Consider *rheme* and *kontrast*, both of which are concepts commonly lumped under *focus*:

**Rheme:** The *new information* of the sentence.
The elements in the sentence that are *contextually unbound*.
What is *asserted* rather than presupposed.

**Kontrast:** An "operator-like" element that’s *contrastive, exhaustive, identificational* …or something…

**Point:** These are not two aspects of a unified *focus*—they are two different things.

---

**Re: Rheme:**

**Rheme:** The (context) “update potential” of the utterance.
i.e. how this utterance is to change your view of the world.
(if a theme is provided, it tells you where to make that change)

1. The pipes are \([R \text{ RUSTY}]

   Why does the water from the tap come out brown?
   I have some rust remover. You have anything rusty?

2. \([R \text{ THE PIPES} \text{ are rusty}]

   I wonder whether the pipes are rusty.

The information state (context) contains *familiar entities and conditions*.

- rusty(the pipes) ‘the pipes are rusty’
- \(\lambda x.\text{rusty}(x)\) ‘something is rusty.’
- \(\lambda P.\text{p}(\text{the pipes})\) ‘something (salient?) is true of the pipes.’

**Theme** zeroes in on one of those conditions, **Rheme** provides the missing information.

---

**Koncerning Kontrast:**

If *a* is *kontrastive*, a **MEMBERSHIP SET** \(M = \{\ldots, a, \ldots\}\) “is generated” and “becomes available to semantic computation as some sort of quantificational domain.”
People like to think of \(wh\)-expressions as some subkind of focus. Why? Well…

Hungarian: \(Wh\)-phrases and foci seem to land in the same structural position. More generally: \(Wh\)-answers usually have focus where the \(wh\)-word was.

Well, focus comes in two kinds, kontrast and rhyme. And \(wh\)-phrases can’t be rhemes—after all, in the question, the \(wh\)-word isn’t necessarily the answer. I’m not talking about the answer, I’m talking about the question.

(5) I don’t care about who Bill introduced to Sue…

Who did JOHN introduce to Sue?

At the very least, John is new information here. Maybe even the rest (including who?) is old information.

Claim : Interrogative \(wh\)-words are kontrasts—not rhemes.

Though I’d bet that people who called \(wh\)-words “focus” were thinking of something like kontrast anyway—I think they’re generally people who don’t consider theme–rheme.

(6) Interrogative kontrast:
If \(M = \{a, b, c\}\) and \(P(x \in M)\) then \(?x \, P(x)\).

I have no idea what this means, but the idea is just that \(M\) is the same set that gives you alternatives to the \(wh\)-word in what counts as an answer to the question.

Testing the typology—if kontrast and thematicity are orthogonal then you should be able to find (a) nonkontrastive themes (regular topics) and (b) kontrastive themes ("contrastive topics"). And, of course, you can.

(7) Thematic kontrast:
if \(M = \{a, b, c\}\) and \(P(a)\) then \(P'((y \in M) \neq a)\)

‘If \(P\) is true of a then other properties like \(P'\) hold of the non-a members of \(M\).’

(8) How’d she do at the race?
(Well,) the first 100 meters, she ran in RECORD TIME.

(…but after that, she fell behind)

i.e. \(P = \) being run in record time by her, \(a = \) the first 100 meters, \(M = \{a, \text{ the rest of the race}\}\), \(P' = \) being run in an unsuccessful manner by her.

About only: only has to associate with kontrasts.
(and, they assert, it can do it even in the theme. Maybe Japanese \(dake-wa\) is evidence).

Still not convinced? Ok, let’s go to syntax…

Crosslinguistic evidence for the syntactic reality of \([+ Rh]\) and \([\pm K]\),

Finnish: \([+K]\) elements (contrastive focus, contrastive topic) move to CP. Noncontrastive “main news” (theme) stays low, below IP

Topics (theme) in between.

