

ROMANIAN FREE CHOICE FREE RELATIVES: A COMPARISON WITH SUBTRIGGERED FREE CHOICE SENTENCES

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Abstract The present study focuses on the semantic and pragmatic properties of Romanian free choice free relatives (FC-FRs), with the following conclusions: the quantificational force of FC-FRs in Romanian is definite; the apparent universal force is the outcome of an evaluation constraint of the free choice particle: the syntax of FC-FRs in Romanian is the same as that of English *ever*-FRs; Romanian FC-FRs most closely resemble the semantics and pragmatics of subtriggered free choice determiners. The distribution and interpretation of Romanian FC-FRs is assumed to be of three main kinds: auto-licensing, on a par with subtriggering; licensing by a modal operator in a non-generic/non-habitual context on a par with FCI determiners licensed in the same environments; licensing by a generic or habitual operator (also on a par with determiner FCIs). As shown in Panaitescu (2022), the three types of contexts differ in the type of universality they display: serial universality, parallel universality (the apparent existential reading) and atemporal universality.

Keywords: free choice free relative, subtriggering, definiteness, universality effect, presumptive mood

1. Introduction

English FC-FRs are represented by clauses introduced by *wh*-pronouns with the suffix *ever*, as illustrated in (1a) below. Romanian FC-FRs are clauses introduced by the free choice particle *ori*- plus a relative pronoun such as *what* in (1b) below:

- (1) a. John grabbed whatever (dish) was on the breakfast table.
b. Orice scrie are un nucleu emoțional extraordinar,
FC-what writes has a nucleus emotional extraordinary
dialogurile lui au umor, haos, violență, istețime.
dialogues.DEF his have humor, chaos, violence, wit
'Whatever he writes has an extraordinary emotional core, his dialogues
contain humor, chaos, violence, wit.'

The theoretical questions addressed by an examination of the distributional pattern of these constructions in these two languages are mainly:

- a) what is the quantificational force of these clauses (definite or universal)?
- b) what is the semantic contribution of the free choice particle in this syntactic environment as opposed to, e.g. free choice determiners such as English *any* or Romanian *orice*?

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The two questions are closely linked, since there has been a debate in the literature on free choice determiners regarding their status as either universal or indefinite (LeGrand 1975, Dayal 1998, 2013, Horn 2005, Chierchia 2013). Even though the general direction in the current research seems to be going towards the indefinite side, it is still of interest to answer the question how the universality effects intrinsically associated with free choice arise. On the other hand, with respect to the status of free relatives, it has been argued that they are definite (Jacobson 1995, Caponigro 2003, Tredinnick 2005 a.o.), but also possibly universal, especially those of the FC variety (Bresnan & Grimshaw 1978, Larson 1987, Iatridou & Varlokosta 1998 among others). It seems that free choice in general is what tends to be associated with universality.

Among the tests used for the universal status in the literature previous studies have proposed: paraphrase with a universal quantifier, NPI licensing and *almost* modification. The following sentences are an application of these tests to Romanian:

(2) a. Universal paraphrase for (1b):

Tot ce scrie are un nucleu emoțional extraordinar.
 All what writes has a nucleus emotional extraordinary
 ‘All that he writes has an extraordinary emotional core.’

b. NPI licensing:

E multă violență în orice a scris vreodată.
 Is much violence in FC-what has written ever
 ‘There is a lot of violence in whatever he has ever written.’

c. *Almost* modification:

E multă violență în aproape orice scrie.
 Is much violence in almost FC-what writes
 ‘There is a lot of violence in almost whatever he writes.’

For the purpose of answering the two questions, it is useful to look at the pattern of free choice phenomena in Romanian¹, since Romanian FCI *orice* has two syntactic manifestations, as a determiner and as a relative pronoun introducing free relatives.

(3) FCI determiner + restrictive relative clause:

Orice roman pe care îl scrie acest autor conține multă violență.
 FC novel PE which CL.Acc writes this author contains much violence
 ‘Any novel that this author writes contains a lot of violence.’

(4) Relative pronoun:

a. Simple wh-phrase (without NP):

Orice scrie acest autor conține multă violență.
 FC writes this author contains much violence
 ‘Whatever this author writes contains a lot of violence.’

¹ Among the studies which have focused on Romanian FC-FRs I mention Grosu (2013) and Caponigro & Fălăuș (2017).

b. Complex *wh*-phrase (with NP in FC-FR):

Orice roman scrie acest autor conține multă violență.

FC novel writes this author contains much violence

‘Whatever novel this author writes contains a lot of violence.’

As can be seen in the translation of (4) above, English employs *wh-ever* relative pronouns in order to produce FC-FR structures.

The claim supported here is that, in apparently episodic contexts such as (5) and (6) below, where no licensing operator is present, FCIs require the presence of an event/situation variable in their restriction.

(5) Maria a citit orice carte pe care i-a
Mary PF.AUX read FC book PE which CL.3.SG.DAT-PF.AUX
recomandat-o profesorul.
recommended-CL.3.SG.FEM. ACC teacher.DEF
‘Mary read any book which the teacher recommended.’

(6) Candidatul a dat un răspuns la orice i s-a reproșat.
‘The candidate gave an answer to whatever was reproached to him.’

