

The Proper D Connection*

Anonymous for Review - 2007

1.0 Introduction

In this paper we look at the features proper/common to determine how they are encoded in noun phrases, and in particular, how they interact with determiner systems. Judging from the norm in English as shown in (1), English can be pre-theoretically described as a language in which determiners occur with common nouns but do not occur with proper nouns.

- (1) a. The dog is in the living room.
- b. Maria is in Rome.

This descriptive generalization has been called into question, however. The strongest reason for further examination of the role of determiners in proper noun phrases is the fact that in some languages there are morphemes that might be classified as articles or determiners that do appear with proper nouns (eg. Niuean, Fijian (Alderete 1998), Kavalan, Catalan). In each of these languages, the particular character of the relevant marker varies. For example, in Niuean (Polynesian), proper/common marking is syncretic with case marking, as shown in (2) and (3). This distinction runs across the case system, as illustrated in (3).

- (2) a. Ne tohitohi **a Sione**.
 PST writing ABSP Sione
 ‘Sione was writing.’ (FN1997)
- b. Kua egaega **e kau kauvehe**.
 PERF rosy ABSC PL cheek
 ‘The cheeks are rosy.’ (Sp.55)
- c. Ko e tele **e Sione** a Sefa.
 PRES kick ERGP Sione ABSP Sefa
 ‘Sione is kicking Sefa.’ (S.73d:29)
- d. Ne kai **he pusi** ia e moa.
 PST eat ERGC cat that ABSC bird
 ‘That cat ate the chicken.’ (S.73a:29)

* Acknowledgments and data source discussion to be added after review.

(3) Niuean Case System (Seiter 1980)

	<u>ABS</u>	<u>ERG</u>	<u>LOC</u>	<u>GOAL</u>	<u>POSS</u>	<u>SOURCE</u>
COMMON	e	he	he	ke he	he	mai he
PROPER	a	e	i	ki	ha	mai

In Catalan the definite determiner shows a common/proper distinction before masculine nouns beginning with a consonant, as shown in (4-6).

Catalan

- (4) a. el noi 'the boy'
b. l'home 'the man'
- (5) a. la dona 'the woman'
b. l'àvia 'the grandmother'
- (6) a. La Maria 'Mary'
b. L'Enric 'Henry'
c. En Joan 'John' [Gili 1967:26]

Finally, in Kavalan the prefix *ti-* appears on arguments that are both proper and human, as discussed in Chang et al (1998), and shown in (7).

(7) **Kavalan**

p-um-ukun=ti ti-tina (*ti-)tazuNan
hit-AV=Asp TI-Mother TI-woman
'Mother has hit a woman.' [Chang, et al 1998:3.5a]

Such languages provide evidence that proper nouns can appear with determiners.¹ In fact, even in languages such as English where generally proper nouns do not appear with determiners it has been argued that there is evidence for a determiner position in such phrases (Anderson 1977, Thompsen 1997). One argument for this is that proper nouns pattern identically with DPs for the most part, in their ability to appear as subjects and objects of sentences for example. In his explicit syntactic account of the behaviour of proper nouns it is proposed by Longobardi (1994, 2005) that proper nouns phrases are DPs with a null expletive determiner and with N-to-D movement. According to Longobardi, this movement may take place overtly (Romance) or at LF (English), which account for variations in adjective/noun word order in these languages.

¹ It is not clear that the case+proper/common marker in Niuean should be labeled 'determiner' but since this marker is obligatory in a nominal phrase, and since there are no other elements that clearly merit the label, it is reasonable to consider them to be determiners (Massam, Gorrie and Kellner 2006).

(8) Longobardi (1994, 2005)



For others (Borer 2005, Ghomeshi & Massam 2005) it is also argued that there is a null determiner in proper noun phrases, and further, that the proper determiner is not an expletive but contributes meaning to the phrase by means of a semantic feature such as [proper]. (See also Vergnaud and Zubizarreta 1992 and Mathieu 2005 on expletive determiners.) In this paper we explore the claim that there is a null determiner in proper nominal phrases that houses an interpretable feature, but in this paper we consider that that feature is [definite]. We consider further that this determiner also houses two other features [proper] and [singular]. We also differ from Borer 2005 and Ghomeshi and Massam 2005 in that we consider that the overt determiner *the* does not contain a value for common², but rather, that it is unmarked for this value. In addition, we consider there to be an interpretable feature [name] on the proper noun itself. Unlike Borer we argue that this feature is not merely encyclopedic, but that it plays a role in computational processes such as selection and/or agreement. In particular, the determiner with the feature [proper] (which also has features [definite] and [singular]) must co-occur with a [name] NP.³ We argue that by building in the feature [definite] and positing two relevant features [proper] and [name], we can capture the full range of interpretive options for noun phrases across many languages.

