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Contrastivity in Pontic Greek

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Abstract

Efforts to impose linguistic uniformity have resulted in significant loss of dialectal variation in Greece thus rendering Greek dialectal syntax difficult to study. The present article aims to shed light on an understudied area of Greek dialectal syntax, namely the organization of information structure in Pontic Greek. Through empirical work, it is argued that [contrast] is an autonomous structural notion (in line with [Vallduví and Vilkuna, 1998](#); [Molnár, 2002](#)) in Pontic Greek rather than a sub-feature of Focus, as traditionally held for Standard Modern Greek. In particular, it is claimed that Pontic Greek (i) employs a rich particle system to express contrast; (b) CLLD does not have the same pragmatic import as in Standard Modern Greek, and; (c) “pa”-phrases are almost exclusively associated with a non-exhaustive reading, whereas focus movement is always associated with an exhaustive one; (d) information focus is obligatorily in the left periphery. On the basis of our findings we argue that there is evidence in favour of a Contrast projection in the CP domain.

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1. Introduction

The contribution of the present article is twofold: (a) descriptively, it aims to contribute to the mapping of syntactic microvariation by analysing a currently largely under-discussed area of Greek dialectal syntax, namely the organisation of information structure in Pontic Greek (but cf. [Setatos, 1994](#); [Drettas, 1997, 2000](#)); (b) theoretically, the central aim of the paper is to address the role of contrast in the theory of grammar and the impact of contrast on linguistic structure. In particular, we investigate the possibility of contrast combining with focus and topic, which, in turn, causes us to query the status of contrast in grammar: should contrast be treated as a sub-feature of focus and topic, or as a separate feature of information structure (cf. [Repp and Cook, 2010](#))? The answer to this question is controversial (cf. [Rizzi, 1997](#); [Molnár, 2002](#) for two different approaches). In the present article, we aim to shed some light on the issue by investigating contrast in Pontic Greek and comparing it with contrast in a cognate variety: Standard Modern Greek (SMG).

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Earlier accounts of SMG have argued for a designated focus projection in the left periphery, similar to Hungarian focus (Alexiadou, 1999; Baltazani and Jun, 1999; Baltazani, 2002; Tsimpli, 1990, 1995, *inter alios*), as in (1)a–(1)b, unless there is contrastive reading of the corrective type, as in (1)c–(1)d, in which case they can appear post-verbally too:

- (1) a. Ti efaje o Janis? (SMG)
 what eat.Past.3SG the.NOM John.NOM?
 Tin tiropita i tus lukumaðes?
 the.ACC cheese pie.ACC or the.ACC doughnuts.ACC
 'What did John eat? The cheese pie or the doughnuts?'
- b. TIN TIROPITA efaje o Janis (oxi tus lukumaðes).
 the.ACC cheese pie.ACC eat.Past.3SG the.NOM John.NOM (not the doughnuts)
 'It is the cheese pie that John ate (not the doughnuts).'
- c. O Janis aȝorase axlaðja.
 the.NOM John.NOM buy.Past.3SG pears.ACC
 'John bought pears.'
- d. Aȝorase MILA o Janis (ke oxi axlaðja)
 buy.Past.3SG apples.ACC the.NOM John.ACC and not pears.ACC
 'John bought apples (and not pears).'

On the other hand, in SMG, information focus is generally associated with an *in situ* realisation (but cf. Gryllia, 2008; Haidou, 2012 and the discussion in section 3.2 for why information focus may obtain in the left periphery as well), as shown in (2):

- (2) a. Ti efaje o Janis? (SMG)
 what eat.Past.3SG the.NOM John.NOM
 'What did John eat?'
- b. (O Janis) efaje mila (o Janis).²
 (the.NOM John.NOM) eat.Past.3SG apples.ACC (the.NOM John.NOM)
 'John ate apples.'
- c. ??Mila efaje o Janis.
 apples.ACC eat.Past.3SG the.NOM John.NOM
 'John ate apples.'

Despite the fact that contrastive and information focus have different syntactic reflexes in SMG, contrastive topics do not (cf. Alexopoulou, 1996), as shown in (3), since they combine both the OV order, typically associated with contrastive focus, and CLLD, frequently associated with topichood in SMG:

- (3) a. Pu tus iðe? (SMG)
 where them see.Past.3SG
 'Whom did he see where?'
- b. To Jani ton iðe sto sinema, ti Maria
 the.ACC John.ACC him see.Past.3SG to.the cinema the.ACC Maria.ACC
 sto staðmo ...
 to.the station
 'He saw John at the cinema and Maria at the station.'
- c. *Iðe to Jani ...
 see.Past.3SG the.ACC John.ACC

(Alexopoulou, 1996:56)

Interestingly, in Pontic Greek, the strategy which is traditionally considered to denote contrastive topics (cf. Drettas, 1997) is syntactically distinct from the one in SMG, that is, Pontic Greek employs the particle *pa*, as shown in (4)³:

² For what we demonstrate here the position of the subject is not crucial although ultimately relevant; on SVO with the subject in spec-TP/TopP, cf. Alexiadou (1999); on SVO in answering a *wh*-question that triggers object focus, cf. Gryllia (2008); on VOS, cf. Sifaki (2013) and references therein.

³ Given that: (i) there is no formal writing system for Pontic Greek, and; (ii) the data come from sources which use different writing/transliteration systems or none at all (in the case of oral data), all the examples discussed here are transliterated in a uniform way.

- (4) (A brother talks about his love for his sister and the marriage proposal she has received and which he favours; the father, clearly very pleased with his son's brotherly love, is now replying to him.)
 Eyo ... xa epiya! S=esen kivænefkumes eyo ki (Pontic Greek)
 I.NOM INTERJ leave.Past.1SG to=you.ACC count.1PL I.NOM and
 i mana=s
 the.NOM mother.NOM=your
 na teris mase. Tin aðelfi=s=pa m' æyliyoris.
 Subj.PART look.after.2SG PART the.ACC sister.ACC=your=PART not forget.2SG.
 θa ðiyom=aten so kalon=ats
 Fut.PART give.1PL=her to.the.ACC good.one.ACC=her
 'As for your sister, don't rush (into marrying her). We will give her to her beau.'
 (Melanofrydis, 2001:13)

Furthermore, in Pontic Greek, contrast is not exclusively associated with focus movement – as is the case in SMG – given that (5)b is an instance of information focus, where we also observe an *ex situ* realisation of the focused element:

- (5) a. D' epikes? (Pontic Greek)
 what make.Past.2SG
 'What did you make?'
 b. Enan supa epika.
 a.ACC soup.ACC make.Past.1SG
 'I made a soup'
 c. *Epika enan supa.
 make.Past.1SG a.ACC soup.ACC

Our account essentially relies on two major tenets: (a) information structure is encoded in the syntax and movement is driven by discourse-related features (as in the cartographic approach); and (b) the various word order configurations in the so-called 'free word-order' languages are directly determined by the information structure requirements, which may or may not employ syntactic positions specially dedicated to discourse (cf. Mathieu and Sitaridou, 2005; Devine and Stephens, 2000). In particular, we argue that in Pontic Greek: (i) the particle *pa* functions as a contrastive marker (in line with Setatos, 1994 and Drettas, 2000, although, they seem to interpret it as a contrastive topic marker whereas we do not). Importantly, Pontic Greek seems to indicate that contrast is a property of particular contexts, and, therefore, is not bi-uniquely identified with a particular linguistic form, contrastive focus or contrastive topic, for instance (cf. Skopeteas and Fanselow, 2009; Zimmermann, 2007); and (ii) information focus is encoded in the left periphery, whereas in SMG a post-verbal position is preferred without, however, excluding the preverbal one (cf. Gryllia, 2008). Importantly, these two discourse strategies clearly demarcate Pontic Greek from SMG.

The article is structured as follows: section 2 mentions some typological facts about Pontic Greek and the methodology used in collecting the Pontic Greek data. Section 3, on the basis of a wide-range of both written and oral empirical evidence, presents topicalisation and focalisation strategies in Pontic Greek. In section 4 we employ a micro-comparative perspective and analyse the manifestation of contrast in the grammar of Pontic Greek – with special emphasis on the syntax of particle *pa* (sections 4.1–4.3). Finally, we conclude our findings in section 5.

2. Typological facts about Pontic Greek and methodology of the present study

Pontic Greek is a variety of Greek spoken both within and outside of Greece. Within Greece, it is mainly spoken in Macedonia (especially in Thessaloniki, Kozani, Imathia, Kilkis, Pieria and Drama), Thrace, and to a lesser extent in Attica. Outside of Greece, it is spoken in the Pontus region (in North-East Turkey and especially in Tonya, Of and Sürmene, but also in Istanbul by emigrants from these aforementioned regions),⁴ and in Caucasus (in Georgia, Russia and Abkhazia).⁵ Despite the robustness of Pontic Greek speakers in Greece numerically (roughly estimated at 300,000 speakers), in real terms, large numbers of speakers have suffered attrition or are heritage speakers and, consequently, only a fraction of the

⁴ For the documentation of the Romyka varieties in Pontus, see Sitaridou (2013) and British Academy, #SRG-102639, "Continuity, contact and change: Documenting the morphosyntax of the Greek varieties in Pontus", PI: Dr Ioanna Sitaridou; visit www.romeyka.org.

⁵ The varieties spoken in the Azov region (Ukraine, Russia) are classified as Crimean Greek (also known as "Roumeic" (see Pappou-Zuravliova, 1999) and are considered to be distinct from Pontic Greek, though both Pontic Greek and Crimean Greek fall under Asia Minor Greek (along with Cappadocian).

estimated Pontic Greek-speaking population can be claimed to be native speakers of the variety. Due to the geographical dispersion of Pontic Greek, it is important to note that the term ‘Pontic Greek’, synchronically, can only be used as an “umbrella” term for the various sub-dialects, which, crucially, can diverge significantly from one other in terms of syntax (e. g. the existence of the infinitive in Romeyka but not Pontic Greek, cf. Sitaridou, 2014). For the purpose of this article, we focus exclusively on the Pontic Greek varieties of Northern Greece, and, in particular, on the variety used in the area of Thessaloniki.

