LENGTH		
MO1f	14:49:00 (889s)	MO1i	38:57:00 (2337s)
LC1f	17:36:00 (1056s)	LC1i	38:57:00 (2337s)
MC1f	15:01:00 (901s)	MC1i	25:40:00 (1540s)
PK1f	14:21:00 (860s)	PK1i	18:43:00 (1123s)
SC1f	14:36:00 (876s)	SC1i	21:03:00 (1263s)
LB1f	16:44:00 (1004s)	LB1i	12:31:00 (751s)
DK1f	14:39:00 (879s)	DK1i	25:12:00 (1512s)
MD1f	18:39:00 (1119s)	MD1i	25:12:00 (1512s)
JM1f	13:22:00 (802s)	JM1i	17:22:00 (1042s)
total:	139:47:00 (8387)		159:28:00 (9568)
	2:19':47"		2:39':28"

The interviews thus total 17,954 seconds (nearly 300 minutes), which is nearly 5 hours of dialogue speech. Because of the format of the informal conversations, informant LC1 and MO1 share the informal conversation and MD1 led the conversation both with DK1 and JM1, and her conversation data come from her conversation with DK1. Since there was no *a priori* limit on the length of the recordings, the length of conversations shows considerable variation: the shortest being 751s, the longest running to 2,337s – both of these extremes are informal conversations. This explains why some informants yielded more tokens of *because* than others.

The total number of occurrences of *because* collected in PAC Lancashire equals 350 in interview speech. Curiously, they were divided between formal and informal virtually equally: 171 instances of *because* could be identified in the formal conversations and 183 examples in the conversations. (These data exclude 6 further occurrences of *because* as part of the complex preposition *because of*, excluded from the present study both because this complex preposition is rare in this corpus data and because it is syntactically different. The data also exclude occurrences of *because* by the fieldworker because she is not a speaker of the variety under study.)

(3) Tokens of *because* by speaker, and by formal (f) and informal (i) conversation context

Speaker ID	Number of instances	Speaker ID	Number of instances	TOTAL
MO1f	7	MO1i	6	13
LC1f	20	LC1i	17	37
MC1f	17	MC1i	29	46
PK1f	21	PK1i	28	49
SC1f	22	SC1i	27	49
LB1f	20	LB1i	18	38
DK1f	10	DK1i	21	31
MD1f	37	MD1i	16	53
JM1f	17	JM1i	17	34
				0
total:	171		179	350

The frequency of occurrence of *because* is one every 49.04 seconds in the guided conversations and one every 53.45 seconds in the informal conversations, which gives an average of one instance of *because* every 51.30 seconds across the two styles of conversation. It is therefore pertinent to point out that there does not seem to be a significant difference in these data in the overall frequency of occurrence according to whether the interlocutor is talking to a stranger (the fieldworker) or with someone they know well.

Nevertheless, certain qualifications apply to these figures above. Since the interviews do not represent pure speaker time (because of the fieldworker's turns), the frequency data must be strictly taken as reflecting individual production during the length of conversational interaction. The overall figures do hide considerable variation between the speakers and much intra-speaker variation across the two styles, but given the small amount of data from individual speakers, no statistically relevant conclusions can be drawn. Calculating the frequency of occurrence (the number of occurrences per conversation) for each speaker and each style gives a more detailed picture, revealing interesting differences among informants. As for the extremes, MD1 in her formal conversation uses *because* every 30 seconds on average, while MO1 in her informal conversation uses *because* every 390 seconds on average, that is nearly every 6,5 minutes. It cannot be determined what accounts for these differences in the frequency of use of *because* in the informants: these variations are probably influenced by verbal dominance relations (who asks more than they argue their point), the conversation topic (recurrent questions in the formal conversations, uncontrolled topics in the informal conversations), although the relatively small amount of data do not allow conclusions anything than hypothetical. The 350 instances of *because* seem to be a dataset that is both sufficient and relevant for an analysis of patterns in a corpus of spoken contemporary English. I am not aware of studies of *because* on such a scale.

A further observation to be discussed here is that the frequency data described above hide the fact that occurrences of *because* are not evenly distributed during the interviews. As a matter of fact, there seems to be a clustering effect in the frequency of own-speech occurrences of *because* for virtually all the speakers: *because* tends to cluster with further occurrences nearby and this seems to be related to a more general pragmatic/discursive strategy in spoken English. This effect is shown in the following excerpt, where *because* occurs five times (in multiple discursive functions):

(4) Clustering effect in a single turn

F: <Why Greece?>
PK1f_10-14: <Well **because** ...people my husband worked with recommended Kefalonia
                    because a lot of them had been, there and said it was really nice and they thought
                    we might enjoy it.
                    because [X]'s been abroad
                    because he used to be in the TA...the army thing..and so he's been abroad but I'd
                    never been abroad before...
                    because we had a dog... so we never went abroad and then

In this corpus, one can take spans of 20 seconds from an occurrence of *because* and see if another occurrence follows in that lapse of time and if so, take another span of 20 seconds from that occurrence and so on. While 20 seconds is admittedly arbitrary, it is slightly less than half of the average frequency of occurrence of *because* presented above (51,3 seconds) and is, based on the data in the corpus, a convenient cut-off point in the distance between occurrences of *because*. This span is long enough to include all closely hanging instances, quite possibly belonging to the same topic of discussion or very often even the same turn, while separating instances that clearly belong to separate topics/turns. Calculating in this manner, *because* is found to occur not further than 20 seconds away from another occurrence of *because* by the same speaker 64% of the time in the formal conversations (110 occurrences out of 171) and 52% of the time in the informal conversations (93 occurrences out of 179). This is an informal finding that possibly reflects the discourse strategy whereby speakers amass arguments and supporting points rather than just give *one* piece of argument relevant to the discussion and might have to do with the spiral patterns addressed in section 4.2 below.

3 Variant pronunciations and distribution of forms of *because*

3.1 Phonological variants

Being a disyllabic function word, *because* occurs in a wide range of forms, from a disyllabic variant with a full vowel through various disyllabic forms with reduced vowels to monosyllabic variants with full or reduced vowels to forms which are vowelless and are best transcribed as [pks] or [ks]. Variants in pronunciation dictionaries are listed in the table below:

(5a) Variant pronunciations in *EPD* (2011)

        GA disyllabic monosyllabic
                /bɪˈkɑːz/ ~ /bə-/ (/kɑːz/)
                /bɪˈkʌz/ ~ /bə-/ (/kʌz/)
                /bɪˈkəz/ ~ /bə-/ /kəz/

        RP disyllabic monosyllabic
                /bɪˈkɒz/ ~ /bə-/ /kɒz/
                /bɪˈkəz/ ~ /bə-/ /kəz/

For RP, the *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary* often cites widespread educated localized non-RP variants (Wells 2008: xiv):

(5b) Variant pronunciations in *LPD* (2008)

