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Uses and functions of the Romanian marker *dar* and its English equivalent *but* in professional spoken interaction. A contrastive corpus analysis

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Based on two comparable corpora of professional spoken interaction CIVMP[2] and ITICMC[3] and on the idea that in the past hundred years, the way in which researchers conceived communication has changed, this paper analyzes the ability of speakers to control their behavior, actions and attitudes in the process of communication in the workplace, in an attempt to demonstrate that language is an instrument of doing things. Moreover, based on Fraser's classification (1996), this paper also analyzes two contrastive markers, ***but*** *and* ***dar****, trying to show that they may be seen as equivalent. Following Schiffrin (1987), I began my inquiry by paying attention to their distribution in discourse. Thus, in the corpora I have analyzed,* ***but*** *and its Romanian equivalent* ***dar*** *have the following functions: to express a contrastive value, to continue an idea, to signal the personal correction of the speaker, to insert an objection or a reaction to the previous speech act, to emphasize a discursive idea, an obligation etc. In addition, according to the analysis on the corpora, it could be said that speakers seem to constantly adapt to the conditions imposed by the interactional, social, ideological and cultural requirements of the context, as shown by Măda (2009).*

Key-words: *English, Romanian, contrastive markers, dialogic interaction, discourse strategies*

1. Introduction

Discourse marker is a term which is relatively hard to define, but pointedly, this term refers to words or phrases which are used to structure sequences of a speech act. According to another definition, *discourse markers* are lexemes which could be left out without changing the semantic function of a sentence, because they do not

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contribute to the truth-condition of a sentence (Mehlbaum 2008, 2). The interest in *discourse markers* has expanded since the 1970s and throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Hence, the linguistic research has gained many new insights into the nature of these lexical units over the past decades. Fraser (1996) (quoted in Schiffrin 2003, 54) called the research on *discourse markers* "a growth market in linguistics". In terms of terminology, there is a variety of expressions for this kind of lexical units e.g. *discourse particles*, *discourse connectives*, *discourse operators*, *cue phrases* etc., the term *discourse markers* being just one of them, but probably, the one that is used more frequently (Mehlbaum 2008, 6). Moreover, it is significant to point out the fact that *discourse markers* occur very frequently in speeches (usually every few seconds). In written texts, they are very frequent as well, but not as frequent as in verbal speech (Mehlbaum 2008, 2). As Aijmer (2002, 3) emphasizes, *discourse items* (which include greetings, thanks and apologies, apart from all kinds of *discourse markers*) accounted for 9,4% of all word-class tokens. Consequently, they constitute the fourth largest word-class, outranked only by verbs, pronouns and nouns.

Regarding *the contrastive meaning* of the discourse marker *but*, it should be mentioned that the discursive relations that are based on contrast are sometimes transparent enough to be identified at the semantic level of the assertion, but sometimes, thus being more difficult to identify, the contrast is established between the speaker and the interlocutor, based on their cultural background and on the vision they have about the world or even towards each other (Schiffrin 1987, 152-153). Furthermore, it is fundamental to point out the fact that *discourse markers* have a big influence on how two or more utterances are used in relation to each other, because they often provide a background or a contextual assumption for the hearer. Ordinarily, the speakers understand when the discourse marker *but* is used, the fact that a contradictory opinion will be introduced to the previous assertion, this being in fact the reason why, in contexts in which one of the speaker expresses his/her disagreement, the discourse marker *but* is used with a very high frequency. The contrastive value of the discourse marker *but* can be more or less accentuated, depending on the context, but what is certain is the fact that the sense of *opposition* is perpetually present in a more or less pronounced degree, in each use of *but*. However, there are still discussions about the nature of its sense: whether it is semantic or pragmatic and what are the types of context in which the meaning is predominantly pragmatic or semantic (Schiffrin 1987, 176-177).

On the other hand, morphologically, *but* is similar to the Romanian *dar*, an adversative coordinating conjunction. According to their functionality, the conjunctions and elements used with conjunction value are divided into two categories: coordinating and subordinating, *but* being included in the first category (*Gramatica limbii române* 'Grammar of the Romanian Language', VOL I 1966, 383).

