

## Flavours of *mbu* in Cypriot Greek

Natalia Pavlou  
University of Cyprus  
nataliapavlou@gmail.com

### 1 (E)*mbu* in Cypriot Greek<sup>1</sup>

This paper starts out from the discussion of the different syntactic approaches to the formation of *wh*-questions in Cypriot Greek which involve the use of *embu* and the possible assumptions that have been made for the analysis of *mbu*, an element that may appear having as a host the *wh*-phrase *inda*. It explores the observation that the dialectal *wh*-phrase *inda* (*mbu*) can have four possible allomorphs, which appear to be the result of language change and therefore, present their own morphosyntactic properties which differ from the aforementioned *inda* (*mbu*). The possibility of language change in these *wh*-phrases has been the immediate observation of a questionnaire, examining the syntactic restrictions among the allomorphs in four different age groups. The final section of this paper proceeds to show how these four allomorphs are different from the standard form by taking into account any phonological and morphosyntactic properties and by exploring different syntactic analyses for the standard form and its apparent allomorphs.

Cypriot-Greek speakers have the optionality of using the element *embu* in *wh*-questions introduced with *wh*-arguments (both subjects and objects), *wh*-quasi-arguments and true adjuncts:

(1) a. Pcos (*embu*) emilisen?  
Who *embu* talked.3SG  
'Who talked?'

Grohmann, Panagiotidis and Tsipakou (2006) suggest an analysis assuming sideward movement in a cleft structure. A contrasting point of view comes from Papadopoulou (in progress) who argues that *embu* is a fossilized element and that its structure might have been in the past a more complex one but it has now been simplified in one element through the passing of the time and can only appear in the Complementizer (C) position.

---

<sup>1</sup> I express my gratitude to Kleanthes K. Grohmann, with whom this topic originated as a linguistics research paper, for his continuous encouragement and the support that he always offers to students of all levels as well as his endless discussions and assistance I enjoyed myself, which also helped me identify the properties of the *mbu*-allomorphs and provide further explanations.

This paper deals with *mbu*, a variant of *embu* which appears in different contexts obligatorily and may support different functions. The relevant discussion for this paper involves the obligatory use of *mbu* in *wh*-questions, where *embu* is not allowed. One of the most important differences between the two was observed by Grohmann, Panagiotidis and Tsipakou (2006) in complex *wh*-expressions with *inda* and a noun phrase where there is obligatory use of *mbu*, but when *inda* is used as an argument and it necessarily needs *mbu*. Secondly, the Standard Greek *wh*-phrases *ti* “what” and *jati* “why” are not combined most of the times with *embu* but, as it appears, *mbu* and its host *inda* are used as the only alternative option.

(2) a. Inda (mbu) efaes?	b. Inda (mbu) epies?
What mbu ate.2SG	Why (mbu) went.2SG
‘What did you eat?’	‘Why did you go?’

This can be a matter of combining Standard Modern Greek *wh*-phrases with a purely Cypriot-Greek element resulting in a mixing of the two.<sup>2</sup> This appears not to simply be code-switching, but the use of both elements between Greek and Cypriot Greek which results to unnaturalness of the sentence. A third difference is related to *wh*-questions where *mbu* along with its host *inda* seem to attract other elements, a property also found in *embu*-questions. The following examples show that *mbu* in copular sentences attracts the Cypriot copula *en/eni*:

(3) a. Pcos emboni?	b. Pcos embon tzinos?
Who embu is.3SG	Who embu is.3SG he.NOM
“Who is it?”	“Who is embu he?”
c. Inda mbon / Inda mboni?	d. Inda mbon tzino?
Inda mbu is.3SG/ Inda mbu is.3SG	What mbu is.3SG it.NOM
“What is that?”	“What is it”

Supposing that verbs raise at least to  $T^0$  in Greek and possibly in Cypriot Greek as well, then the copula lands in  $T^0$  as well. Following Papadopoulou (in progress) that *embu*, and logically its variant *mbu*, are Complementizers, it can be assumed that the kind of close distance between the copula in  $T^0$  and (*e*)*mbu* in  $C^0$  has the phonological effects of *mboni/ mbon* (*mbu+ eni/ mbu+ en*).

