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BULGARIAN COPULATIVE CONJUNCTIONS *И, ТА, ПА, НИТО, НИ* AND *ХЕМ* IN CONTEMPORARY AND 19TH-CENTURY TEXTS

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БЪЛГАРСКИТЕ КОПУЛАТИВНИ СЪЮЗИ *И, ТА, ПА, НИТО, НИ* И *ХЕМ* В СЪВРЕМЕННИ ТЕКСТОВЕ И ТЕКСТОВЕ ОТ XIX ВЕК

The study examines and compares the semantic characteristics and frequency of occurrence of the Bulgarian copulative conjunctions *и, та, па, нито, ни* and *хем* across four corpora, consisting of texts from the end of the 19th century and from the contemporary period (2018–2022). In addition, the use of the conjunctions under discussion in contemporary literary, scientific and journalistic texts is analysed and compared. The frequency analysis shows that the use of the conjunctions *та, па, ни* and *хем* in writing has declined during the 20th century. The frequency of use of the conjunction *и*, on the other hand, remains unchanged in the contemporary language. On the whole, the use of copulative conjunctions in contemporary texts is lower than in the 19th-century texts, which may signify an increase in the stylistic divide between written and spoken language. The examination of the semantic characteristics of the conjunctions revealed a reduction in the scope of semantic function of some conjunctions. The author provides some ideas for further research on the topic.

Keywords: *Bulgarian; copulative (additive) conjunctions; frequency analysis; semantic functions; corpus study.*

В изследването се разглеждат и сравняват семантичните характеристики и честотата на употреба на българските копулативни съюзи *и, та, па, нито, ни* и *хем* в четири корпуса, състоящи се от текстове от края на 19. век и от съвременния период (2018–2022 г.). В допълнение към това се анализира и сравнява употребата на изследваните съюзи в съвременни литературни, научни и публицистични текстове. Честотният анализ показва, че употребата на съюзите *та, па, ни* и *хем* в писмени текстове е намаляла през 20. век. От друга страна, честотата на употреба на съюза *и* остава непроменена в съвременния език. Като цяло употребата на копулативни съюзи в съвременните текстове е по-ниска, отколкото в текстовете от 19. век, което може да е признак за увеличаването на стилистичното разделение между писмения и говоримия език. Изследването на семантичните характеристики на съюзите показва намаляване на обхвата на семантичните функции на някои съюзи. Авторът дава и някои идеи за по-нататъшни изследвания по темата.

Ключови думи: *копулативни съюзи; честотен анализ; семантични функции; корпусно изследване.*

1. Introduction

The conjunction *и* is probably one of the most commonly used copulative conjunctions in a number of Slavic languages, such as Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian, and Polish. While the similarities between Slavic languages in the area of coordinating conjunctions cannot be denied, it is important to notice that in the course of their historical development South Slavic languages seem to have been in-

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fluenced in this area of grammar by their extensive contact with the Turkish superstratum. Indeed, in an article dealing with the additive, disjunctive and adversative constructions in the languages of Europe, Italian linguist Caterina Mauri provides a detailed semantic analysis of conjunctions in a number of European languages. She also names a few conjunctions that Bulgarian uses (Mauri 2007: 10) but does not mention conjunctions like *хем*, *я* and *ама* which are clearly of Turkish origin and are still used in the contemporary language. In fact, in addition to *и*, *та* and *на*, the group of copulative conjunctions in Bulgarian also includes *ни*, *ниито*, *че*, and *хем* (Andreychin et al. 1993: 461). However, while all of these copulative conjunctions still exist in the language system of modern Bulgarian, it appears that they are not used with the same frequency and distribution. An investigation of the use of these conjunctions in the modern language as well as in older textual documents could shed light on their current prominence in contemporary Bulgarian and on the development of their usage in the past century.

2. Aims and methodology of the study

In the present article I will briefly discuss the semantic characteristics of Bulgarian copulative conjunctions *и* ‘and’, *на* ‘and’, *та* ‘and/so that’, *ниито* ‘neither/nor’, *ни* ‘neither/nor’ and *хем* ‘both/and’ and then I will investigate their use in contemporary written Bulgarian, comparing it with data collected from Bulgarian texts composed in the last years of the 19th century. The present work aims to contribute to the clarification of two issues. Firstly, how the aforementioned conjunctions’ semantics and frequency of use have changed in the past 130 years and secondly, what differences can be observed in the use of the conjunctions across different text types and writing styles in modern written Bulgarian. The goal of the study will be achieved by analysing the behaviour and frequency of occurrence of the conjunctions in a total of four corpora. Three out of these four corpora represent contemporary Bulgarian, while the remaining one represents the state of the Bulgarian language at the end of the 19th century.