2.0 Our current proposal

A natural starting point is to consider the featural status of the head noun in a proper nominal phrase. We consider that [name] nouns and common nouns are both of category N, but that they differ semantically in that they pick out different kinds of sets (Thomsen 1997, cf Kripke 1972). [name] nouns pick out sets of individuals bearing the same *name* while common nouns pick out sets of individuals sharing the same properties (Ghomeshi & Massam 2005, Matushansky 2006). This is illustrated in (9) and (10).

² The position that *the* is common leads to interesting consequences, such as, for example, the claim that a noun phrase such as “The Hague” is common. It is surprisingly difficult to determine whether this claim is justifiable, since virtually the only test for [proper] in English is the absence of the overt determiner in definite contexts. (See Borer’s 2005 discussion of “The Bronx”.)

³ We do not take a stand in this paper on the mechanisms involved in establishing that a proper determiner occurs with a nominal that is [singular] and [name]. This could be done by selection, or by agreement, for example. This choice can be overridden though, by lexical specification, for pragmatic effect, or in particular cases of type-shifting, as will be discussed below.

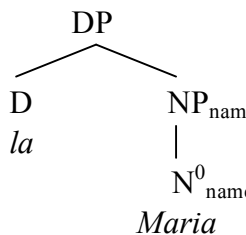
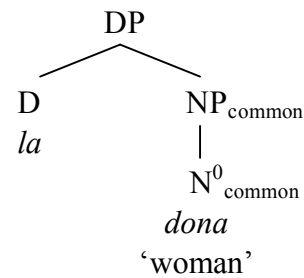
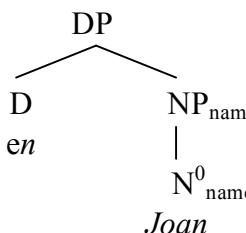
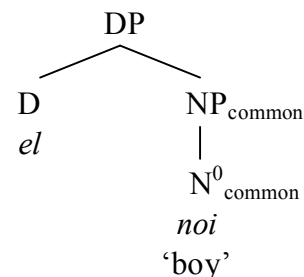
- (9) a. Kelly: {x: **is-named** (x, Kelly)}
- b. dog: {x: **four-legged, canine, furry** (x)}
- (10) a. N_{name}: {x: **is-named** (x, N_{proper})}
- b. N_{common}: {x: **properties-of-N_{common}** (x)}

Given this different semantics for common and [name] nouns, we consider them to be lexically distinguishable. We characterize this semantically-rooted difference with the feature [name]. Another option might be to use the feature [proper], however, we will reserve this feature to discuss a formal property of the noun phrase, which comes in at the grammatical level of determiner.

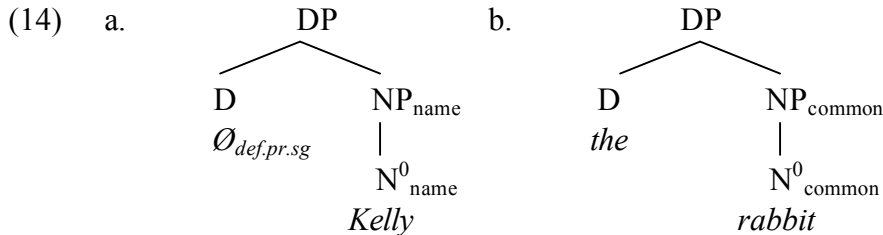
Following Longobardi (1995), we propose that there is a phonologically null determiner that occurs in English proper nominals. We further propose that it shares semantic features with the definite determiner *the*, in English and possibly in other languages too, that is, it provides definiteness to the nominal phrase. See also Matushansky (2006) who argues that the two determiners are semantically identical. It differs from *the*, however, in that it bears both the feature [proper] and the feature [singular] while *the* is neutral with respect to the proper/common distinction and number. As the less specified determiner, *the* is the default in English and will always appear with common nouns. We illustrate the featural character of the two determiners in (11).