### 1.1 *Inda mbu* and the allomorphs

Even though *embu* and *mbu* show some similarities in their structure, the fact that they appear in different structures cannot be ignored. This section will be discussing the properties of *inda mbu* ‘what’ and ‘why’ (Pavlou 2010) and present some of the tests and restrictions that explain the special nature of *mbu*.

The close relation of ‘what’ and ‘why’ is not surprising, since *ti* ‘what’ can take the role of *jati* ‘why’. This kind of constructions is very often in CG- and respectively, in other varieties as well. Even though the two are syntactically very different, they appear to share a lot of similarities in the proposed topic. ‘Why’, for example, appears to show similarities with ‘how come’, as Tsai (2008) explains for *why-how come alternations*, which although on a first glance seem of the same nature, they show a lot of syntactic differences and dependencies.

To start with, *inda* is believed to have originated from the interrogative pronoun *tinda*, used in Asizes (Simeonidis 2006; mentioned in Grohmann & Papadopoulou to appear). As far as its today’s use is concerned, it appears that some minorities in certain

---

<sup>2</sup> See also Fotiou (2009) for a relevant discussion on the ungrammaticality of the combination of Standard Modern Greek (SMG) and Cypriot Greek (CG) regarding structural focus and Panagiotidis (2009) for relevant comments on the morphological and syntactic mixing in CG

regions of Cyprus which show more dialectal heaviness than other areas use the *inda* ‘what’, where as most of the population today does not, suggesting possible language change. *Inda* ‘what’ in those minorities shows some interesting structures, which are not shared by the rest of the population:

(4) To master sta linguistics inda na to kamo?  
 The master.NOM in linguistics what to it.ACC do.2SG  
 ‘What would I do a master degree in linguistics?’

In (4) there is *wh*-movement out of a predication relation, already identified as a possibility in SMG (Spyropoulos 1999), meaning that the answer to this question would be (*kame to*) *kadro* ‘(do it) a picture’. Contrary to this, the *inda* in this kind of structure would be an adjunct for most of the Cypriot speakers today. Other than this, *inda* ‘what’ is widely used in “frozen expressions” (for examples, see Pavlou 2010), indicating the possibility of language change and loss of it in today’s language, and its remaining through cultural specificities expressed in fixed expressions.

*Mbu* shows optionality even today, when combined with *inda* serving as an adjunct:

(5) Inda (mbu) me thoris?  
 why *mbu* me.ACC look.2SG  
 ‘Why are you looking at me?’

Two tests, the negation and the DP-test, are given to identify differences between the ‘why’ and ‘what’ or the bare form without the *mbu*:

(6) a. Inda en efaes? b. Inda mbu en thelis  
 Why not.NEG eat.2SG What/Which *mbu* not.NEG want.2SG  
 ‘Why did you no eat?’ ‘What do you not want’  
 c. (?) Inda *mbu* en efaes?  
 Why *mbu* not.NEG eat.2SG  
 ‘Why did you not eat?’

As can be seen in (6c), the mild grammaticality of the negation<sup>3</sup> with the adjunct *wh*-phrase comes in oppose with the perfectly grammatical questions with the *wh*-object in (6b). This already suggests that there can be some differences between the two. If *mbu* is a variant of another complementizer (Papadopoulou in progress) as discussed in the first section of this paper, then the already taken position by the negation in C causes the derivation to crash. However, since this is only one example, there will not be any further discussion for the syntactic structure of negation in Cypriot Greek. As striking as it may seems, the *wh*-object *inda mbu* brings no objections to negation revealing that there are indeed some differences between *wh*-objects and true adjuncts, which will be discussed later on.

