But and its Arabic Counterparts:

A Relevance Theoretic Account

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Author's Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed entirely by myself and been solely the result of my own work, and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, for any other degree or professional qualification.

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Abstract

This thesis investigates, within the framework of Relevance Theory (RT), the semantics and pragmatics of the discourse connective *but* in English and its counterparts in Modern Standard Arabic, namely *lākinna*, *lākin*, and *bal*. The study focuses mainly on Blakemore's (2002) relevance-theoretic account of *but* in which she argues that *but* encodes a procedural meaning that guides the hearer to interpret what follows as contradicting and eliminating an assumption. She claims that *but* encodes a unified meaning that accounts for its different uses of contrast, correction, denial of expectation and utterance- and discourse-initial use.

In this study, however, I highlight a number of gaps in Blakemore's analysis of *but* and argue that, although a unified account of *but* is desirable, it cannot be maintained. Hence, I argue that there are two different *buts* in English, each associated with a different meaning and a different syntactic distribution. The correction *but* seems to be available only when preceded by an explicit negation and followed by a constituent smaller than a full clause. On the other hand, a preceding negation is not a prerequisite for the denial *but* which allows its conjuncts to be full clauses or constituents smaller than a full clause.

I propose that *but* in English encodes two different procedures. The first procedure which is associated with the denial *but* constrains the inferential processes that result in the contradiction of a manifest assumption that cannot be relevant as an explicature. The other procedure which is associated with the correction *but* constrains the inferential processes involved in the interpretation of the second conjunct and the context for its interpretation as a replacement of an explicitly denied assumption. This analysis works for the Arabic counterparts of *but* as well. I show that both *lākin* and *lākinna* are the equivalents of denial *but*, whereas the equivalent of correction *but* is *bal* and *lākin* when preceded by negation and followed by a phrase.

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Transliteration

Consonants	Romanization	IPA symbols
ء, أ	ʾ	[ʔ]
ب	b	[b]
ت	t	[t]
ث	t̲	[θ]
ج	ǧ	[ʤ]
ح	ḥ	[ħ]
خ	ḫ	[x]
د	d	[d]
ذ	d̲	[ð]
ر	r	[r]
ز	z	[z]
س	s	[s]
ش	š	[ʃ]
ص	ṣ	[sˤ]
ض	ḍ	[dˤ]
ط	ṭ	[tˤ]
ظ	ẓ	[ðˤ]
ع	ʿ	[ʕ]
غ	ġ	[ɣ]
ف	f	[f]
ق	q	[q]
ك	k	[k]
ل	l	[l]
م	m	[m]
ن	n	[n]
ه	h	[h]
ة	a/at	[a/at]
و	w	[w]
ي	y	[j]

	Romanization	**IPA symbols**
Gemination		
ّ◌	consonant doubling	
Short vowels		
◌َ	a	[a]
◌ُ	u	[u]
◌ِ	i	[i]
Long vowels		
ا	ā	[aː]
◌ُو	ū	[uː]
◌ِي	ī	[iː]
Diphthongs		
◌َو	aw	[aʊ]
◌َيْ	ay	[aɪ]

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Abbreviations

1	First person
2	Second person
3	Third person
ACC	Accusative case
CLA	Classical Arabic
DUAL	Dual number
F	Feminine
GEN	Genitive case
IPFV	Imperfective
M	Masculine
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
NEG	Negative
NOM	Nominative case
NP	Noun phrase
OVS	Object Verb Subject order
PFV	Perfective
PL	Plural number
POSS	Possessive
PP	Prepositional phrase
PRO	Pronoun
RT	Relevance Theory
S	Sentence
SG	Singular
SVO	Subject Verb Object order
VOS	Verb Object Subject order
VSO	Verb Subject Object order
XP	A phrase

Typographical conventions

~~Strike through~~	ellipsis
[ ]	constituent
*	ungrammatical
?	unnatural

Dedication

To my parents and dearest son,

with love.

Chapter 1   Introduction

1.1   Background and overview

In most languages, there is a variety of lexical items whose function is to connect together successive utterances or discourse segments in various ways. Often, these expressions are referred to as discourse connectives (hereafter, DCs), such as these in italics in the following examples.

(1)   A: Mary got an A in Maths.
       B: *But* she did not prepare well.

(2)   I don't have any money; *therefore*, I won't be able to buy a new coat.

(3)   I would like to come with you; *however*, I have to finish my assignment.

Levinson (1983) looks at these expressions as a class that should be examined in its own right. He states that

> ... there are many words and phrases in English, and no doubt most languages, that indicate the relationship between an utterance and the prior discourse. Examples are utterance-initial usages of *but, therefore, in conclusion, to the contrary, still, however, anyway, well, besides, actually, all in all, so, after all,* and so on. It is generally conceded that such words have at least a component of meaning that resists truth-conditional treatment ... what they seem to do is indicate, often in very complex ways, just how the utterance that contains them is a response to, or a continuation of, some portion of the prior discourse.

<div align="right">(Levinson 1983: 87-88)</div>

In the passage above, Levinson highlights two central points: First, discourse connectives do not contribute to the truth conditions of the utterances in which they occur, and, second, they indicate a relationship between segments of discourse. Many proposals have been developed in the field of discourse connectives (e.g. Blakemore 2002; Iten 2005; Fraser 1999; and Shiffrin 1987, to mention a few), but most of these proposals do not provide a clear basis for what counts as a discourse connective; each approach lists different expressions. One notices a significant variation in what is considered a discourse connective among different accounts. For example, Fraser (1990) lists the following expressions as discourse connectives (or markers, as he calls them).

> consequently, also, above all, again, anyway, alright, alternatively, besides, conversely, in other words, in any event, meanwhile, more precisely, nevertheless, next, otherwise, similarly, or, and, equally, finally, in that case, in the meantime, incidentally, OK, listen, look, on the one hand, that said, to conclude, to return to my point, while I have you

Schiffrin (1987) gives the following list.

> oh, well, but, and, or, so, because, now, then, I mean, y'know, see, look, listen, here, there, why, gosh, boy, this is the point, what I mean is, anyway, whatever

The discrepancy is not only limited to what is considered a discourse connective; it is also found in the label under which these expressions are studied. The name that is given to these expressions varies considerably from one account to another. For example, these expressions are referred to as *discourse connectives* (Blakemore, 1987, 2002; Hall, 2007); *discourse markers* (Blakemore, 2002; Iten, 2000; Schiffrin, 1987; Fraser, 1999, 2006); *discourse particles* (Schourup, 1999; Abraham, 1991); *indicating devices* (Dascal

and Katriel, 1977); *pragmatic connectives* (van Dijk, 1979); *pragmatic markers* (Fraser, 1996); and *semantic conjuncts* (Quirk *et al.*, 1985), to name just a few.

As a group of expressions, the term discourse connectives encompasses different lexical elements that belong to different syntactic classes. They can be conjunctions (e.g. *but, and*) adverbs (e.g. *however, anyway,*) and prepositional phrases (*in spite of this, after all*). We can trace the importance of studying discourse connectives back to the early work of Halliday and Hasan (1976). Although Halliday and Hasan did not use the term discourse connectives *per se*, the elements that they list under the term *conjunctives* are very similar to the aforementioned expressions. The term I use in this thesis to refer to these expressions, however, is the one that has been used by Blakemore (1987), which is *discourse connectives*. In that regard, it should be noted that Blakemore (1992: 138-139) considers this label misleading. As will be shown later in this chapter, the fact that these expressions are referred to as 'connectives' does not necessarily entail that they are used to connect two segments of discourse. Making sense of discourse connectives requires an understanding of what discourse is, which I discuss below.

1.1.1   Discourse

The study of discourse is very wide and interdisciplinary since "it has its intellectual roots not only in linguistics, but in the social sciences and in philosophy" Schiffrin (1987: 2). Therefore, the view of what discourse is varies from one account to another. One view of discourse given by Stubbs (1983: 1) is that discourse is 'language above the sentence'. According to this definition, discourse is considered a level of language that is higher than the level of sentence. Along the same lines, Harris (1951) argues that

discourse is the next level in a hierarchy of morphemes, clauses and sentences, and that what distinguishes discourse, in particular, from a random sequence of sentences is the fact that discourse has structure. This view maps discourse to grammar. It considers the relation among sentences forming discourse very similar to that of words and clauses forming sentences.

The problem with this approach to discourse, however, lies in the fact that it considers sentences as abstract entities and sees discourse as sequence of such entities with structural properties. When people communicate, they do not always use full sentences, nor do they always mean what is literally encoded by the sentence. For example, many utterances may contain ellipses or may contain connectives in an utterance-initial position that are considered sentence-fragments, yet they are acceptable and meaningful. Consider the utterances in (4) and (5) below, which are acceptable utterances that can be perfectly understood when combined with appropriate context.

(4)   Once they call.
(5)   So you have been crying.

In view of that, Lyons (1977: 26) argues that "there is no simple relation of correspondence between utterances and sentences" since an utterance might comprise a single word, phrase, or sentence or might consist of a sequence of sentences. Therefore, it seems that discourse is better understood as "language in use", as is argued by Brown and Yule (1983). However, they argue that discourse should look into what speakers and hearers are doing by the use of linguistic forms. In other words, Brown and Yule look at discourse in terms of social behaviour and interaction achieved by 'language use'.

Relevance theory (see Sperber & Wilson, 1986), which is the theoretical framework adopted in this thesis, studies discourse within the study of human cognition, (Blakemore 2002: 155). Relevance theory embraces a pragmatic approach to discourse that is concerned with what is referred to in relevance theory terms as inferential pragmatic processing. It considers 'language use' not in terms of behaviours and functions, but in terms of the cognitive processes underling successful communication. In other words, relevance theory's main concern is the study of discourse understanding, in particular, as Blakemore (2001: 101) puts it, it studies "the mental representations and computations underlying utterance understanding."

1.1.2   Approaches to discourse connectives

According to those who view discourse as a structural entity, DCs are analysed in terms of indicating relations between discourse segments. For those who view discourse in terms of social interactions, DCs are analysed as marking relations between exchanges and acts (Blakemore 2002: 5). Relevance theory, however, analyses DCs in terms of their contribution to the inferential processes involved in utterance interpretation. In the following, I briefly discuss two important accounts to discourse connectives. These are the coherence-based account and the relevance-theoretic account. In the discussion, I highlight some of the major problems in the coherence-based account to discourse in general and to DCs in particular. Moreover, I show that the relevance-theoretic account of DCs that is concerned with discourse understanding is a better account to adopt.

1.1.2.1   The coherence-based account

Halliday and Hasan (1976: 1) argue that "[a] text is a unit of language in use. It is not grammatical unit. Like a clause or a sentence; and it is not defined by its size". By 'text', Halliday and Hasan are referring to discourse. They explain that what makes a text a semantically well-formed unit is *coherence*. They call the property that distinguishes a text from any other random collection of sentences a *texture*. This texture is created by the existence of cohesive ties or relations of meaning within the text. These relations are what make a text or discourse coherent. Accordingly, they identify five different semantic relations or cohesive ties that are linguistically encoded, which are: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction (or conjunctives as Halliday and Hasan call them) and lexical cohesion. The primary focus in this thesis is on *conjunctives*; a term that Halliday and Hasan use to describe discourse connectives. Halliday and Hasan (1976) classify conjunctives into the following categories: additive, adversative, causal, and temporal, as in (6a-d), respectively.

(6)   (a)   For all these years he was thinking of her. And he even did not
              know other girl.   (additive)

       (b)   John is young yet he is very depressed.   (adversative)

       (c)   Your eyes are very red, so you have been crying.   (causal)

       (d)   Then, as sun set, she went back home.   (temporal)

This classification seems to be general and broad as there could be other sub-classifications. It does not distinguish between connectives that have the same coherence relation but do not have the same exact meaning. For instance, expressions such as *therefore, so, hence* are described as having 'causal relations', and expressions

such as *however, but*, and *nevertheless* are classified as having 'adversative relations'. The problem is not with the classification itself but rather with the fact that this classification does not shed light on or differentiate between the different meanings of these expressions. It considers them to have identical meanings; thus, the coherence relationship encoded by any element of the category of adversative, such as *but*, will be identical to that of *however*. Let us consider Blackmore's (2002: 116) example in (7) below.

> (7)   [In response to: Have you got my article?]
>
> (a) Yes, but the last page is missing.
>
> (b) Yes. However, the last page is missing.
>
> (c) Yes. ? Nevertheless, the last page is missing.

Following Blakemore's example, the use of either *but* and *however* is acceptable, while the use of *nevertheless* is not. If all elements of a particular DCs category encode the same relation in discourse, the use of *nevertheless* should be acceptable in utterances such as (7) above, but this is not the case. Blass (1990) and Blakemore (2002) agree that a discourse connective might have more than one function, and that some of these functions, not all of them, are shared by other DCs. While *but, however*, and *nevertheless* seem to share the function of contradiction, *however* and *nevertheless* have different functions that are not encoded by *but,* (Blakemore 2002:128). Although these expressions share some functions, they cannot be used interchangeably in all contexts.

Another problem with the coherence-based account of discourse is that it cannot account for isolated utterances and discourse-initial utterances. For example, consider the utterance in (8).

(8)   No valid excuse for invalid ticket.

A coherence-based account of discourse does not provide an explanation for such utterances. Reading this utterance on a bus, one can think of an interpretation, such as, there is a fine or penalty for invalid tickets. To interpret the meaning of this utterance, it does not need to have a discourse relation with either a following or a preceding utterance. By the same token, discourse-initial use of connectives, such as in (9) below, cannot be explained by this approach.

(9)   [The speaker notices that his friend's eyes are red and puffy]

         So, you have been crying.

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), what makes discourse acceptable is the property of cohesion which is defined in terms of linguistically encoded relationships in discourse. However, in (9) above, *so* is not preceded by any other utterance. It is used in discourse-initial position. If DCs encode relations between segments of discourse, then the example in (9) is impossible as it cannot be linked to other discourse segment. Yet, it is perfectly acceptable. In fact, as is argued by Blakemore (1987: 110), the only way in which discourse-initial utterance may be understood is "in terms of the specific relationship it bears to information outside the text or discourse." Accordingly, it seems that the notion of cohesion is questionable.

1.1.2.2   Discourse connectives and relevance

From a relevance-theoretic perspective, the main criticism of coherence-based accounts of discourse is that our understanding of utterances does not depend on the organization of the text. Rather, it is the other way round. Our intuitions about the organization of discourse are a consequence of our understanding. In other words, coherence is not a prerequisite for understanding utterances; it is a result of successful communication, (Blakemore 2002: 157-8). Thus, instead of being concerned with the acceptability of discourse, the focus should be shifted on to the understanding of discourse. According to relevance theory, we can have a better understanding of discourse connectives if we analyse them in terms of the role they play in the cognitive processes involved in utterance interpretation, i.e. in terms of their contribution to relevance.

Blakemore (1987, 2002), Blass (1990), Iten (1998) including others study discourse connectives from a relevance-theoretic point of view. They argue that discourse connectives encode procedural meanings that constrain the inferential part of the interpretation of the utterances in which they occur. Such expressions guide the hearer to reach the interpretation of an utterance. They are linguistic devices used to maximize contextual effects and minimise processing effort in assessing the relevance of a given utterance. A detailed discussion of relevance theory and its view of DCs follow in Chapter (2).

1.2   Aims of the study

This study is concerned with the analysis of the English discourse connective *but* and its Arabic counterparts: *lākinna*, *lākin*, and *bal*, within the framework of relevance theory. Throughout the discussion, I draw especially on the relevance-theoretic account of Blakemore (2002) in an attempt to address, in particular, the correction use of *but*. Hence, the primary objective is to use syntactic evidence to shed more light on the correction. Furthermore, the aim is also to provide a relevance-theoretic account of the Arabic discourse connectives aforementioned, drawing on any similarities or differences between these connectives and the English *but*.

1.3   Significance of the study

Anscombre and Ducrot (1977) argue that *but* in English is ambiguous. They identify important syntactic differences between two *buts*: the denial *but* and the correction *but*. However, Blakemore (2002) claims that *but* in English encodes a single meaning that accounts for all its different uses, including the correction use. This research study investigates in-depth the syntactic differences between the two uses of *but* by examining the underlying structure of the hosting utterance of each *but*. It also identifies substantial issues that Blakemore did not address in her account. Hence, the significance of this study is to bridge the gap between the syntactic differences of the two *buts* and the relevance-theoretic account of *but*. With this in mind, I propose a renewed relevance-theoretic account in which I argue that *but* encodes two different procedures. Furthermore, this study proposes a relevance-theoretic account of the Arabic counterparts of *but* and discusses their syntactic distributions.

1.4   Thesis outline

This thesis comprises seven chapters in total, including the introduction (this chapter) and the conclusion chapter.

Chapter 2 introduces the theoretical framework of relevance theory, which is considered a development of Grice's theory of meaning—though it significantly differs from it. In this chapter, I show that relevance theory is a cognitive approach to communication, which rejects the traditional view that semantics is about truth conditional meaning and pragmatics is about non-truth conditional meaning. This is followed by a discussion of the inferential model of communication that the theory adopts, in which utterance interpretation is considered to involve inferential processes to which the linguistically encoded meaning serves as input. Furthermore, the chapter discusses two important distinctions made within the theory: the explicature/implicature distinction and the procedural/conceptual distinction. These two distinctions are of high importance to the study and the analysis of discourse connectives in the next chapters.

Chapter 3 provides a review of the main uses of *but* that have been identified in the literature and discusses a number of accounts which *but* has received. These include the two relevance-theoretic accounts of Blakemore (2002) and Iten (2005), and the accounts of Anscombre & Ducrot (1977) and Foolen (1991).

Chapter 4 provides the main discussion of *but* in the thesis. It discusses in depth the syntactic structures of *but* utterances and the different meanings associated with these structures. Furthermore, it highlights important differences between the denial *but* and

the correction *but* in terms of context and asymmetry of conjuncts. Most importantly, it introduces a new RT account of *but* which maintains that *but* encodes two distinct procedures.

Chapter 5 provides the foundation for the discussion of Arabic data in Chapter (6). The aim is to present some of the syntactic features of Modern Standard Arabic, mainly in respect of case assignment and word order. The importance of the discussion in this chapter is related to the fact that it is not possible to address the meaning of discourse connectives in Arabic without being reasonably clear about the kinds of the syntactic structure in which these connectives appear.

Chapter 6 focuses on the syntax and semantics of the Arabic counterparts of *but*, which are: *lākinna*, *lākin*, and *bal.* In this chapter, I provide a detailed discussion of their uses, semantics and their syntactic distributions which interact with their semantics. Furthermore, I propose an RT account for these connectives.

Chapter 7 concludes the study with a summary of the research findings and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2   Relevance Theory

2.1   Introduction

This chapter introduces the pragmatic framework of relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986; 1995) (henceforth RT), and shows how this theory provides a better account for utterance interpretation than truth-conditional approaches, as it can account for all linguistic expressions regardless of their contributions to the truth-conditionality of the hosting utterance.

As a cognitive theory of communication, utterance interpretation in RT is based on two main theoretical principles: the cognitive principle of relevance and the communicative principle of relevance. In RT, it is argued that the interpretation of linguistic communication involves inferential processes in a way similar to the processing of non-linguistic stimuli. These inferential processes contribute to the recovery of the speaker's meaning whether at the explicit or the implicit level. I will discuss how RT's view of utterance interpretation has led to a distinction between two ways in which assumptions are communicated; that is as explicature and implicature. In our discussion, we will see how this distinction paved the way to investigate the contribution of the linguistically encoded constituents in deriving not only explicature, but implicature as well. The different roles that linguistically encoded constituents play on both sides of communication have been captured, in RT's terms, by the distinction between procedural and conceptual encoded meaning. This distinction appears to be very important in relation to an account of discourse connectives.

This chapter is structured as follows. First, I briefly discuss the grounds that RT shares with Grice's (1967) theory of meaning and how RT differs from it. Second, I discuss truth-based approaches to linguistic semantics, highlighting the problems of such approaches to speaker's meaning and showing how and why RT rejects these approaches. Third, I present relevance theory and discuss the code model of communication and the alternative inferential model which RT adopts. Then, I discuss the kind of communication that RT recognizes as triggering an assumption of optimal relevance; that is, ostensive communication. Next, I discuss the definition of both the cognitive and the communicative principles of relevance and how they interact in utterance interpretation. Then, I proceed to discuss two important distinctions in RT: the explicature/implicature distinction and the conceptual/procedural one. I will show how these distinctions are important for an account of discourse connectives. Finally, a summary of the main points of the chapter follows.

2.2   Background and overview

Relevance theory is considered a development of Grice's theory of meaning. It shares some central claims with Grice's theory. The most important claim that RT shares with Grice is that human communication is about the expression and recognition of intention. However, it differs significantly from his theory in many aspects. As we will see, Wilson and Sperber raised a number of issues that seem to be unsatisfactory in Grice's theory of meaning. Grice (1967: 45) argues that when people communicate they abide by what he calls *the co-operative principle of communication*, which says:

> Make your contribution such as required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.

Grice explains that there are four maxims related to this principle by which communicators abide. These are the maxims of quality, quantity, manner, and relevance. Hence, when interpreting the speaker's meaning, the hearer chooses an interpretation that meets the expectations in the cooperative principle and its maxims. However, for RT, as will be discussed in detail in section (2.7), communication is grounded in cognition and it is guided by the principle of relevance, which is defined in terms of the positive cognitive effects an utterance achieves and the processing efforts it takes to achieve these effects.

Furthermore, according to Grice, the exploitation of one or more of these maxims leads to an implicit meaning that is pragmatically inferred, which Grice refers to as *conversational implicature*. Accordingly, Grice distinguishes between two kinds of meaning: 'what is said' and 'what is implicated' arguing that pragmatics plays a key role in the derivation of the implicated meaning and that its role in the explicit meaning is limited to reference assignment and disambiguation. I will show how, in relevance theory, Grice's distinction of 'what is said' has been replaced by 'explicature'. Additionally, we will see, contrary to Grice, how pragmatic processes in RT play an important role in all aspects of communication; that is, implicatures and explicatures.

2.3   Truth conditional meaning and linguistic semantics

As a theory of pragmatics, RT has various implications for semantics. Before I discuss the main argument on which RT is based, it is essential to highlight the traditional

distinction made between semantics and pragmatics. Traditionally, the distinction between semantics and pragmatics is based on truth conditionality. That is, semantics is concerned with the study of truth conditional meaning whereas pragmatics is concerned with the study of non-truth conditional meaning, or as Gazdar (1979: 2) puts it:

Pragmatics = meaning minus truth conditions.

According to the truth-based approaches to linguistic meaning, e.g. Davidson (1967, 1984), it is claimed that the meaning of a sentence is reduced to its truth conditions. In other words, the meaning of a sentence is determined by the conditions of the world under which the sentence is judged either true or false; that is, the meanings of the words are analysed according to their contribution to the truth conditions of the sentences containing them, (Iten 2005: 4). For instance, according to truth-conditional semantics the utterance in (1) is true if and only if the Earth is round.

(1)   The Earth is round.

Determining the truth conditions of an utterance is rarely as simple and straightforward as in the previous example. For instance, cases of indexicality, such as the one in (2), and unarticulated constituents, as in (3), are among the issues which show that the linguistic content of an utterance alone is not sufficient to assign its truth conditions.

(2)   She invited him.

(3)   The food is too hot.

It is impossible to determine the truth conditions of (2) and (3) by relying only on the linguistically encoded meaning. To explain, we cannot decide if (2) is true or not

without knowing who *she* and *him* refer to. Similarly, we need to know what the food is too hot for in (3). However, in the following, we will see that these are not the only cases that seem problematic to a truth conditional theory of meaning. Another problem in truth conditional semantics lies in examples such as (4) below. All of the utterances in (4) have the same truth conditional meaning, as long as they refer to the same Kim and Lee and the same present time; however, these utterances slightly differ in meaning.

(4)   (a)   Kim likes Lee.

(b)   It's Kim that likes Lee

(c)   It's Lee that Kim likes.

Relevance theory rejects the idea that semantics is about truth conditions because seldom is the linguistically encoded meaning identical to the truth conditional meaning. Later in this chapter, I show how the linguistically encoded meaning of a sentence is a blueprint for a proposition, not a proposition in itself. That is to say, it furnishes the basis for deriving a proposition. In what follows, we see from RT's view of utterance interpretation that truth conditional meaning is not just a product of linguistic semantics but also involves a great deal of pragmatic processing. Hence, according to RT, sentences cannot be bearers of truth conditions; it is propositions that are truth conditional.

2.4   Relevance theory: cognition and communication

Relevance theory is a theory of communication that is rooted in an account of cognition. It aims at explaining how the hearer arrives at the speaker's intended meaning. Accordingly, in RT, it is argued that utterance interpretation involves cognitive

processes, in which utterances are considered linguistically-encoded inputs to inferential processes, which ultimately affect the cognitive environment of the hearer. Building on Grice's theory of speaker's meaning, Relevance theory has been developed in several stages by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, (see Wilson and Sperber 1981; Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995, 1998; Wilson and Sperber 2002, 2004).

Within RT, there is an important distinction, which is also shared by other approaches, between two modes of communication: the coded and the inferred, (Clark 2013: 3). This distinction has been developed since Grice's theory of meaning, as an important claim of his theory is that human communication is about the expression and recognition of intentions. By this claim, Grice opened the way for a new model of communication: the inferential model, which stands as an alternative to the classical code model, (Sperber & Wilson 1986: 24).

2.4.1   The code model of communication

According to the code model of communication, utterance meaning is derived by a decoding process which is executed by a linguistic module that performs grammatical computations to the linguistic stimuli, resulting in semantic representations, (cf. Blakemore 2002: 60). In other words, according to the code model, utterances are signals encoding messages. It assumes that the process of communication depends on encoding the message by the speaker into signals which are then decoded by the hearer to obtain the associated message, (Wilson & Sperber 2004). However, this model of communication is too simplistic and fails to account for all cases of communication. Firstly, according to the process of encoding and decoding, the result is a replica of the

thought of the speaker in the mind of the hearer, which is not always the case. It is not a necessity for the hearer to have a replica of the speaker's thought, as successful communication only creates a resemblance of the speaker's thought in the mind of the hearer, not a copy. Secondly, another problem with the code model is that there are cases of communication which are achieved without the use of any code, whether linguistic or not. Although these cases communicate simple thoughts, as is argued by Sperber & Wilson (1986: 26), their very existence is not compatible with the code model. For example, in (5) below, A infers that B has been invited because B is showing an invitation card.

(5)   A: Have you been invited to the party?

        B: [taking out an invitation card from her bag and waving it]

There is no convention that says that showing an invitation card means 'yes, I have been invited'. Although B's communication is not conventionally coded, it shows strong evidence that the intention of B is to inform A that they have been invited. B's non-verbal answer could have many other possible interpretations. It could be an invitation to another party or an invitation for another person. However, as will be discussed in section (2.6) below, the first interpretation is the most relevant to A because the other two involve unjustifiable extra processing efforts. Clearly, such cases of communication cannot be explained by the code model alone. Not only is the non-coded communication problematic to the code model but cases of weak linguistic communication that occur with exclamations, metaphor and irony, are problematic too. In examples such as (6) and (7) below, it is difficult for the hearer to have the same

thought as the speaker. The hearer might have expectations about the meaning; however, it is difficult to have an exact paraphrase for such examples.

(6)   Oh no!

(7)   He is an angel.