(9) K-field \([+K]\) T-field \([-K,–Rh]\) V-field \([+Rh]\)

\[\begin{align*}
\text{Finnish} \\
\text{[CP]} & \quad \text{[IP]} & \quad \text{[\(VP\)]}
\end{align*}\]

What things did Anna get for her birthday? Anna sai \([aKUKKIA]\).
What is it that Anna got for her birthday? \([aKUKKIA]\] Anna sai.
What about the flowers? Did Anna have to buy them or did she get them for free? \([aKukkia]\] Anna \([aSAI]\).

\(+K\) \quad \(-K,–Rh\) \quad \(+Rh\)

Hungarian: “focus moves to preverbal position”—but what kind of focus?

• an “identificational” operator, an “exhaustiveness” operator
• so it’s kontrast, right?
• rhemes stay in situ (sounds like “information focus” doesn’t it?)

(10) Where did Peter put the book? (idea: rhyme will be on the answer)

\(\begin{align*}
Péter & \quad \text{letette a könyvet} \quad \text{[\(r\) a POLCRA ]}.
\text{Peter} & \quad \text{down-put the book} \quad \text{the shelf-on}
\text{‘Peter put down the book on the shelf’}
\end{align*}\)

vs.

(11) Where-all did Peter put the book?

\(\begin{align*}
Péter & \quad \text{letette a könyvet} \quad \text{[\(r\) a POLCRA ]}.
\text{Peter} & \quad \text{the shelf-on down-put the book}
\text{‘It’s on the shelf (and nowhere else) that Peter put down the book’}
\end{align*}\)

But topichood (\([-Rh]\)) takes priority over kontrastiveness (\([+K]\)) unlike in Finnish.

(12) Topic \([-Rh]\) Kontrast \([+K]\) Rheme \([+Rh]\)

\[\begin{align*}
\text{Hungarian} & \quad \text{[\(fr\)]} & \quad \text{[\(fr\)]} & \quad \text{[\(fr\)]}
\end{align*}\]

Catalan: \([-Rh]\) causes things to leave the IP

( recalls, links go left, tails go right)

(13) a. El Joan va deixar una nota damunt la Taula.
b. El Joan hi, va deixar una NOTA, damunt la taula,
c. El Joan l’hi, va DEIXAR, una nota, damunt la taula,‘John left a note on the table.’
(13a) is typical—John = theme, table et al. = rhyme

In (13b), on the table is part of the theme, e.g. “—After lunch I laid out all the gifts on the table. —Oh, by the way, did you see? (13b)”.

In (13c), all of the arguments are part of the theme, e.g. “—John did something with a note and the table… —(13c)”.

(13′a) El Joan [va deixar una nota damunt la TAUILA]
(13′b) El Joan [hi va deixar una NOTA [damunt la taula]]
(13′c) El Joan [l’hi va DEIXAR [una nota] [damunt la taula]]

They propose: [–Rh] dislocate out of the clause.
That which remains in the clause is [+Rh].

(and [–Rh] doesn’t suffice in Catalan to tell whether it right- or left-dislocates; that’s a third distinction [xlink] if you like.)

but does [+K] have any effect in Catalan?

Kontrast fronting—is it really? Hint: no.

There is this thing called “focus fronting” (kontrast fronting) wherein the focused element shows up left of the verb. Any other language, we’d say “sure, it moves there. You know, like wh-movement. Or like Hungarian…” Ah, but it’s an illusion—

(and we’re looking for it to be an illusion because we want to believe Vallduvi that rhemes are all IP-internal—but, if there is focus movement of a rhematic element to an FP outside of IP, we can’t)

Is it like wh-movement?
Well, even if it is (which it isn’t), wh-movement itself doesn’t escape IP.
(according to a previous argument “on the basis of ample evidence” (oh, ok…) that puts them in SpecIP, which is specialized for hosting “quantificational elements” including wh-words, negative quantifiers, other quantifiers.
Non-quantificational preverbal arguments are further left, outside of NP.)

