

*Khatia Buskivadze*

**THE PRAGMATIC AND GRAMMATICAL FUNCTIONS OF DMS IN AMERICAN  
AND GEORGIAN COMMENCEMENT SPEECHES**

**Abstract** – This paper investigates the use of discourse markers in two commencement speeches given by American and Georgian speakers from the perspective of Pragmatics. The study is specifically based on Fraser’s taxonomy of discourse markers according to their pragmatic and metalinguistic functions. This theoretical framework is concerned with language in use, giving more importance to the context than to the text of utterances. The authors attempt: (1) to look at which DMs (Discourse Markers) are used in particular discourse; (2) to provide a through explanation of addresser’s communicative intentions based on their choice of DMs; (3) to identify mainly functional (and linguistic) characteristics of English DMs in comparison to their selected Georgian equivalents. Findings of qualitative and quantitative analysis reveal some similarities and differences regarding the ratio of using each type of DMs.

Key words: commencement speech, pragmatic functions

**I. Introduction**

Discourse markers as a set of linguistic items functioning in the cognitive, social, psychological, interactional, expressive and textual domains have captured the attention of many researchers in Discourse Analysis, Pragmatics, Semantics and other various fields of studies. Consequently, DMs have been examined in a variety of languages and interactive context/genres: including English (Schiffrin, 1987; Fraser 1996, 1996; Redeker 1990, 1991, 2005; Brinton, 1996; Jucker and Ziv, 1998; Müller, 2005 and others), narrative (Norrick forthcoming; Koike 1996; Segal et al. 1991), political interviews (Wilson, 1993), Radio talk (Cotter, 1996), spoken English (Fung and Carter, 2007), television interviews (Verdonik, et al., 2008), President Obama’s political speeches (Ismail, 2012), speech and writing (Crible, Zufferey, 2015), speech act (Crible and Cuenca, 2017), TED Talks (Furko, 2019) as well as in a number of relatively similar interactive genres.

This paper aims to present particular DMs use, meaning and functions in the discourse of commencement speech. The selected speeches are not yet studied in terms of DMs, nevertheless, from the perspective of Fraser's framework of DMs taxonomy (1999).

Commencement speech belongs to the genre of commencement rhetoric and covers the following topics: (a) acknowledging the graduates and their achievements; (b) creating identification between the speaker and the graduates; (c) presenting the world and its challenges; (d) installing a sense of hope for the graduates' future (Gault, 2008: 44). Literature review reveals three main aspects of commencement speech: (1) commencement address: formal talk given to an audience (Bull, 2011:426); graduation is a formal occasion and 'overly chatty' language should be avoided by the speaker. 'Talk' represents text, text in context and non-verbal language ('body language'); (2) commencement addresser –the speaker who interacts with (3) commencement addressees – the audience. The communicators share 'mutual knowledge', 'the common ground' (Clark, 1992: 81) that is presented in the use of Pragmatic and Discourse Markers (PMs and DMs).

## **II Literature Review**

Discourse Markers are studied widely by a variety of scholars from diverse theoretical and practical perspectives. However, there are three basic frameworks - Discourse Coherence, Relevance Theory and Fraser's taxonomy of DMs in Pragmatics – investigating the practical usage of DMs from three different perspectives but eventually, they come to very similar conclusions. The first and the most detailed effort regarding DMs is that reported in Schiffrin's Coherence Theory (1987), which defines DMs as "sequentially-dependent units of discourse". The Author provides through linguistic and functional analysis of eleven common DMs (because and, but, now, I mean, oh, or, so, then, well, you know) from the perspective of Discourse Coherence<sup>1</sup>. Accordingly, these expressions are seen as serving an integrative function between different segments of discourse and contributing to the logical structure of language in use. Levinson does not suggest the name of the DMs but he emphasizes the function of the following expressions as "words and phrases in English, and no doubt most languages that indicate the relationship between an utterance and the prior discourse" (Levinson, 1983: 87-88). Following Schiffrin's methodological steps Redeker considers that DMs (she labels them 'discourse operators') enable "the contextual interpretation of the

---

<sup>1</sup> Discourse coherence is "constructed through relations between adjacent units in discourse (Schiffrin, 1987: 24)

utterance” (1991: 1164). She assumes ‘Discourse Operators’ to be less defined linguistic elements in the fields of Semantics and Pragmatics and makes a list of various “expressions whose scope does not exhaust the utterance” (Redeker, 1991: 68). Coherence theory looks at DMs as linguistic, paralinguistic or non-verbal units that signal the relations<sup>2</sup> between the different units of discourse. Thus, DMs permit interpretation of the context by five planes of talk, Schiffrin defines them as ‘contextual connectives’.

