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FORMAL SIMILARITIES AND DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN THE CONTRASTIVE MARKERS MAS (BUT), JÁ (ALREADY) AND AGORA (NOW) IN BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE

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ABSTRACT: This paper investigates the semantic and pragmatic characteristics of the connectives *mas*, *já* and *agora* in Brazilian Portuguese (BP), which mark contrast in this language³. More specifically, this research aims to answer the following questions: (i) what is the semantic-pragmatic contribution of those connectives?; (ii) are there any syntactic or phonological differences among them?; (iii) might they be used in the same contexts?

Keywords: contrastive markers, discourse structure, formal semantics, formal pragmatics.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses the use of Contrastive Discourse Markers (CDM) resting on authors who worked on this subject (Carlson 1983; Fraser 1990, 1996; Shourup 1999, among others). We assume that these markers contribute to felicity conditions of the proposition expressed by its host utterance (Grice 1975), since there are differences in their use. A formal analysis will be proposed assuming that discourse structure is organized underlying questions (Carlson 1983; Robert 1996; Buring 1999, 2003).

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³ The English connectives *already* and *now*, which correspond to *já* and *agora* of BP respectively do not convey contrast.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The connectives have been investigated from several theoretical perspectives. Although there are controversies about their terminology and classification, three characteristics are unanimously considered as necessary to deal with Discourse Markers (henceforth DM) in general: *connectivity*, *optionality* and *non-truth-conditionality*.

Connectivity of DMs is often taken as a necessary characteristic. Nevertheless, connectivity is conceived of in different ways. There are, for example, disagreement about whether DM connectivity must involve more than one textual unit (Schourup, 1999: 230). Schourup (1999) states that connectivity often figures in several definitions of DMs and that it refers to the relation between utterances or other discourse units. Fraser (1996) considers DMs to be expressions signaling both the current message and its relations with previous discourse.

Despite these disagreements, connectivity can be used to distinguish DMs from other initial elements, such as illocutionary adverbials ('frankly'), attitudinal adverbials ('fortunately', 'sadly') and primary interjections ('oops'). However, it is not enough to distinguish DMs from other intra-sentential elements.

Optionality is the second characteristic presented by Schourup (1999). It must be understood in two ways. On the one hand, DMs are almost universally regarded as syntactically optional elements in the sense that dropping them does not affect the grammaticality of their host sentences (Fraser 1988). On the other hand, DMs have been claimed to be optional in the sense that they do not enlarge the semantic relations of elements they are associated with. Therefore, if a DM is omitted, the relation it signals is still available to the hearer even though it is not explicitly stated (Schourup 1999: 231). Utterances (1) and (2) may be understood in roughly the same way, for example.

(1) The others are going to Stoke. However, I am going to Paris.

(2) The others are going to Stoke. I am going to Paris.

(Schourup 1999: 231)

Optionality of DMs renders them useless or redundant. According to Schourup (1999: 231), even scholars who claim they are optional take them to guide the hearer toward a particular interpretation and simultaneously rule out unintended interpretations (e.g. Brinton, 1996: 34; Brown and Yale, 1983: 106).

Finally, the third characteristic of DMs is non-truth-conditionality: DMs do not

contribute to the truth-conditions of the proposition expressed by an utterance⁴ (e. g. Blakemore, 1988: 183; Hansen, 1997: 161; DeFina, 1997: 340). Fraser (2009) states that the non-truth-conditional of DMs distinguishes them from uses of “content” words, as the manner adverbial uses of words like *sadly*, and from disjunctive forms that do affect truth-conditions, such as evidential and hearsay sentence adverbials (see Infantidou-Trouki, 1992).

We assume that DMs have the same truth-conditions as sentential connectives such as 'and'. In addition to this, we propose that these markers contribute to the felicity conditions of an utterance (Grice 1975).

Regarding Contrastive Markers (henceforth CDM), Fraser (1996: 187) states that they are either a negation or an element contrasting some proposition related to previous discourse. Unlike Fraser, we resting on Büring (1999, 2002) and Menuzzi & Rodrigues (2010) who propose which “intonation patterns” can be enough to express contrast, as we will discuss later.

CDMs, according Fraser, are then divided into two groups: one signals a clear but unexpected contrast ('conversely', 'in contrast', 'on the contrary') and the other contrasts previous and current statements ('that said', 'I may be wrong but').

Fraser (2009) notes that CDMs must be distinguished between two-people use (3) and one-people use (4). In this paper, we focus the one-people use only.

