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Referential Properties of Nouns across Languages¹

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Abstract

In this paper, we argue that nouns in each of their lexicalized meanings have certain referential properties encoded in their lexical entries. Due to these referential properties, the meaning variants of nouns are predisposed for certain determination. However, in actual use nouns often occur in grammatical contexts that differ from these predisposed uses. On the basis of data from typologically different languages, we argue that such grammatical variations follow systematic referential modification patterns of the respective meaning variant of a noun. In accordance with Löbner (2010), we will refer to the underlying cognitive processes as type shifts and show that they provide a stimulating approach to widely discussed phenomena such as definite article splits and alienability splits.

1 Introduction: Types of nouns and types of determination

Over the past few decades, several noun-type distinctions have been discussed, including considerations about common nouns, proper nouns, count nouns, and mass nouns (e. g., Krifka 1989, Chierchia 1998, Payne & Huddleston 2002, Pelletier 2009). The distinction between sortal and relational nouns is generally taken as a distinction between one-place predicates and two- (or more-) place predicates (Partee 1983/1997, Barker 1995, Jensen & Vikner 2002, Asudeh 2005). Löbner

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(1985, 2010) takes this distinction as a starting point for a classification of nouns into four logical types that differ with respect to their referential properties, i. e., UNIQUENESS (inherently unique vs. nonunique) and RELATIONALITY (inherently relational vs. nonrelational). Löbner distinguishes between sortal nouns ('SN' such as *flower, table*), relational nouns ('RN'; *sister, friend*), functional nouns ('FN'; *mother, president*), and individual nouns ('IN'; *sun, pope*, proper names). Within this classification, individual and functional nouns are inherently unique in the sense that the number of possible referents is restricted to one in a given context. In contrast, for sortal and relational nouns the number of possible referents is unrestricted. Relational and functional nouns are inherently relational and require the specification of an additional argument for reference. Löbner (2010) assumes that the lexical referential properties of nouns influence the way they are used grammatically. In accordance with their referential properties, functional and relational nouns can be seen as predisposed for possessive use. Due to their inherent uniqueness, individual and functional nouns exhibit a predisposition for definite use. However, the classification of nouns into four logical types faces some challenges, including the following: (1) Most nouns are polysemous (Pustejovsky 1995, 1996, Yael 2000). Lexicalized (Löbner 2010) meaning variants may have different logical types due to their different referential properties. If nouns can be classified with respect to their logical type it seems plausible to assume one logical type for each lexical entry of a noun. We refer to the logical type of a lexical entry as its **lexical type**. In this paper, we will use Löbner's terms SN, RN, FN, IN to refer to the lexical types of meaning variants. (2) One can observe that in actual use (e. g., within the NP) the logical type of a noun often differs from its lexical type. Sortal nouns, for example, often occur with definite marking (*the table, this flower*). However, if the lexical distinction holds, these uses can be explained by systematic type shifts. Löbner (2010) argues that nouns can be shifted between the four type classes. Hence, we need another term to refer to the logical type of a noun in actual use. In order to stay close to the established terms, we will speak of sortal concepts (SC), relational concepts (RC), individual concepts (IC), and functional concepts (FC) in such cases. For illustration, consider the following examples:

- (1) *The sun is rising.*
- (2) *The suns are rising.*

(3) *A sun is rising.*

(4) *This sun is rising.*

Sun can be regarded as an IN (i. e., as a unique, cf. Hawkins 1978, Lyons 1999). In everyday life, we experience only the one sun of our solar system rising. (2)–(4) contradict this perception and require the (mental) construction of a situation with more than one sun. This effect is reflected by the mismatch of number (as in (2)) and determination (as in (3), (4)) in contrast to the lexically unique reference of the noun. In these contexts, the IN *sun* is shifted to an SC.

(5) *Maria is Peter's mother.*

(6) *Maria is the mother.*

(7) *Maria is a mother of Peter.*

(8) *Maria is a mother.*

Conceptually, every person has only one mother and a mother is always the mother of someone. Hence, *mother* is a FN. The use in (5) is perfectly interpretable without further context and agrees with the lexical type of the noun. In (6) *mother* is used as an IC; it still occurs with the definite article but without a possessor argument. Hence, without further context, the utterance in (6) would naturally lead to the addressee asking the question “Whose mother?”² In both (7) and (8) *mother* occurs with the indefinite article. (7) sounds awkward since the uniqueness condition is given up and the mother is shifted to a relational concept. Still, (7) may be acceptable in certain contexts (e. g., if Maria is Peter's stepmother). However, the crucial point is that such contexts are – in contrast to (5) – required for interpretability. The expression in (8) differs from (7) in the nonpossessive use which leads to a focus on the sortal characteristics of being a mother; here *mother* is shifted to a SC.