GA disyllabic monosyllabic
/bɪˈkʌz/ ~ /bə-/ (57%)
/bɪˈkɔːz/ ~ /bə-/ (/kɔːz/)
/bɪˈkɑːz/ ~ /bə-/ (41%) (/kɑːz/)
/bɪˈkəz/ ~ /bə-/
/bəkəz/ (/kəz/)
/-ˈkɔːs/ ~ /-ˈkɑːs/ (2%) (/kɔːs/ ~ /kɑːs/)

BrE disyllabic monosyllabic
§/bɪˈkɔːz/ ~ §/bə-/ ~ §/-s/
/bɪˈkɒz/ ~ /bə-/ ~ §/-s/ /ˈkɒz/ ~ §/ˈkɒs/
/bɪˈkəz/ ~ /bə-/
/bəkəz/ /ˈkəz/ ~ §/ˈkəs/
§ = wide-spread educated non-RP

Summarizing the dictionary data above, the pronunciation of *because* shows variation along four axes in the Standard accents registered in pronunciation dictionaries:

(6) Four parameters of variation of *because*

-disyllabic or monosyllabic: /bəˈkɒz/ – /ˈkɒz/
-phonemic voicing in final consonant: /z/ – /s/
-vowel quality in the etymologically stressed syllable: RP /ɔː/ – /ɒ/ – /ə/
                                                         GA /ɔː/ – /ɑː/ – /ʌ/ – /ə/
-reduction of unstressed vowel: /ɪ/ – /ə/

The cline of reduction can thus be given as follows:

(7) Cline of reduction (for RP)

disyllabic origin:

/biˈkɔːz/ - /bəˈkɔːz/ > /biˈkɒz/ - /bəˈkɒz/ > /biˈkəz/ - /bəˈkəz/ > /bikəz/ - /bəkəz/ > /pks/

monosyllabic origin: /ˈkɒz/ > /kəz/ > /ks/

The corpus data from Bolton (Lancashire) can be usefully compared to forms found in other accents, such as RP. The variant pronunciations in Bolton, Lancashire, according to the variants based on the LPD (Wells 2008: 75) and the EPD (Roach, Setter & Esling 2011: 49), can also be thus grouped: that is, according to whether they are disyllabic or monosyllabic in origin and whether they have a full stressed vowel or some reduced vowel in the (etymologically stressed) second syllable. Another relevant axe of variation is whether they have final [z] or [s], the latter being non-RP or localized variants, according to Wells (2008). Among such non-RP, localized variants LPD also lists [bi'kɔ:z], [bi'kɔ:s], with a long vowel that is. Such variants with a long stressed vowel clearly exist in the corpus under study but they only occur in emphatic lengthening contexts. According to LPD, many speakers distinguish between strong /bi'kɒz/ (or /bə'kɒz/) and weak /bikəz/ (or /bəkəz/). This behaviour is of course identical to the pattern of other grammatical words such as strong /'fɔ:/ and weak /fə/. For these speakers the difference is then between a full versus a reduced vowel in the respective forms. However, LPD also mentions that some other speakers have "an irregular strong" /bi'kəz/ (or /bə'kəz/) variant where the "strong form" has a reduced vowel. This pronunciation is similar to forms of *very* with a reduced initial vowel: [vəri], also recorded in LPD. Disyllabic forms with /ə/ in the final syllable (/bɪ'kəz/ or /bə'kəz/ or /bəkəz/) indeed occur some 80 times, although with different frequencies in the individual speakers, in all eight female speakers, while the only male informant, DK1, does not have this variant at all in his data. The *Cambridge English Pronouncing Dictionary* (EPD; Roach, Setter & Esling 2011: 49) adds a note to say that the forms with /ə/ are "found only a few phrases, most commonly in 'because of the/a...' [in RP]". This does not correspond to what is found in the Lancashire corpus since /(bə)'kəz/ forms are regularly found both in formal and informal conversations introducing clauses rather than in the complex preposition *because of.* Incidentally, all 6 occurrences of *because of* in the corpus are disyllabic, 5 of them have a full stressed vowel, only one has /ə/. This variety clearly has disyllabic /bi'kəz/ and /bə'kəz/ used as a conjunction. Finally, all variants may co-occur with final [s] instead of [z] according to LPD. In the Lancashire PAC corpus, MC1 (71) is the only speaker who consistently has final /s/ in both formal and informal conversations, although another speaker, PK1 (58), also has a sporadic monosyllabic variant with final /s/ intervocalically as in PK1f_09 "X sometimes comes *because he's* [ˈkɒ**siz**] in as well". With respect to the monosyllabic variant, Quirk *et al*. (1985: 899) point out that, as opposed to many other aphaeretic forms such as 'fraid (for *afraid*), 'deed (for *indeed*), 'cept (for *except*), the aphaeretic form 'cos / 'cause (for *because*) does not necessarily occur in initial position. This is fully borne out in the corpus data from Bolton, Lancashire where no such positional restriction applies to 'cos.

The following table gives a summary of the variant forms in the corpus:

(8) Variant forms of *because* in the Bolton, Lancashire PAC corpus

The table shows that all speakers have at least one disyllabic variant and all, except the oldest speaker, also have at least one type of monosyllabic variant. Furthermore, the table shows that there are further pronunciation variants of *because* in the PAC Lancashire corpus that are not registered as variants in RP/GA in the EPD and LPD dictionaries.

Possibly the most trivial is the variant reduced to the extreme, [ks] ([kz]), which is relatively frequently used by MD1 (23), in the corpus.

(9) [ks]~[kz] in both formal and informal context with MD1

MD1f_21:   it's a bad idea *because* [kz] it's so hard travelling and the trains in England are terrible you can't rely on them

speaker ID (age)	disyllabic (number of tokens)			monosyllabic (number of tokens)	
	long vowel	short vowel	reduced vowel	short vowel	reduced vowel
MO1(83)		bɪ'kɒz 9	bɪ'kəz 4	‼ 0	‼ 0
LC1 (77)		bɪ'kɒz 17 bʊ'kɒz 3	bɪ'kəz 13	'kɒz 4	‼ 0
MC1 (71)	bɪ'kɒːs 3	bɪ'kɒs 27	bɪ'kəz 2	'kɒs 12	kəs 2
PK1 (58)		bɪ'kɒz 21	bɪ'kəz 6	'kɒz 11 'kɒs 4	kəz kz ks 6 kəs 1
SC1 (40)	bɪ'kɒːz 1	bɪ'kɒz 24 bɪ'kɒs 1	bɪ'kəz 10	'kɒz 6	kəz 7
LB1 (38)	bɪ'kɒːz 5	bɪ'kɒz 9	bɪ'kəz 22	‼ 0	kəz 2
DK1 (29)		bɪ'kɒz 4	‼ 0	'kɒz 25	kəz 2
MD1 (29)		bɪ'kɒz 1	bɪ'kəz 19	'kɒz 2	kəz 31
JM1 (23)	bɪ'kɒːz 2	bɪ'kɒz 11	bɪ'kəz 2	'kɒz 6	kəz 13
total	11	127	78	70	64 = **350**

MD1f_36:   whereas I'd feel terrible *because* [ks] I think you know if this was my grandma you know

MD1i_07:   So I got there probably about half past, no maybe about six *because* [kz] then I had to come across

MD1i_08:   And I had wine *because* [ks] I was so stressed out from the journey and that day and getting that parking <DK1: Naughty> ticket.

