

Expressing Contrast in Romanian: the conjunction *iar*

Gabriela Bîlbîie and Grégoire Winterstein

Laboratoire de Linguistique Formelle, Université Paris Diderot-Paris 7
{gabriela.bilbiie,gregoire.winterstein}@linguist.jussieu.fr

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1 Introduction

Romanian Conjunction *iar*

Romanian distinguishes itself from other Romance languages by having a conjunction *iar* that:

1. is considered as an adversative ([Zafiu, 2005], [Guțu-Romalo, 2005]), in the same class as *dar* and *ci* ('but')
 2. shares an additive meaning with the conjunction *și* ('and') [Bâtea, 1988]
 3. has a double adversative-additive behaviour [Niculescu, 1965]
- (1) Ioana făcea duș, **iar** Maria vorbea la telefon.
Ioana was taking a shower, IAR Maria was talking on the phone.

Etymology

- *Iar* is assumed to come from Latin (lat. **ea hora* > *eară*)
- Initially, it is used as adverbial with a temporal meaning, and later, with adversative meaning ([Niculescu, 1958]), under the influence of Slavonic language.

Additive uses of *iar*

- a narrative *iar*, introducing a digression from the main story line, i.e. topic change:

(2) Ninge, e ora două noaptea, **iar** eu scriu.
It's snowing, it's 2 o'clock in the morning, IAR I'm writing

- an 'epistemic' *iar*, with an anaphoric expression:

(3) E optimist, **iar** asta mă miră.
He is optimistic, IAR this surprises me

- *iar* in diachrony (different from the actual uses of *iar*: correlative use, no syntactic constraint)

(4) **Iară** n-am stricat, **iar** nici datorie am lăsat. (A.
IAR NEG AUX destroyed, IAR any debt AUX left
Ivireantul)

I didn't destroyed anything and I didn't left any debt

Adversative use of *iar*

'Denial of expectation' with a mirative effect (expression of surprise about the fact that both situations hold):

(5) Sunt 40 de grade afară, **iar** Maria are trei pulovere pe ea.
There are 40 degrees outside, IAR Mary has three pulls on her

Since the additive and adversatives uses mentioned above do not show parallel and contrast structure, we leave them aside.

Parallel with Slavic Languages

At first sight, a conjunction similar to *iar* also appears in several Slavic languages ([Jasinkaja and Zeevat, 2009b], [Repp, 2009], [Niculescu, 1958]): Russian, Bulgarian and Slovak have a conjunction *a* with an 'intermediate' meaning between the additive *i* and the adversative *no*:

(6) Vera primimala vannu, **a** Lena razgovarivala po telefonu.
Vera was taking a shower and Lena was talking on the phone.

Cross-Linguistic Overview of Main Conjunctions

| French | Spanish | Romanian | Russian |
|--------|---------|----------|---------|
| et | y | și | i |
| | | iar | a ⇒?? |
| mais | pero | dar | no |
| | sino | ci | a |

Table 1: Rough equivalence of additive and adversative conjunctions

Traditional Analyses of Romanian Adversatives

A three-level approach is traditionally assumed to deal with Romanian adversative coordination, where there would be some kind of *opposition* between the conjuncts ([Niculescu, 1965], [Zafiu, 2005], [Guțu-Romalo, 2005])

1. denial of expectation: the conjunction *dar*
2. correction and substitution of the first conjunct which is explicitly negated: the conjunction *ci*
3. 'thematic' contrast, as a sub-type of non-oriented semantic contrast [Zafiu, 2005]: the conjunction *iar*

Puzzle 1

- (7) a. Ion {**și**/***iar**/***dar**} Maria sunt frumoși.
John {and/IAR/but} Mary are beautiful
- b. Inelul e frumos {**și**/***iar**/**dar**} scump.
The ring is nice, {and/IAR/but} expensive
- c. Maria e medic, {**și**/**iar**/***dar**} Ion profesor.
Mary is a doctor, {and/IAR/but} John a professor

Puzzle 2

- (8) Dan este înalt, **iar** Ion (e) mic și slab.
Dan is tall, IAR John is short and thin
- (9) a. Dan este înalt, Ion (e) mic și slab.
Dan is tall, John is short and thin
- b. Dan este înalt **și** Ion (e) mic și slab.
Dan is tall and John is short and thin
- c. Dan este înalt, **dar** Ion e mic și slab.
Dan is tall, but John is short and thin

General Objectives

1. Give a syntactic and semantic account of the conjunction *iar* by:
 - Listing the constraints that distinguish it from other conjunctions (mostly the additive *și* and the adversative *dar*)
 - Focusing on the central property of *iar*: its *double contrastiveness*
2. Give additional evidence for the double contrastiveness of *iar* from elliptical coordinations such as *gapping*
3. Argue that the contrastive *iar* does not belong to the class of additives or adversatives

2 Constraints on *iar*

2.1 Syntactic constraints

Prosody

With *iar*, the conjuncts are separated by a clear intonational phrase break (signaled by an obligatory comma in prescriptive grammars), unlike with *și* where there is an integrated prosody.