(3) A: I don't suppose you remember where they are, do you?

B: **On the contrary**, my dear Watson, I know exactly where they are.

(4) I'm not hungry. **On the contrary**, I'm starved.

(Fraser, 2009: 88)

Besides the claim that these markers contribute to the felicity conditions of an utterance (Grice 1975), we also propose that there are some differences (to be shown below) among them.

3. CDMs IN BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE

We will focus on three contrastive contexts in which *mas*, *já e agora* can occur: (i) contexts in which there is only one individual with different properties in which these

⁴ In this paper, we will treat of the utterance because for us is important to investigate the sentences considering your speech context.

properties are contrasted (see (5)); (ii) contexts in which there are different individuals who are contrasted by taking the same property into account, (see (6)); and (iii) contexts with different individuals and different properties being contrasted (see (7)).

(5) O João é bom aluno, *MAS É PREGUIÇOSO*.

John_i is a good student, BUT HE_i IS LAZY.

(6) O João comprou o livro de semântica, *MAS O PEDRO NÃO COMPROU*.

John bought the semantics book, BUT PETER DID NOT.

(7) O João gosta de futebol, *MAS O PEDRO GOSTA DE BASQUETE*.

John likes soccer, BUT PETER LIKES BASKETBALL.

Considering these three contexts, one can say that what *mas*, *agora* and *já* have in common is the function of inserting new elements (represented by capital letters in the examples above) into discourse. Additionally, they present pragmatic, syntactic and phonological distinctions which will be discussed below.

Contexts like (i), in which there are only one individual and different properties being contrasted, allow the markers *mas* and *agora*.

(8) O João é bom aluno, *MAS É PREGUIÇOSO*.

John_i is a good student, BUT HE_i IS LAZY.

(9) O João é bom aluno, [] *AGORA É PREGUIÇOSO*.

John_i is a good student, [] AGORA⁵ HE_i IS LAZY.

Note that *agora* requires a special intonation: specifically, a pause between the utterances (indicated by brackets). This device could also be a contrastive prosodic strategy; however, this hypothesis needs further investigation as this special intonation has other uses in BP.

The marker *já*, in turn, is not accepted in this context:

(10)*O João é bom aluno, *JÁ É PREGUIÇOSO*⁶.

** John_i is a good student, JÁ HE_i IS LAZY.*

⁵ Since the English word *now* (equivalent to *agora*) does not convey contrast, we maintain the glosses in BP.

⁶ As pointed by anonymous reviewer, if we prolong the final stressed word 'preguiçoso', this sentence sounds natural. Contexts with this particular intonation will be investigated in future works.

Carlson (1983) called this sort of context *contrary-to-expectation*, since it contrasts an expectation related to a previously stated property. In utterance (10), what is expected from the first clause is that good students are hardworking. Carlson claims that in such contexts a utterance following the connective contradicts what is expected.

(11) She is busy but she helps us all the time.

In the utterance above, what is expected after reading the first clause is that busy people do not help because they do not have time to help. However, *but* inserts a statement which is against all expectations: it asserts that she helps all the time.

Apparently, in contexts like (i), *já* is the only suitable CDM when the expected property is explicitly denied:

(12) O João é bom aluno, JÁ DEDICADO ELE NÃO É.

(?) *John_i is a good student, JÁ HARDWORKING HE_i IS NOT.*

(13) O João é bom aluno, DEDICADO ELE JÁ NÃO É.

(?) *John_i is a good student, HARDWORKING HE_i JÁ IS NOT.*

Furthermore, *já* requests a larger syntactic proximity to the element being contrasted, whereas *mas* and *agora* do not have such a requirement.

Ducrot (1980) notes that coordinating two utterances (*p* and *q*) with ‘but’ (compatible with *mas* in BP) – and now we are including other CDMs which occur in this context – adds two ideas to them. The first one is that a given conclusion *r*, which is mentally present and can be accessed by the hearer, would be suggested by *p* and invalidated by *q*. In other words, *p* and *q* have opposite argumentative biases towards the conclusion *r*.

The second idea is that *q* has more strength against *r* than *p* has in its favor, inasmuch as the set '*p mas q*' leads directly to *non-r*. Imagine that John wants to work with a particular professor in his research group, and while analyzing this possibility, the professor says:

(14) O João é bom aluno, MAS É PREGUIÇOSO.