The utterance in (6) might convey different meanings, such as 'exclamation', or in some contexts it might mean 'sorry for that', or it can be an indication of something bad that happened. We can easily think of an array of different possible contexts where the above interpretations are possible. Again, the interpretation of (7) cannot depend on the linguistic code only. If our cognitive system is to process an utterance such as (7) according to the code model, the result will be that the utterance refers to a real angel. This (literal) interpretation is rejected if we are to describe a human being with angelic qualities. Of course, there is a possible context in which (7) can be understood literally. For example, think of a context where a group of people are talking about mythical or religious stories in which they refer to the names of certain characters who are literal angels. However, if this utterance is said by a speaker who is talking about his friend, this utterance is to be understood metaphorically. In such a case, the interpretation of the speaker's friend being an angel is totally rejected. Then, the most reasonable interpretation of (7) is that the whole utterance is a metaphor for someone who might be as innocent, harmless, pure, etc. as an angel. It is also possible to think of a context in which the whole utterance is understood as irony; a context where the speaker is describing someone who has exactly the opposite characteristics of an angel. Thus, it clearly seems that linguistic communication involves more than the linguistically encoded meaning.

2.4.2   The inferential model of communication

The inferential model considers the outputs of the decoding process to be inputs to pragmatic inferential processes. These processes integrate the linguistic contribution with other readily accessible contextual information in order to derive the speaker's meaning. In other words, comprehension involves both decoding and inference. These two types of cognitive processes, decoding and inference, utilised in reaching the meaning of utterances, are considered the base for the distinction between semantics and pragmatics, where the first process, decoding, is linked to semantics and the second, inference, is linked to pragmatics, (see Carston 1998, Blakemore 2002).

A fundamental difference between the two models of communication is that while utterances are signals according to the code model, they are, according to the inferential model, pieces of evidence about the intention of the speaker to convey a certain meaning. Thus, the aim of inferential pragmatics is to explain how the hearer derives the intended meaning of the speaker on the basis of evidence provided; i.e. on the basis of speaker's utterance, (Sperber & Wilson 2005: 250). Before, I discuss the pragmatic processes involved in utterance interpretation from a relevance-theoretic point of view, it is essential to discuss, first, the nature of communication that relevance theory attempts to explain.

2.5   Ostensive inferential communication

As is mentioned earlier, one of the central claims that shapes Grice's theory of meaning, and which RT developed in detail, is that human communication is about "the expression and recognition of intentions", (Wilson and Sperber 2004: 607). In other

words, speaker's meaning should be analysed in terms of speaker's intentions in trying to communicate something to the audience. However, successful communication is not granted only by the speaker showing intention to have an effect on the hearer, but also by getting this intention recognized, (Wilson & Sperber, 2004: 611). That is to say, successful communication needs to be both intentional and overt. In this kind of overt communication the communicator makes it clear to the audience that they intend to have a certain sort of effect on them. This communicative behaviour is what Sperber and Wilson (1986) call '**ostensive-inferential communication**'. They explain that ostensive communication involves two intentions, which are:

> **The informative intention**: to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a set of assumptions **I**.

> **The communicative intention**: to make it mutually manifest to audience and communicator that the communicator has this informative intention.

With these two kinds of intention, the **ostensive-inferential communication** is defined as follows:

> The communicator produces a stimulus which makes it mutually manifest to communicator and audience that the communicator intends, by means of this stimulus, to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a set of assumptions I.

Ostensive-inferential communication is different from accidental information transmission and covert communication. There are cases where information might be transmitted with no informative or communicative intention. For example, consider the differences between the communicative behaviour in (8) and (9) below.

> (8)   Jane entered the room and said "it is too hot".

(9)   Phil notices John undoing the first button of his shirt. He derives the conclusion that John is feeling hot. However, John is unaware that Phil is watching him.

In (8), the hearer interprets Jane's utterance as she feels hot. This is communicated by Jane in an overt and intentional way; whereas, in (9), the conclusion that Phil derived was not intended by John. We notice that the key feature of an ostensive act is the intention to make a set of assumptions manifest. This raises the question of what assumptions qualify as manifest. Sperber and Wilson (1986: 39) define manifestness as follows:

> **Manifestness:** an assumption is manifest to an individual at a given time if and only if he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true.

According to the definition, an assumption is manifest if it can be perceived or inferred. The importance of communication being ostensive lies in the fact that it creates the presumption that it is worth processing. In other words, it creates expectation about its relevance. In the following, I discuss the notion of relevance and what it means for an act of communication to be relevant.

2.6   Relevance: effects and efforts

The principle of relevance upon which RT is based depends on the balance of contextual effects and processing efforts. Strictly speaking, there are two factors that determine the relevance of a stimulus, which are (i) the effort needed to process the stimulus optimally and (ii) the cognitive effect achieved by it. The more positive effects

a stimulus creates without putting the hearer to gratuitous processing effort, the more relevant it is.

According to Sperber and Wilson (1995), new information can affect a person's representation of the world by creating one of the following cognitive effects: derivation of a contextual implication, strengthening of an existing assumption, or contradicting an existing assumption. For example, (10) illustrates the first kind of these cognitive effects.

(10)   A: Let's go for a walk.
            B: It is raining.

In a context in which B holds the assumption that rainy weather is not nice for a walk, B's utterance gives rise to the derivation of a contextual implication that B's answer to A's request is 'no'. As for the second kind of cognitive effects, which is strengthening an existing assumption, consider (11) below. In a context in which the speaker holds, with a fair degree of certainty, the assumption that Lucy is coming, the knocking described in (11) will be relevant because it strengthens that assumption.

(11)   [Lee is waiting for Lucy and she hears someone knocking on the door]

Lee's assumption that Lucy is coming is strengthened by hearing someone knocking on the door. Conversely, B's utterance in (12) is relevant as a contradiction of an existing assumption, which represents the third kind of cognitive effects.

(12)   A: Sam didn't come today.
            B: But I have seen him in the post room.

While A assumes that Sam didn't come to work, B's answer is to be understood as evidence to contradict this assumption. In other words, B intends A to derive the conclusion that Sam must be at work since B has seen him in the post room.

Accordingly, in RT, the hearer aims to process the new information to reach sufficient contextual effects at the cost of least processing efforts. In other words, no more effort is required once there are sufficient contextual effects. However, in cases where there is more than one contextual assumption available for interpreting a certain input, the contextual assumption that will be used will be the most accessible one that combines with the input to yield an optimally relevant interpretation. Let us reconsider the following example in (13).

(13)   [The speaker enters the room and realizes the window is open]
        A: It is cold in here.

Some of the possible contextual assumptions for this utterance could be: (i) people don't like windows open when it is cold, or (ii) people heat their rooms when it is cold. Knowing that the speaker notices that the window is open, the most accessible contextual assumption is (i). Consequently, combining the utterance in (13) with the assumption in (i) leads to the derivation of the contextual implication that the speaker would like the window shut. The need to consider other assumptions, such as (ii), is not justified unless the speaker indicates that they still feel cold after closing the window. In other words, the hearer interprets the utterance of the speaker by using the least processing effort that derives a positive cognitive effect that justifies the effort. The degree of relevance is determined by the processing effort required to optimally process the stimulus and the cognitive effects derived by optimal processing, (Sperber and

Wilson 1995: 156). Putting it differently, while deriving the intended meaning of an utterance, the hearer looks for an interpretation that delivers a positive cognitive effect and does not cost them any unjustifiable processing effort, (Carston 1988). In the following, I proceed to discuss the two main principles of relevance theory: the cognitive and communicative principles of relevance.

2.7   Principles of Relevance

Relevance is based on two main claims about cognition and communication which are summarized by two principles: the Cognitive Principle of Relevance and the Communicative Principle of Relevance. Here, it is very important to observe that the difference between Relevance theory and Grice's theory of meaning is not simply a reduction of Grice's four maxims into one. Relevance theory assumes that the notion of relevance is not a maxim; it is rooted in human cognition. This is reflected in the Cognitive Principle of Relevance. Sperber and Wilson (1995: 260) argue that:

Cognitive Principle of Relevance

Human cognition tends to be geared to the maximization of relevance.

This principle predicts that human mind tends to pay attention to the most relevant stimuli and process them in contexts that lead to the most relevant cognitive effects. In other words, as Clark (2013: 107) argues, the idea behind the cognitive principle is that our perceptual system is set to look out for relevant stimuli on a constant basis and to maximise the cognitive effects that we can derive from these stimuli. It is worth noting here that these processes are carried out unintentionally. They are the result of the way in which the mind is organized. The environment involves many stimuli, both

communicative and non-communicative. If our conceptual system is to process all these stimuli with the same level of importance, there is a risk of overloading. Hence, it follows naturally that there is a constraint on the stimuli that our brain processes. According to relevance theory, there is a single property – relevance – which makes information worth processing for our conceptual system. As is mentioned previously, an input is relevant if it creates a positive contextual effect when combined with available contextual assumptions. The more positive cognitive effects created the more relevant an input is. In the same fashion, when processing an ostensive communicative act, the human mind looks out for optimal relevance. Hence, it is within the interests of the communicator that their utterances be as relevant as possible given their abilities and preferences. This gives rise to what Sperber and Wilson call the '**presumption of optimal relevance'**. That is, the stimulus of a speaker is worth processing for being relevant and the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences. As Sperber and Wilson (1995: 270) put it:

Presumption of optimal relevance

(i) The ostensive stimulus is relevant enough to be worth the addressee's effort to process it.

(ii) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences.

And what the hearer can expect from this ostensive act of communication is captured by the second principle of relevance; that is the Communicative Principle, which is explained by Sperber and Wilson (1995: 158) as follows:

*Communicative Principle of Relevance***:**

Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance.

That is to say, when the speaker claims the attention of the hearer, they are making their intention to communicate clear to the hearer. Consequently, the speaker is expecting the hearer to carry out inferential processes to infer the intentional meaning of the speaker's utterance. In other words, the speaker believes that their utterance is worth the processing efforts of the hearer. Moreover, this principle takes into account the speaker's abilities and preferences as it is very unlikely that the speaker will choose to express their thought in a way that requires the hearer extra processing efforts. Nevertheless, this is not to be understood that every act of overt communication is in fact optimally relevant. As Blakemore (2002: 63) argues, communicators can mistakenly assume that what they are communicating is relevant. They might have wrong assumptions about the contextual resources of their audience. In other words, while speakers may not achieve optimal relevance, they always aim at it. An utterance might not be relevant enough to the hearer because of the inability of the speaker to do so, i.e. it could be the case that the speaker lacks the information to be as relevant as should be. Alternatively, it could be the case that the speaker prefers not to be as relevant and helpful as is required. Consider the following example.

> (14) A: How much do they pay Tom?
> B: Enough to cover his expenses.
> C: They pay him £10 per hour.

In (14), it is likely that B does not know exactly how much money Tom earns, or otherwise the speaker does not want to give A an accurate answer, possibly thinking that it is impolite to ask about other people's earnings. If we compare the answer of B with that of C, it is obvious that C's answer is more relevant, as it achieves more effects

because it is more precise. While B's answer seems to be not the most relevant one for A, it is the most relevant one given B's ability and preferences.

2.8   The implicit/explicit distinction

Having discussed the main principles of relevance theory, I proceed in this section to discuss the ways in which assumptions are communicated by an utterance. According to Grice, the distinction between 'what is said' and 'what is implicated' corresponds to the distinction between the explicitly communicated meaning (i.e. the linguistically encoded) and the implicitly communicated meaning. This has been usually associated with the assumption that semantics is about the former, i.e. the explicitly communicated meaning and pragmatics is about the latter. Grice argues that semantics accounts only for the linguistically encoded meaning, but it fails to account for the implicated meaning. In his account 'what is said' corresponds to what is truth-conditional whereas the 'implicated' meaning lies outside the truth-conditional content of the utterance. In other words, semantics is about truth-conditional meaning only.

RT questions two main aspects of Grice's notion of speaker's meaning. The first is that 'what is said' is the same as what is linguistically encoded, and the second is that pragmatic inferences are restricted to deriving implicatures, (Sperber and Wilson 2005: 473). As for the first point, in Grice's terms, 'what is said' refers to what is explicitly communicated, and it seems to be synonymous with what is 'linguistically encoded'. However, Carston (1991) argues that this ordinary use of the term 'explicit', i.e. as a synonym to the 'linguistically encoded' meaning, and what is explicitly communicated by an utterance are two different things. We have seen that in RT, the linguistically

encoded logical form is not fully propositional. The fully-fledged proposition is the outcome of inferential enrichment of the logical form, (I will discuss these terms shortly). This has been discussed in detail by Carston (2002) in what she calls 'The Underdeterminacy Thesis'. In her underdeterminacy thesis, Carston argues that what is linguistically encoded is rarely, if ever, fully propositional. Nevertheless, what speakers communicate is fully propositional. For example, in cases of semantic ambiguity, what is linguistically encoded is compatible with more than one meaning; however, when speakers communicate, they explicitly communicate one assumption. Consider the example in (15), adapted from (Clark 2013: 120).

(15)   He has a big cat.

In this example, 'big cat' is likely to be understood as a domestic cat that is big. However, there is another sense which includes big cats such as leopards, tigers, etc. While it is very unlikely that people own such big cats, it is still possible, though. Whether the speaker in (15), is referring to the everyday sense of cat or to the meaning of big cats living in the wild, at the time of the utterance, the speaker is communicating only one of the propositions above. Still, even if the sense of cat has been identified, in order for (15) to be fully propositional, we need to identify the referent of *He.* Hence, it seems that we cannot reach the propositional meaning of an utterance by depending on its linguistically encoded meaning alone. There are pragmatic inferences involved in the recovery of what Grice calls 'what is said'. It follows from this that Grice's assumption that linguistically encoded meaning is equivalent to what is explicitly encoded is not a satisfactory assumption. As a result, relevance theorists have replaced Grice's term

'what is said' by the term 'explicature'. Hence, in RT, we have a distinction between explicature and implicature.

However, Grice argues that the explicitly communicated meaning consists of 'what is said' and disambiguation and reference assignment. While, according to him, the role of pragmatics in 'what is said' is limited to these two processes (i.e. processes of disambiguation and reference assignment), Wilson and Sperber (1995) argue that pragmatics' contribution to the explicitly communicated meaning is more than just disambiguation and reference assignment. There are considerable pragmatic inferences involved in the recovery of explicature, much more than reference assignment and disambiguation. Along the same lines, Carston (1991) argues against Grice's claim that any pragmatic inference involved in the recovery of utterance meaning apart from disambiguation and reference assignment is an implicature.

According to Sperber and Wilson (1986: 182) an assumption communicated by an utterance is an explicature if and only if it is a development of the logical form encoded by that utterance. As is mentioned earlier, what is meant by the development of the logical form is not restricted to processes such as disambiguation and reference assignment. The development of the explicature may include the development of unarticulated constituents in the logical form. On the other hand, an implicature is an assumption that is derived purely inferentially. However, the inference of implicature may be constrained by procedural meaning, Iten (2005: 83)[1]. The distinction between explicature and implicature can be clearly recognized in cases of conjoined utterances and cases of free enrichment. Let us consider the examples in (16) and (17) below.

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[1] I explain this in great detail in Chapter (4) when I discuss *but.*

(16) (a)   He cheated on her and she asked for divorce.

      (b)   She wrote him a letter and sent it by post.

(17) (a)   He cheated on her *and so* she asked for divorce.

      (b)   She wrote him a letter *and then* sent it by post.

The propositions in (17) entail the propositions in (16). In other words, the propositions in (17) are a development of the logical forms in (16); hence, they are communicated as explicatures. Similarly, the propositions of the enriched form in (19) below entail the propositions in (18). Hence, they are also communicated as explicatures since they are a development of what is linguistically encoded in (18).

(18) (a)   The child did not eat as the food was too hot.

      (b)   I have no time. I will call you later.

(19) (a)   The child did not eat as the food was too hot (to eat).

      (b)   I have no time (now). I will call you later.

As is argued by Carston (1988: 157-8), implicatures have propositional form and truth conditions distinct from those of explicatures, and they function independently of the explicature as premises and conclusions. Consider the following example in (20).

(20) A: How about going to the cinema?
      B: I have to study.

In (20), the implicated premise could be that one cannot go to the cinema and study at the same time, while the implicated conclusion is that B is not going to the cinema. In other words, the implicature in (20) is derived purely inferentially. That is, it is not a development of the logical form of (20B).

2.9   The conceptual/procedural distinction

We have seen so far that there are two different processes involved in utterance interpretation, that is decoding and inference where the former serves as an input for the latter. According to the distinction drawn above, the contribution of linguistic semantics in utterance interpretation represents logical forms that are not fully propositional and hence not truth evaluable. These logical forms undergo inferential computations constrained by the principle of relevance which results in two different types of assumptions. These are explicatures; the outcome of decoding and inference, and implicatures; the outcome of inferential process alone, (Blakemore 2002: 77).

However, it is worth noting that while most words contribute to the conceptual truth conditional content, some do not. Most words in most languages encode conceptual information. For example, words such as *cat*, *dog*, *smart*, *write*, etc. encode concepts. This is true of most nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, among others. Relevance theorists argue that there is another type of words which encode procedures that guide the process of interpretation. Within relevance theory, this claim was first made by Blakemore (1987) and led to an important distinction in relevance theory between two types of encoded information: the *conceptual* and *procedural*. From a relevance-theoretic perspective, a linguistic form could encode constituents of conceptual representations that enter the inferential computations, and it could also encode information that constrains the inferential computations, (Blakemore 1987, 2002). This distinction raises the question of how the procedural encoded information contributes to the inferential processes.

Originally, the distinction between conceptually/procedurally encoded information was assumed to parallel the distinction between truth and non-truth conditional meaning. In other words, it was supposed that linguistic expressions that encode conceptual meaning have truth conditional content; while, those that encode procedural meaning contribute to non-truth conditional content. Blakemore (1987) argues that inferences in utterance interpretation are constrained by some linguistic expressions, such as *after all*, *however*, *so*, and *but*. The view is that these linguistic expressions encode procedural meaning and do not contribute to the truth value of an utterance. However, subsequent research has made it clear that the conceptual/procedural distinction and the truth/non-truth conditional distinction cross-cut each other, and that the original parallelism between these two distinctions is not accurate. Wilson and Sperber (1993) argue that there are four logically possible types of meaning. First, we have *conceptual and truth conditional* meaning in most content words, such as *like*, *cat*, and *sad*. Second, we may have *conceptual and non-truth conditional* meaning as in sentence adverbials, and illocutionary adverbials, as in (21) and (22) respectively.

(21)   Sadly, we are late.

(22)   Seriously, I will be there.

However, this is not to be confused with manner adverbials which are truth conditional, as in (23) and (24) below.

(23)   They smiled sadly.

(24)   We discussed the problem seriously.

Third, we may also have *procedural and non-truth conditional* meaning, as in discourse connectives such as *so*, and *but*, as in (25) and (26).

(25)   Joe is very generous. **So**, he is rich.

(26)   Maria is in love, **but** she is sad.

Blakemore (1987, 2002), Blass (1990), and Iten (1998b, 2000b, 2005) argue that discourse connectives such as *but*, and *so* do not contribute to the truth conditions of the propositions of the utterances in which they occur. They encode procedural information that guides the hearer in interpreting the speaker's meaning. As pointed out earlier, for an utterance to be optimally relevant within RT, it needs to attain the intended cognitive effect without putting the hearer to gratuitous processing effort; hence, the importance of discourse connectives is in minimizing the processing efforts involved in utterance interpretation. Lastly, we may have *procedural and truth conditional* meaning as in personal pronouns, such as *I* and *you.* Blakemore (2002) agrees with Wilson and Sperber (1993) that her (1987) account of procedural meaning should be modified to include constraints on all aspects of inferential processing; i.e. the explicit and implicit aspects.

The above classification does not only demonstrate that equating the truth/non-truth conditional meaning to the conceptual/procedural meaning is problematic, but it also shows that equating the conceptual/procedural distinction to the explicit/implicit distinction is problematic too. On the one hand, the type of meaning that is referred to in the first two categories, i.e. truth conditional conceptual meaning and non-truth conditional conceptual meaning is a development of the logical form, i.e. explicature. On the other hand, we have (i) procedural meaning that is non-truth conditional, as in

the case of discourse connectives, which constrains the inferential processes involved in the derivation of implicature, and (ii) truth conditional procedural meaning which constrains the inferential processes involved in the recovery of the explicature. This means that the two central RT's distinctions between explicit/implicit and conceptual/procedural lead to three-way distinction of linguistic expressions, which is put by Iten (2005: 84) as follows:

(a) conceptual expressions that contribute to explicit communication;

(b) procedural expressions that contribute to explicit communication;

(c) procedural expressions that contribute to implicit communication.

This distinction will be relevant to our discussion of discourse connectives in the following chapters.

2.10   Relevance theory and experimental pragmatics

The distinction made in relevance theory between conceptual and procedural meaning has not only dominated the field of theoretical pragmatics, but the application of this claim has been attested by experimental pragmatics and psycholinguistic research. As Sperber and Novek (2004: 9) argue, putting pragmatics hypotheses to experimental test is beneficial to both pragmatics and psycholinguistics. Having an experimental side to pragmatics can provide evidence to confirm or disconfirm hypotheses which also requires a higher degree of theoretical explicitness that makes testing hypotheses possible.

Psycholinguistic research is typically concerned with the underlying mental processes involved in the acquisition, production and comprehension of language. It is usually

less concerned with the pragmatics of language use. However, since relevance theory is a pragmatic theory that is rooted in human cognition, psycholinguistic methodologies can be exploited to validate or invalidate the relevance-theoretic claims about utterance understanding. Evidence for the existence of procedural meaning can be found for example in Grisot & Moeschler (2014) who investigate the nature of the information encoded by verb tenses. They implement psycholinguistic methodology and bring evidence from offline experimentation that the English Simple Past encodes both procedural and conceptual information. This result validates the relevance-theoretic claim about the existence of procedural meaning.

Furthermore, Zufferey et al (2015: 30-1) use on-line and off-line comprehension experiments to study second language learners' acquisition of discourse connectives. They find significant differences between advanced learners' intuitive and conscious knowledge of connectives in a foreign language. These experiments suggest that while in the on-line experiments advance learners exhibit a native-like performance (implicit ability) in understanding connectives in L2, they seem to make negative transfer from their first language to the second language in the off-line judgment tasks. They ascribed the difference between the learners' implicit knowledge (reflected in the on-line experiments) and their explicit knowledge (reflected in the off-line tasks) to the fact that discourse connectives encode procedural meaning that is not easily accessible to consciousness. While, as Zufferey et al. (2015) argue, the exact nature of learners' explicit knowledge of the meaning of connectives needs to be specifically assessed, their study supports relevance theory claim that linguistic expressions can encode procedural meaning.

2.11   Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced the main tenets of relevance theory, highlighted the relevance-theoretic view of linguistic semantics, and discussed how according to relevance theory inferential pragmatic processes play a key role at both explicit and implicit levels of communication. It seems clear that the distinction between semantics and pragmatics is not co-extensive with truth and non-truth conditional meaning. We have also seen how the truth-based approaches to utterance meaning are inadequate as, on one hand, they fail to accommodate for the non-truth conditional meaning, and on the other, because truth conditional meaning is not purely linguistic; it also includes inferences. Additionally, we have seen that the linguistically encoded meaning serves as input to the inferential processes. This notion of utterance interpretation has led to an important distinction between two types of encoded meaning: procedural and conceptual. This distinction is essential to our discussion of the encoded meaning of discourse connectives. In the following chapters, my aim is to analyse the role of a number of discourse connectives in the inferential processes involved in interpreting the hosting utterance.

Chapter 3   Approaches to *But*

3.1   Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the tenets of relevance theory and highlighted the way in which linguistically encoded constituents contribute to the derivation of explicature and implicature; distinguishing between two types of encoded meaning: conceptual and procedural. Additionally, I have indicated that from a relevance-theoretic perspective, some discourse connectives, such as *but,* are considered to encode a procedural meanin. Ample literature in English has been concerned with the study of the discourse connective *but* (see Lakoff 1971; Anscombre & Ducrot 1977; Horn 1989; Bell 1998; Blakemore 1987, 1989, 1992, 2002; Iten 2005, to name a few). Many uses of *but* have been distinguished and have been analysed within different approaches. However, the first account of *but* from a relevance-theoretic perspective is Blakemore (1987), which was later revised in (1989) and (2002). It is, then, Blakemore (2002) account which I squarely focus on in this study.

My aim in this chapter is two-fold: first, to provide a brief review of the most common uses of *but* as discussed in the literature, and second, to review a number of accounts which *but* has received. These theoretical accounts include Blakemore (2002), Hall (2004), Foolen (1991), Anscombre & Ducrot, (A&D hereafter), (1977), and Iten (2005). The main purpose of this chapter, however, is to present the argument of each account as is proposed by its author and to identify any problematic issue(s) in each one of them. A critical analysis and an alternative RT-based account will be discussed in Chapter (4).

This chapter is organized as follows. Section two provides a review of the different uses of *but* accounted for in the literature. Section three discusses the theoretical accounts of Blakemore (2002), Foolen (1991), Anscombre and Ducrot (1977), and, finally, Iten (2005). Lastly, Section four focusses on the (assumed) correlation between metalinguistic negation and the correction use of *but* and argues that, despite the perceived correlation, a reanalysis of *but* is still required.

3.2   Uses of *but*

In the literature there are a number of different uses of *but.* These uses fall into the following major categories: the contrast, the denial of expectation, the correction, and the utterance- and the discourse-initial use, as is shown in (1-5) below, respectively.

(1)   Sam is tall, but Mary is short.

(2)   John is English, but he speaks German.

(3)   Kim did not go to London, but to Paris.

(4)   A: [A gives B, who has just received a shock, a glass of whisky]

B: But I don't drink!   (Blakemore 2002: 105)

(5)   A: I am going to the cinema tonight.

B: But you have an assignment due next week.

Generally, regardless of the theoretical frameworks under which *but* is studied, there are two research camps that aim to account for these different uses of *but*: the monosemy camp, advocated by Blakemore (1987, 2002); Foolen (1991); and Iten (2005), and the ambiguity camp, advocated by R. Lakoff (1971); Anscombre & Ducrot (1977); Abraham (1979); and Horn (1989). Proponents of the monosemy camp, view *but* as

having only one unified meaning from which all uses are derived, whilst those in the ambiguity camp argue for more than one distinct meaning of *but*. Further division within the ambiguity camp is also seen between: (i) R. Lakoff (1971) and G. Lakoff (1971) who argue that *but* is ambiguous between denial of expectation and contrast, and (ii) Anscombre and Ducrot (1977) and Horn (1989) who argue that *but* is ambiguous between denial of expectation and correction[2].

This is roughly a very brief presentation of the different uses of *but.* However, all these distinct uses will be discussed in greater detail when discussing the approaches to *but* below.