- (11) a. NULL [proper, singular, definite] **(semantically) marked**
- b. *the* [definite] **unmarked**

In a language like Catalan both determiners are phonologically realized, as shown in (12) and (13).

- (12) a.  b. 
- (13) a.  b. 

In English, the null determiner shares with *the* a number of the same semantic features such as identifiability, familiarity, and uniqueness (see Lyons 1999), that is, essentially definiteness as in (11b). For this reason a proper nominal is similar to a definite description.



3.0 Implications

In this section we explore some implications of the claims presented above, namely that ‘proper’ and common nouns are lexically distinguished in ways that can be characterized by the semantic feature [name], and that there is a null determiner that appears in proper DPs, which shares the semantic property [definite] with the overt definite determiner *the*, and is also marked with agreement features [proper] and [singular].

3.1 Type-Shifting

If nouns are pre-syntactically specified as +/- [name], then we must account for the flexibility found in languages, whereby proper nouns can be used as common, and vice versa. Borer (2005) argues that this flexibility is best accounted for by allowing the proper/common designation to be entirely contextual – when embedded under a common determiner, a noun will be construed as common, and when embedded under a proper determiner, the same noun can be construed as proper. We consider that this view is overly elastic, in that it fails to capture directionality of shift: there is a strong intuition that *Mary* is a proper noun that can be used as a common one, whereas *desk* is a common noun that can be used as a proper one. (Borer considers this to be encyclopedic, but we argue for a lexical analysis.) Furthermore, it is clearly necessary to capture the semantic concept of naming, which can be retained by a fundamentally ‘proper’ noun, even when it is not used with the proper determiner (eg. *The Tremblays*, *The Hague*, *Fido* in (17c)). And finally, we will argue below that the full range of interpretation possible creates a need for more than the binary distinction of proper/common. Nonetheless we must account for flexibility. To capture this we appeal to type-shifting.

3.1.1 Type-Shifting: Common to Proper

Cross-linguistically, common and proper nouns can undergo type-shifting. When a common noun is type-shifted to proper it becomes [name], and takes a proper determiner. Interestingly, it is possible to shift back and forth from proper to common reference within a story, as illustrated in the quotes below,

taken from adjacent pages in the same book.

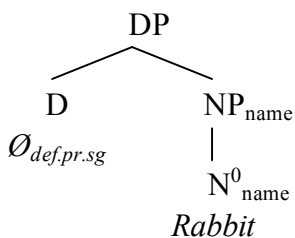
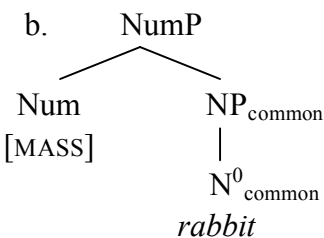
- (15) a. ... that suddenly reached Mole in the darkness, ... (p. 86 *The Wind in the Willows*)
 b. ... too far to hear clearly what the Mole was calling, ... (p. 87 *The Wind in the Willows*)

Type-shifting occurs cross-linguistically. In (16) we provide an example from Niuean (from Loeb 1926). In this language too we find variation, though in (16) the variation is from one story to another, not within the same story as in (15). In (16a) the character is referred to by the usual common noun, but it takes a proper case marker. In (16b), the characters appear with common case marking.

- (16) a. Pehe a Kiu ka ...
 said ABSP kiu if ...
 ‘Kiu said “if ...”’
 (From a story about a kiu (plover).)
- b. Ti pehe e Kule kehe Veka “...”
 then said ABSC kule GOALC Veka “...”
 ‘Then the kule said to the veka “...”’
 (From a story about a kule (a purple swamphen) and a veka (a crane).)

It is difficult to draw conclusions from capitalization conventions, but the use of capitals in these contexts at least suggests that noun is still [name] (that is, it has been type-shifted) although it appears with an overt determiner. This is not contradictory in our system, where nouns can be marked as [name] independently of the article, and where the overt article is not specifically marked as [common], but rather, is unmarked for this value. It is interesting that this neutral use of the overt determiner is possible only in such cases, indicating that the type-shifting here is visible to the selection or agreement process.