The first of the three contemporary Bulgarian corpora comprises a number of contemporary Bulgarian short stories and novel excerpts and its purpose is to represent the literary writing style. Below it is referred to as the *literary corpus*. The second corpus encompasses journalistic texts, such as opinion pieces and news reports, and its purpose is to illustrate the journalistic writing style in modern Bulgarian. It will be referred to as the *journalistic corpus*. The third corpus includes science journal articles and excerpts from larger scientific publications, belonging to various fields of scientific and scholastic inquiry, such as biology, history, folklore studies, linguistics, and economics. Its aim is to represent the academic writing style. In the rest of the study, it will be called the *scientific corpus*. All texts in the first three corpora have been published in the years 2018 through 2022. The fourth corpus consists of two well-known Bulgarian literary works: *Bay Ganyo* and *Pod Igoto*, both of which were published at the end of the 19th century¹. In the text below, it will be referred to as the *historical literary corpus*. Each of the corpora used for this study encompasses approximately 100 000 word tokens and was analysed by means of the concordancer software *AntConc*. The size is equal in order to enable comparisons of the conjunctions’ frequency of occurrence across the corpora. Because of this size limitation, only the first part of the novel *Pod Igoto* was included in the historical literary corpus.

2.1. Corpus size discussion

Regarding the size of the corpora presented so far, it has to be noted that a size of 100 000 tokens might seem insufficient to be deemed representative of the language, considering that some researchers² recommend a corpus size for general linguistic studies of at least 1 million word tokens. However, it must be taken into account that the four corpora compiled for this study are not general linguistic corpora like, for example, the National Bulgarian Corpus³ is. Instead, they are designed to reflect specific text types and writing styles and with the purpose of being comparable with each other. In such cases several

¹ *Bay Ganyo* was published in several pieces in 1894 and 1895, and *Pod Igoto* was published in a single volume in 1894.

² see Borja Albi (2000) and Ruiz Antón (2006) for a more detailed discussion

³ <http://www.tei-c.org/Activities/Projects/bu01.xml>

linguists point out that “a few thousand and a few hundred thousand words’ are just as useful in the study of languages for specific purposes” (Bowker and Pearson 2002: 48, as cited in Seghiri 2014: 89) or that “it is not necessary to have such large corpora if they are homogenous in terms of language register, geographical area and historical time” (Kock 1997: 292). These requirements are met for the corpora of the present study: each of them is centred on a particular register of standard Bulgarian, which is a language spoken in a precisely delimited geographical area - the Republic of Bulgaria – and the texts in the corpora represent two clearly identified periods: the contemporary period (2018 – 2022) for the three corpora of contemporary Bulgarian and the end of the 19th century (1894 – 1895) for the novels *Bay Ganyo* and *Pod Igoto*, which comprise the fourth corpus.

2.2. Types of combinational semantic relations relevant for the study

Before going into the analysis of Bulgarian copulative conjunctions and their usage, some additional remarks need to be made on the categorization of the semantic relations that these conjunctions express. In her typological study of conjunctive constructions in the languages of Europe Mauri (2007) introduces a semantic classification system for coordinating conjunctions, because European languages possess a wide variety of conjunctions and conjunctive constructions whose differences cannot always be accounted for by using the basic three-way distinction - copulative/disjunctive/adversative. In our discussion of Bulgarian, the additional subcategories that Mauri employs can also be of use, as there are several copulative conjunctions (most notably *та* and *па*) in Bulgarian, which can express semantically different relations of addition, depending on the context, in which they are used. In such cases, by using a slightly more sophisticated classification of semantic relations, one should be able to identify more easily and clearly the semantic functions of the investigated conjunctions and how they may have changed over time.