Another test that was put in use to expand the already existed knowledge and reveal the nature of *inda mbu* was the DP-test, as will be called here, where the determiner takes the position of the D head and gives the following:

(7) a. To inda mu eklepses ta lefta en ekatalava.  
 The why me.GEN stole.2SG the money.ACC not.NEG understood.1SG  
 ‘The why you stole my money I did not understand’  
 b. (?) To inda *mbu* mu eklepses en mu ipes  
 The what *mbu* me.GEN stole.2SG not.NEG me.GEN said.1SG  
 ‘The what you stole from me you haven’t told me’  
 c. (?) To inda *mbu* mu eklepses ta lefta en ksero  
 The why *mbu* me.GEN stole.2SG the money.ACC not.NEG know.1SG

<sup>3</sup> Many thanks to Anastasia Giannakidou for the relevant comments on this issue and Anna Roussou for pointing negation as a possible test for clarifying the *mbu*-allomorphs.

‘The why you stole my money I did not understand’

*Wh*-phrases have the property of becoming determiner phrases (DP) (Abney 1987) when a determiner is placed in D. While all the rest of the *wh*-phrases in Cypriot Greek (i.e. *pcos* ‘who’, *pote* ‘when’, *pou* ‘where’, *jati* ‘why’, *ti* ‘what’ etc.) and *inda* ‘why’ share this property, the *inda mbus* (both object and adjunct) are accepted by some speakers or even by those accepted they do not sound very grammatical. The observations here may not result simply from the existence of a Complementizer but, from the combination of *inda* and *mbu*, with *inda* being a fused form resulting to a cleft (with *mbu*), since its literal meaning is *ine ti afta* (Pavlou 2010).

(8) a.\* To ine ti (inda) pu efaes den mu ipes  
The is what that ate.2SG not me.GEN told.2SG  
‘You didn’t tell me what you ate’

b. To ti en pu (embu) efaes, den mu ipes  
The what is that ate.2SG, not me.GEN told.2SG  
‘You didn’t tell me what you ate’

Interestingly enough, *innambu*, *nambu*, *tambu* and *ambu* which are claimed here to be the four possible allomorphs of *mbu* do not share the same morphological properties as the *inda mbu*, which will be called here the standard form of use on the island. A closer look at them reveals that the phonological similarities with *inda mbu* are only at a first glance but, this is not the only case as illustrated below:

(9) a. To moro {innambu, \*inna} klei? b. {Nambu, \*Na} fonazis?  
The baby why cries.3SG Why shout.2SG  
‘Why is the baby crying?’ ‘Why are you shouting?’

c. {Tambu, \*Ta} ekatharises to trapezi? d. {Ambu, \*A} skupizis?  
Why clean.2SG the table Why sweep.2SG  
‘Why are you clean the table?’ Why did you sweep?

As observed above, *mbu* is attached to the allomorphs not only when they are used as *wh*-arguments but also as *wh*-adjuncts, resulting to their status as one word. Contrary to *inda mbu*, the *mbu*-allomorphs cannot be separated in two words and therefore *inda* is no longer considered a host and *mbu* its attached element in *wh*-questions, but the two of them inseparable pieces of the actual *wh*-phrase. So, the allomorphs are lexical items used in *wh*-questions, both *wh*-arguments (objects) and true adjuncts.

This would explain the ungrammaticality with *wh*-phrases *ti* “what” and *jati* “why” which cannot be combined with *embu* and the existence of the *mbu*-allomorphs or the standard form in their position. If all of them can function as *wh*-objects or adjuncts, then the immediate question regarding *innambu/ nambu/ tambu/ ambu* would be whether there are any syntactic environments where any of these can behave as arguments or adjuncts and if there can be any other disambiguation point, except the meaning of the context.

Regarding the other properties of *inda mbu* mentioned above, it should be noted that, although *innambu/nambu/tambu/ambu* can function as *wh*-adjuncts and be similar to *inda* or serve as *wh*-arguments meaning ‘what’, they cannot be combined with a complex *wh*-phrase of the type *inda* +noun. This results that the variants cannot serve as referential *wh*-phrases after their fusion with *mbu*:

(10) \* Nambu fai emairepses?  
What food cooked.2SG  
‘What food did you cook?’

However, the *mbu*-allomorphs share similar properties to the standard form, showing that *mbu* is the strongest element between *inda* and *mbu* but still having the unity of the allomorphs as their main property:

(11) a. Nambon/ Innambon/Tambon/Ambon?