Another variant, however, deserves some attention. The form occurs with a single speaker, LC1 (77), on three occasions (out of her 21 occurrences) all in the formal conversation. It is best transcribed as [bʊ'kɒz] or [bu'kɒz], that is with a labial vowel in the unstressed syllable. This variant seems ultimately to be a derivative of [bə'kɒz] in the sense that a reduced [ə] can

very easily be coloured phonetically by neighbouring consonants, in this case by the labial consonant [b] that directly precedes. Since there are no known regular alternations in English between unstressed [ɪ] and [ʊ], a form [bɪˈkɒz] to be the origin of [bʊˈkɒz] is difficult to assume. In other words, it would seem that the prior existence of [bəˈkɒz] was a necessary condition to the emergence of [bʊˈkɒz] in this variety of English. However, the speaker in question only has a single occurrence of [bəˈkɒz] in all her speech sample, which is therefore not a main variant for her. While the source of the lip-rounding on the vowel is straightforward, it remains unclear why she replaces unstressed [ɪ] with [ʊ] when she does not produce examples with a reduced [ə] in this syllable.

(10) Examples for [bʊˈkɒz]

 LC1f_04: yes...[bʊˈkɒz] my brother was even brighter than I was

 LC1f_15: while I was with Mother, it was a wonderful escape...[bʊˈkɒz] the people in theatre are very interesting

 LC1f_07: but in a way I was lucky...because [bʊˈkɒz] I'd been completely free since I was 39...so I'd been able to make the most of my freedom

As the orthographic transcriptions show, all three tokens occur after a pause and in her formal conversation. The form [bʊˈkɒz] is emphatic, but it is not exclusive in that context: LC1 also uses [bɪˈkɒz] in post-pause positions:

(11) LC1f_14: so... and I'd always been in plays at church... because [bɪˈkɒz] I could shout up

In conclusion, it can be said that the corpus data from Bolton, Lancashire, reveal the presence of a wide range of pronunciation variants of *because*. This accent shows the full range of variation described for British accents in LPD, including non-RP variants. There is one speaker who uses a variant with final /s/ consistently – a variant which is non-RP. Moreover, the Bolton accent seems to offer a very rare variant, only three occurrences in the corpus, that is not listed in pronunciation dictionaries: [bʊˈkɒz] with labial colouring of the unstressed vowel. What is interesting in these variants is that they are disyllabic variants that occurred in the relatively formal context of the guided conversations: they are produced in rather careful speech.

3.2 Distribution of forms across speech styles and speakers: signs of change in apparent time

The following tables present the distribution of all 350 occurrences of *because* in formal *versus* informal conversation in the corpus. The table is arranged according to the age of speakers in descending order from top to bottom and the variants are listed according the degree of reduction across the row.

(12) Data from the formal conversations

(13) Data from the informal conversations

INFORMAL CONVERSATION data

speaker ID (age)	disyllabic (number of tokens)				monosyllabic (number of tokens)			
	long vowel	short vowel		reduced vowel		short vowel		reduced vowel
MO1(83)	0	bɪ'kɒz	5	bɪ'kəz 1			0	0
LC1 (77)	0	bɪ'kɒz	7	bɪ'kəz 10			0	0
MC1 (71)	bɪ'kɒːs 2	bɪ'kɒs	16	bɪ'kəs 1	'kɒs	8	kəs	2
PK1 (58)	0	bɪ'kɒz	13	bə'kəz 3	'kɒz	5	kəz kəs kz	6
					'kɒs	1		
SC1 (40)	0	bɪ'kɒz	15	bɪ'kəz 4	'kɒz	4	kəz	3
		bɪ'kɒs	1					
LB1 (38)	bɪ'kɒːz 3	bɪ'kɒz	2	bɪ'kəz 13		0		0
DK1 (29)	0	bɪ'kɒz	4	0	'kɒz	15	kəz	2
MD1 (29)	0	bɪ'kɒz	1	bɪ'kəz bɪkəz 4	'kɒz	1	kəz kz ks	10
JM1 (23)	bɪ'kɒːz 1	bɪ'kɒz	4	bɪ'kəz 1	'kɒz	3	kəz	8
total	6		68	37		37	31	179
LC1 (77)	0	bɪ'kɒz	10	bɪ'kəz 3	'kɒz	4		0
		bʊ'kɒz	3					
MC1 (71)	bɪ'kɒːs 1	bɪ'kɒs	11	bɪ'kəs 1	'kɒs	4		0
PK1 (58)	0	bɪ'kɒz	8	bɪ'kəz 3	'kɒz	6	kəs	1
					'kɒs	3		
SC1 (40)	bɪ'kɒːz 1	bɪ'kɒz	9	bɪ'kəz 6	'kɒz	2	kəz	4
LB1 (38)	bɪ'kɒːz 2	bɪ'kɒz	7	bɪ'kəz 3		0	kəz	2
				bɪkəz 6				
DK1 (29)	0	0		0	'kɒz	10		0
MD1 (29)	0	0		bɪ'kəz bɪkəz 15	'kɒz	1	kəz kz ks	21
JM1 (23)	bɪ'kɒːz 1	bɪ'kɒz	7	bɪ'kəz 1	'kɒz	3	kəz	5
total	5		59	41		33	33	171

One striking observation about the data above is that there is no unique variant that would either cue formal or an informal style: the variants overwhelmingly occur for all speakers in both formal and informal conversations. That said, three speakers out of 9 do have variants they used exclusively in the less formal context, and, in addition, these variants (or at least their distribution) are not identical for the five speakers: MC1 has [kəs] (2 times), and DK1 uses both a disyllabic, [bɪ'kɒz] (4 times), and a monosyllabic reduced form, [kəz] (2 times), exclusively in the informal conversation, while MD1 uses [bɪ'kɒz] (once) in her informal conversation.

(14a) Variants exclusively found in the informal conversation for the given speaker

```
         disyllabic      monosyllabic
MC1:                     [kəs] (2)
DK1:  [bɪ'kɒz] (4)      [kəz] (2)
MD1:  [bɪ'kɒz] (1)
```

In the cases of MC1 and DK1, it is true that they use their most reduced variant, [kəs], [kəz], in the most informal context. DK1 and MD1 show yet another distribution: they use an emphatic [bɪ'kɒz] in their informal conversation, and for DK1 this is his only use of a disyllabic variant at all.

On the other hand, there are three other speakers who used a particular variant exclusively in their formal conversation: SC1 used an emphatic [bɪ'kɒ:z] in her formal conversation, while LC1 and LB1 are even more intriguing because they used a monosyllabic variant, ['kɒz] (4 times) and [kəz] (4 times), respectively, in their formal but not once in their informal conversation; moreover, this variant is their only monosyllabic token in their whole material.