2.2.1. Sequential combination

In the group of copulative (also known as *additive*) conjunctions, which generally express a relation of combination between two words, phrases or clauses, Mauri distinguishes between *sequential* and *non-sequential* combination⁴. According to Mauri “this distinction depends on the presence vs. absence of a temporal or causal sequence within which the two SoAs occur one after the other”⁵ (Mauri 2007: 185). Thus, an instance of a combinational relation, in which a temporal or causal sequence is involved, would be classified as *sequential*, while the opposite case would be classified as *non-sequential*. Consider the following example (1):

(1) *Прекоси с леки стъпки спалнята и зашляпа с боси крака по студения теракот на коридора.* (Bivolarski n.d. (a), my emphasis)

“He crossed the bedroom with silent steps **and** went into the corridor, his bare feet padding on the cold terracotta tiles.”

As we can see, the second event (or SoA) – the entering and moving through the corridor – follows temporally the first event – the crossing of the bedroom.

2.2.2. Non-sequential combination

Non-sequential combination, on the other hand, does not involve temporality (ex. 2):

(2) *Златка се усмихваше, запали си цигара, а аз се стараех да бъда учтив с нея...* (Brambarov n.d., my emphasis)

“Zlatka was smiling; she lit a cigarette **and** I was trying to be polite with her...”

Here, both actions appear to be occurring simultaneously, or the first event – lighting the cigarette – being shorter, could even be regarded as integrated in the second – trying to be polite – which is very

⁴ Note that the distinction was not originally introduced by Mauri. For more information see Payne (1985) and Langacker (1987: 84), as referred to in Mauri (2007: 185).

⁵ SoA stands for State of Affairs, which is an overarching term subsuming “the entities usually called ‘events’, ‘states’, ‘situations’, and the like” (Mauri 2007: 184).



likely temporally longer. In these two examples we see that unlike English, Bulgarian expresses the two types of combination by means of different conjunctions (*u* for sequential and *a* for non-sequential), which clearly shows that this semantic distinction is real and significant, although probably not immediately obvious for speakers of languages that encode both relations with the same conjunction. The present study focuses predominantly on conjunctions that encode sequential combination, but some of the investigated conjunctions can also be used to express non-sequential combination or even oppositive contrast⁶ - a semantic relation that is usually expressed by adversative coordinating conjunctions. Efforts have been taken as part of the analysis of the corpus data to measure how often the analysed conjunctions were used to encode each of the relations they can express. A more comprehensive description of the measuring process is provided in the sections discussing the individual conjunctions.

2.3. Copulative conjunctions in correlative constructions

Correlative conjunctions do not belong solely to the taxonomy of coordinating conjunctions, as they can be found both among coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. A quick mention of their nature and characteristics, however, is necessary here, because some of the copulative conjunctions explored in this study are often used in correlative constructions. Correlative conjunctions are complex conjunctions, which consist of two or more elements, which can be either different or identical to each other. These elements are typically inserted in front of each of the syntactic constituents that are being connected, be they single lexemes, phrases or clauses (Nitsolova 2008: 464). Example (3) below illustrates how correlative conjunctions function:

(3) *Тази вежливост бай Ганьо я пуца със сметка: хем ще предразположи трегера към себе си, хем ще му покаже, че не е някой голям и богат човек...* (Konstantinov 1894, my emphasis)

“Bay Ganyo provides this courtesy for a reason: he will **both** predispose the carrier towards himself **and** he will show him that he is not some important, rich man...”

As we can see, correlative conjunctions involve more than one lexical item, but nevertheless encode only one conjunctive relation. The elements of the correlative conjunction precede each constituent, which participates in the relation – in example (3) these elements are entire clauses.

In the present study, the occurrence in the corpora of copulative conjunctions that can participate in correlative constructions (i.e. *и*, *нищо*, *ни* and *хем*) were counted without taking into account whether in each individual situation the conjunction was participating in such a construction or not. However, since some of these conjunctions are sometimes used merely as negative or intensifying particles, when measuring their frequency of occurrence, it was taken into account whether they were really used as conjunctions in the text, or as particles. The only exception to this method is the conjunction *и*. Due to its vast frequency of occurrence and the relative rarity of its usage as a particle, the occurrences of this conjunction in the corpora were not analysed individually.

3. Semantic and frequential analysis of the individual copulative conjunctions

3.1. The conjunction *и*

3.1.1. Semantic characteristics

Like several other contemporary Bulgarian conjunctions, such as *a*, *или* and *но*, the origins of *и* go as far back as Old Bulgarian and even Proto-Slavic (Andersen 1998, 448). Micheva (2013) shows, based on evidence from the biographies of St. Cyril and St. Methodius, that in the Middle Ages it was possible to use *и* in an adversative function (Micheva, 12). In Contemporary Bulgarian, however, this use of the conjunction is either extremely rare or non-existent. Instead, as we can see from example (4) below, the main function of *и* is to express sequential combination.