- (10) a. Paul citește (,) **și** Maria doarme.
Paul is reading and Mary is sleeping
- b. Paul citește, | **iar** Maria doarme.
Paul is reading IAR Mary is sleeping

Linearization: Parallelism

In the absence of strict syntactic parallelism between its conjuncts, *iar* is preferred to *și*, as in (11-b).

- (11) a. Lui Ion îi place fotbalul, {**iar/și**} Mariei baschetul.
John likes football, {IAR/and} Mary basket
- b. Lui Ion îi place fotbalul, {**iar/?și**} baschetul Mariei.
John likes football, {IAR/and} basket Mary

Linearization: Finite Verbs

Iar cannot be immediately followed by the main finite verb:

- (12) a. Ninge la Budapesta, {***iar/și**} bate vântul la București.
It's snowing in Budapest, {IAR/and} it's windy in Bucharest
- b. Ninge la Budapesta, {**iar/și**} la București bate vântul.
It's snowing in Budapest, {IAR/and} it's windy in Bucharest

If *iar* coordinates two subordinate clauses, it doesn't allow the reiteration of the complementizer in the second conjunct, unlike *și*:

- (13) Cred că Bănescu va fi pe primul loc, {***iar/și**} că Geoană va fi pe al doilea.
I think that Bănescu will be in the first position, {IAR/and} that Geoană will be in the second one

Linearization: additives

Iar cannot be immediately followed by some adverbials (called *semiadverbs* in Romanian traditional grammars), such as the additive adverb *și* ('also')¹ or the negative adverbial *nici* ('neither'):

- (14) a. A venit Ion, {***iar/și**} și Maria.
John came, {IAR/and} also Mary
 b. Și Ion are casă, {***iar/și**} și Maria mașină.
CORREL John has a house, {IAR/and} CORREL Mary a car
- (15) a. N-a venit Ion, {***iar/și**} nici Maria.
John didn't come, {IAR/and} neither Mary
 b. Ion nu are o sursă de venit, {***iar/și**} nici Maria un salariu stabil.
John doesn't have an income source, {IAR/and} neither Mary a regular salary

Regarding the placement of the additive adverbial *de asemenea* ('too'), preferences for the use of *și* or *iar* seem to be complementary:

- (16) a. A venit Ion, {??**iar/și**} de asemenea Maria.
John came, {IAR/and} also Mary
 b. A venit Ion, {**iar/?și**} Maria de asemenea.
John came, {IAR/and} Mary too

The associate of *de asemenea* is different in (16-a) and (16-b):

- In (16-a):

Associate: *Mary*

Presupposition: *Someone different from Mary came.*

- In (16-b):

Associate: *Mary came*

Presupposition: *Something different from the coming of Mary occurred.*

¹Romanian has two homonymous *și* items: the conjunction *și* and the adverbial *și*.

Intuition

- In (16-b), the post-positioned adverbial *de asemenea* takes a propositional interpretation of the second conjunct to build its presupposition, whereas in (16-a) and (14-a) the adverbial takes the NP it modifies.
- We argue that *iar* coordinates only clauses with propositional content.

2.2 Semantic constraints

- Traditional Romanian literature considers that *iar* coordinates only *sentences* with finite verbs.
- The heterogeneity of elliptical coordinations suggests that *iar* can coordinate fragments where we cannot reconstruct a finite verb [Bilbîie, 2009].
- Instead of a syntactic constraint, it is the semantic type of the *clause* that matters.
- *Iar* connects *clauses* whose semantic type is a subtype of *message*, cf. [Ginzburg and Sag, 2000]: propositional content (for declaratives), outcome (for imperatives)...

(17) Paul a mâncat un măr roșu, {***iar/și**} o pară verde.
*Paul ate a red apple, {*IAR/and} a green pear*

(18) Maria să citească mai multe cărți, **iar** Ion să fie mai ordonat!
Let Mary read more books, IAR John be more orderly!

