**Ever free-relative clauses and Maximize Presupposition**

Maayan Abenina-Adar, UCLA

A pragmatic analysis of *ever* free-relative clauses (EFRCs) is proposed. It relies on the assumptions that speakers must use the presuppositionally strongest utterance from a set of salient, equivalent alternatives (Heim 1991, Sauerland 2008) and that EFRCs evoke such alternatives. EFRCs (e.g. *whatever tool Ali bought* in (1)) are presuppositional definites (Jacobson 1995). For example, singular EFRCs pattern with the rather than *every in contexts that do not satisfy uniqueness, (2a). But unlike *the*-definites or *ever*-less FRCs, EFRCs often imply ignorance, shown by a contrast in compatibility with appositives specifying their referent (2b-c) (Dayal 1997).

1. This toolbox contains whatever tool Ali bought
2. a. Ali bought five tools, and this toolbox contains {every, #the, #whatever} tool she bought
   b. This toolbox contains {the tool Ali bought, what Ali bought} – namely, this hammer
   c. This toolbox contains whatever tool Ali bought – *namely, this hammer

But not all EFRCs imply ignorance e.g. EFRCs that are bound into by *every* (3a) (Lauer 2009), EFRCs in the scope of agentive or attitude predicates (3b-c) (von Fintel 2000), and plural EFRCs (3d) (Condoravdi 2015).

3. a. Every professor enjoyed whatever conference they first attended
   b. Ali grabbed whatever tool was in the toolbox
   c. Bea is convinced that this toolbox contains whatever tool Ali bought
   d. This toolbox contains whatever tools Cam owns

That (3a-d) do not necessarily imply ignorance is shown by their acceptability in the contexts in (4a-d) where the EFRC’s referent is identified with a name or definite description. However, (3a-d) carry different implications when the identity of the EFRC’s referent is known, illustrated by their unacceptability/oddness in (5a-d). (3a) is unacceptable when every professor attended the same first conference, (5a), (3b) is unacceptable when Ali was not indifferent about the identity of the tool she grabbed, (5b), (3c) is unacceptable when Bea knows what tool Ali bought, (5c), and (3d) is odd when the tools do not have salient, distinct properties, (5d).

4. a. Prof A’s first conference was NELS, Prof B’s was AMP, and Prof C’s was SALT...
   b. The tool in the toolbox was the hammer. Ali was in a rush to finish, so...
   c. Bea knows that Ali bought a tool but doesn’t know not that it was this hammer...
   d. The only tools Cam owns are this hammer and this screwdriver...

5. a. Prof A’s first conference was NELS. Same with Profs B and C...
   b. The tool in the toolbox was the hammer. Ali was working carefully and needed a hammer, so...
   c. Bea knows that Ali bought a tool and that it was this hammer...
   d. The only tools Cam owns are these two hammers...

**Proposal.** Given a set of salient contextually-equivalent alternatives, a speaker must use the presuppositionally strongest felicitous one, (6) (Heim 1991 a.o.). Violations result in unacceptability (e.g. {#a, the} sun is shining).

6. **Maximize Presupposition!** (MP). For any LFs φ, ψ and context c (touple of alternatives function ALTc, context set CSc, speaker, and assignment function gc), the speaker must use φ if φ ∈ ALTc(ψ), \{w ∈ CSc : [φ]c(w) = 1\} = \{w ∈ CSc : [ψ]c(w) = 1\}, DOM(φ) ⊆ DOM(ψ), and CSc ⊆ DOM(φ)

EFRCs have the structure in Caponigro 2003, 2004 for free-relatives; a Linkian definite determiner, Def, applies to a property-denoting CP. *Ever* is in a phrase headed by a non-restrictive modification operator, OPnr, which denotes \[Q_{eqr}λP_{nr}: P(σx[Q(x)])\] (Morzycki 2008 – see also Bolinger 1967, Larson & Marušić 2004). *Ever* is an \(⟨s, et⟩\)-variable (index omitted); wc is an object/metalanguage variable for an arbitrary member of CSc.

   \[\{7\}′ = σx[tool(wc)(x) ∧ Ali-bought(wc)(x)], defined only if ([ever]c(wc)(σx[tool(wc)(x) ∧ Ali-bought(wc)(x)])]

Inspired by Condoravdi 2015 (cf. Krifka 1995, Chierchia 2013 on NPI-never), *ever* evokes alternatives that meet the conditions in (8) and therefore partition the denotation of *ever*.

8. For any context c and world w:
   a. \(|\{D\}^c(w) : D ∈ ALTc(\text{ever})\} = |\text{ever}^c(w)\)
   b. \(|\text{ALTc(\text{ever})}| ≥ 2\)
   c. \(∀D, D′ ∈ ALTc(\text{ever})[D]^c(w) ∩ [D′]^c(w) = ∅\)
EFRCs as a whole evoke alternative definite LFs which denote the same maximal entity but carry stronger presuppositions, ascribing to it a more specific property than ever. The use of an EFRC is compliant with MP only if no alternative’s stronger presupposition is known. Assuming (9a-b) in the evaluation of (1), the assumption of MP-compliance licenses that the CS does not settle whether the tool Ali bought is a hammer or a screwdriver. Ignorance implications are context-dependent because many values are consistent with (8).

Every-statements presuppose that every entity in the restrictor is in the domain of the nuclear scope (Heim 1983 a.o.). (3a)’s LF in (10a) presupposes that every professor’s first conference has the ever-property, and (10a)’s alternatives presuppose that every professor’s first conference has an alternative partitioning property (wv determines the extension of all the properties in the abbreviated EFRC sub-LF). Assuming (10b-c) for ever and its alternatives, the speaker complies with MP only if it’s not known that every professor’s first conference was NELS, nor is it known that it was AMP, nor is it known that it was SALT. (3a) is MP-compliant when it’s known that two professors have different first conferences, (4a), and when at least one professor’s first conference is unknown, but not in (5a), where it’s known that every professor’s first was NELS.

Comparison with previous accounts. The predominant analyses of EFRCs assign them a semantically-determined implication of variation across a modal base (e.g. Dayal 1997, Hirsch 2015). They have trouble explaining (3a,d), both because such examples need not be associated with ignorance or indifference/countertfactuality and because it is difficult to generate the attested inferences (i.e. that the professors attended different conferences, and that the tools are distinct) with a requirement the EFRC’s extension vary across some modal base. The current account relates an EFRC’s reading to the grammatical make up of its host sentence. Non-ignorance readings of singular EFRCs only arise if a quantificational expression affects the way the EFRC’s presupposition projects. It will be shown that the current account predicts when indifference readings are available (i.e. only with agentive verbs) better than the predominant account based on a contextually-determined countertextual presupposition (von Fintel 2000, Tredinnick 2005). Overall, this work expands the empirical applications of MP while providing a unified account of the various inferences associated with EFRCs.