If it has not undergone type-shifting, a bare common noun is construed as mass, as in (17b), which differs from the type-shifted proper nominal in (17a) (Calrson 1977). It is important to note that this reading is possible for [name] nouns as well, as in (17c). This shows that the null proper determiner cannot be considered to be expletive (contra Longobardi 1994, 2005), since it plays a role in the definite interpretation of a noun phrase such as *Fido* in (17d). Conversely, the [name] feature on the head noun is retained in (17c), in spite of the lack of a determiner. We will return to this.

- (17) a. 
- b. 

- c. There was rabbit/Fido all over the floor.
- d. Fido is in the doghouse.

3.1.2 Type-Shifting: Proper to Common

As well as finding common nouns type-shifted to proper, we also find the reverse. When a proper noun is type-shifted to common it denotes a set of properties (see Thomsen 1997), as in (18).

- (18) a. The museum has bought a Picasso.
 b. She's a baby Einstein.
 c. He's the next Wayne Gretzky.

- (19) With each new Hollywood hit, the lead actress thinks she is the new Monroe, and the director does too. (from Sells 1986, cited in Lee 2003)

Type shifting of this sort also occurs cross-linguistically. In Niuean, we find a somewhat different example of proper to common type-shifting with names of locations, which, when common (and plural – see below), denote nationalities of peoples.

- (20) he tau Tonga
 ERGC PL Tonga
 'the/some Tongans'

3.2 Overt determiners with proper nouns

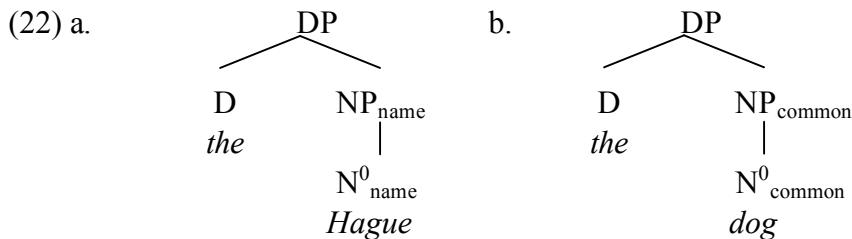
As touched on briefly above, some proper nouns occur with the overt definite determiner *the* (e.g. many geographic names *The Hague* (Borer 2005), *the Gulf of Mexico* (Harley 2004), and some country names). We treat these as [name] nouns that are idiosyncratically lexically marked as requiring the overt determiner. In our system, there is no proper/common contradiction in this configuration, as *the* is unmarked for this feature. The nominal phrase is interpreted as a [name] due to the lexical feature on *Hague*, similarly to *the Mole* in (15b). Note when a name is plural, languages are remarkably consistent in marking them with the determiner that is unmarked for proper/common. We will discuss this further below.

- (21) **Country Names** (see also Matushansky 2006)

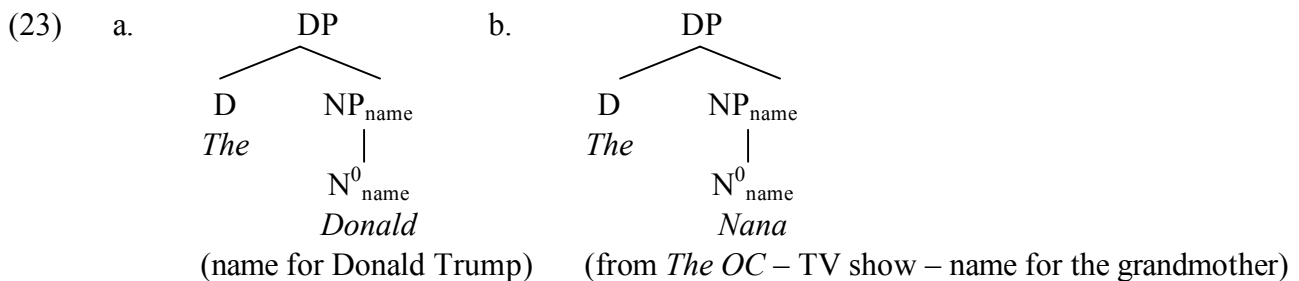
English	French	German
Niue	Nioué	Niue
India	L'Inde	Indien
China	La Chine	China
Iran	L'Iran	Iran