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Thus, *dar* is an adversative coordinating conjunction besides conjunctions such as *iar*, *însă*, *ci*, the adversative coordination expressing an opposition without exclusion (Hoarță Cărăușu 2003, 119).

Discourse markers have important pragmatic functions. Apart from being used only for structuring and organizing a speech, they indicate some aspects of attitude (Renkema 2004, 169) and the relation between two or more utterances. In other words, *discourse markers* often help to express the speaker's or writer's attitude to an utterance, plus they signal conceptually where the discourse is heading (Del Saz 2007, 68). They can also offer information about social dimension, group identity and relations between communicating people (Aijmer 2002, 14).

2. Research methodology

Two types of methods are used in this paper: methods aimed at analyzing linguistic structure (*morphological analysis*, because at the language level, through this kind of analysis, we have identified the linguistic structures in which the adversative coordinating conjunction *dar* and its English equivalent *but* can occur) and methods aimed at analyzing verbal interactions (*conversation analysis*, a form of sociological approach to language, which involves careful examination of real verbal interactions, *discourse analysis*, because the description of English and Romanian in professional spoken interaction means discourse level research and *corpus linguistics*, because the analysis of professional spoken interaction cannot be performed without representative corpora and because through the corpus linguistics method, authentic interactional phenomena are captured, as they were produced and received in their context). Therefore, the two corpora, CIVMP and ITICMC were analyzed from a *structural* and *a functional perspective*, in order to identify linguistic patterns in professional spoken interaction. At the functional level, through *conversation analysis*, *discourse analysis*, and *corpus linguistics*, we have identified the functions that the two discourse markers can have: to mark a contrast, a reaction, the personal correction, to continue an idea, to insert an objection etc. In addition, it is significant to point out the fact that this research was based on a *descriptive perspective* through which we have identified and we have anticipated the functions that the two discourse markers *but* and its Romanian equivalent *dar* may have. Moreover, at the speech level, we are interested in finding the specific structures of professional spoken interactions, and if these structures have occurred with a high frequency, they can be considered specific to the discourse performed in professional environment. Also, this paper aims to analyze the speakers' language choices, the linguistic constraints they are

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subjected to and the way in which they use language in social and professional interaction. By recognizing the interference between the structural and the functional level, it is fundamental to emphasize the fact that the theoretical framework in which this research can be framed is that of Modern Linguistics.

Through professional spoken interaction analysis, we have intended to demonstrate that this type of interaction is a very complex linguistic phenomenon which involves *the use of pragmatic strategies*. A pragmatic strategy is the insertion of the discursive markers *but* and *dar*, when speakers do not want to give the right to reply to other participants (see *infra* e.g. (9) and (10)). The analysis of the use of discourse markers at the emission and reception poles completes the image that illustrates the properties of professional spoken interactions. Identifying and understanding communication principles and strategies help us to interpret this type of spoken interaction. The functions that the two contrastive markers can have are updated with each new context in which they occur.

Last, but not the least, in this paper, by identifying the pragmatic functions that this type of discourse can have and the discursive functions that the two discursive markers *dar* and *but* have, we want to involve this type of spoken interaction (i.e. professional spoken interaction) in the global phenomenon of dynamics of language.

3. Analysis of the data

In this paper we set out to seek and establish the regular pragmatic values that justify the uses of *dar* and *but*. In other words, this paper is going to analyse the use of two contrastive markers *but* and *dar* and in addition, it will be analysed and explored how the two *discourse markers* occur in the speeches of different speakers and what exactly *but* and its Romanian equivalent *dar* are used for. According to some scholars interested in *discourse markers*, the most prominent feature of *discourse markers* is their ability to relate utterances to other discourse units (Del Saz 2007, 65). Connectivity is one of the properties that is least disputed by writers of research papers on the topic.

