Topicalisation in Pontic Greek

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1. Introduction

Pontic Greek is a variety of Greek which was historically spoken outside the area which now constitutes the Greek state. Today, as a consequence of the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), it is spoken both within and outside Greece. Within Greece it is mainly spoken in Macedonia, Thrace, and to a lesser extent in Attica. Outside Greece it is spoken in the Pontus region –the historical berceau of all Pontic varieties– but also in Istanbul, in Caucasus and by diaspora communities across the world. Although Pontic in Greece seems to be robust in terms of number of speakers, in real terms the majority of speakers is severely attrited. Indicative of the attrition situation is that although the number of Pontians is quite significant (above 2 million in Greece alone) only a fraction of the population (200,000 or 300,000 depending on the estimates) is reported to be active speakers of the dialect. Due to the geographical dispersion of Pontic, it is important to note that the term Pontic, synchronically, can only be used as an "umbrella" term for the various subdialects, which, crucially, can diverge significantly from each other (e.g., "Christian" vs. "Muslim" Pontic, cf. Mackridge 1987). For the purpose of this paper we use the term "Pontic" to refer to the Pontic varieties of Northern Greece.

Greek dialectal syntax is notoriously understudied primarily because of all the efforts –perpetuating at both social and institutional level– to erase dialectal variation and instead, impose linguistic uniformity in the name of Standard Modern Greek (henceforth SMG) (for the same view see also Ralli 2007). Within this context, work on dialectal syntax is urgently needed and our present article aims at contributing towards this direction. The goal of the article is twofold: first, to describe the discourse phenomenon of topicalisation in Pontic syntactically; and, second, to suggest a (cartographic) analysis casted within the generative framework thus making the present work the first attempt of this kind.

The paper is organised as follows: Section 2 presents the main syntactic features of Pontic that differentiate it from the standard variety. Section 3 describes our methodology. Section 4 discusses topicalisation strategies in Pontic. Section 5 proposes a syntactic analysis of topicalisation in Pontic. Finally, section 6 concludes the discussion.

2. Syntactic variation in Pontic Greek and SMG

Although the Pontic variety spoken in Greece is by far the best described Greek dialect (cf. Oikonomidis 1958, Papadopoulos 1955, Tombaidis 1988, 1996, Drettas 1997, *inter alios*), still little is known about its syntax. For this reason, in the current section we identify the main syntactic features of Pontic (pertaining to the structure of the DP, vP, CP) which could be used as diagnostics for determining the syntactic isoglosses between Pontic and SMG as well as among Greek dialects, in general.

First, let us consider the most well-studied syntactic phenomenon of Pontic namely, the distribution of clitics (cf. Pappas 2006, Revithiadou 2008) which alone, according to Condoravdi & Kiparsky (2001:1-3), is a sufficient criterion for a taxonomy of the Greek varieties. Pontic clitics are strictly enclitics, as shown in (1):

(1)   Edoken to jon ats ton Lazaron ... ke ipen aton   (Pontic)
         give-3SG-PAST the son her the Lazaros-ACC ...
                              and say-3SG-PAST he-acc

'She gave her son, Lazarus … and told him'
(Kyriakidis 1998: 30)

Second, although the main distributional rule in DP constructions is that the qualifying element always precedes the qualified (cf. Drettas 1997:183, Janse 2002:221) as in SMG, Pontic differs in having obligatory determiner spreading whereas in SMG determiner spreading is optional (2b) and obligatory (2c') only when the adjective is postposed:

(2) a. o tranon o ðeskalon   (Pontic)
     the big the teacher
(Tombaidis 1988:61)
   b. o meɣalos (o) ðaskalos   (SMG)
     the big (the) teacher
   c. *o ðaskalos meɣalos   (SMG/Pontic)
     the teacher big
   c'. o ðaskalos o meɣalos
      the big (the) teacher
     'the big teacher'

Additionally, although adjectival possessives are postposed in both SMG and Pontic, it is only in the latter that we find possessive spreading by means of a purely affixal possessive (3a):

(3) a. to kalom to peðim   (Pontic)
   the good-POSS the child-POSS
(Janse 2002: 222 & Drettas 1997:166)
   b. *to kalo mu to pedi mu   (SMG)
     the good POSS the child POSS
     'My good child'

Third, in dative constructions in Pontic (see also Drettas 1997, Tombaidis 1996, Michelioudakis and Sitaridou, this volume) the 'inherent' vs. 'structural' distinction is possibly collapsed into the latter. Objects, regardless of whether they are direct or indirect, are always in the accusative (4):

(4) Ipa ton peðan tin aliθian   (Pontic)
   said-1SG the boy-acc the truth-acc
   'I said the truth to the boy.'

Fourth, Pontic exhibits significant variation from SMG in terms of hypotaxis since it uses more paratactic constructions. Consider, for instance, verb serialisation (cf. Drettas 1997) in (5a), which, crucially, is not found in SMG (5b) (but see Joseph (1990) on the *ela pame*, "let's go" construction). In particular, in (5a) the movement verb is paratactically connected to the second verb without any complementiser mediating.