The second primary approach regarding DMs is developed within the Relevance Theory framework in Pragmatics. Relevance Theory is based on cognitive principles and Gricean maxims in conversations. The functionalists<sup>3</sup> (including Blakemore, 1988; Jucker, 1988; Helt and Foster-Cohen 1996; Unger 1996; Ariel 1998; Andersen 2001) treat DMs as a type of Gricean conversational implicature, that have solely procedural meaning and consist of instructions about how to manipulate the conceptual representation of the utterance (Blakemore, 1992). Similar to Shiffrin’s idea, the Relevance Theory suggests that the linguistic form of a sentence or an utterance (combining with DMs) might give rise to numerous possible interpretations. According to Blakemore DMs are the signals that guide the addressees to “encode instructions for processing procedural meaning” (1992: 150), in other words, addressee is to choose a context for an utterance so as to make the correct inferences about the addresser’s intentions. The study of DMs in Relevance theory is extensive and it covers the aspects of Pragmatic and Discourse Analysis. However, the downside of this framework is that it does not imply DMs function to connect different units of discourse.<sup>4</sup> Hence, both central approaches share the general functions<sup>5</sup> of DMs according to which DMs are used to initiate discourse; to shift topic in discourse; to preface response or a reaction; to serve as a filler; to mark foregrounded and backgrounded information. We will take a further look at several of the introduced functions in the empirical data analysis of the article.

### **III. The Framework of the Study – Fraser’s taxonomy of DMs**

Fraser approaches DMs from a grammar-pragmatic perspective and characterizes them as solely linguistic expressions. He broadly defines DMs as a type of pragmatic markers, “which [signals] a

---

<sup>2</sup> Schiffrin’s five planes of talk (1987)

<sup>3</sup> Formal (text linguistics) and functional (context, discourse analysis) approaches (Laura Alba-Juez, 2016: 2)

<sup>4</sup> Diana Blakemore, Cambridge, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Based on Brinton (1990: 47)

relation between the discourse segment, which hosts them and the prior discourse segment” (Fraser, 1987: 3). Fraser assumes ‘sentence meaning’ to be divided up into two separate and distinct parts: (1) propositional meaning (or content meaning), which “represents a state of the world the speaker wishes to bring to the addressee’s attention” and (2) non-propositional meaning (he explains as “everything else”), that can be conveyed by different types of signals, he labels as Pragmatic Markers (PMs).<sup>6</sup> According to Fraser DMs in contrast to other types of PMs do not contribute to the content meaning, but only to the procedural meaning of the sentence. He defines DMs as commentary pragmatic markers “which signals how the speaker intends the basic message that follows to relate to the prior discourse” (Fraser, 1990: 387). Thus, DMs contribute in the encoding of another message that comments on the basic message. A relationship between two discourse segments is procedural, not conceptual. Therefore, it provides the interpretation of these messages.

According to the relation between discourse segments (S1-DM+S2)<sup>7</sup> of the sentence, Fraser provides three classes of discourse markers: Contrastive Markers (CDMs) where SDM signals direct or indirect contrast between S1 and S2; Elaborative Markers (EDMs), where an EDM signals an elaboration in S2 to the information contained in S1; and Inferential Markers (IDMs), where IDM signals that S1 provides a basis for inferring S2. Fraser does not include a number of interjections and widely researched DMs (most importantly ‘like’ and ‘really’) in his classification. Moreover, he characterizes DMs as a linguistic item only in contrast to Schiffrin, who permits non-verbal DMs<sup>8</sup> in her taxonomy. Before introducing Fraser’s classification of DMs provided with definitions and examples we intend to summarize three necessary and sufficient conditions that a discourse marker must meet: (1) A DM is a lexical expression that excludes syntactic structures and prosodic features (stress, pauses, intonation, non-verbal expressions); (2) A DM must occur as a part of 2<sup>nd</sup> discourse segment (S2) in the sentence<sup>9</sup>; (3) A DM does not contribute to the semantic meaning of the sentence/utterance but signals a specific semantic relation which holds between the interpretation of two Illocutionary Act<sup>10</sup> segments S1 and S2 (Fraser, 2009). According to their pragmatic functions, Fraser distinguishes the following classes of DMs (Table 1.):