The goal of our paper is to present typological evidence for the noun type classification and to have a closer look at type shifts. For these purposes, it seems obvious to look at languages that explicitly reflect the categories UNIQUENESS (inherently unique vs. nonunique) and RELATIONALITY (inherently relational vs. non-

² Horn (thesis, in prep.), takes this characteristic of [+R] nouns as a test criterion for distinguishing [+R] from [-R] concept types.

relational) grammatically, the more fine-grained the better. As for the uniqueness distinction, we will focus on several regional variants spoken in Germany which exhibit two different definite articles (Ebert 1971, Hartmann 1982, Himmelmann 1997, Studler 2004, Schwager 2007, Schwarz 2009). These articles are assumed to mark different kinds of uniqueness, i. e., inherent uniqueness and inherent nonuniqueness (section 2). We also highlight a phenomenon mostly neglected so far, i. e., the unpredicted use of inherently nonunique nouns with the weak definite article. For the relationality distinction, we investigate typologically different languages that show explicit marking for different kinds of relationality with a strong focus on alienable and inalienable possession (section 3).

2 Insights from definiteness marking

2.1 Approaches to uniqueness

Many approaches to unambiguous reference focus on the function of the definite article. Lyons (1999) and Abbott (2004) discuss the principle approaches: according to the familiarity account (Heim 1982), the definite article indicates that the referent of the particular NP is already familiar to both speaker and addressee. The identifiability approach assumes, as Lyons (1999) points out, that the definite article directs the addressee to the referent by signaling that she is able to identify the intended referent (Chafe 1976, Birner & Ward 1994). Löbner (1985) builds his theory on a third approach, the uniqueness theory (Russell 1905, Strawson 1950, Donnellan 1966). The main assumption of the uniqueness approach is that the definite article indicates that there is only one entity which satisfies the used definite description, i. e., an entity that is unique. Löbner (1985) proposes a distinction between semantic and pragmatic definiteness that also includes uniqueness coming from other parts of the expression. For semantic definiteness the referent is established independently of the immediate situation or context of utterance. Pragmatic definiteness depends on special situations and contexts for the nonambiguity (and existence) of a referent. In this paper, we will use the terms semantic and pragmatic uniqueness instead and reserve the term definiteness to refer to the grammatical marking of uniqueness. We will apply the distinction to the analysis of some regional variants in Germany that exhibit two definite articles, one often referred to as the strong, the other as the weak definite article. This article split has been analyzed as reflecting semantic versus pragmatic uniqueness (cf.

Löbner 1985 for Fering, Ripuarian, Himmelmann 1997 for Ripuarian, Studler 2004 for Alemannic, Schwager 2007 for Bavarian, Ortman 2014 also for Dutch and Swedish): pragmatic uniqueness is signaled by the strong, semantic uniqueness by the weak definite article. If we consider INs and FNs as semantically unique and SNs and RNs as pragmatically unique, one might expect that SNs and RNs only occur with the strong definite article. However, we will provide a type shift-based explanation as to why the latter also occur with the weak definite article under certain conditions.

2.2 Definite article splits in language

A frequently mentioned example is Frisian, a West-Germanic language, as investigated by Ebert (1971). Table 1 shows the paradigm of the definite article split for Frisian Fering (spoken on the island of Föhr).

	masc.	fem.	neutr.
weak	a	at	at
strong	di	det	det

Table 1: Definite articles (singular) in Fering (forms according to Ebert 1971)

Ebert (1971) argues that the use of the weak definite article ('A-article') signals that the speaker presupposes the referent of the NP is either part of the universe of discourse (we prefer the term 'participants' shared reference set', henceforth 'SET') or is related to a familiar referent in a well-known relationship. The strong definite article ('D-article') contains an additional deictic element which points to the situation of utterance, to anaphoric or cataphoric specifying information, and helps to select the appropriate referent. Hence, INs and FNs which refer uniquely by definition should occur with the weak definite article, unless they undergo shifts that change their logical type.

Fering (Ebert 1971: 71,97)

- (9) A *san skiinj* (10) *Kreske fng een üüb anöös*
DEF_{WEAK} sun shine Kreske got one on DEF_{WEAK} nose
 'The sun is shining.' 'Kreske got hit on her nose.'