(5) a. as paɣo elepo   (Pontic)
   part-1SG-Pres see-1SG-Imperf
   'I shall go and see.'
(Papadopoulos 1955: 163-164)
   b. as pao na do   (SMG)
    part go-1SG-Pres part see-1SG-Perf
    'I shall go and see.'

Fifth, Pontic allows multiple *wh*-fronting, as shown in (6a), contrary to what is possible in SMG (6b):

(6) a. Tinan pion ospit eðiksises?   (Pontic)
        who-ACC which house show-2SG-PAST
      b. *Se pion eðikses pio spiti?   (SMG)
        to-who-ACC show-2SG-PAST which home
       'Which house did you show to whom?'

So far we have seen (cf. examples (1) to (6)) that significant syntactic differences are attested in all syntactic areas between Pontic and SMG. Moreover, Pontic has an additional feature namely, discourse particles which, crucially, SMG lacks. The discourse particles are identified as the clause-typing and the interrogation ones (cf. Drettas 1997). The first one to consider is the clause typing particle *kja¹* which is etymologically related to *ke* (meaning "and") and *ara* (meaning "consequently"). It is used primarily in dialogues and is rarely found in narratives (cf. Drettas 1997:407). The discourse function encoded by this particle is that of assertion (7):

(7) kja vevea θa iʃes   (Pontic)
    Ass-PART certainly Fut-PART have-2SG
    'You will certainly have it.'
    (Drettas 1997: 408)

Another clause typing particle is *ja*.² Its discourse content is that of assertion as well. It is syntactically incompatible with interrogatives and it is positioned clause-finally immediately before an extended pause (Drettas 1997:409) (8):

(8) eʃ ke ton jeronats ja (Pontic)
    have-3SG-Pres and the-ACC old-man-ACC+Poss-3SG-Fem Ass-PART
    'She also has her old man.'
    (Drettas 1997: 409)

Moving on now to the interrogation particles, we can identify at least three particles used in question clauses: *paʃkim* (or *paʃkimto*), *jam* and *kjam* each conveying quite distinct discourse roles. *Paʃkim* (or *paʃkimto*) is positioned clause-initially and functions as an intensifier which asserts certainty (Drettas 1997:411) (9):

(9) ta traɣoðias ta kala paʃkimto in ɣramena? (Pontic)
    the-ACC songs-ACC the-ACC nice-ACC Inter-PART be-3PL-Pres writ-ten-Adj-ACC
    'Does somebody find nice songs written?'
    (Drettas 1997: 355)

On the other hand, *jam* has the exact opposite intensive usage. It conveys either uncertainty or probability (Drettas 1997: 413-414). As (10) illustrates, both pragmatic notions are encoded via the *jam* particle and the exact discourse value can be determined

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¹ Consider *ke* in SMG:
(i) ke vevea tha erthis
And of course Fut-PART come-2SG
'You will certainly come'
² Consider *ja* in Northern Greek:
(i). etsi ine ja
that-is-how be-3SG-Pres PART
'That is how it is!'

only through context:

(10) Probability
   efoγuntane jam pernats […](Pontic)
   be-afraid-3PL-Past Inter-PART take-3PL-Pres+Obj-3PL
   'They feared that they might not be taken.'
   (Drettas 1997: 413, 348)

This brief discussion on particles shows how extensively this device is used in Pontic. It is therefore, not curious that particles are also involved in marking other discourse functions, such as topicalisation and focalisation (although the latter is not discussed here, cf. Kaltsa and Sitaridou, to appear), as we shall see in section 4.

3. Methodology of data collection

The original methodological aim was to use only native data collected through elicitation and grammaticality judgement tasks. For this purpose, we selected two speakers of Pontic from Thessaloniki as our informants. We used the following criteria to select them: age (both +60); degree of exposure to Pontic (both exposed to Pontic from birth); use of Pontic in everyday life: (one on an everyday basis, the other less often); education (none with a university education albeit one with higher education); mobility (both non-mobile); language profile (no other languages apart from SMG); community status (one is considered by the community as a very able speaker); social class (both middle class). We run one-to-one pilot interviews which comprised: a) a 50-item questionnaire examining subject and object focus (Kaltsa 2007); we administered it orally so that the speakers not be confronted with the written language which may, in turn, trigger grammaticality judgements influenced by SMG given the affinity of the written medium with the standard variety; and b) free theme/narration of a story.

The pilot study showed important problems. First, the informants used excessive clitic doubling which is a very frequent in SMG, but much less so in Pontic. (11) provides further proof of a transfer from the SMG since we observe proclisis whereas we know that Pontic exhibits enclisis across the board:

(11) to vivlio to eðavesa to olon   (Pontic)
    the-ACC book-ACC the-ACC read-1SG-Past the-ACC whole-ACC
    'I read the whole book.'

Second, the informants used no particles in the grammaticality tasks, but only in the narration task (12):

(12) ato emas-pa θ'etroen
  (Pontic)
   that-ACC us Top-PART Fut-PART eat-3SG-Past
   'It would eat us.'