The situations and individuals introduced by the FC description (be it a free choice DP headed by determiner *orice* as in (5) or a free choice free relative as in (6)) satisfy an evaluation constraint of the free choice morpheme, namely domain shift (see Jayez & Tovena 2005). In the case of determiner FCIs, the condition is met by subtriggering (LeGrand 1975). Subtriggering is a saving mechanism observed for free choice *any* in episodic contexts. The addition of a relative clause turns the sentence from unacceptable to perfectly acceptable (as in *The professor talked to any student *(who approached him)*). In the case of free relative uses, the requirement is met by default as long as the event is construed as dynamic, meaning that the event/situation variable introduced by the relative clause enables the distribution of free choice alternatives.

The flavor of universality particular to subtriggered sentences containing a free choice determiner such as *orice* has been dubbed *serial universality* in Panaitescu (2019, 2022). Taking a sentence such as (5), the semantic contribution of the FC indefinite can be paraphrased as follows: during the past reference interval, in all events of a professor making a recommendation in which there was some instantiation of a book being recommended, Mary read that book. The interaction between reading and recommending events is manifested in two ways (following the terminology in Hinterwimmer 2008): temporal dependence (the recommendations precede the reading) and non-accidentality (there is a non-contingent relation between the pairs of events).

In the same vein, a sentence containing a FC-FR (6) is interpreted in a similar way (following Tredinnick 2005 and Hinterwimmer 2008). There was a past situation made up of possibly multiple subsituations which contain a unique reproach, and this reproach was followed by a response by the candidate. The difference between the indefinite status of the DP containing the head noun *book* in (5) as opposed to the definite status of the head of the free relative in (6) is therefore almost completely neutralized by the universality

effect, which is obtained via quantification over situations/ events. As for environments such as (1b) and (4) above, the universality effect arises from two sources, one similar to the mechanism described above, and the second from a covert generic operator on the main verb (*writes*).

2. Previous accounts

2.1 Von Fintel (2000)

Von Fintel discusses three types of examples, (7a), (8a) and (9a), corresponding to three interpretations. The paraphrases in (b) and (c) are meant to capture the definite vs. universal observable quantificational force: ignorance and indifference FC-FRs.²

(7) Ignorance

- a. There's a lot of garlic in whatever (it is that) Arlo is cooking.
- b. There's a lot of garlic in what Arlo is cooking.
- c. There's a lot of garlic in the dish Arlo is cooking.

(8) Indifference

- a. Zack simply voted for whoever was at the top of the ballot.
- b. Zack simply voted for who was at the top of the ballot.
- c. Zack simply voted for the candidate who was at the top of the ballot.

(9) Universal

- a. There's a lot of violence in whatever Parker writes.
- b. There's a lot of violence in everything Parker writes.

The following analysis is proposed for ignorance interpretations, which is a modification of Dayal (1997) and assume that FC-FRs are definite expressions whose presuppositional content is richer than that of a regular definite description. The presupposition is assumed to carry the FC semantic constraint of domain shift³:

(10) Analysis of ignorance

whatever (w) (F) (P)

- a. presupposes: $\exists w', w'' \in F: \lambda x. P(w')(x) \neq \lambda x. P(w'')(x)$
- b. denotes: $\lambda x. P(w)(x)$

Above, w is the world of evaluation, F is the modal base (here, epistemic, anchored to the speaker), and P is the expression obtained by abstracting over *whatever* in the free relative

² The label "universal" in (3) is used for convenience even though von Fintel 2000 does not provide a label for this type of sentence; in later stages of the present article, I will argue in favor of Tredinnick's (2005) label of internal (8) and external (9) indifference.

³ See also Abenina-Adar (2019) for a presuppositional account of ever- FRs.

(*Arlo is cooking*_∅). Basically, an FC-FR has the same assertive content as a definite description (e.g. *the dish Arlo is cooking*) but presupposes fluctuation across epistemic worlds, which amounts to the speaker not being sure about the identity of the dish. The property P is required to remain constant.

The analysis of indifference *ever*- free relatives is the following:

(11) Analysis of indifference – conditional

whatever (w) (F) (P) (Q)

- a. presupposes: $\forall w' \in \min_w [F \cap \lambda w'. \iota x. P(w')(x) \neq \iota x. (P)(w)(x)] :$
 $Q(w')(\iota x. P(w')(x)) = Q(w)(\iota x. P(w)(x))$
- b. asserts: $Q(w)(\iota x. P(w)(x))$

Here, w is again the world of evaluation, F is the modal base (this time circumstantial⁴), P is the expression obtained by abstracting over whatever in the free relative (*∅ was at the top of the ballot*), and Q is the expression obtained by abstracting over the entire free relative in the matrix clause (i.e. *Zack voted for ∅*). Von Stechow offers the following informal explanation (p.9): “all of the worlds in the modal base F that are minimally different from w but where the referent of the FR is different from that in w are such that the truth of the whole sentence that *whatever* operates on is still the same as in w ”. Therefore, in this case the matrix property is also present in the presupposition.