2.1. Methodology of data collection

The original aim was to use only native data collected through elicitation and grammaticality judgement tasks. For this purpose, in the first instance, we conducted one-to-one pilot interviews, which comprised: (a) free theme/narration of a story, and; (b) a 50-item questionnaire examining subject and object focus contexts. We ran the questionnaires orally so that speakers were not confronted with the written language which may have triggered grammaticality judgements influenced by SMG given the affinity of the written medium with the standard variety. We carried out the interviews via SMG.⁶ For the grammaticality judgement tasks, we asked our participants to respond either by answering a question or by interpreting a particular utterance in the context provided. Two speakers of Pontic Greek from Thessaloniki served as our informants; their socio-linguistic profile is as follows: (a) age: both +60; (b) birth place: Thessaloniki and Kozani for the female and male respectively; (c) place of residence: Thessaloniki for the entire life of the female speaker and for the last 40 years for the male speaker; (d) exposure to Pontic Greek: both exposed to Pontic Greek from birth, but to SMG (alongside Pontic Greek) from only the age of 5 (late FLA); (e) use of Pontic Greek in everyday life: one on an everyday basis, the other less often; (f) education: neither had obtained a university education, although one had completed higher education; (g) mobility: both non-mobile; (h) language profile: no other languages apart from SMG; (i) community status: one is considered by the community as a very fluent speaker; (k) social class: both low-middle class; (l) Pontic Greek variety background: female speaker’s descent was from Imera, whereas male speaker’s descent was from Of; however, they both speak what we could call Pontic koine (in other words, no vestigial features specific to their ancestral varieties were found).

The pilot study brought some important problems to light: (i) a notable amount of lexical transfer from SMG; (ii) the informants used excessive clitic doubling which occurs very frequently – in fact, obligatorily in some occasions – in SMG (cf. Anagnostopoulou, 1994, *inter alios*), but considerably less so in Pontic Greek (the issue awaits further investigation, but cf. Chatzikyriakidis, 2010 for a preliminary account); evidence for this transfer is found in (6) where (iii) we also observe proclisis – otherwise impossible in Pontic Greek – and that the morphological form of the pronoun is SMG clitic form, *to*, instead of Pontic Greek strong pronoun *ato* (the former is only possible enclitically in Pontic Greek); (iv) the informants did not use any discourse particles in the grammaticality tasks,⁷ but did so only in the narration (7), where (iv) additional proof of the standard variety interference stems from the use of *θa* as a future marker, instead of Pontic Greek *na*.

(6) *To vivlio to eðavesa to olon* (Pontic Greek – speaker VM)
 the.ACC book.ACC it.ACC read.Past.1SG the.ACC whole.ACC
 ‘I read the whole book.’

(7) *Ato emas=pa θ' etroen* (Pontic Greek – speakers VM and CG)
 that.ACC us=PART Fut.PART eat.Imperf.3SG
 ‘It would eat us.’

On the basis of the above results, we reached the conclusion that the informants’ judgments were severely affected by SMG (cf. also Chatzikyriakidis and Sitaridou, 2012), indicating that we are dealing either with heritage speakers (in the sense of Silva-Corvalán, 2003) of Pontic Greek, or with attrited individuals because of interference from the standard variety due to the interface status of discourse phenomena under examination. Although separate research is needed

⁶ Although monolingual data collection is the method of choice, and is, for instance, fully adopted in the Romeyka project (see footnote 4) and in the main study, in this specific sociolinguistic context (pilot on this occasion) it was not opted for because Pontic Greek speakers seemed to find it artificial.

⁷ Stavros Skopeteas (p.c.) reports that in two interviews (designed to elicit focus and topic configurations with transitives and locative constructions) conducted in 2005 with older Pontic Greek speakers, one in Batum (with a 70-year-old woman) and one in Tbilisi (with a 90-year-old man), he observed the same tendency, namely the lack of production of information structure particles in both the interview as well as the experimental setting.

to consolidate this claim, this developmental trajectory is hardly surprising since information structure – a syntax-discourse interface phenomenon, *par excellence* – is particularly vulnerable to attrition (in the sense of Tsimplici et al., 2004).

These findings led to a redesign of our main study as we could no longer rely on robust grammaticality judgments. Therefore, we decided to use written texts primarily, despite the disadvantages that this entails.⁸ In our effort to circumvent these problems, we selected texts which fulfilled the following criteria: (i) must contain dialogues; (ii) must have an early publication date – in other words, as close to 1923 as possible, when Pontic Greek speakers arrived in Greece as refugees (thus ensuring that texts were authored by speakers with Pontic Greek as a robust L1); (iii) must have translation available to avoid misinterpretation. On the basis of these criteria, we used the following texts: (a) a theatrical play dating from 1972 (Andreadis, 1990); (b) a short story dating from 1951 (Melanofrydis, 2001); (c) a selection of folktales dating from 1928 (Tombaidis, 1988), and; (d) narratives included in the grammar of Drettas (1997:515–671). After examination of these texts (approximately 2300 tokens), 231 *pa*-tokens were identified (Kaltsa, 2007). These data form part of our study and the most representative ones are presented and discussed in the following sections. In analysing the data, we controlled for the following properties: (i) syntactic position of *pa*-phrases; (ii) the nature of the elements that combine with *pa*; and (iii) their discourse reading. Once the data were coded, they were further checked against the grammars of Papadopoulos (1955), Tombaidis (1988) and Drettas (1997).

The final phase of the data collection involved re-approaching the least attrited informant (speaker CG) with a new 45-item questionnaire that provided greater contextualisation for each token, and which was administered in Pontic Greek. The data obtained this time was more reliable, although focalisation particles were still not produced at all and the only instances in which the *pa* particle was used were when modifying a polarity item (3 occurrences out of 45 tokens) or a quantifier (1 occurrence out of 45 tokens), as shown in (8):

- (8) a. Polarity item
 –Do efaes? (Pontic Greek – speaker CG)
 what eat.Past.2SG
 ‘What did you eat?’
 –Tiðen=pa efaa.
 nothing=PART eat.Past.1SG
 ‘I ate nothing.’
- b. Quantifier
 –Do iðes?
 what see.Past.2SG
 ‘What did you see?’
 –Ola ta erya=pa iða.
 all.ACC the.ACC movies.ACC = PART see.Past.1SG
 ‘I saw all the movies.’

However, despite the incipient attrition, the informant (speaker CG) produced some interesting data with regards to information focus. These data were then checked against the intuitions of other speakers of Pontic Greek (5 further speakers, all in the Thessaloniki area) and were confirmed. Therefore, in what follows, we use data from two sources: (i) written texts, whose source is always indicated, and; (ii) when not stated, from our informants: principally CG, but others too.

3. Information structure in Pontic Greek

For most studies on the encoding of discourse values in SMG, discourse positions are to be identified in the CP domain (cf. Agouraki, 1990; Tsimplici, 1995, 1998; Tsiplakou, 1998; Alexiadou, 1999; Alexopoulou, 1999; Baltazani and Jun, 1999; Keller and Alexopoulou, 2001; Haidou, 2006, *inter alios*). On the whole, until recently there was consensus that postverbal object foci in Greek are interpreted as new information foci (cf. Baltazani, 1998), whereas preverbal object foci are interpreted as contrastive foci (cf. *ex situ* focus in Tsimplici, 1995). A notable exception to this in SMG – although we do not comment further on this in this article – is when post-verbal object foci are interpreted as instances of corrective focus:

⁸ We would like to emphasise that we are aware that this method of data collection is not problem-free. In the absence of “live” data, phenomena such as sentence intonation and sentence stress/focus stress are going unstudied and, therefore, may greatly impede our understanding of information structure overall (for the same problem in historical linguisticscf, Eide and Sitaridou, 2014). For the purpose of the present article, we are leaving aside issues pertaining to the accentuation/intonation of Pontic Greek.

- (9) a. A: Filise ton Spiro. (SMG)
 kiss.Past.3SG the.ACC Spiros.ACC
 'S/he kissed Spiros.'
- B: Filise ton JANI, oxi ton Spiro.
 kiss.Past.3SG the.ACC John.ACC not the.ACC Spiros.ACC
 'S/he kissed John, not Spiros.'
- b. A: θelis kafe? (SMG)
 want.2SG coffee.ACC
 'Do you want coffee?'
- B: Oxi, θelo TSAI.
 no want.1SG tea.ACC
 'No, I want tea.'

Contrary to this common analysis, [Gryllia \(2008\)](#) questions the claim that Greek preverbal object foci are always contrastively focused and shows instances of preverbal information focus, which is in line with the findings in [Haidou \(2012\)](#) about the 'flexibility' of the preverbal focus position. In what follows, we examine the organisation of information structure of Pontic Greek against these empirical generalisations regarding information structure in SMG. To make the discussion more manageable (given that there is very little work to refer/anchor to with regards to the Pontic Greek data), we limit the discussion to objects.

3.1. Topicalisation strategies in Pontic Greek

Topic has been identified in the literature, primarily as: what the utterance is about at the level of a sentence ([Kuno, 1972](#); [Van Dijk, 1977](#); [Prince, 1981](#); [Kiss, 1995](#)); it is not necessarily overtly spelt out, nor does it have to coincide with the grammatical subject ([Szendrői, 2001:260](#); [Kiss, 1995:7](#)); a structure that provides an antecedent for later identification by some anaphoric device; the most uncontroversial being, as the element that is discourse-old, and consequently known to both speakers. Further interpretive distinctions can be made: *Aboutness Topic*, which is the constituent representing the theme of the predication, namely what the sentence is about ([Reinhart, 1981](#); [Lambrecht, 1994](#); [Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl, 2007](#)); *Contrastive Topic*, which is aboutness plus focus, following [Krifka \(2007\)](#) and providing clarification when several options are possible (cf. [Lambrecht, 1994:97](#)), and; *Familiar Topic* ([Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl, 2007](#)). In our study we explore the former two.

There are two main strategies for conveying old information in Pontic Greek: Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD), as in SMG, and usage of a particle, unlike SMG. First, let us consider CLLD in Pontic Greek,⁹ as shown in (10)a. CLLD is far more restricted in Pontic Greek (10)b than in SMG (10)e. In the latter, clitic doubling (CD) with right dislocation is possible (10)e–(10)f, whereas their equivalent is ungrammatical in Pontic Greek (10)c–(10)d.

