Well yes, but…

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1 Introduction

The excellent article by Kalokairinos & Karantzola (1992), which was based on the analysis of the usage of *mais* in French (Ducrot 1980), proved convincingly that the Greek adversative conjunctions *μα* (*ma*), *όμως* (*omos*) and *αλλά* (*alla*)[1] share some common semantic features, without fully coinciding in meaning. So the authors concluded that these three conjunctions are freely interchangeable in all linguistic environments. They express the concept of contrast, as it is defined in the context of the argumentative structure of discourse, according to Anscombre & Ducrot (1983, 1986).

In brief, these are the conclusions of the study by Kalokairinos & Karantzola (the examples that follow are their own). The conjunction *αλλά* can only ostensibly introduce dialogue, since in essence it is monologic, as evidenced in example (1):

(1) *Ποιόν να διαλέξω; Ο Γιώργος είναι ωραίος αλλά ο Γιάννης είναι πλούσιος.*
'Who should I pick? George is handsome, but John is rich.'

There are two distinct usages of *αλλά*. The first, *αλλά-SN* (according to Anscombre & Ducrot, cf. *mais*-SN), has a negative/corrective function, as in examples (2) and (3) respectively:

(2) *Δεν την αγαπά αλλά την μισεί.*
'He does not love her, he actually hates her.'

(3) *Δεν την αγαπά αλλά την λατρεύει.*
'He does not love her, he actually adores her.'

According to the second usage, *αλλά-PA* (cf. *mais-PA*) has a concessive nature and is principally argumentative:

(4) *Δεν την αγαπά αλλά τη συμπαθεί.*
'He does not love her, but he likes her.'

At the same time, the contrast is not necessarily located in the clauses of the juxtaposition, but also in unexpressed referents. So the contrast relates to the conclusions to which the arguments expressed by the parts of the juxtaposition may lead to:

[1] These conjunctions can be translated into English as 'but', 'however' or 'though'.

(5) *Ο Γιώργος έχει ωραίο παρουσιαστικό αλλά είναι φτωχός.*
'George has a nice appearance, but he is poor.'

The conjunction *όμως* is a sentence adverb and can take various places in the second part of the juxtaposition, as is the case in example (6):

(6) *Δεν είναι οικονομολόγος, όμως είναι επιχειρηματίας / είναι όμως επιχειρηματίας / είναι επιχειρηματίας όμως.*
'He is not an economist, but he is a businessman.'

Kalokairinos & Karantzola (1992) also highlighted the semantic differences between *αλλά-PA* (with a concessive nature in an argumentative environment) and *όμως*. The latter places a barrier to the prospect that has opened with the initial description of the situation (refer to the next example, whereby the second part of the argumentative juxtaposition is a relative defining clause):

(7) *Πρόκειται για ένα αδύνατο κοριτσάκι που είναι όμως βίαιο.*
'It is a weak girl, who is violent, though.'

With the conjunction *όμως*, the juxtaposition contains terms that establish related sets (the second term appears as a subset of the first), as per example (8):

(8) *Ο Ρόναλντ είναι Ρεπουμπλικάνος, τίμιος όμως.*
'Ronald is a Republican, but an honest one.'

The comparison of *αλλά* and *όμως* is followed by that of *αλλά* and *μα***.** Those latter two words are in a free transference relationship within a monologic environment. The peculiarity of *μα* is that it exceeds the limits of the monologue, in which its usages coincide with those of *αλλά*. The interlocutor may use *μα* to deny the semantic precondition of the speaker's discourse, as in example (9):

(9) *– Σταμάτησε να καπνίζει. – Μα δεν κάπνιζε ποτέ.*
'– He quit smoking. – But he never smoked.'

The word *μα* undermines the conditions for success of the interlocutor's linguistic act, as in (10):

(10) *– Σε διατάζω να φύγεις. – Μα δεν έχεις κανένα δικαίωμα.*
'– I order you to leave. – But you have no right.'