Taking (8) as an illustration⁵:

(8') $\lambda w. (\text{whoever}(w) ((f)(w)(s)) (\lambda w'. \lambda x. x \text{ is at the top of the ballot in } w'))$

$(\lambda w'. \lambda x. \text{Zack votes for } x \text{ in } w')$

- a. Assertion: In w , Zack votes for the person at the top of the ballot in w .
- b. Presupposition: In all worlds w' minimally different from w in which someone different is at the top of the ballot, Zack votes for that person iff in w he votes for the person at the top of the ballot in w .

The interpretation is counterfactual: if somebody else had been on top of the ballot, Zack would still have voted with them.

As for so-called universal FC-FRs, von Stechow does not provide an analysis, but only mentions Dayal's (1997) solution:

(12) a. People usually honor whoever is elected.

b. $\lambda w. \text{usually} (\lambda o. o \text{ is contextually relevant in } w)$

$(\lambda o. \text{people honor whoever}(w) (f(o)(s)) (\lambda o. \lambda x. x \text{ is elected in } o))$

⁴ It is not explicitly stated, but presumably, in the case of indifference, F is a circumstantial modal base.

⁵ See Tredinnick (2005), chapter 1, section 1.2.1, for a detailed breakdown of the semantic composition of such examples.

2.2 Tredinnick (2005)

In her doctoral dissertation, Tredinnick builds on von Fintel's (2000) analysis. One of the important underlying assumptions in this work is that the so-called 'indifference' and 'universal' interpretations in (8) and (9) are actually both indifference, the distinction being made by the locus of indifference: internal (the subject, namely Zack in (8)) or external in (9). In the latter, there is no identifiable locus of indifference, and the interpretation is counterfactual. As Tredinnick explains in section 1.4.2, what is constant across "indifference" FRs is not an indifferent agent, but **the counterfactual entailment**, as in von Fintel's formal analysis. The modal flavor is the unifying factor.

A further observation is that the counterfactual interpretation of both types of indifference imply a causal link⁶ between the matrix condition and the FC-FR description: Zack votes for x because he is on top of the ballot, the novels are violent because they were written by Parker. Any context that supplies multiple instantiations of the object described by the FR is considered a generic context (as in *John will read whatever Bill assigns*, which is most naturally interpreted as John reading all of the things Bill assigns)⁷.

The ingredients required for the universal interpretation to surface are: indifference (i.e. counterfactual interpretation) and co-variation of situations and individuals due to a covert GEN operator.

2.3 Caponigro & Fălăuș (2017)

The authors assume that FC-FRs in Romanian and Italian have the same syntax as English *ever*-FRs but display semantic and pragmatic properties that more closely resemble headed relative clauses introduced by the free choice determiner *any* in English. Therefore it is expected that FC-*any* headed relatives (HRs) are acceptable whenever FC-FRs are and are subject to the same kinds of semantic restrictions⁸.

A central claim related to the pragmatics is that in episodic contexts, they are felicitous only if they obey the following constraint:

- (13) CONSTRAINT ON ACQUAINTANCE IN EPISODIC SENTENCES: Speakers cannot use a FC-FR (or a FC-any HR) in an episodic sentence if they are "acquainted" with the set that is associated with the FC-FR in the world of evaluation i.e. speakers have had a salient perceptual relationship with all the members of that set knowing that they and only they are members of that set.

⁶ More precisely causal explanation as in Kratzer (1997).

⁷ In my analysis in section 3.4, I will mention an exception. There are episodic iterated events readings, i.e. sentences containing expressions such as *yesterday*, *from 3 to 4 o'clock* and perfective aspect. Free choice expressions are allowed as long as the interpretation involves a time-bound regularity.

⁸ This is an assumption I subscribe to: the parallel between the distribution of determiner and relative pronoun orice will be presented in more detail in section 3.1.

C&F (2017) assume that, like English *ever*-FRs, Italian and Romanian FC-FRs also display ignorance and indifference readings. The difference is to be seen in episodic contexts, where the latter are infelicitous if the constraint above is not met.

Taking a scenario that elicits an ignorance meaning, C&F present the following two scenarios:

(14) CONTEXT: *The speaker can see that Bianca is cooking three dishes now. She doesn't know what they are, but saw Bianca pouring tons of garlic powder in each and can smell waves of garlic coming from the kitchen:*

(Nu știu ce gătește Bianca, dar după cum miroase...)
 not know.1SG what cooks Bianca but after how smells
 *E usturoi în orice mâncare gătește Bianca acum.
 is garlic in FC-what dish cooks Bianca now

(15) CONTEXT: Luca knows that Bianca always uses garlic for whatever she cooks. Luca is now upstairs and cannot see what Bianca is doing downstairs. Elena comes from downstairs and tells Luca that Bianca is cooking. Luca knows Elena hates garlic, so he warns her:

E usturoi în orice mâncare gătește Bianca acum.
 is garlic in FC-what dish cooks Bianca now
 'There's garlic in any dish/dishes Bianca is cooking now.'

The difference in acceptability is claimed to stem from the direct acquaintance in (14) vs. the lack of direct acquaintance in (15). A second example is the following:

(16) Poliția a arestat pe oricine a protestat aici în clădirea asta
 police-the has arrested ACC FC-who has protested here in building-the this
 ieri.
 yesterday
 'The police arrested anybody who protested here in this building yesterday.'

According to the authors, the sentence is acceptable out of the blue, but adding a context as below renders it unacceptable:

(17) CONTEXT: Yesterday, Luca saw four people he did not know protest in the building where he is now. He just heard that those people were all arrested. He says to Bianca. . .