3.3   Approaches to *but*

In this section, I discuss five major accounts of *but*, namely these of Blakemore (1987, 2002), Hall (2004), Foolen (1991), Anscombre and Ducrot (1977), and Iten (2005). As we have mentioned earlier, Blakemore (1987, 2002), Foolen (1991), and Iten (2005) argue that *but* has a unitary meaning that works for all its uses, whereas Anscombre and Ducrot (1977) consider *but* ambiguous. I first start by discussing Blakemore's account in detail as it represents, by far, the most influential account of *but* within RT. In the discussion, it shall become clear that I disagree with Blakemore's (2002) analysis that

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[2] In addition to the denial of expectation and correction *but*, Abraham (1979: 112-15) argues that there is another *but* which translates into German as *dafür,* 'lit. for that', as in the following:

    (i) There was no chicken, but I got some fish.
       Es gab kein Huhn, dafür habe ich Fisch gekauft. (Iten 2005: 114)

However, I agree with Iten (2005: 115) that this use of *but* can easily be reduced to the denial of expectation meaning. This is because the first clause might imply that the speaker got nothing and the clause following *but* denies this.

correction *but* encodes the same procedure as denial *but*. Next, I provide a summary of

Hall's (2004) relevance-theoretic account of *but*, in which she disagrees with Blakemore

on the procedure that *but* encodes. As for the other accounts, I am discussing Foolen's

(1991) mainly for two reasons: first, for the analysis he provides for the contrastive *but*

and, second, for his argument in differentiating between contrastive *but* and contrastive

and; the argument with which Blakemore agrees and which she also tries to explain

further in her (1992) work. After that, I proceed to discuss Anscombre and Ducrot

(1977) account in which they argue that *but* in English is ambiguous between correction

but and denial *but*. Finally, I discuss and highlight some issues in Iten's (2005) account

in which she criticizes A&D's (1977) account and adopts, as an alternative, an analysis

of *but* that is very much in line with that of Blakemore (2002). A thorough analysis,

however, will follow in the next chapter.

3.3.1   Blakemore's account

Within the framework of relevance theory, Blakemore (2002) provides an account of *but*

in which she argues that *but* encodes a procedure linked to the cognitive effect of

contradiction and elimination. She explains (2002: 109) that *but* guides the inferential

processes to interpret the utterance prefaced by *but* as contradicting and eliminating an

assumption expected to be accessible to the hearer. Her (2002) account, however, had

changed since (1987). In (1987), she argued that *but* has a single meaning, and that both

the denial of expectation and contrast uses of *but* can be understood as having the same

procedural meaning. However, in (1989), the earlier analysis she proposed for the

contrast *but* was substantially modified; arguing that denial *but* encodes a procedure

different from that encoded by contrast *but*. But, once again in (2002), she reconsidered

her (1989) analysis of contrast *but* and returned back to her (1987) one; maintaining that contrast *but* is a special use of denial *but*, and that both uses encode the same procedure of contradiction and elimination of an assumption. However, the difference between the (1987) and (2002) account lies in the nature of the contradicted assumption. While she argues in (1987) that the contradicted assumption is a manifest assumption, she amended her analysis in (2002) and argued that it is sufficient for the contradicted assumption to be accessible. As will be seen in section (4.8.4), the main reason for this change in analysis is to account for cases of *but* that are preceded by counterfactuals. In the following, I discuss in detail Blakemore's analysis of *but* and her attempt to account for its different uses in terms of a single procedural meaning.

3.3.1.1   Denial *but*

One of the most common uses of *but* is the denial of expectation use as shown in (6) below.

(6)   John is a Republican, but he is honest.   (G. Lakoff, 1971: 67)

According to Blakemore (2002), the use of *but* guides the hearer to understand how the clause following it is relevant. In particular, it directs the hearer to interpret the clause that *but* introduces as a contradiction and elimination of an accessible assumption. In the case of so-called denial *but*, that assumption might be derived from the clause or discourse preceding *but*. Therefore, the *but*-clause in (6) is contradicting and eliminating an assumption that might be derived from the previous clause, which is that 'John is dishonest'. This denial use of *but* is considered a direct denial; the proposition of the *but* clause directly contradicts an assumption derived from the previous clause. However,

there are other cases where the *but*-clause contradicts an assumption indirectly. That is when an assumption derived from the *but* clause contradicts an assumption that is derived from the preceding clause, as (7) below shows. This use of indirect denial of *but* is what König (1985) referred to as 'adversative'.

(7)   It's raining but I need some fresh air.   (Iten, 2005: 140)

In (7), it is the implicature that is derived from the *but* clause that contradicts and eliminates another implicature of the preceding clause. What is implicated in the *but*-clause is that the speaker will go out, which contradicts what is implicated in the previous clause, which is that 'the speaker will not go out' because it is raining; hence, the denial is indirect. This use of *but*, i.e. denial, seems to be the common use that all accounts agree on. The second commonest use of *but* is the so-called contrast use, which I discuss next.

3.3.1.2   Contrast *but*

While Lakoff (1971) argues that the contrast *but* is different from the denial of expectation *but*, Blakemore (1987, 2002) argues that the contrast use of *but* is a special use of the so-called denial *but*; hence, it does not seem problematic for the analysis she proposed above. Blakemore argues that it is important to note that not all cases of the contrast use of *but* are cases of semantic oppositions. For example, in (8) below the contrast seems to be a semantic opposition (or antonymy); however, in (9) it is just a "pure" contrastive use as 'philosopher' is not the semantic opposite of 'linguist'.

(8)   John is rich but Sally is poor.
(9)   John is a linguist, but Mary is a philosopher.

Therefore, Blakemore says that the encoded meaning of the constituents in the contrast use of *but* utterances does not always involve opposition. In these cases, such as (9), the contrast meaning must be derived *inferentially*, as Blakemore (2002: 99) argues. In other words, it must be derived as contrasting contextual implications, not propositions. Consider Blakemore's example in (10) below.

(10)   Anna likes reading, but Tom likes tennis.

The contrastive meaning of (10) is derived from the contextual assumption that Anna likes intellectual activities and Tom likes physical activities. Reading and tennis are not semantic opposites.

Furthermore, those who argue that there is a contrast *but* depend mainly on the similarities between utterances of contrast use of *but* and utterances of contrast use of *and.* For example, one might argue that (10) can be expressed by replacing *but* by *and,* as in (11).

(11)   Anna likes reading, *and* Tom likes tennis**.**

Blakemore (2002) argues that the similarity between the contrastive *and* and the contrast use of *but* is due to analysing these utterances out of context. She explains that *but* and *and* in the contrast use are not interchangeable without a difference in the interpretation. To show the difference between contrast *but* and contrast *and,* Blakemore (2002: 101-2) gives the examples in (12) and (13) below. She claims that what *but* encodes is not contrast as the contrastive *and.*

(12)   Larry, Sue and Simon want coffee and Bob, Jane and Tom want wine.
(13)   Larry, Sue and Simon want coffee but Bob, Jane and Tom want wine.

Blakemore argues that the replacement of *and* in (12) by *but* in (13) can only be acceptable if the speaker believes there is something surprising of some sort that Bob, Jane, and Tom want to drink something different from the others. For an extra piece of evidence on the differences between *but* utterances and *and* utterances, consider Blakemore's example in (14), where the utterance is said in a context where Sue never drinks wine, or in a context where she always drinks what Larry drinks.

(14)   Larry wants tea but Sue wants wine.

If there is no unexpectedness in Sue drinking wine, the use of *but* in (14) becomes unacceptable. Accordingly, the similarity between *but* and *and* utterances is superficial and it disappears once these utterances are interpreted within the right context. Thus, they only seem to be interchangeable out of context.

It is also important to note here that what seems to be a symmetric contrast in cases of *and* utterances, such as in (15) below, cannot be symmetric in cases of contrast *but*.

(15)   (a)   Larry wants tea, and Sue wants wine.

        (b)   Sue wants wine, and Larry wants tea

For instance, out of context both (14), repeated below, and (16) seem to be symmetric. However, once (16) is considered in the same context of (14), i.e. a context in which Sue does not drink wine, (16) cannot be acceptable; hence the asymmetry becomes clear.

(14)   Larry wants tea, but Sue wants wine.

(16)   Sue wants wine, but Larry wants tea.

Thus, (14) and (16) do not have the same interpretation. If the so-called contrast *but* encodes the meaning of contrast, then (16) should be acceptable in the context of (14),

but in fact it is not. Therefore, the order of the clauses of *but* utterances matters in cases of contrast *but* just inasmuch as it does in cases of the denial of expectation *but*. Blakemore (2002) argues that the so-called contrast use of *but* is a special case of the denial use of *but*. In the contrast use, what *but* contradicts and eliminates is the assumption that two states of affairs or events are similar. To demonstrate this point further, Blakemore identifies other cases where the use of the so called contrast *but* in place of *and* seems not acceptable, even when it is used out of context. Consider Blakemore's example in (17).

> (17) The wettest weather has been in Preston where they have had 15mm
>   of rain and the driest weather has been in Ashford where there has
>   been only 3mm of rain.
>
>   (Blakemore, 2002: 100)

In (17), which is an utterance from a BBC weather report, the substitution of *and* by *but* seems unnatural. As Blakemore argues, the unacceptability of *but* in place of *and* in (17) is due to the fact that *but* encodes a procedural meaning of contradicting and eliminating an assumption. In (17), even if the speaker is drawing a contrast between the wettest and the driest places in terms of rainfall, the hearer would not expect that there is another place apart from Preston to be the wettest, hence the unacceptability of using *but.* In other words, it is understood from the clause preceding *but* that there is a 'wettest' place, therefore the hearer would not expect that there is another wettest place in terms of rainfalls. The contrast is already expected between wettest and driest places. Thus, there is no need to indicate that these two places are not the same. Following this, it appears that while contrastive *and* can substitute *but* in some utterances and they

seem similar out of context, there are cases like (17) above where the substitution is not possible, which gives evidence that what *but* encodes is not the meaning of contrast. In other words, *but* guides the inferential process in a way that results in the elimination and contradiction of an assumption that two states or events are similar. *But* will not be used if no one would think that they are similar.

3.3.1.3   Utterance- and discourse-initial *but*

I discuss in this section both the utterance- and discourse-initial use of *but.* According to Blakemore (2002), *but* can be used to activate the same procedural meaning of contradiction and elimination even in utterances that are not preceded by any discourse or verbal act of communication, such as the one mentioned earlier in (4), repeated below for convenience.

(4)   [A gives B, who has just received a shock, a glass of whisky]
           B: But I don't drink.

Blakemore (2002: 105) argues that the contradicted and eliminated assumption by the *but*-clause needs not necessarily be derived from an utterance preceding *but.* For instance, B's utterance in (4) is not preceded by any verbal communication at all. However, what *but* clause seems to do is to contradict the assumption that B drinks. This assumption is derived from the non-verbal communication of A. In other words, by offering alcohol to B, A is assuming that B drinks alcohol, hence the *but* clause contradicts this assumption.

Moreover, there are many cases of *but* utterances in which *but* is preceded by a segment and the assumption that the speaker intends the hearer to eliminate is not derived from

the segment preceding *but;* it is simply "an assumption that the speaker has reason to believe is manifest to the hearer"[3], Blakemore (2002: 109). Consider Blakemore's example in (18).

(18)   There's a pizza in the fridge, but leave some for tomorrow.

In (18), *but* is preceded by an utterance, yet, still, the assumption that the *but* clause contradicts is not derived from the preceding utterance itself. The contradicted assumption in (18) is an assumption that the speaker has in their knowledge about the hearer. For example, the speaker has some reasons to believe the hearer can eat the whole pizza. A similar analysis can be applied to utterance initial uses of *but*. Consider the earlier example of (5), repeated below for convenience.

(5)   A: I am going to the cinema tonight.

        B: But you have an assignment due next week.

In (5), what the *but* clause seems to contradict is the assumption that A is free to do what they like tonight. This assumption is not derived from A's utterance. It is derived from B's knowledge that A has an assignment combined with the assumption that if one has an assignment due, they should spend the evenings working on it. Hence, we find that the initial uses of *but,* whether they occur in utterance or discourse initial position, can be explained by Blakemore's account of *but,* for that, according to

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[3] I have indicated earlier that Blakemore (2002) amends her account and argues that the contradicted assumption needs to be accessible, not necessarily manifest. However, in this extract the contradicted assumption seems to be manifest. There is no contradiction here as manifestness is stricter that accessibility. In other words, a manifest assumption is accessible, but not vice versa. In this specific example in (4), the assumption seems manifest. For a definition of manifestness see section (2.5).

Blakemore, the assumption that *but* eliminates should not necessarily be derivable from a previous discourse.

3.3.1.4   Correction *but*

The correction use of *but* refers to utterances similar to example (3), repeated below for convenience.

(3)   Kim did not go to London, but to Paris.

As is indicated earlier, Anscombre and Ducrot (1977) argue that the *but* used for correction, as in (3), is different from the *but* used for denial of expectation.[4] However, Blakemore (2002) claims that her proposed account of *but* works for the correction use as well. She argues that the difference between the correction use of *but* and the denial use of *but* is attributed to the linguistic environment of the utterance. In other words, the linguistic property of the utterance is the prime factor that allows for the correction reading of *but* and that the encoded meaning of correction *but* is compatible with the procedural meaning of contradicting and eliminating an assumption.

She argues (2002: 111) that if *but* guides the hearer to interpret what follows as a contradiction and elimination of an assumption, then there must be an assumption manifest to the hearer that is contradictory to the assumption that the speaker is communicating. Blakemore claims that, in (19) below, the assumption that the *but* segment contradicts is the one in (20).

(19)   He is not clever, but hardworking.
(20)   He is clever.

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[4] A detailed discussion of their account follows in section (3.3.4)

She argues that the assumption in (20) is presumed to be manifest to the hearer provided that the first segment is relevant as a contradiction of the assumption in (20). She explains that *but* is making the interpretation of elimination and contradiction of an assumption salient not only for the segment it introduces, but also for the preceding segment, i.e. by the use of *but*, the speaker is making the assumption in (20) manifest to the hearer to interpret the preceding and the following segments as a contradiction of this assumption. Thus, for Blakemore, the only difference between the denial of expectation *but* and the correction *but* is that in the case of correction *but* "the interpretation of each of its segments involves an inferential procedure that results in the contradiction and elimination of the same assumption", (Blakemore, 2002: 112). In other words, both segments play the same role.

Blakemore's argument that *but* encodes a general meaning that accounts for all it uses and that the correction reading is available because of the linguistic environment of the utterance seems in a way similar to Urgelles-coll's (2010) account of *anyway*. Urgelles-Coll (2010) studies the syntax and semantics of *anyway* within the theoretical frame work of Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar (HPSG). While *anyway* seems to have a discourse marker use and other different uses that are considered adverbial, she argues that *anyway* has a general common meaning and even its adverbial uses appear to have a discourse connectivity property and can be considered discourse connectives. She contends that the different interpretations or discourse effects that *anyway* can have depend on its position in the sentence. In other words, its position in the sentence has a secondary effect that affects the interpretation of the discourse.

3.3.2   Hall's account

Hall (2004) disagrees with Blakemore (2002) that the meaning of *but* lies in the contradiction and elimination of an assumption. Instead, she posits an analysis of *but* that appears to be very similar to Iten (2000) account of *although*. Hall's main objection to Blakemore's account is that there is a straightforward link between discourse connectives and cognitive effects, i.e. that *but* directly encodes the cognitive effect of contradiction and elimination. According to Hall (2004) the function of *but* is to guide the hearer not to draw a potential conclusion that they could be expected to draw. In other words, she (2004: 30) argues that the constraint that *but* encodes is: "suspend an inference that would result in a contradiction with what follows." While Hall (2004) claims that her account can better explain the various interpretations of the main uses of *but*, she says that her account is far from complete as it needs more thought on correction *but*. Iten (2005) argues that it seems that Hall's account of 'cutting off' an inference entails the denial account, but not vice versa. This is because "inferences always yield assumptions (conclusions), but denial does not presuppose that the denied assumption must have been inferred in the context", (2005: 155). Iten (2005) discusses Hall's account in detail and she argues that it does not provide a better explanation than the contradiction and elimination of a manifest assumption account, especially with regards to correction examples. For this reason, I will not discuss Hall's account any further.

3.3.3   Foolen's account

Another account of *but* which assumes that the different uses of *but* can all be reduced to one meaning, is Foolen's (1991). Although Foolen's account is not presented within

the theoretical framework of RT, he adopts a functional account of *but*, it shares a number of similarities with Blakemore's account. Foolen argues that all *but* uses can be explained by the denial of expectation meaning. He provides strong evidence for how the so-called contrast *but* in English does not encode the meaning of contrast. In his paper, Foolen (1991) provides a theoretical review of the different traditions available in the literature on adversative particles. He considered data from the literature from different languages, namely English, Hebrew, German, and Russian. I focus only on his discussion of the English examples. For the English particle *but*, he identifies different uses similar to those discussed earlier in section (3.2). These are contrast (or what he calls semantic opposition), denial of expectation and correction uses. Similar to Blakemore's (2002) argument, he argues that the contrastive meaning that is often associated with *but* is a result of analysing these utterances out of context. He provided the following set of examples to explain his point.

(21)   A: John and Peter don't live in the same place, do they?

    B: No, John lives in Amsterdam and (??but) Peter lives in Rotterdam.

(22)   A: John and Peter both live in Amsterdam, don't they?

    B: No, John (indeed) lives in Amsterdam but (??and) Peter lives in Rotterdam.

(231)   A: Where do John and Peter live?

    B: Well, John lives in Amsterdam and/but Peter lives in Rotterdam.

In the example of (21), Foolen mentions that the use of *but* seems odd in (21B) because what follows *and* is in accordance with the expectations generated by the first segment. Therefore, the use of *but* here seems inappropriate. This, in fact, is akin to Blakemore's

(2002) argument. However, *but* is acceptable in (22B) while the use of *and* is not. This is because what is communicated by the *but*-segment is opposite to the expectation created by the context. However, in (23B) where the context does not help in creating any expectation, it is possible to use either *but* or *and*. It mainly depends on what the speaker assumes is expected by the hearer. When the speaker B uses *but*, it means that B acknowledges that A has an expectation that both John and Peter live together, and thus the speaker intends to contradict this expectation. On the other hand, if B uses *and* then no suggestion about A's expectations is made. Accordingly, Foolen argues that the contrast use of *but* is in fact just a case of denial of expectation *but*.

With regard to the correction use of *but*, Foolen (1991: 87) states the following:

> What is done in this construction correction, is a quotation (a quasi-quotation), in the first conjunct, of a linguistic expression that has been used or (is suggested as having been used) in the previous discourse, which is then replaced by the form in the second conjunct.

In other words, he argues that cases of correction *but* are a metalinguistic use which is an exploitation of the primary meaning of *but*, i.e. the denial of expectation. According to him, in the correction use of *but*, what the second conjuncts denies is the possible expectation had the assertion in the first conjunct been true. However, he did not elaborate further, but like Blakemore, he believes that the different uses of *but* in English can be maintained within the 'one core meaning' account.

3.3.4   Anscombre and Ducrot's account

Anscombre and Ducrot (1977), argue that the English *but*, like the French *mais,* is ambiguous between two distinct meanings: the denial of expectation meaning as in (5), and the correction meaning as in (6), repeated below for convenience.

(5)   John is Republican but he is honest.   (G. Lakoff 1971: 67)

(6)   I didn't buy a blue shirt but a black dress.

According to A&D, the denial of expectation *but* and the correction *but* translate, respectively, into 'aber'/*'sondern'* in German as in (24) below, and into *'pero'/'sino'* in Spanish as in (25).

(24)   (a)   Das ist nicht meine Schwester, <u>aber</u> (es ist) meine Mutter.

That's not my sister, but it is my mother.

(b)   Das ist nicht meine Schwester, <u>sondern</u> meine Mutter.

That's not my sister but my mother.

(25)   (a)   No es mi hermana, <u>pero</u> es mi madre.

That's not my sister, <u>but</u> it is my mother.

(b)   No es mi hermana, <u>sino</u> mi madre.

That's not my sister <u>but</u> my mother.

They further argue that *but,* as well as *mais* in French, receives a correction reading when the following conditions apply:

In utterances where correction *but* connects two sentences *P* and *Q*:

i. *P* is a negative clause that has the form of *not P'*. In other words, the first clause must contain an explicit unincorporated negation in the sense that it does not take the form of a negative prefix. Consider the difference between (26) and (27) below.

(26)   It is not ambiguous but vague.   (correction)

(27)   It is **un**ambiguous but vague.   (denial of expectation)

ii. Any shared linguistic materials between the two clauses should be deleted from the second clause. For example, while what follows *but* in (28) can only receive a correction reading, it is understood as a denial of expectation in (29).

(28)   He does not own a house but a flat.   (correction)

(29)   He does not own a house, but he owns a flat.   (denial of expectation)

iii. *Q* has to refute *P'* directly. *Q* should be able to replace *P'* in the sense that the speaker considers *Q* and *P'* incompatible with each other.

However, in their account, A&D do not discuss the kind of utterances that involve a special use of negation, i.e. these of the form *not X but Y* as in (30) below, which can be paraphrased using the ordinary use of negation, as in (31).

(30)   He went not to London but to Paris.

(31)   He didn't go to London but to Paris.

I am calling this use of negation in (30) special because it seems to be acceptable only when it is paired with *but*[5]. Horn (1989: 403-4) also discusses these cases of correction

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[5] In English, we cannot say **He went not to London.*

but. He argues that the correction *but* constructions have the form of *not X but Y* as in (32), functioning as a single constituent within a sentence.

(32)   We have **not** three children **but** four.

Additionally, he argues that these constructions "may often be paraphrased by a metalinguistic negation which is contracted onto the preceding copula or auxiliary element", as in (33).

(33)   We do**n't** have three children **but** four.

By this, Horn (1989) agrees with A&D (1977) who also argue that the negation in the correction *but* constructions is metalinguistic. However, while metalinguistic negation often appears in correction *but* utterances, the negation in correction *but* utterances needs not be metalinguistic. I return to discuss this point further in section (3.4) below.

3.3.5   Iten's account

In her 2005 work, Iten opts for a monosemy account of *but.* She presents a critique of A&D's account and argues against an ambiguity analysis that posits there are two different *buts*. In the following, I first present Iten's critique of A&D's account and then proceed to discuss her relevance theory-based analysis.

3.3.5.1   Against ambiguity

Iten (2005) criticises Anscombre and Ducrot's ambiguity account and provides an alternative RT-based account of *but* that is very close, in terms of analysis, to Blakemore's (2002). While she seems to agree with A&D on certain points, she disagrees with their main idea that *but* is ambiguous. She (2005: 127) argues:

If *but* is linguistically ambiguous between denial and correction, there should

be at least some genuinely ambiguous sentences containing *but*. If this is not

the case, there are still two options: either *but* is not ambiguous or the two

senses of *but* must serve different syntactic functions.

She states that, according to A&D's analysis, there are two *buts* with two different

syntactic distributions. From this, it follows that there are no ambiguous sentences

containing *but* as each *but* requires different distribution. However, Iten (2005: 128)

gives the example in (34) below, claiming that it is ambiguous between two readings.

(34)   He is not good-looking but successful.

She argues that in (34) both readings of *but*, denial of expectation and correction, are

possible if rightly contextualised although out of context the correction meaning is

harder to get. Therefore, she claims, contrary to what A&D claim, it is not necessary for

any utterance involving explicit unincorporated negation in the first conjunct and

ellipsis in the second to receive a correction interpretation. Accordingly, she assumes

that utterances such as (34) provide evidence that what A&D argue with regard to the

syntactic differences between correction *but* and denial *but* is not as clear-cut as they

claim. Instead, Iten (2005: 129) argues that the denial reading is always available for all

utterances of *but*, whereas the correction reading is only possible where there is an

unincorporated negation in the part of utterance preceding *but.* In other words,

according to Iten the denial reading is always available alongside the correction

reading, regardless of whether we have a clause after *but* or less than a clause. Hence,

following her argument, the chosen reading depends primarily on the context rather

than the syntactic properties of the co-text. The context that Iten (2005: 128) suggests for (34) to receive a correction reading is the following: "A and B are convinced that all male American soap opera characters are either good-looking or successful. They are discussing which characters fall into which category", as in (35).

(35)   A: JR is good-looking.

B: He is not good-looking but successful.

In the correction use of *but*, we are generally dealing with alternative answers which couldn't both be true at the same time. In cases such as (35) above, the speaker and the hearer have the assumption that there are two incompatible categories that the American soap opera characters belong to; i.e. they do not belong to both categories at same time. On the other hand, the denial reading is available in a context where there is the assumption that if one is not good looking, they cannot be successful, hence the *but-*segment contradicts this assumption.

By the same token, Iten claims that the correction meaning is also available when there is unincorporated negation in the first segment, and *but* is followed by a clause as in (36).

(36)   Mary did not fail the exam, but her name was at the top of the pass list.

Again, she argues that (36) can receive both the denial and correction readings, each in the right context, although out of context, according to her, the more available reading is the correction one. The denial reading is available in a context where it is believed that failing an exam and appearing at the top of the pass list are embarrassing. So, Mary didn't have one embarrassment, but she had another.

However, Iten's argument that the denial reading is always available in all *but* utterances is not accurate. There are cases of *but* where it is not possible to argue for a denial reading. These are cases of *but* preceded by special use of negation, which I referred to in section (3.3.3) above, as in (11), repeated below.

>   (11)   He went not to London but to Paris.

The only available reading in (11) is the correction reading. Iten does not address examples as the one in (11), and for which she would need to offer an alternative explanation. Additionally, to derive the correction reading in (36), many native speakers will drop *but*, as in (37).

>   (37)   Mary did not fail the exam. Her name was at the top of the pass list.

In general, Iten argues against A&D's (1977) claim that the syntactic differences between correction *but* and denial *but* are clear-cut. Additionally, although she argues there are utterances of *but* where the reading of correction and denial, according to her, are both available, she seems to exclude the possibility that *but* is lexically ambiguous. She maintains that the correction reading is only available by virtue of context and proposes a relevance-theoretic account of *but* that treats *but* as having a unified meaning.

3.3.5.2   Iten's account of *but*

In her proposed account, Iten agrees with Blakemore (1987, 2002) and Foolen (1991) that *but* is not ambiguous. She posits (2005: 147) that *but* has a single meaning; it encodes the following procedure:

"What follows (Q) contradicts and eliminates an assumption that is manifest

in the context".

Although in the case of correction *bu*t the assumption has already been contradicted

and eliminated, Iten argues that her account still works for the correction use. This

means that there is no contrast or correction *but*, and the different uses of *but* can all be

reduced to one core meaning of *but,* which is the contradiction and elimination of a

manifest assumption.

The procedural meaning she proposes for *but* is largely compatible with Blakemore's

(2002), mainly with regards to the denial and the contrast uses of *but*. Her analysis is not

much different from the one provided by Blakemore. She agrees with Blakemore (2002)

and Foolen (1991) that the contrast use of *but* is a special use of the denial *but.* The only

difference between her analysis and Blackmore's concerns the correction use. While

Blakemore argues that the contradicted assumption needs to be accessible, Iten (2005)

argues that it must be manifest rather than accessible. By this condition, i.e. that the

assumption must be manifest, Iten claims that her analysis provides a better account of

the correction use of *but* than Blakemore's . However, we find out in Chapter (4) that,

although I do not agree with Iten that the correction *but* is the same as the denial *but,* I

do agree with her on the fact that the contradicted assumption should be manifest in the

case of denial *but.*

For Iten, in order to account for the correction use by the procedural meaning

mentioned above, she argues that "even in correction cases, *but* is used if the speaker

thinks there is a danger that an 'undesirable' assumption could be manifest to the

hearer", (pp. 149-50). In other words, the function of *but* is to contradict and eliminate this manifest assumption. To support her argument, she gives the following example:

(38)   That's not my sister but my mother.

She argues that this kind of utterance is normally uttered in a context such as (39) below; i.e. as a reply to another speaker.

(39)   A: Your sister looks a lot like you.

B: That's not my sister but my mother.