What is.3SG

‘What is it?’

Moreover, they seem to follow the same pattern in the negation test and show the same oddness with the *nambu*-adjunct. Regarding the DP-test, the same effects are also present.

The different properties of *mbu* discussed here show some basic similarities and differences between *embu* and *mbu*, but create the question of ambiguity in the allomorphs. The description of the study following below, aims to unfold any restrictions related to the *mbu*-allomorphs, specify their exact environment and lead to a clearer picture of the *mbu* jungle.

## 2. The study

Before giving the description of the actual study, it should be pointed out that Cypriot Greek does not have a written alphabet, but rather if there is any in poems, text messages or any other informal form of communication, it is the individual transcription of its sounds using the Greek alphabet and therefore can vary in many levels. The data given for judgment in written form were crosschecked for their naturalness with several speakers before the distribution of the questionnaire who agreed upon some of the sounds which are specifically used in Cypriot Greek.

The effort made for *mbu*-allomorphs was following a methodology<sup>4</sup> with the use of a pen-and-pencil questionnaire to elicit judgments from 100 native speakers, all of them non-linguistically trained. The questionnaire involved both 41 closed test sentences and 10 fillers in order to counterbalance habituation effects like the easiness in informants' judgments when they get used to a given construction that is being repeated. The participants had to choose between a 5-grade scale ranging from *completely unacceptable*, *below satisfactory*, *satisfactory*, *quite good* and *absolutely satisfactory*. The participants were selected from the region of Limassol to restrict any regional variation, something which appeared to have significant results for the *mbu*-allomorphs.

There were four syntactic environments being tested which involved clause-initial position of the *mbu*-allomorphs, initially assuming that this is in Spec, CP, topicalized elements i.e. noun phrases, adjective phrases and adverb phrases preceding the *mbu*-allomorphs and last, the *mbu*-allomorphs in embedded contexts and in both declarative and interrogative sentences. The targeted responses aimed to show that there is difference in the syntactic distribution between the *mbu*-allomorphs and also with *inda mbu* which could be related to their morphological difference with it.

A pilot study administered to 10 adults from Limassol using the same questionnaire as described above gave enough evidence to claim that *innambu* is used with a topicalized element rather than in the clause-initial position. *Nambu* appeared with preference in the clause-initial position, where as the other two, *tambu*<sup>5</sup> and *ambu*<sup>6</sup>, appeared not to be used in the region of Limassol. For this, the main focus in this paper will be on the frequently used allomorphs *nambu* and *innambu*. Based on the fact that two out of four allomorphs showed some evidence for the targeted responses, the pilot study offered the ground for the full study to take place.

---

<sup>4</sup> Here, I would like to thank Elena Papadopoulou for her willingness to guide me properly through methodological issues and weaknesses of a questionnaire-based study.

<sup>5</sup> As informed by participants *tambu* is used in rural regions.

<sup>6</sup> *Ambu* was very strongly claimed by a big number of participants that it is widely used in the region of Paphos, the southwest part of Cyprus.

One of the most significant findings of this study is the sociolinguistic status of the *mbu*-allomorphs which was shown by the age factor of the participants. As mentioned above, the participants were grouped in ages of 18-30, 30-45, 45-60 and 60+. Based on these ages, the results imply that there are attitudes for change, starting from no use at all of *nambu* and gradually increasing till the age of 18-30, where there is use of *nambu*: There is a slight increase at age 45-60, which falls again at the age group of 30-45 and then rises to give the 80% of the test sentences given as grammatical with *nambu* in all the environments tested. The data provided for *nambu* shows immediately the observation of ongoing language change. Since Labov's success of his methodological innovations in Martha's Vineyard (1963) and in New York City (1966), linguistic research has been following the idea that the actual process of language change can only be detected through the result of this kind of studies. The apparent-time construct which can be characterized as the quickest, easiest and safest way of replacing real-time data has been one of these important Labovian innovations, which can take into account the linguistic variation that appears before language change. In the same way, *innambu* which is argued in this paper to be another variant under language change shows increased frequency of use in the age groups of 45-60 and 18-30. However, there is no stasis at all, as shown for *nambu* and the increase in frequency and use is not only observed in the youngest group but in a strange way in two groups.