The issue supposedly lies with the fact that the epistemic agent is directly acquainted with the individuals.

The following example is provided by C&F (2017) to show that the constraint on acquaintance is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the felicity of FC-FRs:

(18) CONTEXT: The speaker is aware that someone broke into the company last night but doesn't know who:

*A fost oricine avea codul de acces al clădirii (deși nu
has been FC-who had code-the of access of building-the though not
știu cine a fost.
know.1SG who has been

The degraded status of (18) stems from a clash between the FC-FR and the QUD (presumably *Who broke in last night?*), which requires identification.

2.4 Šimík (2018)

Šimík (2018) proposes the following classification of English FC-FR interpretations. There are two types of modalized FC-FRs: ignorance (with a subtype irrelevance) and indifference. Following Lauer (2009) and Condoravdi (2015), Šimík assumes there are also non-modalized FC-FRs.

In the following, the two types of modalized FC-FRs according to Šimík's classification are discussed in more detail. Firstly, the ignorance reading comes with the inference that the Speaker has no settled belief about the identity of the referent of the FC-FR (in this case, the movie):

(19) Whatever movie is now playing at the Avon is making a lot of money.

The sentence is assumed to involve covert modality, and has been interpreted in the literature as involving a doxastic modal base s.t. the identity of the movie differs across doxastic worlds anchored to the speaker (Dayal 1997, von Stechow 2000). Crucially, many languages have been reported to lack this interpretation altogether (for instance Greek, in Giannakidou & Cheng 2006).

The second type of interpretation is indifference, of the same kind as discussed in von Stechow (2000):

(20) Zack simply voted for whoever was at the top of the ballot (namely Clinton).

As for third kind, Šimík takes the interpretations dubbed “universal” or “external indifference” to be unmodalized:

(21) In those days, whatever Parker wrote was (always) violent.

This view is in agreement with Lauer (2009). Šimík explains the reasoning as follows (p.3):
“Lauer (2009) argues that this type of FR carries no conventional modal inference (whether ignorance or indifference) and that it is sufficient if (i) Parker wrote at least two different things in those days [...] and (ii) that all the things that he wrote in those days were violent [...]”

An important empirical result worth mentioning is the result of a cross-linguistic survey testing the availability of ignorance vs. indifference and of one instantiation vs.

multiple instantiation FC-FRs across languages (where one instantiation involves a unique object referred to by the FC-FR, while multiple instantiations involve co-variation).

Romanian was included among the languages in the survey. Below are three examples of sentences tested for acceptability, with the “*” indicating a low score on a scale of 1 to 5.

- (22) *Ieri la ora 8, David s-a uitat la orice era pe HBO.
yesterday at hour 8 D. REFL-has watched at EVER.what was on HBO
‘Yesterday at 8, David was watching whatever they were showing on HBO.’
- (23) Diseară la 8, David se va uita la orice va fi pe HBO.
tonight at 8 D. REFL will watch at EVER.what will be on HBO
‘Tonight at 8, David will be watching whatever (\approx the thing) they will be showing on HBO.’
- (24) La cină, David mănâncă întotdeauna ce îi gătește prietena lui.
at dinner D. eats always what him cooks girlfriend his
‘For dinner, David (always) eats whatever his girlfriend cooks for him.’

The punctual past interpretation is excluded (on both ignorance and indifference interpretations), which was also reported for Romanian and Italian in Caponigro & Fălăuş (2017). The results are summarized in the following table (where eFRs are FC-FRs):

Table 1: Šimík 2018 – Table 1

CONTEXT	SERBIAN <i>n</i> = 4	POLISH <i>n</i> = 5	HEBREW <i>n</i> = 4	GREEK <i>n</i> = 6	RUSSIAN <i>n</i> = 5	CZECH <i>n</i> = 4	ROMANIAN <i>n</i> = 4
a habitual present	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	5.0	5.0
b simple past	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.5
c punctual future	5.0	5.0	4.5	4.5	4.0	4.0	5.0
d punctual past	4.5	4.0	3.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.0

Table 1: Median ratings of eFRs per context and language

3. Proposal: how many interpretations?

I propose the following classification of interpretations for Romanian FC-FRs:

1. AUTO-LICENSED: EXTERNAL INDIFFERENCE
2. LICENSED BY A MODAL OPERATOR (including ignorance)

3. GENERIC atemporal universal

Regarding the first kind of FC-FR, it is taken here to be equivalent to subtriggered sentences such as the one below, employing FC determiner *orice*:

- (25) Maria a citit orice carte pe care i-a
Mary **PF.AUX** read FC book PE which CL.3.SG.DAT-PF.AUX
recomandat-o profesorul.
recommended-CL.3.SG.FEM. ACC teacher.DEF
'Mary read any book which the teacher recommended.'

The parallel with determiner free choice expression has been hard to miss in the literature on FC-FRs (e.g. Dayal 1997, Giannakidou 1998, Tredinnick 2005, Caponigro & Fălăuș 2017 among others). This parallel is taken here more seriously than before: there is a wider variety of interpretations available to FC-FRs, which is the result of the semantic contribution of the modal operator which licenses them. The possibility of auto-licensing, which is available for determiner FCIs only in (dynamic) eventive DPs (*subtriggering*) is satisfied in the case of FC-FRs almost for free: the only requirement is that the verb in the FC-FR should be eventive.

