Standard Modern Greek

Modern Greek Complementisers:

- **ποι**
- **πως/ότι**
- **να**

(και, Ο)

(και, Ο)

να irrealis; ποι, πως/ότι realis.

Relative distribution of ποι vs. πως/ότι in Contemporary Standard Modern Greek (CSMG):

e.g. Χαίρομαι ποι ύρθε/Χαίρομαι πως ύρθε 'glad'
   Θυμάμαι ποι ύρθε/Θυμάμαι πως ύρθε 'remember'
   (Το) Ξέρω ποι ήρθε/Ξέρω πως ήρθε 'know'
   ???Λέω ποι ήρθε/Λέω πως ήρθε 'say'
   *Νομίζω ποι ήρθε/Νομίζω πως ήρθε 'think'

In CSMG, ποι obligatory for true factives (Kiparsky & Kiparsky 1971), πως/ότι for non-factive. Choice for semi-factives (ποι marked, πως/ότι unmarked).

Factors determining choice (very hard to extricate!):
- truth valuation/assertivity—πως/ότι makes a distinct complement (fact) assertion and matrix assertion; ποι 'presupposes' truth of its (event) complement. (Christidis 1981; Svalberg 1992; Ginzburg & Kolliakou 1997 [1995])
- givenness/theme—πως/ότι-complement is foregrounded in discourse; ποι-complement is backgrounded/discourse theme (Kakouriotis 1982; Delveroudi, Tsamadou & Vassilaki 1994 [1993]; Varlokosta)

In general, distribution of ποι in Standard Modern Greek characterised by competition with να; ποι-clauses are realis/given, να-clauses are irrealis.

Christidis (1986) and Papadopoulou (1994) posit metaphoricist grammaticalisation account:

όπου (stationary in space) → ποι (given in discourse)
Semantic Factor Analysis

Need to posit vector space classifying complement-taking predicates, to allow distribution of ποὺ to be classified objectively. Scheme after Ransom (1986).

**Semantic Class:**
- Emotive: e.g. χαίρομαι ‘glad’
- Physical/Cognitive: e.g. ξέρω ‘know’
- Linguistic: e.g. λέω ‘say’

**Evaluation:**
- Predetermined: e.g. ξέρω ‘know’

**Modality:**
- Determined: Strongly Asserted: e.g. βέβαιος ‘certain’
- Undetermined: e.g. ελπίζω ‘hope’
- Indeterminate: e.g. απορώ ‘wonder’

**Information:**
- Truth: e.g. ξέρω ‘know’
- Future Truth: e.g. προβλέπω ‘predict’
- Occurrence: e.g. βλέπω ‘see’
- Action: e.g. αρχίζω ‘begin’

**CSMG Distribution:**

ποὺ near-obligatory for emotive predetermined truth (true factives)—though less so for subject complements (appraisals) than object complements (reactions);
- marked for cognitive/physical predetermined truth (semi-factives);
- marginal for linguistic predetermined truth;
• disallowed for any other evaluation or information modality.

Counts from To Τρίτο Στεφάνι (1963) by Κώστας Ταχτσής:

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Dialect Survey

Spread in Evaluation Modality
Weak assertive που (e.g. νομίζω που...) present in:
• Thracian, Western Macedonian, Corfiot, Livisiot, Italiot (1 instance)

Semi-Factive που used in broader contexts (e.g. with false complements) in:
• Tsakonian, Thracian, Western Macedonian, Corfiot, Livisiot, Italiot

Spread in Semantic Class
Linguistic που (e.g. λέω που) present in:
• Thracian, Western Macedonian, Corfiot, Livisiot, Italiot (1 instance), (Tsakonian?)

Not restricted to given, topicalised contexts; appears with false complements
Proportion of Linguistic που varies greatly even within Thracian:
• 100% in Kouvouklia (Bithynia), Saranda Ekklisies (corpus of 4!)
• 93% in Psichari (1886)
• 35% in Cavafy
• 43% in Lemnos
• 12% in Marmara

Inhomogeneity suggests lexical diffusion as underlying distribution; lexical diffusion then smoothed over in most dialects through analogical levelling.

Spread in Information Modality
Action πος (e.g. καταφέρω πος) present in:
• Italiot (14 instances), (Corfiot?)
  (Calque of Italian participle? sta mangiando > steo pu troo)

Seems: EVALUATION MODALITY > SEMANTIC CLASS > INFORMATION MODALITY

Corroboration: the divide between πος and να primarily expresses Information Modality (fact vs. event), and is remarkably consistent in Modern Greek

Conversely:
πος wholly absent in:
• Silliot, Mariopolitan
  (e.g. Κουνγκουμής σεβινδά πολ’ύ, δείχναζόνησι πολ’ύ πορά ‘The goldsmith is very much pleased that he has gained much money’; Limbizmen ot’ perasan n’ dunja liyus piðiýa ‘Regretting that they had traversed life without children’)
• Cappadocian (but for Constantinopolitanisms in Delmeso schoolkids)

The relativiser πος itself is marginal in Silli and Cappadocia
The relativiser το/τος is prominent as a complementiser, but better explained as a Turkism

πος vestigial in Pontic (possibly contingent reanalysis from ντο as relativiser/complementiser). 17% use in emotives—against 38% for πος!

Independent:
  Tsakonia from others
  Italiot from others
  Livisiot from others
  Corfu from others
  Thracian (including Bithynian) and Western Macedonian
  NOT contiguous

Dependent:
  Mariopolitan & Silliot may represent Old Western Anatolian
  Pontic & Cappadocian represent Old (Eastern) Anatolian
External Influence:

- Can explain Western Macedonian (< Macedonian Slavonic деца)
- Probably doesn’t explain Thracian (no comparable complementiser in Bulgarian)
- Explains Anatolian usage of ντο as nominaliser (circumstantial evidence that it calques Turkish personal participle)
- Explains Italiot usage of ca, but not pu
- Not a useful explanation elsewhere

(Absence of Anatolian που indicative of relative antiquity; ditto for absence of complementiser-πς in Cappadocian/Mariupolitan)

Extensions

- Frequent expansion of που at least into non-factivity (mirroring development of Hebrew asher: Givón 1991)

Reflective of general fractiousness of που in Eastern Greek dialects—much less consistently factive than Western Greek (including CSMG)

- Behaviour of που across dialects (particularly Pontic) shows semantics inhere not in etymology, but paradigmatic opposition

Possibly indicates stronger analogical levelling in Western Greek under pressure of language contact (cf. Contossopoulos on verbal morphonology)

References