- (10) a. Tin elean eðek=aten ton jitonan. (Pontic Greek)
 the.ACC olive.ACC give.Past.1SG=her the.ACC neighbour.ACC
 'I gave the olive to the neighbour.'
- b. ?¹⁰Ton jitonan eðek=aton tin elean.
 the.ACC neighbour.ACC give.Past.1SG=him the.ACC olive.ACC
 ([Drettas, 1997:278](#))
- c. *Eðek=aten ton jitonan tin elean.
 give.Past.1SG=her the.ACC neighbour.ACC the.ACC olive.ACC
- d. *Eðek=aton ton jitonan tin elean.
 give.Past.1SG=him the.ACC neighbour.ACC the.ACC olive.ACC
- e. (Tu jitona) tu eðosa (tu jitona) (SMG)
 (the.GEN neighbour.GEN) him give.Past.1SG (the.GEN neighbour.GEN)
 tin elia.
 the.ACC olive.ACC
 'I gave the olive to the neighbour.'

⁹ CLLD in Pontic Greek merits a study of its own yet to be carried out, but see [Chatzikyriakidis \(2010\)](#).

¹⁰ The question mark indicating a lesser degree of well-formedness was added by us in reaction to [Drettas's \(1997:278\)](#) comment about the example in question: 'Tout en étant reconnu comme grammatical, l'énoncé paraît peu naturel.' [While being recognised as grammatical, the utterance seems unnatural.] (translation our own).

- f. Tin eðosa ston jítona tin elia.
her give.Past.1SG.it to.the neighbour.ACC the.ACC olive.ACC
'I gave the olive to the neighbour.'

Second, let us consider the use of the particle *pa* (cf. [Setatos, 1994](#); [Drettas, 2000, 1997](#)), which is extremely frequent in the texts studied here. The (invariable) particle *pa* carries no stress and is always attached at the end of the constituent.¹¹ Crucially, such particle is never attested in SMG. Regarding the selectional properties of *pa*, it attaches to subjects, objects or adverbs (less frequent), as shown in [Table 1](#).

Table 1
pa-Phrases in our corpus.

<i>pa</i> -attachment (Total: 231 items: note that 50 items involved adverbials and not arguments)	Pre-verbal		Post-verbal	
Object	56 items	96.5%	2 items	3.5%
Subject	120 items	97.5%	3 items	2.5%

Pa may attach to subject pronouns, lexical DPs, and possessives (11)a–(11)d without being blocked by any definiteness or quantifier restrictions (11)e and (11)f:

(11) Subject (Pontic Greek)

- a. Pronoun
Eyo=*pa* eθaresa emen ekuiksēs.
I.NOM=PART think.Past.1SG me call.Past.3SG
'I thought that you called me.'

([Andreadis, 1990:84](#))

- b. Lexical DP
I popaðia=*pa* so mandrin išen ðulian
the.NOM priest's-wife.NOM=PART to.the.ACC pen.ACC have.Past.3SG work.ACC
'The priest's wife had work at the pen.'

([Andreadis, 1990:19](#))

¹¹ *Pa* is etymologically related to the Ancient Greek adverb *palin* "again", as suggested by [Papadopoulos \(1961:130\)](#). The use of *pa* as a discourse marker seems to be a straightforward case of grammaticalisation from an adverb (lexical) to a discourse marker (functional). Two varieties which best illustrate the early stages of the grammaticalisation of *palin* into a discourse marker are: (i) *-pali* in Pharsiot ([Dawkins, 1916:207, 631](#)), and; (ii) *pa* in Roumeic ([Agouraki, 2010, Kisilier, 2007](#)):

- (i) o nomat pali tin džo kru. (Pharsiot)
the.NOM man.NOM PART ear.ACC not strike.3SG
'But the man gives no ear to him.'

([Dawkins, 1916:478](#))

- (ii) to yairiði pali nekas topas pernun da? (Pharsiot)
the.ACC donkey.ACC PART woman.GEN place.NOM take.3PL OBJ
'Do men take the donkey instead of a woman?'

([Dawkins, 1916:482](#))

- (iii) a. kaθais=*pa* θel' na to kser aftu. (Roumeic)
everyone.NOM=PART want.3SG Subj.PART it know.3SG this.ACC
'Everyone wants to know it.'

- b. ula=*(*pa*) kala ki panda kala.
all=PART well and always well
'All is well and always is well.'

- c. kuaniskum=*pa* su kananeja.
swing.1SG=PART on.the.ACC swing.ACC
'I swing on the swing.'

([Kisilier, 2007:16](#))

Although [Kisilier \(2007\)](#) analyses *pa* as a focus marker, [Agouraki \(2010:542\)](#) disagrees because she considers the restricted distribution of *pa* (only with locative proforms, universal quantifiers and NPIs) as evidence against analysing it as a focus marker. Regardless of what the correct analysis of Roumeic *pa* is, it is clear that it differs from Pontic Greek *pa* in its distribution.

- c. Possessive/demonstrative
 T' emeteron=pa to tixeron aikon eton
 the.NOM our=PART the.NOM fate.NOM of.this.kind.NOM be.Past.3SG
 'Our fate was of this kind.'
 (Andreadis, 1990:58)
- d. Definite Subject
 ... tin Leila=pa ipen na fori ta kala ta
 the.ACC Leila.ACC=PART say.Past.3SG Subj.PART wear.3SG the.ACC nice.ACC the.ACC
 lomat=ats ...
 clothes.ACC=her
 '... s/he said to Leila to wear her nice clothes ...'
 (Melanofrydis, 2001:33)
- e. Indefinite Subject¹²
 Temæk o apoθamenon=pa eš topon ke zilevn=aton
 perhaps the.NOM dead.NOM=PART have.3SG place.ACC and be-jealous-of.1SG=him
 i zondani?
 the.NOM alive.NOM
 'Is it possible that a dead person has a place to rest of which the living are envious?'
 (Andreadis, 1990:36)
- f. Quantifier subject
 ... ul=pa etimanan=aton.
 everyone.NOM=PART honour.Imperf.3PL=him
 '... everyone honoured him.'
 (Melanofrydis, 2001:25)

Furthermore, consider instances of *pa*-attachment to an object (12) – again with no selectional restrictions:

- (12) Object (Pontic Greek)
- a. Definite object
 Tin aðelfis=pa m' æyliyoris.
 the.ACC sister.ACC.your=PART not forget.2SG
 'As for your sister, don't rush (into marrying her).'
 (Melanofrydis, 2001:13)
- b. Indefinite object
 Enan=pa litanian eftayn=aton atora ...
 one.ACC=PART litany.ACC make.3PL=him now
 'They make a litany in his honour now ...'
- c. Polarity object
 Tiðen=pa k' eis.
 nothing=PART not have.2SG
 'You don't have anything.'
- d. Possessive object
 A: Ne paraponon k' exo. θa kei=me o θεon.
 yes complaint.ACC not have.1SG Fut.PART burn.3SG=me the.NOM God.NOM
 'I have no complaint. (Or) the God will show me his wrath.'
 B: T' emon=pa kap n' ayrika nuniz=aton ...
 the.NOM mine.NOM=PART somehow SUBJ.PART understand.3SG think.1SG=him
 'Mine (=my mother-in-law), in contrast, when she somehow understands that I am thinking of him ...'
 (Andreadis, 1990:12)

¹² Although the DP is not an indefinite, its interpretation is undoubtedly such.

Finally, consider instances of *pa*-attachment to an adverbial (13):

- (13) Adverbial (Pontic Greek)
- a. Time adverb
 Akaθarton ekino i lefkaða; atora=pa ley=ato ke neræskume.
 unclean.NOM this.NOM the.NOM Lefkada.NOM now=PART say.1SG=it and become.sick.1SG
 ‘Lefkada was so dirty! Even now that I am bringing it up it makes me sick.’
 (Drettas, 1997:442)
- b. Adverbial - Indefinite DP
 Enan imeran=pa erθen enas psaras kuiz=mas yariðes
 one.ACC day.ACC=PART come.Past.3SG a.NOM fisherman.NOM call.3SG=us women.VOC
 yariðes emis ol exparayamen etoplaeftam ekeka.
 women.VOC we.NOM everyone.NOM get.scared.Past.1PL gather.Past.1PL there
 ‘One day a fisherman came and called us: women, women! All of us got scared and gathered around there.’
 (Drettas, 1997:442)
- c. Manner adverb
 Ki aets=pa¹³ eperen=aten opis k’ epandreftan.
 and thus=PART take.Past.3SG=her back and marry.Past.3PL
 ‘And thus, he took her back and they got married.’
 (Drettas, 1997:448)

Let us now discuss the distributional properties of *pa*. As we have seen, *pa* always appears after the constituent it modifies apart from the split-DP examples, as shown in (14):

- (14) Splitting (Pontic Greek)
- ðio ospita=pa ixame so xorion=emun turkant.
 two houses.ACC=PART have.Past.1PL to.the.ACC village.ACC=our Turkish.NOM/GEN
 ‘We had two Turkish houses in our village.’
 (Drettas, 1997:438 ex. 98)

Examples such as (14), where *pa* does not attach to the entire constituent, may *prima facie* cast doubt as to whether *pa* is generated within the DP or in the CP. However, we follow Mathieu and Sitaridou’s (2005) analysis on split-DPs, whereby the splitting is ultimately the result of movement which is driven by discourse considerations, namely emphasis/contrast – in this case *pa* would be its overt realisation in the C-domain.

Additionally, *pa*-phrases emerge predominantly at the pre-verbal position and clause-initially. The example in (15) demonstrates the one and only instance of a post-verbal position attested in our data set.