Consider the following example: ***So*** *it's an investment, less freedom during the school time* ***but*** *on the long term there's good consequences* ***so*** *it's worth to have that restriction* ***well*** *yes* (Mehlbaum 2008, 9). The example has the following structure: DM.S1.(S2).DM.S3.DM.S4.DM.S5 with the *discourse markers* ***so***, ***but***, ***so*** and ***well***. S2 is put in brackets because is not an independent utterance. Therefore, it is significant to note that the receiver of this message does not know what the first *so* refers to, but because of the *discourse marker* at the very beginning, he's

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urgent to imply that the sentence is taken from a certain context in a longer discourse. *Discourse markers* often signal 'a transition in the evolving progress of the conversation' (Mehlbaum 2008, 10). This is often particularly evident in the use of the *discourse marker* ***so***. In this case, the discourse marker *but* and the second *so* have the role to link the following sequences, which could also exist independently.

Different *discourse markers* have a variety of common properties; however, every *discourse marker* is special because it has unique functions. The functions of *discourse markers* are usually versatile and can differ strongly in different contexts. In most cases, they signal a progress in the ongoing discourse. Thereby, in the corpora under investigation I have identified the following pragmatic functions of *dar* and its English equivalent *but*:

3.1. to mark a contrast (Schiffrin 1987, 152)

Context: Teachers' council;
Speaker: Adina, school principal and Romanian language teacher;
Place of the recording: School professors' room.

(1) Adina. *Trebuie să își aducă orarul,* ***dar*** *au mai apărut niște schimbări în programul dumneaei.*
'She has to bring her own schedule, ***but*** I have seen some changes in her schedule' (CIVMP 2009, 60).

Context: Telephone conference;
Speaker: R3, a Romanian employee, member of a work-team;
Place of the recording: The telephone conversation has been recorded in Brașov, at a multinational company specialized in software.

(2) R3. I already started a design *but* this part of factor doing the switch I don't know exactly right now what I have to do there (ITICMC1 2008, 41).

In these two examples of professional spoken interaction, the discourse markers *but* and its Romanian equivalent *dar* mark a contrast. In the first example, Adina, the school principal, by inserting the discourse marker *dar*, wants to signal the fact that some changes have occurred in an employee's schedule and this situation contrasts with what the speakers had already known. In the second example, the discourse marker *but* also marks a contrast, in the sense that the speaker R3 mentions that although he has already started a design, he does not know exactly what he has to do there.

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3.2. to continue an idea (Hoarță Cărăușu 2003, 120)

Context: Teachers' council;
Speaker: Adina, school principal and Romanian language teacher;
Place of the recording: School professors' room.

(3) Adina. *Clasele de-a noua profilurile nu îi interesează pe ei chiar acuma,* ***dar*** *io mă gândesc tot așa la două de mate-info un an cu intensivele de rigoare*
'The ninth grade profiles don't interest them right now, *but* I think about two of mathematics-computer science (classes), one year with the necessary intensives.' (CIVMP 2009, 46).

Context: Telephone conference;
Speaker: F2, a Belgian employee;
Place of the recording: The telephone conversation has been recorded in Brașov, at a multinational company specialized in software.

(4) F2. I was working with CAT group basically I was working in high frequency domain, *but* yeah, the whole experience I have with CAT (ITICMC 2008, 26).

In these two examples of professional spoken interaction, *dar* and *but* are inserted because the speakers (Adina and F2) want to continue their idea, thus adding more details and information on the topic of discussion. Contrary to the above examples (*see supra* 3.1., e.g. (1) and (2)), in these two fragments of professional spoken interactions, *dar* and *but* do not mark a contrast, their role being to give the speakers the opportunity to continue their speech. In other words, according to these two examples, we cannot speak about a contrast, because, Adina and F2, by using these two discourse markers, emphasize the fact that they do not want to be interrupted and, of course, the fact that they want to continue and finish what they want to say.

3.3. to insert an objection to the previous speech act (Biasci 1982, 93)

Context: Teachers' council;
Speakers: Ileana, English teacher and union leader and Dana, computer science teacher;
Place of the recording: School professors' room.

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(5) Ileana. *E mai simplu să-i implicăm și pe alții sau pe altcineva*.
'It is easier to involve others or someone else.'
Dana. **Dar** reprezintă niște elevi trebuie să fie elev
'*But* s/he represents the pupils, s/he must be a pupil' (CIVMP 2009, 21).