John_i is a good student, BUT HE_i IS LAZY.

The utterance '*John is a good student*' (*p*) leads to the conclusion of accepting John in

the research group (r). On the other hand, the utterance '*John is lazy*' (q), leads to the conclusion of not accepting John in the research group ($non-r$), and in this case q is the strongest argument.

Ducrot (1980) compares utterances with *but* to a scale which weighs two arguments and tends to the heavier one. Therefore, it evaluates conclusion r by weighing arguments p and q , and q is presented as the strongest one. Now imagine the same situation, but with (15) instead of (14):

(15) O João é preguiçoso, MAS É BOM ALUNO.
John_i is lazy, BUT HE_i IS A GOOD STUDENT.

In this case, the stated fact that John is a good student plays a more important role in the professor's decision. The utterance '*John is lazy*' (p) is leading to the conclusion of not accepting John in the research group (r), while the utterance '*John is a good student*' is leading to the opposite conclusion of accepting John in the research group ($non-r$), and in this case, the last argument is the strongest one.

In other words, one of the characteristics of contrast is that it must be a gradable phenomenon (Molnár 2006, Paoli 2009, Calhoun 2010, Bolinger 1961, Lambrecht 1994, Asher & Lascarides 2003), in which a certain property is more important to the speaker than others. Utterances with *but* present such a gradation in a way clearer and intuitively more contrastive, according to Reep (2014):

(16) John is tall but John is slow. (To a basketball player)

In this utterance, the statement following the connective is more relevant to the speaker than the first statement. For instance, if John wants to play in a basketball team and (16) is said by the coach, there is a strong possibility that he may not be selected.

It is important to note that what is being contrasted is the degree of importance of proprieties and not the proprieties themselves. Suppose that Peter wants to buy a car and, after inspecting several models, he finds one which pleases him because of its spacious interior. Nevertheless, its price is a little high. When the seller asks Peter if he will buy the car, Peter says:

(17) O carro é espaçoso, MAS É CARO.

The car_i is spacious, BUT IT_i IS EXPENSIVE.

Note that there is nothing in ‘spacious’ that directly contrasts to ‘expensive’. What is at stake here is the degree of importance of these properties, which leads to the conclusion of buying the car (*r*). Following the same reasoning, the utterance ‘the car is spacious’ (*p*) leads to the conclusion of buying the car (*r*), whereas ‘the car is expensive’ (*q*) leads to the conclusion of not buying it (*non-r*) (which is the strongest one). Importantly, this use generates an implicature that can be canceled. Hence, a speaker can choose the conclusion *r* even though he is inclined to *non-r*.

(18) O carro é espaçoso, MAS É CARO. Só que vou comprá-lo mesmo assim.

The car_i is spacious, BUT IT_i IS EXPENSIVE. However, I'll buy them anyway.

Although the *q* argument is more relevant in the argumentative scale, speakers do not necessarily need to choose the conclusion presented by *q*.

Turning to contexts with distinct individuals and the same property being contrasted, Reep (2014) presents two types of contrast: opposition contrast and correction contrast. In opposition contrast cases, two sentences can be true and they can carry opposite contributions to a question under consideration. In correction contrast cases, on the other hand, one proposition rejects the other and if one of them is true, the other is necessarily false. Examples of opposite contrast (19) and correction contrast (20) are presented below:

(19) O João comprou o livro de semântica, mas o Pedro não comprou.

John bought the semantics book, but Peter did not.

(20) A: O João comprou o livro de semântica.

B: Não, o Pedro comprou.

A: John bought the semantics book.

B: No, Peter bought the semantics book.

In (19), both sentences are true, and the property of *x* buying the semantics book applies only to John. In (20), on the other hand, the proposition “John bought the semantics book” is false, while “Peter bought the semantics book” is true.

In this paper, we assume that contrast evokes a set of alternatives (see Rooth 1985) comprising at least one that is affirmed and at least one that is denied by inference, not by

assertion. In (19), for example, the “John bought semantics book” alternative is asserted while “Peter bought the semantics book” is denied.

In the opposite contrast context (21), different individuals (John and Peter) are contrasted regarding a particular property (to buy the book of semantics). In this case, the markers *mas*, *já* and *agora* are allowed:

- (21) O João comprou o livro de semântica, MAS O PEDRO NÃO COMPROU.
John bought the semantics book, BUT PETER DID NOT.
- (22) O João comprou o livro de semântica, [] AGORA O PEDRO NÃO COMPROU.
John bought the semantics book, [] AGORA PETER DID NOT.
- (23) O João comprou o livro de semântica, JÁ O PEDRO NÃO COMPROU.
John bought the semantics book, JÁ PETER DID NOT.