As for the examples of the second type (licensed by non-generic modal operators), the expectations are that the same modals that license FCI determiners also license the FC-FR. In the example provided below, the licenser is the possibility modal *may*:

- (26) Poți citi orice carte dorești.
'You may read any book you like.'

Notice that the sentence is perfectly acceptable in a scenario in which the speaker requires the addressee to read only one book.

A point of departure from the parallel with determiner FCI *orice* is represented by the Romanian counterpart of ignorance interpretations. Crucially, as has been reported in Caponigro & Fălăuș (2017) and Šimík, R. (2018), the ignorance reading is not available if one simply tries to translate English *ever*-FR equivalents. Take for instance example (47c) in C&F (2017):

- (27) *Este usturoi în orice mâncare gătește Bianca acum.
is garlic in FC-what dish cooks Bianca now
Intended: 'There is garlic in whatever dish Bianca is cooking now.'

Nevertheless, changing the mood from indicative to presumptive in the free relative proves to be a saving mechanism.

- (28) Orice (mâncare) o fi gătind Mircea conține mult usturoi.
FC-what dish aux.3sg be cooking Mircea contains much garlic
'Whatever Mircea may be cooking contains a lot of garlic.'

This strategy is only available for FC-FRs, not for the minimally different FC determiner constructions:

- (29) *Orice mâncare pe care o fi gătind-o
FC-what dish DOM which aux.3sg be cooking-CL.Acc
Mircea conține mult usturoi.
Mircea contains much garlic.

The examples in (28), with or without a nominal head, are perfectly acceptable, while the example in (29) involving determiner *orice* introducing a DP which contains a relative clause in the presumptive mood (see Fălăuș 2014 on the Romanian presumptive).

3.1 Free choice as an evaluation constraint: A parallel between determiner and relative pronoun uses of Romanian *orice*

In semantics, free choice is a term which targets a very specific linguistic procedure: the step of determining a referent for a DP (see Farkas 2002, 2006, Chierchia 2013). The term “free choice” is not to be understood as a component of the asserted content, but as a component of the evaluation level (more particularly, determining a referent for the DP). Take a free choice item (FCI) such as *any*:

- (30) Karen may pick any present.

Here, the contribution of the determiner *any* is to preclude the assignment of a particular referent across the possible worlds introduced by the deontic modal *may* i.e. all presents in the domain are a possible referent for the DP, none is excluded. Compare with *Karen may pick a present, namely the one on the right*. Looking at (30), it also seems that “free choice” is taken literally, at the level of assertion, in this case as Karen’s freedom to pick a present. But this is merely an effect of the semantics of the modal of permission *may*. Looking at (31), involving an epistemic modal, and (32), involving an ability modal, the paraphrase involving free choice is lost:

- (31) They may have talked to any of the students.
(32) Any third-grader can solve this problem.

What is left is the evaluation constraint to cast all of the entities in the domain which satisfy the nominal properties (the students and the third-graders respectively) as referents of the free choice DPs in some possible world.

Unlike English, Spanish, Italian etc. and as in Greek, the Romanian FC morpheme ORI-WH has a double function: as a relative determiner and pronoun introducing free choice free relatives. English employs two different morphemes for the two uses: *any* as FC determiner and WH-EVER relative pronouns for FC-FR uses. Italian, Spanish and Catalan only retain FC determiners formed with FC + WH morphology and simply lack a specialized relative pronoun with FC-FR uses.

The advantage of further looking into the behavior of the Romanian FC elements is that it invites a unified treatment of FC phenomena, one which describes FCIs as both determiners and relative pronouns. The line of reasoning followed here is that the basic observations made in the literature for determiner *orice* should be extendable to the field of FC-FRs. More specifically, the two types of universality proposed for FC determiners are expected to be present in FC-FRs in the same environments. The following sections are dedicated to further exploring this hypothesis.

3.2 Licensing FCIs and subtriggering

FCIs like *any* require to be in the scope of a licensing operator (*may* (30), (31), *can* (32), GEN (33))

(33) Any owl hunts mice.

An apparent exception is the episodic environment called *subtriggering*, a DP which contains an FCI and a relative clause:

(34) a. ?? Yesterday we spoke to any customer.
 b. Yesterday we spoke to any customer who required assistance.

As already mentioned, Romanian⁹ disposes of a lexeme which doubles as an FC determiner and an FC relative pronoun introducing free choice free relatives. Both constructions allow for an interpretation in which: 1. there are two event descriptions 2. the events-individual pairs denoted by the FC constructions involve multiple instantiations 3. the connection between the two events is perceived as being non-accidental. In one word, both constructions display “subtriggering”.

(35) a. Orice persoană care a trișat a fost eliminat din concurs.
 ‘Any person who cheated was eliminated from the contest.’
 b. Oricine a trișat a fost eliminat din concurs.
 ‘Whoever cheated was eliminated from the contest.’

These types of sentences are exclusively interpreted as universals, even though they are here not assumed to be in any sense generic:

(36) Ne-a pus la dispoziție orice am cerut.
 ‘He/ she placed at our disposal almost anything we asked for.’