- (15) Post-Verbal *pa*-phrase (Pontic Greek)
- A: Lei=me pios eš paraðas?
 say.3SG=me who.NOM have.3SG money.ACC
 ‘S/he says to me: Who has money?’
- B: Leo k’ eyo=pa ...ekinos esker=ætsen;
 say.1SG and I.NOM=PART that.one.NOM know.3SG=them
 ults ekser kata onoman ke kata jenean.
 everyone.ACC know.3SG by name.ACC and by lineage.ACC
 ‘And I say to myself: He knows them; He knows everyone by name and lineage.’
 (Drettas, 1997:551)

Furthermore, *pa*-phrases in Pontic Greek can be multiple:

- (16) Multiple *pa*-phrases (Pontic Greek)
- a. Ekino=pa propayanða eton ekino=pa.
 that.NOM=PART propaganda.NOM be.Past.3SG that.NOM=PART
 ‘And this, it was propaganda.’
 (Drettas, 1997:586 ex.248)

¹³ According to Drettas (1997:448), the expression *aets-pa* “this way” is a fixed expression.

- b. Zante, einon=pa skotonen ke emas=pa.
fool.VOC that.ACC=PART kill.Imperf.3PL and us=PART
'You fool, they (would) kill both him and us.'
(Tombaidis, 1988:91)
- c. Esi=pa kala ke alos=pa ke alos=pa ke alos=pa,
you.NOM=PART well and other.NOM=PART and other.NOM=PART and other.NOM=PART
eksege=ten tin kutšin ke ulæ epiketen, ...
come-out.Past.3PL the.ACC girl.ACC and everything take.Past.3PL
'You, and the other, and the other, and the other, you took out the girl and you did everything (but if it wasn't for me to catch her in the air and rescue her wouldn't she have been killed?)'
(Tombaidis, 1988:83)

In (16)a, the subject, *ekino-pa* "that", is recursive, emerging both clause-initially and clause-finally and enhancing the clause with an emphatic reading overall. (16)b, on the other hand, illustrates an instance of multiple *pa*-phrases as the result of coordination: the two coordinated object DPs, preverbal *einon-pa* "that" and post-verbal *emas-pa* "us", each bear the *pa* particle. In (16)c all *pa*-topics are subject DPs, each with its own *pa* attachment and merged pre-verbally; crucially, this is another instance of coordination. Rather, the most genuine instance of multiple *pa*-phrases is the one in (17), whereby multiple *pa*-constituents bear distinct syntactic functions within the same clause, namely the subject, *ekin-pa* "these", and the object, *ekints-pa* "these":

- (17) Ki atos eraepsan=aton; ekin=pa ekints=pa efayan. (Pontic Greek)
and then seek.Past.3PL=him these.NOM=PART these.ACC=PART eat.Past.3PL
'And then they launched themselves into his pursuit; and they, they killed these ones.'
(Drettas, 1997:440)

Turning now to the issue of whether there is any interpretive differentiation for the two distinct strategies for conveying old information in Pontic Greek, the data suggest two discourse readings which are neither interchangeable nor pragmatically identical. As for the CLLD in Pontic Greek, it conveys 'aboutness' (18), while *pa* is linked to contrast, as will be shown in section 4.3 (in particular, see discussion of example (52)).

- (18) Eyo avuto to korits eval=ato s' omat. (Pontic Greek)
I.NOM this.ACC the.ACC girl.ACC put.Past.1SG=it to.the.ACC eye.ACC
'This girl, I took notice of her.'

The claim that CLLD conveys aboutness in Pontic Greek is very interesting, especially because, in SMG, CLLD needs a stronger contextual trigger. In particular, CLLD is either characterised as a strategy to create a contrastive topic (Iatridou, 1995, Agouraki, 1993) or as a link, in Vallduví's terms (following Alexopoulou and Kolliakou, 2002). Consider (19):

- (19) Xθes vjikame me tis palies simaθitries. (SMG)
yesterday go.Past.1PL with the.ACC old.ACC mates.ACC.
Ta peōja ta kratisan i adres.
the.ACC kids.ACC them keep.Past.3PL the.NOM men.NOM
'We went out yesterday and the children were taken care of by the men.'

As shown by (19), CLLD in SMG receives a contrastive topic interpretation, whereas this is not the case in Pontic Greek, where *pa*-phrases seem to be the ones receiving such a reading. If so then this constitutes another area of divergence between SMG and Pontic Greek.

To sum up, the *pa* particle attaches to the end of a preverbal constituent whose function can be the subject, object or adverbial; there seem to be no selectional restrictions as to which category it can attach to; it may appear multiply and express a discourse reading relating to contrast, unlike SMG where no particle use is attested.

3.2. Focalisation strategies in Pontic Greek

Focus is the non-presupposed part of the sentence (Jackendoff, 1972; Chomsky, 1972). A variety of focus subdivisions, such as wide vs. narrow, contrastive (identificational) vs. information, have been employed in order to capture its properties (cf. Kiss, 1998; Pinto, 1997; Vallduví, 1993; Lambrecht, 1994, *inter alios*). According to Kiss (1998),

contrastive focus is equated either to *exhaustive* identification, accepting only a certain constituent to be contrastively focalised and excluding others (cf. also Krifka (2007:14): ‘... focus denotation is the only one that leads to a true assertion’), or non-exhaustive, whereby there is contrast to some salient alternative, but without excluding all alternatives. *Information focus*, conversely, underlines the assertion of an utterance, and marks the “non-presupposed nature of the information it carries” (Kiss, 1998:248) without further restriction concerning the nature of what an informationally focused element should be.

Let us first consider contrastive focus in Pontic Greek which is realised through (i) the use of discourse particles (cf. Drettas, 1997) or (ii) focus movement as in SMG. Let us start with (i). One of the focus particles to consider is the particle *kela*.¹⁴ It is always in postposition, but not enclitic to the verb (20):

- (20) a. Kit ekeka ke k^h eleps=ato kela. (Pontic Greek)
 lie.IMPER.3SG there and not see.2SG=it PART
 ‘It is there and you don’t even see it.’
 b. Efaen to fain=atun k’ endoken=atsen kela.
 eat.Past.3SG the.ACC food.ACC=their and strike.Past.3SG=them PART
 ‘He ate their food and beat them as well.’

(Drettas, 1997:410)

In (20) the particle appears post-sententially; thus, the whole VP is emphasised. Crucially, no clause-initial occurrence of this particle has been found in our data.

Another focus particle is *ki*, which is enclitic (21), and, importantly, does not bear additional emphatic stress as is the case of *kela* (always according to Drettas, 1997):¹⁵

- (21) Atos ... eperane=ki ti Marian eksenkan=aten
 he.NOM take.Past.3PL=PART the.ACC Maria.ACC take-out.Past.3PL=her
 aso plan tin portan. (Pontic Greek)
 from.the.ACC sides the.ACC door.ACC
 ‘He [...] they took Maria and forced her to exit through the side door.’

(Drettas, 1997:481)

In (21) the *ki* particle attaches to the verb, unlike *pa*, which attaches to any constituent with the exception of the verbal one, and unlike *kela*, which is non-enclitic. The constituent, *eperane=ki* “they took”, is contrasted with the predicate in the second main clause, *eksenkan=aten aso plan tin portan* “they forced her through the side door” because the action of bride kidnapping cannot take place through the main exit of the house, but the side door instead (cf. also Drettas, 1997:481).

Moving now to focus strategy (ii), consider (22):

- (22) a. θelts na pseno=sen kaiven (Pontic Greek)
 want.2SG Subj.PART=you make.1SG=you.ACC coffee.ACC
 ki ena ðio otia na vukuse?
 and one two sweets.ACC Subj.PART eat.PASS.1SG
 ‘Do you want me to make you some coffee and and a couple of sweets to eat?’

¹⁴ It is etymologically related to the coordinator *ki* and the quantifier *olas/olos* (Papadopoulos, 1961). Arguably, this is yet another instance of grammaticalisation of the coordinator *ki* in conjunction with *olas/olos* (possibly thanks to its inherent quantificational properties) producing the fused form *kela*. An equivalent etymologically – but not otherwise – in SMG is the adverb *kialo* (i) and some non-temporal uses of *kiolas* (ii):

- (i) θelo kialo na me ayapas. (SMG)
 want.1SG more Subj.PART me love.2SG
 ‘I want you to love me more.’
 (ii) Sa ðen drepese kiolas.
 PART not be-ashamed.2SG already
 ‘You are not even ashamed on top of it!’

¹⁵ Some uses of the particle *de* in SMG resemble the use of *ki* in Pontic Greek particle, as shown in (i):

- (i) Fae de, min pezis. (SMG)
 eat.IMPER.2SG PART, not play.2SG
 ‘Come on, eat! Don’t play!’

- b. Kaiven pson.
coffee.ACC bake.IMPER.2SG
'Make coffee (and not sth else).'
- b'. Manaxon kaiven pson.
only coffee.ACC bake.IMPER.2SG
'Only make coffee.'
- c. *Manaxon kaiven=pa pson.
only coffee.ACC=PART bake.IMPER.2SG
'Only make coffee.'
- d. Kaiven=pa θelo.
coffee.ACC=PART want.1SG
'I want coffee.'
- e. Kaiven=pa θelo, otia=pa θelo.
coffee.ACC=PART want.1SG cookies=PART want.1SG
'I want both coffee and cookies.'
- f. Mono KAFE θelo. (SMG)
only coffee.ACC want.1SG
'I only want coffee.'

In (22)b–b' we observe that focus movement in Pontic Greek is on a par with SMG, as shown in (22)f. The discourse reading of the *ex situ*/pre-verbal focus in (22)b is exhaustive since it identifies a single alternative, namely "coffee" to the exclusion of the others, in this case, "cookies", an option presented to the hearer in the question in (22)a. Further evidence that the reading of (22)b is exhaustive comes from (22)b' in which the presence of "only" explicitly excludes any other alternatives (cf. Kiss, 1998). An answer containing a *pa*-phrase is equally felicitous (22)d; however, the reading cannot be exhaustive, as shown in (22)c by the incompatibility of "only" with a *pa*-phrase. Additional proof derives from (22)e which shows that one *pa*-phrase does not exclude an alternative; in fact, it yields an emphatic "both coffee and cookies" interpretation. We can therefore, conclude at this stage that non-exhaustive focus utilises the particle *pa*, as in (22)d, and that an exhaustive reading is excluded with *pa*, as in (22)c, whereas exhaustive focus employs focus movement, as in (22)b–b'.

