Causal and concessive clauses
Causal clauses

• These are words like “because” and “although”.

• So far you have met them with a verb in the indicative, where it is a fact

• They may instead be followed by an subjunctive, to indicate an alleged reason, or a possibility

Remember: the indicative is used for facts, subjunctive tends to be used for possibilities, or things at a remove from facts.
Causal clauses - indicative

• quod, quia (because),
• quoniam, quando (since)

introduce clause whose verb is usually **INDICATIVE**, showing that the speaker or writer vouches for the reason.
Causal clauses

Examples:

hostes, quoniam iam nox erat, domum discesserunt. The enemy went home because it was now night.

adsunt propterea quod officium sequuntur. They are present because they are doing their duty.
Causal clauses - subjunctive

• The same words introduce a clause whose verb is SUBJUNCTIVE when the writer or speaker does not himself vouch for the reason given, but reports the alleged reason given by somebody else:

  • discesserunt quoniam fessi essent.  
    *They departed because (they said) they were tired.*  
    *(implication: they may or may not actually have been tired)*

  • mihi irascitur, quod eum neglexerim.  
    *He is angry with me because (he says) I have neglected him.*
Causal clauses - subjunctive

• This sort of subjunctive clause is very common after words of accusing, praising, complaining, blaming etc. in the main clause (because the reasons for such emotions are naturally subjective).

• In translating into English, you may not be able to make a clear distinction – but do note it. It gives flavour. What’s more, I am likely to ask a question on it.
Other occurrences

A relative clause may have a causal meaning. Causal relative clauses always contain a **SUBJUNCTIVE** verb and are frequently preceded by quippe:

hostes, **qui** adventum Caesaris **ignorarent**, flumen transierunt.
The enemy, since they were unaware of Caesar's arrival, crossed the river.

**consul, quippe qui** praemonitus **esset**, haec exspectabat .
The consul expected these events, because he had been forewarned.
Concessive clauses

Concessive clauses are introduced in English by “although”, “even if” etc. and concede either a fact or a possibility in spite of which the statement made in the main sentence is true.

In Latin:
– etsi, tametsi, etiamsi (even if)
– quamquam, quamvis, licet (although)

may introduce a concessive clause.
Concessive clauses - indicative

They are usually followed by the indicative; but like causal clauses, they use a subjunctive if it is a possibility rather than a fact.

*etiamsi tacent, satis dicunt* (Cicero)
Even if they are silent, they say enough.

*Romani quamquam itinere et aestu fessi erant, tamen obviam hostibus procedunt*.
Though the Romans were tired from the march and heat, yet they advanced to meet the enemy.

Both of these are the real reasons!
Concessive clauses - subjunctive

**etiamsi non adiuves, haec facere possim.**
Even if you were not to help, I should be able to do this.

**vera loqui, etsi meum ingenium non moneret, necessitas cogit.**
Even if my character were not bidding me (and it is), necessity forces me to tell the truth.

Both of these are possibilities: note the English subjunctive.
Concessive clauses - other occurrences

Two additional points:

1. *quamvis* – used with adjectives and adverbs.

   *quamvis strenue labores, non ad tempus opus conficies.*
   *However hard you work, you will not finish the task in time.*

2. a relative clause can have concessive force if used with a subjunctive.

   *Caesar, qui illud suspicaretur, tamen obsides dimisit.*
   *Although Caesar suspected that, he released the hostages.*
Key points

• Words meaning “because” and “although” are normally followed by the indicative;

• a subjunctive is used for an alleged reason or only a possible concession.

• quod can mean “that” in certain phrases