However, it is worth noting that in example (10) by Kalokairinos & Karantzola (1992), whereby the first linguistic act is an order, the use of *μα* is not necessary in order to undermine the conditions of this act.

2 Further concepts relating to contrast

This article aims at studying the concepts directly connected to contrast and more specifically, at analysing the relationship between contrast, and the additive, negative conditional, and limitative concepts. These three concepts are inexorably interwoven, as proven in Kortmann's study (1997). In this study, the data of which come from a series of languages belonging to different families (Fig. 1), Kortmann examines the formal complexity, syntactic polyfunctionality (adverbial subordinator or elements belonging to any other grammatical category), and semantic polyfunctionality of adverbial concepts, but only after presenting the relationship between them (Fig. 2).

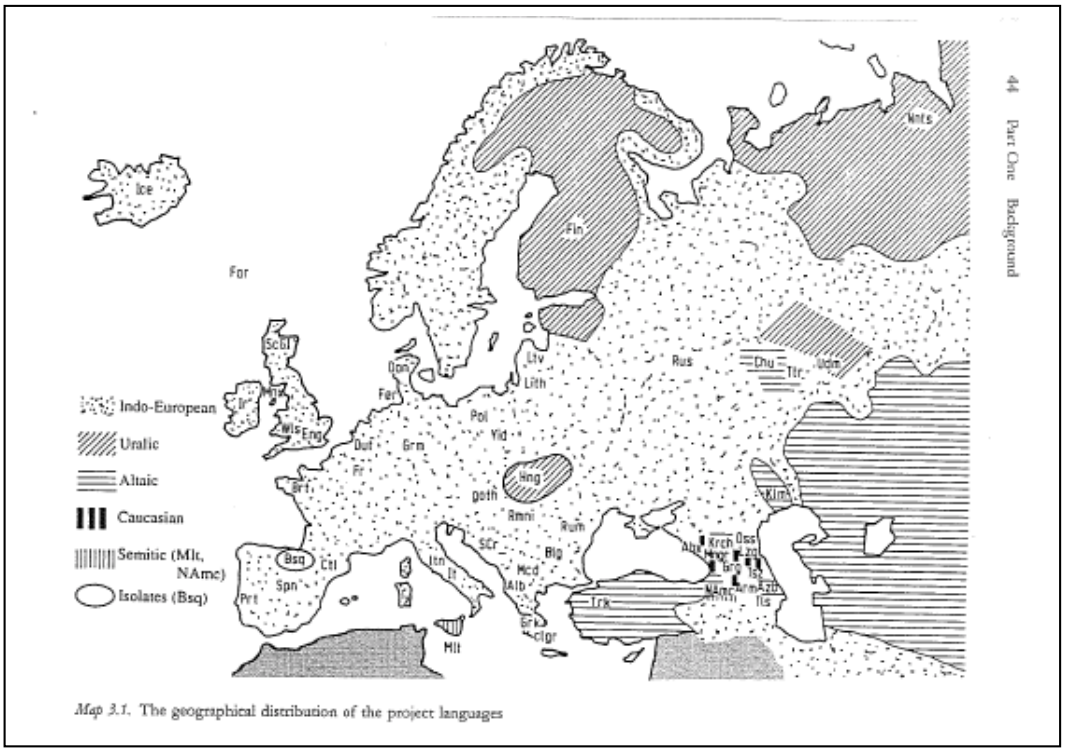

Figure 1. Kortmann (1997: 44)