Let us next consider information focus of which there is no explicit mention in the relevant literature, to the best of our knowledge, and which is tacitly considered to function in a similar fashion to the one in SMG. Consider (23)b–(25)b from Pontic Greek and (23)d–(25)d from SMG as felicitous answers to the questions in (23)a–(25)a:

- (23) a. O Jorikas do efaen? (Pontic Greek)
the.NOM George.NOM what eat.Past.3SG?
'What did he eat?'
- b. (O Jorikas) to xošaf efaen.
the.NOM George.NOM the.ACC stewed-fruit.ACC eat.Past.3SG
'George ate a (traditional) soup.'
- c. *O Jorikas efaen to xošaf.
the.NOM George.NOM eat.Past.3SG the.ACC stewed-fruit.ACC
- d. O Joryos efaje tin kobosta. (SMG)
the.NOM George.NOM eat.Past.3SG the.ACC stewed-fruit.ACC
'George ate the stewed fruits.'
- (24) a. Do eðevasen? (Pontic Greek)
what read.Past.3SG?
'What did he read?'
- b. Pola vivlia eðevasen.
many.ACC books.ACC read.Past.3SG
'He read many books.'
- c. *Eðevasen pola vivlia.
read.Past.3SG many.ACC books.ACC
- d. ðiavase pola vivlia. (SMG)
read.Past.3SG many.ACC books.ACC
'S/He read many books.'

- (25) a. D' epikes? (Pontic Greek)
 what make.Past.2SG
 'What did you make?'
 b. (Ena) xavits epika.
 (a.ACC) pudding.ACC make.Past.1SG
 'I made some pudding.'
 c. *Epika (ena) xavits.
 make.Past.1SG (a.ACC) pudding.ACC
 d. Eftjaksa ena yliko. (SMG)
 make.Past.1SG a.ACC pudding.ACC
 'I made (a) pudding.'

From the examples in (23)–(25) it becomes obvious that Pontic Greek allows for information focus to the left of the predicate and sentence-initially. However, the degree of diversification of the Pontic Greek pattern from the SMG attenuates if we consider [Gryllia's \(2008\)](#) findings, on the basis of experimental tests, which show that preverbal objects are not always either exhaustive or contrastive in SMG. In both positions, VO and OV, the focused direct object is interpreted as new information focus, as in (26)a and (26)b, respectively:

- (26) a. Ti xarise metaxi alon o Janis stin llektra? (SMG)
 what give.Past.3SG among others the.NOM John.NOM to.the.ACC llektra.ACC
 'Among other things, what did John give to llektra?'
 b. Xarise ENA VIVLIO stin llektra.
 give.Past.3SG a.ACC book.ACC to.the.ACC llektra.ACC
 'He gave a book to llektra.'
 c. ENA VIVLIO xarise stin llektra.
 a.ACC book.ACC give.Past.3SG to.the.ACC llektra.ACC
 'He gave a book to llektra.'

([Gryllia, 2008:21](#))

Nevertheless, the fact that SMG may allow for either option does not alter the parametric difference with Pontic Greek, where the preverbal position (as a result of movement) is the only option.

The Pontic Greek pattern is reminiscent of what has recently been claimed about information focus, namely that it also commonly appears within the left periphery (cf. [Paoli, 2011](#); [Mensching and Remberger, 2010](#); [Sitaridou, 2011, 2012](#); [Cruschina, 2008](#); [Jones, 1993](#)). This operation is dubbed focus fronting (FF) and is different from contrastive fronting since a contrastive interpretation of the focus constituent is not necessary. FF in Pontic Greek can involve any type of constituent: objects (27)a–(27)c, predicatives (27)d, adverbials (27)e, and existential constructions (27)f:

- (27) Focus Fronting (Pontic Greek)
 a. Direct Object (NP) is fronted
 —Do efaes?
 what eat.Past.2SG
 'What did you eat?'
 —Xavits efaa.
 pudding.ACC eat.Past.1SG
 'I ate pudding'.
 b. Direct Object (DP) is fronted
 —Do eplises?
 what wash.Past.2SG
 'What did you wash?'
 —Ta poðaræ=m eplisa.
 the.ACC feet.ACC=my wash.Past.1SG
 'I washed my feet.'
 c. Indirect Object (Beneficiary) (DP) is fronted
 Epita ti nifæn θa eniyane lutron.
 then the.ACC bride.ACC Fut.PART open.Imperf.3PL bath.ACC
 'Then they would prepare the bath for the married girl'

([Drettas, 1997:280](#))

- d. Predicative (Adj) is fronted
 –Do en atos?
 what be.3SG he.NOM
 ‘What is he like?’
 –Palalos en.
 crazy.NOM be.3SG
 ‘He is crazy.’
- e. Adverbial (NP) is fronted
 Mesanixts eton.
 midnight be.Past.3SG
 ‘It was midnight.’
- f. Fronting in existential constructions
 xorafæ k^h ine.
 fields not exist.3PL
 ‘There are no fields’

(Drettas, 1997:555)

Additionally, Pontic Greek FF also applies to questions of “total ignorance” which yield a yes/no reply, as shown in (28)a–(28)b. This is in contrast to SMG which allows FF in questions only with indefinite DPs (28)e, but not with definite ones (28)d:

- (28) Focus Fronting in questions
 - a. T’ apiðæ ekserts? (Pontic Greek)
 the.ACC pears.ACC know.2SG
 ‘Do you know the pears?’
 - b. ???Ekserts ta apiðæ?
 know.2SG the.ACC pears.ACC
 - c. Kseris ta axlaðja? (SMG)
 know.2SG the.ACC pears.ACC
 ‘Do you know the pears?’
 - d. *T’ axlaðja kseris?¹⁶
 the.ACC pears.ACC know.2SG
 - e. yramata kseris?
 letters.ACC know.2SG
 ‘Can you read?’

Moreover, strict adjacency seems to hold between the fronted constituent and the predicate, especially in cases where the predicate is the verb “be” or “have” (29):

- (29) Adjacency
 - a. Aiksa esne panda. (Pontic Greek)
 like.this be.Imperf.2SG always
 ‘You were always like this.’
 - b. *aiksa panda esne
 like.this always be.Imperf.2SG

(Drettas, 1997:182)

¹⁶ It should be mentioned that (28)d can be rendered grammatical should the object be CLLDed, as shown in (i). As one reviewer points out this may suggest that the construction involved in (28)d is not, straightforwardly, a focus fronting one.

- (i) Ta axlaðja, ta kseris? (SMG)
 the.ACC pears.ACC them know.2SG
 ‘Do you know the pears?’

However, for Krifka (2007:6), yes-no questions elicit polarity alternatives, and as such, are associated with polarity focus. If CLLD is associated with a contrastive topic reading in SMG, as we have maintained in section 3.1, then it is perhaps less surprising that CLLD can be tolerated in yes-no questions too.

However, in the case of contrastive focus, such a restriction does not hold, as shown in (30) where we observe that the adverb *kamian* “never” is sandwiched between the predicate and the left periphery elements (topicalised *aika emorfa peđja* “such beautiful children” and focalised *esis* “you”):

- (30) Aika emorfa peđja esis kamian iđeten? (Pontic Greek)
 such beautiful.ACC children.ACC you.NOM never see.Past.2PL
 ‘Have you ever seen such beautiful children?’

(Drettas, 1997:183)

Furthermore, it has been claimed that FF is unavailable within the left periphery of the embedded clause (cf. Cruschina, 2008). *Prima facie*, on the basis of (31)a, it appears as if FF in embedded clauses in Pontic Greek is indeed possible.

- (31) a. Eθaresen oti tšantarmas eton. (Pontic Greek)
 think.Past.3SG that policeman be.Past.3SG
 ‘He thought (that) he was a policeman.’
 b. Eθaresen tšantarmas eton.
 think.Past.3SG policeman be.Past.3SG
 ‘He thought he was a policeman.’

(Drettas, 1997:370)

The reason why FF obtains in (31)b is because there is omission of the complementiser which in this case it would be *na*, the ‘low ranking’ complementiser (cf. Roussou, 2000) (which is never omitted in SMG in contrast to *oti*, the ‘high ranking’ one (in the sense of Rizzi, 1997), which may be omitted). Therefore, a null complementiser seems to relax the ban on FF in embedded clauses. So, the curious case is really (31)a where we see FF despite an overt complementiser. This is due to the fusion of two grammatical options: (i) a transfer from SMG, namely the ‘high’ rank complementiser *oti* and (ii) the Pontic Greek FF strategy which is trivially obtained in the absence of overt complementisers, as shown in (31)b.

Overall, foci, in Pontic Greek, are expressed either: (i) by some fronting operation in the case of information focus. In short, new information is encoded in the left periphery in Pontic Greek, whereas the new information in SMG is encoded either by movement or in situ, or; (ii) with particles attached at the verbal constituent undergoing contrastive focalisation. This clearly leaves open the question of what happens to non-verbal constituents undergoing contrastive focalisation and whether the *pa*-strategy is, in fact, the Pontic Greek mechanism for this.

4. Micro-variation and information structure in Pontic Greek

In the literature there are several proposals regarding the division of labour between the distinct components of the grammar involved in the organisation of information structure. There are *grosso modo* two main approaches: the feature-driven approach (cf. Diesing, 1992) and the stress-based one (cf. Dezsö, 1974, Hajičova and Sgall, 1988; Hajičova et al., 1998; Szendrői, 2004; Zubizarreta, 1998; Steedman, 2000; Reinhart, 1995). On the basis of the Pontic Greek data which exhibit an abundance of discourse particles and methodological restrictions (see footnote 8), we endorse the former, and, in particular, the Cartographic framework (cf. Rizzi, 1997).

Regarding contrast, we follow a recent proposal by Molnár (2006), which highlights the relevance of the contrast feature for the left edge. According to Molnár (2006) and Molnár and Winkler (2010:1394), contrast is assumed to be an autonomous information-structural notion, which “shares certain features both with the focus and with the topic, being a highlighting device and a coherence-creating device at the same time”. For instance, a contrastive topic can be considered a subtype of topic often viewed as topic with focus (e.g. Krifka, 1998), where focus is viewed as the information-structural category that elicits alternatives to the focused element (Rooth, 1992). The Pontic Greek data, we will show, offer ample support for such an analysis of contrast.