The *agora* marker displays the same contrastive intonation and the pause between the utterances observed in the previous contexts. As seen above, this behavior is different from the other CDMs *mas* and *já*.

A possible distinction between *já* marker and *mas* and *agora* concerns its syntactic position. While *mas* and *agora* occur only at the beginning of clause (as can be seen in (24) and (25)), *já* shows a greater syntactic mobility (see (26)):⁷

- (24) *O João comprou o livro de semântica, O PEDRO MAS NÃO COMPROU.
**John bought the semantics book, PETER BUT DID NOT.*
- (25) *O João comprou o livro de semântica, O PEDRO AGORA NÃO COMPROU.
**John bought the semantics book, PETER AGORA DID NOT.*
- (26) O João comprou o livro de semântica, O PEDRO JÁ NÃO COMPROU.
John bought the semantics book, PETER JÁ DID NOT.

Finally, there are contexts in which different individuals are being contrasted on the basis of different properties. Consider the following example:

- (27) a. O João gosta de futebol, MAS O PEDRO GOSTA DE BASQUETE.
John likes soccer, BUT PETER LIKES BASKETBALL.

⁷ This position of “agora” is required to get the contrastive reading, but not the temporal reading.

b. O João gosta de futebol, *JÁ* O PEDRO GOSTA DE BASQUETE.

John likes soccer, JÁ PETER LIKES BASKETBALL.

c. O João gosta de futebol, [] AGORA O PEDRO GOSTA DE BASQUETE.

John likes soccer, [] AGORA PETER LIKES BASKETBALL.

In this context, all three contrastive markers are accepted. Unlike previous context there is only a pause between the utterances. This makes us wonder why only *agora* demands special intonation or pause.

The pause attested in all *agora* contexts observed so far could indicate that speakers, while inserting a new information, contrast this new information with the one previously given. This behavior possibly occurs because *agora* has other uses in BP besides its contrastive use. For instance, *agora* is also a tense marker ((28) and (30)) which does not require either a pause between the utterances or a particular intonation. On the other hand, (29) and (31) present *agora* in contrastive use.

(28) A Maria chegou agora.

Mary has just arrived.

(29) A Maria chegou, [] agora o Paulo está atrasado.

Mary arrived, now Paul is delayed.

(30) Agora é a minha vez de falar.

Now it's my turn to speak.

(31) É a minha vez de falar, [] agora o Paulo vai ter que esperar

It's my turn to speak. Now Paul will have to wait.

In other words, since *agora* has other uses in BP besides its contrastive use ((28) and (30)), pauses or a particular intonation are needed to identify that a contrastive notion is being used in a given context. Also important is Reep's (2014) observation that contrast can be prosodically or morphosyntactically marked. Hence, marked intonation and pauses would be a strategy to signal contrast in the utterances with *agora*. This is in line with the claim that is possible to mark contrast by intonation.

The marker *já*, as well as *agora*, has other uses in BP despite the contrastive one. One of them is as a tense marker:

(32) Eu já falei para você que isso não pode acontecer.

I already told you that this cannot happen.

(33) Pedro já chegou ao escritório.

Peter already arrived at the office.

(34) Quando cheguei em casa, o almoço já estava pronto.

When I got home, the lunch was already ready.

This marker can be used in contrast contexts. However, it is not suitable for contexts in which different properties of the same individual are contrasted. Nonetheless, if there is an explicit contrast, *já* is allowed. Consider (12) and (13), repeated here as (35) and (36):

(35) O João é bom aluno, JÁ DEDICADO ELE NÃO É.

(?) *John_i is a good student, JÁ HARDWORKING HE_i IS NOT.*

(36) O João é bom aluno, DEDICADO ELE JÁ NÃO É.

(?) *John_i is a good student, HARDWORKING HE_i JÁ IS NOT.*

The utterances above contain an explicit denial of a property being contrasted, and *já* is appropriate for these contexts. Therefore, we claim that, when *já* refers to a single individual and its distribution is distinct from the one found with *agora* and *mas*, contrast itself is not present in its semantics. Since *já* does not contain any contrast semantics, it requires other elements to show it.