Whatever the reasons are, the apparent-time differences noted among generations of the Limassol Cypriot Greek mirror diachronic developments in language and imply some attitudes towards change going on in 'real time'.

### 3. Syntactic representations of *inda mbu* and its allomorphs

Having clarified that the *mbu*-allomorphs are new elements in the Cypriot grammar, there should be a syntactic representation which illustrates the different scenarios of the *mbu* puzzle. Before moving into the structure of the allomorphs, it is necessary to discuss the structure of the standard form of *inda mbu*, for the sentence given in (12). Even though there is not any relevant work on the structure of *inda*, there are possibilities easily observed to any Cypriot which would suggest *inda mbu* being a fused form of a cleft *ti ine (pu)* 'what is (that)' or *ine ti pu* 'is that what'. While this is explored through a different study (Pavlou 2010), *inda* will be used in Spec, CP for the purposes of this paper since the concentration lies on *mbu*.

(12) Inda mbu fonazusin?

What mbu shout.2PL

'What are they shouting?

Based on the morphological properties of *inda mbu*, in *inda mbu* 'what', *mbu* is merged in C<sup>0</sup> and *inda*, as the *wh*-phrase, is merged at Spec, CP. As has been observed in other languages, a *wh*-element can co-occur with an element in C<sup>0</sup> contrary to the "doubly-filled COMP" (Chomsky and Lasnik 1977). Merging *mbu* at C<sup>0</sup>, as will be explained in more details below, follows from the need of a unified structure for both *mbu*-allomorphs and the variable *inda mbu*. As will be argued further on, *mbu* is on C<sup>0</sup> because of the morphological properties of the allomorphs and the property of *inda* combining with an N in a complex *wh*-phrase:

(13) a. Inda fain {embu, \*mbu} emairepses?

What food.ACC embu cooked.2SG

'What food did you cook?'

While the picture is not yet clear about the syntactic position of the elements in question, another possible approach could relate operators in the structure. If indeed *mbu* is a complementizer, then following literature in D-linked *wh*-phrases, it should be

ungrammatical when a *wh*-phrase ‘what’ is fronted with an overt Complementizer. Grewendorf (2008) in his attempt to explain ‘doubly filled COMP’ in Bavarian German lists *wh*-phrases in a linear order according to their operator-status, ranging from ‘why’ as the lowest one to ‘what’, as the highest one. He makes the generalization that the higher the degree of the operator of a *wh*-element, the lower the degree of grammaticality will be when it co-occurs with complementizer ‘that’. If we take this generalization to hold for complementizers other than ‘that’, it follows that the structure given in (12) should crash. But the lexical *wh*-phrase is argued to be here *inda*, which as mentioned in previous section can stand alone meaning ‘why’, and ‘why’ as argued by Grewendorf has a low degree of operator-status in D-linking. Further, as mentioned above, there is no clear indication related to the nature of *inda* for now rather just a simple presentation here as a *wh*-phrase in the specifier of CP.

Based on the morphosyntactic differences described in section 1 and following general distinction of the merging point of *wh*-adjuncts in the literature, *inda* is immediately merged in Spec, CP when it appears as stand-alone and means ‘why’.

(14) Inda (mbu) fonazusin?

Why mbu shout.3PL

‘Why are they shouting?’

The *mbu*-allomorphs, as new items in the language, would be very logically entertained to be different lexical items that now exist in the lexicon. This would imply that the language change discussed above, as possible reason for their appearance is lexical and not grammatical. The status of these new items is that they are used as *wh*-questions and therefore should exist in the Spec, CP. Following Chomsky’s (1995) Copy Theory of Movement, *nambu*, as the internal argument, merges with the verb *fonazusin*. The original *nambu* is deleted and the copy of *nambu* is then merged to Spec, CP.