Iraq	L'Iraq	Der Irak
Switzerland	La Suisse	Die Schweiz
The United Kingdom	Le Royaume-Uni	Das Vereinigte Königreich
The Netherlands	Les Pay-Bas	Die Niederlande
The Philippines	Les Philippines	Die Philippinen
The United States	Les États-Unis	Die Vereinigten Staaten

Under our account, there are no semantic differences between phrases with [name] nouns that are lexically marked as requiring an overt determiner and [name] nouns that occur with the null determiner – since both the null determiner and *the* share the same semantic feature [definite]. Such nouns simply occur with a determiner that is unspecified for the features [proper] and [singular]. The difference between such nominals and definite noun phrases containing common nouns is the [name] feature marked on the noun itself:



When an overt determiner appears with a (non-type-shifted) [name] noun that does not require it, however, there is some extra effect, but no shift from [name].



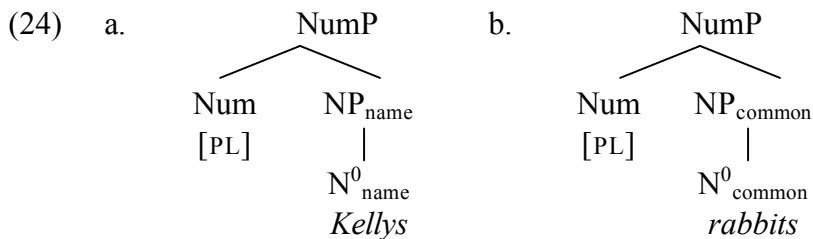
- c. The New York Review of Books has published a letter by Theodore John Kaczynski -- yes, the Unabomber, currently serving out several life sentences in a federal prison in Colorado -- taking issue with one writer's depiction of pygmies in ancient Egypt. The literary journal's editor, Robert Silvers, says that his staff took no special precautions when opening the notorious mail bomber's missive, admitting, "It only dawned on us afterward that it was *the* Theodore Kaczynski." (In Salon's *The Fix*, Wed. June 29, 2005 (reprinted from Lloyd Grove's Lowdown.)

We assume this is a pragmatic effect: more is said than is needed, giving rise to a Gricean-type

implicature, similarly to violations of the Avoid Pronoun Principle of Chomsky (1981). See also Borer (2005).

3.3 Plural proper nouns

When proper nominals are plural, the null definite determiner does not appear.⁴ Plural proper nominals, like bare plural common nominals, can be generic or existential but are not construed as definite. This constitutes a second argument against Longobardi's view that the proper determiner is expletive, since clearly it does add meaning (definiteness) to have null determination as opposed to no determination at all (generic bare plurals or bare mass nouns).



In the following examples we see that plural [name] nominals can be generic (25) or existential (26). Example (27) shows that a [name] noun that is lexically specified as requiring an overt determiner (e.g. *The Hague*) generally loses this determiner when the name is used as an existential:

- (25) a. Kellys tend to have long hair.
 b. Rabbits tend to have fluffy tails.
- (26) a. There are (some) Kellys in my class.
 b. There are some rabbits in the park.
- (27) a. There are Hagues in every country.
 b. ? There are The Hagues in every country.

Plural proper nominals require an overt definite determiner in order to pick out an identifiable, familiar, and unique set:

- (27) a. The Tremblays are coming for dinner.

⁴ This is not meant to be necessarily a universal claim, but it appears to be true across many languages. Li 1997 discusses the possibility of Mandarin plural marker *-men* appearing with proper names.

- b. ? Tremblays are coming for dinner.

We propose that the null definite determiner cannot appear with plural proper nominals because it is specified as [+singular]. This appears to be true across many languages (but see footnote 4). In Niuean, if a proper nominal is plural, it appears with the common determiner, as in ‘the Tongans’ above. This explains why plural names, such as those for bands in (28a), almost always appear with the overt determiner. If a name is singular, on the other hand, there is more freedom as to whether it is lexically specified to appear with the overt determiner or not, as in (28b). That said, it is important to note that naming is a creative process (especially in the arts) and exceptions and exocentric names are also possible, as in (28c). For such names, however, there is a strong tendency to add the overt determiner: our quick internet study has shown that usage fluctuates a great deal, even on the official websites for bands with names of the type in (28c), which is not the case for the examples of the type in (28a) and (28b).