Context: Telephone conference;
Speakers: R5, a Romanian employee and F1, the team-leader.
Place of the recording: The telephone conversation has been recorded in Brașov, at a multinational company specialized in software.

(6) R5. I've received some tutorials which I should follow to get familiar with MAV application, so…
F1. *But* they request you to go one year to XXX. (ITICMC 2008, 38)

By using the discourse marker *dar*, Dana inserts an objection to what Ileana said: *E mai simplu să-i implicăm și pe alții sau pe altcineva* 'It is easier to involve others or someone else'. In other words, Dana wants to emphasize that other people with other professional status should not be involved: *trebuie să fie elev* 's/he must be a pupil'. On the other hand, example (6) highlights a similar pragmatic situation, a situation in which a speaker, F1, the team-leader, attaches to his assertion the discourse marker *but* in order to highlight the fact that he does not agree with what has been mentioned before by R5.

3.4. to mark the "appropriateness conditions" of the previous speech act (Austin 1972, 27)

Context: Teachers' council;
Speakers: Dana, computer science teacher and Adina, school principal and Romanian language teacher;
Place of the recording: School professors' room.

(7) Dana. *Vă aduceți aminte că la momentul acela am discutat și într-adevăr ei veneau a venit elevul respectiv cu dovada sau chiar și dumneavoastră îl trimiteați mă rog la alte acțiuni*.
'Do you remember that at that moment we talked and they really came the student came with the proof or even you were sending him to other activities.'
Adina. ***Dar*** *noi datorită lui suntem gazde pentru toate ședințele consiliului consultativ pe județ*.
'But it is thanks to him that we are the hosts for all the meetings of the county advisory council.' (CIVMP 2009, 20).

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Context: Telephone conference;
Speaker: F1, the team-leader;
Place of the recording: The telephone conversation has been recorded in Brașov, at a multinational company specialized in software.

(8) F1. *Can we do now a quick tour, the usual one to explain what you are doing? The tasks not in details technically,* ***but*** *then everybody knows a bit I hope that you are in the team*. (ITICMC 2008, 33)

Despite the fact that morphologically and pragmatically, the main function of *dar* (and its English equivalent *but*) is to mark a contrast (a referential contrast, a functional contrast or a contrast between what is actually said and the speaker's expectations regarding the speech act), the two discourse markers can also mark the positive sides of the previous speech act. For instance, in the first fragment that illustrates this function, Adina uses the discourse marker *dar* in initial position to highlight the positive sides that can be deduced from Dana's affirmation. The same thing can be said about the example (8). F1 inserts in the second part of his assertion the discourse marker *but* which has the pragmatic role to underline the positive side of the first part of the assertion: ***but*** *then everybody knows a bit I hope that you are in the team.*

3.5. to mark a delimitation / a restriction from what the speaker has already said or from the previous speech act (Biasci 1982, 94)

Context: Board meeting - opening of the meeting;
Speakers: Nela, school principal and Romanian language teacher;
Place of the recording: School professors' room.

(9) Nela. *Balul majoratului ar putea să aibă loc de asemenea în următoarele două săptămâni poate în patru aprilie deși copiii încă nu sunt foarte bine pregătiți mai au de alergat după sponsori domnu profesor [nume] ne poate da detalii în legătură cu balul,* ***dar*** *în principiu cam în patru aprilie ne gândiserăm să se desfășoare și balul*.
'The prom could also take place in the next two weeks maybe on April 4 although the children are not yet very well prepared they still have to find sponsors Professor [name] can give us details about the prom, ***but*** basically we had thought to have the prom on April 4' (CIVMP 2009, 64).

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Context: Telephone conference;
Speakers: F1, team-leader;
Place of the recording: The telephone conversation has been recorded in Brașov, at a multinational company specialized in software.

(10) F1. So the how the complete cross power case for MAV, how it will be computed, how it will be settled etc., that will also need to wait until next week when we get the requirements and more explanation, ***but*** at least for the part that I asked you to do there that's already fixed so (ITICMC 2008, 50).