Both their linguistic performance as well as their metalinguistic judgments provided evidence for the fact that the Pontic speakers today are seriously attrited and the dialect is possibly endangered despite Ethnologue's (http://www.ethnologue.com/) figures asserting the opposite. However, further research is needed to consolidate this claim.

These findings led to a redesign of our main study since we could no longer rely on unattrited, robust grammaticality judgments which were not influenced by the bi-dialectalism of our informants. Therefore, we decided that our main study should mainly involve soliciting data from the written record of Pontic. For this purpose we selected texts which fulfilled the following criteria: (i) contained dialogues; (ii) publication date; (iii) availability of translation into SMG to avoid variability of interpretations. On the basis

of these criteria –to the extent that such a tall bill can be satisfied– the following texts have been employed for the identification and description of information structure in Pontic: a theatrical play dated from 1972 (Adreadis 1990); a short story dated from 1951 (Melanofrydis 2001); a selection of folktales dating from 1928 (Tombaidis 1988); and the narratives included in the grammar of Drettas (1997:515-671). After careful examination of these texts, 231 tokens encoding topicalisation have been identified (Kaltsa 2007). These data form the core of our analysis and the most representative ones in the next two sections. In analysing the data, we controlled for the following properties: sentential position; the nature of the elements that undergo topicalisation; and, the possibility of the contrastive vs. informational reading. Once the data were coded they have been further checked against the grammars of Papadopoulos (1955), Tombaidis (1988 & 1998) and Drettas (1997).

4. Topicalisation Strategies in Pontic Greek

In the literature, information structure is defined as the encoding of discourse information of an utterance through operations such as topicalisation and focalisation. Topic has been primarily identified as what the utterance is about at the level of a sentence; to put it differently, topic is the "notional subject" (at least, according to Kiss 1995:7). Meanwhile, at the level of a dialogue the topic is identified as the element that is discourse-old, and consequently known to both interlocutors. Further interpretive distinctions can be made with regards to topics: *Aboutness Topic* (ATop), which is the constituent representing the theme of the predication, namely, "what the sentence is about" (cf. Reinhart 1981, Lambrecht 1994, Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl 2007); *Contrastive Topic* (cf. Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl 2007); and *Familiar Topic* (*ibid*). In our study we utilise this tripartite distinction and focus on the former two.

There are two main strategies for topicalisation in Pontic: (i) Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD) (with clitic doubling, henceforth CD) as in SMG, and (ii) usage of particles unlike SMG. Crucially, these two topicalisation strategies are neither interchangeable nor pragmatically identical: The former is claimed to be conveying "aboutness" whereas the latter is claimed to be conveying "contrastiveness"; (iii) there is a third strategy which is more marginal and entails a clitic-doubled *pa*-phrase –this last one is assumed to encode a discourse reading somewhere between the two aforementioned ones. In this paper we will focus on (ii) leaving aside the discussion of other topicalisation strategies (for a detailed account of the encoding of information structure, cf. Kaltsa & Sitaridou, to appear.)

It has already been noted in the literature that the use of the particle *pa* is an extremely frequent topicalisation strategy (cf. Setatos 1994, Drettas 2000, 1997). The (invariable) particle *pa* carries no stress (and consequently it is never sentence-initial), and is attached to the end of the topicalised constituent. Crucially, particle use for the encoding of discourse information is never attested in SMG. *Pa*, is etymologically related to the Ancient Greek adverb *palin*, meaning "again", as suggested by Papadopoulos (1958-1961:3.130)[3]. This etymological explanation is further supported by the finding of the use of -*pal* in Cappadocian (Dawkins 1916: 631 in Janse 2002) (13):

(13) a. ekinos-pa efxaristiθike pola   (Pontic)
     he-NOM Top-PART be-pleased-3SG-Past a lot
    'He was deeply pleased.'
     (Tombaidis 1988: 106)
   b. k-eto-pali … ekutʃis-to piken   (Cappadocian)
     and this-ACC Top-PART ox-driver-NOM+the-ACC do-3SG-Past
    'And this…it was the ox-driver who did it.'
     (Dawkins 1916: 424, 426)

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[3] The use of *pa* as a discourse marker seems to be a clear case of grammaticalisation from an adverb (lexical) to a topic marker (functional).

The data which we will discuss stem from our corpus. We noted all instances of *pa* and we controlled for the type of constituent *pa* attaches to, as well as the position of the *pa*-phrase vis-à-vis the verb. Our findings are summarised in Table 1.

Table 15: *pa*-phrases in our corpus

pa-attachment (231 items)	OV		VO		SV		VS	
Object	56 items	96,5%	2 items	3,5%				
Subject					120 items	97,5%	3 items	2,5%

With regards to the types of constituents pa attaches to let us first, let us consider instances of *pa* attaching to a subject constituent. *Pa* appears attached to pronominal subjects (14a), lexical subjects (14b), in subject DPs with DS (14c), and without being blocked by any definiteness (14d & 14e) or quantifier restrictions (14f).

