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Laying bare nominal determination

An introduction to the present volume

Albert Wall & Johannes Kabatek
University of Tübingen / University of Zürich

1. The challenge of studying bare nouns

In recent decades, research on bare nouns has produced a considerable bibliography, and the present volume further demonstrates the fact that nominal constituents without overt determiners offer a fascinating field of linguistic investigation. At first glance, something mysterious seems to be responsible for this fascination for absence, but looking at nominal determination in a broader sense, research on bare nouns is obviously only the other side of the coin of research on determiners: here, in turn, we find ourselves in a traditional area, and entire schools of linguistic theory such as the French *Guillaumiens* are founded on the interpretation of articles. Investigating bareness – a "negative" phenomenon in Hegelian terms – only makes sense if we consider it to be the significant counterpart of *something*, in this case the overt elements accompanying the noun.

Focusing on bare nouns and studying them in greater detail – rather than being "distracted" by determiners and modifiers – opens up the possibility of uncovering essential properties of nominal determination on many levels, up to the scale of typological variation. For instance, there has been converging interest from formal/generative as well as functional linguists in the systematic cross-linguistic variation of common noun denotations (or their "modes of being"). In both research traditions, influential proposals of typological/parametric variation have been cast on the basis of properties of bare common nouns (Chierchia 1998 and Rijkhoff 2002). These properties, of course, interact systematically with the determiners and modifiers found in each group of languages. Roughly, one could subsume the upshots of these studies in the establishment of three groups of languages: languages in which bare nouns are predominant, languages practically without bare nouns and languages in which bareness enters into significant opposition to the presence of other elements. Of course, these languages are the most interesting ones since they call for adequate explanation of this variation.

Most of the research done in recent decades refers to Indo-European languages, with a considerable amount of studies on Romance.[1] The Romance languages share with others, such as English or German, a series of typological characteristics that make them seem to be representatives of a cross-linguistically widespread type: they all have articles and other determiners. Additionally, in almost all of them, determiners are placed to the left of the noun, generally differentiating a DP with referential, extensional functions, and, to the right of the noun, a zone for elements specifying the intension, such as adjectives, PPs or relative clauses (cf. e.g. Seiler 1978). This striking similarity of European languages invites the Eurocentric view to confound cross-linguistic tendencies with universality, but if we look at the world's languages, we see that for instance the necessity of PPs or relative clauses to appear at the right of the noun is far from general, even in Indo-European.

With this general background in mind, it is not astonishing that we will also find considerable variation within those languages that oppose determinerless NPs to NPs with overt determiners. The contributions to this book give new insights into this variation in three ways:

– In a theoretical perspective, the bottom-up view (how to find an adequate theoretical account for the observed phenomena?) as well as the top-down perspective (is there an overall account for the different possibilities human languages offer?) are discussed in several contributions.
– Methodologically, not only the question of how "absence" can be measured in corpus research will be addressed but also other methodological issues such as introspection on bare nouns or aspects of production and perception.
– Empirically, the volume focuses mainly on BN phenomena in Romance languages, but it also explores Germanic, Slavic and Semitic languages comparatively.

Focusing on Romance languages is particularly interesting: being one of the two larger Indo-European language families which have developed a generalized article system, the picture in the Romance languages seems to be much more diversified than for example in English vs. German, or at least crucially different. Munn and Schmitt (2005), for instance, emphasize that there are many structures including bare singulars in different Romance languages which would be absolutely ungrammatical in English – in predicative as well as in argumental uses. As for the

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1.   Kolde (1996), compiling an impressive bibliography on nominal determination, expresses a similar view. Besides resuming the general state of the art in the field, the special focus of his bibliography are the languages English, German and French. Cf. also Footnote 7 of this introduction.

predicative cases, these structures include such well-known constructions as post-copular predication (1), but also reprise-commentaire-structures (2) and part/whole constructions (3). Additionally, Munn and Schmitt recall research in the vein of Bosque (1996) on argumental bare singulars as in (4).[2]

(1) a. Jean est médecin.   French
     b. Juan es   médico.   Spanish
     c. João é   médico.   Braz. Port.
         J.   is   doctor
         John is a doctor.

(2) *Pedro trajo   su mesa de camping, mesa que sirvio*   Spanish
     Pedro brought his table of camping, table that served

     para el   picnic.
     for   the picnic

     P. brought his camping table, a camping table that served for the picnic.

(3) *J'ai   acheté un chien à long museau.*   French
     I-have bought a dog   of long snout
     I bought a dog with a long snout.

(4) a. *No encuentro película que me guste.*   Spanish
         not find.1SG film   that me please.3SG.subj
         I did not find a film to my taste.

     b. *No he   visto ciudad que tenga más*   Spanish
         not have.1SG seen city   that has   more

         líneas de metro.
         lines   of metro

         I have never seen a city that has more metro lines.[3]

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2. These facts, among others, lead Munn & Schmitt to propose two syntactic parameters in order to account for the differences between "Romance" and "Germanic". Leaving aside the Romance data for a moment, recent research on Germanic also shows that such an approach meets several difficulties. For instance, according to Hallab (2011), the contrast in German post-copular predication between bare and indefinite NPs (*Hans ist Arzt* vs. *Hans ist ein Arzt*; the equivalents of example (1)) and detailed related data from comparative constructions, among others, suggest that only the former is predicational whereas the latter is better analyzed as a "true equative", and thus individual-denoting. This is not the place to evaluate Hallab's empirical and theoretical claims. Her observations, however, at best suggest that all current attempts of cross-linguistic (semantic as well as syntactic) parameterization need substantial refinement or, at worst, are not viable in their current conceptualizations given the manifold local variation cross- and intra-linguistically.

3. Argumental bare singulars in Spanish are subject to quite limited licensing conditions. Note the presence of negation and a restrictive relative clause in the examples in (4).

Furthermore, among the Romance languages we find the interesting case of Brazilian Portuguese, in which BNs are considerably less restricted. Not surprisingly, this language is used by Dayal (2011) in her overview article for demonstrating challenges for all current approaches to the syntax and semantics of bare nominals. However, while they surely give an insightful first impression of the facts, both Munn and Schmitt (2005) as well as Dayal (2011) only account for a subset of the observed data, and both also fail to look beyond possible syntactic and semantic parameters, while it is well-known that, for instance, information structure plays a crucial role. It is in this sense of a more integral approach that the present volume wants to contribute to the study of BNs. This approach also includes striving for a better permeation between schools of different orientation, one of the challenges that, in our view, should be lifted to a more prominent position in all linguistic paradigms.

This introduction is structured in the following way: After briefly setting the overall picture, we give an overview of the study of BNs from the Romance perspective in this first section, as well as some remarks on the concept of *bareness*. In Section 2, we point at the current challenges, starting with rather general questions about different approaches to the study of language and subsequently zooming into different domains, namely syntax, semantics, information structure, pragmatics and even phonology, and finally broadening the view again for questions of what is usually subsumed under the term variational linguistics: inter- and cross-linguistic variation, discourse traditions, normativity, typology, language contact and change. In the third chapter of the introduction, we outline how the different authors in the volume contribute to the clarification and development of the aforementioned issues.[4]

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4.   Most of the contributions to this volume originated as papers presented at the "International Workshop on Sentence-Initial BNs in Romance", held at the University of Tübingen and hosted by the project "The Dynamics and Variation of Nominal Determination" of the SFB833 in May 2011. Since several participants proposed to submit work not directly related to the core issues of the workshop, this broadened the thematic focus of the present collective volume to Romance BNs in general, but still the original issues of the workshop such as BNs at the left periphery, information structure and empirical and methodological questions characterize an important block of the contributions. The following authors discuss work developed significantly after the workshop: M.T. Espinal, S. Rothstein, R. Pires de Oliveira and S. Rothstein. We would like to thank all the participants and the external reviewers for the fruitful collaboration towards this volume.

