

# The external category of free relatives: Evidence from Modern Greek\*

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Free Relatives are located at the boundary between nominal and sentential arguments. Even though a general consensus exists on their CP-internal structure, there is no complete agreement about their external category, the question being whether they are maximally CPs (the bare *wh*-CP analysis) or CPs embedded within a DP (the complex DP analysis). This paper provides refined and novel empirical evidence from Modern Greek in support of a complex DP analysis. The evidence adduced builds on a number of phenomena which distinguish Free Relatives from interrogative complements (matching effects, nominalization, Clitic Left Dislocation, islandhood, syntactic distribution), as well as on their similarities with uncontroversial complex DPs, such as restrictive *pu*-relatives and Light Headed Relatives.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Free Relative Clauses (FRs), also known as Headless Relatives, are most commonly defined with respect to other subordinate *wh*-dependencies. Thus, in terms of internal structure and syntactic function, they are associated with interrogative complements, while in terms of interpretation they are related to Headed Relatives. To illustrate, the FR in (1a) is naturally paraphrased by means of a Headed Relative, as in (1b). Syntactically though, it patterns with an interrogative complement, as in (1c), in that it functions as an argument of the matrix verb, rather than as a Head<sup>1</sup> modifier.

- (1) a. I like [what(ever) he bought].  
b. I like [the thing(s) [which he bought]].  
c. I like [what he bought].

Numerous issues related to, and derived from, the hybrid character of FRs are still controversial. These questions include:

- (2) The external category of FRs; whether the FR is a bare CP or a CP embedded in a DP.  
(3) The structural relation between the FR and any DP in which it is embedded; whether the FR is a complement to a D head, or right adjoined to a DP/NP phrasal category.  
(4) The position of the *wh*-pronoun; whether it is identified with the Head of the construction, or occupies the expected [Spec, CP] position.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this paper, the term Head will be written with a capital H in order to distinguish it from the X' theoretic notion of head.