---

<sup>6</sup> Pragmatic Markers, Bruce Fraser, 1990, 1996

<sup>7</sup> Fraser’s canonical form which implies Segment 1 and Discourse Marker+ Segment 2 (Fraser, 2009)

<sup>8</sup> Non-verbal cues for discourse structure (e.g. hand gestures, eye gaze, head nods)

<sup>9</sup> According to Fraser, most DMs occur in the initial position of S2, but there are some DMs occur in medial or final positions of S2 (such as however, but, therefore, etc.)

<sup>10</sup> Illocutionary meaning – a particular intention of the speaker in making the utterance (Austin, 1962)

DMs	Definition	Examples
<p style="text-align: center;">Contrastive Discourse Markers (CDMs)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Signal that the explicit interpretation of S2 contrasts with an interpretation of S2</p>	<p><b>but</b>, alternatively, although, contrariwise, contrary to expectations, conversely, despite, even so, however, in spite of, in comparison, in contrast, instead of, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, on the other hand, on the contrary, rather, regardless, still, though, whereas, yet</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Elaborative Discourse Markers (EDMs)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Signal an elaboration in S2 to the information given in S1</p>	<p><b>and</b>, above all, after all, also, alternatively, analogously, besides, by the same token, correspondingly, equally, for example, for instance, further (more), in addition, in other words, in particular, likewise, more accurately, more importantly, more precisely, more to the point, moreover, on that basis, on top of it all, or, otherwise, rather, similarly</p>

Inferential Discourse Markers (IDMs)	Signal that S1 provides bases for inferring S2	<b>So</b> , all things considered, as a conclusion, as a consequence, as a result, because (of), consequently, for (this/that) reason, hence, it follows that, accordingly, in (that/any) case, on (this/that) condition, on these/those grounds, then, therefore, thus
---	---	---

Table 1. Fraser’s taxonomy of DMs according to their functions (2009)

Fraser outlines the most common DMs in each class that are given in bold in Table 2- and, but, so. He is interested in these linguistic items functioning as DMs in the sentence and excludes their homonyms having variety of semantic meanings even though they are widely used in the text: “when an expression functions as discourse marker that is its exclusive function in the sentence” (Fraser, 1990) To include Fraser’s approach to DMs in one sentence, it could be the following: pragmatic theory of meaning applied within and across sentences.

#### **IV. Methodology**

##### **Materials**

The study considers commencement speech to be a social and discursive interaction, where two sides, addresser and addressee, use language for different communicative purposes, including conceptual and procedural meanings of the sentence. We realize that commencement speeches are primarily pre-prepared and rehearsed form of conversation, however, it does not disturb speakers to use them while making public speeches as such linguistic items create a naturalistic conversational effect and lead to an easy flow of the speech.

The data for this study were collected from two commencement speeches given by Hilary Clinton at Yale University (2018) and Davit Gogichaishvili in Ivane Javakhisvhili Tbilisi State University (2017). Yale University is the third-oldest universities in the United States (established in 1701) that produced publicly respected alumni including George H.W. Bush, George W. Bush, Bill and Hilary Clinton and many others. Ivane Javakhisvhili Tbilisi State University (established in 1918) is the oldest university in Georgia as well as in the Caucasus region. The alumni of TSU, including three out of five democratically elected presidents of Georgia, are distinguished

professionals in their respective fields. Both Alumni speakers, whose speeches are discussed in the article, follow the received structure of commencement speeches and include the main three aspects of graduation speech explained in the introduction of our paper. Frequently they do not read the text, but give oral presentation, responding to the audience reaction.