One test to prove this is modification by *almost*: Jacobson’s (1995) example (37a) is perfectly acceptable in Romanian (37b):

(37) a. *For years, I did almost/ nearly whatever you told me to do.

⁹On a par with Spanish, Catalan, French, Greek a.o. (see Chierchia 2013 etc.).

- b. Ani de zile, am facut aproape orice mi-ai spus sa fac.
Years of days PRO.1SG AUX done almost FC PRO.2SG me.DAT -AUX told do.SUBJ
 ‘For years, I have done almost anything you told me to do.’

- (38) Ne-a pus la dispoziție aproape orice am cerut.
 ‘He/ she placed at our disposal almost anything we asked for.’

Another test is paraphrasing by using a universal quantifier. This is possible for the sentence above: *S/he provided all of the things we asked* (and if we had asked for other things, s/he would have provided those as well). Example (38) is an apparently unmodalized episodic context, associated with a short time span (this can be enforced by adding *for the duration of our visit*). According to Tredinnick (2005), such cases do involve some sort of genericity, with the generic operator quantifying over subparts of the episode:

- (39) Yesterday morning, John grabbed whatever dish was on the breakfast table.
 a. “Yesterday morning, John grabbed *the dish* that was on the breakfast table.”
 b. “Yesterday morning, John grabbed *every dish* that was on the breakfast table.”

The paraphrase in (39b) involves one layer of genericity:

- (40) $\lambda s_0. \exists s$ [s is past with respect to s_0 & GENs’ $\leq s$ [C(j, s’)] [grab (j, [whatever dish was on the breakfast table in s’], s’)]]

In words, (40) says that there is a situation s in the past and every one of its subsituations of the appropriate type containing John (introduced by the contextual parameter C) is a situation in which John grabs whatever dish is on the table

- (41) In those days, every morning, John grabbed whatever dish was on the breakfast table.
 a. “In those days, every morning, John grabbed *the dish* that was on the breakfast table.”
 b. “In those days, every morning, John grabbed *every dish* that was on the breakfast table.”

Reading (41b) involves two layers of genericity, one habitual, introduced by *in those days*, and another one operating on partitions of the habitual situations (subsituations of mornings). The question which remains to be answered is why for Romanian *ori*-FRs do not display the reading in (39a) and seem to accommodate a reading such as (39b) only under certain conditions, while (40b) is easily available. In section 3.4 I will extend the analysis in Panaitescu (2022) and propose that subtriggered cases as such as (39b) are actually non-generic and rather involve an (iterated/ co-varying) interpretation against a metaphysical modal base. Informally, these sentences express a time-bound regularity.

3.3 Free choice free relatives (FC-FRs) in English and Romanian: distribution and properties

As mentioned in the introduction to section 3 above, FC-FRs in Romanian are assumed in the present paper to come in three guises as far as their interpretation is concerned: they may be auto-licensed, in which case they express a time-bound regularity, or they may be licensed by some compatible (non-)generic modal operator.

The second case displays a nice parallel to the behavior of determiner FCI *orice*. The determiner *orice* + relative clause and the FC-FR produce the same interpretations. I only mention a few examples, but the same contexts that were listed for the determiner FCI in Panaitescu (2022) are available here too.

(42) Permission modal

- a. O poți lua pe oricare dorești.
'You may take whichever you like.'
- b. Oricine vine la petrecere poate dansa.
'Whoever comes to the party may dance.'

In (42a), the D-linked FC-FR induces an interpretation in which one thing is taken, while (42b) most naturally means that one or more people can dance. The same ambiguity that exists for determiner uses is present.

(43) Ability

- Oricine a fost la curs poate rezolva problema.
'Whoever attended the lecture can solve this problem.'

(44) Generic

- Orice rău faci se întoarce împotriva ta.
'Whatever harm you do turns against you.'

Here, just as in the case of determiner uses, the type of universality is atemporal.

A very intriguing case of non-generic licensing mechanism is represented by ignorance interpretations licensed by the presumptive mood. The construction is interesting for two reasons. Firstly, the licenser in this case is not to be found in the matrix clause but in the relative clause. Secondly, this kind of construction is possibly the best testing ground for definiteness. On a par with regular free relatives (*What Arlo is cooking contains a lot of garlic*), FC-FRs have been argued to be definites which can be paraphrased as *the thing/person/place that*. This carries on to the Romanian examples. The interpretation obligatorily involves a unique event of cooking.

(45) a. English:

Whatever Arlo is cooking contains a lot of garlic.

b. Romanian

Orice (mâncare) o fi/ va fi gătind Arlo acum conține mult usturoi.
ori-what dish AUX be/ AUX be cooking Arlo now contains much garlic

‘Whatever (dish) Arlo is cooking now contains a lot of garlic.’

Taking a context in which I do not know what he is cooking, but I can smell the garlic, the interpretation involves epistemic uncertainty on the part of the speaker. The FC-FR is definite and carries a presupposition of existence (it is presupposed that there exists something that Arlo is cooking). The FC-FR is interpreted against an epistemic modal base at the level of presupposition (von Stechow 2000). The relevant set of worlds contains epistemic variants of the actual world, from the point of view of an epistemic agent.