(14) Subject Topicalisation (Pontic)
  a. Pronoun
    ego-pa eθaresa emen ekuikses
    I Top-PART be-encouraged-1SG-Past me-ACC listen-3SG-Past
   'I was encouraged that you listened to me.'
        (Adreades 1990: 84)
  b. Lexical DP
    i popaðja-pa 's so mantrin ixen ðulian
    the-NOM priest's-wife-NOM Top-PART to-the-ACC pen-ACC have-3SG-Past work-ACC
   'The priest's wife had work at the pen.'
        (Adreades 1990: 19)
    c. Possessive/demonstrative (but not definite article)[4] (with   Determiner Spreading)
       t'emeteron-pa to tixeron aikon eton
     the-NOM mine-NOM Top-PART the-NOM fate-NOM of-this-kind-NOM be-3SG-PAST
     'My fate was of this kind.'
        (Adreadis 1990: 58)
    d. Definite Subject
      tin Leila-pa ipen na fori ta kala ta lomatats
      the-ACC Leila-ACC Top-PART say-3SG-Past Mod-PART wear-3SG the-ACC nice-ACC the-ACC clothes-ACC Poss-GEN
      'S/he said to Leila to wear her nice clothes.'
        (Melanofrydis 2001:33)

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[4] It may be claimed that the following example constitutes an exception to this distributional restriction since the particle attaches to the indefinite pronoun and not the entire DP:
 (i) enan–pa litanian eftaɣnaton atora ta enteka ta enteka t-avɣusti
    a Top-PART litany-ACC do-3PL-Pres+Obj-3SG-ACC now the-ACC eleven-ACC the-ACC
    eleven-ACC the-GEN August-GEN
   'Recently, the 11th August, a litany took place.' (Drettas 1997: 440 ex.101)
This is however, an instance of a split-DP, see discussion on p. 12.

e. Indefine Subject
 o apoθamenon-pa ex topo
 the-NOM dead-NOM Top-PART have-3SG-Pres place-ACC
 'A dead person has its place.'
  (Adreadis 1990: 36)
f. Quantifier subject
 ul'-pa etimanan aton
 everyone-NOM Top-PART honour-3PL-Past he-ACC
 'Everyone honoured him.'
  (Melanofrydis 2001: 25)

Second, consider instances of *pa*-attachment to an object (15). '*Pa*' appears attached to definite objects (15a & 15b), indefinite objects (15b), wh-objects (15c), and objects bearing a possessive (15d).

(15) Object Topicalisation (Pontic)
 a. Definite object
  Tin aderfis' pa m' aγliγoris
  the-ACC sister-Poss Top-PART not forget-2SG
  'Do not forget your sister'
   (Melanofrydis 2001: 13)
 b. Indefinite object
  Enan-pa litanian eftaγnaton atora
  one-ACC Top-PART make-3PL-Past-him now
  'They made a litany in his honour'
   (Drettas 1997:440)
 c. Polarity object
  Tiden pa leis
  nothing Top-PART say-2SG
  'Don't say anything'
   (Andreadis 1990:45)
 d. Possessive object
  T'emon pa kap na aγrika nuniz' aton
  the mine-PART somewhere to understand think him-ACC
  'Mine(mother-in-law) as soon as she felt I was this thinking of him'
   (Andreadis 1990:12)

Third, consider instances of *pa*-attachment to an adverbial (16). The *pa*-adverbials appear predominantly in the preverbal position and can be time, location or manner ones. A *pa*-adverbial can be an adverb (16c) or prepositional phrase/DP (16b).

(16) Adverbial topicalisation (Pontic)
 a. akaθarton ekino i lefkaða | atora-pa leγato ke neræskume
  unclean-NOM this-Deict-NOM the-NOM Lefkada-NOM now Top-PART say-1SG-Pres+Obj-3SG-ACC and make-sb-sick-1SG-Pres
  'Lefkada was that dirty that even now it makes me sick.'
   (Drettas 1997: 442 ex. 105)
 b. enan imeran-pa erθen enas psaras kuizmas γariðes γariðes emis ol exparaγamen etoplaeftam ekeka
  one-ACC day-ACC Top-PART come-3SG-Past one-NOM fisherman-NOM cry-3SG-Pres+Obj-1PL-ACC woman-PL-ACC woman-PL-ACC we-NOM everyone-NOM get-scared-1PL-Past gather-1PL-Past there

'One day a fisherman came and called the women. All of us got scared and gathered around.'
        (Drettas 1997: 442 ex.107)
    c. Kj- aets-pa[5] eperenaten opis k- epantreftan
        And thus-Top-PART take-3SG-PAST-her back and marry-3PL-PAST
        'And thus, he took her back and they married.'
            (Drettas 1997: 448 ex.115)

Let us now discuss the position of the *pa*-phrases vis-à-vis the verb. The position of the *pa*-constituent is predominantly in the pre-verbal position and clause-initially, as shown in Table 1. The post-verbal instances are very limited and only one instance (1 occurrence out of 231 tokens) has been found in our data (17):