(28) Band Names

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|-------|
| a. | The Beatles | |
| | The Cars | |
| | The Doors | |
| b. | The Who | Oasis |
| | The Clash | Kiss |
| | Le Tigre | Jet |
| c. | Flaming lips | |
| | Dixie Chicks | |
| | Red Hot Chili Peppers | |

Similarly, Borer (2005) notes that if a name is morphologically plural but treated as grammatically singular it does not require an over determiner:

- (29) a. Peaches, my neighbor’s cat, is dying. (from Borer 2005)
 b. Athens is a nice city.

3.4 Proper nouns as modifiers

Proper names do not appear with determiners when used as modifiers as in (30). Since in such contexts, the naming function of these words remains intact, this demonstrates that there is need for a feature such as [name], on the head noun itself. The naming function cannot be housed entirely in the proper determiner, since determiners are stripped in adjectival contexts, as in the examples in (31).

- (30) He’s a **Nixon**-hater.

- (31) a. Name = *The Hague*

CAFAC is a licensed adoption agency in the Province of Manitoba, accredited to work with **Hague** and non-**Hague** countries. [<http://www.cafac.ca/>]

- b. Name = *The Who*

One can only expect the unexpected as Ballard Lesemann's Bonham-heavy drumming propells the band through songs that veer wildly from speed-metal tempos to heavier **Who**-style guitar riff numbers. And then there are the surprise cover tunes. [<http://www.hayride.org/hayride-info.html>]

- c. Name = *The Bronx*

This is a **Bronx**-type environment [Borer 2005: 84.35b]

The non-use of the proper determiner when a [name] noun is used as a modifier can be seen more clearly in a language with normally obligatory overt proper marking, such as Niuean. In (32) *Niue* is used as a modifier, and we note that it appears bare, with no marking for either common or proper.

- (32) a. He falua tau fuata Niue
 ERGC some PL youth Niuean
 ‘some Niuean youths’
- b. he vaghau Niue
 LOCC language Niuean
 ‘in the Niuean language’

3.5 Section Summary

In this section we have argued that there are two features relevant for the interpretation of a nominal phrase. First, we have argued for an interpretable [definite] feature on the null determiner (contra Longobardi), as well as the features [proper] and [singular], which function as selectional or agreement features. The need for the definiteness feature is demonstrated by the fact that a noun such as *Fido* cannot have an individuated definite interpretation without the null determiner (see 17c). It is also demonstrated by the fact that a bare plural noun such as *Kellys* can be generic or existential, but not definite (see 25a, 26a). The addition of the [singular] feature accounts for the fact that the null determiners do not appear with plural [name] nouns. The feature [proper] is important also, as made clear in languages such as Niuean, where this feature is phonologically realized on case, or Catalan, where it can be realized on a normal determiner. In English as well as Niuean and Catalan, this feature co-occurs with [name] nominals. Second, we have argued for an interpretable feature [name] on nouns, which can be manipulated by type-shifting. This feature exists independently of the proper determiner, as

evidenced by the fact that nominals such as *The Hague*, *The Tremblays*, *Fido* in (17c) and *Kellys* in (25a) are understood as ‘proper’ in some sense in spite of the occurrence of the overt determiner in the first two instances, or of no determiner at all (mass and generic) in the last two instance. What we argue is that there are two levels of ‘proper’ – one consisting of the semantics of being a name, and the other, a grammatical feature realized at the determiner level, which marks a noun phrase as grammatically proper. Generally, [proper] determiners occur with [name] nominals, although there are several types of mismatches, as discussed above.

4.0 Persian

So far we have considered languages in which the proper/common distinction is realized phonologically within the extended noun phrase, whether they are languages with definite determiners (English, Catalan) or languages with robust case systems (Niuean). We now turn to a language that, at the formal level, lacks a definite determiner and very little case marking. There is nevertheless evidence for the features we have proposed.