She mentions that, in B's reply, despite the negative assertion in the first conjunct, 'that is not my sister', there is still a chance for what she calls 'undesirable' assumption that could be manifest to the hearer; namely that the woman who is referred to is still A's sister. She claims that the negation used in the first part of B's utterance might not be strong enough to eliminate the hearer's belief that the woman is A's sister. In other words, she claims that the first clause on its own might not be believed. Therefore, the *but*-segment provides the evidence that eliminates and contradicts the hearer's 'undesirable manifest assumption', as it is very unlikely if not impossible for a woman to be someone's mother and sister at the same time. However, to argue that the contradicted assumption is still manifest or even weakly manifest is not justifiable when it has already been explicitly contradicted.

3.4   Metalinguistic negation and correction *but*

We have seen that Horn (1989), Anscombre and Ducrot (1977), and Foolen (1991), have made a correlation between correction *but* and metalinguistic negation. They argue that

the negation involved in correction *but* utterances is metalinguistic. This correlation was first noted by Horn (1989), and since then it has been discussed greatly in the literature. My aim here is not to provide an account of metalinguistic negation, but rather to investigate the type of negation in correction *but* utterances. For a detailed account of metalinguistic negation, however, I refer the reader to Horn (1985, 1989), Burton-Roberts (1989a, 1989b), and Carston (1996).

Horn (1989) argues that negation in natural language is pragmatically ambiguous. He claims that two kinds of negation should be distinguished: descriptive negation and metalinguistic negation. He (1989: 363) posits that metalinguistic negation is

> a device for objecting to a previous utterance on any grounds whatever, including the conventional or conversational implicata it potentially induces, its morphology, its style or register, or its phonetic realization.

According to Horn, while descriptive negation seems to be truth conditional, metalinguistic negation seems to fall outside the truth propositional content. This distinction can be clearly seen in the following example.

(40)   We didn't see the hippopotamuses.

a. We saw the rhinoceroses.

b. We saw the hippopotami.   (Carston 1996: 310)

In (40), the negation and the following utterance in (a) seem to be consistent. On the other hand, the negation in (b) is to be understood as an objection to the plural morpheme used in *hippopotamuses*. Had the negation been understood descriptively in (b), it would have led to a contradiction. Horn (1989) argues that this difference between

metalinguistic and descriptive negation can be found in the different distributions of *but* conjunctions. He claims that *not X but Y* is the representative frame for metalinguistic negation. He (p. 402) explains that "this construction provides a straightforward way to reject X (on any grounds) and to offer Y as its appropriate rectification." In other words, he claims that the kind of negation in the form of *not X but Y* that yields the corrective reading of *but* is the metalinguistic negation. This claim that the negation in *not X but Y* is always metalinguistic had been opposed by McCawley (1991). McCawley differentiates between what he calls contrastive negation and metalinguistic negation. He argues that contrastive negation takes the form of *not X but Y*. However, contrary to Horn (1989), he states that there is nothing inherently metalinguistic about this form, even if it is often used metalinguistically.[6] Here, I agree with McCawley, as there is nothing metalinguistic about either (41), or (42) below.

(41)   A: Is Sarah an Iraqi?

        B: She is not an Iraqi but a Syrian.

(42)   Kim is not clever, but stupid.

Furthermore, Carston (1996: 322) explains that what distinguishes the metalinguistic negation from the non-metalinguistic one is the implicit echoic use, which she defines as follows:

A representation is used echoically when it reports what someone else has said or thought and expresses an attitude to it.

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[6] McCawley discussed in detail the syntax of the contrastive negation of *not X but Y* and the different forms that it might take, cf. McCawley (1991).

According to Carston, the echoic use of negation does not exclude the truth conditional content from what is being objected to. Let us recall Horn's argument that 'metalinguistic negation is a device for objecting to a previous utterance on any grounds whatever'. While Horn (1989) does not include the truth conditional meaning in the grounds that metalinguistic negation may reject, Carston (1996) argues that ***any ground*** should include even the truth conditional meaning. She (1996: 324) provides evidence for this by implementing the use of polarity items as in (43).

(43)   A: Mary is sometimes late.

B1: She isn't ever late; she's always punctual.

B2: She isn't sometimes late; she's always punctual.

The use of different polarity items reflects the difference between the descriptive use and the echoic (metalinguistic) use of negation. The use of the negative polarity item 'ever' in (B1) indicates the descriptive use of negation, whereas the positive polarity item 'sometimes' in (B2) indicates the echoic use. Yet, the follow-up clause gives evidence that the negation is used as an objection to the truth conditional content. Let us adapt Carston's examples and express the correction meaning by the use of *but*, as follows in (44).

(44)   A: Mary is sometimes late.

B1: She isn't ever late, but always punctual.

B2: She isn't sometimes late, but always punctual.

In (44), both (B1) and (B2) have the form of 'not X but Y'. However, as is just mentioned, the negation in (B1) is descriptive, whereas the negation in (B2) is

metalinguistic. Thus, while metalinguistic negation seems to appear in correction *but* utterances, it is not a prerequisite for the negation to be metalinguistic in such utterances. Consequently, the argument that the correction reading is derived because of the use of metalinguistic negation is not a tenable argument.

3.5   Conclusion

In this chapter, we have discussed a number of accounts of *but.* On the one hand, we have the relevance-theoretic accounts of Blakemore (2002), Hall (2004), and Iten (2205), and Foolen's (1991) functional account. These accounts claim that *but* encodes a unified meaning, i.e. it is not ambiguous. We have seen that Blakemore's (2002) account seem to work for the denial of expectation, contrast and initial uses of *but.* Most importantly, she provides, I believe, a convincing argument that the contrast *but* can be reduced to the denial of expectation use. That is, *but* in these two uses encodes the same procedure. This argument has been also endorsed in Foolen's account. Along the same lines, Iten's (2005) account is very similar to Blakemore's account, except that she disagrees with Blakemore on the nature of the contradicted assumption; i.e. whether it is manifest or accessible. Both Iten and Blakemore claim that their accounts work for the correction use of *but.* We have also seen that Foolen indicates that the correction use can be explained in terms of the denial of expectation meaning. Although he does not explain how, he assumes that the correction reading is the result of a metalinguistic use.

On the other hand, we have Anscombre and Ducrot's account in which they argue that *but* is ambiguous between correction and denial, assuming that these two *buts* have different syntactic distributions. They argue that correction *but* requires an explicit

negation in the first segment, and any shared linguistic materials should be elided. They assume that the type of negation involved in such utterances is metalinguistic. However, we have seen that, while metalinguistic negation often appears in correction *but* utterances, it is not necessary for the negation to be metalinguistic. It also appears that all of the previous accounts neglect the cases of correction *but* that involve a special use of negation. In the following chapter, I discuss in detail the differences between the denial and correction *but* and propose a different account of *but* in which I argue that *but* is ambiguous. That is, it encodes two different procedures.

Chapter 4   The Syntax, Semantics, and Pragmatics of *But*

4.1   Introduction

We have seen in the previous chapter that all uses of *but* (disregarding *but* in e.g. *nobody but Kim*) can be reduced to the denial use, except for the correction *but*, which seems different. In this chapter, I am concerned with whether there are two *buts* or only one. Therefore, the options are either we have one (form of) *but* that has only one meaning which may appear rather different in different contexts, or we have two *but*s with distinct meanings.

To this end, the chapter is structured as follows. Section (4.2) presents the different syntactic forms of utterances in which *but* may appear. Next, section (4.3) highlights some of the differences between the denial use and the correction use in terms of asymmetry of *but* conjuncts and the appropriate context for each use. Then, the following section (4.4) discusses the interaction between correction *but* and focus of negation, in an attempt to further highlight the difference between the denial and correction use of *but*. This is followed by a discussion in section (4.5) of the possible ways to arrive at the correction reading, with or without the use of correction *but*. Next, I highlight in section (4.6) the gaps in both Iten's (2005) and Blakemore's (2002) accounts of correction *but*. After that, a detailed discussion of the underlying syntactic structures of *but* utterances follows in section (4.7). Finally, an alternative relevance-theoretic account of *but* is presented in section (4.8).

4.2   The different syntactic forms of *but* utterances

The reading that an utterance containing *but* can have depends on its structure. Therefore, in order to answer the question raised earlier, I will first preview the different forms that *but* utterances can have [7] and then highlight the semantic differences, if any, among them. First, *but* utterances can take the form in (i) below where it is possible to have a full clause (S), with or without negation, in the first conjunct, and a full clause (S), with or without negation, in the second. All the different combinations of this form are illustrated in (ia-d). The only available reading in (i), however, is the denial reading.

   i.   **S + but + S**

   a. Full positive clause + but + full positive clause.

   b. Full positive clause + but + full negative clause.

   c. Full negative clause + but + full positive clause.

   d. Full negative clause + but + full negative clause.

With this form, we can have examples that express the denial reading only, such as the following.

   (1)   John is a Republican, but he is honest.

   (2)   Kim went to London, but he did not go to Paris.

   (3)   Kim did not go to London, but he went to Paris.

   (4)   Kim is not rich, but he is not generous.[8]

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[7] At this point I am neglecting the fact whether these utterances are said as statements by one speaker or as a reply to another.

[8] (4) is acceptable in a context where the non-rich are assumed to be generous.

It seems that, as long as we have full clauses in both conjuncts, it does not matter whether these clauses are positive or negative; the available reading is the denial of expectation reading. This is not surprising since both positive and negative propositions can give rise to inferences that are not in fact true which can be contradicted by the *but* conjunct.

Second, *but* utterances can have a denial reading where the first conjunct is a full positive clause (S) and the second conjunct is a phrase (XP), as in (ii) below. Nevertheless, the second conjunct is understood as a full clause.

ii.   **S + but + (not) XP**
        Full positive clause + but + (not) a phrase.

Hence, examples (5) and (6) below, which have the form in (ii), have a denial reading.

(5)   Kim lives in London, but only in the outskirts.
(6)   Kim read the article, but slowly.

Also, these examples could not have a correction reading as the content in the second conjunct does not in any way 'correct' the content in the first conjunct, i.e. in (5), living in the outskirt of London is still living in London, and in (6), reading an article slowly is still reading it. As is noticed in (ii), the second conjunct can be affirmative or negative. So, examples such as (7) below also have a denial reading. A detailed explanation of this interpretation follows in section (4.3.1.2), as for now the focus is on the form.

(7)   Kim lives in London, but not in the center.

Third, *but* utterances can have the form in (iii), where we have a correction reading, as example (8) below shows.

iii.   **S […NEG…] + but + XP**

Full negative clause + but + a phrase.

(8)   Kim didn't go to Paris, but to London.

However, as noted in Chapter (3), the correction reading of *but* can involve a special use of negation,[9] thus it can take the form in (iv) below, where X and Y are constituents smaller than a full main clause.

iv.   **S [… [not X but Y]]**

X and Y could be phrases as in example (9), or even subordinate clauses as in (10).[10]

(9)   Kim went not to Paris but to London.

(10)   Kim said not that he was tired but that he was exhausted.

However, it is also important to note that we can have the correction reading without the coordinator *but* at all, as examples (11), (12), and (13) below show.

(11)   Kim went to London, not to Paris.

(12)   Kim went to London; he didn't go to Paris.

(13)   Kim didn't go to Paris; he went to London.

So far it seems that each of the previous forms has one reading only; either denial or correction. However, in Chapter (3), we have seen that Iten (2005) provides an example in which she assumes that both readings of *but* are available. I will refer to her example as Iten's example. I will discuss it in detail in section (4.6.1).

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[9] As we mentioned in Chapter (3), the use of negation in utterances like (9) above is considered a special use of negation since it yields an ungrammatical sentence in a non-coordinate structure as in **Kim went not to Paris*.

[10] The utterances of correction *but* considered in this discussion are cases where both conjuncts are phrases.

4.3   Crucial differences: laying the foundation

We have seen in the previous chapter that all the discussed accounts agree that *but* can be used in examples of both the denial of expectation and correction interpretations. The relevant question is whether there actually are two different *but*s or two different realizations of a single *but*. The fact that the two uses are associated with different structures seems to suggest that there are two different *but*s. In the following I discuss in more details the meaning that the previous forms convey, providing evidence for the difference in meaning between the form of correction *but* utterances and the form of denial *but* utterances.

4.3.1   Asymmetry: denial *but*

It is generally accepted that *but* utterances are asymmetric. That is, by changing the order of *but's* conjuncts, the meaning of the whole utterance changes accordingly. This is not unexpected as the inference that might arise from the first conjunct and be contradicted by what follows *but* will be different. For example consider the difference in meaning between (14) and (15) below, which have the same conjuncts but in a reversed order.

(14)   The ring is beautiful, but it's expensive. [So we shouldn't buy it.]

(15)   The ring is expensive, but it's beautiful. [So we should buy it.]

(Jasinskaja 2012: 1907)

One inference that might arise from the first conjunct in (14) and is contradicted by the second conjunct is that the speaker would like to buy the ring. On the other hand, a possible inference that might arise from the first conjunct in (15) and is contradicted by

the second could be that the speaker would not buy the ring. However, while changing the order of the conjuncts changes the meaning of the utterance (not its truth conditions, though), the procedural meaning encoded by *but* is still the same. This situation is in a way similar to that which involves changing the syntactic order of the arguments of a lexical verb, which results in a change of sentence meaning, but not the meaning of the main verb. For instance, in example (16) below, *chase* retains the same meaning although the two sentences have different meanings (due to the different syntactic positions of the verb's arguments in each sentence).

(16)   (a)   The dog chased the cat.

       (b)   The cat chased the dog.

As we have mentioned in Chapter (3), Blakemore (2002) argues that *but* encodes procedural meaning that guides the inferential process to interpret what follows *but* as contradicting and eliminating an accessible assumption. To this point, the denial use of *but*, especially in the kind of utterances which have full clauses in both conjuncts as in (14) and (15) above, seems to be in line with Blakemore's account.

Let us now consider other forms of *but* utterances discussed in the previous section. We have seen that the derived meaning of *but* in from (ii), i.e. when *but* is followed by a phrase, is also the denial meaning, as examples (17) and (18) below show.

ii.   **S + but + (not) XP**
        Full positive clause + but + (not) a phrase.

Again, the same argument applies here. We notice that this form of *but* utterances is also asymmetrical. Compare (17a) with its reversed order in (17b) and (18a) with its reversed order in (18b).

(17)   (a) Kim is old but handsome.
       (b) Kim is handsome but old.

(18)   (a) Kim is fat but not ugly.
       (b) Kim isn't ugly but fat.

In the above examples, we notice a change in meaning of the utterances. It is almost the opposite meaning derived when we change the order. This is unsurprising, of course, as with denial of expectation *but* we are typically rejecting a possible inference from the preceding utterance. Therefore, it actually does matter whether a conjunct comes before or after *but*. The speaker in (17a) means to say that even if Kim is old, being old is not a disadvantage to Kim because he is handsome. On the other hand, the speaker in (17b) means to say that although Kim is handsome, it is unfortunate that he is old. Despite the change in meaning in the reversed order, *but* still yields the denial meaning. However, the meaning of an utterance of this form that has negation in the second conjunct changes from denial into correction when the order of the conjuncts is reversed, as in (18a) and (18b) respectively. This should not be unexpected, since the form in examples such as (18b), is associated with correction.

4.3.2   Not X but Y ≠ X but not Y

Now, let us consider the utterances in form (iii) which is associated with correction *but.*

iii.   **S [...NEG...] + but + XP**
        Full negative clause + but + a phrase.

In correction utterances such as (8), repeated below, if we change the order of the conjuncts within the same syntactic form,[11] as in (19), the meaning should accordingly change as this is typical of *but* utterances. However, it is not only the meaning of the utterance that changes, but also the meaning of *but* seems to be different.

(8)   Kim didn't go to Paris, but to London.

(19)   Kim went to London, but not to Paris.

In (19), what follows *but* contradicts and eliminates the assumption that Kim went to Paris too. We should make no mistake in considering the meaning of (8) and (19) to be identical. At first glance, they seem to have the same meaning if one does not think carefully about them. However, I argue that the use of *but* in (19) is the typical denial use which is different from its correction use in (8). In (19), the *but*-clause seems to contradict the assumption that if Kim went to London, he would have gone to Paris too. Hence, the *but* used in (19) seems to be the same one used in (18a), repeated below.

(18)   (a) Kim is fat but not ugly.

In (18), the contradicted assumption is that Kim is ugly; an assumption that the speaker assumes is manifest to the hearer. In other words, we are dealing with an assumption that two state of affairs or two events are expected to be true at the same time. In (19), it is assumed that Kim went to London and that Kim went to Paris. However, Kim went to the first place but not to the second. The situation in (8) is different, though. There is an assumption that Kim went just to one notable place. So, it seems that in the case of (8), we are dealing with two alternatives that both cannot be simultaneously true. It is

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[11] We keep the same form because we have seen in section (4.2) that changing the form might change the meaning of the utterance. In other words, we need to ensure that if there is any change in meaning, it is due to semantic reasons, not syntactic ones.

said in a context where Kim went to one place only; either to London or to Paris, but not to both places. Thus, it seems that in the case of correction *but*, once the order of the positive and negative conjuncts is reversed, the correction reading is no longer available. The only available reading, then, is the denial reading.

I have mentioned in section (4.2) that the correction meaning can be derived without the use of *but* as in (11), repeated below. So, in order to have the correction meaning of (8) in the reversed order, we need to drop *but* in (19), as (11) shows.

> (8)   Kim didn't go to Paris, but to London.

> (19)   Kim went to London, but not to Paris.

> (11)   Kim went to London, not to Paris.

If we compare (8) with (11), we notice that they almost have the same meaning; there seems to be no significant semantic difference between them. However, as is mentioned above, *but* in (19) is the denial *but.* We can clearly realize the difference between the correction meaning in (11) and the denial meaning in (19) in the following example by Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 1314).

> (20)   (a) He died in 1984, not 1983.

>   (b) *He died in 1984, but not 1983.

Huddleston and Pullum argue that the meaning of utterances of the form 'X, not Y' is different from 'X but not Y'. This difference in meaning is realized in the anomalous use of *but* in (20b), as it is not possible that the person died in both years. Another piece of evidence that *but* in (8) is different from *but* in (19) is seen in examples such as (21) below.

(21)   (a) Kim is not a man, but a woman.

(b) *Kim is a woman, but not a man.

While changing the order of the conjuncts in (8) above does not affect the acceptability

of the use of *but* in an utterance such as (19), this is not possible for the case in (21). The

semantic anomaly of the utterance in (21b) suggests that this *but* is different from the

one used in (21a). The unacceptability of *but* in (21b) suggests that its encoded meaning

lies in the contradiction and elimination of an assumption, which is different from *but* in

(21a). In (21b), since Kim is a woman, the assumption that Kim is a man is not available.

Thus the use of *but* is unacceptable. Consider the difference between (21b) and (22).

(22)   Kim is a man but not a gentleman.

Similar examples are given by Hall (2004: 225) who argues that the use of *but* is not

always acceptable before *not*, as shown in (23) below. Again, it is clear that the

unacceptability of (23b) suggests that the meaning of *but* here is different from the one

in (23a), and that (23b) is anomalous for the similar reasons in (21b) above.

(23)   (a) Tomorrow is not Tuesday but Monday.
        (b) *Tomorrow is Monday but not Tuesday.

Compare (23b) with (24) below, where the use of *but* is perfectly acceptable.

(24)   Tomorrow is Saturday but not a holiday.

So far, we have seen that correction reading is only available when *but* is preceded by

negation in the first conjunct and followed by a phrase. However, unlike cases of denial

but, once the order of the conjuncts is reversed, the meaning of *but* changes from correction to denial.

For further clarification on the difference between the correction use and denial use of *but*), consider the earlier example of (8) in the context of (25) below.

(25)   A: How was Kim's business trip to Paris?

         B: He didn't go to Paris but to London.

B's reply in (25) is not denying that Kim went on a business trip. The speaker is denying that Kim went to Paris and replacing it by 'to London'. However, this should not be mistaken with cases of denial use of *but* where the hearer has an expectation that one thing is only true, as in (26).

(26)   A: Did Kim go to Paris?

         B: He didn't go to Paris, but he went to London.

The speaker in (26A) might ask this question in a context where they have no assumption that Kim might have gone to another place other than Paris, i.e. it is the case either that Kim went to Paris or not. However, the speaker in (26B) uses *but* to contradict and eliminate the assumption that Kim did not go anywhere else which might be derived from the first conjunct. So, the key difference between the context of (25) and (26) is that, in the case of correction *but,* we have the assumption that only one possible alternative from a set of alternatives is true; it could be an event or a state of affair. This is very similar to A&D's argument discussed in the previous chapter in section (3.3.3). However, in the case of denial *but,* we are dealing with an assumption that two alternatives can be true at the same time.

4.4   Correction *but* and focus of negation

An important aspect of correction *but* is that it interacts with the focus of negation in the preceding conjunct. What immediately follows *but* provides a correction or a replacement for the segment that is denied by the negation. In other words, *but* segment highlights the focus of the negation in the preceding segment. As I mentioned previously, all the discussed accounts of *but* in Chapter (3) do not discuss utterances of *but* that contain special use of negation, as in the earlier example of (9), repeated below for convenience.

(9)   Kim went not to Paris but to London.

We have seen before that the use of *not* in (9) becomes ungrammatical if *but* is dropped, as example (27) below shows. This is why I am referring to it as the special use of negation.

(27)   * Kim went not to Paris.

If we compare correction *but* involving the special use of negation in (9) with those involving ordinary negation as in (8), we notice that the meaning seems the same.

(9)   Kim went not to Paris but to London.
(8)   Kim didn't go to Paris, but to London.

In the case of special use of negation in (9) above, what is negated is clearly not the verb, it is the destination, 'to Paris'. In (8), we have sentential negation. According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 796-7), sentential negation can have different foci. The focus of negation is the part of the scope of negation that is prominently or explicitly

negated. Consider the first conjunct in (8) alone, i.e. without the *but*-segment as in (28) and its positive counterpart in (29) below.

> (28)   Kim didn't go to Paris.

> (29)   Kim went to Paris.

(28) is true only in circumstances where (29) is false. According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 797), (29) has the following truth conditions in (30).

> (30)   i. An act of going took place.
>
>   ii. Someone called Kim did the going.
>
>   iii. There is a place called Paris and Kim went to it.

If any of (30i-iii) is false, then (28) is true. Thus, if (30iii) is not true, then (28) is true. Therefore, the negation in (28) is relatively uninformative, as it could be the falsity of any of the conditions in (30) the reason for the negation. The use of stress could make it clearer. However, once (28) is said as part of the utterance in (8), i.e. followed by *but* segment, the focus of the negation is understood to be on (30iii). It would be impossible to consider the focus of negation in (8) to be on the event of going. We have seen earlier that (8) has to be said in a context where Kim is expected to have visited one place only, i.e. there is one event of going is expected to take place. So, what is negated is the destination that Kim went to, not the event itself.

We can say that in the case of correction *but* involving the special use of negation, the focus of negation is made explicit by virtue of the special use of negation, as explained in (9) above. However, the focus of negation is made explicit by the use of correction *but* in utterances that involve ordinary sentential negation, as explained in (8). Either way,

in both cases of correction *but,* i.e. with special negation and with ordinary negation, what follows correction *but* replaces the element focused by negation in the segment preceding *but*.

4.5   Correction: with *but* and without *but*

The question that one might ask at this point is whether there is any difference in meaning between (9) and (11), repeated below.

(9)   Kim went not to Paris but to London.

(11)   Kim went to London, not to Paris.

While both utterances seem to give the correction meaning, there might be a slight difference in meaning between them. The order in (11) seems to help in deriving a contextual implication. In other words, in the context of (11), the fact that Kim went to London is seen as the reason why he did not go to Paris (in a context where one trip to one destination is taking place). Compare (11) with (31) when *therefore* or *so* is used instead.

(31)   a. Kim went to London; therefore, not to Paris.

b. Kim went to London, so not to Paris.

If we know that Kim went to one place only, the fact that he went to London entails that he didn't go to Paris. On the other hand, in (9), the fact that Kim didn't go to Paris doesn't entail that he went to London. Hence, the importance of *but* segment in (9) is to provide the correct alternative.

4.6   Issues with Blakemore and Iten's accounts

4.6.1   Iten's example

It appears, so far, that the denial meaning of *but* and the correction meaning are each

associated with different syntactic structures. However, as is pointed out in Chapter (3),

Iten (2005: 128) argues that utterances such as (32) below are ambiguous between two

readings: the denial and the correction, each in a different context.

(32)   He is not good-looking but successful.

At first glance, it seems that *but* in (32) is preceded by a full negative clause and

followed by a phrase. This example seems to have form (iii) that is associated with the

correction reading, as is seen in section (4.2) above. All the utterances of this form that

we have discussed so far seem to have the correction reading only, i.e. they are not

ambiguous. The relevant question here is why is (32) different from superficially rather

similar examples like (8), i.e. why does Iten consider the example in (32) ambiguous?

(8)   Kim didn't go to Paris but to London.

What we have in (32) seems to be a case of subclausal coordination where *not* is a

modifier of *good-looking* and hence part of the first conjunct, (not good-looking), i.e. not

a sentential negation. This might look a little like example (33) below.

(33)   She is unattractive but successful.

Therefore, it might be suggested that the reason for this difference in meaning between

(32) and (8) is due to the type of the verb used in each utterance. While we have a lexical

verb in (8), the copula in (32) makes it more complicated for an analysis of the scope of

not. In other words, the negation in (32) can be analysed in two ways. It could be either a modifier for *good*-looking and in this case we have denial reading or it could be sentential negation and in this case we have correction reading. Consequently, it seems conceivable why Iten (2005) assumes that the example in (32) can have both denial and correction readings. This will be explained in more details in section (4.7).

4.6.2   Blakemore's account of correction

We have seen in Chapter (3) that Blakemore (2002: 112) argues that the only difference between the denial use and the correction use of *but* is that in the case of correction use, both conjuncts involve inferential processes that result in the contradiction and elimination of the same assumption. Hence, according to Blakemore, in utterances such as (8) below both conjuncts contradict and eliminate the assumption that Kim went to Paris.

(8)   Kim didn't go to Paris, but to London.

Blakemore argues that in correction cases what *but* contradicts is an accessible assumption. In the case of (8), it is the assumption that is 'Kim went to Paris' which is contradicted. According to Blakemore, the fact that this assumption has already been contradicted in the first conjunct doesn't necessarily mean that it is not accessible.

As is discussed earlier in section (4.2), example (11) is not the only way in which we can have the correction reading in (8) without the use of *but*.

(8)   Kim didn't go to Paris, but to London.

(11)   Kim went to London, not to Paris.

We can also have the correction reading in (12) and (13) below when we have two full clauses in either order.

    (12)   Kim didn't go to Paris. He went to London.

    (13)   Kim went to London. He did not go to Paris.

It is very important to mention here that if we use *but* in the previous examples, the correction meaning will be lost. Consider the examples in (34) and (35) below.

    (34)   Kim didn't go to Paris, but he went to London.

    (35)   Kim went to London, but he didn't go to Paris.

Here, an expectation that two events could be true becomes available; hence, this assumption is contradicted by the *but* clause. This is expected as we have already seen earlier that when *but* coordinates two full clauses, the available reading is the denial one. Whereas in examples (8) and (11) above, the assumption is that only one event is true. The key point here is if *but* in the correction case introduces a segment that contradicts an assumption that has already been contradicted as is argued by Blakemore above, why cannot an example such as (34) be interpreted as a case of correction? In her work, Blakemore (2002) refers to cases similar to (34), as the one in (36) below. She explains that it is due to the linguistic environment in such sequence that *but* does not receive a correction reading, in other words, because there is no shared materials between the two clauses to allow for conjunction reduction.