1.1   Setting the scene

Since even the most ambitious overview of the research on nominal determination must remain piecemeal, we will limit ourselves to the Romance perspective on BN research and dispense with the establishment of the general picture of the discipline as a whole on the following pages. We refer readers interested in the state of the art to the introductions of other quite recent collective volumes such as Sleeman and Perridon (2011) (Romance/Germanic; diachrony & variation), Ghomeshi, Paul and Wiltschko (2009) (formal/generative crosslinguistic syntax & semantics), Müller and Klinge (2008) (combining "formalist" with "functionalist" perspectives) and Stark, Leiss and Abraham (2007) (typology, context effects & diachrony), Vogeleer and Tasmowski (2006) (cross-linguistic studies on indefinites, plurals, BNs and incorporation) and, finally, somewhat older, Coene and D'hulst (2003a, b). There, in the introductions as well as in the contributions, references to most of the classical works are given, and a good deal of the most prominent questions regarding determiners is addressed. The two towering monographs from the last decade should be named in the same breath: Rijkhoff (2002) and Alexiadou, Haegeman and Stavrou (2007) offer a wealth of in-depth analyses, each of them from a different theoretical perspective, but both with an impressive coverage of noun phrase related topics. We think that, by referring to these works, we do more justice to the field than by trying to boil this research down to a handful of remarks on these pages. Since, from our perspective, it is fair to say that many of the basic questions still remain unsettled (in each of the volumes as well as in general), the aforementioned introductions still serve as informative overviews of the field, although the bibliography is continually increasing in this dynamic area of research.

1.2   Research on BNs and Romance: A first survey

According to Berezowski (2009: 4–11), the crucial impulse for the systematic research of bare NPs[5] was the fusion of the philological research tradition with structuralist ideas in the first half of the 20th century. Philologists had elaborated detailed descriptions on how the articles in Indo-European developed out of demonstratives and the numeral *one*. Among other observations, they found

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5.   Actually, Berezowski traces the history of the 'zero article', which, however, coincides to a considerable extent with the study of bare NPs.

a gradual increase of article frequency over time to the point of being ostensibly obligatory in certain contexts. Structuralists insisted on the point that in a synchronic semiotic system, signs always operate in oppositions. Consequently, "[t]he insistence of the obligatory nature of article use was the result of the search for a criterion that would help in pinpointing the time when the definite article separated off from the demonstratives and became a distinct grammatical category" (Berezowski 2009: 9). Having established compulsiveness as one of the defining properties of the articles, the possibilities of absence of this element and cases of variation had to be better understood.

For the particular case of Romance, Friedrich Diez (1844: 16–42) already gives a comparative overview of article uses including detailed descriptions of the contexts from which the article is banned in several of the languages. Attributing to the articles the role of "letting an abstract term emerge as an indvidual",[6] Diez links the absence of the article either to non-individuating uses or the lack of necessity of overt marking in some cases, meticulously commenting on what, for him, are language-specific idiosyncrasies. He also points out that in certain contexts, variation is employed as a stylistic device. Essentially, however, what he offers is a commented list of BN constructions, in effect an already quite impressive one. As observed by Berezowski, the treatment of BNs reaches a new quality with the rise of structuralism. The aforementioned Gustave Guillaume and his debut work on articles (Guillaume 1919) can be taken as a quite early and influential contribution in which the opposition of "bare" vs. "non-bare" is consequently explored and later on developed into an overall theory of "virtual" vs. "actualized" states of language. It is also a rather early work postulating a "zero article".[7]

Although these developments gave rise to occasional case studies on BNs in several of the Romance languages,[8] providing rich sources of data and theoretical observations, the unification towards a more systematic and concentrated effort only became visible in such publications as the thematic issue in *Langages* (102, 1991), mainly addressing BNs in French, and a collective volume on Spanish

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6.   "[D]er Artikel […] soll einen Begriff als ein Individuum hervortreten lassen" (Diez 1844: 16).

7.   According to Berezowski (2009: 4), Jespersen (1949) is "the first significant work where [the zero article] is used to describe English usage".

8.   In his bibliography which focuses on research on nominal determination in German, English and French, Kolde (1996: 426–454) lists 35 titles of works dedicated primarily to BNs in French (for German and English the numbers are 24 and 17, respectively). For Spanish, works like Alonso 1951; Lapesa 1974 (reprinted in Bosque 1996) and Chapter 3 of Suñer 1982 coud be cited as representatives, among others. For Italian, Benincà 1980; Korzen 1982 and Renzi 1985 and, somewhat later, Longobardi 1994 were influential.

(Bosque 1996). Given these developments, Romance BN phenomena have also entered the canon of research questions of the larger (general) linguistic community interested in the syntax and semantics of noun phrases.

If we look at the last three decades of research, which has paid special attention to the semantics of bare NPs (following Dayal's historiographical periodization), evidence from Romance languages played a major role in linguistic theorizing predominantly in the second half, when linguists began to take "insights from the study of bare plurals beyond English to other languages" (Dayal 2011:1088). Longobardi (2001, 2003) and Chierchia (1998), instantiating "syntactic" and "semantic" theories of parameterization, respectively (Dayal 2011:1092, 1094), drew mainly on Italian to represent the "Romance parameter setting". This presumably conscious overgeneralization might be at least partly responsible for the subsequent, more fine-grained study of many Romance languages and Romance-based creoles with regard to the behavior of their BNs, sometimes formulated as direct responses or challenges to the aforementioned theories.

An account developed first and foremost to do justice to the behavior of Romance languages can be found in Dobrovie-Sorin and Laca (2003). The authors carve out the use of BNs in three Romance languages in greater detail[9] and come to the conclusion (contra Chierchia 1998) that in Spanish, Italian and Romanian bare plural objects as well as the very restricted bare singulars are better treated as predicates and not real arguments throughout; without making use of null determiners in a full DP structure à la Chierchia (1998). Consequently, they give up the idea of a trivial homomorphism between syntactic argument position and semantic type (Dobrovie-Sorin & Laca 2003:253). Dobrovie-Sorin et al. (2006) develop this approach, further arguing for special rules of pseudo-incorporation: a special type of existential closure ("semantic incorporation") for bare plurals and "predicate modification" for bare singulars and a distinction between the denotation of "intensional" and "extensional" properties for the latter, cf. also Laca (this volume) for further details and an extension of that initial claim but also Dobrovie-Sorin and Beyssade (2012) for significant modifications, such as partly giving up the predicative analysis and introducing a null determiner for bare singular arguments.

In parallel, new analyses on syntactic grounds and attempts to link them to semantic notions were proposed. Munn and Schmitt (2005) try to capture the Romance data arguing for a syntactic parametric difference between Romance and Germanic and associate the Romance phenomena with a "split" DP, separating a

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9. The paper focuses mainly on the similarities in Spanish, Italian and Romanian but also treats French and European Portuguese and even contains an independent view on Brazilian Portuguese.

head of its own for number and allowing Romance DPs to lack the number phrase when it is not semantically necessary, while Germanic would have a "fused" functional DP head. The two authors can also be credited for drawing more attention to Brazilian Portuguese (Schmitt (1996), Schmitt and Munn (1999)), in which BN facts very different from the overall Romance picture can be found.