In formal Persian there is no overt marker of definiteness. Consequently bare definite nouns and proper names appear to be indistinguishable (see Ghomeshi to appear).

- (33) a. sæg xabid
 dog slept.3sg
 ‘The dog slept.’
- b. kiyan xabid
 kiyan slept.3sg
 ‘Kiyān slept.’

In the informal (colloquial) language, however, there is a suffix marking definiteness, a stressed *-e*, that appears on unmodified common nouns. This suffix does not usually appear on proper nouns. The appearance of this suffix on proper nouns gives rise to Gricean effects.

- (34) a. sæg-e xabid
 dog-DEF.SG slept.3sg
 ‘The dog slept.’
- b. *kiyan-e xabid
 kiyan-DEF.SG slept.3sg
 (Possibly okay with a sense of diminution or endearment.)

The behaviour of stressed *-e* supports the idea that proper nouns are distinct from common nouns in Persian too by virtue of being specified as [+name]. Demonstratives in Persian are also sensitive to the proper/common distinction. They can co-occur with common nouns whether they are marked with stressed *-e* or not but cannot appear with proper nouns. This co-occurrence could be due to agreement or

selection, similarly to the co-occurrence of [proper] with [name].

- (35) a. in/un sæg(-e)
 this/that dog(-DEF.SG)
 ‘this/that dog’
- b. in/un sæg-a
 this/that dog-DEF.PL
 ‘these/those dogs’
- c. * in/un kiyan
 this/that Kiyan

In the colloquial system, then, Persian is similar to English in that the common determiner is phonologically realized and the proper determiner is null. Unlike English, however, *both* determiners are specified as singular in addition to being definite; stressed *-e* does not appear on plural nouns. Instead the plural marker marks both plural and definite (see Ghomeshi 2003).

- (36) a. sæg-a(*-e) xabid-æn
 dog-PL(*-DEF) slept.3PL
 ‘The dogs slept.’

The Persian plural marker cannot appear on proper names at all. Where English uses bare plurals in existential contexts, Persian uses bare singulars for both common and proper nouns.

- (37) ægær qomeši dær engelestan
 if ghomeshi in England
- baše, hætmæn famil-e ma-st
 be.SUBJ.3SG definitely family-EZ us-be.PRES.3SG
 ‘If there are Ghomeshis in England, they are definitely related to us.’

For the equivalent of noun phrases such as *the Tremblays*, Persian uses *the Tremblay family* or an associative construction.

- (38) kiyan ina resid-an
 Kiyan them arrived.3PL
 ‘Kiyan and his family arrived.’

We have shown in this section that colloquial Persian marks the proper/common distinction within DP and that this distinction is more closely tied together with number than it is in English. This is outlined in (39)

(39)	Formal		Informal
	Ø	[proper, singular, definite]	Ø [proper, singular, definite]
	Ø	[common, singular, definite]	-e [common, singular, definite]
	-ha	[common, plural, definite]	-ha [common, plural, definite]

5.0 Summary

So far, we have accounted for the following properties of English.

- (40) English
- [name] nouns take a null determiner, and are definite
 - [name] nouns can sometimes take an overt determiner
 - common nouns always take the overt determiner
 - existential and mass [name]/common nouns do not take a definite determiner
 - adjectival [name]/common nouns do not take a determiner
 - pluralized [name] nouns take the overt determiner

In Persian, we have accounted for the following properties.

- (41) Persian
- number and definiteness are bundled together
 - [name] nouns can appear with neither the singular nor the plural common determiner
 - [name] nouns cannot appear with demonstratives

In Niuean, we have accounted for the properties in (42).

- (42) Niuean
- proper nominals take a proper case marker
 - proper nominals are definite (whereas common nouns are not marked for definiteness)
 - plural proper/common nouns take the common case marker
 - adjectival proper/common nouns are not marked for proper/common or case

6.0 Extensions: Niuean proper & pronouns

In this section we briefly discuss the relation between [name] nouns and pronouns, which like names do not appear with determiners in many languages. We focus on Niuean, which uses the proper case article for pronouns as well as for names of people and places. The range of nouns that appear with proper marking is shown in (43). (See Strang 1962)

(43) **Types of nouns appearing with the proper case article in Niuean**

Pronouns

Names of people/places

Names of days/months

Kinship/*home*-type nouns/local nouns (*outside, front, sea, land*)