⁶ A more detailed description of this semantic relation can be found in Mauri (2007: 3).

(4) По цяла нощ около него бръмчаха мотоциклети **и** автомобили, чуваха се пиянски викове **и** необуздани крясъци. (Bivolarski n.d (b).; my emphasis)

“The whole night motorbikes **and** automobiles roared around it, one could hear drunken cries **and** wild screams.”

As the prototypical and most universal copulative conjunction in Bulgarian, *и* can combine representatives of almost all kinds of parts of speech, as long as they are homogeneous – nouns (e.g. *мотоциклети и автомобили*, “motorbikes and automobiles”), proper names (e.g. *Иван и Мария*, “John and Mary”), adjectives (e.g. *висока и светла къща*, “a tall and well-lit house”), adverbs (e.g. *тихо и внимателно*, “quietly and carefully”), pronouns (e.g. *той и тя*, “he and she”) and prepositions (e.g. *от и за учителя*, “by and for the teacher”). In addition, *и* can also combine verbs and entire clauses (e.g. *мога и искам*, ‘I can and I want’)⁷. The conjunction *и* can also be part of larger, more complex conjunction constructions, e.g. *ако и да, а и да*. However, the participation of *и* in such constructions was counted as a single occurrence for the purpose of the frequency analysis. Although more rarely, the conjunction *и* can also express non-combinational semantic relations or be used as an intensifying particle. As already mentioned, the occurrences of the conjunction in each of the corpora were not analysed individually to determine what kind of relation it expresses on each occasion or whether it was used as a particle, due to its high frequency of occurrence. However, further research in the area could focus more closely on this conjunction and its semantics, because it remains highly relevant and important in contemporary Bulgarian.

3.1.2. Corpus data analysis

As can be seen in Table 1 below, the frequency of occurrence of the conjunction *и* across the four corpora used in the study is relatively even. The only number that truly stands out on this row is the one pertaining to the scientific corpus. In this corpus, there are approximately 300 more occurrences of the conjunction than in the remaining three corpora. This phenomenon may be attributable to the fact that scientific texts tend to be more complex, utilising longer, more comprehensive sentences. Longer sentences and phrases require more connecting elements, especially when listing or enumerating entities – something that is not uncommon in scientific literature – the conjunction *и* is particularly useful. Compared to each of the other investigated conjunctions, *и* is by far the most frequently occurring copulative conjunction in all corpora, probably because of its universal nature and its indispensability in the oral domain of the language. The comparison between the corpora representing contemporary Bulgarian, on the one hand, and the corpus representing the state of Bulgarian at the end of the 19th century, on the other, does not yield intriguing results. Apparently, 130 years ago the conjunction was used in writing just as frequently as it is used nowadays, with the already-mentioned exception of scientific and scholastic texts, where it is approximately 8% more frequent.

3.2. The conjunctions *ма* and *на*

3.2.1 Semantic characteristics

According to Micheva (2013) *ма* is a conjunction which was not very prominent in Old Bulgarian and often competed with several other conjunctions, derived from the common root *м-* (*ма, му, мо, таже, таче, тоже*). The use of the latter conjunctions, however, gradually declined or their semantics changed, so that in the 17th century *ма* remained the only copulative conjunction from the root *м-* that was still in frequent use. Moreover, its frequency in texts from the period shows that it had even become quite popular, to the extent that it competed with *и* (cf. Micheva 2013: 14). *Па*, on the other hand, appears to be a newer development than *ма*, as it does not occur in the list of Proto-Slavic conjunctions Andersen (1998) provides. According to the Bulgarian Etymological Dictionary (Anastasov et al. 1995) *на* is a weakened version of the adverb *нак* and originated through external sandhi at the word boundary

⁷ Note that Bulgarian, unlike English, is a pro-drop language, i.e. it is possible to build a clause in Bulgarian without explicitly mentioning the subject. Therefore, a single conjugated verb can constitute a clause.



between *нак* and the following word. Further information about the origins and history of the conjunction *та* in Bulgarian and other Slavic languages can be found in Tsonev (2014a: 7–8).

