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Facultad de Ciencias Sociales y Humanas

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Programa de Doctorado en Ocio, Cultura y Comunicación para el Desarrollo Humano

PhD program in Leisure, Culture and Communication for Human Development

THE ARTICLE SYSTEM IN SPANISH: A COGNITIVE GRAMMAR VIEW

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation offers a reconsideration of the article system in Spanish from a Cognitive Grammar point of view, which to a large extent challenges previous accounts of articles in Spanish from different theoretical perspectives, including some recent cognitively oriented analyses. In line with the Cognitive Grammar concept of grounding, articles are analyzed as elements of the Spanish grounding system: they establish a connection between the interlocutors and some conceptual content for discourse purposes.

The major argument of this work is that articles are inherently meaningful linguistic categories, which are polysemous and organized around prototypical centres and, consequently, can be represented as networks of interrelated senses. It is argued that their meanings are motivated and form continuums of senses, producing in some cases overlaps in meaning. In particular, it is advocated for continuums between the definite and the indefinite articles, between unique and non-unique reference, and between proper names and type conceptions. This view seeks to offer a contribution to a new understanding of definiteness.

After a brief introduction, Chapter 2 begins with a review of previous accounts of articles in Spanish and, more generally, theories of definiteness and outlines the relevant theoretical background within the Cognitive Linguistics framework. Chapters 3 and 4 account for the semantic structure of the definite and the indefinite articles respectively, discussing in detail their different uses, traditionally regarded as random and not related to each other, and as a result, representing them as polysemous networks, whose senses are motivated by family resemblances and interrelated through categorizing relationships of elaboration and extension. Chapter 5 examines cases of the absence of articles in Spanish, arguing against the concept of the zero article and describing various

kinds of covert grounding, since bare nouns can profile divergent conceptual content, running the gamut from a proper name to the abstracted commonality of a type. The final chapter draws conclusions and outlines future lines of research.

Keywords: *cognitive grammar, article, definiteness, Spanish, polysemy, network, metonymy, prototype theory, grounding*

RESUMEN

En esta tesis se ofrece una reconsideración del sistema del artículo en español desde una perspectiva de la Gramática Cognitiva, que desafía su forma de análisis en los trabajos anteriores elaborados en el marco de diferentes corrientes lingüísticas e, incluso, en algunos estudios recientes que han asumido un enfoque cognitivo. Las formas del artículo determinado (el/la/los/las) e indeterminado (un/una/unos/unas) se analizan como elementos de anclaje—el concepto desarrollado en el marco de la Gramática Cognitiva—ya que establecen una conexión entre los interlocutores, el contexto discursivo y el contenido conceptual que se transmite en el discurso.

El principal argumento de este trabajo es que las formas del artículo determinado y las del indeterminado son elementos que poseen significado propio siendo categorías polisémicas que se centran alrededor de un prototipo y, por consiguiente, pueden representarse como redes semánticas de significados que están motivados e interrelacionados entre sí. Los distintos significados de esas redes forman continuos, en algunos casos produciendo los solapamientos de significado. En particular, se aboga por la existencia de los continuos entre los sentidos del artículo definido e indefinido, entre la referencia única y la referencia múltiple y entre los nombres propios y las concepciones de tipo. Esta visión busca ofrecer una contribución a una nueva comprensión del concepto de definitud.

Después de una breve introducción, el capítulo 2 presenta una revisión de los estudios anteriores sobre el artículo en español y, más en general, sobre la noción de definitud desde una perspectiva semántica. A continuación, se describen algunos de los principios teóricos de la Lingüística Cognitiva que son de relevancia para el presente trabajo. En los capítulos 3 y 4 se examinan las estructuras semánticas formadas por los artículos definido e indefinido,

respectivamente, estudiando en detalle sus usos que tradicionalmente se han considerado como arbitrarios y no relacionados entre sí. En consecuencia, el artículo determinado e indeterminado se representan como redes polisémicas, cuyos significados están motivados e interrelacionados con base en el parecido de familia por medio de relaciones de elaboración y extensión. El capítulo 5 examina los casos de ausencia de artículo, argumentando en contra del concepto de artículo cero y describiendo varios casos del anclaje no marcado, dado que los nombres escuetos pueden perfilar un contenido conceptual muy variado: desde el nombre propio hasta la similitud abstraída de tipo. En el último capítulo se presentan las conclusiones y se plantean futuras líneas de investigación.