Another fact that reinforces the claim that *já* does not carry contrast semantics is related to the optionality factor presented by Schourup (1999). In contexts with more than one individual being contrasted, the contrastive marker can be removed without any loss of interpretation.

(37) O João comprou o livro de semântica, [] O PEDRO NÃO COMPROU.

John bought the semantics book. Peter did not buy the semantics book.

(38) O João gosta de futebol, [] O PEDRO GOSTA DE BASQUETE.

John likes soccer. Peter likes basketball.

In (37) and (38) contrast is maintained even without the contrastive markers because there is an opposition between both individuals. Nonetheless, in contexts with a single individual, the contrastive markers seem essential to show contrast:

(39) #O João é bom aluno, [] É PREGUIÇOSO.

John_i is a good student. He_i is lazy.

Utterance (39) is not suitable for a situation in which the speaker intends to contrast the degree of importance of John's characteristics. In this context, dropping the contrastive marker (and consequently omitting the contrast as well) indicates that the presence of contrastive markers is obligatory in contexts with a single individual, unlike the other contexts under discussion. This fact makes us wonder whether the discourse markers are truly optional, as stated by Schourup (1999).

Since the contrastive markers *mas* and *agora* are obligatory to express contrast and *já* is not possible in this context, we regard this fact as an evidence that *já* itself does not convey contrast.

For the marker *já* to become acceptable in contexts with a single individual, it must deny the property in question and it must also be syntactically near of the denied characteristic.

(40) Maria é inteligente, JÁ BONITA ELA NÃO É.

Mary_i is smart, JÁ PRETTY SHE_i IS NOT.

Note that the omission of this marker does not affect the contrast being involved in this utterance:

(41) Maria é inteligente, BONITA ELA NÃO É.

Mary_i is smart, PRETTY SHE_i IS NOT.

In sum, *mas* (*but*) is used exclusively to mark contrast in BP and *agora* requires a pause or a particular intonation to perform the contrastive function in a given context. *Já*, on the other hand, does not convey contrastive semantics, although it can be used in contexts involving contrast. This non-contrastive nature of *já* is the reason why it cannot be used in contexts with a single individual.⁸

⁸ An anonymous reviewer presented these counterexamples:

(i) Maicon tem boa saída e bom passe, *já* (ele) é ruim na marcação.
Maicon has a good soccer and a good pass, *já* (he) is bad on the marking.

(ii) O João tinha tudo pra ser um bom aluno: Ele é estudioso e inteligente, *já* (ele) é péssimo em

5. DISCOURSE STRUCTURE

To present a formal analysis, we borrow the theories of Roberts (1996) and Büring (2003). Roberts claims that the discourse is organized around explicitly or implicitly stated questions. Büring, in turn, proposes discourse-trees following Roberts' (1996) theory.

Roberts (1996) assumes (along the lines of Carlson (1983)) that discourse is organized around questions and answers and presents the *Question Under Discussion* (QUD) concept, on which discourse is based. Additionally, she defines that relevance is directly related to QUD. Therefore, a complete or partial answer to a question under discussion (QUD) will be relevant to discourse.

Based on them, we propose then that utterances with contrastive markers implicitly answer a more general question that contains alternatives to the properties introduced by that utterance.

Büring (1999, 2003) defends that speakers use a discourse strategy and prosodically mark a given element to partially answer or contrast two utterances. Resting on Robert's theory, which proposes super-questions and sub-questions relations for information structure, Büring developed d-trees structures to organize the relation between questions and answers. Observe the following context:

(42) A: Os alunos da graduação foram pra festa?

A: *Did the undergraduate students go to the party?*

B: Os do primeiro foram.

B: *The freshmen went.*

The answer in B is a partial answer to A. According to Büring, the context above is

matemática. Eu não entendo.