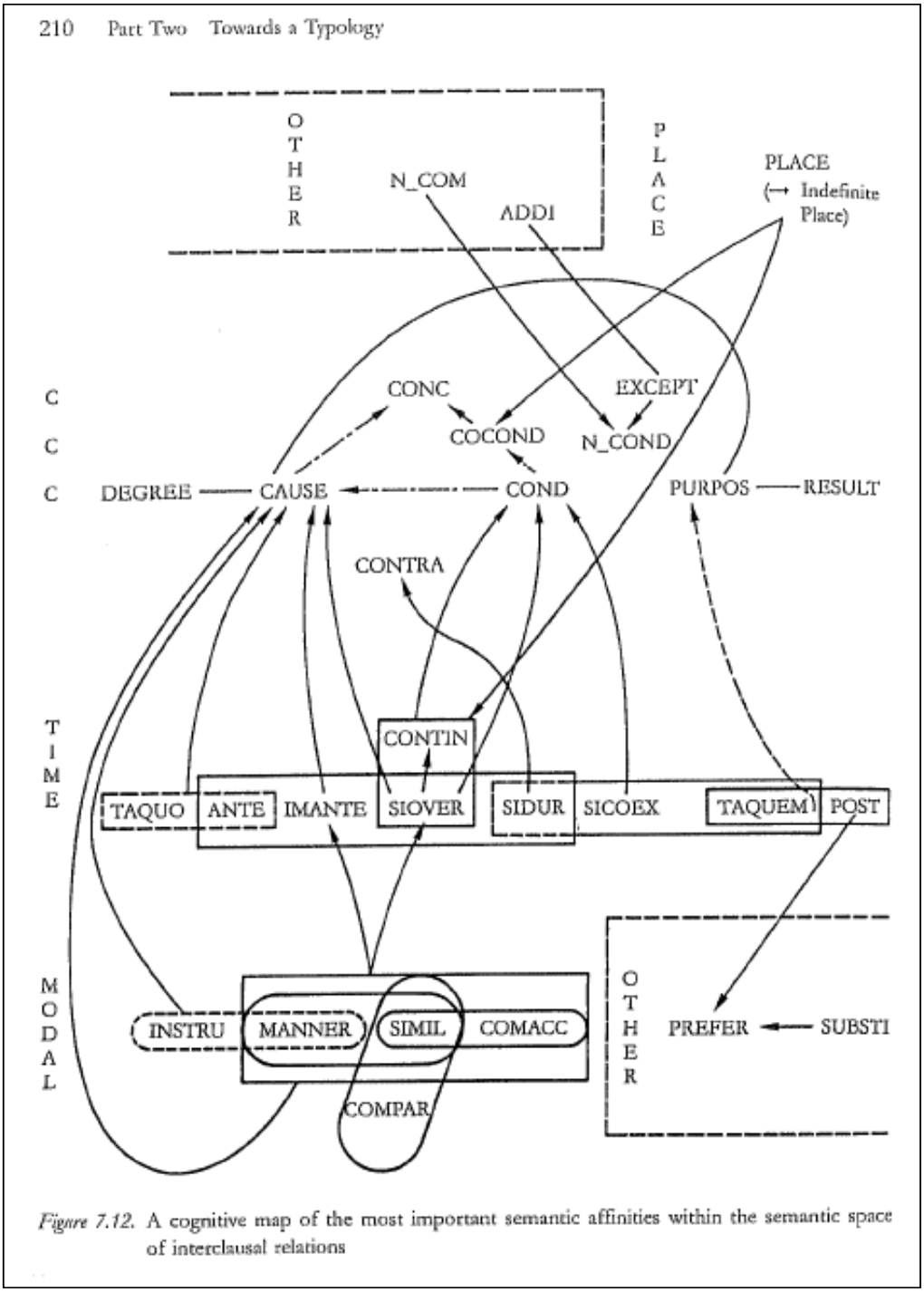

Figure 7.12. A cognitive map of the most important semantic affinities within the semantic space of interclausal relations

Figure 2. Kortmann (1997: 210)

The conclusions of our study complement the table above by adding a vector that would join the contrast (CONTRA) to the additive (ADDI), negative conditional (N_COND), and exceptive (EXCEPT) concepts. The next part examines the conditions necessary for the conjunctions *αλλά*, *όμως* and *μα* to express the three aforementioned concepts.