Although *та* and *на* were both prominent conjunctions at particular stages of the Bulgarian language in the past, today they are classified as colloquial (cf. Durchova and Tsonev 2021: 216), being used more frequently in speech rather than in writing. In addition, when used in writing, the two conjunctions are not as semantically multifunctional as *и*, in their role as copulative conjunctions. Firstly, apart from clauses, *на* and *та* can only combine nouns, proper nouns, adjectives and adverbs and this only when enumerating two or more items of the same class, in which case they can only occur as correlatives, i.e. a conjunction is inserted in front of each of the elements being connected. The following ex. (5) and (6) are simplified and modified versions of ex. (4) that illustrate the difference between the use of *и* and *на*. In ex. (5), the simple combination expressed by *и* is replaced by an enumerating correlative construction with *на* in front of each item. Ex. (6), on the other hand, represents a version of the example, in which *и* is only replaced by a single *на* and therefore the resulting clause is very unnatural.

(5) *По цяла нощ около него бръмчаха: на мотоциклети, на автомобили...*

“The whole night there roared all sorts of vehicles around it: motorbikes **and** automobiles...”

(6) * *По цяла нощ около него бръмчаха мотоциклети на автомобили.*

“The whole night motorbikes **and** automobiles roared around it...”

It should also be pointed out that the use of an enumerating correlative construction with *на* or *та* is more emotionally marked than a simple combination with *и*.

In addition to a relation of simple sequential combination (ex. 7), the conjunction *та* can also be used to encode non-sequential combination or oppositive contrast (ex. 8) (cf. Dictionary of the Bulgarian Language). In such cases, it can be replaced by the Bulgarian conjunctions *а* or *пък*.

(7) *Една тайфа турци ходиха, та ги намериха...* (Vazov 1894, emphasis mine)

“A band of Turks went **and** found them...”

(8) *... той видя свършеното си изнурение, но не щя да викне да го възчакат — та и вятърът нямаше да допусне гласът му до другарите.* (Vazov 1894, my emphasis)

“... he saw his utter exhaustion but did not want to call out to them to wait for him — **and** the wind would not have let his voice reach his friends anyway.”

Furthermore, the conjunction *та* can also introduce subordinate clauses expressing modality, purpose or a causal relationship (cf. Dictionary of the Bulgarian Language), such as in example (9) and (10).

(9) *Остаяха му два часа дотам, но коня му беше съсипан и пътят мъчен, та едвам по мръкнало той стигна в селото.* (Vazov 1894, my emphasis)

“He needed two more hours to reach it, but his horse was exhausted and the road was difficult, **so** he only made it to the village when it was already dark.”

(10) *– Моля те, кажи на Бойча, той е там, че заптиета го пазят при вратата, та да вземе мерки.* (Vazov 1894, my emphasis)

“– Please, tell Boycho, he is there, that some guards are lying in wait for him at the door, **so that** he may take precautions.”

As a particle, the conjunction *та* is used as an intensifier (ex.11) (cf. Dictionary of the Bulgarian Language).

(11) *– Та какво гледаш, Викентие! Не разбираш ли?* (Vazov 1894, n.d., my emphasis)

“– **But** what are you looking at, Vikentiy! Don’t you understand?”

Similarly to *та*, the conjunction *на* can also be used to express non-sequential combination (ex. 12) or oppositive contrast (ex. 13), in which cases it is roughly equivalent to the either *а* or *но* or *пък*. When used as a particle (ex. 14), it has an intensifying effect (cf. Dictionary of the Bulgarian Language).

(12) *Мастиката му не е добра на Георгия, на и мезето калпаво;* (Vazov 1894, my emphasis)

“Georgi’s brandy is not good **and** his appetisers are also of poor quality.”

(13) *Че остави това, ами като взех, че си наблъсках джебовете с паста, **на** те меки...*
(Konstantinov 1894, my emphasis)

“Well, this is one thing, I took some cakes and stuffed them in my pockets, **but** they were soft...”

(14) *Па най-после само немците ли имат Бисмарк...* (Konstantinov, my emphasis)

“**After all**, do only Germans have Bismark...”

A more detailed discussion of the use of the conjunctions *та* and *на* as intensifying particles can be found in Ivanova (2013: 56). A comprehensive investigation of the use of the two conjunctions, along with other coordinating conjunctions, in Bulgarian colloquial speech is also available in Tsonev (2014b). The present study focuses primarily on the use of the conjunctions *та* and *на* to encode sequential combination. Therefore, their occurrences in the corpora were additionally analysed to determine in what role they were used on each individual occasion.