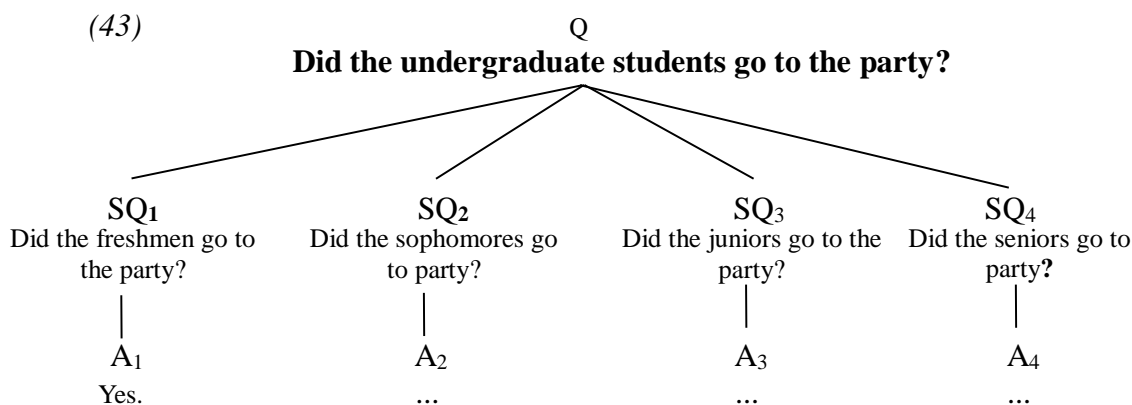
John had everything to be good student: He is studious and he is intelligent, *já* he is very bad in mathematics. I don't understand.

However, in these contexts, the contrast notion is not present in *já*, but it is given by properties: "be good" x "be bad" given by the utterances. This reinforces our claim that *já* does not have contrast. Proof is that these utterances can be said without *já* and even so to maintain the contrast notion. (Since the utterance has a particular intonation or a pause)

(iii) Maicon tem boa saída e bom passe, (ele) é ruim na marcação.

(iv) O João tinha tudo pra ser um bom aluno: Ele é estudioso e inteligente. (Ele) é péssimo em matemática. Eu não entendo.

structured by the d-tree presented below:



The answer in B shows that the speaker is using a partial answer to a wider question than the one contextually given (see Roberts 1996; Büring 1999, 2003). It means that, in order to answer which undergraduate student had gone to the party, the speaker completely answered the sub question SQ₁, but left open the answer to other questions related to sophomores, juniors and seniors.

Considering these relationships in a *d-tree*, Büring defines relevance as follows: a/any statement that represents an answer (complete or partial) to a question in a certain d-tree will be relevant to discourse. In example (43) a relevant statement to discourse is the complete answer A₁, “Yes”, to sub-question SQ₁, which is in turn a complete answer to Q. Therefore, a question will be relevant to discourse if at least one of its answers is an answer to the question under discussion. Once again we come back to our example: SQ₁ is relevant to discourse because its answer A₁ is a partial answer to Q.

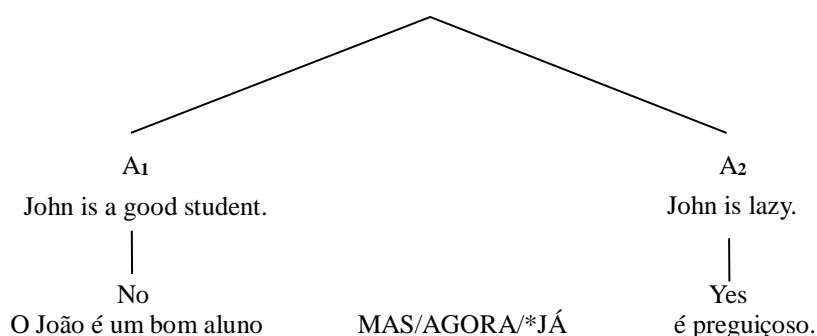
Assuming Roberts (1996) and Büring (1999, 2003) account, we propose the following *d-tree* to contexts with a single individual and with different properties being contrasted. Besides, you are attempting to adapt Buring's ideas to the previous observation (by Ducrot and others) that this contrast are related to degrees. Roberts' and Buring's theories don't consider the degree in these cases.

(44) O João é bom aluno, mas é preguiçoso.

John is a good student, but he is lazy.

(45) Qual característica pesa mais na aprovação ou não do João?

What characteristic is more important to John's acceptance or refusal?



The *d-tree* above suggests that the main question is about those characteristics which are relevant. If a professor who is willing to accept John in the group asks for John's references to a colleague and he says (44), he is suggesting that John is not a good researcher.

In this case, a certain property has a higher degree of importance than some other in a scalar level (cf. Ducrot (1980)). This more important property stays always after the contrastive marker. In the example above, *mas* indicates that the property of being lazy is more important than being a good student. Therefore, contrast involves the importance level: a property is being contrasted with another one because one of them is more important than the other.

We then represent the *d-tree* of (18) (repeated here as (46)) as (47):

(46) O carro é espaçoso, MAS / AGORA É CARO.