3 Double Contrastiveness

- The conjuncts connected by *iar* must offer two contrastive pairs:

(19) Ioana a mâncat un măr, **iar** Ion o pară.
Iona ate an apple IAR Ion a pear

- A single contrastive pair is not enough, be it a subject (20-a) or an object (20-b):

(20) a. *Ioana citește, **iar** Maria.
Iona is reading, IAR Maria
b. *Ioana a mâncat un măr, **iar** o pară.
Iona ate an apple IAR a pear

- An element of the pair might be implicit. In (21), *apoi* contrasts with an implicit indication in the first conjunct :

(21) Ioana citește, **iar** apoi se delectează.
Ioana is-reading, IAR then is-enjoying herself

What is Contrastiveness?

- Two elements form a contrastive pair if they are both similar and dissimilar (e.g. [Zeevat, 2004])
 - They must be distinct, i.e. “*not be a part of the other*”
 - They must both be relevant in the appropriate context
- Two contrastive elements are assumed to belong to the same set of alternatives ([Repp, 2009], [Hartmann, 2000]).

Forcing contrast

- Contrastiveness can be forced by *iar* through exhaustification:

(22) Paul a răspuns la toate întrebările, **iar** Maria la câteva.
Paul answered all the questions, IAR Mary some of them
 a. \rightsquigarrow *Mary did not answer all the questions.*

- When the implicature is not licit, *iar* does not allow it:

(23) ?Paul a mâncat un măr, **iar** Maria un fruct.
Paul ate an apple, IAR Mary a fruit
 a. $\not\rightarrow$ *Mary did not eat an apple.*

Puzzling Fact: Predicate Negation

- In modern spoken Romanian, it appears that *dar* is preferred to *iar* to contrast a predicate and its negation:

(24) A: Do John and Mary like football?
 B: Lui Ion îi place fotbalul, {**dar/iar**} Mariei nu(-i place).
John likes football, {but/IAR} Marie doesn't

- In Russian the situation is opposite ([Jasinkaja and Zeevat, 2009a]):

(25) A: Do Oleg and Maria like football?

B: Oleg ljubit futbol, {??no/a} Maria ne ljubit.
Oleg likes football, {but/A} Marie doesn't

- A predicate and its negation form a proper contrastive pair.
- Russian *no* (=but) cannot mark this contrast and *a* is used instead, whereas *dar* can mark it and is preferred.
- *Hypothesis*: the difference is due to the semantics of the adversatives *dar* and *no*:
 - Russian *no* is restricted to specific *argumentative* cases
 - Romanian *dar* is close in meaning to adversatives in Romance languages (Sp. *pero*, Fr. *mais*...) and thus has a wider range of uses, some overlapping with the ones of the Russian *a*
 - The possible uses of *iar* are thus narrower than its Russian counterpart *a*, because of the range of *dar*

3.1 Proposed Analysis

Inspired by [Jasinkaja and Zeevat, 2009b], we use the following features to describe the semantics of conjunctions:

- **SINGLE**: each conjunct answers a single WH-variable

(26) A: Who came?
B: John came, and Mary did too.

- **WHETHER**: each conjunct answers a question with a polar variable

(27) A: Did John and Mary come?
B: John did, but Mary didn't.

- **WHY**: the conjuncts give arguments for a conclusion
- **2nd**: the second argument is conclusive

(28) A: Should we buy this ring?
B: It's nice but expensive.

- **CORRECTION**: the second argument corrects the first

(29) It's not a car but a Volkswagen.

Russian

| | | |
|----|-------------------------------|--|
| i | SINGLE | |
| a | | \neg SINGLE, \neg (WHY, WHETHER, 2 nd) |
| no | WHY, WHETHER, 2 nd | |

- (30) a. Idet sneg, **i** duet veter.
It's snowing and the wind is blowing
 b. Oleg ljubit futbol, {??**no/a**} Maria ne ljubit.
Oleg likes football, {but/A} Marie doesn't
 c. Eto kol'co krasivoe, {**no/*a/*i**} dorogoe
This ring is nice, but expensive

Spanish

| | | |
|------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| y | | \neg (WHETHER, 2 nd) |
| pero | WHETHER, 2 nd | \neg CORRECTION |
| sino | CORRECTION | |