### **Research Methods and Analysis Procedure**

The study presents quantitative and qualitative analyses of the functional use of DMs in selected speeches based on Fraser's pragmatic taxonomy of discourse markers. The full texts of the speeches were analyzed in terms of the actual occurrences of DMs (not their homonymous language items) and later the percentage of their occurrence was determined in order to verify the most frequently used DMs in American and Georgian Speeches. Afterwards, we use pragmatic and discourse analysis (considering social and interpersonal aspects of conversations) to clarify the functional use of some of the commonly used discourse markers in our target speeches and finally, to capture and identify mainly functional characteristics of English DMs in comparison to their Georgian equivalents chosen by the authors.

## **V. The Results of the Study**

The pragmatic analysis of discourse markers according to Fraser's DMs taxonomy revealed the excessive use of the particular contrastive, elaborative and inferential discourse markers *but*, *and*, *so* and their Georgian equivalents. This article discusses the pragmatic functions of the chosen discourse markers as well as their combinations with other DMs found in the selected American and Georgian commencement speeches.

### **i. The pragmatic functions of But/მაგრამ**

*But* mainly signals the semantic relationship Contrast.<sup>11</sup> However, it also appears to have several pragmatic functions that enable the interpretation of the utterances which host the discourse marker *but*. Fraser proposed *but* to be contrastive discourse marker (CDM) only as he argues that each DM

---

<sup>11</sup> Fraser (2009), Blakemore makes the same claim using the term "contradiction", "semantic contrast" and also "denial expectation."

presents only one class in DMs taxonomy.<sup>12</sup> As a DM, *but* connects the preceding (S1) and succeeding (S2) segments of discourse, therefore, that there is a relevant contrast to be found between the segments. The opposition *but* expresses is not always direct (explicit), but indirect (implicit) as well, it could be interpreted through the context.

I classified the instances in terms of the functional use of CDM *but* in them (all examples are from the selected American and Georgian speeches of this study):

- 1) Direct contrast<sup>13</sup> - the opposition between discourse segments (S1 and S2) are stated directly; i.e. explicit opposition:
  - a) Democratic resilience starts with standing up for truth... not just in the classroom and on campus, *but* every day in our lives.
  - b) თითქოს არ ისმენ არაფერს, მაგრამ ყველაფერი გესმინება.

(1a) the idea stated in S2 opposes the idea given in S1. The contrast is direct, explicit and there is no need for interpretation. (1c) Sometimes it occurs that both discourse segments contain one member in the same syntactic functional location (in this case nothing (S1) –everything (S2), don't listen (S1) – listen (S2))

- 2) Indirect contrast- at least one of the discourse segments is implied; i.e. the implicit meaning of one segment is in contrast to the meaning of another segment:
  - a) So yes, there are challenging times for America, *but* we come through challenging times before;
  - b) I was like who is this person *but*, you know he kept looking at me and I kept looking back (Hilary Clinton on Bill Clinton)
  - c) სამსახურში კი დავდივარ, მაგრამ, აი, როდის მოვა 6 საათი რომ სახლში წავიდე.

(2a) S2 is an implication and it is interpreted as “we are able to cope with these challenges as/like we did before”; (2b) both discourse segments are implications, they do not directly express the actual meanings that are in contrast; Hilary Clinton’s communicative intentions could be interpreted as following: S1 “I was like who is this person”- she did not like Bill Clinton at first but S2 “he kept looking at me and I kept looking back” – he started to grow on her; (2c) S2 is an

---

<sup>12</sup> But one DM might have more than one sub function of its pragmatic functional class.

<sup>13</sup> “Direct” and “indirect” contrasts; Fraser, International Review of Pragmatics 1 (2009) 308-309



implication “I am waiting for 6 o’clock to go home” – someone does not like their job, however/but they work (S1).

3) Violation of expectation- S2 is to be unexpected for S1. The idea generated by S1 is unexpectedly violated/rejected by S2:

- a) It is not easy to make back into the fight every day *but* we are doing it;
- b) როცა ვამბობ წარმატებას, თითქოს ყველამ იცის ეს რა არის, მაგრამ, მე მინდა, სხვა კუთხით დავფიქრდეთ.

(3a) the result does not meet the expectation. S1 underlines that the fight was difficult/not easy but/however they managed to win it. (3b) the speaker does not speak about the “success” everyone knows and expects to be discussed, but something else.