The car is spacious, MAS / AGORA IS EXPENSIVE.

(47) Qual característica pesa mais na decisão de comprar ou não o carro?

What characteristic is more important to the decision of buying the car?



The *d-tree* above shows that, whenever a speaker uses the contrastive marker, he indicates that the second characteristic is more important than the first one. If the person who

uttered (46) has to decide between buying the car or not, there is a strong tendency not to buy it because the fact that the car is expensive is more important to his decision than the fact that the car is spacious. On the other hand, there is a strong tendency to buy the car if the expensive property appears before the contrastive marker. Compare (46) with (48):

(48) O carro é caro, MAS / AGORA É ESPAÇOSO.

The car is expensive, MAS / AGORA IT IS SPACIOUS.

(49) Qual característica pesa mais na decisão de comprar ou não do carro?

What characteristic is more important to the decision of buying the car?



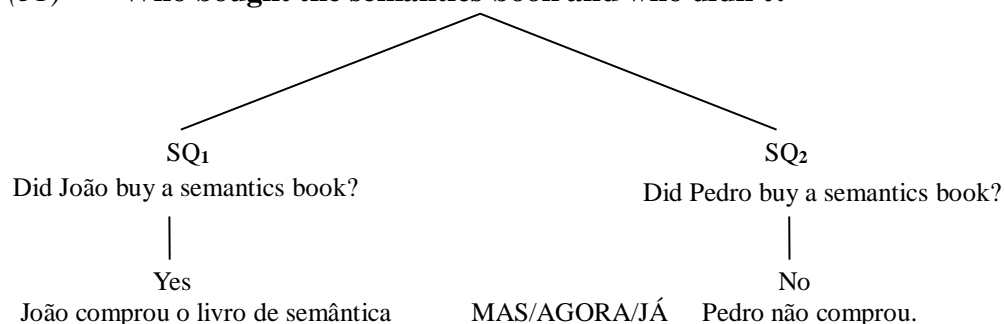
As mentioned earlier, the contrast in this context is related to the degree of importance. In (47), the property of being expensive has a higher degree of importance than the property of being spacious. Nevertheless, in (49) the property of being spacious has a higher level of importance than the property of being expensive.

Next, we present the discourse structure for contexts in which different individuals are contrasted regarding the same property.

(50) O João comprou o livro de semântica, MAS / AGORA / JÁ O PEDRO NÃO COMPROU.

John bought the semantics book, MAS /AGORA/JÁ PETER DID NOT.

(51) **Who bought the semantics book and who didn't?**

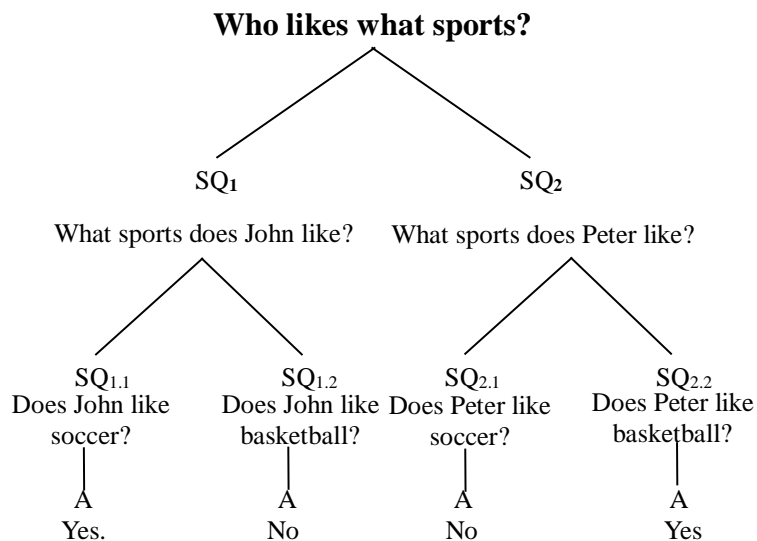


In (51), answering “yes” to SQ₁ implicates in denying SQ₂, since the marker indicates contrast between both statements. In this case, the question under discussion presents the following set of alternatives: {John bought the semantics book, John did not buy the semantics book, Peter bought the semantics book, Peter did not buy the semantics book}. In this set of alternatives, speakers answer “Yes” to John and “No” to Peter.

Finally, the d-tree of contexts in which different individuals and different property are being contrasted is depicted in (53).