Finishing this first overview, one might mention the approach of Zamparelli (2008), who also argues for syntactic layers above NP in the case of bare plurals and occasionally refers to them as DPs, however without being very explicit about null determiners. Still, this might be taken as an approach which rejects semantic incorporation in the sense of Dobrovie-Sorin and Laca. Additionally, Zamparelli points to some problems of compositionality for approaches which assume the possibility that BNs may denote kinds (e.g. Krifka 1995; Chierchia 1998, cf. also Pires de Oliveira & Rothstein (this volume)). And finally, he also proposes a different treatment for bare singular predicates: He tries to capture the behavior of this restricted class of nouns that may appear without an overt determiner by analyzing them as denoting activities or relations and as being defective for the feature of (abstract) gender. Although his approach is not entirely complementary to the pseudo-incorporation approach, it is interesting to note that while Zamparelli tries to keep the syntax rather uniform and opts for accepting irregularities in the semantic features, the incorporation approach leaves the semantic features intact and, rather, is willing to dispense with the uniform syntax. A comparison in greater detail or an evaluation of the different proposals is beyond the scope of this introduction. Our aim is merely to show the very different ways researchers have taken (illustrated here on the basis of formal/generative approaches) and that many controversies still remain open to future investigations. Further open questions which were not directly involved or only played a minor role in the research cited above will be considered in Section 2.

1.3   A word on "bareness"

It is good scientific practice that concepts and terminology should be clearly defined before they are used. This justified demand involves some trouble in the case of BNs. Already a quick look at the literature tells us that the terms "bare" or the concept of "bareness" neither refer to a uniform phenomenon nor are they generally defined in any precise way. Usually the definition (if given at all) includes the condition of lack or absence of all or at least certain (overt) modifications on a noun or in a noun phrase, but since languages vary considerably in the ways a noun (phrase) may be modified, "bareness" can take on quite different shapes. This loose use of the term must be highlighted, and the risk of confusion should not be taken as negligible since frequently only a reduced set of instantiations of

bareness (probably in most cases just one) is actually under discussion in a given work. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that when the term is found in another work, it is used for the same phenomenon or in the same way. Also, the relation between the concerned phenomena is not always straightforward, although many cross-linguistic links in the effects of bare forms could be established. There is no need to look at "exotic" languages in order to observe the following: Most of the studies on English in the tradition of the classical paper by Carlson (1977), for example, deal with plural nouns which are bare in the sense that they lack an overt pre-nominal determiner.[10] In studies on other languages, however, – and Brazilian Portuguese can be taken as a case in point – NPs lacking plural morphology as well as determiners are the cases which linguists have focused on mainly, i.e. the noun overtly appears without any sort of modification. The more (optional) marking a language allows on its nouns, the more distinctions make use of the presence or absence of overt marking (e.g. mass-count, case), and the more different elements may be combined, then the more degrees of "bareness" are conceivable in principle. Other means of modification also play a role (cf. e.g. Dayal 2004), so nouns modified by adjectives, relative clauses etc. which lack determiners still may be eventually treated as "bare". With the increasing awareness of the many shapes of bareness, authors started to qualify the bare forms under discussion, which led to a proliferation of labels: "count bare nouns", "bare mass nouns", "bare plurals", "bare singulars", "bare NPs", "bare DPs", "bare predicates" (Zamparelli 2008), "fully bare nominals" (Kihm 2010), etc. The absence of case forms or classifiers, for example, led to (even) more "bare" terminology (Korean, Mandarin) for other phenomena. And, even in Romance, the label "bare" was extended to other contexts, for instance Cinque's (1995) "bare quantifiers", cf. Floricic (this volume) or "bare numerals" (cf. index in Vogeleer and Tasmowski 2006).

Bareness in the aforementioned use could therefore simply be taken as a pre-theoretic characterization of linguistic surface material, using "surface" in a theory-neutral fashion. However, it is then not clear whether it makes sense at all to put this material together for a unified linguistic analysis. If the forms actually are NOT bare at the crucial level of linguistic analysis (remember the case of English plurals just mentioned), why should they be a special case of nominal determination? Another possibility would be to define the term in a theory-specific way, for example reserving it for NPs which, from a purely formal syntactic viewpoint, lack at least some functional projections (or layers). In fact, this is what is sometimes found in the literature. Yet, again, it is not carried out consistently, and a clear consensus is not in sight. We can take the most well-known cases for illustration once more: English

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10.   We ignore for a moment the fact that frequently some covert element in its place is assumed so that, at a certain level of analysis, it is NOT bare any more.

bare plurals are standardly assumed to be DPs (Carlson 2003), while bare singulars usually are taken to be just NPs, but in Pérez-Leroux, Gavarró Algueró and Roeper (2011), for example, both are referred to as "bare". The possibilities of "stages of bareness" (presence/absence of null DPs, NumPs etc.) consequently are mirrored here. Remember, also, the notable use of "bare NPs" and "bare DPs" mentioned above. All this indicates that "bareness" is, at best, a loose cover term for absence of something in the nominal domain. Given that the universal semantic function of determination as such can never be absent (cf. Coseriu (1955–56) as well as e.g. Stark, Leiss & Abraham (2007)), independently of how it is analyzed, the resulting conclusion is that "bareness" can never refer to something like "lack of determination at all" (cf. also Carlson 2003). It rather describes a certain way of establishing determination opposed to other means with the presence of overt elements.

What all the different approaches and analyses of bareness have in common is that they realize the importance of this general, and possibly trivial-sounding, observation and try to exploit it by pursuing an "indirect" approach: The knowledge of the whole range of distribution and possibilities of interpretation of BNs in a language, which of course in its own right already is important for achieving empirical/descriptive adequacy, is important in understanding the core characteristics of nouns and noun phrases in that language. It reveals what they can do (how they can be/are used) without the "support" of overt determiners – an indispensable step for a precise understanding of what determiners actually do.

1.4   Really bare, just zero or rather without shape?

Before we proceed, we would like to draw attention to two objections/caveats which already loom in the background for quite some time but should not be forgotten, although they have the flavor of an era of linguistics which some researchers might claim we have overcome: Firstly, it is wisdom stemming from structuralism that linguists should look at what is overtly marked and not at what is not marked when categorizing, since grouping not marked forms together for analysis by necessity will lead to "diffuse" categories. Secondly, there is the concern about zero forms/empty categories/silent material which can take more or less radical shapes, even within generative grammar.[11] Essentially, though, these concerns can be reduced to a simple question: Once we start postulating such elements – where

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11.   Featherston (2001) e.g. motivates his empirical inquiries with such controversies regarding some of the "classical" empty categories such as zero pronouns and traces; he claims that there is experimental evidence for some of them. Zero articles, however, do not take part in his experiments.

do we stop? Different answers can be found in the literature that proposes such categories, at least for the "zero article(s)". However, as long as this basic question remains widely controversial, it is comprehensible that, for many researchers, it is hard to put much trust in the given answers.

Of course these two objections are not to be taken as instantiations of eternal taboos, but they might help to evaluate current views on BNs. From the first objection, we might derive that we should not look for only one licensing factor for BNs in a language a priori and that, in this case, the most "economic" analysis is not necessarily to be favored. But, on the other hand, as Harder (2008: 13) puts it, "no marking of X" at a certain point may turn into "marking of no X", and in such a case there should be some consistency if it is actually a marking strategy. Paying more attention to such distinctions might help in separating cases which superficially look similar but actually might need different analyses.

In the case of empty categories, the lesson to be learned is not that easy to understand. While, for many researchers, postulating empty categories resembles an unsound way of (academic) life (cf. e.g. the call for "wholewheat syntax"),[12] others introduce them without qualms,[13] and apparently both with good reasons. For many researchers, the decisive evidence for "silent" determiners is (still) missing, and things that can't be observed directly are suspect in principle. On the other hand, though, if a unified analysis with a direct mapping of syntactic and semantic categories and assuming a universal DP structure is pursued, it seems almost impossible to achieve this without "generalizing to(wards) the worst case", a strategy by which, in principle, the most heterogeneous data can be unified. If proper names are to be included in the analysis, adding an expletive version of the overt article (many proper names take articles in a wide range of Germanic and Romance languages (and beyond)) also seems to be inevitable. This immediately raises the question about a silent counterpart of the expletive. Moreover, since BNs have different semantic values and distributions, this might call for more silent elements in the DP. Once this strategy is accepted, much more silent material is straightforwardly identifiable (cf. e.g. Leu 2008 for the nominal domain). Note that even an intermediate position which could be proposed as a common sense principle is not easy to find:[14] To say that one should be as economic as

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12.   Cf. e.g. Kihm (2010: 11), after Cooper (1982), but much fundamental criticism independent of that could be cited.