    (36)   I haven't got any homework, but the teachers want us to cover our books.

She argues that while it is possible to think of a context where the speaker of (36) intends to contradict the hearer's assumption that they had homework and replace it by

the assumption that the teacher wants the students to cover their books, example (36),

still, cannot receive a correction interpretation. The reason for this is explained by

Blakemore (2002: 112) as follows:

> The correction interpretation is ruled out due to the fact that the two
> clauses share no linguistic material at all, and hence that there is not an
> appropriate linguistic environment for the conjunction reduction, which,
> as we have seen, characterizes correction uses of *but* in English.

However, Blakemore did not address cases of correction that involve a special use of

negation. As will be discussed in section (4.7.4), there is no conjunction reduction in

these cases. I will show that they involve a subclausal coordination.

It seems that despite the fact that *but* can only be associated with correction in a very

limited range of syntactic contexts, Blakemore claims that correction and denial are two

uses of the same *but.* In the following, I discuss the syntactic structure of the different

forms that *but* utterances can have, showing evidence that conjunction reduction cannot

account for all sorts of data of correction *but.* Then, in section (4.8), I will discuss in

detail, from a relevance-theoretic perspective, the difference between the two *buts,*

showing that the differences are not restricted to syntactic distributions. In fact, there is

also a difference in the encoded meaning.

4.7   Syntactic Structure

It becomes clear that Blakemore does not look closely enough at the syntax of *but*

utterances. She simply refers to the fact that the correction use is possible when there

are shared materials between the two conjuncts of *but* that allow for conjunction

reduction. This seems to be a way of highlighting the fact that what follows *but* in

correction cases is not a full clause. I have already identified, in section (4.2), the different forms that *but* utterances can have and the different meanings associated with each one of them. In this section, my aim is to examine the underlying syntactic structure of the different forms that *but* utterances take in order to derive the generalisations that license each interpretation. I now turn to discuss each form separately.

4.7.1   Form (i. S + but + S

First of all, the structure of the utterances of *but* in form (i) is clearly a clausal coordination structure that consists of two full clauses, i.e. there is no ellipsis. No matter whether these clauses involve negation or not, the only available reading is the denial reading. In other words, the negation is not a prerequisite for the denial reading, as (37) below shows.

> (37)   I would like to go for a walk, but I am too tired.

While the structure here seems simple and straightforward, the picture gets more complicated in the rest of the forms.

4.7.2   Form (ii. S + but + (not) XP

Full positive clause + but + (not) Utterances of *but* of the form (ii) can appear with or without negation in the second conjunct, as in (38).

> (38)   (a) Kim lives in London, but not in the center.
>
>   (b) Kim is clever but rude.

It seems that (38) can have two different structures. One possibility is that (38) is a case of clausal coordination with ellipsis in the second conjunct, as (39) below shows.

(39)   (a) Kim lives in London, but ~~he does~~ not ~~live~~ in the center.

(b) Kim is clever but ~~he is~~ rude.

The other possibility, on the other hand, is that (38) has a subclausal coordinate structure, as the clefting test[12] shows that 'in London but not in the center', as in (40a), and 'clever but rude', as in (40b), are each a constituent.

(40)   (a) It is in London but not in the center where Kim lives.

(b) It is clever but rude who Kim is.

However, other examples that have the same form in (ii), such as (41) below, which seem similar to (38), can only have a clausal coordination structure with ellipsis.

(41)   Her son went to Paris, but not her husband.

This can only receive an elliptical clause analysis because *her husband* is understood as the subject. In other words, 'to Paris but not her husband' cannot be a constituent, as (42) shows.

(42)   *It was to Paris but not her husband that her son went.

Additionally, we have examples of the same form where the only possible structure is that of subclausal coordination, as (43) below clearly shows.

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[12] In simple terms, clefting (or a cleft construction), which is used to emphasise a particular 'element' in a sentence, involves moving a word or a sequence of words in a sentence and placing it within the frame of 'it is/was ……. who/that/which/etc.' Only constituents can appear in this frame.

(43)   (a) We have bought a small but cozy house.

(b) An old fashioned but beautiful design was painted on the wall.

In (43), we cannot argue for an ellipsis analysis. We have seen in (38) that it is possible to argue for a clausal coordination and ellipsis analysis because the first conjunct 'Kim lives in London' looks like a full clause. However in (43), it is not possible to argue that the first conjunct of *but* is a clause because 'We have bought a small' is clearly not a full clause. The only possible analysis here, however, is that 'small' is the first conjunct and 'cozy' is the second. That is to say, (43a) has a subclausal coordinate structure, which is 'small but cozy'. The same is true for (43b). In other words the type of the conjuncts and the position of the coordinate structure in (38) make it possible to have two different structures. So, it seems that utterances of denial *but* in the form (ii) could involve either subclausal coordination or clausal coordination with ellipsis. Some examples seem to have two possible analyses, as in (38), and others to have only one, as in (41) and (43). Accordingly, the denial *but* seems to coordinate not only full clauses but also constituents smaller than clauses.

Vicente (2010) presented an argument that is very close to this generalization. He (2010: 385) argues that denial *but*, or counterexpectational *but* as he calls it, "allows its conjuncts to be smaller than clauses." In general, it appears that the denial *but* is available in clausal coordination without ellipsis as in form (i), and in clausal coordination with ellipsis, and in subclausal coordinate structure as in form (ii).

4.7.3   Form (iii): S [...NEG...] + but + XP

So far, it has become clear that utterances of form (iii) are associated with correction reading. Vicente (2010) says that the semantic difference mentioned in the literature between two types of *but*, namely correction *but* and denial of expectation *but*, is also translated into different syntax for each of these two *buts*. He highlights the fact that one of the most prominent characteristics of the correction *but* is that the negation in the first conjunct is a prerequisite. He (2010: 383) argues:

> It is the denial of the first conjunct plus the assertion of the second that
> creates the corrective reading.

This is very similar to what has, so far, been argued for, and it is also in line with A&D's argument that I have discussed previously in section (3.3.3). It is semantically clear that in correction *but* utterances, such as (8), the negation has scope over what precedes *but* only. The meaning of (8) is that Kim did not go to Paris. He went to London.

(8)   Kim didn't go to Paris, but to London.

So, it seems that 'to Paris but to London' cannot be a subclausal coordinate structure, as (44) below shows.

(44)   *It is to Paris but to London where Kim didn't go.

A possible explanation for why the negation in (8) scopes over the first conjunct only is that we have a coordination of two clauses where the second clause is elliptical. Consider the following.

(8)′   Kim didn't go to Paris, but ~~he went~~ to London.

Such an analysis is based on the generally accepted idea that negation in the first clause of clausal coordination does not scope over the second clause. Vicente (2010) maintains such an analysis for the structure in (8). Accordingly, he (2010: 385) claims that correction *but* always requires a clausal coordination:

Corrective *but* always requires its conjuncts to be full clauses.

By this, he claims that correction *but* does not coordinate anything smaller than clauses. However, Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 1313) argue that in (46) below, 'Jill but her husband' is a coordinate structure although the negation is not expressed within the coordination itself.

(46)   They had not invited [Jill but her husband].

Yet, they do not elaborate further on this matter. Whether these utterances involve a clausal coordination or subclausal coordination is a controversial matter that I leave open for future research. What is important to stress, however, is the fact that in correction *but* utterances negation is a prerequisite in the first conjunct.

4.7.4   Form (iv): Not X but Y

We have seen in section (4.2) that correction *but* can appear in utterances that involve special use of negation, as in (9), repeated below.

(9)   Kim went not to Paris but to London.

We referred to this form as *not* X *but* Y, where X and Y are constituents smaller than a clause. The fact that the special use of *not* in (9) seems to be acceptable when in coordination with *but* might suggest that *not … but* is a correlative coordinator similar

to *either … or* and *neither … nor*. Accordingly, 'not to Paris but to London' seems to be a subclausal coordinate structure. This structure can be seen in examples (47), (48) and (49) below.

(47)   We sent [not Kim but Lee] to the meeting.

(48)   I read [not his book but his paper].

(49)   [Not Kim but Lee] won the prize.

However, Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 1313) highlight some issues with such an analysis. They argue that *not* cannot be a marker of correlative coordination for the following reasons. First, the fact that *not* can be repeated in (50) below makes the similarity with the other correlative coordinators only partial.

(50)   What she needs may be not criticism, not advice, but simply encouragement.

They further argue that what we have in (50) is a layered coordination. One layer consists of asyndetic coordination[13] of *not criticism* and *not advice* as its coordinates. The other layer is coordinated by *but* and it has *not criticism, not advice* as the first conjunct and *simply encouragement* as the second. Furthermore, *not* in (50) can be preceded by *and* as shown in (51), which gives evidence that *not* cannot be a coordinator, as we cannot have two coordinating conjunctions adjacent to each other.

(51)   What she needs may be not criticism, **and** not advice, but simply encouragement.

---

[13] Asyndetic coordination is a coordination where the conjuncts are coordinated without the use of a coordinator.

However, the fact that *not* cannot be a marker of correlative coordination does not mean that the coordination is not subclausal. What follows from their argument is that *not* is a modifier of the first conjunct. While correction *but* utterances with ordinary negation seem to involve clausal coordination with ellipsis, the correction reading seems to appear in subclausal coordinate structures as well, as is the case in *not* X *but* Y. This is contrary to Vicente's earlier claim that correction *but* always requires its conjuncts to be full clauses. Accordingly, one cannot argue here that there is a conjunction reduction in correction *but* utterances. Thus, Blakemore's argument that correction *but* is only available when there is conjunction reduction does not account for these kind of examples.

4.8   RT account of correction *but*

So far, we have identified a number of syntactic differences between the denial *but* and the correction *but*. It does now seem clear that correction *but* is only possible in a certain syntactic environment. In the following, my aim is to elaborate further on the observations that I have established so far, not only from a syntactic point of view, but also from a relevance-theoretic perspective. Before I provide an account for the correction *but* within RT, I first preview Blakemore and Carston's (2005) account of *and-*utterances. I will show that the function of correction *but* conjuncts and the function of *and* conjuncts seem to share some similarities. However, they differ in some other respects.

4.8.1   *And* utterances

In their account of *and*-utterances, Blakemore and Carston (2005: 573) provide the following argument:

> an utterance of the form S_i *and* S_{ii} must have at least some cognitive effect in whose derivation both the proposition expressed by S_i and the proposition expressed by S_{ii} play parallel inferential roles.

This account is a modification of Blakemore's (1987) original account of *and*. That is to say, instead of treating the conjoined utterance as referring to one conjunctive explicature that carries optimal relevance, it should be treated in a way that each conjunct can function as an input to an inferential process or processes that lead to the same cognitive effect. In other words, rather than arguing that we have a single conjunctive explicature, we can say that we have three explicatures: one for each conjunct and one for the whole coordination, (Blakemore and Carston 2005: 588). At this point, what is important to us is that each of the *and* conjuncts plays the same role in achieving the intended cognitive effect. That is, both conjuncts function as inputs either to the same inferential process that leads to a certain cognitive effect as in (51) below, or to a distinct inferential process that both of which lead to the same cognitive effect, as in (52).

(51)   Paul is a linguist and he can't spell.

(Blakemore and Carston, 2005: 570)

(52)   Hermione is very beautiful, and (furthermore) she comes from a wealthy family.

(Blakemore and Carston, 2005: 574)

The relevance of (51) lies in the conjunctive explicature where the two conjuncts are true together although there is a conflict or contrast between them. So, both conjuncts are acting as inputs to a single inferential process that leads to the cognitive effect of contrast. In other words, the two conjuncts together lead to the conclusion that these two propositions are at odds with each other. However, in the case of (52), the explicature of each of the two conjuncts acts as a premise in a distinct but parallel inferential process that both of which lead to the derivation of the same contextual implication. So, Hermione's being beautiful and coming from a wealthy family each leads to the same conclusion; that is, for example, Hermione's marriage prospects are excellent. Thus, the conjoined utterance in (52) achieves optimal relevance as having two pieces of evidence for the same conclusion. Blakemore and Carston (2005), following Sperber and Wilson (1986), argue that a conclusion that is achieved by providing two independent premises receives a degree of strength that is greater than it would receive from either premise independently. So, in cases such as (52), the second conjunct can be seen as strengthening the same conclusion implied by the first conjunct.

Furthermore, it is worth noting the following. Blakemore and Carston (2005) argue that *and* can be followed by another discourse connective such as *indeed*, *after all*, or *furthermore*, as is seen in (52), repeated for convenience.

> (52)   Hermione is very beautiful, and (furthermore) she comes from a wealthy family.

However, it seems that there are cases where the use of *and* before a certain discourse connective is acceptable and other cases where *and* is unacceptable before the very same

discourse connective. Consider the examples that Blakemore and Carston (2005) provide in (53) and (54) below, where in both utterances we have *and* followed by *after all;* however, the use of *and* in (54) is unacceptable.

(53)　A: Shall we start without Jane?

　　　B: Well, she did say to start if she was late, **and, after all**, we do want to finish by 6.00 p.m.

(54)　A: Shall we start without Jane?

　　　B: Yes, let's start now; **(? and) after all**, we do want to finish before

　　　　6.00 p.m.

The meaning of *after all* in (53) and (54) is the same. In both utterances, *after all* guides the hearer to interpret what follows as evidence or justification for a manifest assumption, still there is a disparity on the acceptability of *and*. According to Blakemore and Carston (2005: 586), the crucial difference between the two cases is this: in (53) what follows *after all* is processed as extra evidence for the same manifest assumption for which the speaker has already provided evidence in the first segment, which is 'yes we should start', whereas in (54), the segment following *after all* is providing evidence for what is explicitly communicated by the first segment. In other words, the two segments in (53) are related as both being premises in distinct inferences that have the same conclusion. However, in (54), the two segments are inferentially related as premise and evidence. Thus, the unacceptability of *and* in (54) is due to the fact that the role of the two conjuncts is different in the inferential process.

4.8.2   Denial vs. correction

Blakemore and Carston (2005) made a comparison between *and* utterances and *but* utterances, arguing that the difference between the two lies in the different role that the conjuncts play in each case. To show the difference between *and* utterances and *but* utterances, they refer to Kitis's (1995) examples in (55) and (56) below.

> (55)   Her husband is in hospital, and she is seeing other men.

> (56)   Her husband is in hospital, but she is seeing other men.

The relevance of (55) is related to the fact that the truth of the conjunction is at odds with the assumption that a woman whose husband is in hospital is not supposed to see other men. However, the hearer is not expected to eliminate this assumption. In contrast, in (56) *but* encodes a procedure that ensures that what follows *but* achieves relevance by contradicting and eliminating an assumption, such as that the woman is not having fun or not seeing other men. In the case of (56), the assumption happens to be derived from the conjunct preceding *but*. Therefore, the role of the first conjunct is an input that gives rise to an inference, whereas the role of the second conjunct is an input to the inferential process that results in a contradictory assumption that eliminates the inference derived from the first conjunct. To put it simply, while both conjuncts are involved in achieving the cognitive effect of contradiction and elimination, these two conjuncts, still, are playing different inferential roles.

Nevertheless, as is discussed in section (3.3.1.3), there are cases of *but* utterances where the contradicted and eliminated assumption is not derived from the segment preceding *but*, as in the following examples.

(57)   [Speaker, who has received a shock, is given a whiskey]
         But I don't drink.

(58)   A: Did you go to Bill's party for Mary's birthday?
         B: I did go to Bill's party, but it wasn't for Mary's birthday.

In (57) *but* is not preceded by any verbal communication. In (58) the contradicted assumption is not derived from the preceding conjunct, but from the utterance of the previous speaker. Therefore, Blakemore and Carston (2005: 582) argue that, in cases such as (57) and (58), "there is no sense at all in which one can say that two segments of a *but*-utterance are jointly involved in the derivation of the intended cognitive effect."

To summarise, there are cases of *but* utterances where both conjuncts can be seen as playing a role in the inferential process; however, their roles are very different. And there are other cases where only the conjunct following *but* plays a role in the inferential processes. Hence, what follows from this is that the role of the conjuncts in *and* utterances is different from that in *but* utterances. However, all of the previous examples of *but* involve the denial *but,* not the correction *but.*

Now let us recall Blakemore's (2002) argument about the correction use of *but.* Blakemore argues that *but* in the correction use encodes the procedural meaning of contradicting and eliminating an accessible assumption, the same as that in the denial use, albeit with a slight difference. That is, in the correction use of *but* "the interpretation of each of its segments involves an inferential procedure that results in the contradiction and elimination of the same assumption", (Blakemore 2002: 112). In other words, the hearer is expected to recover an interpretation in which each segment is relevant as a contradiction of the same assumption. What seems to follow from her

argument is that both conjuncts are attaining the same function. If the conjuncts of correction *but* are playing the same role in the inferential process as is claimed by Blakemore, then correction *but* cannot encode the same procedural meaning as the denial *but* as the conjuncts of the denial *but* have different inferential roles, as is argued above by Blakemore and Carston (2005).

Furthermore, if we compare Blakemore's (2002) claim about the function of correction *but* conjuncts with the function of *and* conjuncts that is assumed by Blakemore and Carston (2005), we find a striking similarity between the function of the conjuncts of correction *but* utterances and *and* utterances. If Blakemore's argument that correction *but* and denial *but* are the same, it is, then, surprising to find such a similarity between the role of correction *but* conjuncts and the role of *and* conjuncts, especially that Blakemore and Carston (2005) and Blakemore (2002) argue that the role that the conjuncts play in *but* utterances is different from that in *and* utterances. Thus, at this point, we have two options: either to reconsider Blakemore and Carston's account of *and* utterances or to reconsider Blakemore's account of the correction *but.* However, we have already spotted syntactic differences between the two *buts.* In addition, the differences that Blakemore and Carston (2005) show between *and* utterances and *but* utterances hold true for the denial use of *but,* but not for the correction use. Therefore, it is more convincing to consider the latter option, i.e. to reconsider Blakemore's account of the correction use of *but.*

4.8.3   **Correction** *but*

First of all, it cannot be the case that correction *but* conjuncts are playing the same inferential role that *and* conjuncts play in achieving the intended cognitive effect. If this is true, then it should be possible for examples of *and,* as the one in (59) below, to be a case of correction. However, it is clearly not.

(59)   Kim didn't go to Paris, and he went to London.

In (59), *and* has a narrative reading. It cannot be a case of correction. So, if the conjuncts of correction *but* do not play the same inferential role of *and* conjuncts, and if it is true that in the case of correction *but* both conjuncts contradict and eliminate the same assumption as Blakemore (2002) says, how different their role is from the role of *and* conjuncts?

So far, it becomes clear that in the case of correction *but,* it is a prerequisite to have a denial in the segment preceding *but* and this denial is always achieved by the use of explicit negation. What follows *but* seems to provide an alternative to what has been negated in the first conjunct. For (59) to express the meaning of correction, we can either have two juxtaposed sentences, i.e. without the use of a coordinator, as in (60), or we can use *but,* as is the case in example (8), repeated below.

(60)   Kim didn't go to Paris. He went to London.

(8)   Kim didn't go to Paris, but to London.

Remember, that we have already established that in the case of correction *but* we are dealing with two alternatives that cannot be true at the same time. In other words, we

have alternative answers to some question. In (60), the correction reading is possible in a context where there is an assumption that Kim went one trip to one place; i.e. 'He went to London' is said as evidence for 'Kim didn't go to Paris'. Again, in (8), it seems that the segment preceding correction *but* says that a possible answer is wrong, and the segment following *but* gives the right answer. However, the difference between (60) and (8) is that the correction reading is possible in (60) in the right context, whereas in the case of (8), the correction reading is the only available reading. In other words, even if (8) is said out of the blue, the derived meaning is correction. It seems that in the case of correction *but* the first conjunct is relevant as a premise whereas the second is relevant as evidence. So, while it may be the case that both conjuncts contradict and eliminate the same assumption, as Blakemore (2002) says, each conjunct does that differently. We have seen in section (4.6.1), that Blakemore and Carston (2005) argue that *and* conjuncts paly a parallel role as **premises** either to the same inferential process that leads to a certain cognitive effect, or each as a premise to a distinct inferential process that both of which lead to the same cognitive effect. However, they also argue that the reason why *and* is unacceptable in an utterance such as (54), repeated below, is that the two conjuncts are inferentially related as premise and evidence.

> (54)   A: Shall we start without Jane?
>   B: Yes, let's start now; **(? and) after all**, we do want to finish before 6.00 p.m.

It seems that this is the difference between the role of *and* conjuncts and correction *but* conjuncts. While *and* conjuncts have a parallel role in the inferential process, they are both relevant as premises. On the other hand, correction *but* conjuncts are inferentially

related as premise and evidence that both lead to the cognitive effect of denial and contradiction of the same assumption.

Besides, the role of correction *but* conjuncts seems also different from the role of *but* conjuncts in the denial use. The role played by the first conjunct in each use is very dissimilar. In both uses, i.e. denial and correction, *but* guides the hearer to interpret what follows as a contradiction of an assumption. However, in the typical cases of denial *but* this assumption is usually derived from the first clause, but not denied by the first clause. What *but* seems to do is to instruct the hearer to interpret what follows as a denial and contradiction of an assumption that is usually derived from the first clause. In other words, in the denial use, by the first conjunct, the speaker conveys an assumption that is possibly true and negates it by the conjunct introduced by *but.* Whereas, in the correction use, by the first conjunct, the speaker already denies an assumption that they believe is manifest to the hearer and replaces it by the conjunct following *but.* As is explained above, the first clause is denying an assumption and the second is providing the correct answer.

Moreover, as is discussed in section (3.3.1.3), there are cases of denial *but* utterances, such as the initial uses, where the assumption that the speaker intends the hearer to eliminate is not derived from a segment preceding *but.* It is simply, as Blakemore (2002: 109) argues, "an assumption that the speaker has reason to believe is manifest to the hearer." So, in the denial use it is not a requirement for *but* to be preceded by an utterance. However, while denial *but* can be used initially, correction *but* cannot. Consider the example in (61).

(61)   A: Sam is not tall.

        B: But attractive.

Although *but* is preceded by a negated assumption said by another speaker, still the only available reading is the denial one. It cannot be the case that B's utterance is evidence for A's, as is seen in (8). The proposition of A implies an assumption, such as Sam has no merits, and B's utterance contradicts this assumption. However, as Blakemore (2002: 184) says,

> … as is so often the case in linguistics, we often learn more about the meanings of these expressions [discourse connectives] from the fact that they cannot occur in a particular context than the fact that they can occur in another.

The fact that correction *but* cannot be used in initial position shows that the conjunct introduced by correction *but* cannot simply contradict any manifest assumption. While it seems to contradict an assumption, that assumption should be explicitly denied in the segment preceding *but*. As is mentioned before, Vicente (2010: 383) explains that "it is the denial of the first conjunct and the assertion of the second that creates the corrective reading." So, in the case of correction *but,* unlike the denial *but,* it is essential that both *but* conjuncts are said by the same speaker. It seems that in the case of denial *but* the speaker is expressing two propositions, and *but* constrains the relevance of the second; whereas, in the correction use, the speaker is expressing a single conjoined proposition where the first conjunct affects the context for the interpretation of the second. In other words, the negation in the segment preceding *but* provides the grounds for the interpretation of the segment introduced by *but.* This could explain why correction *but* cannot be used in utterance- and discourse-initial position. So, it seems that the

differences between the denial use and the correction use of *but* are not restricted to syntax. The conjuncts of each use are related to each other differently. Moreover, in the case of correction, the optimal relevance lies in the single conjoined proposition. Hence, I argue that correction *but* is different from denial *but,* and the correction meaning cannot be accounted for by the encoded meaning of denial *but.* If my argument is correct, then what does correction *but* encode?

As is discussed before, correction *but* is used in a context where *X* and *Y* in *not X but Y*, cannot be true at the same time. However, correction *but* utterances always give the meaning of correction even if they are read or said out of the blue. They always give the meaning that *Y* is a substitute for *X*; it is always the case that what follows *but* is interpreted as a replacement for what has been denied before *but.* Without the denial in the segment preceding *but* we cannot reach the correction reading. The way in which we interpret what follows *but* as a replacement for the denied proposition is encoded by correction *but.* In other words, correction *but* encodes a procedure that does not only constrain the relevance of the conjunct it introduces but also the context for the interpretation of the second conjunct as a contradiction of the same assumption denied in the first conjunct.

My argument that correction *but* encodes an additional function that is defined in terms of a constraint on the context is in line with Blakemore (2002) account of procedural meaning in general. According to Blakemore (2002), procedural information is not restricted to constraints that guide the hearer to the intended cognitive effects. She (2002: 128) argues that "constraints on implicatures may also include information about the contexts in which cognitive effects are derived." In view of that, she accounted for

the differences between *but*, *however*, and *nevertheless*. She argues that while these three connectives seem inter-substitutable, the use of *but* is always acceptable where the use of *however* and *nevertheless* is acceptable, but not vice versa. This indicates that the meaning encoded by *but* is more general than the encoded meaning of *however* and *nevertheless*. Likewise, while *however* is acceptable where *nevertheless* is acceptable, it is not the case that *nevertheless* can be acceptable wherever *however* is acceptable, which suggests that the meaning of *nevertheless* is more restrictive than the meaning of *however*. Consider the following examples given by Blakemore (2002: 116):

(62)   (a) I am sure she is honest. But the papers are missing.
         (b) I am sure she is honest. However the papers are missing.
         (c) I am sure she is honest. Nevertheless, the papers are missing.

(63)   [In response to: Have you got my article?]
         (a) Yes, but the last page is missing.
         (b) Yes. However, the last page is missing.
         (c) Yes. ?Nevertheless, the last page is missing.

(64)   [Speaker, who is in shock, has been given a whisky]
         (a) But I don't drink.
         (b) ?However, I don't drink.
         (c) ?Nevertheless I don't drink.

Blakemore argues that while all these three connectives seem to encode the procedure of elimination and contradiction, the encoded meaning of *however,* and *nevertheless* is not exhausted by the elimination of an assumption. They have additional functions that are not encoded by *but.* These additional functions are restrictions on the contexts in which the cognitive effect of denial and contradiction is achieved, (2002: 185). I will not

discuss her analysis of *however* and *nevertheless* in detail, since what matters here is that, as is put by Blakemore (2002: 128), "it seems reasonable to assume that the information encoded by a linguistic expression or construction may activate either an inferential route or a particular kind of context or, indeed, both". Thus, the fact that *however*, and *nevertheless* have the contradiction and elimination of an assumption as part of their encoded meaning does not entail that these connectives encode the same procedure as *but.*

By the same token, correction *but* seems to share the contradiction function encoded by denial *but,* however, it encodes an additional function that constrains the context which results in the contradiction of an already explicitly denied assumption. Specifically, correction *but* restricts the recovery of this effect to contexts which include an assumption that there is only one state of affair or event that is true. So, correction *but* encodes information about the intended cognitive effect and also activates the context that guides the hearer to interpret what follows *but* not simply as a contradiction of any assumption but as a contradiction of an already explicitly denied assumption. This restriction on context is what guides the hearer to look for the kind of assumption that *but* contradicts which is an assumption that is explicitly denied in the segment preceding *but.* Thus, I argue that:

> *Correction but encodes a procedural meaning that guides the hearer to interpret what*
> *follows as a replacement of an explicitly eliminated assumption.*

It seems that correction *but* is different form denial *but* in many respects. I have shown that the function of correction *but* conjuncts is different from the function of denial *but* conjuncts. That is, the correction *but* conjuncts are inferentially related as premise and

evidence and it is the single conjoined proposition that carries optimal relevance. Moreover, I have also shown in section (4.7.4) that ascribing the correction reading to conjunction reduction, as Blakemore (2002) argues, does not explain the correction reading in utterances with special use of negation. This is because we have seen that these are not cases of conjunction reduction but cases of subclausal coordination. While, as is put by Iten (2005: 122), senses should not be multiplied beyond necessity, it would be advantageous if there is a pragmatic account that can explain all the different interpretations of *but*, rather than an account that assumes ambiguity. However, it seems that a pragmatic account which treats correction *but* simply as another use of the denial *but* cannot account for the significant differences discussed so far. If my argument is correct, i.e. if correction *but* encodes not only information about the intended cognitive effect but also information about the context in which this cognitive effect is derived, it is doubtful to argue that both uses encode the same procedure.