These worlds are minimally different from each other, varying only with respect to the identity of the individual satisfying the FR condition (the thing Arlo is cooking). The assertion is that, in each world, the unique thing Arlo is cooking satisfies the main clause condition, namely it contains a lot of garlic. Therefore, putting the assertion and presupposition together, the ignorance effect becomes evident: Arlo is cooking something (I do not know what) and, whether it is stew, tomato soup etc., it contains a lot of garlic. Romanian FC-FRs are felicitous on this reading only if the verb in the FC-FR is in the presumptive mood, which is arguably responsible for the epistemic flavor.

3.4 A possible account

The fact that the same interpretation as (39b), but not (39a) arises for free choice determiners *orice* and *any* in subtriggered sentences suggests the existence of certain common factors in the semantics of these FC pronouns and determiners, while still maintaining the distinction which emerges from their syntax. An example of a subtriggered sentence containing an FC determiner is (46):

- (46) Maria a citit orice carte pe care i-a
Mary **PF.AUX** read FC book PE which CL.3.SG.DAT-PF.AUX
recomandat-o profesorul.
recommended-CL.3.SG.FEM. ACC teacher.DEF
‘Mary read any book which the teacher recommended.’

Subtriggered sentences were analyzed in Panaitescu (2022) as involving what was called “serial universality”. Serial universality involves a form of covert modality that is distinct from genericity. What (46) conveys is that during the reference interval, there was a regular pattern in the sense that whenever some book or other was recommended, it necessarily was also read by Mary. There is variation of individuals based on the entity variable introduced by the DP, but also times and worlds. This kind of variation was modeled following the time-world framework of Thomason (1984). The modal base is circumstantial (metaphysical). Serial universality is a type of universality effect in apparently episodic sentences that do not actually involve genericity. Genericity is **not** sensitive to the temporal ordering of situations, as assumed by Tredinnick (2005).

On the contrary, I have tried to show that both subtriggered *orice* and indifference FC-FRs obey certain temporal and aspectual constraints and will opt for the presence of an underlying conditional structure in these apparently episodic environments, in the spirit of Iatridou & Varlokosta (1996, 1998) and Baker (1995).

The following informal interpretation of FCI *orice* displaying a time-bound regularity was offered in Panaitescu (2022) for example (47). Notice that the free choice determiner does not require a relative clause as long as the nominal it introduces is eventive, and the relation to the matrix clause event is not accidental.

(47) După prezentare, Ion a răspuns bucuros la orice întrebare.
 after presentation.DEF John has answered gladly to FC question
 ‘After the talk, John gladly answered any question.’

- a. After the talk, John gladly answered any question.
- b. Serial universality:**
 - w_1 : question *a* asked & answered; question *c* asked & answered; no other question asked;
 - w_2 : question *a* asked & answered; no other question asked;
 - w_3 : question *a* asked & answered; question *b* asked & answered; no other question asked;
 - w_4 : question *b* asked & answered; ; no other question asked

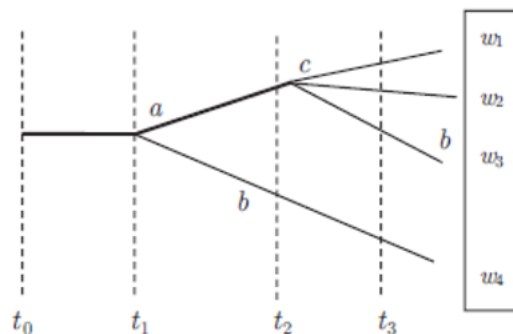


Figure 1: Serial universality in example (47)

Non-accidentality here is understood as a relation of causal explanation between the events in the free choice DP (the questions) and the matrix events (the answers). The visual representation in Figure 1 above expresses the fact that, in the relevant time interval (here, $[t_0, t_3]$) a regularity was instantiated in the form of questions leading to answers. The toy model presented here contains four worlds, out of which one turned out to be the actual world. The other three are unactualized ways the world might have evolved (branched) out of t_0 . Crucially, the questions asked must differ on these branches (with overlaps allowed; for instance, question *a* was asked in w_1 , w_2 and w_3). It is important to point out that expressing epistemic possibility is compatible with such scenarios. It is possible to find examples of subtriggered sentences where the epistemic agent is not aware of the individuals actually involved in the causal relation between the FC and the matrix events. But it is also possible that there is no epistemic uncertainty about the actual turn of events whatsoever. For instance, if we take w_3 to be the way the actual world developed, then (47) is perfectly

acceptable in a setting in which everybody is aware that questions a and b were asked (and answered), i.e. there is no epistemic uncertainty. Of course, uttering (47) also conveys something about unrealized potentials (e.g. the asking of question c).

The same reasoning arguably applies to all FC-FRs without an obvious overt or covert (e.g. GEN or HAB) licenser, such as (48) below:

- (48) După prezentare, Ion a răspuns bucuros la orice întrebare i s-a pus.
after presentation.DEF John has answered gladly to FC question him REFL-has put
'After the talk, John gladly answered whatever question he was asked.'

These cases were subsumed to cases of subtriggered determiner FCIs *any* and *orice* in Panaitescu (2022). The following section discusses certain examples presented in the literature of FC-FRs from the perspective of the account presented here.