(17) Post-Verbal *pa*-topic   (Pontic)
    lejme pios eʃ paraðas? Leo k eɣo pa ...ekinos ekserætsen ults ekser kata onoman ke kata jenean
    say-3SG-Pres+Obj-1SG-ACC who-NOM have-3SG-Pres money-ACC?
    say-1SG-Pres and-EMPH I-NOM Top-PART...he-Deictic-NOM know-3SG-Pres+Obj-3PL-ACC everyone-ACC know-3SG-Pres by name-ACC and by generation-ACC
    'S/he says: Who has money?
    And I say: Everyone knows him by name and generation.'
            (Drettas 1997: 551 ex. 117)

As we have seen *pa* always appears after the constituent it modifies apart from the split-DP examples where it appears interpolating between the adjective/possessive and the noun, as shown in (18):

(18) a. ðio ospita-pa ixame so xorionemun turkant
    (Pontic)
        two house-ACC-PL-Neut Top-PART have-1PL-Past to-the-ACC village-ACC-SG-Neut+Poss-1PL Turkish-NOM/GEN-PL-Masc
        'We had two Turkish houses at our village.'
            (Drettas 1997: 438 ex. 98)
    b. ekino-pa to kaimeno kaθete olen tin imeran
        that-Deict-NOM Top-PART the-NOM poor-NOM sit-3SG-Pres whole-ACC the-ACC day-ACC
        'The poor thing sits all day long.'
            (Adreades 1990: 27)

Examples such as (18), may *prima facie* cast doubt as to whether *pa* attaches to the entire constituent or not. Crucially, following Mathieu & Sitaridou (2005) analysis on split-DPs, the splitting is ultimately the result of movement which is driven by discourse considerations namely emphasis/contrast. This is perfectly compatible with the contrastive reading of the split-*pa* phrase attested here and which will be advocated for in the next section.

Furthermore, *pa*-phrases in Pontic can be multiple[6] albeit this is not very frequent:

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[5] According to Drettas (1997:448), the expression *aets-pa*, "this way" is a fixed expression –a calque in other words– which marks a rupture/discontinuity in terms of discourse.

[6] Benincà (2004: 53, 71), however, claims that recursion in the CP domain is not an option. In light of her proposal, each projection bears a particular semantic property and can host only one XP. Moreover, the highest projections encapsulate old information while new information appears lower in the CP area which hosts three subfields: Frame, Thematisation, & Focus.

(19) Multiple *pa*-phrases
  (Pontic)
a. ekino-pa propaɣanða eton ekino-pa
   that-NOM Top-PART propaganda-NOM that-NOM Top-PART
   'That was propaganda.'
          (Drettas 1997: 586 ex.248)
b. zante, e'inon-pa skotonen ke emas-pa
   fool, that-ACC Top-PART kill-3PL-Pres and us-ACC Top-PART
    'You fool, they'll kill both him and us.'
          (Tombaidis 1988: 91)
 c. esi-pa kala ke alos-pa ke alos-pa, eksegketen tin kutsin ke ula epiketen
     you-NOM Top-PART well and other-NOM Top-PART and other-NOM Top-PART,
come-out-3PL-Past the-ACC limp-person-ACC and everything take-3PL-Past
    'You and the others pulled out the limp lady and took everything.'
          (Tombaidis 1988:83)

In (19a), the subject topic, *ekino-pa* "that" is recursive emerging both clause-initially and clause-finally thus enhancing the emphatic reading of the clause. On the other hand, (19b) illustrates an instance of multiple topics as the result of coordination: the two coordinated object DPs, preverbal *e'inon-pa* "that" and post-verbal *emas-pa* "us". Likewise, in (19c) all *pa*-topics are subject DPs, each with its own *pa*-marker and are all merged pre-verbally. However, the most genuine instance of multiple *pa*-topics is the one in (20) whereby multiple *pa*-constituents have distinct syntactic functions within the same clause:

(20) kj atot eraepsanaton; ekin-pa ekints-pa efaɣane   (Pontic)
       and then seek-3PL-Past+Obj-3SG-Masc this-Deict-NOM Top-PART this-Deict-ACC
Top-PART eat-3PL-Past
       'And then they kept searching for those who killed the others.'
          (Drettas 1997:440 ex.102)

Both the subject, *ekin-pa* "that" and the object, *ekints-pa* "those" of the second main clause bear the *pa*-marker and occur preverbally.

5. Syntactic analysis of topicalisation in Pontic Greek
In the literature there are different proposals regarding the division of labour between the distinct components of the grammar which are involved in the organisation of information structure. With regards to the actual mapping between the syntax and the interfaces there are *grosso modo* two main approaches: the feature-driven one and the stress-based one. Here we endorse the former. The feature-based approaches suggest a direct and unambiguous mapping between the grammatical representation of an utterance and its discourse interpretation. According to the Mapping Hypothesis, as developed by Diesing (1992), there is a strict correspondence between the syntactic form and the semantic interpretation. Within the feature-based proposals, it is the Cartographic Project (Rizzi 1997, 2004, Cinque 1999, 2002, 2006, Belletti 2004), and, in particular, the split-CP representation of the left-periphery of the sentences (cf. Rizzi 1997), which we adopt here. Although, the extension of the CP domain with additional functional heads has not been welcomed by more restrictively defined minimalist accounts (cf. Cormack & Smith 2000), our choice of framework is guided by the nature of the data.
Let us start by considering how high up on the syntactic tree *pa*-topics are located. First, consider (21):

(21) I petheram-pa sin eklisian eʃeven   (Pontic)
   The-NOM mother-in-law-NOM+Poss Top-PART to-the-ACC church-ACC go-3SG-Past
    My mother-in-law went to the church

(Andreadis 1990:20)

(21) shows that *pa* is merged after the enclitic possessive *-m* clearly excluding any possibilities of *pa* being merged within the DP.