13.   Cf. e.g. Leu (2008: 6): "[…] there may be more silent elements/structure that has been thought".

14.   Hendriks et al. (2010: 143) might be an example of such an intermediate position: "We try to avoid null elements in the functional projections Num and D in the absence of evidence that they need to be projected."

possible with "unpronounced but syntactically and semantically active material" (beside not being a very precise criterion) implies that in the end something is wrong with postulating such forms. Since there is no consensus in sight, we simply point to the open question and leave this issue unsettled. We will, however, return to the problem on the following pages.

2. The challenges

2.1   Combining approaches

Interestingly, all of the collective volumes mentioned in Section 1.1 have an entry for "bare" forms (occasionally also for "zero") in their indexes. On the other hand, the monumental typological volume on the NP by Rijkhoff (2002) omits these entries entirely. This might corroborate the impression the reader might have at this point of the introduction, namely, that the study of BNs is a purely formal/generative discipline. However, we believe this should not be (and in reality is not) so. As a matter of fact, the indexes mentioned above also refer to contributions centered in other frameworks. Of course it is no surprise that when the goal of the enterprise essentially consists of an explicit compositional semantic analysis and its mapping onto autonomous (presumably universally principled) syntactic properties of a language in a bottom-up approach, the distribution of BNs will be a quite intriguing challenge for which one would really want to have a satisfying answer. On the other hand, when "in terms of the descriptive logic of [a certain] account, the category of determiners has no obvious place" anyway, as according to Harder (2008:2) for instance in the case of Dik's Functional Grammar and its successors (such as Rijkhoff (2002)), the question of zero forms, or of bareness, hardly will be at the top of the agenda (as it used to be even within the generative tradition). However, we believe that independent of theoretic orientation, a better understanding of the use natural languages make of BNs in general would be profitable, at best in combining insights from different approaches. Not wanting to leave this last statement a purely abstract wish and taking it quite seriously, in the following, we give three examples of how it might come true:

One quite interesting view from a functional perspective that should be developed further with respect to bare nominals is Harder's (2008) analysis of the "determiner slot" because, while arguing on functional grounds, he assigns a semi-autonomous status to it. According to Harder, "[a] 'structure' that always transparently reflected all online, emergent functional pressures would not really correspond to its name" (2008:12). The basic idea, though somewhat simplified, is that apparently functionally "redundant" or otherwise apparently unmotivated

material may well have a certain function, "the result of a functional bias towards a certain degree of uniformity"; "the determiner slot is functionally motivated not in terms of positive content, but in terms of a paradigmatic choice associated with it – the choice between identifying and non-identifying reference" (Harder 2008:13). For Harder, the crucial development for such a choice is "when the absence of any element indicating definite reference comes to indicate that definite reference is not a possible interpretation" (Harder 2008:13). In order to reach such a point, the presence of the respective element must show some regularity and a frequency high enough for its absence being perceived as such, i.e. it should have reached a certain degree of grammaticalization.

This idea is not entirely new, and specifically for the Romance languages there have been proposals like Kabatek (2002), who argues that the grammaticalization of an element or a category may well lead to a "secondary grammaticalization" of the not marked form in the sense of "marking of no X", although the formulations diverge somewhat (for more details cf. also Kabatek 2008). In Kabatek (2002), several Romance languages are considered, and their use of this opposition is discussed. In this context the author also points at recent developments in Brazilian Portuguese on the basis of which the standard view of a grammaticalization cycle for Romance article systems is called into question: At a certain point, the pathway of grammaticalization seems bifurcating and articles can either choose the extension of obligatorization or to be simply omitted – both ways leading to a loss of functional values of the article.

Another line of inquiry in which the combination of approaches looks very promising is a closer investigation of the denotation of bare forms in various languages. Different approaches have developed quite diverging accounts, but there seems to be enough shared common ground for taking over insights in each direction. In model theoretic semantics, "reference to kinds and the semantic operations involved in kind formation" (Dayal 2011:1088) are a recurrent topic for argumental non-massive-BNs, while non-bare argumental NPs usually are analyzed as predicates which need saturation by some other element in the sentence. However, many questions about the formal theory of kinds are still open (cf. Pires de Oliveira & Rothstein (this volume)). When it comes to mass nouns, one of the open questions is whether the model should make use of different(ly) structured domains (the traditional solution; Link 1983; Landman 1991) or just one (cf. e.g. Chierchia 1998, 2010), where, for mass nouns, the notion of atoms simply remains vague. The exclusiveness of the mass/count distinction as a denotational primitive raises immediate questions in languages without (obligatory) plural morphology. In these cases, one has to say that in some languages all nouns are mass in a certain sense, which often clashes with other means of distinguishing cumulative from non-cumulative reference in these languages. Rijkhoff (2002), on the

other hand, proposes a more fine-grained classification of the use of denotational domains in the languages of the world on the basis of a typological survey on a big and balanced sample of languages. He comes to the conclusion that the mass/count distinction (in the sense of (non)cumulative reference), which he captures in the features [± homogeneous], and which corresponds to "likepartedness" or "dissectiveness" (Rijkhoff 2002: 51), actually is orthogonal to another more basic distinction, which he identifies by the features [± shape], the designation of a spatially bounded property. The criterion for [± shape] is the possibility of direct combination of the noun with a cardinal numeral, i.e. counting without having to introduce the "units" overtly. An interesting difference to the above mentioned model-theoretic approaches is the observation that the feature [homogeneous] may be entirely absent for certain noun classes. The [shape] feature, however, is always relevant, i.e. nouns either combine directly with cardinal numerals or they don't. This gives rise to a three-way distinction rather than a two-way distinction for [homogeneity] and leads to an overall classification of six nominal subcategories, which are called "Seinsarten" (modes of being). "Mass nouns" are [–shape; +homogeneous], while "singular object nouns" are [+shape; –homogeneous] and correspond largely to what is commonly subsumed under the "mass/count distinction", but in the Rijkhoff system these are just two out of six basic classes. The most interesting and relevant additional noun class for our purposes is the one Rijkhoff calls "set nouns", which only have the feature [+shape]. They combine directly with cardinal numerals (probably also with other quantificational elements) but in these cases usually lack plural marking, although the language may have some means of (or even quite regular) plural marking. This is interesting here because, from this perspective, "number neutrality", a property quite important in the context of BNs, comes out as a basic denotational property in some languages but not in others. Most recent approaches, however, try to derive their behavior uniformly (Dobrovie-Sorin & Beyssade 2012; De Swart & Farkas 2010). For Romance, these observations and distinctions become relevant when we look at the language which behaves most differently from the others with respect to nominal determination: Brazilian Portuguese. In certain varieties of that language, nouns show a behavior which could justify a treatment as "set nouns" rather than "singular object nouns". Usually, this issue is omitted in the literature on nominal bareness:[15] What has traditionally been taken to be stigmatized "lack of agreement", seems, upon closer investigation, to be avoidance of redundant plural marking and might lead to an exclusive system as for instance in Hungarian, a prototypical language with "set nouns". If this is correct,

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15. A remarkable exception offering interesting facts (even if a deeper analysis is still lacking in this contribution) is Müller (2002).

it might be taken as a useful source of arguments for the special properties of this language (cf. Wall (this volume) and Pires de Oliveira & Rothstein (this volume) for different, though, not necessarily mutually exclusive/opposing approaches). Consequently, "number-neutrality" might not only be a consequence of the configurational setup of the functional layers "above" the NP but alternatively could be a property of the noun itself without automatically rendering it as mass. The exact mapping within the denotational domains may only have indirect influence on the overt distribution of determiners, but the arguments for different analyses for determiners will differ considerably – and here the potential of combining approaches or taking over insights has hardly been touched upon. Much can be expected from a more detailed comparison of such insights and what they might mean for the different approaches.

