

Wh-clauses as nominal complements: Evidence from Greek

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Claim

- **3 classes of predicates** w.r.t. to type of clause(s) they select (e.g., Grimshaw 1979; Groenendijk and Stokhof 1984; Lahiri 2002)

(1) **Antirogative/ANT-class** (*nomizo* ("think")):

a. Nomizi [oti i Anna efighe]*that-clause*

think-3SG that the-NOM Anna-NOM left-3SG

"S/he thinks that Anna left."

b. *Nomizi [pjos efighe]*wh-clause*

think-3SG who-NOM left-3SG

"S/he thinks who left."

Typical classification of clausal selection ii

(2) Rogative/RG-class (*anarotjeme* ("wonder")):

a. *Anarotjete [oti i Anna efighe]*that-clause*
wonder-3SG that the-NOM left-3SG

"S/he wonders that Anna left."

b. Anarotjete [pjos efighe]*wh-clause*
wonder-3SG who-NOM Anna-NOM

"S/he wonders who left."

(3) Responsive/RS-class (*ksero* ("know")):

a. Kseri [*oti* i Anna efighe]*that-clause*
know-3SG that the-NOM Anna-NOM left-3SG

"S/he knows that Anna left."

b. Kseri [*pjos* efighe]*wh-clause*
know-3SG who-NOM left-3SG

"S/he knows who left."

- RG-class & RS-class each select a **distinct type of *wh*-clause**:

(4) **RG-predicate** selects **disjunctive *wh*-clause (DWH)**:

[Anarotjete]_{RG-predicate} [pjos efighe]_{DWH}

wonder-3SG who-NOM left-3SG

"S/he wonders who left."

- **Information-seeking** reading ("question")
- The speaker has **total ignorance** about the possible answer(s) to the question: "**which person *x* is such that *x* left?**"

- (5) RS-predicate selects conjunctive *wh*-clause (CWH):

[Kseri]_{RS-predicate} [pjos efighe]_{CWH}

know-3SG who-NOM left-3SG

"S/he knows who left."

- No information-seeking reading (i.e., "no question")
- The speaker has total knowledge about the possible answer(s) to the question: "for every person *x*, [I know] if *x* left."
- Reminiscent of **factive reading** (Kiparsky and Kiparsky 1971)

The upshot about *wh*-clause selection (seems to be)

- Ross (n.d.) concentrates:
 - on RG-class & RS-class
 - the semantics of DWH & CWH
- More recent analyses focus on the semantics of RG-class & RS-class (e.g., Uegaki 2015; Theiler et al. 2019; Mayr 2019)
- So:
 - **ANT-class left outside "*wh*-clausology"** (Ross' term); and
 - **Little (if at all) concern about syntax**

- A proper subclass of ANT-class combines with CWH :
 - The ANT-predicate must be **licensed** under certain environments
 - The ANT-predicate must be able to **combine** with Free Relative (FR)
 - The ANT-predicate may **select DP**
- CWH is :
 - **Nominal** (*wh*-clause headed by D)
 - **Complement** (to ANT-predicate)

- Facts
- Analysis
- Extensions

Facts

- Typically, *pistevo* ("believe") takes a *that*-clause as its complement (cf., (6a)), and is ungrammatical with a *wh*-clause (cf., (6b)):

(6) a. *Pistevi* [oti i Anna efighe]_{that-clause}
 believe-3SG that the-NOM Anna-NOM left-3SG

"S/he believes that Anna left."

b. **Pistevi* [pjos efighe]_{wh-clause}
 believe-3SG who-NOM left-3SG

"*S/he believes who left."

- **However**, under certain environments, *pistevo* ("believe") may combine with a *wh*-clause. Two of these are:

(7) a. **Negative quantifier:**

Dhen pistevi [pjos efighe]_{wh-clause}

NEG believe-3SG who-NOM left-3SG

"S/he does not believe who left."

b. **Imperative:**

Pistepse [ti su leo]_{wh-clause}

believe-2SG what you-CL say-1SG

"Believe what I tell you."

- **No information-seeking** reading (i.e., "no question")
- There is **total knowledge** from the part of the speaker. Reminiscent of **factive reading**

- Like *pistevo* ("believe"):

(8) a. *amfisvito* ("dispute")

b. *anakalipto* ("discover")

c. *apanto* ("reply")

d. *apokalipto* ("reveal")

e. *apofasizo* ("decide")

f. *arnume* ("deny")

g. *dhexome* ("accept")

h. *fantazome* ("imagine")

i. *fonazo* ("shout")

j. *ipotheto* ("assume")

k. *iponoo* ("imply")

l. *madevo* ("guess")

m. *matheno* ("learn")

n. *omologho* ("confess")

o. *simfono* ("agree")

- What **defines** the ANT-predicates in (8) as a **proper subclass** is **two shared properties**:

- They **combine with FR**; E.g.:

(9) a. Pistevi [opjon(dhipote) exi kala epixirimata]_{FR}
 believes-3SG who(ever) has-3SG good arguments-ACC
 "S/he believes who(ever) has good arguments."

b. Amfisviti [oti(dhipote) dhen bori na apodhiksi]_{FR}
 disputes-3SG whatever NEG can-3SG to-PRT prove-3SG
 "S/he disputes whatever s/he cannot prove."

c. Arnite [oti(dhipote) akui]_{FR}
 denies-3SG whatever hears-3SG
 "S/he denies whatever s/he hears."