Second, consider diagnostics involving adverbial placement (cf. Cinque 1999) (22):

(22) a. "always"

　　　　T'emon o Jagon-pa panda estil'ne 　　　　　　　　　(Pontic)
　　　　the mine the John-NOM Top-PART always sent
　　　　'My boy, John was always sending stuff'
　　　　　　(Andreadis 1990:28)

　　b. "maybe"
　　　　tæmæk ato pa ekripsen
　　　　Maybe this-ACC Top-PART hide-past-3SG
　　　　'Perhaps he also hid this'
　　　　　　(Drettas 1997:569 ex. 185)

Interestingly, (22a) shows that the *pa*-phrase is higher than Asp$_{Perfect}$ whereas in (22b) it is below the speaker oriented adverb *tæmæk* "maybe".

Third, (23) also suggests a high position of the *pa*-phrase because it appears higher than the mood particle *na* which is hosted in the lower CP domain.

(23) Na ɣazanev's pola paradas ke ti manas-pa na min anaspalts (Pontic)

　　　Mod-PART gather-2SG many money and the mother-ACC
　　　Top-PART Mod-PART neg forget-2SG
　　　'To make a lot of money and not to forget your mother'
　　　　　(Andreadis 1990:22)

The topicalised object *ti-manas-pa* "the mother" is merged higher than the modality particle *na* which, according to Roussou (2000), is in Cop.

Fourth, (24) dissolves any uncertainty with regards to the high position of *pa*-phrases:

(24) ato-pa pos erθen so nu-s'? 　　　　　　　　　　　　(Pontic)
　　　that-NOM Top-PART how come-3SG-Past to-the-ACC mind-ACC your
　　'How did that cross to your mind?'
　　　(Adreadis 1990: 33)

(24) shows that *atos-pa* "he" is merged above the *wh*-constituent. This clearly indicates how "high" up in the tree *pa*-phrases are located in Pontic.

However, although we have demonstrated that *pa*-phrases are in the CP the question as to whether they pertain to a specialised projection, such as ContrastiveTopicP, or not remains open. In fact, there are several problems with such a claim. First, consider an example of postverbal topicalisation (25):

(25) lejme pios eʃ paraðas? 　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Pontic)
　　say-3SG-Pres+Obj-1SG-ACC who-NOM have-3SG-Pres money-ACC?
　　Leo k eɣo pa …ekinos ekserætsen ults ekser kata onoman ke kata jenean
　　say-1SG-Pres　and-EMPH　I-NOM　Top-PART…he-Deictic-NOM　know-3SG-Pres+Obj-3PL-ACC everyone-ACC know-3SG-Pres by name-ACC and by generation-ACC
　　'S/he says: Who has money?
　　And I say: Everyone knows him by name and generation.'

In (25) it is should be clarified that the *k* "and" is not a coordinator but has an emphatic use, and, thus, it enhances a marked nature at the clause.

Second, consider multiple *pa*-phrases (26):

(26) kj atot eraepsanaton; ekin-pa ekints-pa efaɣane   (Pontic)
     and then seek-3PL-Past+Obj-3SG-Masc this-Deict-NOM Top-PART this-Deict-ACC Top-PART eat-3PL-Past
     'And then they kept searching for those who killed the others.'
          (Drettas 1997:440 ex.102)

(26) is an instance of multiple *pa*-phrases which are perfectly possible in Pontic and this should cast doubt on a single, dedicated projection.

Finally, consider (27) which shows attachment of *pa* to a QP:

(27)   ul' i kaloer'-pa aɣapune ton Yorika-m' (Pontic)
       all the-NOM monk-PL-NOM Top-PART love-3PL-Pres the-ACC George-ACC my
       'All the monks love my George.'
          (Melanofrydis 2001:29)

In (27) *pa* is attached to the right of the quantifier which is trivially assumed to be in the Spec-CP. If *pa* was a contrastive topic marker why is it possible to select a QP –an element which is inherently focalised? Overall, examples (25-27) provide counterarguments for a dedicated ContrastiveP projection.

On the basis of the arguments presented so far, we think there is enough evidence to 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 elements. Indeed, we claim that topicality and the contrastive interpretation associated with *pa*-phrases are two independent features of a contrastive topic, and thus agreeing with Vermeulen (2008). In what follows we present evidence for corroborating such a claim.