Finally, a third phenomenological block seems to lend itself to a combination of approaches: Dobrovie-Sorin et al. (2006: 55) claim, on the basis of five Spanish and five Romanian examples which are contrasted with one Romanian and two Spanish ones, that certain bare singular object constructions "seem[…] to be used mainly when reference is made to sets of events which are culturally institutionalized or which are conceived as common activities".[16] Zamparelli (2008: 126) goes in a similar direction by separating out some "bare predicates" as "well-established activities". He admits that these are not "hard-and-fast constraint[s]" but does not go further into detail. Obviously, to develop such claims in greater detail would require a completely different approach and the previous consideration of many additional questions in which neither Dobrovie-Sorin et al. nor Zamparelli are primarily interested. However, such questions surely could be answered from a socio- and/or cognitive linguistic perspective eventually also giving rise to a better understanding of the interrelation of the formal, cognitive and social dimensions of languages. Similar considerations could be made about another recurrent topic in this domain, namely the notion of "well-established kinds", to which Zamparelli alludes, too (cf. also e.g. Lawler (1973), Carlson (1977)).

2.2   Towards an agenda of BN studies

Having been the "stepchild" of researchers interested in nominal determination,[17] BNs still have to be recognized as a topic of inquiry in its own rights because usually they are still tacitly and systematically subsumed under other phenomena, usually

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16.   Their examples include such cases as *Juan ha comprado casa/*?*castillo* (literally '*J. bought house/castle*') or *Maria tiene coche/casa en la playa/tarjeta de crédito* (literally '*M. has car/ beach house/credit card*').

17.   Cf. e.g. Berezowski (2009: 1–11) for the history of the treatment of the "zero article" in English linguistics.

"indefiniteness" (cf. e.g. Dobrovie-Sorin & Beyssade 2012), and rarely are investigated from a more independent perspective. It will not be possible to develop a comprehensive agenda for the investigation of BNs on these introductory pages but since such an agenda is still a desideratum, we will give a (necessarily) short and incomplete list of what it might look like.

Looking at BNs from a more independent perspective only makes sense if there is evidence that they are not simply some form of residue in a sub-domain of the noun phrase structure but actually interact with different components of the language and have impact on the study of all relevant linguistic levels: the universal, the historical and the individual (in the sense of Coseriu 1985). If we want to take into account considerations such as those by Kabatek or Harder – or if recent proposals which extensively argue for a competition-based model of the forms in the nominal domain (Hendriks et al. 2010; DeSwart & Farkas 2010) are to be worked out in more detail – this not only would make sense but actually would be indispensable.

a.   *Syntax and Semantics*

Interestingly, it is precisely the competition-based study of Hendriks et al. (2010) which features a "typology of bare nominals" in the heading of their Chapter 7.2. They give a (admittedly incomplete) classification of six groups of languages for different configurations of article use and number morphology, drawing on data identified as crucial from previous (mainly formal) accounts. The data are modeled in more or less standard OT-style by positing a set of constraints and proposing different rankings of them for the different groups of languages.[18] One of the strengths of this account surely is that BNs no longer disappear behind the many other interesting phenomena in the noun phrase that might attract attention but regularly show up as competitors to be reckoned with in the tableaux. The actual classification and implementation by Hendriks et al., however, only can be taken as a starting point; a model of competition in the nominal domain will need a much more in-depth analysis, even to account for the languages that Hendriks et al. cite in their classification. For instance, their "class iii" groups together Bulgarian, Brazilian Portuguese and Modern Hebrew. But there are notable differences between these languages which will be discussed at some length in this volume (Pires de Oliveira & Rothstein on Brazilian Portuguese, Rothstein on Modern Hebrew, Gorishneva on Bulgarian). Therefore, for a better understanding of the syntax and semantics of BNs, there is much to be cleared on empirical

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18.   This is not the place to delve deeper into the many open questions of optimality theoretic syntax (not to mention semantics), but cf. Müller (2000) or Newmeyer (2002), among others.

grounds, beside the many open questions, controversies and different approaches that have led to an impressive fragmentation of the study of noun phrases in natural languages.

b.   *Pragmatics and Information Structure*

The idea that information structure and other not primarily syntactic and semantic principles play a role in the use of BNs is not entirely new (cf. e.g. Cohen 2001; Krifka 2004), but the consequences of these proposals have neither been worked out in greater detail for a number of languages nor systematically challenged. Due to the historical development of this volume (cf. Footnote 4), several papers pick up precisely these questions, mainly for BNs in Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese (Laca, Leonetti, Wall), but also for a different phenomenon in Italian (Floricic).

c.   *Phonology and processing*

Also not brand new is the idea that at a certain stage of grammaticalization, articles start to serve as processing cues. Berezowski (2001) resumes some of the older literature on that line of thought. More recently, Hawkins (2004, 2011) argued in a similar direction about the function of articles under the notion of NP-constructors. The question that arises here is how much importance a language posits in its NP-constructors which usually are unstressed, reduced forms, occasionally consisting of just one phonological segment and in an extreme case are represented merely by a vowel. In the latter cases the salience of the processing cue and therefore its justification are threatened. Romance languages seem to behave quite differently with regard to this question (cf. Wall 2011): First, there is a sharp cut between BrP and the "European" varieties in that the first regularly and systematically allows for contractions which lead to a complete loss of the cue in the signal[19] while the latter have quite robust phonological rules that block such contexts and guarantee the salience of the article. Secondly, there also seems to be gradience in the strength of these blocking requirements within the European varieties – some languages even avoid problematic contexts (no vowel-vowel sequences when an article is involved) while at the other edge of the continuum only the cases which could be most problematic for saliency are blocked. Both the phonology of the Romance articles as well as the exact role of the articles as NP-constructors in Romance, as far as we can see, has not been subjected to comparative inquiries. Marked determiner use in special registers also has been argued to be conditioned by processing efficiency (de Lange, Vasic & Avrutin 2009), cf. item (e) "Discourse traditions" further down.

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19.   An exemplification of this phenomenon can also be found in Wall (this volume).

d.   *Varieties, written and spoken registers, normativity*

Most of the accounts developed so far for BNs in Romance languages deal with what is meant to be the "standard" variety, rarely are they based on samples of actual language use. Much less is known about diatopic varieties and about different registers, such as written vs. spoken language and the influence of normative forces, especially on the former. This consideration is important here mainly because in most accounts for the presence and absence of determiners, much of the analyses hinges on the notion of obligatory. What most studies either fail to specify or simply ignore is how much of the obligatory actually stems from the linguistic system, and how much is due to codification and acquired for certain registers by exposure to prescriptive norms etc. It is not a priory clear that deviations (from what is usually taken to be the "standard" or what out-of-the blue intuitions might reveal) in actual language use are automatically irrelevant because performance is something different from competence. While the latter is a quite obvious truism (which might be more or less trivial, depending on theoretical persuasions), one should resist the illusion that intuitions are immune to performance factors; some would even claim that they themselves are performance-based.[20] Therefore, the more complete a picture we get, the more of such admittedly delicate and complex issues we can at least start to disentangle.

e.   *Discourse traditions*

The fact that certain types of text as well as other forms of linguistic communication are conditioned by tradition, i.e. by previous utterances in a linguistic community under certain circumstances, have led to the development of theoretical accounts unifying such phenomena under the notion of "discourse tradition" (cf. e.g. Kabatek, Obrist & Vincis (2010), Koch (2008) as well as Sáez Rivera (this volume) and references therein). Such traditions eventually allow for the deviation from the grammar of a language[21] but also may have an influence on it. This is an important observation for the study of nominal determination, if we recall such well-known facts as "article drop" in "diary style", "telegraphic style" or headlines, "topic drop" etc. The main question here is obviously how much of the phenomena we find is due to grammar and how much to discourse traditions? And more basically: How exactly are the relations between grammar and discourse traditions to be understood in a specific case? That this question does not have a trivial answer can be illustrated with the following example: Several studies have treated the

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20.   This point still is discussed very controversially, see Wall (this volume, Footnote 20).