Pragmatically, marking a restriction means that the speaker uses a communicative strategy to summarize in just a few words what has been mentioned before. In other words, Nela, by inserting the discourse marker *dar*, tries to summarize what she has already said. At the same time, she insists that the prom should be on April 4: *dar în principiu cam în patru aprilie ne gândiserăm să se desfășoare și balul '**but*** basically we had thought to have the prom on April 4'. In this context, the discourse marker emphasizes and systematizes what has been mentioned. These are also the reasons why F1 uses the discourse marker *but*: ***but** at least for the part that I asked you to do there that's already fixed so*. In these two contexts, by inserting the discourse markers *but* and *dar*, the speakers summarize and try to draw a conclusion on the previous speech act.

3.6. to mark a reaction (Stati 1986, 312)

Context: Teachers' council;
Speakers: Felicia, French and Italian teacher and Marcel, physics teacher and responsible for the schedule;
Place of the recording: School professors' room.

(11) Ileana. *E mai simplu să-i implicăm și pe alții sau pe altcineva*.
'It is easier to involve others or someone else.'
Dana. **Dar** reprezintă niște elevi trebuie să fie elev
'*But* s/he represents the pupils, s/he must be a pupil' (CIVMP 2009, 21).

(12) R4. With basic connection, derived from the analysis connector design, and then I will create a basic component for the supports which I will derive from my basic component
F1. **But** this entity should not be the basic eh? (ITICMC 2008, 34)

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To draw ostentatiously the dialogue partner's attention to the fact that it is a reaction, the speakers usually insert discourse markers, and in these two contexts (11) and (12), the discourse markers are *dar* and its English equivalent *but*. Sometimes, there are pragmatic situations in which the reaction could be confusing or even overlapping with an objection, the differences between the two being in fact insignificant. Pragmatically, in the first example related to this discursive function, the reaction has the same form with an objection, this being the reason why the same example is given to illustrate the reaction and the objection (*see* supra 3.3, e.g. (5)), but in the second example of professional spoken interaction, F1's reaction, being in the form of a question, cannot be confused with the objection.

3.7. to mark the fact that the speakers try to correct their speech (Hoarță Cărăușu 2003, 130)

Context: Teachers' council;
Speakers: Dana, computer science teacher;
Place of the recording: School professors' room.

(13) Dana. *Sunt foarte solicitați și acum io nu știu cât lipsește de la el,* ***dar*** *sunt foarte solicitați și în timpul programului*.
'These students are extremely overloaded and now I don't know how much is missing from him, but they are extremely overloaded during the school program' (CIVMP 2009, 20).

Context: Telephone conference;
Speakers: R1, Romanian employee, member of a work-team;
Place of the recording: The telephone conversation has been recorded in Brașov, at a multinational company specialized in software.

(14) R1. So it's not really the first job ***but*** the first so I worked also for Si before six months. (ITICMC 2008, 29)

In these two examples, by using the ***dar/but*** discourse marker, the speakers (Dana and F1) correct themselves. In other words, when the speakers have failed to say something or when the information that they have transmitted is wrong, they try to correct their message by using markers of correction. In the first example that illustrates this pragmatic function, Dana corrects her speech in the sense that she adds essential information that does not occur in the first part of the statement:

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dar *sunt foarte solicitați* ***și în timpul programului*** 'but they are extremely overloaded during the school program'. Thus, Dana inserts this discourse marker to correct her speech and to clarify the idea that the students are overloaded even during the program. A similar pragmatic situation in which the speaker tries to correct his/her speech occurs in the second example (14). R1 tries to correct the information he transmitted about his first job: ***but*** *the first so I worked also for Si before six months.* Thus, he corrects himself and tells the interlocutor that he actually worked for another company six months ago and this thing means that this job is not his first.

3.8. to mark a referential contrast; in this case, *but* and its Romanian equivalent *dar* can be replaced by *however / totuși* (Schiffrin 1987, 164).

Context: Teachers' council;
Speakers: Cornel, physics teacher and the chairman of the CEAC commission;
Place of the recording: School professors' room.