San ('sun') as an individual noun has already been discussed. In (9) it is used with the weak definite article as predicted. *Nöös* ('nose') is a good example of an FN

since every person has one and only one nose. In accordance with the predictions, it occurs with the weak definite article in (10). In contrast, the anaphoric use of the Fering SN *kü* ('cow') in (11) and the Bavarian SN *biachl* ('book') in (12) requires the strong definite article. It signals that the referent is only referred to in anaphoric use.

Fering (Ebert 1971: 107)

- (11) *Peetje hee an kü slaachtet. Jo saai, det kü wiar äi sünj.*
 Peetje has a cow slaughtered they say DEF_{STRONG} cow was not healthy
 'Peter slaughtered a cow. They say the cow was not healthy.'

Bavarian (Schwager 2007)

- (12) *Da Maxi hod a biachl kaft. Sei Mama hod des biachl scho glesn.*
 DEF_{WEAK} Maxi has a book bought his mom has DEF_{STRONG} book already
 read
 'Maxi bought a book. His mom has already read the book.'

Proper names in Bavarian, such as *Maxi* in (12), and in Ripuarian (*et Waltraud*) in general occur with the weak definite article. However, Hartmann (1982) reports that proper names may also be used with the strong definite article (*dat Waltraud*) in Ripuarian if the speaker is annoyed about the respective person which can hence be considered a marked use of the proper name.

2.3 Permanently established ICs

As we will see now, SNs and RNs may occur with the strong or with the weak definite article when shifted to ICs or FCs – something which is not predicted by Löbner's approach. With respect to the noun type classification, INs would naturally refer within the participants' shared reference set. One question that is widely discussed in the literature (also in different terms and different frameworks) is when an IC actually becomes part of the reference set (cf. Hawkins 1978, Prince 1992, Gundel, Hedberg & Zacharski 1993, Ariel 1998, for example). We cannot fully answer this question here but want to shed some light on it from the noun type perspective. An IC may be the result of an ad hoc shift for reference in the respective situation of utterance only. Also, ICs may become more permanent between participants and hence refer just like proper names. Consequently,

we assume that in such cases type shifts are not required and the IC is established as what we will call a ‘permanently established IC’ (PEIC) within the participants’ shared reference set. In this view, PEICs are semantically unique within the respective SET. This could, for example, be the case for ICs that have been used frequently enough or those that are seen as very prominent between participants so that a PEIC would reduce the cognitive effort of disambiguation and type shifting. For illustration, imagine a family that has a dog. Within the family, the SN *hünj* (‘dog’, Fering) refers as a PEIC to the dog (of the family) just like its given name. This analysis is reflected by the use of the weak definite article in (13) (cf. also Hawkins 1978: 117 ‘larger situation use with specific knowledge’).

Fering (Ebert 1971: 83)

- (13) *A hünj hee tuwwark.*
DEF_{WEAK} dog has toothache
‘The dog has toothache.’

Ebert (1971) calls such concepts ‘situative Unika’ (‘situational uniques’). However, to refer to a dog on the street or in anaphoric use, the strong definite article is generally used (*Det hünj hee tuwwark*). The German dialects Ripuarian (spoken in the Rhineland) and Bavarian reflect the use of the weak definite article discussed so far. Consider the SN *kenk* (‘child’) in (14a) which is shifted to an IC with the strong definite article indicating that the child is not part of the SET. *Kenk* in (14b) and *kind* (15) are other examples of PEICs (e. g., in the sense of “our own child” or “the child that we take care of”).

Ripuarian (Hartmann 1982: 196)

- (14) (a) *Dat kenk es am jriene*
DEF_{STRONG} child is PROGR cry
‘The child is crying.’
(b) *Et kenk es am jriene*
DEF_{WEAK} child is PROGR cry
‘The child is crying.’

Bavarian (Schwager 2007)

- (15) *Ogott, mia ham vogessn, das ma 's Kind abhoin!*
o.god we have forgotten that we DEF_{weak} child pick.up
‘Oh god, we forgot to pick up the child!’

PEICs and INs can differ with respect to their lexical type. Whereas INs are lexically constructed as uniquely referring to one entity only, PEICs can be the result of shifts of any noun type. They are not necessarily lexically unique. With respect to their uses, however, INs and PEICs resemble each other. Proper names (belonging to INs in Löbner's classification), for example, may have only one referent within a certain SET but also multiple potential referents in a different SET. PEICs may refer semantically uniquely between very few participants only or (as an extreme) within a whole speech community. They can also be seen as one way of assigning a noun a unique referent which can be temporary or become lexicalized.