- (31) a. Nieva **y/?pero** sopla el viento.
It's snowing and the wind is blowing
 b. A Nicolau le gusta el football, **y/pero** a Maricela no.
Nicolau likes football, and/but Maricela doesn't
 c. Este anillo es bonito, **pero** es caro.
This ring is nice, but expensive
 d. Nicolau no esta en Estrasburgo **sino/*pero/*y** en Tolosa.
Nicolau is not in Strasbourg, but in Toulouse

Romanian

| | | |
|-----|--------------------------|--|
| și | SINGLE | |
| iar | | \neg SINGLE, \neg CORRECTION, \neg (WHETHER, 2 nd) |
| dar | WHETHER, 2 nd | \neg CORRECTION |
| ci | CORRECTION | |

- *dar* gets the same restrictions as Romance adversatives
- therefore *iar* gets the further restriction \neg (WHETHER, 2nd)

4 Evidence from elliptical coordinations

Gapping and *iar*

Iar is the most used conjunction in gapping constructions (19). Why?

- *Iar* is compatible with the general semantic constraint required in gapping: remnants (i.e. the remaining overt material in the second conjunct) and correlates (i.e. the corresponding constituents in the first conjunct) together must be *contrast pairs* ([Hartmann, 2000], [Repp, 2009])
- There must be at least two contrast pairs.

Structural parallelism between remnants and correlates (i.e. syntactic symmetry) is assumed to play an important role in the analysis of gapping ([Culicover and Jackendoff, 2005]).

However, Romanian data show that there is no strict syntactic parallelism in gapping constructions. When these variations are permitted, we observe a strong preference for *iar* instead of *și*:

- with implicit correlate in prodrop cases:

(32) Lunea merg la film, **iar** sora mea la muzeu.
On Mondays, [I] go to the movies, IAR my sister to the museum

- with variations on word-order:

(33) a. Dimineața spăl eu vesela, **iar** seara Ioana.
in the morning wash I the dishes, IAR in the evening Ioana
b. Dimineața spăl vesela eu, **iar** seara Ioana.
in the morning wash the dishes I, IAR in the evening Ioana
c. Dimineața eu spăl vesela, **iar** seara Ioana.
in the morning I wash the dishes, IAR in the evening Ioana
d. Eu spăl vesela dimineața, **iar** Ioana seara.
I wash the dishes in the morning, IAR Ioana in the evening
e. Eu spăl vesela dimineața, **iar** seara Ioana.
I wash the dishes in the morning, IAR in the evening Ioana

- to improve the processing of contrastive pairs which normally involve violation of [Kuno, 1976]’s constraints (Minimal Distance Principle, the Tendency for Subject-Predicate Interpretation, the Requirement for Simplex-Sentential Relationship):

- (34) a. Paul crede că Spania va câștiga meciul, **iar** Maria Portugalia.
Paul believes that Spain will win the match, IAR Mary Portugal
- b. #Paul crede că Spania va câștiga meciul, **și** Maria Portugalia.
Paul believes that Spain will win the match and Mary Portugal
Intended: *Paul believes that Spain will win the match, and Mary believes that Portugal will win the match.*

Coincidence of meaning: *iar* and gapping

- Previous claim: *iar* is \neg SINGLE, i.e. a *iar* coordination answers a double WH-question
- [Steedman, 1990]: a gapping coordination answers a double WH-question ('an open proposition')

Even the most basic gapped sentence like '*Fred ate bread and Harry, bananas*' is only really felicitous in contexts which support (or can accommodate) the presupposition that the topic under discussion is '*WHO ate WHAT*'. (p. 248)

- Gapping coordinations and *iar* coordinations select the same set of discourse relations: symmetric relations of the Resemblance type (e.g. Parallel and Contrast) [Kehler, 2002], [Hendriks, 2004].

Outlooks

- Characterize properly the semantic relation between the conjuncts coordinated by *iar*; is the notion of *event* relevant?
- Investigate the interplay between *iar* and scopal items such as negation, adverbials...
- Effects of some elliptical coordinations (ACC) and *iar* on definiteness:

- (35) a. Ion i-a dat o pară Danei, {**iar** / **și**} Mariei un măr.
Ion gave a pear to Dana, {IAR / and} to Mary an apple
- b. Ion i-a dat o pară Danei, {??**iar** / **și**} un măr Mariei.
Ion gave a pear to Dana, {IAR / and} an apple to Mary
- c. Ion i-a dat para Danei, {**iar** / **și**} mărul Mariei.
Ion gave the pear to Dana, {IAR / and} the apple to Mary

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