3.2.2. Corpus data analysis

Interestingly, the conjunction *на* is not attested in either of the corpora representing the contemporary language, while, on the other hand, it is not infrequent in the historical literary corpus, where it occurs 219 times. This shows that the use of this conjunction in writing must have experienced a sharp decline during the 20th century. Yet, a more comprehensive study, involving larger corpora from different periods within the 20th century, is needed to shed more light on the issue. This is also not to say that *на* has completely disappeared from the language. Indeed, for a native speaker it is easy to recognise that the conjunction still occasionally appears in the oral domain and especially in some dialects. An investigation of a corpus consisting of transcribed oral speech could provide insights on the use of the conjunction in this area of the language. The conjunction’s similarity to *нък* could be one of the reasons why it is not used in writing anymore, while occasionally still appearing in oral speech.

Within the data obtained from the historical literary corpus, it can be observed that at the end of the 19th century *на* encoded frequently a relation of sequential combination, occurring approx.⁸ 115 times in this capacity. However, its role as a particle or a conjunction expressing non-sequential combination or opposite contrast is also attested strongly. The conjunction occurs in this capacity approx. 104 times. Interestingly, in the historical literary corpus *на* occurs almost twice as many times as *та* - a semantically similar conjunction which, unlike *на*, is attested in the corpora of contemporary Bulgarian. This observation further emphasises the decline that the conjunction must have experienced in writing in the past 130 years. It is interesting to note that in comparison to the historical literary corpus of the present study Durchova and Tsonev observe an inverted frequency distribution of the two conjunctions in their own study of four Bulgarian novels published in the 50s and 60s of the 20. century. They point out that only 5% of all occurrences of the two conjunctions in the novels are occurrences of *на*, while the remaining 95% are occurrences of *та* (Durchova and Tsonev 2021: 227). This observation seems to confirm the idea that the 20th century was a period of intense decline in usage for the conjunction *на* in writing. Tsonev (2014b) studies the usage of *та* and *на* in contemporary Bulgarian speech and provides comprehensive information on their semantic characteristics in this context.

As far as the conjunction *та* is concerned, some interesting observations can be made, based on the data obtained from the four corpora. The conjunction is least frequent in the scientific corpus, where it occurs only three times, always encoding sequential combination and always in works dealing with literature. In the journalistic corpus, the conjunction is slightly more frequent, appearing eight times, again always expressing a sequential combination and always in opinion pieces, which are much more free and literary in style than news reports. Moving on to the literary corpus, the conjunction *та* is even more frequent there, occurring 16 times, seven of which as a conjunction encoding a sequential combination. The remaining nine times *та* functions either as a particle or as a conjunction encoding a non-sequential or contrastive semantic relation or even introducing a subordinate clause. In the historical literary corpus, the frequency of the conjunction is much higher – 38 times it is used to express sequential combination,

⁸ The results are approximate because there were at least several occurrences of the conjunction *на* where its meaning was ambiguous and the way it was used could not be determined with certainty.



87 times - to express other relations or as a particle. Clearly, this conjunction has also undergone a decline in usage in writing in the 20th century, but not to the same extent as *na*. The frequent occurrence of *ma* in the literary corpus may be indicative of its stronger presence in the spoken language because the authors of literary texts often use informal colloquial expressions and vernacular in order to create more realistic narratives.

Considering the semantics of *ma*, the analysis of the data shows that the conjunction is used more frequently to encode relations other than a sequential combination. The latter use of the conjunction seems to be decreasing with time, because it does not appear even once in this function in either the journalistic or the scientific corpus. The decline in usage may be associated with a decrease in the conjunction's scope of semantic capacity. Here too, further research, involving larger corpora from different periods within the 20th century and containing oral speech, could help clarify the semantic changes that this conjunction has undergone in the past century and possibly predict future developments.

3.3 The conjunction *хем*

3.3.1 Semantic characteristics

Another copulative conjunction in Bulgarian, which is often encountered as a correlative is *хем*. It commonly expresses a non-sequential combinational relation, which involves two different actions taking place at the same time, or an action that is performed with two different objects at the same time, in a parallel manner, e.g. in ex. (15):

(15) *Хем ми беше чудно, хем се успокоих малко, защото си казах, вече развеселено: "Аха, редовна си е водката, почна да ме хваща, май!"* (Brambarov n.d.; my emphasis)

"I was confused **and at the same time** I grew calmer, because I thought, now somewhat more cheerfully: 'Well, the vodka is ok, it's even starting to go into my head, I think!'"