3 Insights from possession marking

3.1 Approaches to possession and alienability

Several notions of possession have been proposed (cf. Seiler 1983, Heine 1997, McGregor 2009). We follow Heine (1997) in interpreting possession as all kinds of constructions in language that express a conceptual relation between entities. Within these relations, the possessor is seen as the grammatical realization of the entity that owns the other entity or entities, has control over it, is its producer or represents a whole entity with the other being part of it. In a possessive construction, we refer to the entity that is possessed, controlled, produced or part-of as the possessum. Some languages reflect different relations grammatically (cf. Seiler 1983). They distinguish, for example, between certain possessive constructions exclusively used for kinship relations and body-part relations on the one hand and other kinds of possessive constructions for all other kinds of relations on the other (cf. Chapell & McGregor 1996). According to McGregor (2009), the most widespread distinction with respect to possession is that between alienable and inalienable possession (Nichols 1988), often referred to as an alienability split. For alienable possession, the relation between possessor and possessum is separable and not inherently determined; moreover, the relation need not be permanent. In contrast, inalienable possession is considered inseparable under normal conditions, and the kind of relation is fixed (cf. McGregor 2009). The inalienability of a relation between possessor and possessum is determined by the semantics of the latter, i. e., the kind of relation is inherent (Seiler 1983). Heine (1997: 10) lists the following terms as primary candidates for inalienable relations: kinship terms

(*Peter's mother*), body parts (*The girl's nose*), relational spatial concepts (*The end of the semester*), part-whole relations (*The trees branch*), physical and mental states (*Lisa's strength*), nominalizations (*The planting of the bananas*), and what Heine calls individual concepts³ (*name, voice*). Not all languages that exhibit an alienability split treat all mentioned candidates as inalienable. The language specific distribution heavily depends on cultural concepts (McGregor 2009).

The alienability split is often grammatically reflected in language, sometimes to a very fine-grained extent (cf. Classical Nahuatl in 3.2). According to Seiler (1983), inherently relational (including inalienable) nouns tend to occur unmarked or less marked across languages since the kind of relation between possessor and possessum is already determined by the latter and needs not to be made explicit. Contrastively, alienable nouns tend to occur with additional lexical material in possessive constructions, such as classifiers or predicative possession. Seiler calls this relation 'established' since the kind of relation has to be made explicit. Some possessive markers used in alienable possessive constructions provide further information about the kind of established relation (as shown in section 3.2 for Oceanic classifier languages or as can be stated for predicative possession). Ortman & Handschuh (2004) link the analysis of alienability splits with Löbner's noun type classification, an approach we will follow in 3.2. We will also see that the different marking of alienable and inalienable nouns can provide clues for the identification of lexical and shifted types (see also Partee & Borshev 2000).

3.2 Alienability splits in language

Ortman & Handschuh (2004) analyze three Mayan languages (Yucatec, Itzaaj, and Mam) with respect to the so-called derelationality marker. They consider this kind of marker a shift marker indicating the conceptual shift from an inalienable RN to a SC. Compare the examples in (16).

Yucatec (Mayan; Lehmann, 1998: 70 ff)

- (16) (a) *in tàatah*
P'OR1SG father
'my father'

³ Heine (1997) uses the term 'individual concept' to refer to individual characteristics of persons and entities.

- (b) *le tàatah-tsil-o'*
 DF father-DEREL-ART
 'the father'

The FN *tàatah* ('father') receives no special marking when used in accordance with its lexical type (16a). The possessive pronoun only indicates whose father is referred to. When used in a nonrelational way, the derelativization morpheme *-tsil-* is added to the noun in order to signal that the inherent relationality has been given up as in (16b) (Ortmann & Handschuh 2004). This kind of shift marker occurs also in Paamese, Cahuilla, Koyukon and Q'eqchi indicating the process of 'derelativization' (Seiler 1983) or 'absolutivization' (Lehmann 1998).