4) Indirect violation of expectation- similar to indirect contrast, implicit meaning (the idea that is not directly stated) violates the explicit meaning of S1:

- a) This may be hard for a group of Yale (university) soon-to-be graduates to accept (S1), *but*, yes, you will make mistakes in life, you will even fail (S2).
- b) შესაძლოა, ცოტა უცნაურად მოგეჩვენოთ, მაგრამ, პირველ რიგში. მინდა გისურვოთ წარუმატებლობაც და მარცხიც.

(4a) Hilary Clinton addresses Yale graduates that even though they are strong competitors (because they graduated from Yale), but still there will be plenty of unexpected failures and disappointment. In this instance, S1 is an implication. Overall, the sentence is an example of an unexpected violation of the idea expressed in a preceding segment of discourse. (4b) S2 indirectly expresses the kind wish of the speaker (Davit Gogichaishvili) toward TSU graduates to gain success in their lives.

5) Correction- S2 corrects/qualifies the idea stated in S1:

- a) I know we don’t always think of politics and empathy as going hand-in-hand *but* they can and more that they must;
- b) And now you are ready to take on your next adventure *but* maybe some of you are reluctant to leave;
- c) ყველა შემთხვევაში არა, მაგრამ ძირითადად...

- d) მინდა, გისურვოთ კარგი სამსახური, მაგრამ არ მინდა გისურვოთ მხოლოდ კარგი სამსახური.

Similar to contrast and violation of expectations this function of *but* (correction) can be explicit or implicit. The instances (5a, 5c) present direct correction - S1 (incorrect), S2 (correct), whereas other examples involve implicit meanings: (5b) “but some of them are reluctant to leave” could be interpreted because they leave Yale, but/however they are not ready for it; (5d) “*but* not only a good job” implies that only a good job does not bring happiness to the graduates.

6) Qualification – *but* as a qualifier:

- a) Today as a person I am OK, *but* as an American I am concerned;
- b) And I say this not as a democrat who lost an election *but* as an American afraid of losing a country;
- c) Personal resilience is important *but* it is not the only form of resilience we need right now;
- d) ის ამ რადიოდი ტელევიზიას გულისხმობდა, *მაგრამ* ეს როგორი წარმოსადგენი იყო მაშინ, 90იან წლებში.

All instances given in this functional category provides the same contrastive relationship between discourse segments. S2 defines and qualifies the idea expressed in S1, makes it more specific and understandable compared to the preceding segment: (6a) not a person, but American; (6b) not as a democrat but American; (6c) this is important, but not only this; (6d) qualifies inventing TV as unbelievable/unimaginable.

*But*<sup>14</sup> also implies other pragmatic functions that do not express contrastive relationships between discourse segments; It could be used as a/an:

7) Opener – to innovative a new narrative:

- a) ...well, I was shocked (long pause) *But* over the years Yale has been a home away from home for me, a place I returned to time and again...
- b) ახლა არ გთავაზობთ მედიტაციას, *მაგრამ* გთავაზობთ, რომ ჩვენი ტვინი ხომ ყოველთვის დაგვაფიქრებს ან წარსულზე ან მომავალზე.

---

<sup>14</sup> Non-contrastive discourse marker

Opening a new narrative, filling the pauses or turn-taking are the main, common functions of nearly all discourse markers, *but* is not an exception. It can be used as an opener by the speaker or a listener. Since commencement speech does not include turn-taking, we look at the instances where the speaker uses *but* to introduce new topic/idea: (7a) personal experience as a Yale graduate; (7b) brain functioning.

8) Topic/focus changer:

- a) Thank you everyone joining us by live stream from around campus *but* most of all, congratulations to class of 2018;
- b) I have a very dedicated campaign intern here graduating David Shimer the class of 2018, *but* I have to confess of all the formative experiences I had at Yale, Perhaps, none was more significant the day during my second year ... I saw a handsome guy (Bill Clinton);

*But* as a topic changer discourse marker is more noticeable in English speech. I could not capture it in the Georgian commencement speech, the reason could be the usage of another discourse markers<sup>15</sup> to imply this function “ასევე- also”, “ასე რომ - so”