(14b) Variants exclusively found in the formal conversation for the given speaker

```
         disyllabic      monosyllabic
SC1:  [bɪ'kɒ:z] (1)
LC1:                     ['kɒz] (4)
LB1:                     [kəz] (4)
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While it is not surprising that there is no clear distributional difference between the variants in the semi-guided and the informal context, there are two points worth noting. One is that the variants used in the informal context are not necessarily the speaker's most reduced variant, as shown by the use of [bɪ'kɒz] by DK1 and MD1 exclusively in their informal conversation. The second is that for two of the speakers a monosyllabic variant occurs in the formal data but not in the informal data. Both these observations go against the expectation that if there is a form preferred in informal contexts, it should be monosyllabic *'cos* since its monosyllabicity implies reduction (from disyllabic *because*).

For three speakers out of nine there is a complete overlap between the types of variants they use in the two styles, meaning that for them informality is not encoded by the choice of the form *per se*. Moreover, given that the number of occurrences of variants used exclusively in formal or informal contexts, in the case of other speakers, is extremely low, the individual variant pronunciation of *because* does not cue formal or informal context in the overwhelming majority of cases: in 323 out 350 tokens (ca. 92%), there is no way of knowing the degree of formality of the speech turn based on the particular variant used. The data above, however, do not mean that there are no differences in the frequency of use of each variant according to the formality of the situation. The oldest speaker, MO1, has relatively few tokens of *because* to come up with a description of her pattern apart from the fact that she lacks monosyllabic variants. For LC1, informality seems to be cued by inversion of the ratio of [bɪ'kɒz] to [bɪ'kəz], in favour of [bɪ'kəz] in the informal conversation. For MC1 and DK1, the reduced variant [kəs]/[kəz] makes its appearance as formality drops, and in PK1 [kəz]/[kz] becomes more frequent with respect to

['kɒz] at the same level of formality. For LB1, disyllabic [bɪ'kəz] clearly dominates over [bɪ'kɒz] as formality loosens (and she virtually lacks monosyllabic variants, [kəz] only occurring twice in her formal (!) conversation as discussed above). DK1 and MD1 use a disyllabic form for emphasis in their emotionally more charged informal conversation. Finally, in the case of SC1 and JM1 (and MD1 apart from her use of an emphatic form informally), there is no obvious correspondence between their variants and their frequency and the formality of the conversation.

The most striking observation about these corpus data concerns the distribution and frequency of monosyllabic forms. 134 monosyllabic forms have been identified among the 350 in the corpus, which is over one third of all occurrences, ca. 38%. The table below gives the forms and the proportion of the full and reduced forms (using the symbols >, <, and ≈ to mark these ratios).

(15) Distribution of monosyllabic variants across speakers

	full vowel	ratio	reduced vowel
MO1 (83):	-		-
LC1 (77):	'kɒz		-
MC1 (71):	'kɒs	>	kəs
PK1 (58):	'kɒz, 'kɒs	>	kəz
SC1 (40):	'kɒz	≈	kəz
LB1 (38):	-	!!	kəz
DK1 (29):	'kɒz	>	kəz
MD1 (23):	'kɒz	<	kəz, ks
JM1 (23):	'kɒz	<	kəz

On the one hand, there is again much individual variation. All speakers except MO1, the oldest speaker, use at least one monosyllabic variant at least occasionally. The frequency and the number of monosyllabic variants, however, vary considerably. LB1, for instance, uses only 2 instances of /kəz/ out of her 38 occurrences, while she lacks, at least in her data, /'kɒz/. DK1, however, has only 4 disyllabic occurrences of his 31 tokens, 27 thus being spread over 25 tokens of /'kɒz/ and 2 of [kəz]. Nevertheless, a very clear and consistent tendency emerges as far as the proportion of the full versus reduced variants are concerned. The oldest speaker, MO1 (83), does not use monosyllabic variants at all. Next oldest speakers, LC1 (77) and MC1 (71), do use a monosyllabic form, but it nearly always has a full stressed vowel, /ɒ/. Also, MC1 uses the full variant more often than LC1, and it is perhaps not surprising to find her use [kəz] twice to 12 tokens of [kɒz]. With PK1 (58) the incidence of a monosyllabic variant is close to 40% of the time (across the two styles) and sporadically the variant /kəz/ makes its appearance. While SC1 (40) and LB1 (39) make use of a monosyllabic variant far less often than the other speakers in the corpus, they both have /kəz/. With the youngest speakers, DK1 (29), MD1 (23) and JM1 (23), the dominance of monosyllabic variants is clearly established even if all three do not show the same overall pattern. DK1, as already referred to, makes near-exclusive use of /'kɒz/ in his sample (87% is monosyllabic), while MD1 and JM1 have a very clear preference for /kəz/, ca.60% and 38%, respectively, among all the different forms they use. With at least one of the youngest speakers, MD1, the extremely reduced /ks/ variant is also very frequent. What these data demonstrate is that, on the one hand, monosyllabic variants gain ground through time and, on the

other, the competition between a full-vowelled and a reduced vowelled variant is increasingly in favour of the reduced variant. This pattern is compatible with an apparent time change analysis of these data.

4 Semantics of *because* and discourse

4.1 The grammatical functions of *because*

The conjunction *because* is a versatile and very frequent connector in English. The Longman Communication 3000, the word frequency appendix of the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2009), lists it among the 1000 words most frequently used both in speech and writing in English. As far as its grammatical functions are concerned, they range from subordinating conjunction, introducing adverbial clauses of cause or reason, to its use as "style disjunct" and discourse marker. In *A Communicative Grammar of English* (Leech & Svartvik 2002: 107), *because* is treated primarily as a connector indicating cause or reason in an adverbial *because*-clause (along with prepositions like *on account of*, *because of*, *from*, *out of*, *through*). In the *Cambridge Grammar of English* (Carter & McCarthy 2006: 57-58), *because* "is a subordinating conjunction which introduces clauses of cause and reason". Quirk *et al.* (1985: 616, 1072) describe a function where *because* is not an adjunct, but a "style disjunct". Carter & McCarthy (2006: 214, 218) explicitly enumerate *cos* among "common spoken discourse markers" and say specifically that "*cos* marks the reason/ justification/ explanation for asking the question rather than acting as a causal subordinator". The PAC corpus data provide ample illustration for all these functions of *because*.

Because can be used to express cause. Leech & Svartvik (2002: 107) give the following example for this meaning (their data come from the Longman Corpus Network):

(16a)   *because* expressing "cause":

The accident occurred because the machine had been poorly maintained.

Carter & McCarthy (2006: 57-58) give this example to illustrate the causal meaning of *because*:

(16b)   *The government will not act because economic factors influence their thinking.*

In both cases, the subordinate clause introduced by *because* expresses the state of affairs that is presented as logically leading to the situation described in the main clause. Passot (2007: 122) notes that such "narrow scope" interpretations are rather rare in speech data. This is fully borne out in the corpus, since the closest one gets to with a "cause" reading is in the following utterance:

(17) JM1f_01:   I think...I got confused because [bi'kɒz] those loads of words are together