3.5 Application to examples

Extending work on English *-ever* FRs to other languages, many authors have discovered that ignorance and indifference are unavailable in many cases. Looking at the results provided by the survey in Šimík (2018) in Table 1, one can notice that sentences containing FC-FRs and punctual past (i.e. forcing a unique event interpretation) have very low scores in Greek, Russian, Czech and Romanian. These judgments apply irrespective of the ignorance/ indifference interpretation prompted by the context. Based on the judgments provided in Caponigro & Fălăuș (2017), Italian can also be added to the list. The authors also stress that this observation holds only for past/ present episodic sentences with a punctual interpretation. This pattern is indeed to be observed for determiner FCIs as well: only in the absence of a licenser is domain shift (co-variation of event-individual pairs) a requirement. If a modal licenser is present, the restriction against punctual interpretations is lost:

- (49) Poate fi în orice cameră a fost deja curățată.
may.3SG be in any room has been already cleaned
S/he may be in whichever room has already been cleaned.

In (49) above, the epistemic possibility modal counts as a licenser for the FC-FR and correspond to an interpretation of parallel universality (Panaitescu 2019, 2022). The subject is in one room, but the identity of this room varies across the worlds in the epistemic modal base.

Going back to cases that have been called auto-licensing here, it has been argued throughout the paper that epistemic uncertainty is in no way a necessary ingredient in their acceptability. If one were to accept the Constraint on Acquaintance formulated in C&F (2017), it would also be left unexplained why there is a ban against punctual interpretations.

Still, two kinds of examples provided in C&F (2017) seem to go against these observations. I will discuss them in turn. Firstly, it is claimed that if the speaker does not have any direct acquaintance with the dish(es) in question, a sentence containing an FC-

FR and a presumably punctual ignorance interpretation becomes available (see the contrast between the contexts in (15) and (16) above):

- (50) E usturoi în orice mâncare gătește Bianca acum.
is garlic in FC-what dish cooks Bianca now
'There's garlic in any dish/dishes Bianca is cooking now.'

A first observation is that the translation provided by the authors (with determiner any plus a restrictive relative clause) does not seem to be perfectly acceptable. Following my own judgments, the Romanian counterpart does not fare much better, no matter whether one chooses a context with or without direct acquaintance:

- (51) ??E usturoi în orice mâncare pe care o gătește Bianca acum.
is garlic in FC-what dish ACC which CL.ACC cooks Bianca now
'There's garlic in any dish/dishes Bianca is cooking now.'

As for (50), the presumptive is I believe equally required no matter the context (an option that the determiner version of *orice* does not have). In any case, it would remain to be explained why there is a contrast between determiner and relative pronoun *orice*, assuming that the Constraint on Acquaintance operates on both constructions equally.

A second example discussed by the authors and presented in section 2.3, is repeated below:

- (52) Poliția a arestat pe oricine a protestat aici în clădirea asta
police-the has arrested ACC FC-who has protested here in building-the this
ieri.
yesterday
'The police arrested anybody who protested here in this building yesterday.'

According to the authors, the sentence becomes infelicitous in a scenario where the speaker has seen the people in question. From the perspective of the account presented here, the interpretation aimed for here is an auto-licensing one. The intended meaning is: in the relevant past interval, the police operated under the rule that, if someone protested, they would arrest them. A number of people happened to fall victim to this rule, but if other people had protested, they would also have got arrested. This meaning can be conveyed irrespective of what the epistemic agent has witnessed. Forcing the context (16) does not alter the felicity of the sentence but merely creates the impression that it is somehow inappropriate to discuss time-bound regularities when the question under discussion is *Who protested?*

4. Conclusion

DPs headed by *orice* are indefinite and FC-FRs containing *orice* are definite. Both guises of *orice* come with an evaluation constraint which translates as a causal link between

two events. Romanian free choice item *orice* in its guise as a determiner (in which case the DP it is part of is an indefinite) and as a relative pronoun introducing FC-FRs (in which case it is definite) has been shown to display three sources of licensing: generic modal licensors, non-generic modal licensors and auto-licensing. The three types of licensors correspond to three types of universality effects: atemporal, parallel and serial respectively (as defined in Panaitescu 2019, 2022). Due to these universality effects, the definiteness of the relative pronoun is most of the times disguised by Quantificational Variability Effects patterns.

Thus, in the absence of FC licensing operators, (apparently) non-modalized episodic sentences with determiner and FR uses involve serial universality. The modal flavor of these contexts is counterfactual, and the FC and matrix events are temporally ordered. In order to best describe the phenomenon, I claimed in Panaitescu (2022) that the time-worlds branching universe account assumed for determiner *orice* applies to Romanian FC-FRs as well.

The account sketched so far might create the impression that determiner and relative pronoun *orice* are identical in distribution and interpretation. That is definitely not the case, a case in point being the availability of the presumptive mood acting as a licensor from inside the FC-FR, but not from inside a restrictive relative clause. Another point of divergence could be the definite vs. indefinite status of FC-FRs and free choice DPs containing determiner *orice* respectively. Yet another possible distinction in the semantics of the two constructions is the possible analysis of FC-FRs as unconditionals, a route which was taken in Šimík (2018) and Szabolcsi (2019) building on Rawlins (2013). This avenue is left open for further research.

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