21.   Or they simply represent a particular "grammar of headlines", see e.g. Simon-Vandenbergen 1981.

absence of articles in newspaper headlines from different perspectives and argued for different sources for their characteristics. It is not a matter of dispute that if we accept the notion of discourse tradition, newspaper headlines would be a clear instance of them. Their widespread phenomena – such as article drop –, therefore, would not only be ascribed to external pressures such as space limitations but also would be envisaged as a characteristic feature of the tradition in the sense that an author may not necessarily be concerned about how to cut down the number of characters when dropping some articles in a headline but simply might be following the established template which is characterized by them contrary to what the grammar of the language usually would allow. Discourse traditions, much like textual genres, are not necessarily language-specific and therefore seem to be also interesting for the study of language contact (cf. Sáez Rivera (this volume)). However, an alternative approach based on information theory (de Lange (2008); de Lange, Vasic & Avrutin (2009)) holds that article drop in headlines is predicted by grammatical and processing factors in the sense that different article systems turn out to have asymmetric distributions of their items, which leads to different "levels of activation" needed for specific forms in different languages, so it might be more advantageous from a processing perspective to drop articles in one language than in another. De Lange, Vasic and Avrutin interpret the finding that, in their corpus of Italian and Dutch newspaper headlines, significantly more Dutch articles are dropped as a confirmation of their prediction. Since both approaches apparently took little (if any) notice of each other, the exact relationship of all the factors involved remains a further opportunity to bring together arguments and findings from different sides of interdisciplinary linguistic work.

2.3   Methodological considerations for future research

The methodological toolbox for linguists is steadily gaining new items, and existing ones are being refined. Electronic corpora are growing up to the size of the WWW, including the linguistic documentation of past centuries, and algorithms for automatized steps of analysis are getting more and more powerful. Furthermore, experimental techniques from cognitive or even neurosciences have come to stay. Monumental databases such as the WALS reflect the increasing importance of the cross-linguistic perspective and the thriving for the most complete picture possible. This is a huge leap forward since different data types can be used together in order to reduce or even compensate for the shortcomings of each of them. Additionally, it is an exciting and stimulating perspective to look for (cognitively as well as typologically) more "realistic" formulations of grammars and their implementation in computer applications or even some form of artificial intelligence. While this surely must be welcomed not only as a sign of the vitality

and progress in the field, we would like to highlight two challenges which become increasingly more evident exactly through this process and for which a satisfactory answer is not in sight. The first is more closely tied to the study of BNs, namely the problem of recognizing and handling "nothing"; while the other one is more general and concerns the conceptual link between methodological diversity and the unification in the interpretation of the data. While being a rather general problem, it is especially important in the study of bare nominals since the study of bare forms seems to be in special need of a combination of methods through which the question of the interpretation of the data regularly comes up.

The problem of recognizing and dealing with "nothing", i.e. the absence of an overt determiner in an NP, regularly poses problems in many research paradigms. The most trivial case might be the automatic search for such constructions in an electronic corpus, one of the most basic standards for the approach to any kind of research question concerning language. While workarounds and the investment of man-power in principle could at least diminish the problem, its consequence is that we actually have very little reliable frequency data about the occurrences of BNs. Experience has shown that exhaustive corpus research may have surprising results, even for cases where intuitions of native speakers are quite robust. With regard to bare noun phenomena, moreover, in many cases we are confronted with conflicting intuitions, which is precisely one of the main reasons why the combination of methods is so interesting here. However, approaching BNs with experimental designs has its own inherent problems: Presenting stimulus material where one of the manipulated variables is the presence vs. absence of overt linguistic material may lead to several unwanted artifacts in the results or excludes certain experimental paradigms directly, as for instance those measuring reaction times on-line, which require an exact matching of the sentential segments. Sometimes even off-line approaches encounter problems: Since the variation of the presence vs. absence of articles often correlates with register variation and usually normative pressure comes into play as an additional factor, it is quite difficult to control for these factors for instance in Acceptability Judgment Tasks (AJTs) on the basis of written sentence material. This does not mean that the results of such studies are uninterpretable in general but rather, that we need a better understanding of the processes underlying language-specific behavioral tasks and experience-based standard techniques for the experimental investigation of syntactic and especially semantic problems. Pioneering comparative studies such as Ionin et al. (2011) on bare and not-bare NPs, despite all the obvious problems, are nonetheless promising first steps in this direction.[22]

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22.   For a more elaborated discussion of this point as well as for concrete proposals and examples cf. also Wall (this volume).

This stronger (re)focusing on empirical issues has been welcomed almost unanimously by the linguistic community, a fact rare enough to raise some suspicion. One case in point is that, of course, the idealized notion of linguistic competence as the target of investigation is still widely held as very useful, if not absolutely necessary. If we maintain that such an abstract notion should play a role in grammatical theory, we have to face the problem that all data types are somewhat detached from this notion and each data type possibly in a different way. Therefore, concrete analyses will vary considerably depending on the number of data types included in the study of the respective phenomenon. The interpretation of linguistic data has never been straightforward (to a certain degree contrary to everyday practice), but as long as data types were considered in isolation, the problem was less urging than it is today.

This problem has already been noticed and first steps towards its solution are already being made. For instance, Adli (2011) proposes to systematically relate different data types and executes this program to a certain extend with respect to the relation of AJTs and corpus (frequency) data. However, he links AJTs to competence/knowledge and corpus data to performance, by no means an innocent move: "It is important to clearly differentiate the grammar system from usage, something that usage-based models ignore. These two notions relate to different sources of linguistic evidence, namely judgment and frequency, and we need to further understand the relation between them. Future research should also analyze data on syntactic phenomena that can be considered as (semantically similar or equivalent) optional variants, in order to take into account grammar-internal, structural variation" (Adli 2011:399). While the first association is clearly problematic (cf. e.g. the discussion in Devitt (2010)), it must be added that Adli considers neither of the two data types as central and the other as epiphenomenal, an important step in order to objectively unveil their interdependencies. From our perspective, at the moment, the advance of multi-methodological approaches should be accompanied by a more active discussion of this problem of data interpretation in order to avoid the impression that it has not been recognized, or even that there is none. It goes without saying that the systematic investigation of the relationship between data types should be extended beyond the judgment/frequency pair.

3.   The contributions in this volume

Taking data and analyses of Romance languages, especially Brazilian Portuguese, as a point of departure and comparison, **Susan Rothstein's** paper *Some Cross-linguistic Aspects of Bare NP Distribution: Modern Hebrew and Brazilian Portuguese* takes a closer look at previous analyses of BN distribution in Modern Hebrew. The author takes issue with empirical as well as theoretical claims, which

treated both languages quite similarly and assumed kind-denotation for bare singulars. Rothstein, however, observes that there are considerable differences between the two languages and that the restriction of bare singulars to categorical subject position (as described by previous studies) does not capture their distribution exactly in either language. In her characterization, bare singulars in Brazilian Portuguese occur quite freely, behave like mass nouns and denote kinds, while her generalization for the Modern Hebrew counterparts is that they denote species. Consequently, she develops an account which distinguishes between the two notions: Both denote entities, but while the denotation of a species corresponds to an extensional entity, kinds are intentional (they "may be constructed from every set" – hence the general availability in Brazilian Portuguese). Furthermore, names for species are separated from proper names. After discussing the consequences of this proposal in some detail on the basis of original Modern Hebrew data and giving a preliminary vision of what the denotational domain in this language would look like, the author concludes that the comparison of bare singulars in both languages reveals two things: Firstly, the complex and idiosyncratic patterns seem to contradict parametric approaches to this domain. Secondly, she sees the hypothesis that Brazilian Portuguese bare singulars denote names of kinds as strengthened through the comparison, since the data in this language withstood her critical reexamination while those in Modern Hebrew did not.