(52) O João gosta de futebol, MAS / AGORA / JÁ O PEDRO GOSTA DE BASQUETE.
John likes soccer MAS/AGORA/JÁ PETER LIKES BASKETBALL.

(53) De que esporte eles gostam?



O João gosta de futebol, MAS / AGORA / JÁ O PEDRO GOSTA DE BASQUETE.

This approach is similar to the contexts previously discussed, in which different individuals are contrasted regarding a certain property. The question under discussion presents the sets of alternatives: {John likes soccer, John does not like soccer, John likes basketball, John does not like basketball, Peter likes soccer, Peter does not like soccer; Peter likes basketball, Peter does not like basketball}. In this case, answering “yes” to SQ_{1.1} implicates in

answering “no” to SQ1_{1.2}. The same occurs with SQ1_{2.1} and SQ1_{2.2}, since two properties are under discussion: “x likes soccer” and “x likes basketball”. Thus, when a speaker states (52), he indicate that he is answering “yes” to the alternatives {John likes soccer; Peter likes basketball} and answering “no” to the alternatives {John likes basketball, Peter likes soccer}.

Our contribution to linguistic investigation is to propose a formal analysis (based on Roberts (1996), Büring (1999 / 2003) and Ducrot (1980) for markers *mas*, *já* and *agora* on the Brazilian Portuguese, considering these markers as contrastive markers. We emphasize which these markers have already been investigated in BP on the other perspectives. However, this work is original because it analyses the markers *mas*, *já* and *agora* in a formal perspective and it contributes for formal pragmatic studies in Brazilian Portuguese.

6. SUMMARY

We conclude that *mas* is the exclusive contrastive marker in BP, as it conveys contrast in all contexts in which it occurs. *Agora*, in turn, requires a particular intonation or a pause between the utterances. This distinction in the use of *agora* is necessary to indicate to the hearer that *agora* is being used contrastively and that other uses of *agora* should be discarded. Finally, we observe that *já* does not convey contrast by itself and it needs an explicit contrast marker, as negative elements like “no” in contexts with single individuals.

We confirm that such markers do not contribute to the truth-conditions of the proposition expressed by an utterance. However, in utterances in which contrast is not explicit, either by negative element presence, or by individuals opposition, the markers *mas* and *agora* are obligatory because they carry contrast semantics. On the other hand, *já* is not allowed in contexts with single individuals, in which the presence of a contrastive marker is obligatory. Therefore, it cannot be considered a contrastive marker like *mas* and *agora*.

Lastly, the utterances of the BP that present the contrastive markers *mas*, *já* and *agora* can be represented for d-trees. This possibility indicate which the speaker is answering an implied multiple question.

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RESUMO: Este artigo investiga as características semânticas e pragmáticas dos conectivos *mas, já e agora* no português brasileiro (PB) em contextos nos quais tais conectivos marcam contraste. A esses, chamamos de marcadores discursivos contrastivos (MDC). Defendemos que tais marcadores não possuem valor semântico, portanto, não contribuem com o valor de verdade da sentença (Fraser, 1990 / 1996). Entretanto, os marcadores contrastivos aqui investigados contribuem para as condições de felicidade no enunciado (Grice, 1975), uma vez que há diferença de uso entre eles. Mais especificamente, esta pesquisa procura responder às seguintes perguntas: (i) qual a contribuição semântico-pragmática desses conectivos?; (ii) Há diferenças sintáticas ou fonológicas entre eles?; (iii) Esses conectivos podem ser usados nos mesmos contextos? O presente artigo busca identificar as diferenças de ordem semântica, sintática ou pragmática que apresentam tais marcadores. Por fim, será proposta uma análise formal generalizada para os marcadores *mas, já e agora*, com base em teorias semântico-pragmáticas que defendem que a estrutura do discurso é norteada a partir do desencadeamento de perguntas e respostas (Carlson 1983; Robert 1996; Büring 1999, 2003). E essas perguntas podem ser organizadas a partir de árvores do discurso. Para isso, analisamos o uso desses marcadores contrastivos em três tipos de contexto: (i) contextos em que há somente um indivíduo e diferentes propriedades relacionadas a esse indivíduo que são contrastadas; (ii) contextos em que há diferentes indivíduos que possuem a mesma propriedade e são contrastados entre si; (iii) contextos em que há diferentes indivíduos e diferentes propriedades sendo contrastadas.

Palavras-chave: marcadores contrastivos, estrutura do discurso, semântica formal, pragmática formal.