Another function of *because*, according to Leech & Svartvik (2002: 109), is indicating reason concerning the way a person interprets the events, and acts upon this interpretation rather than concerning the events themselves. In these cases "[t]he main clause indicates the consequence of the reason clause" (Leech & Svartvik *ibid.*). *Because* cannot introduce participial and verbless clauses when functioning as a conjunction of reason (Leech & Svartvik 2002: 204, Quirk *et al.* 1985: 564). Leech & Svartvik (2002: 107, 109), give the following examples for reason meaning (their data come from the Longman Corpus Network):

(18a) *because* expressing "reason":

> *The party opposed the aircraft because they were out of date.*
> *We have to lunch early on Saturday because the girls are always in a hurry to go out.*

In the *Cambridge Grammar of English* (Carter & McCarthy 2006: 57-58), *because* has a "reason" interpretation in this example:

(18b) *Because the snow had set in, we decided to abandon the excursion to the mountain top.*

Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 727) note that the subordinate situation, with reason, can be simultaneous with, or earlier, or later than the matrix clause:

(18c) He was angry because he couldn't find his keys.
       He was late because he had overslept.
       He didn't want to go with them because it would be dark soon.

The Lancashire corpus provides plenty of examples for the "reason" reading:

(19)   LB1i_13:   Everybody knew Mandy *because* [bikəz] she's so loud

       MO1f_04:   they decided to form a club. So er, my husband was er, (laughter) appointed chairman...and er...*because* [b(ə)kəz] /z/ he always had the most to say

       LC1f_16:   And then in retirement, I joined the rambling club, and that was great *because* [bɪˈkəz] a lot of them are church people

       LC1f_19:   And they motored me up the coast, from Gibraltar to Barcelona so that was interesting *because* [kɒz] we stopped on the way

       MC1f_10:   So I've had, mini holidays I call them, and I usually I like to take them after Christmas *because* [bɪˈkɒs]...our winter is so...Burnley, in Burnley it's very depressing

       PK1f_06:   but yoga I really like *because* [bɪˈkəz]...it's stretching

SC1i_07:   I mean I'm concerned as well *because* [bɪˈkɒz] it's the first time he's ever been on his own so...just like...you know I'm just like, you know.

MD1f_12:   and it was fascinating *because* [kəz] I'd never done anything about reading before

JM1f_05:   it's quite hard to pinpoint exactly what I do *because* [kəz] it's it's quite varied really my role

As far as the particular phonological variants are concerned, many of the examples above carry a form that is the majority form for the given speaker, but this is not at all a regular correspondence.

Quirk *et al*. (1985: 616, 1072) note a function where *because* is not an adjunct, but functions as a style disjunct "making more explicit the respect in which a comment is being 'hedged' ". They distinguish between three types of *because*-clauses (*ibid*.: 1077): restrictive adjunct, non-restrictive adjunct and style disjunct. Their examples are presented in (20), where syllables in capital letters mark the tonic syllable of the utterance and the diacritics indicate the tone movement, rise (ÉA), fall (À) and fall-rise (Ǎ), on that tonic syllable:

(20)   restrictive adjunct:
        Raven didn't leave the party early because CǍRol was there

        non-restrictive adjunct:
        Raven didn't leave the party ÉARrly because CÀRol was there

        style disjunct:
        Raven didn't leave the party ÉARrly because I CHÈCKED

Quirk *et al*. (1985: 1106) note that only adjunct *because*-clauses, but not style disjunct *because*-clauses can correspond to a PP introduced by *because of*. Style disjuncts are close equivalents of speech act-related adjuncts with Huddleston & Pullum (2002). The latter add they can be found with questions as in their example:

(21) Are you nearly ready, because the bus is leaving in ten minutes?

In this function, the adverbial clause is final in the utterance, while otherwise, reason clauses may either precede or follow their main clause (see also Carter & McCarthy 2006: 563). Quirk *et al*. (1985: 1073) note that such "style disjuncts" "realized by clauses are always separated from the matrix clause by intonation and punctuation." It follows that in speech their identification should be relatively easy. According to Quirk *et al*. (1985: 615): "Style disjuncts convey the speaker's comment on the style and form of what he is saying, defining in some way under what conditions he is speaking as the 'authority' of the utterance." These are their examples:

(22) He was drunk, because he had to support himself on a friend's arm.
      I have nothing in my bank account, because I checked this morning.

This usage is indeed found in many examples in the corpus such as the following:

(23) MO1f_07:   And er, but er, we've got quite a good,...keen...company...*because* [bɪˈkɒz] er....there, there's a, a sort of a national competition the er, the North West Federation,

      LC1i_08:   And after that he went to see him, and I think he probably put him in a better home *because* [bˈkɒz] he said after a while he was in a nicer home

      LC1f_06:   It wasn't that we were poor...*because* [bɪˈkəz]...printers got paid...better than other tradesmen, they had one of the best unions.

      DK1i_07:   make sure you ring him first *because* [ˈkɒz] it looks like a lot of garages are busy

      MC1i_05:   my neighbour next door kindly went up in my loft to take my case down *because* [bɪˈkɒs] the case that was down wasn't big enough.

      SC1f_15:   when I came back home I was so homesick *because* [kəz] I just wanted my mum and dad

      SC1i_13:   I'll probably see her this weekend *because* [ˈkɒz] I'm off for four days

At the level of the whole corpus there is no direct correlation between the phonological variant and the discourse function of *because*. This is not to say such correspondences do not exist, but it would be matter for a further study to establish such relationships in individual informants.

Carter & McCarthy (2006: 214, 218) explicitly enumerate *cos* among "common spoken discourse markers" linking segments where "*cos* marks the reason/justification/explanation for asking the question rather than acting as a causal subordinator". In such cases, "[d]iscourse markers help speakers to negotiate their way through talk, checking whether they share a common view of the topic and of the nature of the unfolding discourse with their listener[.]" Examples for this in the corpus include the following cases:

(24) JM1f_12:   it makes you cope under pressure *because* [bɪˈkɒz]...people think it/ have you ever done that? people think it's a really easy job...

      SC1i_19:   well *because* [bɪˈkɒz]...I don't know if it's...*because* [bɪˈkɒz]...I don't know it would

One particular discourse marker function of *because* is to delay turn alternation (cf. Passot 2007: 130). In this case, there is a pause after *because*. The form can be any variant that is

available for the speaker, although, as the data clearly show, there is a tendency for a disyllabic variant to occur in this use, precisely because it is before a pause signalling the wish for the speaker to continue. Below is a list of examples from the corpus:

(25a)   LB1f_06:   they are very good... to work for *because* [bɪˈkɒːz]... they did let me leave

MD1f_13:   whereas it was new to me *because* [kəz]...in Sheffield their speciality is...vision

MD1i_13:   it might just be worth it *because* [bɪkəz] ...then you can do your essay

MO1i_05:   Well I won't be having any *because* [bɪˈkɒːs]...euh...my niece was on the phone this morning

JM1i_02:   he's going to really dodgy places *because* [bɪkəz]...yeah, like...I was reading in the paper....

LC1f_07:   I was very very lucky *because* [bɪˈkɒz]...hmm...I don't think I would have been as happy if like a lot of girls they just went to these office jobs...