Accordingly, there have been adaptations of Rizzi’s (1997) split-CP¹⁷ (32)a through the integration of a left-peripheral contrast position in the syntax, dominating all projections under the Force⁰:

- (32) a. Cartographic Model
 ForceP > TopP* > FocP > TopP* > FinP

(Belletti, 2008, Rizzi, 1997)

¹⁷ Although the extension of the CP domain with additional functional heads has not been welcomed by more restrictively defined minimalist accounts (cf. Cormack and Smith, 2000), our choice of (some version of) the Cartographic framework is guided by the nature of the data.

- b. The modified Left Periphery: version a'
ForceP > TopP_{aboutness} > Contrast_(Top>Foc) > TopP_{familiar} > ModP > FinP
(Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl, 2007, ex. 38)
- c. The modified Left Periphery: version b'
ForceP > KontrP > TopP* > FocP > TopP* > FinP
(Molnár, 2002:111; Molnár and Winkler, 2010:1399)
- d. The modified Left Periphery: version c'
ForceP > TopP > FocusPcontrast > FinP > FocusPinfo > TP > vP
(Sitaridou, 2011:178)

However, as we shall see in section 4.3, none of the modified left periphery proposals in (32) captures Pontic Greek, for which reason (59) will be proposed for Pontic Greek.

In the following sections we concentrate on: (i) the syntactic status of *pa*-phrases; (ii) the possible landing sites of *pa*-phrases, namely TopP, ContrastiveTopP or ContrastP; (iii) whether the status of *pa*-phrases indicates an organisation of the left periphery as in (32)b or (32)c.

4.1. Is *pa* in TopP?

In this section we examine the possibility of whether *pa* is the overt realisation of TopP. To explore this avenue we compare Pontic Greek with Japanese, where the existence of a specialised particle such as *wa* has been taken as strong evidence for the existence of a Topic projection – *wa* being the *par excellence* morphological realisation of the Topic head – at least since Kuroda (1965). In the literature on Japanese, two types of *wa*-phrases are identified: non-contrastive topics and contrastive topics. Consider (33):

- (33) a. SONO HON-WA John-ga katta. (Japanese)
that book-WA John-NOM buy.Past
'John bought that book.'
 - b. ?John-ga SONO HON-WA katta.
John-NOM that book-WA buy.Past
'John bought that book (not this one).'
- (Vermeulen, 2009:362)

Although a non-contrastive interpretation of the *wa*-phrase in (33)b produces infelicity, a contrastive one renders it perfectly plausible (33)a.

Setatos (1994) was the first to make the insightful parallelism between Japanese particle *wa* and Pontic Greek particle *pa*. In what follows, we compare *wa* and *pa*-phrases which are shown not to function in exactly the same way in both languages. First, a universally quantified subject cannot be *wa*-marked in Japanese (34)a, whereas this is indeed possible in Pontic Greek, as shown in (34)b:

- (34) a. *MINNA-WA kita. (Japanese)
everyone-WA come.Past
'Everyone came.'
 - b. Ul'=pa etimanan=aton. (Pontic Greek)
everyone.NOM=PART honour.Imperf.3PL=him
'Everyone honoured him.'
- (Vermeulen, 2008:1)
- (Melanofrydis, 2001:25)

Second, both Japanese and Pontic Greek allow multiple *wa/pa*-phrases, as in (35):

- (35) a. Sono inu-wa BILL-WA moo sudeni kyonen kandeiru. (Japanese)
that dog-wa Bill-wa already already last.year bite.PERF
 - b. BILLi-WA sono inu-wa moo sudeni kyonen kandeiru.
Bill-wa that dog-wa already already last.year bite.PERF
'That dog has already bitten Bill last year.'
- (Vermeulen, 2008:1)

- c. Ki atot eraepsan=aton; ekin=pa ekints=pa efayane. (Pontic Greek)
 and then seek.Past.3PL=him these.NOM=PART these.ACC=PART eat.Past.3PL
 ‘And then they launched themselves into his pursuit; and they, they killed them.’
 (Drettas, 1997:440)

Crucially, in Japanese, but not Pontic Greek, sentences containing multiple *wa*-phrases are possible and sound most natural if there is no more than one non-contrastive *wa*-phrase (Kuno, 1972, cf. also Kuroda, 1988; Tomioka, 2007 in Vermeulen, 2008:20).

Third, the main difference between Japanese *wa*-phrases and Pontic Greek *pa*-phrases is that in Japanese all topics are *wa*-phrases, whereas in Pontic Greek this is not the case, as we have seen in section 3.1 – non-*pa*-topics exist. Table 2 compares the major differences between Japanese *wa* and Pontic Greek *pa*-phrases.

Table 2

Comparison of Japanese *wa*-phrases and Pontic Greek *pa*-phrases.

Properties	Japanese <i>wa</i> -phrases	Pontic Greek <i>pa</i> -phrases
Multiple topics	Yes (but only one contrastive)	Yes
Particle as the only way of marking topics	Yes	No
Dedicated ContrastiveTopicP?	No	Possibly (see section 4.2)
Restrictions as to which category the particle attaches?	No (but not with predicates)	No (but not with predicates)
Focus markers also available in the language	No	Yes

As Table 2 shows, although *wa*- and *pa*-phrases share some properties, they diverge in some respects and, therefore, Pontic *pa*-phrases cannot be analysed in a similar fashion to Japanese *wa*-phrases.

4.2. Is *pa* in ContrastiveTopicP?

Recent works (cf. Benincà and Poletto, 2004; Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl, 2007) argue in favour of a syntactic encoding of different topic categories, and, in particular, they postulate a dedicated projection in the left periphery of the sentence for each type of topic. More specifically, Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl (2007) propose a more detailed/fine-grained structure endorsing Rizzi's (1997) split-CP:

- (36) Topic hierarchy
 Shifting topic [+aboutness] > Contrastive topic > Familiar topic

(Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl, 2007)

In (36), three distinct projections are identified and each projection is associated with specific structural properties as well as different tonal events. For our purposes, we shall now explore the idea whereby Pontic Greek *pa* is an instantiation of such a projection, namely ContrastiveTopicP. This is a particularly important avenue to explore given that Drettas (1997:122) seems to propose that *pa* is a contrastive topic marker.

Although analysing *pa* as a contrastive topic marker may seem like the obvious account there are, in fact, several problems with such a claim. First, consider an example of a (rather infrequent yet existing) postverbal *pa*-phrase (37):

- (37) –Lej=me pios eš paraðas? (Pontic Greek)
 say.3SG=me who.NOM have.3SG money.ACC?
 ‘He says to me: Who has money?’
 –Leo k' eyo=pa... Ekinos esker=ætsen; ults
 say.1SG and I.NOM=PART he.NOM know.3SG=them everyone.ACC
 ekser kata onoman ke kata jenean.
 know.3SG by name.ACC and by lineage.ACC
 ‘And I say to myself ... He has. He knows them; He knows everyone by name and lineage.’
 (Drettas, 1997:551 ex. 117)

In (37) it should be made clear that the *k* “and” is not a coordinator, but has an emphatic use, thus contributing towards an emphatic reading. If we were to advocate a projection uniquely devoted to *pa*-phrases, then this occurrence of a postverbal *pa*-phrase (albeit singular) would constitute counterevidence.

Second, if CLLD and *pa*-phrases correspond to two different projections – let us assume for the sake of the argument to Aboutness Topic and Contrastive Topic respectively (given their distinct discourse readings, as discussed in section 3.1) – we would then expect that they can coexist, as indeed is shown to be the case in (38)a, but that a *pa*-phrase cannot be CLLD-ed. Consider (38)b and c:

- (38) a. Ton Memet eyo=*pa* ayapo=aton. (Pontic Greek)
 the.ACC Memet.ACC I.NOM=PART love.1SG=him
 'I (more than anyone) love Mehmet.'
- (Melanofrydis, 2001:13)
- b. Ta oromata=*pa* pos pistevs=ata.
 the.ACC dreams.ACC=PART how believe.2SG=them
 'As for the dreams, how (strange) you believe them.'
- (Andreadis, 1990:27)
- c. Ato=*pa* pos epikes=ato?
 this.ACC=PART how make.Past.2SG=it
 'How did you do that (and not this)?'
- (Andreadis, 1990:54)

The prediction is not borne out since in (38)b and c we see *pa*-phrases being CLLD-ed which would rule out the existence of two distinct topic projections. In other words, CLLD in Pontic Greek is not a syntactic reflex exclusively linked to either 'aboutness' or contrastivity, despite being found more frequently with Aboutness Topics.

Third, in SMG, in (39)b and c *to mandri* "the pen" is interpreted as a contrastive topic whilst *Dori* "Dori" is focus (along the lines of Alexopoulou, 1996, 1999):

- (39) a. Pios kaθarise to spiti? I Parθena? (SMG)
 who.NOM clean.Past.3SG the.ACC house.ACC the.NOM Parthena.NOM
 'Who cleaned the house? Parthena did?'
- b. ðen ksero, pados i Dori kaθarise to madri.
 not know.1SG though the.NOM Dori.NOM clean.Past.3SG the.ACC pen.ACC
 'I don't know, though Dori cleaned the pen.'
- c. ðen ksero, pados to madri to kaθarise i Dori.
 not know.1SG, though the.ACC pen.ACC it.ACC clean.Past.3SG the.NOM Dori.NOM
 'I don't know, though Dori cleaned the pen.'