In addition, similarly to *ma* and *na*, *хем* can be used as an intensifying particle (ex. 16).

(16) *... какво хортуваши, не е шега, злато! Хем чисто злато, не така...* (Konstantinov 1894, my emphasis)

"... what are you saying, this is not a joke, it's gold! Pure gold **at that**, not like this ..."

Again, the occurrences of *хем* in the corpora were analysed individually and its usage as a particle was regarded separately from its usage as a conjunction.

3.3.2. Corpus data analysis

The analysis of the corpus data revealed that the conjunction *хем* is relatively infrequent in writing in the modern Bulgarian language (see Table 1). In the journalistic corpus it was found only four times, always in opinion pieces, which tend to be more versatile in terms of style, as the author has greater freedom of stylistic expression. In the literary corpus, *хем* occurs five times, but it does not appear in the scientific corpus. The latter phenomenon may be attributed to the fact that the stylistic requirements for scientific texts are more rigid. In addition, the conjunction *хем* may be seen as typical for the informal use of the language – a style of expression that is generally avoided in scientific and scholastic publications. However, in order to establish the correctness of this explanation, an examination of the conjunction's frequency and semantics in oral speech will be necessary.

As mentioned above, the conjunction *хем* is frequently used in correlative constructions. This is the case with all occurrences of the conjunction in the corpora representing contemporary Bulgarian. In the historical literary corpus, *хем* was used only once as a non-correlative conjunction. However, it appears four times as a particle. In the remaining three corpora, *хем* is not used as a particle. The development of *хем* may actually resemble that of *ma* and *na*. The conjunction's use in writing appears to have declined, which is evidenced by the total number of the conjunction's occurrences in the historical literary corpus (29 occurrences) being nearly six times higher than in the literary corpus of contemporary Bulgarian (5 occurrences). The fact that *хем* is not used as a particle in the corpora consisting of con-

temporary texts also shows that the scope of its semantic functions in writing has become narrower. This may be a natural consequence of the decreased use of the conjunction. A study of the conjunction's usage in scientific and journalistic texts from the same historical period could shed light on its spread outside of the domain of literature, which, as previously mentioned, is often characterised by the emulation of the spoken language to create a more engrossing narrative. Furthermore, an investigation of texts from the 20th century could provide further support for the idea of the conjunction's decline in the modern written language.

3.4. The conjunctions *нито* and *ни*

3.4.1. Semantic characteristics

Another two Bulgarian conjunctions identified as copulative by Andreychin et al. (1993) are *нито* and *ни*. The two conjunctions have similar semantic characteristics and are both frequently encountered in correlative constructions. However, unlike the conjunctions discussed so far, they negate all elements they combine, e.g. in ex. (17):

(17) *Не си чувствавам нито краката, нито ръцете.* (Bivolarski n.d. (c), my emphasis)
 "I feel **neither** my feet, **nor** my hands."

As can be seen in ex. (17), double negation is possible in Bulgarian, which is why in addition to the conjunction *нито*, which expresses negation, the author has inserted the negative particle *не*. However, the presence of two negative markers does not alter the meaning of the clause. It remains negative.

Similarly to the other conjunctions, investigated in the present study, *нито* and *ни* can be used as intensifying particles. In these cases, the two conjunctions emphasise the negative aspect of the utterance (ex. 18) (cf. Dictionary of the Bulgarian Language).

(18) *Вие не вярвайте ни една дума от тоя вестник!* (Vazov 1894, my emphasis)
 "Do **not** believe **a single** word from this newspaper!"

In the analysis of the corpus data, the occurrences of *нито* and *ни* were examined individually to determine whether they were used as conjunctions or as particles.

Another thing to take into account with regard to *нито* as a particle is the fact that it must have undergone a functional change in the 20th century. Apparently, at the end of the 19th century *нито* was still used as a negative particle that could replace the regular particle *не* in the clause. Consider the following example (19):

(19) *Той нито искаше да прикрие замисъла си от нещастния баща.* (Vazov 1894, my emphasis)
 "He did **not even** want to conceal his intention from the miserable father."