As mentioned in section 1, *nambu* can also serve as *wh*-adjunct. Assuming that adjuncts are merged directly in Spec, CP, this scenario leads to the standard assumption of having the specifier of CP as the landing or merging point for *wh*-phrases. In the same way, all the allomorphs follow the procedure described above. However, there are some problems with this idea that need to be pointed out. *Innambu*, *nambu*, *tambu* and *ambu* can mean both ‘why’ and ‘what’. By saying that these allomorphs just like *inda mbu* (*wh*-argument) and *inda (mbu)* (*wh*-adjunct) are lexical items that exist independently in the lexicon of the speaker, then we immediately assume that there are two of each kind: an *innambu* meaning ‘what,’ an *innambu* meaning ‘why’, a *nambu* meaning ‘what’ and a *nambu* meaning ‘why’ etc. Indeed, the lexicon can be argued to be non-minimalistic for its containments but it is rather unnecessary to assume that we have the *mbu*-allomorphs, the variable *inda mbu* and possibly even the Greek *wh*-phrases *jati* ‘why’ and *ti* ‘what’ because of the use of Standard Modern Greek on the island. Although nothing can be excluded, it is rather not economic and opposing to the Minimalist thinking to assume such an analysis for elements that show so similar properties. Considering their unifying properties of morphological difference with *inda mbu*, which sets them as one element with *mbu*, it is indeed easier to assume that they are lexical elements which are reinforced by the ongoing language change. But a minimalistic approach to the grammar rules out this analysis.

A second possible analysis for the *mbu*-allomorphs would be another possible landing site that they can be found. It is assumed that a null operator is merged as a complement of the verb and raised to Spec, CP. The operator is co-indexed (Hornstein, Nunes & Grohmann 2005) with the *mbu*-phrase and gives the interpretation of *nambu* ‘what’. A relevant part of the literature deals with  $C^0$  in Cypriot Greek showing that it

has a clause-typing feature that must be checked in the syntax (Agouraki 1997, 2001). Agouraki argues that this feature can be either negation raising to  $C^0$  or a kind of Complementizer or a V-to-C rising. A possible reason for moving to  $C^0$  in these cases, as she argues, is this feature since there has been already an operator, which is a preverbal stressed element and has filled the Specifier of CP. In her paper, she proposes that Cypriot Greek has a filled C requirement, referring specifically to the sentential force that needs to be checked overtly in C. In relevance to question-formation, there can be a specification [Question] in C, which is interpreted by the *wh*-questions in Spec, CP. As mentioned above, Papadopoulou (in progress) claims that the Cypriot expression *embu* in *wh*-questions is actually a complementizer found in  $C^0$ . Given that and following the same reasoning with Agouraki's claims, it can be assumed that there is some kind of operator in Spec, CP and that the *mbu*-allomorphs are elements in  $C^0$ . Arguing that the allomorphs are indeed lexical items, there can be the case that *mbu* is actually an element targeting  $C^0$  as Papadopoulou argues for *embu*. Now, the problem appears to be that the *mbu*-adjuncts are supposed to be merged directly to  $C^0$ , since Spec, CP is already filled by some kind of operator. This not only opposes to the distinction between true adjuncts and *wh*-arguments for merging in Spec, CP but also creates a problem since *wh*-adjuncts can merge into projections and not heads and implies that the problem is similar to the first scenario, leaving no space for explaining the difference between the *mbu*-arguments and *mbu* -adjuncts.