Let us recall the argument on the syntactic differences between denial *but* and correction *but.* I have shown that correction *but* is always preceded by an explicit negation in the first conjunct and cannot be followed by a full clause. However, according to Blakemore (2002) the different syntactic distribution between the denial and the correction *but* is compatible with a unitary account of *but.* That is, *but* encodes a general procedure and the correction meaning is reached pragmatically through interaction with the context including the syntactic context. Essentially, on this approach, one would have to assume that *but* is associated with a broad general procedure, P, and that this becomes a more specific procedure P_1 in syntactic context C_1,

and another more specific procedure P$_2$ in syntactic context C$_2$, i.e. we have the following situation in (65):

(65)   P

P$_1$ [in context C$_1$]   P$_2$ [in context C$_2$]
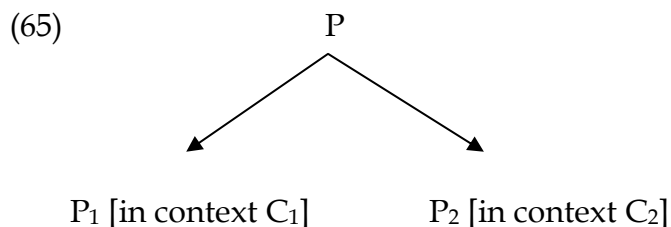
Blakemore (2002) refers to the syntactic differences between the two uses as being in complementary syntactic distribution. The term comes from phonology where different allophones of the phoneme may occur in distinct contexts. A standard example would be the aspirated and unaspirated variants of the /p/ phoneme. These give the following situation in (66):

(66)   /p/

[p^h]   [p]
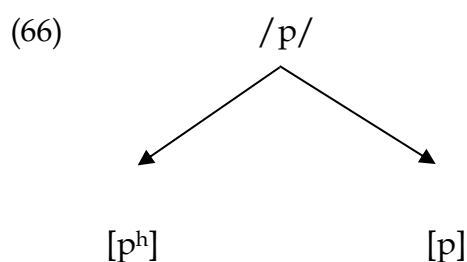
Each allophone occurs in a specific phonetic context. This is just standard phonology and completely uncontroversial. However, *but* seems to be different in many respects. First, importantly with linguistic expressions that encode a general meaning, what meaning is communicated depends on pragmatic processes of enrichment. For example, the stored meaning of the verb *do* is 'to perform some action', but normally when it is used a much more specific meaning is communicated. Consider examples (67a-d).

(67) (a)   John did his homework.

(b)   Do your bed.

(c)   The car has done 50, 000 miles.

(d)   Sam is busy doing sums.

While in each example there is a specific meaning of *do* derived pragmatically, the core meaning of 'performing an action' is communicated in all of them. This also seems to be the case with *and.* Carston and Blakemore (2005) argue that *and* has a minimal (truth-functional) semantics and the various ways that *and* utterances can be understood are explained in terms of the pragmatics of explicit coordination. For example, temporal and consequence relations as in (68) and (69) respectively, are reached through pragmatic enrichment.

(68)   Sam put his pyjamas on and went to bed.

(69)   He broke up with her and she broke in tears.

One notices that in typical cases of enrichment, there are a variety of different communicated meanings, not just two, as is the case with *do* and *and* above. Also in many cases of enrichment the basic unenriched meaning can be what is communicated. A unitary approach to *but* will probably be different in both respects. There seem to be just two procedures that could be communicated, i.e. either correction or denial, and I assume the basic procedure could not be what is communicated in the case of correction *but*. If it was, one would get things that do not occur, e.g. exchanges like the one in (70).

(70)   A: Unaisa is an Iraqi.
       * B: But she's a Syrian.

While one may find a context where the use of *but* in (70B) is acceptable, still the *but* that is used in that case is the denial *but.*

Assuming that the picture of a unitary approach that I have sketched above is correct, it is not clear what it achieves. In interpreting specific utterances, one will use one of the two more specific procedures. It is not clear what is achieved by treating two procedures as alternative ways of fleshing out a basic procedure. Remember our discussion on *but*, *however*, and *nevertheless*. The fact that these connectives share some function does not mean that they encode the same meaning.

4.8.4   **Denial** *but*

I have mentioned earlier in section (3.3.1) that Blakemore (2002) amended her argument on the nature of the assumption contradicted by the *but* segment. While Blakemore (1987) argues that the contradicted assumption needs to be manifest, she claims in her (2002) account that it suffices for the assumption contradicted by the *but* segment to be accessible. Blakemore (2002: 113-114) explains that to say that *but* contradicts and eliminates a manifest assumption cannot account for utterances of *but* after counterfactuals. By counterfactuals, she refers to examples similar to (62) below.

> (62)   Tom should have been there, but he got stuck in traffic.

(Iten, 2005: 145)

By the use of counterfactual in (62), it is clear, as is argued by both Iten (2005) and Blakemore (2002), that the most manifest assumption is that 'Tom is not there'. Therefore, it seems odd that the *but* clause contradicts 'Tom is here', an assumption that is manifestly false. Accordingly, Blakemore argues that the fact that 'Tom is here' is

manifestly false does not exclude the fact that this assumption is still accessible. Thus, she states that what *but* contradicts in (62) is a consequence of the accessible assumption 'Tom is here' had it been true. Therefore, she has modified her account accordingly, arguing that what *but*-clause contradicts is an accessible rather than a manifest assumption. By this, she contends that her account of *but* can work for counterfactual cases as well.

Since from a relevance-theoretic perspective the function of discourse connectives, such as *but,* is to reduce the processing efforts, the question is how would it be possible for *but* to guide the hearer to contradict and eliminate an assumption that is not manifest? Certainly, it would require more processing efforts to contradict an accessible assumption rather than a manifest one. To argue that the clause following *but* contradicts a manifest assumption is more compatible with an RT account. In (62), above, it seems more likely that the *but*-clause is intended to deny not a consequence of an accessible assumption but to deny another assumption. It could be that 'Tom should have been there' makes manifest the assumption that he's at fault for not turning up, which is indirectly denied by 'he got stuck in traffic', which implies that it wasn't Tom's fault that he didn't make it to the meeting. Hence, there is no need to argue that the contradicted assumption is accessible. However, still, it does not suffice to argue that what follows denial *but* contradicts and eliminates a manifest assumption. This account of denial *but* needs further modification in order not to allow for the impossible cases of denial *but,* such as (63).

(63)   A: Kim is a New Zealander.

B: No, he's an Australian.

B': *But he's an Australian.

If a *but*-clause contradicts a manifest assumption then cases like (63) above should be possible. However, the use of *but* in (63) is not possible due to the fact that the contradicted assumption is relevant as an explicature. Thus, I argue that the denial *but* encodes the following procedure:

> *What follows denial but contradicts and eliminates a manifest assumption that cannot be relevant as an explicature.*

With this modification, we can account for the unacceptable use of *but* in utterances such as (63).

4.9   Conclusion

It seems that both Blakemore (2002) and Iten (2005) adopt a monosemous account of *but* despite the syntactic differences between the two uses. Although it would be advantageous to have a monosemous account, it seems that both Blakemore and Iten do not look closely enough at the syntactic facts. As we have seen in Chapter (3), it is good that it is not necessary to recognize separate contrast and utterance- and discourse-initial *but*s. It would be also good if it was not necessary to recognize a separate correction *but*; however, this appears to be unattainable. To conclude, we can say that there are two *but*s that are syntactically different and semantically. It appears that *but* in English encodes two different procedures.

Chapter 5   Modern Standard Arabic

5.1   Introduction

This chapter aims to present some of the syntactic features of Modern Standard Arabic, (hereafter MSA). Although I am addressing, within the framework of relevance theory, the meaning of the Arabic discourse connectives that are equivalent to *but* in English, it is not possible to address them satisfactorily without being reasonably clear about the kinds of the syntactic structure in which they appear. That is to say, this chapter paves the way for a better understanding of the Arabic data presented in Chapter (6). In the following, I present an overview of MSA and then briefly discuss its case marking system and word order.

5.2   Modern Standard Arabic

Arabic is a Semitic language that belongs to the Afroasiatic family. There are many varieties of Arabic dialects, spoken in the different regions of the Arab world. Arabs are fluent at least in one of the Arabic vernaculars and understand many of the others. Often, a distinction is made between informal spoken vernaculars and the Standard variety. However, many linguists distinguish between two varieties of Standard Arabic: Classical Arabic (CLA), which represents the Arabic of the pre-Islamic poetry and the Arabic of the Quran, and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), which refers to the modern form of literary Arabic. MSA is the standardized literary variety of Arabic and it is the lingua franca of the Arab world. It is the official language of all members of the Arab League, from North Africa to the Arabian Gulf. MSA represents the main language used in written Arabic media and formal speech. It is, thus, the dominant form of all

printed words, public speeches and media broadcasting. It is also used as a means of communication among literate Arabs from different Arab countries, especially when there are substantial dialectal differences between geographically distant regions.

MSA does not have a universally agreed-upon definition, especially that it is not spoken in everyday conversation; it is learnt at school. However, as Ryding (2005: 8) argues, there is a general agreement that the different forms of modern Arabic writing constitute the basis of the identity of the language. However, it is not always easy to establish what the term "standard" is since the modern writing includes a wide range of discourse styles and types, and some written forms are influenced by the regional vernaculars. Yet, a distinguishable part of written Arabic language employed by the media has received higher attention from linguists as a result of its stability, pervasiveness, and ability to stand as the model of modern written usage (which explains why it is also called the Modern Written Arabic).

Often, MSA is considered the modernized version of the old Classical Arabic, Monteil (1960: 25). A similar definition is adopted by McLoughlin (1972: 58) who defines MSA as "that variety of Arabic that is found in contemporary books, newspapers, and magazines, and that is used orally in formal speeches, public lectures, learned debates, religious ceremonials, and in news broadcasts over radio and television". Generally in Arabic, it is referred to both MSA and CLA as *al-luġa alfuṣḥā,* which means the most eloquent language. For many Arab speakers, both MSA and CLA are considered the same, except for some lexical differences. However, a useful distinction between the two varieties is made by Badawi (1985: 17-19), who argues that MSA represents a distinguished but not a fully segregated level that comes in-between Classical Arabic

and Educated Spoken Arabic. Along the same lines, Bateson (1967; 2003: 84) identifies three factors that separate Modern Standard Arabic from Classical Arabic: (1) a "series of 'acceptable' simplifications" in syntactic structures, (2) a "vast shift in the lexicon due to the need for technical terminology," and (3) a "number of stylistic changes due to translations from European languages and extensive bilingualism." However, despite the fact that we might find syntactic simplifications in MSA, or in other words, we might encounter certain complex constructions in CLA that is not used in MSA; still, the grammar of MSA is defined along the lines of the classical grammar books. Arguably, these differences between MSA and CLA seem to be less obvious in the literary prose because, as Versteegh (2001: 184) puts it, "authors tend to classicize their style both in syntax and in the selection of the vocabulary."

However, in order to regulate the integration of new terminologies and the borrowing of many foreign words, especially in continuously expanding fields, and to sustain the overall integrity of the MSA, many Arabic language academies were established, with the first one in Damascus (Syria) in 1919, (Holes 2004: 44). Others were established later in Cairo (Egypt), Baghdad (Iraq), and Amman (Jordan). The main aim of these academies of the Arabic language is to conduct research on linguistics problems and the development of technical terms.

5.3   Data

The Arabic data in this thesis represents MSA. The data in this chapter, and the following one, come from three main sources. First, some of the examples are collected from a set of diverse resources such as Arabic news agencies websites, books, electronic

newspapers, and novels. Second, some examples were constructed by me to investigate the impact of substituting a discourse connective by another across different syntactic constructions. Third, some of the examples adapted from Blakemore's examples and translated into Arabic in order to make the appropriate comparison between Arabic and English. The criteria used here to classify any piece of written language as a standard Arabic expression are gleaned from the books of major Arabic grammarians. Henceforth, Arabic and MSA are used interchangeably unless otherwise stated.

5.4   Case

Overt case marking is one of the important features in Arabic. The case system in Arabic is known as *ʾiʿrāb.* Nouns and adjectives are marked by three different cases: the nominative *rafʿ*, the accusative *naṣb*, and the genitive *ǧarr*. These grammatical cases are inflected as short vowels at the end of most categories of nouns and adjectives when they are definite: *u* (ḍamma) for the nominative case, *a* (fatḥa) for the accusative case, and *i* (kasra) for the genitive case, (Holes 2004: 250). When nouns or adjectives in a sentence are indefinite, the case markers change from short vowels (i.e. from either *u*, or *a*, or *i*) to nunation or *tanwīn* in Arabic, as *un*, *an*, *in* respectively.

5.4.1   Nominative Case

The nominative case marks the subject of the sentence, as shown in (1) below, and its attribute adjectives if there are any as in (2). That is because adjectives in Arabic agree with the noun they modify in case, number, gender and definiteness. We notice that, as mentioned previously, the nominative case in (1) is realized by *u* at the ending of the

subject, since the subject is definite, whereas in (2) the subject and its attributive adjective are marked with *un* since they are indefinite.

(1)   qaraʾa   ṣ-ṣabiyy-**u**   l-kitāb-a
        read.PFV.3SGM   the-boy-**NOM**   the-book-ACC
        The boy read the book.

(2)   ǧāʾa   mudarris-**un**   ǧadīd**un**
        come.PFV.3SGM   teacher-**NOM**   new-**NOM**
        A new teacher came.

In addition, the nominative case marks the adjectival predicate with *tanwīn* or nunation in nominal verbless sentences, as in (3). A detailed discussion of the structure of verbless sentences will follow in section (5.5.3).

(3)   s-samāʾ-u   ṣāfiy-at-**un**
        the-sky-NOM   clear-F-**NOM**
        The sky is clear.

For some nouns the nominative case is identified by a different case marker. That is the case of some masculine sound (regular) plural nouns and adjectives in which the nominative case is realized by a long vowel *ū* as in (4). Also, this is the case of dual nouns and adjectives; the nominative case is realized by the long vowel *ā* as in (5).

(4)   ḍahaba   l-fallāḥ-**ūn**   iʾlā   al-ḥaql-i
        go.PFV.3PLM   the-farmers.3**PLM.NOM** to   the-field-GEN
        The farmers went to the field.

(5)   lawḥ-at-**ān**   ǧamīl-at-**ān**
        painting-F-**DUAL.NOM**   beautiful-F-**DUAL.NOM**
        Two beautiful paintings.

5.4.2   Accusative Case

The main use of the accusative case in Arabic is to mark the objects of transitive verbs. As is mentioned earlier, definite nouns and adjectives when assigned the accusative case are marked by the short vowel *a* that is suffixed at the end of them, as in (6), and by the nunation *an* when they are indefinite, as in (7).

(6)   ʾakala   l-walad-u   t-tufāḥat-**a**
       eat.PFV.3SGM   the-boy-NOM the-apple-**ACC**
       The boy ate the apple

(7)   ʾakala   l-walad-u   tufāḥat-**an**   laḏīḏat-**an**
       eat.PFV.3SGM   the-boy-NOM   apple-**ACC**   delicious-**ACC**
       The boy ate tow delicious apples.

Similar to the nominative case, the accusative case marker is different with some masculine regular plural nouns and dual nouns. The accusative case is realized by the long vowel *ī* in some masculine plural nouns and adjectives, as in (8), and is realized by the diphthong *ay* in dual nouns and adjectives, as in (9).

(8)   daʿā   ṭ-ṭulāb-u   l-mudarris-**ī**n   iʾlā l-ḥafl-i
       invite.PFV.3SGM   the-student-NOM the-teacher.**MPL.ACC** to the-party-GEN
       The students invited the teachers to the party.

(9)   iʾštarayytu   wardat-**ay**n
       buy.PFV.1SG   rose-**DUAL.ACC**
       I bought two flowers.

The accusative case is also assigned to nouns and adjectives when preceded by the complementizer ʾinna and other complementizers that belong to the same group of ʾinna, referred to as sisters of ʾinna.[14]

(10)   ʾinna l-ḥayāt-**a**   šāqqat-un
       that   the-life-**ACC**   difficult-NOM
       That is life is difficult.

Furthermore, the adjectival predicate of verbless sentences always appears in the accusative form after the copula *kāna* (was), and the negative particle *layysa*, as in (11) and (12), respectively. To form the past tense of sentences that lack a lexical verb, such as (10), the copula *kāna* is inserted, whereas *layysa* is used to negate the sentence. Both *kāna* and *layysa* require an accusative case for the adjectival predicate.

(11)   kāna   l-walad-u   nāʾim-**an**
       was   the-boy-NOM   asleep-**ACC**
       The boy was asleep.

(12)   layysa-t   s-samāʾ-u   ṣāfiy-at-**an**
       NEG-F   the-sky-NOM   clear-F-**ACC**
       The sky is not clear.

5.4.3   Genitive Case

The genitive case in Arabic marks objects of prepositions. It is realized by the short vowel *i* at the end of nouns and adjectives when they are definite, as in (13), and by the nunation *in* when they are indefinite, as in (14).

(13)   fi   s-sūq-**i**
       in   the-market-**GEN**
       In the market.

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[14] More details on ʾinna and her sister will follow in Chapter (6).

(14)   ʾakaltu   waǧbat-an   fi   maṭʿam-**in**
        eat.PFV.1SG   meal-ACC   in   restaurant-**GEN**
        I ate a meal in a restaurant.

Again, as we mentioned earlier in respect of the nominative and accusative cases, the

genitive case marking for some masculine regular plural nouns and dual nouns is

different. Some masculine regular plural nouns are marked with the long vowel *ī* at the

end of them as in (15), whereas dual nouns are marked with the diphthong *ay* as in (16);

which is exactly identical to how the accusative case marks them.

(15)   sāfara   ahmad-u   maʿa l-muʿallim-**īn**
        travel.PFV.3SGM   ahmad-NOM   with   the-teacher.**MPL.GEN**
        Ahmad traveled with the teachers.

(16)   ʾarsaltu   risālat-an   iʾlā   ṭālib-**ay**n
        send.PFV.1SG   letter-ACC   to   student-**DUAL.GEN**
        I sent a letter to two students.

The genitive case does not only mark objects of prepositions. There is another

construction of two nouns in Arabic in which the second noun is marked for the

genitive. This construction is called *ʾiḍāfah,* or the possessive construction. This type of

construction consists of a (indefinite) noun followed by another (definite) noun. The

second noun, as we just mentioned, is the one which is assigned the genitive case, as

(17) below shows.

(17)   ṯawb-u   l-fatāt-**i**   ǧamīl-un
        dress-NOM the-girl-**GEN**   beautiful-NOM
        The girl's dress is beautiful.

Even when this N-N construction is the object of a transitive verb or a preposition, the

second noun always retains its genitive marking; however, the first noun is assigned the

accusative when it is the object of a transitive verb, as in (18), and the genitive case when it is the object of a preposition, as in (19). In example (18) below, there is a possessive construction where the first noun in the construction, *mudīr-a,* has an accusative case because it is the object of a transitive verb, and the second noun of the construction, *l-madrasat-i,* is marked for genitive case.

(18) qābaltu   mudīr-**a**   l-madrasat-**i**
      meet.PFV.1SG   principal-**ACC**   the-school-**GEN**
      I met the school principal.

(19) ḏahabtu   ʾilā   bayyt-**i**   l-ǧīrān-**i**
      go.PFV.1SG   to   house-**GEN**   the-neighbour.PL-**GEN**
      I went to the neighbours' house.

We have briefly shown in this section how the system of case marking works in Arabic. The discussion, so far, has been to show how each element in a given sentence or phrase structure is assigned the appropriate case. However, most of the discussion above assumed the VSO word order. In the next section, we study the system of word order in Arabic.

5.5   Word order

Word order in MSA is very flexible, i.e. it allows many varieties such as VSO, SVO, VOS, and OVS, (Holes 2004: 250). Let us consider the following example in (19), and then extend it by adding more constituents.

(19) l-walad-**u**   yaktub-u
      the-boy-NOM   write.IPFV.3.SGM
      The boy writes.

l-waladu (the boy) is the subject of the sentence, and thus it has a nominative case marked by the short vowel ***u*** at the end of it**.** The verb *kataba (*perfective of *yaktubu*) in Arabic is similar to the verb *write* in English, i.e. it can be transitive or intransitive. Let us consider the following example where the verb *yaktubu* takes a direct object.

(20) l-walad-**u**   yaktub-u   r-risālat-**a**
      the-boy-NOM   write.IPFV.3.SGM   the-letter-**ACC**
      The boy writes the letter.

We notice that *r-risalat-**a*** which is the direct object of the transitive verb *yaktubu* is assigned the accusative case and marked by the short vowel ***a***. We can extend the same example to include a genitive case as follows.

(21) l-walad-u   yaktub-u   r-risālat-a   ʿalā   ṭ-ṭāwilat-**i**
      the-boy-NOM   write-IPFV   the-letter-ACC   on   the-table-**GEN**
      The boy writes the letter on the table.

The sentence in (21) is a simple declarative sentence which contains, *inter alia*, a direct object and an object of preposition. As we previously explained, since *ṭ-ṭawilat-**i*** is an object of a preposition, it must be assigned a genitive case. Now, insofar as word order is concerned, consider the different sentence structures of (21) in (22a-c) below.

(22) (a)   yaktub-u   al-walad-u   r-risālat-a   ʿalā   ṭ-ṭawilat-i
             write-IPFV   the-boy-NOM   the-letter-ACC   on   the-table-GEN
             The boy writes the letter on the table.

      (b)   r-risālat-a   yaktub-u   l-walad-u   ʿalā ṭ-ṭāwilat-i
             the-letter-ACC   write-IPFV   the-boy-NOM   on   the-table-GEN
             The boy writes the letter on the table.

      (c)   ʿalā ṭ-ṭāwilat-i   yaktub-u   r-risālat-a   l-walad-u
             on   the-table-GEN   write-IPFV   the-letter-ACC   the-boy-NOM
             On the table, the boy writes the letter.

All the previous word orders are possible as the case marking indicates the role each noun plays in the sentence. Watson (2002) argues that the original typical word order in Arabic is VSO. Along the same lines many authors, such as (Fassi 1993; Ouhalla 1999; and Holes 2004), argue that although the word order is flexible, there are two dominant word order patterns in MSA, namely VSO and SVO. Standard Arabic is considered a VSO language which allows SVO in finite clauses as an alternative word order.

However, in the traditional grammar of Arabic, there is an important distinction between verbal sentences and nominal sentences. According to one grammar school of Arabic, the Kufi School, a verbal sentence is a sentence that essentially contains a verb (regardless of word order), while a nominal sentence is a verbless sentence. On the other hand, according to the Basra School, a verbal sentence is a sentence that begins with a verb and a nominal sentence is a sentence that begins with a noun. Arguably, there is a three-way distinction here: VSO, SVO, and verbless. Hereafter, I will use the term nominal to refer to sentences that begin with a noun, i.e. both SVO and verbless sentences. This will have implications when we study the particle *lākinna*, for instance.

5.5.1   Verbal Sentences

A verbal sentence according to the Basri School must start with a verb. The sentence in (23) starts with a verb; accordingly, it is a verbal sentence.

> (23)   kataba   l-walad-u   l-waẓefat-a
>   write.PFV.3SGM   the-boy-NOM   the-homework-ACC
>   The boy wrote the letter.

A verbal sentence may consist minimally of one word which is the verb with a subject pronoun attached to it, such as in (24), where the personal pronoun *t* is attached to the

verb. Whether the suffix is a pronoun or not is a matter of debate. An alternative view is that it is a piece of agreement morphology and there is a phonologically null pronoun.

(24)   nāma-**t**
        sleep.PFV.3SG-**F**
        She slept.

In MSA, subject-verb agreement in number depends on the position of each of the verb and the subject, (Holes 2004: 263). In verbal sentences, with the verb occurring in a sentence-initial position, the subject is in a post-verbal position, the verb agrees with the subject in gender and person, but not in number, as (25) and (26) below show.

(25)   qaraʾa   ṭ-ṭulab-u   d-darrsa
        read.PFV.3**SGM**   the-student.**PLM**-NOM   the-lesson-ACC
        The students read the lesson.

(26)   ḏahaba-t   ṭ-ṭāliba-t-u   ʾilā   l-madrasat-i
        go.PFV.3**SGF**   the-student.**PLF**-NOM to   the-school-GEN
        The female students went to school.

In other words, if the verb occurs in a sentence-initial position, the grammatical number of the verb is always singular regardless of the grammatical number of the subject.

5.5.2   Nominal Sentences

We have said earlier that according to the Basri School, a nominal sentence is a sentence that starts with a noun. It must have two basic components. The first component is the subject, *mubtadaʾ*, with which the sentence usually starts. The second component is the predicate, *ḫabar*, which provides information about the subject. One aspect of nominal sentences is that the subject must be definite, whereas the predicate often, though not always, is in the indefinite. If the predicate is verbal phrase (VP) or a

prepositional phrase (PP), definiteness becomes irrelevant. Additionally, the subject could be a noun, a pronoun, a proper noun or a noun phrase, on the other hand the predicate could be a noun, a pronoun, an adjective, a verb, a clause or even a complete sentence; thus, nominal sentences could be verbless. The aim here is not to present a detailed analysis of the different *subject* and *predicate* patterns of nominal sentences in Arabic, but to understand the general structure of them. (27) is an example of a verbless nominal sentence of a definite subject and adjectival predicate.

(27)   ṭ-ṭaqs-**u**   bārid-**un**
        the-weather-NOM   cold-**NOM**
        The weather is cold.

(27) starts with a definite noun *ṭ-ṭaqs-u,* 'the weather' which is the subject of the sentence. Its nominative case is marked by the short vowel **u** on the ending of the noun. The predicate in this example is a nominative adjective *bāridun* 'cold' marked by the nunation **un** on the end. (28) below is another example of a verbless nominal sentence where the subject is a pronoun and the predicate is a noun.

(28)   hiīa   ṭabīb-at-un
        PRO.3SGF   doctor-F-NOM
        She is a doctor.

Now consider the following example of a nominal sentence where the predicate is a verb.

(29)   t-talāmīḏ-u   daras-ū
        the-pupil.PLM-NOM   study.PFV-3 PLM
        The pupils studied.

In the following example in (30), the predicate is a complete sentence: *ğāʾa iʾlā s-sūq-i* 'came to the market'.

(30) r-raǧul-u   ğāʾa   iʾlā   as-sūq-i
      the-man-NOM   come.PFV.3SGM   to   the-market-GEN
      The man came to the market.