- | | |
|---|---|
| Paamese (Oceanic; Crowley 1996: 417) | Cahuilla (Uto-Aztecan; Seiler 1983: 25) |
| (17) <i>vat-in</i> <i>a-vat</i>
head-3SG.POSS DEREL-head
'his/her head' 'head' | (18) <i>hé-puš</i> <i>púč-il</i>
3SG.POSS-eye eye-DEREL
'his eye' 'eye' |
| Koyukon (Athabaskan;
Thompson 1996: 654-667) | Q'eqchi (Mayan,
Kockelman 2009: 346) |
| (19) <i>se-tlee'</i> <i>k'e-tlee'</i>
1SG-head DEREL-head
'my head' 'head' | (20) <i>in-ch'ool</i> <i>ch'ool-ej</i>
1SG-heart heart-DEREL
'my heart' 'heart' |

The use of inalienable body-part terms (such as 'head' in (17), (19), 'eye' in (18), and 'heart' in (20)) as SCs requires an additional marker for derelativization. Thus, they are explicitly marked when shifted from an inalienable FN ('head', 'heart') or RN ('eyes') to a SC. In Paamese, the suffix for derelativization is only realized when the inalienable noun is used absolute (Crowley 1996). When shifted to an alienable noun, a marker indicating alienability is required (*vat ona-k*, head POSS-1SG, 'my head' (in the sense of 'my leader') (Crowley 1996: 421)). In Koyukon, however, the morpheme indicating derelativization occurs also in the alienable relational construction: *se-k'e-k'e-tlee'*; 'my (animal's) head' (Thompson 1996: 667, Löbner 2010).

Classical Nahuatl not only exhibits a marker for derelativization (21a) for the absolute use of a relational noun but also one marker for alienable and one for inalienable constructions:

Classical Nahuatl (Amerindian, Launey 1981: 100 f)

- (21) (a) *omi-tl*
bone-DEREL
'bone'
- (b) *m-omi-yo*
2SG-bone-INAL
'your bone (part of your skeleton)'
- (c) *m-omi-uh*
2SG-bone-AL
'your bone (on a plate)'

Bone is a RN and can be realized as an inalienable (21b) or alienable RC (21c) with the respective morphemes. According to Launey (1981: 89–105) the use of the alienability morpheme on an inalienable noun indicates that the possessum is external to the possessor, i. e., the part-whole relation is given up. Thus, the inherent relation is not the one expressed in the alienable possessive construction; instead a different kind of relation is established.

Oceanic classifier languages exhibit an alienability distinction which reflects Seiler's assumptions in that they mark inalienable relations only with a possessive suffix and alienable relations with additional classifiers. Depending on the richness of the possessive classifier system, the relation established can be made more explicit and indicate the kind of possession (e. g., a legal ownership possession or a possession for food purposes). Lichtenberk (1983: 148) states that the use of possessive ("relational" in his terms) classifiers is not determined by the properties of the possessum but by the nature of the relation between possessor and possessum. The possessive classifier categorizes the possessum with respect to the relation to its possessor (Lichtenberk 2009: 263). In Manam, kinship terms, body parts, and part-whole terms belong to the category of inalienable entities. When used in a possessive construction, they take a personal possessive suffix indicating person and number of the possessor. Alienable nouns are additionally marked with one of the two possessive classifiers depending on what kind of relationship they encode. *'ana-* indicates that the possessum is food or something associated with food (garden, bottle, basket), while *ne-* is used for all other kinds of possession.

Manam (Oceanic; Lichtenberk 2009: 249)

- (22) (a) *paŋana-gu*
 head-1.SG.POSS
 ‘my head’
 (b) *uma ‘ana-gu*
 garden POSS.CLF-1SG.POSS
 ‘my garden’

The FN *paŋana* (‘head’) in (22a) takes only the possessive suffix representing its inherent kind of relationality. It is used with the inalienable possessive marker in accordance with its lexical type. For the SN *uma* (‘garden’) the ‘food’-possessive classifier is used (22b). However, FN and RN can also take possessive classifiers. Consider the FN *paŋana* (‘head’) in the following examples:

Manam (Lichtenberk 1983: 302)

- (23) (a) *paŋana ‘ana-gu*
 head POSS.CLF-1.SG.POSS
 ‘my head (to eat)’
 (b) *paŋanane-gu*
 headPOSS.CLF-1.SG.POSS
 ‘my head (I found, I cut off)’

In (23a) and (23b), a different kind of possession is established and the possessive relationship is indicated no longer by the possessive suffix only but by a possessive classifier which now specifies the relation between possessor and possessum. In (23a) *paŋana* occurs with the food-possessive classifier, while in (23b) the general possessive classifier is used to indicate that the established relation differs from the inherent one and does not concern food. In both (23a) and (23b), the inalienable FN is shifted to an alienable FC in a specified relation which does not take the preferred relation (which is determined by the possessum) into account. Toqabaqita, another Oceanic language, has no possessive classifiers but uses a separate marker for alienable possession.