## ii. The pragmatic functions of *and/და*

*And* is an elaborative discourse marker (EDM) that signals elaboration between two discourse segments. *And* frequently occurs in combination with inferential discourse markers, for instance, *and so, and then, and because* and implies several types of pragmatic functions. As an EDM *and* takes an initial position of S2 that can be presented by two canonical forms S1.DM +S2 (S1 and S2 are two independent clauses) or S1, DM+S2<sup>16</sup> (S1 and S2 are two sequences of the discourse). Pragmatic analysis of Georgian and American commencement speeches revealed the following functions of EDM *and/და* [da]:

9) Focus maker – the speaker focuses on one particular topic and outlines its importance:

- a) Sorry, Franklin and Paulie Marie heard you at a great first year *and (now)* I am honored that this class invited me to be your speaker.
- b) გილოცავთ უნივერსიტეტის დამთავრებას და გისურვებთ წარმატებებს... და ახლა მინდა, შევეცადო, ეს თითქოს და ბანალური ფრაზა გადავაქციო არაბანალურად.

---

<sup>15</sup> Different functional class in Fraser’s taxonomy (elaborative and inferential DMs)

<sup>16</sup> B.Fraser, Journal of Pragmatics 31 (1999), 939

- c) ყველა ჩვენგანს გვაქვს „წარმატების“ ინდივიდუალური განმარტება, და ამიტომ მე მინდა, წარმოგიდგინოთ ამ სიტყვის სამი გაგება.

(9a,b) compound discourse marker – and now, და ახლა - grabs the attention of the listener and makes them concentrate on the forthcoming message/discourse segment. (9c) In Georgian და ამიტომ “and because” is fairly common, which aims to give the reason for the idea stated in S1.

10) Adding more details/items to the provided information. When the speaker adds something to what they just said, develops the current topic:

- a) I was leaning toward Yale anyway but that pretty much sealed the deal **and** when I came to Yale I was one of 27 women out of 235 Law students.
- b) It was the first year women were admitted to the college **and** as that first class of women prepared to graduate four years later.
- c) დაგავწყვიტე ჩემი გამოსვლა დღეს იყოს ბანალური, არაფრით გამორჩეული და სწორედ ამით იყოს გამორჩეული სხვა გამოსვლებისაგან.

(10a) Hilary Clinton intends to provide further details on her enrolment at Yale. (10b) She discusses the changes that happened regarding gender equality and gives some statistics. In both instances, *and* gives more depths to the current, introduced topic. (10c) S2 clarifies and explains the idea given in S1, provides further argumentation.

11) Elaborates topic. It expresses the speaker’s attitude as a personal comment:

- a) I said to my friend who is that **and** she said well that’s Bill Clinton he’s from Arkansas **and** that’s all he ever talks about...
- b) **And** I was like who is this person.

In all instances *and* is used as an EDM that mainly elaborates discourse segments. (11a) It presents the comments the speaker (Hilary Clinton) made to the introduced topic, moreover, shows the speaker’s personal attitudes toward something/someone (Bill Clinton) (11b).

12) Fills the gap and spaces in conversation as many other DMs:

- a) The school has been responsible for some of my treasured friends and colleagues people like Jake Sullivan and Harold Koh **and** I watched some of you grow up like Rebecca Shaw who is graduating today...

- b) **And** you will hear from me shortly **and** I've been honored to serve over the last year two working with some of the Yale Law school faculty.
- c) წარმატებული ხარ მაშინ როცა, იმას აკეთებ, რაც გულით გინდა და, შესაბამისად, დრო ისე გადის, რომ ვერც კი გრძნობ ... (პაუზა) ... და მესამე გაგება წარმატების, რაც მინდა, გაგიზიაროთ...

(12a) the first *and* is a conjunction that simply unites the items. The second *and* (EDM) elaborates the discourse segments and presents the speaker's comment. (12b) I suppose both *and* to be gap fillers as they appear into conversation after pauses. Hilary stops briefly to listen to the ovations/applauses of the audience and then breaks the pause. (12c) And (და) is not a conjunction that simply connects two items but a discourse marker that fills the pause between discourse segments and prevents hesitation.