A third proposed scenario would be related to the previous one, namely that *mbu* needs to fill  $C^0$ , but that does not mean necessarily that *innambu*, *nambu*, *tambu* and *ambu* are lexical elements which are copied there. *Mbu* can exist on its own and *inna*, *na*, *ta* and *a* which are called to be possible allomorphs of the variable *inda* exist as one element which is the initial Cypriot *wh*-phrase before its changing; namely, *inda*. *Inda* is merged as the complement of the verb and then copied and remerged to Spec, CP. When the derivation reaches the projection of CP, *mbu* is merged in  $C^0$ . Because *mbu* seems to be a strong element in syntax of Cypriot Greek based on all the properties examined so far (see section 1), it attracts the *wh*-phrase in Spec, CP and lowers it down to  $C^0$ , so that it can be checked as one element that looks like *nambu* etc. Due to this attraction there are phonological processes coming in which turn the initial *inda* to *inna*- (when found with a topicalized element), *na-*, *ta-* and *a-*. These phonological or syntactic processes can be either called adjacency or fossilization (Papadopoulou in progress), hopefully to be rephrased clearer in the future. This would lead to the conclusion that the language change observed is not really an add of new elements in the lexicon but a grammatical change occurring in a syntactic and phonological level, namely the function of *mbu* attracting *inda* and appearing as unifying elements i.e. *nambu* and not *na mbu*. It follows that a change in a morphosyntactic level can be argued to imply two things: To have as later implications, adaptation of Standard Modern Greek grammar, or the exact opposite which is that CG is in a completely different path than Standard Modern Greek. For *wh*-adjuncts, *mbu* is again an element which is merged directly to  $C^0$ , but *inda*, merges directly to Spec, CP following again fundamental distinction on *wh*-arguments and true adjuncts. Then phonological processes and the strength of *mbu*, change *inda* to *inna-*, *na-*, *ta-* and *a-* and send it to LF as a unifying element.

There have been discussed three possible analyses for the structure of *mbu*-allomorphs in the syntax. The first and second scenarios face the same problem: anti-economy! Assuming that new elements in language are lexical items only creates a lexicon with the *mbu*-allomorphs taking much more space than the theory accounts for. The lexicon can be by its nature not economic but, the ambiguities and the difficulty in

processing the *mbu*-allomorphs as ‘why’ or ‘what’ imply that there are syntactic differences between the two. The second solution provided creates another problem, if one is to follow distinction between *wh*-adjuncts and *wh*-arguments. Having the *mbu*-allomorphs in  $C^0$ , there is no merging point for adjuncts, but it assumes that either *mbu*-adjuncts exist as the *mbu*-arguments in the lexicon, which is excluded from the very start, or that they actually merge on  $C^0$ . The third scenario places *mbu* in  $C^0$ , and gives an analysis which is much closer to the real data than the other two. The similarity between *inda mbu* and its allomorphs *innambu*, *nambu*, *tambu* and *ambu* also leave strong implications for phonological processes.

#### 4. Conclusion

This paper discussed four new elements in the grammar of Cypriot Greek, which appear to be allomorphs of the standard form of the dialectal phrase *inda mbu*. A first comparison of *mbu* to *embu*, a Complementizer as argued by Papadopoulou (in progress) and a much more complex element according to Grohmann, Panagiotidis and Tsipakou (2006) showed that the two show significant differences in their syntactic distribution.

The four allomorphs of *inda mbu* appear to follow the same path, but differ in a morphosyntactic level. Their morphological properties are very much restricted compared to *inda mbu*, since they appear to behave as one element. Through findings collected with a questionnaire testing the four allomorphs in four possible syntactic environments produced by 100 speakers, it has been shown that there are some tendencies for a syntactic restriction in one of the allomorphs, the *innambu*, which appears to be preferred with a topicalized element. The morphosyntactic differences that appear for the allomorphs are argued to be the immediate result of ongoing language change observed in the findings collected.

The existence of these four allomorphs in the grammar creates a question of their syntactic properties as *wh*-phrases. Based on the data collected, a syntactic approach which accepts the allomorphs as lexical forms in the lexicon is ruled out, since it does not account for any semantic difference but created a number of *mbus* in the lexicon. The second scenario excludes the possibility of accepting the allomorphs as lexical elements which target  $C^0$ . A last suggestion puts *mbu* in  $C^0$  and presupposes that the initial form of the allomorphs is *inda*, which after merged with the verb and copied to Spec, CP is attracted by *mbu* and lowers down to  $C^0$  changing in *na-*, *inna-*, *ta-* and *a-* due to phonological processes.

These newly-appeared allomorphs in CG contribute to the discussion of *wh*-questions, the relevance of the overt complementizers and the possible function of them as one element (Papadopoulou in progress) or deconstruction of them as clefts (Pavlou 2010), as argued for *embu* (Grohmann, Panagiotidis & Tsipakou 2006). The phenomenon of their unifying properties is yet syntactically and phonologically undetermined, but this paper offers the most significant properties characterizing them. Other work (Pavlou 2010) concentrates on the nature of *inda*, presented here as a *wh*-phrase, and its possible decomposing as a cleft in its combination with *mbu*. In relevance to this and in addition to the already existed corpus of the acquisition of *wh*-phrases and relevant structures in CG (Papadopoulou in progress), it is aimed that the acquisition of the structures listed here will be tested from their acquisition perspective.