Let us start by examining the topicalisation strategy in two different languages namely, Japanese and Pontic Greek, which, however, both employ particles. Consider Table 2:

Table 16: Comparison of Japanese *wa*-phrases and Pontic *pa*-phrases

Properties	Japanese *wa*-phrases	Pontic *pa*-phrases
Multiple topics	Yes (but only one contrastive)	Yes
Particle as the only way of marking topics	Yes	No
Dedicated ContrastiveTopicP?	No	Possibly
Restrictions as to which category the particle attaches?	No (but not with predicates)	No (but not with predicates)
Focus markers also available	No	Yes

In Japanese the existence of a specialised particle such as *wa* has been taken as strong evidence for the existence of a Topic projection, *wa* being a morphological realisation of the Topic head. However, recent works (cf. Benincà and Poletto 2004, Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl 2007) also 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) reject Rizzi's (1997) recursive definition of the Topic Phrase and propose the following topic hierarchy instead:

(28) Topic hierarchy
  Shifting topic [+aboutness] **>** Contrastive topic **>** Familiar topic

In this hierarchy, three distinct projections are indentified and, according to Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl (2007), each projection is associated with specific structural properties as well as different tonal events. Crucially, in Japanese, sentences containing multiple *wa*-phrases (29) are possible and sound most natural if there is no more than one non-contrastive *wa*-phrase, but there can be multiple contrastive *wa*-phrases (Kuno 1973, see also Kuroda 1988, Tomioka 2007 in Vermeulen 2008:20).

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

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 called foci, despite their thematic nature, thus, contributing to the blurring between the notions of focus and topic. In Finnish, for instance, contrastive focus and contrastive topic occupy the same structural designated position (cf. Vilkuna 1995). Could this be also the case in Pontic? To put differently, is it possible that *pa* –to which we have referred as "contrastive topic marker"– is not a topic marker but rather a contrastive marker which can also function as a topic? Let us start by employing Rizzi's (1997) diagnostics between topics and foci in order to establish whether *pa*-phrases are topic-like or focus-like. First, consider the compatibility of *pa*-phrases with a resumptive clitic (30):

(30) Resumptive clitic   (Pontic)
     Ato-pa pos epikesato?
     this Top-PART how do-2SG-PAST-it
    'How did you do this (and not something else)?'
          (Andreadis 1990:54)

Second, consider *pa*-phrases which give rise to Weak Cross-Over without resulting to ungrammaticality:

(31) WCO   (Pontic)
     Ton Jorikan-pa i manat pola aγap'aton
     The George-ACC Top-PART the mother-NOM much love-3SG-him
     'His mother loves George a lot'

Third, consider bare quantificational elements which can take *pa*-marking (32):

(32) Bare quantificational elements   (Pontic)

Ke ul-pa ekateteɣoresan'aton
and all-NOM Top-PART blame-3PL-PAST-him
'And they all blamed him'
(Melanofrydis 2001:41)

Fourth, multiple *pa*-phrases are possible, as we have already seen in (26) –repeated here as (33) for convenience:

(33) Multiple *pa*-phrases
(Pontic)
kj atot eraepsanaton; ekin-pa ekints-pa efaɣane
and then seek-3PL-Past+Obj-3SG-Masc this-Deict-NOM Top-PART this-Deict-ACC Top-PART eat-3PL-Past
'And then they kept searching for those who killed the others.'
(Drettas 1997:440 ex.102)

Finally, consider the compatibility of *pa*-phrases with *wh*, as in (34):

(34) Compatibility with *wh* (Pontic)
T'atines-pa ta tærta pjos apori na sirata
Her own chagrins who can tolerate
(Andreadis 1990:17)

To summarise our findings so far, consider Table 3:

Table 17: Comparing Pontic *pa*-phrases to topics and foci

Properties	Focus	*pa*-phrase	Topic
Resumptive clitic	No	Yes	Yes
Weak Cross-Over	No	Yes	Yes
Bare quantificational elements	Yes	Yes	No
Uniqueness	Yes	No (but only marginally so)	No
Compatibility with Wh	No	Yes	Yes

Table 3 clearly shows that *pa*-phrases show a mixed behavior: sometimes behaving like foci and others like topics. In order to resolve this odd behavior we must briefly consider the articulation of focus, and, in particular, contrastive focus for which discourse particles are also used (Kaltsa & Sitaridou, to appear). Consider (35):

(35) ar aets pontiaka peaton-ki na esker (Pontic)
so that-way pontic-ACC say+Obj-3SG-ACC Foc-PART Mod-PART know-3SG-Pres
'Hence, tell him in Pontic so that he knows.'
(Drettas 1997: 523 ex.5)

In (35) the *ki* particle appears attached after the fused verb/object and focalises the entire TP. Kaltsa & Sitaridou (to appear) claim that *ki* does not attach enclitically to any

other element except for predicates, namely Heads. For this reason, the following example would be ungrammatical:

(36) *Tin Anasta-ki iða (not Partheni)   (Pontic)
     The-ACC Anasta-ACC Foc-PART see-Past-1SG
     'I saw ANASTASIA (not Parthena)'

Crucially, we have seen in section 4 that *pa* attaches to XPs but not to X⁰s. We would therefore, like to suggest that *pa* and *–ki/kela* are in complementary distribution and that they are therefore, realised in a single projection which we will call ContrastiveP. To put it differently, what we have called so far contrastive focus particles and contrastive topic particles we would like to propose that they are merely contrastive. In our analysis topicality and contrastivity are two independent features.