In Pontic Greek if *pa* was a contrastive topic marker we would then expect *ta mandria* "the pens" to be unfailingly marked with a *pa*-phrase. However, this is not the case, as shown in (40)d – the most grammatical option being the one in (40)b which is the equivalent of (39)c:

- (40) a. Pios epastrepsen t' ospit? I Parθena? (Pontic Greek)
 who.NOM clean.Past.3SG the.ACC house.ACC the.NOM Parthena.NOM
 'Who cleaned the house? Parthena did?'
- b. Ki ksero mian ta mandria i Dori epastrepsen.
 not know.1SG though the.ACC pens.ACC the.NOM Dori.NOM clean.Past.3SG
 'I don't know, though Dori cleaned the pens.'
- c. ?Ki ksero, mian i Dori epastrepsen ta mandria.
 not know.1SG though the.NOM Dori.NOM clean.Past.3SG the.ACC pens.ACC
 'I don't know, though Dori cleaned the pens.'
- d. ?*Ki ksero mian (i Dori) ta mandria=*pa* epastrepsen.
 not know.1SG though (the.NOM) the.ACC pens.ACC=PART clean.Past.3SG
 'I don't know, though Dori cleaned the pens.'

On the basis of this evidence, we dismiss the idea that *pa* is a contrastive topic marker and, therefore, we also dismiss the possibility for a dedicated ContrastiveTopic projection. Crucially though, this does not amount to claiming that we dismiss the idea of a specially designated position for *pa*-phrases or that *pa*-phrases cannot function as contrastive topics. Our proposal on the status of *pa* follows next.

4.3. *pa* is the exponence of ContrastP!

In general, the existence of contrastive topics has, as anticipated, important repercussions on the realisation of contrastive foci since, in the literature, contrastive topics are sometimes referred to as foci, thus, contributing to the blurring between the notions of focus and topic. In Finnish, for instance, contrastive focus and contrastive topic occupy the same structurally designated position (cf. [Vilkuna, 1995](#)). Could this also be the case in Pontic Greek? Expressed another way, is it possible that *pa*, defined as a “contrastive topic marker” by [Drettas \(1997\)](#), does not have any topic status, but is simply a contrastive marker? Indeed, this is the claim we put forward, namely that Pontic Greek *pa*-phrases are an exponence of Contrast⁰. Following [Molnár and Winkler \(2010:1396\)](#) and in line with the conclusions in [Paoli \(2011\)](#), we, too, claim that focus and contrast are related notions and that they also share some features. In what follows we present evidence for corroborating such a claim for Pontic Greek.

Let us start by discussing the (partially) quantificational properties of *pa*-phrases using [Rizzi's \(1997\)](#) diagnostics between topics and foci, in order to establish whether *pa*-phrases are quantificational or not. First, in SMG, topics (41)a are typically associated with a resumptive pronoun in the argument position and are assigned the pronoun's case. Meanwhile, focus (41)b disallows resumptive clitics and their case is assigned solely by the argument position they are linked to ([Tsimpli, 1995:179–180](#)):

- (41) a. Tus fitites, oli i kaθijites tus ipostirizun.
the.ACC students.ACC all.NOM the.NOM professors.NOM them support.3PL
'All professors support the students.'
(adapted from [Tsimpli, 1995:179–180](#))
- b. TO JANI (*ton) sinantisa xtes.
the.ACC John.ACC (*him) meet.Past.1SG yesterday
'It is John that I met yesterday.'

If we assume that *pa*-phrases are focus we would expect a similar behaviour to (41)b. Crucially, *pa*-phrases with a resumptive clitic in Pontic Greek are possible, yet not very common (42):

- (42) Ato=*pa* pos epikes=*ato*? (Pontic Greek)
this=PART how do.Past.2SG=it
'How did you do this (and not something else)?'
([Andreadis, 1990:54](#))

Second, in SMG, weak cross-over effects emerge in the case of focus-movement (43)a but not when topics are involved (cf. [Alexopoulou, 1999](#); [Tsimpli, 1995](#); [Iatridou, 1995](#)), as shown in (43)b:

- (43) a. to JANI_{i/j} ayapa i mana tu_i (SMG)
the.ACC John.ACC love.3SG the.NOM mother.NOM his
'His mother loves John.'
- b. *to JANI_{i/j} ton ayapa i mana tu_i
the.ACC John.ACC him love.3SG the.NOM mother.NOM his
'His mother loves John.'

Crucially, in Pontic Greek *pa*-phrases give rise to weak cross-over without resulting in ungrammaticality, as shown in (44):

- (44) Ton Jorikan=*pa* i manan=*at* pola ayap=*aton*. (Pontic Greek)
the.ACC George.ACC=PART the.NOM mother.NOM=his much love.3SG=him
'His mother loves George a lot.'

Third, in SMG, foci along other quantificational elements are not felicitous, as shown in (45):

- (45) *OLA O YANIS ta efaye. (SMG)
all.ACC the.NOM John.NOM them eat.Past.3SG
'JOHN ate everything!'

However, in Pontic Greek it seems possible to have a quantificational element along a *pa*-phrase, as shown in (46):

- (46) –Aso Jorikan ke kalion anθropos (Pontic Greek)
 from.the.ACC George.ACC and better man.NOM
 apan son kosmon evriete?
 on to.the.ACC world.ACC find.PASS.3SG
 ‘Is there a better man in the world than George?’
 –Kanis=pa. Aman atin ul=atun ton Jorikan=pa ekatiyoresan.
 no one=PART But they.NOM all=them the.ACC George.ACC=PART blame.Past.3PL=him
 ‘No one (is better). But all of them blamed George.’

Furthermore, attachment of *pa* to bare quantificational elements in Pontic Greek is also perfectly productive, as shown in (47):

- (47) a. Ke ul=pa ekatetyoresan=aton. (Pontic Greek)
 and all.NOM=PART blame.Past.3PL=him
 ‘And they all blamed him.’
 (Melanofrydis, 2001:41)
- b. Uj’ i kaloer=pa ayapune ton Jorika=m.
 all.NOM the.NOM monks.NOM=PART love.3PL the.ACC George.ACC.my
 ‘All the monks love my George.’
 (Melanofrydis, 2001:29)
- c. Tiðen=pa k’ eis.
 nothing=PART not have.2SG
 ‘You don’t have anything.’
 (Andreadis, 1990:45)

Fourth, in SMG, recursiveness applies to topicalisation (48)a, but not to focus (48)b:

- (48) a. Tis Marias, ta vivlia tis ta estile o Janis. (SMG)
 the.GEN Maria.GEN the.ACC books.ACC her them send.Past.3SG the.NOM John.NOM
 ‘John gave the books to Mary.’
- b. *TIS MARIAS TA VIVLIA estile o Yanis. (SMG)
 the.GEN Maria.GEN the.ACC books.ACC send.Past.3SG the.NOM John.NOM
 ‘John gave the BOOKS to MARIA.’

(adapted from Tsimpli, 1995:181)

As we have already seen, multiple *pa*-phrases are possible in Pontic Greek – example (17) repeated here for convenience as (49):

- (49) Ki atos eraepsan=aton; ekin=pa ekints=pa efayane. (Pontic Greek)
 and then seek.Past.3PL=him these.NOM=PART these.ACC=PART eat.Past.3PL
 ‘And then they launched themselves into his pursuit; and they, they killed them.’

(Drettas, 1997:440)

Fifth, in SMG, topics appear to be fully compatible with *wh*-questions, both in matrix and indirect clauses. On the other hand, foci are compatible with indirect *wh*-questions (50)b since *wh*-elements are argued to be inherently focalised and, therefore, the uniqueness condition applies (Rizzi, 1997:291), but not otherwise (50)a (cf. Krifka, 2007:14):

- (50) a. *Ti ayorase i MARIA? (SMG)
 what buy.Past.3SG the.NOM Maria.NOM
 ‘What did Maria buy?’
- b. ðen ksero pjos milise sti MARIA. (SMG)
 not know.1SG who.NOM talk.Past.3SG to.the.ACC Maria.ACC
 ‘I don’t know who talked to Maria.’

(adapted from Tsimpli, 1995:192–196)

Interestingly, in Pontic Greek *pa*-phrases are compatible with a *wh*-element, as in (51)a. However, grammaticality deteriorates if the *pa*-phrase is not clitic-doubled, as shown in (51)b. As we have claimed in section 3.1, CLLD in Pontic Greek conveys ‘aboutness’, hence why *pa*-phrases need to be clitic-doubled in the presence of a *wh*-element:

- (51) a. T' atines=*pa* ta tærtæ pios epori
 the.NOM the.one.GEN=PART the.NOM problems.NOM who can.3SG
 na sir=*æta*? (Pontic Greek)
 Subj.PART drag.3SG=them
 ‘Who can cope with her problems?’ (Andreadis, 1990:17)
- b. ?*T' atines=*pa* ta tærtæ pios epori
 the.NOM the.one.GEN=PART the.NOM problems.NOM who can.3SG
 na sir?
 Subj.PART drag.3SG
 ‘Who can cope with her problems?’

To summarise the discussion so far, consider Table 3:

Table 3
 Comparing Pontic Greek *pa*-phrases to topics and foci.

Properties	Focus	<i>pa</i> -Phrase	Topic
Resumptive clitic	No	Yes (but only marginally so)	Yes
Weak cross-over	Yes	Yes	No
Bare quantificational elements	No	Yes	Yes
Recursiveness	Yes	Yes (rarely more than one)	No
Compatibility with <i>wh</i>	No	Yes	Yes

Table 3 clearly shows that *pa*-phrases show mixed behaviour, sometimes behaving like foci and, at other times, like topics. This observation naturally leads us to the conclusion that, in Pontic Greek, an element used contrastively does not automatically qualify as a focus and brings us in line with Molnár and Winkler’s (2010) claim regarding the “dual character of contrast”.