In contemporary Bulgarian, however, it appears that *нито* is no longer used in this way, as this usage was not attested in either of the three corpora of standard contemporary Bulgarian.

3.4.2. Corpus data analysis

Across the four analysed corpora (see Table 1), the frequency of the conjunction *нито* is lowest in the scientific corpus (25 occurrences), followed by the journalistic (37 occurrences), literary (40 occurrences) and historical literary (46 occurrences) corpora. This distribution suggests that the conjunction may be more favoured in the spoken language, because of the previously mentioned tendency of literary texts to include speech (as created by the author) and also because of the intentional efforts of the authors of scientific and scholastic works to distance themselves from the informal style of everyday language. Yet, a study of the conjunction's presence and behaviour in the everyday oral speech will be necessary to prove this.

The data from the corpora representing the contemporary language also shows that in about one quarter of its occurrences, *нито* is used as an intensifying particle. Interestingly, in the historical literary corpus *нито* is used significantly more as a particle. Nearly 50% of all its occurrences are in this func-



tion. At the same time, it appears in its conjunction role almost as many times as in the other corpora. The higher use of *нито* as a particle in 19th century texts may be a result of the fact that at this time it was still occasionally used as a negative particle in its own right. In contemporary Bulgarian, this is no longer the case.

The last conjunction to be discussed here is *ни*. Although it is very similar to *нито* in terms of its semantics, it can be observed that its occurrence in the corpora representing modern Bulgarian is much lower. In fact, it does not appear a single time in the literary corpus and was found only once in the scientific corpus, where it was used as a particle. In the journalistic corpus, its frequency is also very low – it occurs only twice. At the same time, in the historical literary corpus, *ни* is used even more frequently than *нито*, especially as a conjunction. These results suggest that, similarly to *та* and *на*, *ни* has been experiencing a decline in usage in writing. An investigation of the oral language could show whether *ни* is as infrequent in speech.

4. Conclusion

The results of the corpus analysis of each of the investigated conjunctions, as described in the sections above, provide several important insights. Firstly, the conjunction *и* continues to be the most prominent and widely used copulative conjunction in contemporary Bulgarian. This has remained unchanged throughout the 20th century and is even more articulate in scientific and scholastic publications. Secondly, the frequency of use of the conjunctions *та*, *на*, *ни* and *хем* in writing has experienced a decline in the 20th century. One possible reason may be their formal similarity to other conjunctions that are more widely used, e.g. *нито* and *нък*. Next, the bottom row of Table 1 shows that in the texts written at the end of the 19th century, copulative conjunctions are used more frequently overall than in the contemporary texts. Since higher conjunction use is characteristic for everyday oral speech, this may indicate that in the contemporary language, there is a greater divide between speech and writing. Perhaps during the 20th century the written language has become more formal.

However, this conclusion must be viewed with caution. The novels forming the historical literary corpus in this study (*Bay Ganyo* and *Pod Igoto*) describe numerous situations where everyday language is involved. Therefore, although in writing, the authors are intentionally trying to imitate everyday language use. Of course, the same could be said about the texts comprising the literary corpus representing the 21st century literary style, so the differences in copulative conjunction use between the contemporary corpora, on the one hand, and the historical literary corpus, on the other, could be attributed not only to the tendency of the literary writing style to imitate speech. Still, to solidify and further clarify the conclusions of the present study, a corpus of similar size, containing transcribed contemporary Bulgarian speech should be compiled and analysed and the results compared to those provided here. In addition, an investigation of corpora containing journalistic and scientific texts from the last quarter of the 19th century could also be very helpful in testing the conclusions of the present analysis.

Table 1: Bulgarian copulative conjunctions – corpus results

Conjunction	journalistic corpus		scientific corpus		literary corpus		historical literary corpus	
	sequential combination	other relation or particle	sequential combination	other relation or particle	sequential combination	other relation or particle	sequential combination	other relation or particle
<i>и</i>	3548		3857		3471		3562	
<i>на</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	115	104
<i>та</i>	0	8	0	3	7	9	38	87
<i>нито</i>	29	8	19	6	29	11	24	22



ни	2	0	0	1	0	0	36	14
хем	n/a	4 (conj)	n/a	0	n/a	5 (conj)	n/a	25 (conj) 4 (particle)
Total	3599		3886		3532		4031	

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Abbreviations:

cf. – compare

e.g. – for example

et al. – and others

ex. – example

n.d. – no date