(15) Cornel. *Deci dumneavoastră trebuie să vă orientați spre cineva în care aveți încredere că acel om dacă spune nu greșește foarte mult bineînțeles că totul este subiectiv,* ***dar*** *anumite lucruri trebuie înțelese ca atare.[…]*
'So you have to choose someone you trust that if that person says something it's not very wrong of course everything is subjective, ***but*** some things need to be understood as such.' (CIVMP 2009, 25).

Context: Telephone conference;
Speakers: F2, a Belgian employee;
Place of the recording: The telephone conversation has been recorded in Brașov, at a multinational company specialized in software.

(16) F2. I was working in the systems for two years, and before that I was working in the CEE pre-processing company, the company which we held cooperation for development particularly for guaranteeing machines and so, I have previous experience in this domain. ***But*** my main experience is in CAT particularly and particularly in workbench. (ITICMC 2008, 27)

The two fragments of professional spoken interaction have been extracted from the two comparable corpora ITICMC and CIVMP to illustrate that there are

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discursive situations in which the contrastive marker *but* can be replaced with *however*. Nevertheless, it is significant to point out that this replacement is also valid for Romanian and that, semantically, the replacement of discourse markers does not affect the assertion. The meaning remains the same even if the referential contrast is marked by *dar/but* or by *however/totuși*. There is a perfect semantic overlap between: ***dar*** *anumite lucruri trebuie înțelese ca atare* and ***totuși*** *anumite lucruri trebuie înțelese ca atare* '**but/however**, some things need to be understood as such'. This is also valid for the English example (16). In the second part of F2's assertion, ***but*** *my main experience is in CAT particularly and particularly in workbench*, the discourse marker *but* can be replaced with *however* without changing the overall meaning of the message.

3.9. to mark the functional contrast; in this case, the discourse markers *but/dar* can be replaced by *anyway/oricum* (Schiffrin 1987, 164)

Context: Board meeting - opening of the meeting;
Speakers: Nela, school principal and Romanian language teacher;
Place of the recording: School professors' room.

(17) Nela. *Ne gândim împreună, **dar** și dacă întârziem cred că n-o să fie o dramă.*
'We think together, but even if we were late, I don't think it would be a problem' (CIVMP 2009, 63).

Context: Telephone conference;
Speakers: F1, the team-leader;
Place of the recording: The telephone conversation has been recorded in Brașov, at a multinational company specialized in software.

(18) F1. Ok *but anyway* the modified with the modifications I did the algorithm is a bit faster. For some reason but maybe the measurements are not so accurate. (ITICMC 2008, 36)

These two examples have been inserted in order to illustrate another significant function that the two contrastive markers can have: to mark the functional contrast. Related to this function, it is important to mention the fact that the contrastive markers *dar* and *but* can be replaced with *oricum/anyway* and that even in this situation, as mentioned in other examples (*see* supra 3.8, e.g. (15) and (16)), neither the meaning, nor the syntactic structure of the statement is affected by this replacement. The idea that, at least in example (18), the discourse maker *but*

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can be replaced with *anyway* is reinforced by the speaker's tendency to use immediately after *dar*, *anyway*, this thing happening because, in this context of professional spoken interaction, the discourse marker *anyway* has the same discursive function as *but*. The speaker feels that both markers (*but* and *anyway*) could be inserted in his discourse, this being the reason why F1 inserts the two markers.

3.10. In some contexts, the discourse marker *but* can be replaced by *and* because *but* can mean *and + something else*. This is also valid for the Romanian equivalent, *dar* (Blakemore 1987, 125-126)

The fact that *dar* and *și* are included in Romanian grammar among the coordinating conjunctions represents the morphological similarity that can be established between them. On the other hand, pragmatically, the discourse markers *but*/*dar* resemble the discourse markers *and/și* because they are coordinating elements in discourse, but, despite that fact, the four discourse markers: *dar* and its English equivalent and *și* and its English equivalent have different pragmatic roles, *but* marking an assertion that represents "a contrastive action to the previous speech" (Schiffrin 1987, 152). Given the fact that this pragmatic effect is based on contrastive semantics, the ideational and situational contexts in which *but* is used are less numerous compared to those with *and* (Hoarță Cărăușu 2003, 120). Regarding the frequency, it should be noted that according Schiffrin (1987), but also taking into account the occurrences of markers in the above examples, *but* occurs in professional spoken interaction less than *and*, the contrastive value of the discourse marker *but* being, in fact, the one that limits the uses of this marker.