### iii. The pragmatic functions of so and its Georgian equivalents

Discourse marker so functions differently in the sentence compared with its homonyms. The most common functions of so as a DM are the following:

13) Marking result or consequences - So is syntactically and semantically optional in the sentence and does not change the propositional meaning of the discourse segments. So might mark a fact-based or a knowledge-based inference in the sentence (Schiffrin, 1987:202) but it's sometimes hard to distinguish them. In the following instances So clearly marks an interference:

- a) **So**, yes, there are challenging times for America.
- b) **So**, yes, we need to pace ourselves but also lean on each other.
- c) ესე იგი თუ შეგიძლია თავი იგრძნო ბედნიერად ახლა და აქ, ესე იგი შენი პოტენციური წარმატების ალბათობა 57%-ით იზრდება.

(13a,b) Hilary Clinton provides the audience with her knowledge-based inference. She helps the hearers arrive at her interpretation of the idea/ her suggested consequences. However, it might be simply marking the speaker's attitude toward the issue. (13c) The speaker discusses the survey made about the meaning of success. So is marking both result and consequence in this sentence.

14) Marking the main idea – the spoken discourse can sometimes be chaotic without using appropriate discourse markers as the speakers frequently shift from one topic to another. Accordingly, *So* is used as a connector to stay on track of the main idea:

- a) **So** how do we build democratic resilience?
- b) **მოკლედ**, წარმატების მესამე გაგება არის შემდეგი...ეს არის, **მოკლედ**, წარმატების სამი გაგება

(14a) The speaker intends to cut it short and move to the mainline of the speech. I suppose, *So* can be used as a focus marker as well. Besides the discourse marker *So*, Hilary Clinton uses the question in order to emphasize the problem connected to democratic resilience in the country. The Georgian equivalent of *So* might be lexicalized DM **მოკლედ** (14b) which also aims to provide a proper “coming back” to the main line.

15) Concluding/ summarizing – *So* provides the logical conclusion of the ideas stated before by the speaker. It can be used to introduce the same idea in other words (paraphrasis) or the assumption made after discussion:

- a) We are failing our children, **so** enough is enough, we need to come together.
- b) **მოკლედ**, მინდა, ისეთი წარმატება გისურვოთ რომლის წარმოდგენაც დღეს შეიძლება წარმოუდგენელი იყოს.

(15a) *So* implies different pragmatic functions: summarizing the points discussed, making a brief conclusion, suggesting the author’s interpretation of the dilemma. A similar pragmatic meaning is provided by using a lexical item “**მოკლედ**” in the content of spoken Georgian. (15b) the adverb of manner “**მოკლედ**” outlines the completion of the topic and sums up previously uttered prepositions.

Inferential discourse marker *So* provides a smooth transfer from one discourse segment to another with the implication of diverse pragmatic functions influenced by the speaker’s intentions. In English conversational discourse analysis *So* also hints at the turn-taking, the process starting and finishing a turn in an interaction.

## **VI. Conclusion**

The empirical study (the case of two randomly chosen speeches of American and Georgian speakers) revealed the similarity of the syntactic and linguistic characteristics of the DMs in both languages. They fairly comply with the syntactic patterns S1,DM+S2, S1.DM+S2 suggested by Bruce Fraser. DMs deliver the procedural meaning only and do not invest in the semantic meanings of the utterances that host them. The grammar-pragmatic analysis of selected discourse markers revealed the various correlations between preceding and succeeding discourse segments. DMs *but/მაგრამ*, *and/და*, *so/სე რომ* constitute distinct pragmatic categories – contrastive, elaborative and inferential types of DMs and accordingly, they imply dissimilar pragmatic functions as following:

*But/მაგრამ*– direct contrast, indirect contrast, violation of expectation, indirect violation of expectation, correction, qualification, opener, topic/focus changer.

*And/და* – focus marker, adding more details to the provided information, elaborative marker between discourse segments, gap/pause filler.

*So/სე რომ* – result and consequence marker, main idea marker, summarizing/rewording/ giving an example, gap/pause filler.