PK1f_06:   but yoga I really liked *because* [bɪˈkɒz]...it's stretching it stretches your neck and you do it you see so I like that

PK1i_10:   it's all new *because* [kɒz]...we haven't been f/...for a while 'cos /ks/ we used to go with/ when we had the dog

SC1f_03:   so I think...just really where I live has had an influence on the way I speak *because* [bɪˈkɒz]...it's just...Lancashire accent

As a discourse marker, *because* can also be used to introduce a clarification question as in the following example:

(25b)   JM1i_14   is that what you?....*because* [ˈkəʒ] your Master's it was a Master's in...

This usage is very rare in the corpus and seems to be restricted to usage in younger speakers.

Finally, while *because* does not figure among the expressions "used in everyday spoken language to downtone the assertiveness of a segment of discourse" in Carter & McCarthy (2006: 223), it is clear that this function is readily available for *because* to take on.

(26)   MD1i_05:   it would have taken me half an hour...*because* [kəz] you know...'cos everyone's going that way

LB1f_10:   and it irritates me *because* [bɪˈkɒz] I think "Get yourself a life"

Quirk *et al*. (1985: 1106) note that a *because*-clause is sometimes used informally as equivalent to a *that*-clause:

(27a) *(Just) because I object to his promotion* doesn't mean that I'm vindictive

This structure is strictly parallel to this example from Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 731) where they note that a *that*-clause would be "widely preferred in formal style":

(27b) *Because some body parts have already been turned into commodities does not mean that an increasing trade in kidneys is desirable.*

They also add finally that *because* is often modified by *just* and the matrix VP is "more or less restricted to *doesn't mean*". No such examples could be identified in the corpus.

As far as the monosyllabic variant is concerned, Carter & McCarthy (2006: 57-58) remark that "*cos* (which can also be spelt '*cause*) is a reduced form of *because*. [...] It is widely used in spoken and more informal varieties of English. [*cos*] is common in informal speech across the range of ages, social classes and educational background." The form is available for any of the uses of *because*, apparently.

(28) *We're not going to the club cos it's just too expensive.*
She's probably on the first allowance cos she was probably earning about eighteen thousand.

Nevertheless, Carter & McCarthy (2006: 57-58) also add: "In spoken English *cos* often functions more like a coordinating than a subordinating conjunction. In these instances *cos* invariably follows the main clause and functions to add to the information in the main clause."

(29) *She doesn't like animals cos she says we should keep the house clean. And she does, doesn't she?*
What does he look like? Cos I've never actually met him.

Since all their examples correspond to what Quirk *et al*. (1985) call "style disjunct", the data cited earlier clearly show that there is no necessary preference for a monosyllabic variant for the speakers in the Bolton (Lancashire) corpus.

4.2 Discourse structure involving *because*: A - *because* B - *so* A'

There is a special discourse structure involving *because* in spoken English, which was studied by Passot (2007) in a spoken corpus of RP English. The pattern is also found in the Bolton (Lancashire) corpus and it shows aspects that have not been addressed in Passot's 2007 analysis. On certain other points, her fundamentally correct analysis can be nuanced and made

more explicit.

The structure A - *because* B - *so* A' is a discourse progression device that consists of a number of distinct parts with specific functions. The following example is taken from Passot's work:

(30a) Passot (2007), BNC spoken, text=H49 n=968, PS1XG

A =   [Erm <pause> they say they would not be willing to change their valuation,]
B =   [*because* that was the valuation er come to by the District Value Office from <gap>,]
A' =   *so* [they are not willing to, to come down in price]

Part A is submitted to the addressee as potentially consensual and B provides the elements that allow to reach such a consensus. A', headed by *so*, is a reformulation of A, which is now considered as part of the shared background. The difference in the formulation between A and A', in this example, shows a greater precision and a non-hypothetical stance in the latter: *change their valuation* in A becomes the more specific *come down in price* in A' and *they would not be willing to* becomes *they are not willing to*. Passot (2007: 126) calls this configuration *modal shift* because "it betrays the symbolic stance taken by the speaker on the matter under discussion and the speaker's anticipation of the addressee's own posture". At the level of grammatical devices, this modal shift can be expressed by modal auxiliaries, reporting verbs or intensive verbs and lexical choices, she observes. Discourse progresses in a "spiral" because A' now represents the new consensus, having explicitly formulated the underlying argument(s) introduced by *because* B.

The following example illustrates what Passot (2007: 125) calls semantic or *referential shift* and that she describes as cases where "the two ends of the pattern [A and A'] do not meet" and where "there is enough difference between them to support the spiral hypothesis". This scenario involves shifts in the precision of the terms used or the referencing of pronouns, for instance.

(30b) Passot (2007), BNC spoken, text=KP8 n=3457, PS52U

A =   [It's, what they've done is they've closed er, er, erm <pause> branch, an office <pause> massive office in London and they've moved them all over to Leeds]
B =   [*because* they can't get the people to <pause> take jobs in London <pause>]
A' =   *so* [they've transferred it all to Leeds]

In this example there is a loss of specificity of "branch" > "an office" > "massive office" in A reprised by "it all" in A', while there is a gain in finding the right term "transferred" in A' for "closed" > "moved" in A. In this way, the consensus in A' is the fact of "transfer (to Leeds)" rather than the precise term of what ("branch"/"offices") actually got transferred.

While Passot's analysis in terms of semantic content is correct, a different break-down of the parts A and A' can be proposed, a division based on parallel syntactic features. The main reason for narrowing down the structure syntactically is that it brings out an important trait of the

structure which has apparently changed through time as shown by the PAC recordings: the pattern A - *because* B - *so* A' is carried by syntactic parallels. Under this analysis, parts A and A' would be only constituted by the shortest stretch of utterance they share rather than the much longer stretches under Passot's analysis. Under this analysis, A and A' become shorter than under her analysis but still bring out the spiral character of the device. An additional piece of argument for the restricted analysis is that under this analysis *so* introducing A' really introduces the material that A' reprises. The following is a reanalysis of the modal shift example in (30a) above:

(31a) Reanalysis of BNC spoken, text=H49 n=968, PS1XG

	Erm <pause> they say
A =	[they would not be willing to change their valuation,]
B =	[*because* that was the valuation er come to by the District Value Office from <gap>,]
	so
A' =	[they are not willing to, to come down in price]

It has to be admitted that Passot uses this example to illustrate modal shift and one grammatical device to bring this shift out is using reporting verbs, according to her. However, precisely *they say* is absent from the restricted proposal because A' does not take it up. Such reporting verbs, unless reprised in A', will indeed likely to be absent from the restricted analysis of A presented here. Quite to the point, it could indeed be argued that such a reporting verb can trigger the whole spiral pattern in the first place, in this sense being the trigger of the whole A - *because* B - *so* A' structure rather than being a part only of A. The difference in the break-down between Passot's analysis and the present proposal is even more apparent in the reanalysis of the second example, (30b) above, the referential shift, since it excludes even more of the material included in Passot's analysis:

(31b) Reanalysis of BNC spoken, text=KP8 n=3457, PS52U

	It's, what they've done is they've closed er, er, erm <pause> branch, an office <pause> massive office in London and
A =	[they've moved them all over to Leeds]
B =	[*because* they can't get the people to <pause> take jobs in London <pause>]
	so
A' =	[they've transferred it all to Leeds]

As was pointed out above, the main thrust of the consensus in A' concerns "transfer (to Leeds)", and this restricted analysis brings this observation out neatly since while A has the general verb "moved", while A' has the specific verb "transferred". In this way, nothing is lost in the spiral discursive pattern.

What can also be seen in the proposed analyses above is that A' shows syntactic parallels with A that are not given particular importance under Passot's original analysis. The first example follows a simple structure of "they + be willing to + VP" and both are negations, while

the second is "they + verb in present perfect + direct object + PP [to Leeds]", and both are assertions. The point is not the precise equivalence of the syntactic description here but the observation that A and A' show closely parallel syntactic structures (and further seem to agree in assertion/negation) while they are, crucially, not word-for-word repetitions. This is important because data from Bolton, Lancashire, show a certain number of occurrences of this discourse progression device but the patterns show considerable variation in the degree of syntactic parallels in function of the age of speakers: older speakers do not show such close parallels between A and A' whereas younger speakers do, which seems to reflect the emergence of this discourse structure. Moreover, word for word repetition will also have to be allowed for.

Let us now consider some examples from Bolton (Lancashire). The following are cases of modal shift.

(32) modal shift

(a)   SC1f_06

　　　　　Yeah so, but I'm, yeah
A   [it would s/ I just wanted to do er....you know]
B   *because* [bɪˈkɒz] like....to show that I could do something else rather working
and looking after children (laughter) you, you know. And er and I enjoyed
doing it
　　　　　so,
A'   [you know it wa/ it was something for myself.]

(b)   SC1i_25

A   ...but [it's gonna feel strange] anyway not having him here <all day> even
Christmas morning
B   *because* [bɪˈkɒz] like we used have him in here to open presents You know
　　　　　so
A'   [it'll be strange]

(c)   MD1i_03

A   [Then I'll have to go back Sunday night]
B   *because* [ks] nine o'clock on Monday I'm at school, at Donnington er, doing
those three assessments.
　　　　　So
A'   [I've got to get back,] so I hope it's not foggy.

(d)   LB1f_15

A   [I'm set in..]

B *because* [bɪkəz] ..he takes the car

   so

A' [I can't go out]

The following are cases illustrating referential shift:

(33)

(a) MC1f_04

   A [I didn't want to go back in an office...]

   B *because* [bɪˈkɒs::]....I,, wanted a job without stress

      so,

   A' I had a part-time job at the local school, in the nursery kitchen,

(b) LC1f_15

     In one way it satisfied me enormously, while I was with mother,

   A [it was a wonderful escape]

   B ...*because* [bʊˈkɒz] the people in theatre are very interesting, you get lots of

laughs (?),

     so

   A' [it's a wonderful life]

     and you do get addicted to it. it's a wonderful life and you do get addicted to it.

(c) MC1f_04

   A [I didn't want to go back in an office…]

   B *because*. [bɪˈkɒs]...I,, wanted a job without stress

     so,

   A' [I had a part-time job at the local school, in the nursery kitchen,]

(d) MC1i_29

   A and [they put me two coats of varnish on]

   B *because* /bɪˈkəs/ I / I can't...I thought well I haven't time to paint it,

     so

   A' [he the carpenter varnishes it,] hundred and ninety seven pound!

(e) PK1f_08

              <F: So it's the breathing control?>

A   Yes. So, [it's to do with brea/ and posture]

B   *because* [ˈkəs] when you stand up straight and you're, and you breathe and do that, posture, you know you, stand right

          so

A'   [it's to do with your posture.]

(f)   MD1f_04-05

A   [that was strange]

B   *because* ['kəz] I didn't know anybody because [kz] I'd gone to primary school in Bolton

          so

A'   [it was completely different] and er

(g)   DK1i_19

          It's just rubbish anyway,

A   [it's not ....]

B   *because* [kəz] it's just automatically generated code

          so

A'   [it's not what you would write normally.] <MD1: Right.>

Here are two examples from the corpus where one phrase is fronted, but are still syntactically parallel.

(34a) PK1f_06

          but

A   [yoga I really like]

B   *because* [bɪˈkəz]...it's stretching it just stretches you and I can do it you see,

          so

A'   [I l-/ I like that,]

          it's not fast or, it's just nice and, slow and, yes and I like it yeah.

(34b) SC1f_20

          you know

A   [we had to go everywhere in car…]

B   *because* [bɪˈkəz] it's not safe for you just to walk about you know

          so

A'   [everywhere we went, we were in car]

As can be seen, A and A' show the syntactic parallels as expected. The fronting of *yoga* is justified by a contrast with another element preceding it. The fronting of *everywhere we went* is internal to the turn. While Passot (2007) does not explicitly mention it, in the corpus under study here, there is no pause before *so*.

To illustrate a more complex example with multiple occurrences of *because* and the A - *because* B - *so* A' structure, consider the following turn:

(35) PK1f_10:

        Well ***because*** [bɪˈkɒz]...people my husband worked with recommended Kefalonia
        because [ˈkɒz] a lot of them had been, there and said it was really nice and they thought we might enjoy it.
        because [ˈkɒz]

A	[X's been abroad]
B	***because*** [ˈkɒz] he used to be in the TA...the army thing..and
	so
A'	[he's been abroad]
	but
A	[I'd never been abroad before…]
B	***because*** [bɪˈkɒz] we had a dog...
	so
A'	[we never went abroad]
	and then

Here, *because* has multiple functions. The first three introduce clauses of reason. While the fourth occurrence also gives a reason, the argumentation enters the spiral because *so* picks up A, word for word practically, changing only the proper name to the pronoun. The final instance of *because* is in a spiral again and gives the reason to A which allows a change of perspective in A' from *I* to *we*.

This example leads us to the consideration of cases where A and A' are virtually identical.

(36a) LC1i_13

A	[I 'do find it a lot better]
B	*because* [bɪˈkəz]...when you get into the car first of all you think 'and I must go to so and so and I must go to so and 'so and, your mind is half-taking/, taken up with what you're going to do.
	So
A'	[I do find it a lot better to reverse] and/ <pause>

(36b) PK1f_08

        <F: So it's the breathing control?> Yes. So,

A	it's to do with brea/ and posture

B   *because* [ˈkəs] when you stand up straight and you're, and you breathe and do that, posture, you know you, stand right

       so

A'   it's to do with your posture.

Such examples can be regarded as the precursor of the later spiral structure in the sense that such repetition can fulfil the function of reprise in the narrative and giving a summary of the reason that can lead to a consensus between the speakers. An interesting example in this context is the following turn:

(37)   MC1i_02

      A   [I've told people not to buy me presents.]
                 <F: Right.>
      B   *Because* /bɪˈkɒːs/...I don't want all presents in my house at Christmas
                so
      A'   [I said please]