Context: Teachers' council;
Speakers: Felicia, French and Italian language teacher and Marcel, physics teacher and responsible for the schedule;
Place of the recording: School professors' room.

(19) Felicia. *Problema este că reprezentantul elevilor în consiliul de administrație trebe să fie într-adevăr un elev care le poate reprezenta interesele care să poată să le transmită pe înțelesul lor ceea ce se discută în consiliul de administrație*
'The problem is that the student representative on the board of directors must be a student who can represent their interests and who can convey what they discussed.'
Marcel. *Da **dar** trebuie să fie și*
'Yes ***but*** s/he has to be and' (CIVMP 2009, 21).

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Context: Telephone conference;
Speakers: F1, the team-leader, R3, a Romanian employee, member of a work-team;
Place of the recording: The telephone conversation has been recorded in Brașov at a multinational company specialized in software.

(20) F1. *To do better codes, so we'll review I think the most difficult parts of the code, not every line of it*
R3. *Yeah, ok.*
F1. ***But** what you will learn from the code review, you will have to apply to all the code.* (ITICMC 2008, 42)

The contexts in which the discourse marker *but* can be replaced with *and,* meaning *and + something else* are similar to those in which the discourse marker *dar* and its English equivalent *but* have the pragmatic function of marking the continuation of a discursive idea (*see* supra 3.2, e.g. (3), (4)). The discursive function is in fact the same: to continue an idea thus adding new information and details. Unlike the other examples (*see* supra 3.2, e.g. (3) and (4)), in these two contexts (19) and (20), there is a perfect pragmatic overlap between *dar/but* and *și/and.*

Another interesting, but not necessarily definitional property of *discourse markers* is their tendency to occur in the initial position of the sequence they mark.

Context: Teachers' council;
Speakers: Ileana, English teacher and union leader;
Place of the recording: School professors' room.

(21) Dana. ***Dar** reprezintă niște elevi trebuie să fie elev*
'**But** s/he represents the pupils, he/she must be a pupil.'
(CIVMP 2009, 21).

Context: Telephone conference;
Speakers: F1, the team-leader;
Place of the recording: The telephone conversation has been recorded in Brașov, at a multinational company specialized in software.

(22) F1. ***But** the planning also include some tasks for finishing five A.*
(ITICMC 2008, 29).

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Usually, discourse markers give the receiver of the message a hint about the message that is likely to come and how it could be interpreted, before it is actually pronounced. The initial position of the *discourse markers* restricts the contextual interpretation of an utterance "before interpretations can run astray" (Del Saz 2007, 76). Although the initial position of a *discourse marker* is neither always necessary nor a defining criteria for a *discourse marker*, most *discourse markers* occur in initial position or it would be at least possible for them to occur in initial position of their sequences.

4. Conclusions

To conclude, *discourse markers* are optional inserts, which tend to occur at the beginning of a turn or utterance, do not have truth-conditions, and tend to combine three roles:

- *to signal connectivity between two or more complete utterances and therefore structure a speech*;
- *to signal an interactive relationship between speaker, hearer and message*;
- *to signal a transition in the evolving progress of the conversation*.

Different *discourse markers* have a variety of common properties; however, every *discourse marker* is special because it has unique functions. The functions of *discourse markers* are usually versatile and can differ strongly in different contexts. In most cases, they signal a progress in the ongoing discourse. The two most important properties of discourse markers are their connectivity and their non-truth conditionality. There are also other properties which do not necessary have to be accepted as definitional. These properties include multi-categoriality, weak clause association, they are usually phonologically independent, in most cases their use being optional. Apart from that, they are used for the signaling of attitudes and relations.

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