**References:**

1. Alba-Juez L., Lachlan Mackenzie J. (2016). Discourse Analysis and Pragmatics, formal and functional approaches
2. Austin (1962). Speech Acts Theory, Illocutionary Act
3. Asatiani R., Janelidze T. (2009) Functional Analysis of Conjunctions Showing an Informational Contrast in Georgian, Scientific journal of Semiotics, Tbilisi
4. Blakemore D. (1987). Understanding utterances: An introduction to pragmatics. Oxford: Blackmore
5. Blakemore D. (2002). Relevance and Linguistic Meaning: The Semantics and Pragmatics of Discourse Markers. Cambridge: CUP
6. Brinton L. (1996). Pragmatic Markers in English: Grammaticalization and Discourse Functions
7. Brinton L. (2008). The Comment Clause in English Syntactic Origins and Pragmatic Developments (Studies in English Language). Cambridge: CUP
8. Clark H. (1992). Definite Reference and Mutual Knowledge: Process Models of Common Ground in Comprehension, 81.
9. Coulthard M. and Montgomery M. (1981) Studies in Discourse Analysis
10. Crible L., Guenca M. (2017). Discourse markers in Speech: Characteristics and Challenges for corpus annotation
11. Fraser B. (1990). An approach to discourse markers. Journal of Pragmatics 383- 398
12. Fraser B. (1996). Pragmatic Markers. Pragmatics 167-190
13. Fraser B. (1999). What are discourse markers? Journal of Pragmatics, 931-950
14. Fraser B. (2009). An account of discourse markers, 293-320
15. Fraser B. (2015). The combining of discourse markers , Journal of Pragmatics, 318-340
16. Furko P., Crible L. (2019). The functions and translations of discourse markers in TED talks: A parallel corpus study of under specification in five languages.
17. Gault K. (2008). The development of a genre: commencement addresses, 46-54
18. Jucker Andreas H. (1993). The discourse marker *well*: A relevance theoretical account. Journal of Pragmatics 19, 435-452
19. Jucker Andreas H., Sara W. Smith (1996). Explicit and implicit ways of enhancing common ground in conversations. Pragmatics 6.1, 1-18



20. Jucker Andreas H., Yael Ziv (1998). Discourse Markers, Pragmatics & Beyond New Series, 57, John Benjamin's Publishing Company
21. Kvachadze L. (1977). Syntax of Contemporary Georgian, Tbilisi: Education.
22. Lenk U. (1998). Discourse Markers and Global Coherence in Conversation, Journal of Pragmatics 30, 245-257
23. Muller S. (2005). Discourse Markers in Native and Non-native English Discourse, the case of so, 61-96
24. Redeker G. (1991). Linguistic markers of discourse structure, Linguistics 29, 1139-1172)
25. Redeker G. (2000). Coherence and structure in text and discourse, John Benjamin's Publishing company
26. Ostman J. (1981). *You know: A Discourse-functional Approach*. (Pragmatics & Beyond) Amsterdam: John Benjamins
27. Shanidze A. (1973). The Basics of Georgian Grammar, Tbilisi
28. Schiffrin D. (1986). Functions of and in discourse, Journal of Pragmatics 10 (1), 41-66
29. Schiffrin D. (1987). Discourse markers Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
30. Schiffrin D. (1994). Approaches to discourse, Oxford: England: Blackwell
31. Schiffrin D. (2001). Discourse Markers: language, meaning, context, Handbook of discourse analysis 1. 54-75 Oxford: England: Blackwell
32. Schiffrin D., Tanel D., Hamilton H. (2015). The handbook of discourse analysis, John Wiley & Sons
33. Tree JF., Schrock JC. (1999). Discourse markers in spontaneous speech 40, 280-285
34. Verdonik D., Peterlin A. (2008) The impact of context on discourse marker use in two conversational genres, discourse studies, 759-775

**Selected Speeches for this study:**

- 1) Hillary Rodham Clinton at Yale University  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJFABByAtC4U&t=147s>
- 2) Davit Gogichaishvili at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFVFM8J\\_Ts](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFVFM8J_Ts)

**The official websites of the universities:**

- 1) Yale University: <https://www.yale.edu/>
- 2) Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University: <https://tsu.ge/>

∥

*Author's email: [khatia.buskivadze878@hum.tsu.edu.ge](mailto:khatia.buskivadze878@hum.tsu.edu.ge)*

***Author's biographical data***

*Khatia Buskivadze is a PhD student at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University researching Pragmatic and Grammatical functions of discourse markers in English and Georgian academic discourse. She is a CELTA and DELTA Modules 1-qualified teacher of EFL. She has been working as an invited English lecturer at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University (since 2018) and Ilia State University (since 2016).*