It is a form of repetition (with a change of aspect so A' is presented as more final and definite) but where "people not to buy me presents" is transformed into "please" rather than repeating it. Obviously, in the past situation she could say something more like "people, don't buy me presents".

A variant of the pattern A - *because* B - *so* A' is when A' is not expressed (or reprised by a dummy "yes") or is completed in a way by another speaker. This is illustrated in the following examples:

(38)

(a)   MD1i_05

               as soon as I got out on to A64
      A   [it was fine]...
      B   *because* [kəz] of course.... it's a dual carriage way
               so...
      A'   [_]
      DK1   Yeah, I suppose you missed the M62 traffic…

(b)   MC1i_09

      A   but…[I'm not bothering them]
      B   *because* /bɪˈkɒs/ I might....decide to sell this house maybe,
          so
      <F: Oh right.>
      ?A'   Yeah.

(c)   PK1i_27

      A   he can't really get time of course [he's away for two days]

      B   *because* [bɪˈkɒz] he's moving house
            so
      A'   [_]

(d)   SC1f_13

            \<interviewer\>
      A   [yeah]
      B   *because* [kəz] they only...they only live right round the corner my sister lives round the corner and my dad xxx round the corner
            so.
      A'   [Yeah,] yeah, we're a close family yeah

(e)   SC1i_08

      A   I mean it's probably, probably goo/ doing good to, to be away from us for like three days
      B   *because* [bɪˈkəz] it's the first time he's e/ I mean he's been away with college to, you know, places for his, like assignments and things assignments and things but, you know, it's just that he's never been away with mates on his own before
            so,
      A'   [_]

(f)   SC1i_12

      A   [for the last few days]
      B   *because* [kəz] like...she's busy all the time, isn't she?
            So
      A'   [_] But I'l/ I'll see/ I'll probably see her this weekend because I'm off

(g)   LB1i_12

      A   we don't know how many children we're gonna be doing [hmm]
      B   ...*because* [bɪkəz] they just won't bother coming in to school
            so.
      A'   [_]

(h)   DK1i_17
      A   [it wasn't.]
      B   *because* [kɒz] it was shut last night, the keys were in the xxx
            so
      A'   [_]

(i)   JM1f_04

       A   I went to do that but obviously I've changed my mind again
       B   *because* [bɪˈkəz] I'm not doing anything to do with geography now,
            so.
       A'   [_]

(j)   JM1i_05

       A   Erm, my boss is forty but, she acts about twenty. (MD1 chuckles) Erm. and
then...
       B   *because* [kəz] it's like a call-centre so all the/ everyone in/ most people who
work there are sales agents and they're like, in their twenties.
            So,
    ?A'   [yes.]

(k)   SC1i_07

       A   I mean [I'm concerned as well]
       B   *because* [bɪˈkɒz] it's the first time he's ever been on his own
            so…
       A'   just like...you know [I'm just like], you know.

      While in the first case, it could be argued that DK1's reply fills in A', the possibility of having no overt A' at all, like in the rest of the examples in (38) above, shows that there is no absolute necessity to express the A' part of the pattern. As to the phonological forms, the data reveal that there is no clearly predictable variant for this pattern: both disyllabic and monosyllabic variants occur, either with a full or a reduced vowel.
      There are signs in the corpus material that the pattern A - *because* B - *so* A' has changed through time. While the pattern exists for all speakers, they do not all use it in the same way. For instance, for MO1, the oldest speaker, *so* seems to have its value of true consecutive marker with a short pause after it:

(39a)   MO1f_01
               But
       A   [I didn't go...]
       B   *because* [bɪˈkɒz] my dad.. thought..well it's not much higher than what you're
doing   anyway, you know
            so,
       A'   [there I stayed,] till I was fourteen.

      Combined with *because*, there is an element of progression in the narrative but it does not contribute to building a consensus and it functions more like a reprise of the narrative. This reprise is even more clear in her other example, with lot of narrative material between *because* and *so* and once again with a pause before *so*:

(39b) MO1f _07

A   [we've got quite a good,.. keen .company]

B   ...*because* [bɪˈkɒz] er....there, there's a, a sort of a national competition the er, the North West Federation, and they've won the championship for years and years, and years, they've won the championship of that federation, for oh, I don't know about, over twenty years,

         so,

A'   [they're really keen], there's about a dozen of them and er, they really are keen,

In this case, the word for word repetition seems to serve the purpose of picking up the narrative rather than signalling a consensus on the subject. This is a pattern that is found even in the youngest speakers.

(39c) MD1f_01

         I went to school in Essex and er (silence) I always lo/ I had really good teachers,
A   [I was really lucky and]
B   *because* [pkəz] my sister had a few like dud teachers but mine were really nice and I used to like draw a picture and put: 'I love Mrs (X)' (laughter) and sit on her knee and stuff. Er,
         so
A   [that was really lucky, and] er, (it was) er, quite a

In this example again, practically word for word repetition serves the purpose of picking up the narrative, while it does contain elements for the consensus on why she considers herself really lucky.

5 Conclusions

Variants in the corpus data from Bolton (Lancashire) show an overall familiar range of phonological variants, from disyllabic to monosyllabic forms and from forms having a full stressed vowel to forms with a reduced vowel. Indeed, the full range of the reduction cline is found in the accent from [bɪˈkɒːz] to [ks]. However, speakers do not necessarily use their most reduced variant exclusively in their informal conversation, and for two speakers in the corpus a monosyllabic variant occurs in the formal data but not in the informal data. Both these observations go against the expectation that the form preferred in informal style should be monosyllabic. It is to be noted that a number of speakers of this accent do use a long-vowel variant [bɪˈkɒːz], a variant registered as non-RP in LPD, for purposes of emphasis both in the formal and informal conversation. A variant with a labial vowel in the first syllable has been identified sporadically with one female speaker: [bʊˈkɒz]. The variant [bɪˈkɒz] does occur with all speakers, however with younger speakers this is increasingly an emphatic rather than a neutral variant, the more frequent disyllabic form being [bəkəz] for them. This is particularly clear in DK1 who only uses [bɪˈkɒz] under emphasis in the corpus, therefore, this form counts as his solution for the long-vowelled [bɪˈkɒːz] of other speakers. The oldest speaker, MO (83), only uses

disyllabic forms such as [bɪˈkɒz], [bɪˈkəz]. In the next age-bracket LC (77) and MC (71) do use monosyllabic forms but only with a full vowel, that is [kɒz]/[kɒs]. Speakers younger than 60 years of age use both full and various reduced forms. All these respective forms occur, for all speakers, in both the formal and informal conversations. Monosyllabic variants gain ground through time and the competition between a full-vowelled and a reduced vowelled monosyllabic variant is increasingly in favour of the reduced variant. This pattern is compatible with an apparent time change analysis of these data. At the level of the whole corpus there is no direct correlation between the phonological variant and the discourse function of *because.* The only such distribution is with cases where because serves as a discourse marker to delay turn-taking and where it usually has a disyllabic form and is usually followed by a pause of suspense.

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