Toqabaqita (Oceanic; Lichtenberk 2005: 343)

- (24) (a) *gwau-ku*
 head-1SG
 ‘my head’

- (b) *gwau nau*
head 1SG.POSS
'my (e. g., fish) head'

The inalienable FN *gwau* ('head') occurs with a suffix indicating person and number of the possessor and is used in accordance with its lexical type in (24a). In (24b), the relation is established with a separate possessive marker expressing an alienable kind of relation and the FN is shifted to an alienable FC. (25a) and (25b) show that different meaning variants of nouns can have different lexical types:

Toqabaqita (Oceanic; Lichtenberk 2005: 345)

- (25) (a) *fote-ku*
shoulder.blade-1SG
'my shoulder blade'
(b) *fote nau*
paddle 1SG.POSS
'my paddle'

The relational meaning variant of *fote* ('shoulder blade') is used in accordance with its lexical type in the inalienable construction (25a) and the sortal variant in (25b) in the alienable construction.

An alienability split can also be observed in Hungarian. In adnominal possessive constructions, the possessum always takes a possessive marker that agrees with the person and number of the possessor. Certain nouns, however, take an additional suffix when used with the third-person singular possessive marker (Moravcsik 2003) and differ with respect to their meaning (Elekfi 2000).

Hungarian (Finno-Ugric, own data)

- (26) (a) *a cipő talp-a*
DEF shoe sole-Poss3SG
'The shoe sole'
(b) *Péter talp-a*
Peter sole-Poss3SG
'Peter's sole (of foot)'
(c) *Péter talp-j-a*
Peter sole-AL.SHIFT-Poss3SG
'Peter's sole (of a shoe)'

Examples (26a) and (26b) illustrate the use of the RN *talp* ('sole') in accordance with its lexical type. A sole is typically a part of a shoe or a foot. In (26c), an alienable ownership relation is established. This modification is marked by the *j*-suffix and applies systematically for certain nouns in Hungarian (Elekfi 2000). When the *j*-suffix is not realized, only the inherent interpretation is possible. The established relation always results in an alienable relation. Note that the *j*-suffix can only be realized in combination with the possessive suffix.

4 Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to present typological evidence for the noun type classification with respect to uniqueness and relationality and to introduce the notion of permanently established ICs. With respect to uniqueness, Fering, Bavarian and Ripuarian have shown that FNs and INs generally occur with the weak definite article when used in accordance with their lexical types; proper names as INs in the unmarked case also take the weak definite article but also allow the strong definite article in pejorative uses. SNs and RNs, in contrast, may occur both with the strong as well as with the weak definite article when shifted to ICs or FCs. We have argued that the use of the weak definite article signals that the speaker considers the referent of the NP to be a permanently established IC in the shared reference set with the addressee. In contrast, the use of the strong definite article indicates that the referent is not part of the set at the time of utterance. Hence, we can summarize that the distribution of the two definite articles in principle matches the predictions made by the noun type classification. The data show that SNs, RNs and FNs can be shifted to ICs. These ICs may refer within the context of utterance only (and then occur with the strong definite article) or become referentially permanently established (and then occur with the weak definite article) within the respective shared reference set. We conclude that permanently established ICs refer semantically uniquely within the respective shared reference set. With respect to their uses, INs and PEICs resemble each other, which is reflected by the use of the weak definite article in the languages investigated.

For relationality, the investigation has also shown further support for the noun type distinction. First, Yucatec Mayan, Koyukon, Cahuilla, Paamese, Q'eqchi, and Classical Nahuatl exhibit a derelativization morpheme which clearly indicates a type shift from an inalienable RN/FN to an SC. Second, the analysis of alienabil-

References

ity splits in the languages investigated has shown that in inalienable possessive constructions, we only find inalienable RNs and FNs used in accordance with their lexical type. Hence it seems that these constructions are good indicators for lexical RNs and FNs. In contrast, all noun types can be used in alienable possessive constructions which signal for nonrelational nouns and inalienable nouns a shift to an alienable RC or FC. In the languages investigated, such shifts are marked with a possessive marker for alienable possession. The investigated Oceanic classifier languages exhibit possessive classifiers for different kinds of alienable possession. These classifiers not only indicate a shift of the noun but also explicitly indicate the kind of established alienable possession.

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