3 Additive usage of alla, omos and ma

By examining example (11), one could conclude that the additive usage of *αλλά* is due solely to the presence of *και* (*ke* 'and'), which has the pivotal concept of conjunction (Kanakis 1999: 155, among others).

(11) *Δεν διαθέτουν μόνο υψηλή νοημοσύνη αλλά και ανεπτυγμένα συναισθήματα.*
'They do not just have advanced intelligence, but also developed feelings.'

However, the role of negation should not be neglected. Therefore, the example will be analysed starting with deleting the adversative conjunction and the negation. So example (11) becomes:

(12) *Τα δελφίνια διαθέτουν υψηλή νοημοσύνη και ανεπτυγμένα συναισθήματα.*
'Dolphins have advanced intelligence and developed feelings.'

The conjunction *και* joins two concepts, thus forming related sets (intelligence and feelings belong to the inner world). The negation is then added in the first part of the sentence.

(13) *Τα δελφίνια δεν διαθέτουν υψηλή νοημοσύνη αλλά ανεπτυγμένα συναισθήματα.*
'Dolphins do not have advanced intelligence, but developed feelings.'

The conjunction *αλλά* seems to have a corrective usage in this case. However, the combination of *μόνο* (*mono* 'just') on the one hand, with *αλλά* as well as *και* on the other (cf. (11)) create a new state of affairs. Essentially, the negation that appears in the first part does not refute the clause, but it presents it as part of a set. The content of the second part adds a new piece of information that complements the first concept.

Example (14) can be analysed in the same manner. In this case, the negation is introduced with the word *όχι* (*ohi* 'no/not'). The children and the adults are presented as one category (watermelon lovers), in different degrees. Thus related sets are established in this case as well.

(14) *Με πλούσια γεύση και δυνατό άρωμα, το καρπούζι είναι το αγαπημένο φρούτο <u>όχι μόνο</u> των παιδιών <u>αλλά</u> και ολόκληρης της παρέας.*
'Having delicious flavour and rich aroma, watermelon is a favourite fruit, <u>not only</u> for children, <u>but</u> also for everyone.'

Example (15) presents some differences in terms of its analysis. In this case, the usage of *και* (translated as 'also') is emphatic and that of *αλλά* additive.

(15) *Αναγνωρίζουν τους φίλους <u>αλλά και</u> τους εχθρούς.*
'They recognise the friends, <u>but also</u> the enemies.'

It is not a matter of negative usage in this case, despite the fact that *αλλά* joins two opposite concepts. The reason why the negative usage is excluded in advance is the usage of *και* and the absence of a negative particle.

The two nouns may often belong to the same semantic field and the second part of the sentence may cause surprise, as evidenced by the use of the ellipses in example (16).

(16) *Λουλούδια και βότανα στο πιάτο... <u>αλλά και</u> στο ποτήρι σας.*
'Flowers and herbs in your plate... <u>but also</u> in your glass.'

All of the above indicate that the additive usage of adversative conjunctions is not due exclusively to the presence of *και*. Now, by examining the usage of *όμως*, it may be concluded that in an example like (17), the conjunction *όμως* does not place a barrier to the prospect that has opened with the initial description of the sentence, neither does it present terms that form related sets. It has an additive usage, whereby the second part of the sentence complements the list of watermelon's beneficial ingredients.

(17) *Περίπου το 90% του βάρους του [του καρπουζιού] είναι νερό, τα δε σάκχαρά του δεν ξεπερνούν το 5%. Εκτός από αυτά, <u>όμως</u>, το καρπούζι είναι πλούσιο σε βιταμίνες Α, Β6, C, φυτικές ίνες, β-καροτίνη, λυκοπένιο καθώς και κάλιο.*
'Approximately 90% of the watermelon's weight is water, while its sugar level does not exceed 5%. Apart from those, <u>though</u>, watermelon is rich in vitamins A, B6, C, fibres, b-Carotene, lycopene, as well as potassium.'