(14) \[\text{CP/XP} … \text{non-quantifiers} … \text{IP quantifiers} … \text{I°–V°} \] \[\text{I°–V°} \]

So, if you see a preverbal non-quantifier, it’s outside of IP, and must have gotten there by being non-rhematic.

So, wh-words move to SpecIP, making them strictly preverbal.
Should be the same for negative quantifiers, other quantifiers.
And other contrasts. (maybe quantifiers = things that deal with an alternative set?)

There, we’ve now derived that wh-words and kontrasts should act alike.

Except that they don’t:

• wh-words have to be directly adjacent to the verb
• focus fronted stuff can have things between the focus and the verb.

Why?

• In questions, wh-word is only part of the rhyme (recall: themes are IP-internal)

(15) [s On va ficar el LLIBRE, ] la Maria?
where put the book, the Maria
‘Where did Mary put the book?’

• In the “focus-fronted” cases, the kontrast is the lone rhyme element.

(16) a. [Un ROLEX s’ha comprat el Jordi.
A ROLEX John bought himself.’

b. [IP un ROLEXi [I t j ] [VP t j t i t k ] — s’ha compratj — el Jordik.

(kontrastive rheme)

b. [IP [I t j ] [VP [I un ROLEX t k ] — s’ha compratj — el Jordik.

(nonkontrastive rheme)

(That’s a little weird, postposing the verb alone like that… why couldn’t it just be a remnant? i.e. front un ROLEX to a position outside VP but inside IP, thematize VP when nothing’s left in it but the verb.)

Bottom line:

[+K] in Catalan does have a structural effect, it’s just more subtle than in Finnish. ([+K] moves to SpecIP, [–Rh] moves out of IP).

If you like to think of things this way:

• Displace-[–Rh] >> Front-[+K] in Catalan and Hungarian
• Front-[+K] >> Displace-[–Rh] in Finnish

(17) The flowers I gave only to John.

–Rh

+K
Recall, Vallduví in his solo career distinguishes **focus** (=rheme) from **ground** (=theme), and in **ground**, he distinguishes between **links** and **tails**.

Fn. 3 claims that the link–tail distinction is **not** important to this paper, which must mean that whatever differentiates **links** from **tails** is not what differentiates kontrasts from non-kontrasts.

Fn. 4 tells us that only **links** can be “contrastive topics”—**tails** can’t be (they’re not, in fact, “topics” at all). But can there be a contrastive tail?

What is the correlate of É. Kiss’ (1998) “identificational vs. information focus” in V&V?

• **identificational focus** = kontrast, the kind that moves.
  —V&V assert that kontrast need not be exhaustive.
  —K says identificational focus need not be contrastive (!?).
  (so is her “contrastive” the same as V&V’s “kontrastive”?)
• Is information focus = rheme? I think so.

**NEXT TIME!**

Eva Hajicová will be visiting the seminar to talk about
“**Topic-Focus Articulation**” (TFA)

To prepare, read: Sgall, Hajicová & Panevová (1986),
sections 1.35–1.37 pp. 54–66 (some setup)
sections 2.3–2.4 pp. 148–174 (framework definitions)
sections 3.1–3.3 pp. 175–216 (examples, diagnostics, recursive properties)

extra bonus, if you’re interested: Hajicová, Partee, and Sgall (1998),
section 1.2 pp. 2–7 background on the collaborative effort between
formal semantics (Partee) and Prague School
TFA (Hajicová, Sgall),
“obstacles to joint work”, helps clarify differences
in views between the authors.
chapter 4 pp. 91–101 issues (topic-comment vs. background-focus,
focalizers)
chapter 5 pp. 103–127 main hypotheses of the book (probably only read
this if you’re very seriously interested)
chapter 6 pp. 129–169 future directions, open issues
chapter 7 pp. 171–177

Both books are available in their entirety in the “espresso lounge.”