Bare nominals, bare predicates: properties and related types by **M. Teresa Espinal** covers a wide range of BN phenomena, mainly from Spanish and Catalan. She uses the syntactic and semantic proposals in Baker (2003) and Chierchia (1998) as a starting point, discusses some of their shortcomings from the Romance perspective and develops an alternative way to combine insights from these proposals with type-shifting operations à la Partee (1987) for a more adequate analysis of her data. The wide focus of her analysis includes also such cases as vocatives and separates BNs from other property-denoting elements such as adjectives. Her aim is a better definition of the semantic types related with different kinds of BNs essentially occurring post-verbally, where she argues for a more precise distinction of those predicates. She identifies four groups, namely properties of atomic kinds, properties of individual objects, properties of temporally located individual events and gradable properties. With these distinctions in place, she considers other approaches which postulate capacities as an additional type for the examples she considers. In those proposals, capacities are treated as type e expressions. Espinal shows that this treatment is not adequate and that the semantic types developed by her can account for the examples for which the capacity-type was introduced. Therefore, she argues against this additional type of entities in the denotational domain and for treating capacities as sub-kinds of properties. In sum, the purely property-denoting approach to BNs for languages such as Spanish, Catalan and

French is maintained, and new perspectives on the type-theoretical treatment of the BNs in these languages are offered.

In *Spanish Bare Plurals an Topicalization*, **Brenda Laca** innovatively discusses a sub-kind of Spanish bare plurals that did not receive much attention in the previous literature and which, however, poses several problems for semantic theories as well as recent developments in the analysis of information structure. She identifies a group of preverbal bare plurals which do not have the intonation pattern of (the better understood) emphatic focus fronting but, nonetheless, does not correspond to the unmarked intonation under which preverbal bare nouns are not allowed in Spanish. She calls these structures "topicalized bare plurals". The aim of the paper is to propose a unified analysis of Spanish bare plurals (much in line with Leonetti (this volume)) by accounting for this "new" pattern and staying faithful to the idea that all bare plurals in Spanish denote properties, also taking into account an important observation from the theory of information structure, namely that properties cannot be topics. Laca's strategy to solve this apparent contradiction is to show that the "topicalized" bare plurals are not really topics in the sense of Cohen and Erteschick-Shir (2002). She identifies a strong contrast in the behavior of the "topicalized" bare plurals versus the internal aboutness-topics of Cohen & Erteschick-Shir's account in sentences with a reduced CP-layer (exemplified with data from clitic left dislocation), where only the latter are possible. She concludes, therefore, that the "topicalized" bare plurals should be better analyzed as external topics base-generated in this position. The new problem of composition that arises here (how does the property-denoting bare plural get to the necessary type *e*?) is also tackled. Laca's approach is to assume an independently required nominal null element, which is in this case anaphorically linked with the bare plural. Evidence for this element, which would have the right semantic type for triggering the existential type-shift, comes from indefinite argument drop (also a hardly treated topic in the research on Spanish syntax) and subnominal deletion. Relating two widely ignored phenomena in this coherent and insightful way, the paper paves the way for future research.

Information Structure and the distribution of Spanish bare plurals by **Manuel Leonetti** is a comprehensive attempt to systematize the licensing mechanisms of Spanish bare plurals in order to account for most of the distributional patterns in that language with a minimal set of independently needed factors. The basic ingredients of his system are nothing more than the widely accepted operation of semantic incorporation of property-denoting expressions (for the author, Spanish BNs are not quantificational; he also dispenses with null determiners) and its interactions with more recent but equally uncontroversial principles of information structure. Thus, he defends Suñer's (1982) motivation of what she called the "naked noun constraint" against recent formal syntactic approaches

to the question, restates the problems the original proposal is facing, reexamines the questions in detail and offers a principled answer to the overall problem in which he also manages to bring together previously unrelated facts. Providing a solid basis of arguments and examples, Leonetti convincingly shows that recent developments in the study of information structure provide exactly the kind of tools needed in order to account for Spanish BNs. In line with Laca (this volume) he argues for two different topic positions in Spanish, an internal one for which semantic incorporation under certain conditions is possible, and an external one which needs some other mechanism of composition, arguably the establishment of an anaphoric link to some element of the associated sentence. While Laca (this volume) proposes an explicit analysis of the technical details for the latter case, Leonetti stays faithful to his aim of putting together the broader picture. He also looks at a series of putative counterexamples to an information structure-based approach and points out how to deal more coherently with these data. The claim of general validity of Leonetti's approach is furthermore strengthened by the fact that it also takes into account special licensing conditions of different registers (written/spoken; newspaper headlines). It is thus, as the author concludes, a promising approach for cross-linguistic studies, primarily within the Romance family, and possibly even beyond.

In *Bare Nominals in American Spanish Headlines*, **Daniel M. Sáez Rivera** adds to the multi-faceted and framework-overarching perspective of the volume by investigating a special register which is well-known for its tolerance with regard to bare nominals – newspaper headlines. More specifically, he sets out to explain the striking difference between the rather free use of bare nominals in most contemporary American Spanish newspaper headlines in contrast to the European Spanish practice, where they are much more restricted. His analysis is based on two types of data: a corpus of headlines from more than twenty newspapers with at least one per Spanish-speaking country (including the US and Canada due to their Spanish-speaking immigrant populations), and metadata in the form of explicit guidelines in stylebooks from different decades and countries, in which the use and omission of articles is explicitly treated. On the basis of this information, Sáez Rivera convincingly argues that the difference between American and Iberian Spanish newspaper headlines might be due to the stronger influence of the English press in the case of American-Spanish newspapers. Starting with the discussion of the invention of the telegraph as a crucial factor in the development of reduced registers of communication, he traces the history of the press in several countries, explicating, for example, why the Argentinean press is more similar to the European in the restrictions on bare nominals than the press in other American countries. From the theoretical perspective, he insists on the relevance of considering the history of texts besides purely language-internal factors and analyzes the

lack of articles as a marker of the Discourse Tradition "Headline". Furthermore, Sáez Rivera highlights functions additional to purely economic reasons, such as the "teaser effect", which is achieved precisely by the lack of overt determination.

In *Bare Singular Arguments in Brazilian Portuguese: perfectivity, telicity, and kinds* by **Roberta Pires de Oliveira and Susan Rothstein**, the authors extend their account of BrP bare sujects as mass-denoting kind terms (Pires de Oliveira & Rothstein 2011) to the object domain, thus completing its coverage. Furthermore, they claim that their approach "is compatible with the variety of the interpretations that do arise in practice", even with such marginal and unexpected data as reported in Wall (this volume) – something hardly achievable by the other existing accounts. As for their main point, the analysis of bare objects as kind terms, the authors introduce the notion of a k(ind)-relation as the "link" which holds between individual subjects and kind objects. They use this k-relation to explain the complex interactions that arise in the object zone and argue that such an approach not only allows for a uniform treatment of all argumental BSs, but it also has some further explanatory advantages. For instance, according to the authors, certain bare object-predicate combinations such as *assistir filme* "watch film" or *ler jornal* "read journal" are more plausible candidates for establishing a k-relation than for instance *construir casa* "build house" or *ler tese* "read thesis", which is reflected in the acceptability and interpretation of the respective sentences. However, when a k-relation is made plausible, even *construir casa* and *ler tese* are felicitous and naturally interpreted as expressing k-relations. Finally, the authors show that the expected interactions between bare objects and the aspectual class of the respective verb as well as the type of event denoted by it also naturally falls out in their approach. Among other things, they show that VPs with bare objects build incrementally homogeneous predicates and, that therefore durativity must be separated from non-terminativity.