Let us now consider the proposed articulation of information structure in Pontic, as it emerges from the discussion so far. The empirical generalisation is that Pontic has *regressione del nuovo* "regression of the new" contrary to Greek and most of the Romance languages which have *progressione del nuovo* "progression of the new" (Benincà and Salvi 1988: 118-119). Consider the orderings in (37) which give an insight to the overall articulation of the information structure in Pontic:

(37) a. CLLD Object – Subject-*pa* – V   (Pontic)
         Ton Memet ego-pa agapoaton
         the-ACC Memet-ACC Pronoun-1SG+Particle love-1SG-Pres+Pronoun-ACC
         It is Memet that I love
                 (Melanofridis 2001:13)
      b. Subject – Object-*pa* – IFoc – V
          i Nazlu-xanum ekinon-pa efkero ki θ' afin'
          the-NOM Nazlu-xanum-NOM that-Deict-ACC Top-PART empty-ACC Neg-PART Fut-PART leave-3SG
          'Nazlu-xanum wouldn't leave that empty.'
                  (Melanofrydis 2001: 43)
      c. Object-*pa* – IFoc – V
         k ekina-pa o popas eton
         and those-PART the-NOM priest-NOM be-3SG-Past
                 (Drettas 1997:442)
      d. Subject-*pa* – Topic – IFoc – V
         Ego-pa osimeron pola stenaxorementza ime
         I-PART today many sad be-1SG-Pres
        'Today I am so sad.'
                 (Andreadis 1990:27)

The above examples suggest the following hierarchy:

(38) (Aboutness)TopicP … ContrastiveP …. (Topic) … IFoc … TP

The structure we assume to be at work is shown in (39):

(39)
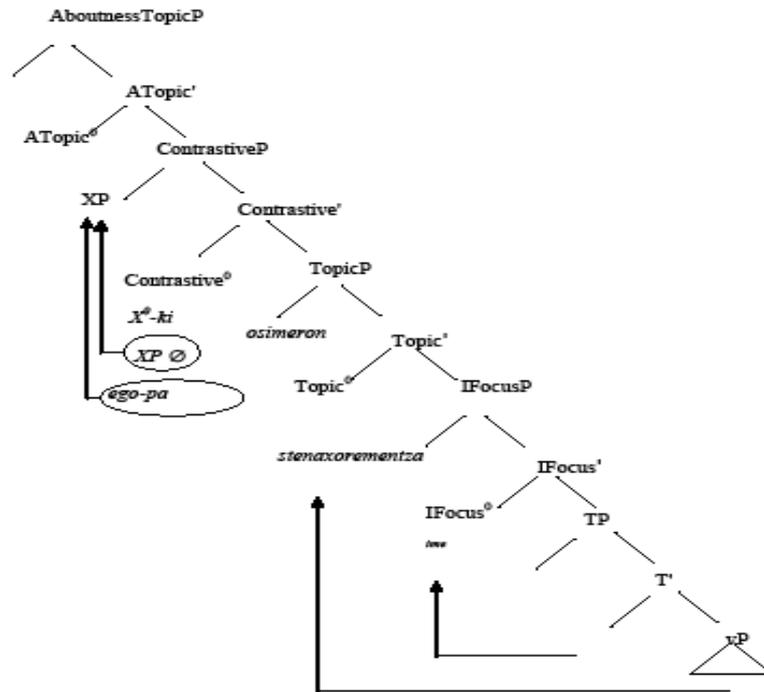
(39) suggests that in the Head of ContrastiveP there can be merging of any one of three different lexical heads: *-pa*, zero, *-ki*. *Pa* and ∅ select XPs, and therefore, they move to the specifier of ContrastiveP. *Ki*, on the other hand, by virtue of selecting X^0 does not move further. *Pa*-phrases by virtue of being in the Spec-ContrastiveP may be interpreted as topics. Additionally, there can be Topic projections above ContrastiveP and between the latter and IFoc.

To conclude, consider the parametric variation between Pontic and SMG, as shown in Table 4:

Table 18: Information structure and (micro)parametric variation in Greek

Pontic	SMG
Specific structural positions for topics, contrastive elements and information focus in the left periphery	Specific structural positions for topics and contrastive focus in the left periphery whereas information focus is in the right one
Morphological encoding of discourse	No morphological encoding of discourse

6. Conclusion

In this paper we have argued that the information structure of Pontic Greek is organised in a radically different way from the one in SMG by virtue of making extensive use of particles. More concretely, we argued in favour of a contrastive projection in the CP domain which can host both topics and foci. *Pa* is argued to select XPs which can then be interpreted as topics hence why all *pa*-constituents would receive the reading of "contrastive topics".

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