## References

Abney, S., 1987. *The English Noun Phrase in Its Sentential Aspect*. Doctoral dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge.

Agouraki, Y., 1997. On the Enclisis/ Proclisis Alternation. , in Drachman, G., Malikouti-Drachman, A., Fykias, J., Klidi, C. (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Greek Linguistics*, Salzburg: University of Salzburg, Vol. II, 393-404.

Agouraki, Y., 2001. The position of clitics in Cypriot Greek, in Ralli, A., Joseph, B., Janse, M. (Eds.), *Proceedings of the First International Conference of Modern Greek Dialects and Linguistic Theory*, Patras: University of Patras, 1-18.

Chomsky, N., 1995. *The Minimalist Program*. Cambridge, MA:MIT Press.

Chomsky, N. and H. Lasnik., 1977. Filters and Control. *Linguistic Inquiry* 8, 425-504.

Fotiou, K., 2009. Focusing strategies in Cypriot Greek. In K.K. Grohmann & P. Panagiotidis (eds.), *Selected Papers from the 2006 Cyprus Syntaxfest*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 63-91.

Grewendorf, G., 2008. *Wh-movement as topic movement*. Msgr. Universität Frankfurt.

Grohmann, K. K., P. Panagiotidis and S. Tsiplakou., 2006. Properties of *Wh*-Question Formation in Cypriot Greek. In M. Janse, B. D. Joseph and A. Ralli (eds.), *Proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Modern Greek Dialects and Linguistic Theory (Mytilene, Greece: 30 September–3 October 2004)*. Patras: University of Patras, 83-98.

Grohmann, K.K. & E. Papadopoulou. to appear. Question(able) issues in Cypriot Greek, *Linguistic Analysis* 35.

Hornstein N., J. Nunes & K.K. Grohmann., 2005. *Understanding Minimalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Labov, W., 1963. The social motivation of a sound change. *Word*, 19: 273-309.

Labov, W., 1966. *The Social Stratification of English in New York City*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Labov, W., 1982. *The social stratification of English in New York City*. Washington: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Panagiotidis, P., 2009. *On the dissociation between syntax and morphology: evidence from 'mixing' in Cypriot Greek*. Paper presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Greek Linguistics, University of Chicago (October 29-31, 2009).

Papadopoulou, E., in progress. *Acquisition of wh-questions: Evidence from Cypriot Greek*. Essex University: Phd dissertation.

Pavlou, N., 2010. Inda mbu, nambu or ti ine pu? Acquiring Complex Structures in Cypriot Greek. In Antonis Botinis (ed.), *Proceedings of ISCA Tutorial and Research Workshop on Experimental Linguistics 2010 — 25-27 August 2010, Athens, Greece*. Athens: ISCA & University of Athens, 141-144.

Pavlou, N. 2010. Mbu! On wh-objects and true adjuncts of Cypriot Greek. In Angela Ralli, Brian D. Joseph, Mark Janse & Athanasios Karasimos (eds.), *e-Proceedings of the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Modern Greek Dialects and Linguistic Theory* (Chios, Greece: 11–14 June 2009), 155-178.

Simeonidis, C., 2006. *P. Ιστορία της Κυπριακής Διαλέκτου* (History of the Cypriot Greek Dialect). Nicosia: Holy Monastery of Kykkos Centre of Research.

Spyropoulos, V., 1999. The structure of small clauses in Modern Greek. In Brian D, Joseph, Geoffrey C. Horrocks & Irene Philippaki-Warburton (eds.) *Themes in Greek Linguistics II.*, 169-196.

Tsai, W.-T. D., 2008. Left Periphery and *How-Why* Alternations. *Journal of East Asian Linguistics*, 17: 83-115.