In *The distribution of specific and definite bare nominals in Brazilian Portuguese*, **Albert Wall** observes that the recent discussion on BrP BSs has not taken the whole range of BS distributions into account and that precisely specific and definite occurrences have been ignored. Wall attributes this (at least partly) to theoretical and methodological 'blind spots' in the overwhelmingly formal research on BrP BNs and argues that in the case of BrP BNs, of which intuitions of well-formedness regularly seem to be problematic, different types of data should be considered. The author then discusses the results from two different corpus studies on specific and definite uses of BSs, pointing out that they not only can be documented but that they also exhibit a regular behavior, which can be captured by some well-known properties of information structure (topicality, topic continuity etc.). Then the author proceeds by arguing against an already existing account for BrP BSs that also makes use of information structure (Müller 2002).

It is shown that Müller's (2002) three arguments for her proposal, in which preverbal BSs in BrP are "external" topics (and therefore not real arguments of the verb) bound by a generic operator, are in conflict with more recent empirical studies. Wall also considers the recent approach by Pires de Oliveira and Rothstein (2011, this volume), agreeing with Pires de Oliveira and Rothstein (this volume) that their approach is flexible enough to be compatible with specific and definite uses. Thus, the author concludes that while the latter account offers an explanation for the existence of BS arguments in BrP, more restricted uses (such as the specific and definite ones) are governed by other principles such as information structure and discourse traditions.

In contrast to the other contributions, **Franck Floricic** focuses on the interaction of bareness and information structure not by investigating properties of nouns but by extending the perspective to a wide range of 'dislocated' pronominal elements. In *'Bare quantifiers' and Topics in Italian*, he brings together a considerable amount of topicality-related structures from a wide spectrum of Italian varieties and challenges some analyses of bare quantifiers in that language because they are not compatible with the data he collected. All the structures under examination are sentence-initial 'quantifiers' which are not part of a larger DP, such as *qualcosa* 'something', *tutto* 'everything', *molto* 'many' and *nessuno* 'nobody'. He suggests that the differentiated picture actually found in regional varieties can be explained as representing different stages of a diachronic development, through which discourse-related elements (topics) have been 'syntacticized' and 'de-topicalized', and therefore do not need to exhibit certain properties usually taken as constitutive for topics. The author takes the stand that none of the features usually associated with topicality is either necessary or sufficient to account for topichood. He uses Topic as a "*discourse* notion relying on the informational structure of utterances". Against previous analyses, Floricic argues that topicalized bare quantifiers are never referential in Italian and, that therefore referentiality of the bare quantifier is irrelevant for gender choice on resumptive pronouns, against some claims in the literature. Rather, they are indefinites with a partitive free-choice value. As a licensing mechanism for such structures Floricic proposes some kind of "Virtual Concord", i.e. a harmonization condition between "the free-choice reading of the indefinite and the potential character of the event structure", which is conceptualized in analogy to "negative concord". The author concludes that, given that left-dislocated structures and the availability of bare nouns as (external) topics in Italian are "typical features" of Italian syntax, his account for bare quantifiers based on lexicalization seems to fit quite naturally into a broader context.

Christina Märzhäuser offers a crosslinguistic study on BNs in three Romance languages on a topic frequently put aside in publications on the syntax

and semantics of BNs. In *Coordinated bare nouns in French, Spanish and European Portuguese*, she approaches coordinated bare singulars for all three languages with an empirical study of their distribution based on oral corpora which are backed up with additional data from other sources. She observes that when they are treated in the literature, coordinated BNs regularly are associated with idiomatic expressions or "frozen" structures, while in her empricial survey such instances are rather the exception than the rule. Given that the three languages vary considerably in terms of licensing conditions for BNs in general, Märzhäuser observes that coordination appears to be a very general licensing mechanism for BNs in Romance since it can be found productively in all three languages. However, her study also offers preliminary indications about differences in the languages she investigates, especially with regard to frequency of some particular coordinated constructions. Building on previous work on the syntax-semantics interface, she addresses the question "Which referents can be coordinated 'bare'?" The answer to this question includes different semantic and discursive traits which can be subsumed under the label "toghetherness": From the semantic perspective, Märzhäuser argues with notions such as sharing *hyperonyms* or *basic semantic features* and *stereotypicality*, always verifying whether the respective phenomenon is given in the languages under examination. She proposes that coordination is possible when two elements are combined into one semantic frame (following Lambrecht 1984 and Zwarts 2008), which can be ontologically given or established by discourse and/or context.

In her contribution *Bare vs. non-bare nouns: two kinds of indefinites in Bulgarian*, **Elena Gorishneva** discusses the contrast between Bulgarian bare nouns and nouns determined by *edin*, originally a numeral meaning 'one' that can be seen as an indefinite determiner "in statu nascendi". With reference to the definiteness scale by Stankov (1995), several tests lead her to claim a semantic and discursive difference between bare nouns and generic uses with the numeral, which leads to a pars-pro-toto 'token'-reading instead of the generic 'type'-reading associated with a bare nominal. For the establishment of the different semantic properties of the two forms, the author makes use of such tests as scopal behavior, existence of different wh-words, discourse anaphora, clitic doubling and *edin*-addition to predicative NPs. Furthermore, the results of the tests are discussed within a larger comparative analysis in which several relevant properties from a variety of languages (Germanic, Romance, several creoles and beyond) are brought together, and besides, the Bulgarian system is located within its neighbor languages in the Balkan *Sprachbund*. Gorishneva also observes that certain uses of *edin* seem to converge with the use of the bare nominal. Nonetheless, she argues that this does not contradict the necessity to distinguish between the two in semantic terms. She sees such convergences as further steps in the grammaticalization of *edin*

and therefore adopts a strategy similar to Floricic's (this volume) in accounting for some of these (apparent) exceptional cases in terms of grammatical change. Finally, she also emphasizes the pervasiveness of the type-token distinction in language, which, although coming from a different background and in a different terminology, can be taken as a support for Pires de Oliveira and Rothstein's view on the denotation of nominals.

4.   Outlook

In 1987, Abney, introducing and arguing for the DP hypothesis, wrote that "[i]n the ideal case, determiners would have the same syntactic behavior in all languages" (Abney 1987: 276). Some twenty years later Bruening (2009: 23), arguing against the DP hypothesis on the basis of selectional asymmetries between CP and DP, replied: "[W]hile I focus predominantly on English, I believe that the asymmetries are universal."

The present-day debate about the nature and locus of linguistic universals continues as lively and as polemic as it has always been – in the special case of nominal determination as elsewhere. The data from different Romance languages, including their uses of BNs, have contributed to crucial inspirations for more diversified theoretical accounts of the syntax and semantics in the nominal domain, even among strongly universalist ones. This tradition and the privileged situation of having a rich and detailed descriptive literature for many of the Romance varieties keeps these languages attractive for ever more in-depth analyses and as testing grounds for innovative hypotheses, such as the consideration of interface questions not only between syntax and semantics but also of information structure, prosody and phonology. Furthermore, a better understanding of Romance BN phenomena in its whole complexity helps to establish a basis of comparison for the analysis of languages which hitherto have been underrepresented in the theoretical discussion and where the interplay of nominal modifiers and BNs may take very different shapes. A decisive factor for this progress in theory through new empirical evidence is the sharp and systematic distinction of different syntactic and semantic phenomena (usually in the shape of formalizations), an indispensable prerequisite for comparative grammar. What has also turned out to be indispensable is not to be too euphoric about apparent/superficial similarities between languages. We should rather try to understand in a first step the detailed casuistic of the behavior of each language in its own terms and then seek for generalizations. Additionally, many empirical questions still have not been successfully tackled or have not even been touched upon. Some of

those that seem most urging as well as promising to us have been highlighted on the preceding pages. In one way or another, all the contributions in this volume advance into such areas and provide new perspectives on bare noun phrases in Romance and nominal determination in general.

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