As it is known in Kalokairinos & Karantzola (1992), the conjunction *μα* appears in a dialogical environment. In the following example, the second interlocutor agrees with the view of the first one, and also adds a new piece of information.

(18) *– Ο Γιάννης είναι πολύ πονηρός. – Ναι, <u>μα και</u> η Μαρία δεν πάει πίσω.*
'– John is very cunning. – Yes, <u>but</u> Maria <u>also</u> does not fall far behind.

4 Conditional usage of alla in conjunction with a negative particle (N_COND)

The negative conditional and the exceptive usages are not possible with the use of *μα*, since the latter does not work well on a discourse level (discourse particle). These usages are possible, however, with the use of *αλλά*.

There are often examples such as (19).

(19) *Θα στο πω αλλά δεν θα το πεις σε κανένα.*
'I will tell you, but you will not say it to anyone else.'

In structures similar to (19), the accomplishment of the second clause depends directly on the first. The simple future tense is essential in both parts of the sentence and its usage is binding. The second clause contains a negative particle and introduces a restriction. As evidenced in example (20)—which is a paraphrase of (19) and it includes the *μόνο αν υποσχεθείς ότι* 'only if you promise that' clause —the concept of this restriction is highlighted and there is a direct reference to a linguistic act (that of the promise).

(20) *Θα στο μόνο αν (υποσχεθείς ότι) δεν (θα) το πεις σε κανένα.*
'I will tell you only if (you promise that) you (will) not say it to anyone else.'

In the case of (21), the relationship between restriction and exception is evident.

(21) *Δεν θα στο πω εκτός αν μου υποσχεθείς ότι δεν θα το πεις σε κανένα.*
'I will not tell you, unless you promise me that will not say it to anyone else.'

The conjunction *αλλά* can introduce a concept of restriction and negative condition, since these two concepts are related, as evidenced by Kortmann (1997: 210).

The conjunction *όμως*, however, also has a restrictive usage, which is directly connected to its adverbial usage.

(22) *Κάτι ήθελα να σου πω. Τι, όμως (= άραγε);*
'I wanted to tell you something. What, though?'

(23) *Δεν ξέρω αν το γράψιμο τραγουδιών είναι θεραπευτικό, ξέρω όμως (= πάντως) ότι αυτόν τον τρόπο έχω για να εκφραστώ.*
'I do not know if songwriting is therapeutic, I know, though (however), that this is the only way I have to express myself.'

In example (22), the content of the second clause is relative, requiring clarifications regarding a term of the first clause. In example (23), the content of the second clause has a smaller range than that of the first and it is argumentative, since the speaker is the sole guarantor of the sentence. It should be noted that the adverbial usage of *όμως* is the reason why its combination with *αλλά* (cf. (24)) is acceptable, but mainly in oral speech. The conjunction *όμως* in this case may be paraphrased with *παρόλα ταύτα* (*parola tafta* 'despite that').

(24) *Μου το απαγόρευσε αλλ' όμως εγώ πήγα.*
'He forbade me, but anyhow I went'

5 Conclusions

When meeting the aforementioned conditions, the adversative conjunctions *αλλά*, *όμως* and *μα* can function as additives. The conjunction *αλλά* may have a conditional usage (cf. negation) and the conjunction *όμως* a restrictive usage. The adversative conjunctions develop functions that allow the passage from the CONTRA (contrast) level to those of N_COND, EXCEPT and ADDI. The concept of CONTRA includes conjunctions "typically expressed by coordinating conjunctions equivalent to the English *but*" (Kortmann 1997: 86). The conclusions of the study into adversative conjunctions (CONTRA) allow the addition of a vector that would join the contradiction with the concepts of negative conditional, exception/restriction and intention in Kortmann's semantic map (1997: 210).

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