Types of nouns occurring with the common case article in Niuean

Names of ships, schools, organizations

Common nouns

Interestingly, while the proper case article appear to be incompatible with plural marking (that is, if the plural marker appears, the common article is used, as in (20)), pronouns can have a value for number. The pronominal paradigm is given in (44).⁵

(44) **Niuean Pronouns**

	Sg	Dual	Plural	Possessive Sg
1 Excl	au	maua	mautolu	aku
1 Incl	---	taua	tautolu	---
2	koe	mua	mutolu	au
3	ia	laua	lautolu	ana

In this system, the singular/non-singular distinction is usually marked by suppletion, while within the plural group, dual is marked by suffix *-ua* “two” and plural by the suffix *-tolu* “three”. Singular and plural pronouns appear with the proper case marker, as shown in (45).

(45)	a. e	au	b. a	au	c. e	mautolu	d. a	mautolu
	ErgP	1Sg	AbsP	1Sg	ErgP	2Pl.Excl	AbsP	2Pl.Exl

Above, we took the incompatibility of the proper marker with a plural-marked [name] to indicate that the proper determiner has a feature [singular]. If this were the case we would not expect it to appear with plural pronouns. However, note that our claim was that this feature is a selectional or agreement feature, rather than having an interpretable value. To explain how it is possible for Niuean pronouns to appear with the proper article with the [singular] value, let us consider the structure of the nominal phrase. The surface order of elements in the Niuean nominal clause is given in (43).⁶

⁵ Possessive pronouns consist of the Genitive case + pronoun. In case of singular possessive pronouns, a suppletive form of the pronoun is used, and these forms are given here.

⁶ The merge order of elements in Niuean is likely different from (43), as discussed in Kahnemuyipour and Massam 2006, while Massam and Sperlich (2000) discuss the surface order in more detail.

(43)

PRE	C	A	QU	N	CL	N	AD	NU	DEMO	PO	RE
POSI	A	R	AN	U	ASS	O	JEC	ME	NSTR	SSE	LA
TIO	S	TI	TIFI	M	IFI	U	TIV	RA	ATIVE	SSO	TI
N	E	CL	ER	BE	ER	N	E	L		R	VE
		E		R							CL
											AU
											SE

Number (in bold in (43)) in noun phrases occurs as a morpheme in the pre-nominal domain (generally *tau*), whereas number in pronouns is realized as a suffix on the pronoun (*-a* “dual” or *-tolu* “plural”). There are differences in placement and in morpho-phonology between the two. It seems likely, therefore that the number features in the pronominal system are of a distinct type from the number features in non-pronominal noun phrases. We propose that pronominal number is embedded in the pronominal phi phrase, in a position distinct from number in other noun phrases, which appears in the left periphery of the phrase. Now, if the [singular] feature on the proper article is such that it must select or agree with an XP which is not marked as [plural] in the Number Phrase, this requirement is met with pronouns, since they do not have a value for number in Number Phrase, that is, in the left periphery. This has interesting implications for the study of the structure of pronouns (cf. Dechaine and Wiltschko 2002, Harley and Ritter 2002), and raises issues for agreement mechanisms (though not in Niuean, which has no agreement) which we leave aside in this paper.

As a final comment, we note that Niuean provides evidence that [proper] bundles with [definite] across languages. In common noun phrases, Niuean has no definite vs. indefinite distinction (Masssam, Gorrie & Kellner 2006). Proper noun phrases, though, are always definite.

7.0 Conclusion

In this paper we have argued that there is a non-expletive determiner in both proper and common noun phrases, which has an interpretive value [definite] in addition to the agreement-like features [proper] and [singular]. The latter feature was posited as there is a widespread incompatibility between the proper determiner and specification for number in the left peripheral domain (but not with specification for number within the PhiP domain of pronouns, it seems). It is interesting to note that [proper] is usually bundled with other features – either definiteness, as in English, Catalan, or case as in Niuean. In the relevant languages, definiteness and case both reside in categories serving a determiner-like function, that is, categories which are obligatory in order for NPs to be treated by syntax, thus it seems there is a tendency for proper features to be hosted in the determiner cross-linguistically.

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