- They **select DP**; E.g.:

- (10) a. Pistevi [DP tin alithia]
 believes-3SG the-ACC truth-ACC
 "S/he believes the truth."
- b. Amfisviti [DP tin alithia]
 disputes-3SG the-ACC truth-ACC
 "S/he disputes the truth."
- c. Arnite [DP tin alithia]
 denies-3SG the-ACC truth-ACC
 "S/he denies the truth."

- Contrary to the previous subclass of ANT-predicates, **the other subclass of ANT-predicates** does not combine with a *wh*-clause (despite licensing; cf., (11a)), nor with FR and DP (cf., (11b) & (11c)):

(11) a. *Dhen nomizi [pjos efighe]_{wh-clause}

NEG thinks-3SG who-NOM left-3SG

"*S/he does not think who left."

b. *Nomizi [oti(dhipote) akui]_{FR}

thinks-3SG whatever hears-3SG

"*S/he thinks whatever s/he hears."

c. *Nomize [DP tin apantisi]

thought-1SG the-ACC answer-ACC

"*S/he thought the answer."

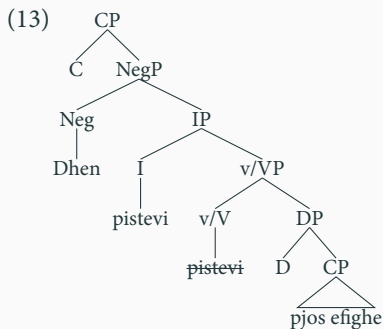
- Like *nomizo* ("think"):
 - (12) a. *efxome* ("wish")
 - b. *elpizo* ("hope")
 - c. *epimeno* ("insist")
 - d. *ipoxome* ("promise")
 - e. *isxirizome* ("claim")
 - f. *orkizome* ("swear")
 - g. *paraponjeme* ("complain")
 - h. *theoro* ("consider")

Analysis

Summary of facts

- *Wh*-clause:
 - yields no information-seeking reading ("no question")
 - implies that the speaker has total knowledge (of the answer(s)); implies a factive reading
- ANT-predicate
 - combines with *wh*-clause only if it combines with FR and/or DP ("*pistevo*-type")
 - does not combine with *wh*-clause only if it does not combine with FR and/or DP ("*nomizo*-type")

The analysis that the facts underpin



- *wh*-clause is CWH headed by D which is complement to ANT-predicate.
- *pistevio* ("believe") (c-/s-)selects D, but *nomizo* ("think") does not.
- *wh*-word/phrase is not interrogative by default (indefinite?; Roussou's talk @BCGL13)
- *wh*-movement does not take place for +Q reasons (if so, then why?)

Extensions

Comparison with "Unselected Embedded Questions" (UEQ; Adger and Quer 2001) i

- Our analysis in (13) is comparable to the treatment of UEQ by Adger and Quer (2001): **D heads *if*-clause and is complement to RS-predicate.**
- In fact, the contexts that license UEQ also license our CWH. Some examples are:

(14) **Negative quantifiers:**

- i. **No one** admitted/heard/said [if the bartender was happy].

Adger and Quer (2001: 112, (21))

- ii. **Kanenas** dhen pistepse pjos itan piso
no one NEG believed-3SG who-NOM was-3SG behind
apo ti listia.
from the robbery
"No one believe who was behind the robbery."

Comparison with "Unselected Embedded Questions" (UEQ; Adger and Quer 2001) ii

(15) 'Only' focus:

- i. **Only** July admitted/heard/said [if the bartender was happy].

Adger and Quer (2001: 112, (22))

- ii. **Mono** i Maria pistepse pjos itan
only the-NOM Mary-NOM believed-3SG who-NOM was-3SG
piso apo ti listia.
behind from the robbery
"Only Mary did not believe who was behind the robbery."

(16) **Adversative predicates:**

- i. He **refused** to admit [if they had the keys].

Adger and Quer (2001: 112, (24))

- ii. **Arnithike** na pistepsi pjos itan piso
refused-3SG to believe-3SG who-NOM was-3SG behind
apo ti listia.
from the robbery
"S/he refused to believe who was behind the robbery."

- Our analysis in (13) is comparable to the treatment of "Future *wh*-clauses" by Agouraki (2005): D heads a *wh*-clause (with intentional reading) and is complement to a predicate that does not usually select clausal complements:

(17) Exo idhi aghorasi ti tha foreso sto parti.
have-1SG already bought-1SG what will wear-1SG at-the party
"I have already bought what I am going to wear at the party."

(Agouraki 2005: 285, (1b))


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Thank you!



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