Pragmatically, this claim also receives confirmation since *pa* conveys different types/degrees of contrast (cf. also Setatos, 1994; Drettas (1997:122) on *themacité forte* “strong thematicity”), as shown in (52):

- (52) a. Ksenos en; atos=*pa*, eklosan=*aton* opis. (Pontic Greek)
 stranger be.3SG he.NOM=PART return.Past.3PL=him back
 ‘He is a stranger; as for him, they forced him back.’ (Drettas, 1997:439)
- b. Al efiyan, al eturksan,
 others.NOM leave.Past.3PL others.NOM become Turkish.Past.3PL
 al krifa epemnan xristjani ke fanera
 others.NOM secretly remain.Past.3PL Christians.NOM and openly
 turk k' aets=*pa* to xorion olon eyenton turkikon.
 Turkish.NOM and this.way=PART the.NOM village.NOM whole.NOM become.Past.3SG Turkish.NOM
 ‘Other people left; other people became Turkish; others secretly remained Christians, but openly acted as if Turkish; and that way the whole village became Turkish.’ (Melanofrydis, 2001:10)
- c. Emis ol=*pa* kala imes, esis pos istun?
 we.NOM all.NOM=PART well be.1PL you.NOM how be.2PL
 ‘We are all fine, how are you?’ (Tombaidis, 1988:85)
- d. To mašer so nin=*at* ke to pistol=*pa* so šern=*at*.
 the.ACC knife.ACC in belt=his and the.ACC gun.ACC=PART in hand=his
 ‘The knife in his belt and the gun in his hand.’ (Drettas, 1997:547)

In (52)a the *pa*-phrase is clearly emphatic; in (52)b the *pa*-phrase is highlighted; in (52)c the *pa*-phrase, *emis ol=pa* “we all” is juxtaposed to *esis* “you”; in (52)d we have a distributive reading; crucially, all these discourse readings are compatible with a hierarchy of contrast as postulated by Molnár (2002).

Having established that *pa* is the exponent of Contrast⁰, we now move on to discuss how the *pa* and *ki* markers are, in fact, in complementary distribution. As we have seen in section 3.2, *ki* is one of the contrastive focus particles. Consider (53):

- (53) Ar aets pontiaka pe=aton=ki na ekser. (Pontic Greek)
 so this.way Pontic.ACC tell.Imper.2SG=him=PART Subj.PART know.3SG
 ‘Hence, tell him in Pontic Greek so that he understands.’

(Drettas, 1997:523)

In (53) the *ki* particle appears attached to a verb+clitic complex and focalises the entire predicate. As we have already seen in section 3.2, *ki* does not attach enclitically to any other element except for predicates. For this reason, (54) is ungrammatical:

- (54) *Tin Anasta=ki iða. (Pontic Greek)
 the.ACC Anasta.ACC=PART see.Past.1SG
 ‘I saw ANASTA.’

The presence of *ki* under Contrast implies high verb movement to FocusP. Evidence for such an analysis comes from (i) the incompatibility of a *pa*-phrase and *ki*-phrase, as shown in (55), because a *pa*-constituent is not compatible with a focused verb; and (ii) the complementarity of distribution between V-to-C and negation, as shown in (56), since it is well known that a Neg head blocks V-to-C, irrespective of the trigger (cf. Rivero, 1993; Roberts, 2001).

- (55) *Tin Anasta=pa pe=aten=ki. (Pontic Greek)
 the.ACC Anasta.ACC=PART tell.Imper.2SG=him=PART
 ‘TELL ANASTA!’

- (56) *K^h iða=ki tin Anasta (ekusa tin Anasta). (Pontic Greek)
 not see.Past.1SG=PART the.ACC Anasta.ACC (hear.Past.1SG the.ACC Anasta.ACC
 ‘I didn’t SEE Anasta (I heard Anasta).’

It follows that the discourse particles *pa* and *ki* have such specialised selectional requirements. This clearly demarcates *ki* from *kela* – consider example (20)a which shows compatibility of *kela* with negation and, therefore, this is suggestive that it occupies a distinct position from focus particle *ki*. Therefore, the claim we put forward is that *pa* attaches to XPs and *ki* to X⁰s. Consider (57):

- (57) ContrastP merging options
 a. ContrastP [XP *pa*] (discourse reading: non-exhaustive)
 b. ContrastP [XP] (discourse reading: exhaustive)
 c. ContrastP [X⁰ *ki*] (discourse reading: non-exhaustive/exhaustive)

(57) suggests that in the Head of ContrastP there can be merging of any one of three different lexical heads: *-pa*, null, *-ki* –, the former and the latter being the morphological reflex of the Head. *Pa* and null select XPs. On the other hand, *ki* selects heads. The broader implications of our analysis are: (i) an element which is used contrastively does not automatically qualify as a focus; (ii) topicality and contrast are two independent features; (iii) our analysis lends support to Molnár and Winkler’s (2010) view whereby contrast may be coded syntactically; (iv) cross-linguistically, it has been claimed that languages that have ContrastiveTopicP do not project ContrastiveFocusP (cf. Vermeulen, 2009, *inter alios*); although this prediction cannot be extended as such in the case of Pontic Greek (since we do not abide to a ContrastiveTopicP), we too agree that the presence of ContrastP subsumes ContrastiveFocusP; in other words, there does not seem to be strong evidence for a non-clustered – that is over-fragmented – contrastive slot for languages that do not fall into the Hungarian type.

So far we have seen evidence that *pa* and *ki* are contrastive markers. We have also seen evidence for FF yielding information focus. On the basis of these claims, we now present our overall proposal regarding the articulation of information structure in Pontic Greek. Consider the orderings in (58) which give us an insight into the overall articulation of the information structure in Pontic Greek:

- (58) a. CLLD-Object Subject=*pa* – V (Pontic Greek)
 Ton Memet eyo=*pa* ayapo=*aton*.
 the.ACC Memet.ACC I.NOM=PART love.1SG=*him*
 'It is Mehmet that I love.'
 (Melanofrydis, 2001:13)
- b. Subject – Object=*pa* – IFoc – V
 I Nazlu-xanum ekinon=*pa* efkero ki θ' afin.
 the.NOM Nazlu-lady.NOM this.ACC=PART empty.ACC not Fut.PART leave.3SG
 'Nazlu-xanum wouldn't leave this empty.'
 (Melanofrydis, 2001:43)
- c. Object=*pa* – IFoc – V
 Eplirosam epta xilæðes; k' ekina=*pa* o popas eton k'
 pay.Past.1PL seven thousand; and these.ACC=PART the.NOM priest.NOM be.Past.3SG and
 epiken=*ato*.
 do.Past.3SG=*it*
 'We paid 7000 (drachmas); and as for these, it was thanks to the priest that we managed (to pay so little).'
 (Drettas, 1997:442)
- d. Subject=*pa* – Topic – IFoc – V
 Eyo=*pa* osimeron pola stenaxorementza ime.
 I.NOM=PART today very sad be.1SG
 'Today I am very sad.'
 (Andreadis, 1990:27)

The examples in (58) suggest the hierarchy in (59) for Pontic Greek in line with (32)b:

- (59) TopicP ... ContrastP ... (TopicP) ... IFocP ... TP (Pontic Greek)

At this stage it is important to present evidence as to why we do not postulate a low focus position in the vP-periphery of the clause, along the lines of [Belletti \(2004\)](#), and, instead, claim that IFocP is in the left periphery in Pontic Greek, especially given that in SMG the low focus position is in the vP-periphery. For this purpose consider (60):

- (60) a. –Pjos irθe? (SMG)
 who.NOM come.Past.3SG
 'Who came?'
- b. –Irθe o Janis.
 come.Past.3SG the.NOM John.NOM
 'John came.'
- c. –Pios erθen? (Pontic Greek)
 who.NOM come.Past.3SG
 'Who came?'
- O Jorikas erθen.
 the.NOM George.NOM come.Past.3SG
 'George came.'
- e. –Ti jemise? (SMG)
 what fill.Past.3SG
 'What got filled?'
- f. –Jemise to potiri.
 fill.Past.3SG the.NOM glass.NOM
 'The glass got filled.'
- g. –Do eyomosen? (Pontic Greek)
 what fill.Past.3SG
 'What got filled?'
- h. –To potir eyomosen.
 the.NOM glass.NOM fill.Past.3SG
 'The glass got filled.'

- i. Efije xθes o Janis. (SMG)
 leave.Past.3SG yesterday the.NOM John.NOM
 'Yesterday John left.'
- k. Opse o Juras efien. (Pontic Greek)
 yesterday the.NOM George.NOM leave.Past.3SG
 'Yesterday Juras left.'
- l. Pote ayorase (?*o Janis) ti (o (SMG)
 when buy.Past.3SG (the.NOM John.NOM) what.ACC (the.NOM
 Janis)?
 John.NOM)
 'When did John buy what?'
- m. O Juras tinan pote efilise? (Pontic Greek)
 the.NOM George.NOM whom when kiss.Past.3SG
 (*o Juras)?
 (*the.NOM George.NOM)
 'When George kissed whom?'

(Michelioudakis and Sitaridou, 2013:363, 375)

What we observe in (60) is that the diagnostics for a low focus position in the vP periphery, that is, postverbal subjects in (60)a–h, focused adverbial in (60)i–k, and the position of *wh*-phrases in multiple *wh*-questions (cf. Michelioudakis and Sitaridou, 2012), as in (60)l–m, are all consistently not obtained in Pontic Greek. We can therefore safely conclude that all focus positions in Pontic Greek are in the C-domain (cf. Michelioudakis and Sitaridou, 2013), whereas, according to Sinopoulou's (2008) analysis, the in situ *wh*-phrases actually move to the low/vP-periphery (cf. Belletti, 2004), in fact, to the same position that postverbal foci move to. If the existence/activation of the low periphery is indeed subject to parametric variation, then it is possible that further parametric variation between SMG and Pontic Greek is the availability of a vP-periphery in the former but not in the latter.

5. Conclusion

In this article we have argued that the information structure of Pontic Greek is organised in a radically different way to the one in SMG because: (a) it employs a rich particle system to express contrast; (b) CLLD does not have the same pragmatic import as in SMG, and; (c) *pa*-phrases are almost exclusively associated with a non-exhaustive reading, whereas focus movement is always associated with an exhaustive one; (d) information focus is obligatorily in the left periphery. We argued that: (i) there is evidence in favour of a Contrast projection in the CP domain which can host both topics and foci; (ii) *pa* is argued to select XPs, whereas *ki* would select an X⁰, and; (iii) IFoc⁰ is in the CP and not above vP.

The advantage of our analysis is that we can now explain the numerous instances of OV attested in Pontic Greek, which led to some (often superficial) observations regarding the 'ancient' character of Pontic Greek through comparison to the OV parametric setting of Ancient Greek. Although the issue remains open to future research, given Pontic Greek's split-headedness, we have demonstrated in this article that discourse operations result in a great deal of OV word order.

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