The examples above are some of the possible nominal sentence constructions in Arabic. To recap, a nominal sentence starts with a noun (the syntactic subject), and it might have a verbless predicate. However, it is worth mentioning that the subject of a verbless sentence can be preceded by a wh-phrase, whereas this is not possible with the subject of a verbal sentence. Furthermore, we have seen in the case of verbal sentences that the verb agrees with the subject only in person and gender, but not in number. However, in nominal sentences with verbal predicate, the subject is in pre-verbal position; thus, it agrees with the verb in person, gender and number, as (27) shows.

(27) ṭ-ṭullāb-u   ḏahabū   ʾilā   l-madrasat-i
      the-student.**PLM**-NOM go.PFV.3**PLM**   to   the-school-GEN
      The students went to school.

We have seen in this section the different word orders the Arabic language allows. In addition, we have learnt that a nominal sentence structure is either SVO or verbless. On this view, any other structure in Arabic, whether VSO or VOS, are referred to as verbal sentences that essentially begin with a verb. I will operate with this distinction throughout the following chapter.

5.6   Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed some features of the language under study and have shown the relationship between the case system and word order in Arabic. As mentioned at the outset of this chapter, the aim has been to discuss some of the syntactic feature in MSA that pave the way for a better grasp of the data and the discussion to follow in the next chapter.

Chapter 6   Discourse Connectives in MSA

6.1   Introduction

In the classical literature of Arabic grammar, such as Sībawayh, Mubarrad, al-Zajjājī, Ibn Fāris words are classified into three major lexical categories: nouns (ʾasmāʾ), verbs (ʾfʿāl) and particle (ḥurūf), lit. 'letters'. Accordingly, the remaining parts of speech that are now recognized as adjectives and adverbs are subsumed under this classification. Adjectives and pronouns, for instance, are considered to belong to the major category of nouns. Also, some of what are classified as particles include prepositions, conjunctions, and adverbs of time and place. It is important to note that although the category of particles includes elements other than particles, the whole category is named after the majority of its members. In Arabic, this word class of particles is usually referred to as (ḥurūf al-maʿāni), lit. 'letters of meaning'. Particles are called 'letters of meaning' because they may link the meaning of the verb to the meaning of the noun such as prepositions as in (2), or they themselves may refer to a meaning in others (i.e. in other parts of speech or utterance), such as in (3), (Saʿd, 1988: 11-12). It is this category *'huruf al-ma'ani'* which is the key focus of this dissertation, and to which discourse connectives belong.

(2)   thahabtu   **ʾilā**   s-sūq
       went-I   **to**   the-market
       I went to the market.

(3)   aḥmadun   raǧulun ḏayyib   **lākinna**-hu   sarīʿu   al-ġaḍab
       ahmad   a-man   good   **but**-pro   quick   the-anger
       Ahmad is a good man but he is quick tempered.

Modern Arab linguists provide different classification of words in which (*ḥurūf al- maʿāni*), 'letters of meaning', are considered part of a category they call (*ʾadawāt*), lit. 'tools', (Al-Saaqi 1977: 157-8). Whichever classification one adopts, discourse connectives belong to 'letters of meaning', be it a main category in itself or a subcategory of another main category.

Contrary to what is claimed by some, such as Alkhalil (2005), that discourse connectives only exist in spoken Arabic, i.e. the dialects, Modern Standard Arabic is rich in discourse connectives, as is the case in the Classical Arabic. The DCs that are used in MSA are the same ones found in Classical Arabic. That is why any discussion of their semantics will draw on the classical literature. DCs have been greatly studied in the classical books of Arabic as a part of 'letters of meaning'. Although most of these discussions focus on their syntax, others such as Ibn Hisham Al Ansari (1340), and Ibn Jinni (961) discuss their semantics. Despite that, there is still a gap in the semantic analysis of some of these particles. The analysis is restricted to limited contexts; it does not cover the occurrence of these DCs across different positions and contexts. However, one can draw upon many insightful remarks that could be regarded as seminal for a fully fleshed account of the occurrences that are not discussed in the literature.

Some recent studies in Arabic have analysed discourse connectives in Arabic in terms of procedural and conceptual meaning. For example, Hussein and Bukhari (2008) propose a procedural account of the Arabic discourse connective *fa*, translated into English as *so*, and *then*. Also, Hussein (2009) claims that *but* in English encodes a general procedure whose implementation generates four different constraints. He argues that these constraints are translated into different lexical expressions in Arabic, that is, *lākinna*,

bainamā, *bal* and *lākin*. Likewise, Zaki (2011) provides a relevance-theoretic account of demonstratives in English and Arabic. She argues that demonstratives in English and Arabic encode a combination of procedural information and a pro-concept that work together to achieve the different interpretations that demonstratives communicate. She explains that the procedural information encodes 'attention-directing procedure' which guides the hearer to maintain a shared level of attention to a particular entity, and the pro-concept encodes information about proximity or distance of the intended referent.

The discourse connectives that I am concerned with in this chapter are those that are considered the Arabic counterparts of *but.* In the following, I will give a detailed discussion of their uses, semantics and the different syntactic distributions which interact with their semantics. At the end, I will propose an RT account of these connectives.

6.2   MSA counterparts of *but*: *lākinna, lākin,* and *bal*

In Modern Standard Arabic, there are three particles considered to be the counterparts of the English *but.* They are *lākinna*, *lākin*, and *bal.* The denial of expectation *but* is usually translated in Arabic into *lākinna* and *lākin*, whereas the correction *but* is translated into *bal* and, in very limited contexts, into *lākin*. First, I will discuss *lākinna,* and then I move on to discuss *lākin* and *bal.*

6.2.1   Lākinna

Any discussion of the meaning of *lākinna* cannot be complete without the discussion of its syntactic distribution, especially that there is another discourse connective in Arabic, *lākin,* which is very similar to *lākinna,* but with some syntactic differences. Hence, I first

start by discussing the syntax of *lākinna* and then proceed to discuss its uses and meaning. *Lākinna* belongs to a group of particles that is called "*ʾinna and her sisters*". These particles share together many characteristics. First, they can only introduce a nominal sentence, although not necessarily a verbless sentence. We have seen in Chapter (5) that a nominal sentence in Arabic is a sentence that starts with a noun phrase, however, its predicate can be verbal. These particles take a noun phrase and a predicate. So, *lākinna* can introduce a nominal sentence as in (3) and (4) below, but not a verbal sentence, (i.e. not a VSO order), as in (5).

(3)   aš-šamsu mušriqat-un   **lākinna** l-lǧaw-a bārid-un
        the-sun-NOM shiny-NOM **but**   the-weather-ACC cold-NOM
        It is shiny but it is cold.

(4)   aḥmadu   ḏakiyyun   **lākinna-hu**   rasaba   fi l-iʾmtiḥān
        ahmad-NOM smart-NOM **but**-3SGM   fail.3SGM.PERF   in the-exam
        Ahmad is smart but he failed the exam.

(5)   *baḥaṯtu   ʿan l-lkitāb-i   **lākinna** lam aʾǧid-hu
         looked.1SG for the-book-GEN **but**   NEG find.IMP.1SG-3SGM
         I looked for the book **lākinna** I didn't find it.

Furthermore, these particles assign an accusative case to the noun phrase following them in the same way transitive verbs assign accusative case to their objects, as (6) below shows.

(6)   al-bayyt-u   ǧamīl-un   **lākinna** al-ʾaṯāṯ-**a**   qadīm-un
        the-house-NOM nice-NOM **but**   the-furniture-**ACC** old-NOM
        The house is nice but the furniture is old.

The noun phrase following these particles functions as the topic that is usually interpreted as the subject of the clause introduced by these particles, but not always.

When there is no overt noun phrase topic in the clause introduced by these particles, the noun phrase can be realized as a clitic attached to the particle, (Ryding 2005:422).[15] In (7), there is no overt noun phrase that follows *lākinna*. The predicate adjective, *samīnat-un*, which follows *lākinna* refers to *Hind*, the subject of the nominal clause preceding *lākinna*. In such cases, a clitic is affixed to the particle functioning as the topic of the clause containing *lākinna*.

(7)   Hind-u   ğamīlat-un   **lākinna-ha** samīnat-un
        Hind-NOM   beautiful-ACC   **but-3SGF**   fat-NOM
        Hind is beautiful but she is fat.

This is similar to a verb or preposition with no overt object noun phrase as in (8) and (9), respectively.

(8)   raʾā-**hu**   fi   al-maktabat-i
        saw.3SGM-**3SGM**   in   the-library-GEN
        He saw him in the library.

(9)   ḏahabtu   ʾilayy-**hi**
        went.1SG to-**3SGM**
        I went to him.

Another aspect of *lākinna* is that it can be preceded by *wa*, 'and', as in (10).

(10)   ʾurīdu ḏ-ḏahāba ʾila s-sūq-i   **(wa) lākinna** al-ğaww-a   māṭir-un
        want   the-going to the-market **(and) but**   the weather   raining
        I want to go to the market (*and) but it is raining.

This gives evidence that *lākinna* cannot be a coordinating conjunction as we cannot have two coordinating conjunctions adjacent to each other, which syntactically makes it not like *but*. In the traditional literature, *lākinna* is referred to as *ḥarf ibtidāʾ*, 'a clause-initial particle'. It is considered part of the clause it introduces. In modern linguistic terms, it is

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[15] Ryding (2005:422) calls it a suffix pronoun, not a clitic.

referred to as a complementizer, like *ʾinna,* 'that'. While some languages only have complementizers in subordinate clauses, it is worth noting here that MSA has complementizers in main clauses, as is the case with *lākinna.* However, while it is possible for an utterance to start with *ʾinna* as in (11), it is usually not acceptable for *lākinna* to occur in an utterance-initial position as in (12).

(11)   **ʾinna**   as-samāʾ-**a**   mumtirat-**un**
         that   the sky-**ACC** raining-**NOM**
         Indeed, it is raining.

(12)   **? lākinna**   as-samāʾ-**a**   mumtirat-**un**
         but   the sky-**ACC** raining-**NOM**
         But it is raining.

Out of context, the use of *lākinna* in (12) seems unacceptable. However, if (12) is said as a reply to another speaker the use of *lākinna* becomes acceptable. In other words, it needs some context to be used, not necessary a linguistic one; otherwise, we cannot use it at the beginning of an utterance, (more details will follow below). This is similar to the utterance-initial and discourse-initial use of *but.* Moreover, we cannot use *lākinna* in utterance-initial position when followed by a question. The restriction here seems to be of a syntactic nature; therefore, the unacceptability of *lākinna* in such contexts will not be considered a problem to our account.

One might argue that *lākinna* is similar to *although* in that it occurs in a subordinate clause. However, when *lākinna* occurs between two parts of an utterance said by the same speaker as in (13a), it cannot be fronted, as (13b) shows, which gives evidence that it is not like *although*, too.

(13) (a)   al-bayyt-u   ğamīl-un   **lākinna** al-ʾaṯāṯ-**a**   qadīm-**un**

the-house-NOM nice-NOM **but**   the-furniture-**ACC** old-**NOM**

The house is nice but the furniture is old.

(b)   ***lākinna**   al-ʾaṯāṯ-**a**   qadīm-**un** al-bayyt-u   ğamīl-un

 but   the-furniture-**ACC** old-**NOM** the-house-NOM nice-NOM

But the furniture is old, the house is nice.

Consequently, with respect to its syntax, *lākinna* seems to be a complementizer that appears in a main clause. In the following section, I will discuss its semantics.

6.2.1.1   The semantics of *lākinna*

We have said in the introduction that some members of the category of particles in Arabic refer to a meaning in others (i.e. other parts of the utterance). It is a category to which many discourse connectives belong, including *lākinna.* According to Ibn Jinni, *al-ḥarf,* 'the letter of meaning', or 'particle', does not have a meaning in itself, but it refers to a meaning in other part(s) of the utterance.' This is in a way akin to what is referred to in RT's terminology as procedural meaning. This is similar to what Blakemore (1987, 2002) and Iten (2005) argue for the English discourse connective *but*; i.e. it does not encode a conceptual meaning but a procedural meaning. Hence, we can argue that, despite the syntactic differences between *lākinna* and *but,* they both encode a procedural meaning. But the overarching question is what does this procedural meaning encode?

In the classical literature, it has been argued that *lākinna* gives the meaning of *ʾistidrāk,* lit 'amendment'. Surely, not any kind of utterance amendment qualifies for the meaning of *ʾistidrāk*. The meaning of *ʾistidrāk* is explained in terms of revoking what have

supposedly been derived from a preceding utterance, (Ibn Hisham, 2005:383), such as in (14).

(14)   aḥmadun   raǧul-un ḏayyib-un **lākinna**-hu sarīʿu al-ġaḍab
        ahmad   man   good   **but**-3SGM quick the-anger
        Ahmad is a good man but he is quick tempered.

So, in other words, what follows *lākinna* is interpreted in a way that prevents the drawing of some conclusion from a preceding utterance. In (14), what follows *lākinna* prevents the possible conclusion, 'Ahmad is calm'; a conclusion that is derived in a context where being a good man is often associated with being calm. We notice that all the acceptable examples of *lākinna* presented in the previous section can be easily analysed in a similar way. This meaning of *ʾistidrāk,* i.e. preventing the drawing of some conclusion, is very similar to Blakemore's account of *but* in which the meaning of *but* is linked to the cognitive effect of eliminating and contradicting an assumption. However, in Blakemore's account, it is not always the case that the contradicted assumption is derived from the preceding utterance. We have already seen in section (3.3.1.3) that *but* is not always preceded by an utterance, i.e. it can occur in an utterance-initial position or even in a discourse-initial position. This initial use of *but* is also observed in the use of *lākinna*. I have mentioned that utterances of *lākinna* such as (12), repeated below, do not seem acceptable.

(12) **? lākinna**   as-samāʾ-**a**   mumtirat-**un**
      but   the sky-**ACC** raining-**NOM**
lit: But the sky is raining.
        But it is raining.

However, as is highlighted earlier, this use of *lākinna* is acceptable in the right context. If this utterance is said as a reply to another speaker, the use of *lākinna* becomes perfectly acceptable, as (15) shows. The same is true for (16).

(15) A: alǧaww-u   dāfiʾ-un
           the-weather-NOM warm-NOM
           The weather is warm

      B: **lākinna**   as-samāʾ-**a**   mumtirat-**un**
           but   the sky-**ACC**   raining-**NOM**
           But it is raining.

(16) A: qul   li-ʿumar ʾan yursil-a   l-ī   l-kitāb-a
           tell.IMPER.2MSG to-Omar that send.IMPERF-JUSS to-me the-book-ACC
           Tell Omar to send me the book

      B: **lākinna**-nī   lā   ʾataḥadaṯu   ʾilayy-hi
           but-1SGPRO NEG   speak.IMPERF   to-him
           But I don't talk to him.

This utterance-initial use seems similar to the examples of *lākinna* presented previously, with only one difference. While all the previous examples are uttered by the same speaker, the examples in (15) and (16) are uttered by two different speakers. Apparently, the meaning of *ʾistidrāk* discussed above is easily applicable to this utterance-initial use of *lākinna* since it is preceded by another utterance said by another speaker. We can say that what follows *lākinna* prevents the drawing of some conclusion that is drawn from A's utterance, for example, that 'the weather is nice' in (15), and that 'it is OK for me to talk to Omar' in (16). This use of *lākinna* is similar to the utterance-initial use of *but* discussed earlier in Chapter (3), and as shown in (17).

(17)   A: Pam's not in today.
        B: But I just saw her in the copy room.   (Bell, 1998: 534)

However, there are cases in Arabic, where the contradicted conclusion or assumption is not derived from the utterance immediately preceding *lākinna*, just as is the case with English *but.* Consider the following example .

(18)   A: hind-un   sa-tatazawwağ-u   ahmad-a
           hind-NOM   will-marry.IPFV   ahmad-ACC
           Hind will marry Ahmad.

       B: **lākinna**-hu   waḥīd-un
          but-3SGM   only-NOM
          But he is an only child.

Although *lākinna* is preceded by an utterance said by speaker A, we cannot say that being an only child is contradicting an assumption or a conclusion that is derived from A's utterance. B's use of *lākinna* in (18) is to guide the hearer to interpret what follows as an objection to A's utterance. In other words, it contradicts that 'Hind should marry Ahmad' based on an assumption that B has, which is that marrying an only child is not good. The speaker might mistakenly believe that this assumption is manifest to the hearer. However, this negative assumption about marrying an only child is not derived from A's utterance. It is derived from B's knowledge of the world which they assume that the hearer also shares. Moreover, *lākinna* can appear in a discourse-initial position, with no preceding verbal utterance as in (19), which shows that it behaves in a very similar way to *but.*

(19)   [A mother giving her son an angry look as she notices the vase is broken]
        Son: **lākinna**-nī   lam   ʾaqtarib   min-ha
             but-1SG   NEG   approach.PERF.1SG   from-it
             But I didn't get close to it.

So, it seems that arguing that *lākinna* prevents the drawing of some conclusion from a preceding utterance does not account for its use in an initial position or in contexts where the contradicted assumption is derived from an utterance that does not immediately precede *lākinna*. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that there is a reference in the literature of Arabic that what is being revoked in utterances of *lākinna* is not necessarily derived from a preceding utterance. Almurādī (1992: 193) mentions that "*lākinna* occurs after a preceding utterance or an understood one". This seems plausible since it accounts for the acceptable use of *lākinna* in places where the contradicted assumption is not derived from a preceding utterance as we have already seen in (18), and (19). In (19), there is no verbal communication preceding B's utterance, yet the use of *lākinna* is still acceptable. So, we can say that the context needed for the use of *lākinna* is not necessarily a linguistic one, i.e. it could be a non-verbal context, as is the case in (19).

This similarity between *lākinna* and *but* is not restricted to the denial use and utterance- and discourse-initial use; we can also find utterances of *lākinna* that resemble the contrast use of *but.* In Arabic, we can have utterances of *lākinna* occurring between a negative and a positive verb such as in (20), or occurring between two semantic opposites, or antonyms such as in (21) and (22), respectively.

(20)   ʾ**atā**   ʿamr-un **lākinna**   ḫālidan **lam yaʾti**
       came   amr   **but**   khaled **not came**
       Amr came but Khalid did not.

(21)   **aḥmad-un**   ṭawīl-un   lākinna   **ḫālid-an**   qaṣīr-un
       ahmad   **tall**   **but**   khaled-ACC   **short**
       Ahmad is tall but Khaled is short.

(22)   umu-hu   **mayyita-t-un lākinna** ʾabāh-u   ḥayy-un
          his-mother   **dead**   **but**   his-father   **alive**
          His mother is dead but his father is alive.

However, it is not acceptable to use *lākinna* in (20-22) only for reasons of mere contrast.
If contrast is the intended meaning, the speaker is more likely to use another discourse
connective, which is *baynamā,* 'whereas'. Nevertheless, Hussein (2009) inaccurately
considers *bayynamā* to be the translation of the contrast use of *but,* where in fact
bayynamā is the translation of *whereas*. Given the fact that he already assumes that *but* in
the so called contrast use actually encodes the meaning of contrast, it is not unexpected
for him to perceive *bayynamā* as a translation of *but.* He argues that "what follows
bainama contrasts a proposition explicitly communicated by what precedes it", (2009:
229). While his argument for *bayynamā* is correct, i.e. it is used for contrast, the so-called
contrast use of *but* translates into *lākinna,* or into *lākin,* as we will see in the following
section.

The use of *lākinna* in utterances, such as (20-22), is unacceptable unless there is a reason
for the speaker to assume that what comes before and after *lākinna* is expected to be the
same ; hence, the use of *lākinna* to contradict this assumption. For example, in (20)
lākinna is used to contradict what might have been derived from 'Amr came', that is
'Khalid came too'. The speaker uses *lākinna* to eliminate an assumption that they think
the hearer might derive. The speaker might be mistaken about the hearer's assumption,
i.e. the hearer might have no reason, for example, to expect that both Amr and Khalid
came. However, the use of *lākinna* makes it clear to the hearer that there is an
assumption which is contradicted by the utterance following *lākinna,* so the hearer
arrives at the conclusion that Khalid's coming was expected as well, even if the hearer

has no idea about Khalid or Amr. The same is true for (21) and (22). In (21), the speaker

uses *lākinna* because they think that the hearer might come to the conclusion that Khalid

is tall since Ahmad is tall, and in (22) that the father is dead since the mother is dead.

We can easily think of a scenario where such conclusions are possible. For example, (21)

can be said in a context where Ahmad and Khalid are twins, and (22) can be said in a

context where both parents were involved in a car accident, possibly. Thus, *lākinna* is

not used just to indicate a contrast reading. In other words, if there is no contradiction

in the context, *lākinna* cannot be used. For example, *lākinna* is not acceptable in (23).

(23)   *ʾatā   ʿamrun **lākinna**   ḫālidan ʾatā
        came amr   **but**   khaled   came
        Amr came but Khalid came.

There is no contradiction that can be drawn in (23), however, if we add *ʾayḍan,* 'too' to

the end of the utterance, *lākinna* becomes acceptable, as (24) shows.

(24)   ʾatā   ʿamrun **lākinna** ḫālidan ʾatā   ʾayḍan
        came amr   **but**   khaled   came   too
        Amr came but Khalid came too.

Adding *ʾayḍan,* 'too' makes the drawing of contradiction possible. Now, in (24), what

follows *lākinna* contradicts that Khalid did not come. Hence, Al-Murādi (1992: 193)

argues that *lākinna* needs to occur between two utterances that are contradictory in

some way. In other words, revoking the drawing of some conclusion or assumption

requires that *lākinna* appear in a context where it is possible to contradict that

conclusion or assumption. The same holds true for *but.*

This is very much in line with what Blakemore (2002: 108-9) suggests:

> If the use of *but* is linked to the cognitive effect of contradiction and elimination, then it will be acceptable only in those contexts in which the hearer is able to derive a contradiction, or in other words, only in those contexts in which the interpretation of the utterance prefaced by *but* includes an assumption which is contradictory to an assumption presumed to be manifest to the hearer.

Apparently, from the Arabic data discussed so far, it is noticeable that *lākinna* and *but* are used in a similar way. However, I have not discussed the correction reading yet; a matter that I will address shortly in my discussion of *lākin.* Most importantly, the meaning of *ʾistidrāk* that *lākinna* encodes remarkably resembles Blakemore's account of *but.* Arguably, in RT's terms, the revoking of what might have been derived from an utterance whether this utterance is said or understood is linked to the cognitive effect of the contradiction and elimination of an assumption. Thus, what we referred to as a denial *but* in Chapter (4) and *lākinna* in this chapter encode the same procedure. Still, the pressing question at hand is what is the nature of the contradicted assumption that *lākinna* contradicts?

Apart from the syntactic differences between the denial *but* and *lākinna,* I cannot see any difference in the encoded meaning of these two discourse connectives. Hence, it is plausible to conclude, from the discussed data, that the assumption that *lākinna* clause contradicts is also a manifest one. However, we find utterances, such as (25) below, where *lākinna* is preceded by a counterfactual clause, which might be problematic for the analysis which rests on the argument of contradicting a manifest assumption.

(25) **laww** ğaʾanī   la-ʾakram-tu-hu   **lākinna**-hu lam yaʾti
        if   he-visited-me I would-welcomed-him **but**-he   not came-he
        If he had visited me, I would have welcomed him but he did not visit me.

In (25), it is not clear what is contradicted by the part of utterance following *lākinna,* yet its use here is acceptable. What follows *lākinna*, 'he did not visit me', is already derived from the counterfactual clause that precedes *lākinna.* Consequently, utterances similar to (25) had led some linguists, such as Ibn Asfour, to argue that the meaning given by *lākinna* in such contexts is the meaning of emphasis, i.e. what follows *lākinna* stresses a conclusion derived from what precedes it. Arguably, 'emphasis' is too vague an analysis; *lākinna* cannot be used to emphasize just anything. It seems that the use of counterfactual before *lākinna* is essential here to make some believe that *lākinna* is used to emphasise an assumption. For example, we cannot say in English *'he's a genius, but he's a genius'*, nor can we in Arabic, either. It could be said that *lākinna* is emphasizing something in the sense that it is asserting an assumption that has already been presupposed, for example, the assumption 'he didn't visit me' in (25). However, this argument is not compelling for two reasons. First, according to such analysis, it is not clear why the speaker needs to assert what they have already said. Second, if *lākinna* does really encode the meaning of emphasis, we should find this meaning in other utterances where *lākinna* is not preceded by a counterfactual clause. However, this kind of utterances is not restricted to the use of *lākinna.* These utterances are analogous to the examples of *but,* discussed earlier in Chapter (4), such as in (26) and (27).

(26)   Tom should have been there, but he got stuck in traffic.

(Iten, 2005: 145)

(27)   I would have liked to go on holiday this year, but I couldn't afford it.

(Blakemore, 2002:113)

Accordingly, a similar analysis can be true for utterances of *lākinna.* In line with our argument above, i.e. what follows *lākinna* is not necessarily contradicting an assumption

derived from an immediately preceding utterance or even from any utterance at all, what the clause following *lākinna* contradicts could be an assumption that is derived from another preceding utterance, or from the speaker knowledge of the world. The speaker uses *lākinna* in (25) possibly to contradict an assumption such as he was at fault for not being hospitable to someone. Consider the same utterance within the following context.

(28)   A: How come you let Ahmad stay in a hotel?

B: If he had visited me, I would have welcomed him but he did not visit me.

From the Arabic data presented so far, the encoded meaning of *lākinna* seems to be very similar to the procedural meaning of what we referred to in Chapter (4) as denial *but*. However, so far, we have not seen any example in which *lākinna* is used for correction. In the following, I show which discourse connectives are used for correction and how similar or different they are from *lākinna.*

6.2.2   Lākin

As is mentioned in section (6.2), there is another discourse connective that resembles *lākinna* and translates into *but,* which is *lākin,* yet it can be used for correction as is *but* in English. To begin, there are two arguments about its etymology: firstly, *lākin* is a lighter version of *lākinna*, i.e. without gemination (final *na* is dropped), and secondly, *lākin* is originally with one '*n'*, i.e. it is not a lighter version of *lakinna.* Semantically speaking, *lākin* seems very similar to *lākinna* as it can replace it in virtually all utterances. That is, similar to *lākinna, lākin* can be used for the denial of expectation, the so called contrast

use, and in utterance- and discourse-initial position, as (29-32) below show, respectively.

(29) ʾurīdu   ḏ-ḏahāb-a   ʾilā al-ḥadīqa-t-i   **lākin** al-ǧaww-u   māṭir-un
      1SG.want.IPFV the-going to   the-park-F-GEN **but**   the weather-NOM raining-NOM
      I want to go to the park but it is raining.   (denial)

(30) ʿumar-u   ġaniyy-un **lākin** sāmer-un   faqīr-un
      omar-NOM rich-NOM **but**   samer-NOM poor-NOM
      Omar is rich but Samer is poor.   (contrast)

(31) A: sawfa nursilu   ḥamlat-a   musāʿadā-t-in ʾilā sūryā
         will   send.1PL.IPFV convoy-ACC aids-F-GEN   to   Syria.
         We will send a convoy to Syria.

      B: **lākin** māḏā ʿan   waqf-i   ʾiṭlāq-i   n-nār-i
         but   what about stopping-GEN shooting-GEN the-fire-GEN
         But what about ceasing fire?   (utterance-initial)

(32) A: [Getting ready to leave]
      B: **lākin** l-waqt-u   lam   yaḥin   baʿd
         but   the-time-NOM NEG   arrive.3SGM.IPFV yet
         But it is not the time yet.   (discourse-initial)

Examples (29-32) show that an analysis similar to *lākinna* can easily be applicable to these utterances of *lākin*. In other words, one can argue that *lākin* functions in the same way *lākinna* functions in an utterance. For example, (29) is similar to *but* cases which König (1985) called 'adversative', i.e. involving indirect denial. That is, instead of the clause following *but* directly contradicts an assumption, what follows *but* implies an assumption that contradicts another assumption that could be derived from the clause preceding *but*, as is the case in (29). Again, what we have in (30) might look like a contrast use in English; however, as is the case in similar utterances of *lākinna, lākin* is

not used for contrast. In other words, the use of *lākin* is not to indicate a contrast between two states of affairs or events that are explicitly communicated. It is used to intend the hearer to interpret what follows as a contradiction to an assumption that might have been derived from what precedes. Had *lākin* been used for contrast, utterances such as the one in (30) should have been acceptable in contexts where *wa*, 'and', is used instead of *lākin,* but they are not. We have previously seen that this is also true for *but* utterances. Hence, to avoid repetition, I refer the reader to the discussion of the difference between *but* utterances and *and* utterances in Chapter (3), as the same argument is correct for the difference between utterances of *lākin* and utterances of *wa*. Again, the same argument for utterance- and discourse-initial use is correct for *lākin* in (31) and (32), which is also the similar case of *lākinna* and *but.*

However, unlike *lākinna, lākin* can also be used for correction in a way similar to correction *but*, as (33) below shows.

> (33) **lam** ʾara   bāsim-**an**   **lākin** rabab-**a**
>   **NEG**   see.1SG.PFV   bāsim-**ACC**   **but**   rabab-**ACC**
>   I didn't see Basem but Rabab.   (correction)

In addition, there is a major syntactic difference between the two discourse connectives that allows for the correction use of *lākin,* but not for lakinna. Unlike *lākinna* which can preface only nominal sentences*, lākin* can introduce a verbal sentence as in (34), a nominal sentence as in (35), or a phrase as in (36).

> (34) naʿmalu   ṣabaḥan **lākin** naqīlu   ẓuhr-an.
>   1PL-work.IMPR morning **but**   1PL-nap.IMPR noon-ACC
>   We work in the morning but we nap in the noon.

(35) ʾuridu   ḏ-ḏahāba ʾilā s-sūqi   **lākin** al-ǧaww-u   māṭir-un
      1SG.want.IPFV   the-going to   the-market **but** the-weather-NOM raining-NOM
      I want to go to the market but it is raining.

(36) **lam**   ʾašrab   al-laban-**a**   **lākin** al-lmāʾ-**a**
      NEG-IPFV 1SG.drink.PERF the-yougurt-**ACC** **but**   the-water-**ACC**
      I didn't drink the yogurt, but the water.

Moreover, *lākin* does not shift the grammatical case of the noun following it. For
example, in (35) above, the case of *al-ǧaww-**u**,* the subject of the nominal sentence
following *lākin* is nominative. It does not change into accusative as is the case with
lākinna. However, one notices that, like *lākinna*, it can be preceded by *wa,* 'and', as in
(37).

(37) ʾiḏhab ʾila   firāši-ka   **wa lākin** la   tansā   ʾiġlāqa al-nāfiḏat-i
      go   to   bed-POSS **and but**   NEG forget   closing   the-window-GEN
      Go to your bed but don't forget to close the window.

Many Classical Arabic grammarians, (such as Ibn Hisham, Al-Mubrad, Al-Suyuti),
argue that *lākin* is a clause-initial particle, or what I referred to in section (6.2.1), a
complementizer, and it encodes the meaning of *ʾistidrāk* as *lākinna.* Nevertheless, they
maintain that *lākin* can be a coordinating conjunction if and only if the following three
conditions are fulfilled:

(1)   It should not be preceded by *wa,* 'and';
(2)   It should be followed by a phrase, not a sentence, be it nominal or verbal;
(3)   It should be preceded by negation.

Most importantly, they argue that when these conditions apply *lākin* encodes a different
meaning, that is the same meaning as another particle in Arabic which is *bal,* which is

used for correction. I return to this point shortly in the next section. For now, consider

examples (30) and (31) below.

(38) **ma**   šarib-tu   al-laban-**a**   **lākin**   al-māʾ-**a**
     NEG   drink.PFV-1SG   the-milk-**ACC**   **but**   the-water-**ACC**
     I didn't drink the milk but the water.

(39) **mā**   zārani   aḥmad-**u**   **lākin** zayyd-**un**
     NEG-PAST   visit.3.M.PERF-PRO ahmad-**NOM**   **but**   zayyd-**NOM**
lit: Ahmad didn't visit me but Zayyd.
       It wasn't Ahmad but Zayyd who visited me.

In these examples, all the three conditions are met. *Lākin* is not preceded by *wa,* 'and'. It

is followed by a noun phrase in (38) *al-māʾ-a,* 'the water', and in (39) *Zayydun,* 'a proper

noun'. It is preceded by a sentential negation particle *mā,* 'not'. Hence, according to the

above criteria, *lākin* in (38) and (39) is considered a coordinating conjunction. It is also

very important to note that *lākin* receives the correction reading only when these three

conditions are met. This of course means that when any of the above three conditions

does not apply, the use of *lākin* is still acceptable, such as in the previous examples of

(34), (35), and (37), yet the meaning of correction is no longer available. The meaning of

lākin in these utterances is exactly as same as the meaning of *lākinna* discussed in the

previous section, i.e. *ʾistidrāk,* or contradicting and eliminating a manifest assumption.

While it is obvious that we were able to derive the meaning of correction only from

utterances that seem to conform to the above criteria, it is not clear to us whether there

is a pressing need to argue that *lākin* corresponds to two different syntactic categories.

So, the first question that seems relevant here is whether *lākin* in the correction use is in

fact coordinating two phrases or two clauses where the second clause is elliptical. Accordingly, is the structure of an utterance such as (39) along the lines of (40)?

(40) **mā**   zāra-ni   aḥmad-u   **lākin** ~~zārani~~   zayyd-un

   NEG-PAST visit.3SGM.PFV-PRO ahmad-NOM **but** ~~visit.3SGM.PFV-PRO~~ zayyd-NOM

lit: Ahmad didn't visit me but Zayyd.

   It was not Ahmad but Zayyd who visited me.

It is obvious that the case of the NP following *lākin, Zayyd-un,* is identical to the case of the NP preceding *lākin, Aḥmad-u,* i.e. it is nominative. As is already mentioned in Chapter (5), both SVO and VSO orders are possible in Arabic. Therefore, it should be possible to change the order of the subject and the verb in the clause preceding *lākin.* Hence, '**mā** zāra-ni Aḥmad-u', and 'Aḥmad-u **mā** zāra-ni' are both acceptable.[16] However, changing the order of the segment preceding *lākin* in (40) will make the utterance unacceptable, as (41) below shows.

(41) *aḥmad-u   **ma**   zāra-ni   **lākin** zayd-un
   ahmad-NOM **NEG**-PAST visit.3SGM.PFV-PRO **but** zayd-NOM
   Intended: Ahmad didn't visit me but Zayyd.

This is akin to our discussion of correction *but* utterances in Chapter (4), such as the one in (42) below.

(42)   ? Kim didn't go to London, but Lee.

It seems that examples of correction *but* are less acceptable when the phrase following *but* is correcting the subject of the main clause. The unacceptability of (41) gives evidence that 'Ahmad-u lākin Zayd-un' is a coordinate structure of two phrases. In other words, it is unlikely to have an elliptical clause in the second conjunct.

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[16] in Arabic, *mā* immediately precedes the verb.

Nevertheless, examples such as (42) below, where *lākin* links phrases and it is not preceded by negation, are ungrammatical.

(42) ***zāran-i**   aḥmad-u   **lākin** zayyd-un
      visit.3.M.PERF-PRO ahmad-NOM **but**   zayyd-NOM
      *Ahmad visited me but Zayyd.

In other words, a preceding negation is obligatory whenever *lākin* is followed by a phrase only. This again is reminiscent of correction *but* in (43), where its use without a preceding negation in the first conjunct is unacceptable.

(43) (a)   I did not see Kim but Lee

      (b)   *I saw Kim but Lee.

The only way in which the use of *lākin* in (42) can be rendered acceptable is to follow *lākin* by a full clause where the main verb is negated. Consider (44) below.

(44) (a)   zārani   aḥmadu   **lākin** zayyd-un
            visit.3SGM.PFV-PRO ahmad-NOM **but**   zayyd-NOM

            ma zārani
            NEG visit.3SG.M.PERF

            Ahmad visited me but Zayyd [didn't].

      (b)   zārani   aḥmad-u   **lākin**
            visit.3.M.PERF-PRO ahmad-NOM **but**

            mā   zārani   zayyd-un
            NEG visit.3SG.M.PERF   zayyd-NOM

            Ahmad visited me but Zayyd didn't.

For the same reasons mentioned earlier, both (44a) and (44b) have the same meaning.

However, the meaning of correction is not available; the only accessible reading is the

meaning of ʾistidrāk or amendment, i.e. the same meaning of lākinna.

Whether lākin in the correction use is a coordinating conjunction or not is a matter

which is open to controversy. In any case, such an analysis, i.e. treating but as a

coordinating conjunction, is defensible as it can account for the unacceptability of

examples such as (41). What is truly remarkable, though, is the striking similarity

between lākin in the correction use and correction but: both are required to be preceded

by negation and followed by a phrase. Consider the following occurrences of lākin.

(46) **lam** ʾaštari   l-fustān-a   l-ʾaḥmar-a
      NEG   buy.1SG.IPFV the-dress-ACC the-red-ACC

      lākin l-qamīṣ-a   l-ʾazraq-a
      but   the-shirt-ACC the-blue-ACC

      I didn't buy the red dress but the blue shirt.

(47) **lā**   tuṣāḥib   l-ḥamqā   **lākin**   l-ḥukamāʾ-a
      NEG   befriend.2SG.IPFV the-fool.PL-ACC **but**   the-wise.PL-ACC
      Don't befriend the fools but the wise.

(48) **mā**   ʿāda   hišām-un   **lākin** ʾibnu-hu
      NEG   return.1SGM.PFV hisham-NOM **but**   son-NOM-3SGM
      Iit: Hisham didn't return but his son.
              It was Hisham's son that returned.

The only reading that one can derive from such examples is the correction reading. If

we compare (46) with (49), we perceive the same difference observed in utterances of

but.

(49) **lam** ʾaštari   l-fustān-a   l-ʾaḥmar-a
      NEG buy.1SG.IPFV the-dress-ACC   the-red-ACC

lākin ʾištarayytu   l-qamīṣ-a   l-ʾazraq-a
but   buy.1SG.PFV the-shirt-ACC the-blue-ACC

I didn't buy the red dress, but I bought the blue shirt.

Once *lākin* occurs between two full clauses the correction reading becomes unavailable. By the use of *lākin* in (49), the speaker intends the hearer to contradict and eliminate an assumption that might have been implied from the first segment, for example, that the speaker did not buy anything at all, while in (46) the speaker intends the hearer to understand the phrase following *lākin* as a replacement for what is negated in the preceding segment, i.e. correction. I have mentioned earlier that *lākin* is not the only particle that can be used for correction. There is another particle in MSA that can also be used for correction, that is *bal*. In what follows, I will first briefly present the different uses of *bal* in Arabic and highlight the similarities and differences between *bal* and the correction use of *lākin*. However, for clarity of exposition, I defer the discussion of the semantics of the correction use of both particles to the end.

6.2.3   Bal

So far, we have seen that the correction *but* in English translates into *lākin* in Arabic provided that *lākin* is preceded by negation; not preceded by 'wa', and followed by a phrase. Still, there is another particle in Arabic, which is *bal,* that could replace *lākin* in the correction use. However, *bal* has two uses: one is similar to the use of correction *but* in English, and the other is different. In the following, I split my discussion into two parts: the first part describes the two different uses of *bal* in Arabic and the second part discusses the use, which is the direct equivalent to correction *but*, leaving its other use for future research.

First, *bal* can be used to correct an EXPLICITLY communicated assumption without the need to be preceded by negation. In this use, the speaker can correct an assertion they made by mistake, i.e. in unplanned speech, or in a way similar to reformulation. (26) is an example of self-correction in unplanned speech, where *bal* has a meaning similar to 'I mean'.[17]

(26)	ḍahabtu	ʾilā	s-sinamā	**bal**	ʾilā	l-masraḥ
	went-I	to	the-cinema	**[I mean]**	to	the-theater

I went to the cinema. I mean to the theatre.

Conversely, correction *but* cannot be used in this way, i.e. it cannot correct an assertion made by oneself without denying it first. As (27) below shows, the speaker cannot correct themselves by simply using correction *but*.

(27)   (a)   *I went to the cinema, **but** to the theatre.
       (b)   I did **not** go to the cinema, **but** to the theatre.
       (c)   I went to the cinema. I mean, to the theatre.
       (d)   I went to the cinema. I mean, I didn't go to the cinema but to the theatre.

In order to use correction *but* here, the speaker needs first to deny the assumption they have just made as in (27b). Alternatively, the speaker may opt to use 'I mean' to correct themselves as in (27c), or they can use 'I mean' followed by denial, followed by correction *but* as in (27d). Therefore, the use of 'I mean' in this context seems to communicate the meaning that what the speaker just said is not what they meant. To correct oneself in unplanned speech, *bal* can be followed not only by a phrase as (26) above shows, but also by a sentence as in (28) below.

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[17] Since there is no English equivalent to this use of *bal*, the closest translation in English is 'I mean', as this is the meaning that *bal* seems to convey in this context.

(28)   qābaltu   ʿamr-an   **bal**   ʾitaṣaltu   bi-h-i
        meet.1SG.PERF amr-ACC   **bal**   call.1SG.PERF in-PRO-GEN
        I met Amr. I mean, I called him.

As is mentioned above, *bal* could also be used in planned discourse as a reformulation, such as the one in (29) below.

(29)   hindun kawkab-**un** **bal**   badr-un   **bal**   šams-un
        hind   planet-NOM **rather** full moon-NOM   **rather** sun-NOM
        Hind is a planet, rather a full moon, rather a sun.

In such contexts, the closest meaning to *bal* is *rather* in English. Utterances such as this one are in a way similar to correction *but* preceded by a metalinguistic negation, as (30b) shows.[18]

(30)   (a)   ***Sam is attractive **but** beautiful.
        (b)   Sam is **not** attractive, **but** beautiful.

However, while the negation in the first conjunct in (30) is a prerequisite, it is not a prerequisite for the case of *bal* in (29). Additionally, this use of *bal* is not restricted to self-correction, it can be used to correct an *explicitly* communicated assumption made by another speaker, such as in (31).

(31)   A: ḫaṭaba   muḥamad-un
                (get engaged).3SGM.PFV muhammad-NOM
                Muhammad got engaged.

        B: **bal** tazawwaǧa
                bal marry.3SG.PERF
                You mean he got married.

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[18] We have seen in Chapter (3) that the negation in correction *but* utterances can be metalinguistic, but not always.

The use of *bal* in (31) is strikingly different from correction *but* and the correction use of *lākin*. It is not only that *bal* is not preceded by negation, it also appears in an utterance-initial position. In English, as (32) shows, correction *but* cannot be used in utterance-initial position as is *bal*, even if it is said by another speaker, nor can *lākin* in Arabic.

(32)   A: John got engaged.
        B: ? But he got married.

We could have *but* in utterances such as (32) with something that casts doubt on what has just been said, as in (33). Yet, it is the denial *but* that is used in (33) below. It is similar to objection *but* discussed in Chapter (3).

(33)   A: John got engaged.
        B: But I heard he got married.

So, we can argue that the main difference between this use of *bal* and correction *but* is that *bal* can be used to correct an explicitly communicated assumption without the requirement for a preceding denial. In all the previous examples, *bal* is used to correct an assumption that is relevant as an explicature. On the one hand, given that we argued in Chapter (4) that the denial *but* contradicts and eliminates a manifest assumption that cannot be relevant as an explicature, it is comprehensible why the denial *but* cannot be used in utterances similar to *bal* utterances above. On the other hand, however, we have also seen that correction *but* can only be used after negation and should be followed by a phrase. These two conditions do not apply to the above examples of *bal*.

The second use of *bal* occurs in the context of negation, as exemplified in (34) below. This is the use of *bal* that seems equivalent to correction *but* and the correction use of

lākin. According to our discussion in the previous section, the use of *lākin* is also acceptable in place of *bal,* in (34).

(34) **lam**   yuʿṭi-ha   sāʿat-an   **bal**   ḫātam-an
      NEG   gave-her   a watch-ACC   **but**   a ring-ACC
      He didn't give her a watch, but a ring.

Apparently, of all the previous examples, only (34) can be considered equivalent to correction *but,* that is, only when it is preceded by negation and it is in a middle position in an utterance said by one speaker. Although the two uses of *bal* could be related, I limit the discussion to its use equivalent to English *but.* That is because the main focus of the thesis is on the use of *but* and its counterparts in Arabic.

We have also seen in Chapter (4), that the correction *but* in English cannot be followed by a full clause. The other way to derive the correction meaning in such a case is by having two juxtaposed clauses. However, the case with *bal* is different. *bal* can be followed not only by a phrase as in (34), but also by a clause, as (35) shows.

(35) **lam**   yuʿṭi-hā   sāʿat-an   **bal**   ʾaʿṭā-hā   ḫātam-an
      NEG   gave-her   a watch-ACC   **but**   give.3SGM.PFV   a ring-ACC
      He didn't give her a watch. He gave her a ring.

This use of *bal* seems to have much resemblance to *sondern* in German, and *sino* in Spanish. For example, *sondern,* the corrective discourse connective in German, can be followed by a phrase as well as a clause, as in (36) below, which is also the case of *bal* in Arabic.

(36) (a) Ich bin **nicht** leidig **sondern** verheiratet.
           I am **not** single, **but** married.

      (b) John hat **keinen** Salat gemacht, **sondern** Jack hat einenKuchen gekauft.
           John did**n't** make a salad. Jack bought a cake.

(Blakemore, 2002: 112)

As is noticed, we have dropped *but* in the English translation of (36b). If we use *but* in

English in (36b), the only reading that we can derive is that of the denial *but*. The same

is true if we use *lākin* in examples such as (35) above.

Syntactically, similar to *lākin*, *bal* can be followed be a verbal sentence, a nominal

sentence, or by a phrase such as in (37), (38) and (39), respectively.

(37) **lam**   tasriq   l-kitāab-a   **bal**   ʾistaʿārat-hu
      NEG   she-stole   the-book   **but**   borrowed-she-it
      She didn't steal the book, but she borrowed it.

(38) ham-u-hum   **layysa**[19]   al-ʿālam-a
      Concern.SG-NOM-3PLM   **NEG**   the-world-ACC

      bal mašrūʿ-un   ʿarabiyy-un   muḥadad-un
      but project-NOM   Arabic-NOM   specific-NOM

      What concerns them is not the world but a specific Arabic project.

(39) **lam**   tasriq   l-kitāb-**a**   **bal**   al-maqāl-**a**
      NEG   she-stole   the-book-**ACC**   **but**   the-paper-**ACC**
      She didn't steal the book, but the paper.

There is a general agreement in the literature that *bal*, in (39), i.e. when preceded by

negation and followed by a phrase, is a coordinating conjunction. However, there is a

controversy in the literature as to whether *bal* in utterances such as (37) and (38); i.e.

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[19] We have a different form of negation here because the sentence before *bal* is nominal. In Arabic the negative particle that is used to negate a verbal sentence is different from the one used to negate a nominal sentence.

when it is followed by a sentence, is either a coordinating conjunction or a complementizer. Since in Arabic the correction meaning is already encoded by a different lexical item, i.e. *bal*, I will not go into the discussion of its syntactic category. The reason that I had to discuss the syntax of *but* and *lākin* is relevant to the fact that both *lākin* and *but* give the correction meaning only when they are preceded by negation and followed by a phrase.

6.2.4   A relevance-theoretic account of *bal* and *lākin* in correction

Regarding the semantics of *bal*, let us recall example (35), repeated below for convenience.

> (35)   **lam**   yuʿṭi-hā   sāʿat-an   **bal**   ʾaʿṭā-hā   ḫātam-an
> **NEG**   gave-her   a watch-ACC   **but**   give.3SGM.PFV   a ring-ACC
> He didn't give her a watch. He gave her a ring.

For the speaker to say the utterance in (35), apparently the speaker believes that the assumption 'He gave her a watch' is manifest to the hearer. In other words, according to Sperber and Wilson's (1986: 39) definition of *manifestness*, the hearer is capable of entertaining this assumption and accepting it as true or probably true. In fact, had not the speaker believed that the hearer held this assumption as true, there would be no reason for (35) to be uttered in the first place. As is discussed before, according to Blakemore (2002: 111), "for an utterance to achieve relevance as a contradiction, it must communicate an assumption which is contradictory to an assumption which the hearer believes to be true." However, in (35), it is clear that the clause preceding *bal* is explicitly eliminating the assumption that the speaker believes the hearer holds as true, that is 'He gave her a watch'. Thus, the function that *bal* seems to achieve in such an utterance is to

guide the hearer to interpret what follows as a replacement to an explicitly eliminated assumption. In other words, similar to correction *but,* the segment follows *bal* gives further evidence for the elimination in the preceding segment. It seems that *bal* encode a procedure different from the procedure encoded by *lākinna* and *lākin* in the denial use. As is the case with correction *but, bal* encodes a constraint not only on the inferential processes involved in achieving the cognitive effect, but also on the context in which the cognitive effect is achieved. I argue that *bal* in the correction use, encodes the following procedure, as given in (40):

(40)   *Bal* encodes a procedure that guides the hearer to interpret what
         follows as a replacement of an explicitly eliminated assumption.

Provided the similarity between the correction use of *lākin* and that of *bal,* the same analysis in (40) is true for *lākin* when it is used for correction. All in all, while in some languages, such as German and Spanish, there is a different connective for the correction meaning, the picture is more complicated in Arabic. We have *lākinna* and *lākin* for the denial meaning, and we have a use of *bal* for correction, yet the meaning of correction can still be derived by *lākin* when preceded by negation and followed by a phrase.

6.3   Conclusion

In conclusion, we can say that the Arabic equivalents of denial *but* are *lākin* and *lākinna.* And the equivalent of correction *but* is *bal* and *lākin* when preceded by negation and followed by a phrase. Noticeably, *lākin* can replace *lākinna* in all utterances, but not vice-versa. This is conceivable provided the syntactic difference between the two particles.

Additionally, it seems that *lākin* in Arabic is used in a very similar fashion to *but* in English.

However, since the use of *lākin* in Arabic is acceptable in both nominal and verbal sentences, i.e. *lākin* can replace *lākinna*, what is the point of having two lexemes that encode the same meaning, i.e. the denial meaning in the case of *lākin?* For this reason, some classical grammarians argue that there is a slight difference in the meaning between *lākin* and *lākinna,* i.e. when *lākin* encodes the meaning of contradiction and elimination of an assumption. That is *lākinna* has the meaning of *tawkīd*, 'emphasis' and *ʾistidrāk* together, whereas *lākin* has the meaning of *ʾistidrāk* only. It is an argument based on the assumption that the etymology of *lākinna* is a combination of both *lākin* and *ʾinna.* Whether *lākinna* encodes an additional meaning is a question that I leave open for future research.

Chapter 7   Conclusion and Further Research

7.1   Conclusion

This study has examined in depth the nature of the encoded meaning of *but* in English and its Arabic counterparts *lākinna*, *lākin,* and *bal* within the framework of relevance theory. The main objective has been to settle the controversy in the literature on whether *but* is ambiguous or not. To achieve this goal, I have discussed a number of different accounts of *but.* These include, on the one hand, the influential ambiguity account of Anscombre and Ducrot (1977), and, on the other hand, the relevance-theoretic account of Blakemore (2002) and Iten (2005). The former account highlights important syntactic differences between two uses of *but*, the denial and correction use, and argues that *but* is ambiguous. However, Blakemore (2002) and Iten (2005) argue that the reason for the different meanings of *but* is due to differences in the context, including the syntactic context. They claim that *but* in English encodes a unified meaning that accounts for all its uses, including the correction use.

I have shown, contrary to Blakemore (2002), that the English *but* is in fact ambiguous. The correction *but* seems to be limited to a very restricted syntactic context. Additionally, I have proposed a renewed relevance-theoretic account of *but*, in which I have argued that *but* encodes two different procedures. First, with respect to the denial *but,* I argue that:

> *What follows denial but contradicts and eliminates a manifest assumption that cannot be relevant as an explicature.*

Second, as for the correction *but,* I argue that correction *but* does not only constrain the inferential processes that lead to the intended cognitive effect, but also the context in which the cognitive effect is achieved. Hence, correction *but* encodes the following procedure:

> *Correction but encodes a procedure that guides the hearer to interpret what follows as a replacement of an explicitly eliminated assumption.*

Turning to the Arabic counterparts of the English *but,* I have shown that the Arabic equivalents of denial *but* are *lākin* and *lākinna,* and the equivalents of correction *but* are *bal* and *lākin* when preceded by negation and followed by a phrase. I have also shown that *lākin* and *lākinna* encode the same procedure of the denial *but* in English, and that the correction use of *lākin* and *bal* encode the same procedure of correction *but.*

7.2   Practical implications

Whether correction *but* is considered another use of denial *but,* or whether it does indeed encode a different procedure, as is argued so far, there is strong evidence that the syntactic distributions of correction *but* and denial *but* are different. I have shown that the correction *but* is always associated with an explicit negation preceding *but* and a constituent smaller than a full clause in the segment following it. These findings could be implemented in language teaching, as well as in translation studies. For example, English speakers learning Arabic could possibly be taught to use these syntactic differences as a clue. First, they can use them to differentiate between correction meaning and denial meaning in the English language itself. Second these syntactic differences can help the learners to differentiate between the Arabic expressions encoding these meanings, that is, the denial meaning encoded by *lākinna* and *lākin* and the correction meaning encoded by *bal* and *lākin* when preceded by negation and

followed by a phrase. Likewise, Arabic speakers learning English could benefit from learning these distinctions.

7.3   Avenues for future research

I have argued throughout this study that there is evidence that *but* in English is ambiguous. However, I have excluded from the discussion another use of *but* that is typically considered synonymous to *except.* Further research is needed to investigate whether the exceptive *but* is simply a homonym of the coordinator *but* or whether the pragmatic account of the denial *but* proposed in this study can be modified to account for this use of *but* as well.

Additionally, as is seen in Chapter (6), the use of *lākin* in Arabic is acceptable in both nominal and verbal sentences, i.e. *lākin* can replace *lākinna.* Thus, it will be particularly interesting to find out whether there is any slight difference in meaning between *lākin* and *lākinna.* In other words, what is the point of having two expressions that encode the same meaning? Is there any additional meaning encoded by *lākinna*?

Moreover, while one of the uses of *bal* seems to be similar to the correction *but* in English, we have seen that it can also be used to correct an explicitly communicated assumption without the need to be preceded by negation. It could also be used in planned discourse for reformulation. This raises the question of how relevant these uses of *bal* to its use that is similar to correction *but.* Does *bal* encode a general meaning that can account for all these uses including the one similar to correction *but?* Further research is needed to answer these questions.

Last but not least, there is a need for an experimental pragmatic study to test/confirm the encoded meaning of *but, lākin, lākinna,* and *bal* proposed in this study. Psycholinguistic experiments could also be used to examine how syntax affects the comprehension and production of both correction and denial meanings and whether any of these two meaning is acquired before the other.

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