Palabras clave: *gramática cognitiva, artículo, polisemia, red semántica, metonimia, teoría de prototipos, anclaje*

PREFACE

The correct use of articles in languages that mark definiteness by means of determiners seems to be an arduous task for any non-native speaker. Usually it is said to be difficult just for those who do not have articles in their mother tongue, but indeed, their use differs from one language to another, even between languages that belong to the same linguistic family. This topic has attracted my attention since I was a student and then a teacher of Spanish as a foreign language. The complexity of this issue is proven by the fact that units on this topic are present even in C2 textbooks, which correspond to the highest proficiency level in the Curricular Plan of the Cervantes Institute, which adjusts to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Being unable to find an explanation that I would have been satisfied with, I took up the search for a coherent framework for the article system in Spanish on my own. In this work, I present the results of my research in which I have tried to provide a systematic explanation of the functioning of articles, challenging the traditional rules and exceptions paradigm.

There are a number of people whom I want to thank for their help and encouragement. I would like to express huge thanks to Dr. María Pilar Rodríguez, who approved my application for the University of Deusto Research Training Grants Programme (FPI) and afterwards hosted me in her research team Communication, always being ready to resolve any doubt. I am grateful to my supervisor Dr. Joseba Abaitua for his support during the whole PhD programme and for introducing me to online resources I did not know about, which were of great help. I would like to thank the DEIKER department of the University of Deusto for providing financial support for my two international research stays, the first one at the University of Bologna (Forlì, Italy) and the second one at the University Roma Tre (Rome, Italy). I would

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It is worth to mention that some preliminary results of this dissertation were presented at the international conference of the French Association for Cognitive Linguistics "AFLiCo 7 – Discourse, Cognition & Constructions: Implications & Applications" in Liège (Belgium), at the international conference of the Italian Association for Cognitive Sciences "AISC 2017 – The Science of Cognition: Brain, Body, Language, and Technologies" in Bologna (Italy), and at the 11th International Conference of the Spanish Cognitive Linguistics Association (AELCO) in Córdoba (Spain) in 2018, "Cognitive Linguistic Research in Metonymy, Metaphor, Constructions and Frames: Scope, Models and Methods". A part of this dissertation roughly correspondent to Chapter 3 has been published in Journal of Cognitive Science, 2017, vol. 18, issue 3.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASALE	*Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española*, Association of Academies of the Spanish Language
B/E	Baseline/Elaboration
CDS	Current Discourse Space
CREA	*Corpus de Referencia del Español Actual*, Corpus of Reference of Actual Spanish
DI	Domain of Instantiation
ICM	Idealized Cognitive Model
IS	Immediate scope
LM	Landmark
ME	Maximal Extension
MS	Maximal scope
CPCI	*Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes*, Curricular Plan of the Cervantes Institute
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
TR	Trajector
RAE	*Real Academia Española*, Royal Spanish Academy

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The study of articles in Spanish, the second most spoken language in the world and the third most common form of communication in political and economic spheres, has been tackled from a variety of theoretical perspectives, being closely related to and influenced by the study of articles in other languages, especially in English. Nevertheless, nor Spanish, nor English sources offer a coherent framework that would account for each and every use of articles and explain their rationale. Counterexamples have been found to these paradigms, while there is no widespread acceptance of any particular theory of definiteness.

Being more than a mere theoretical controversy, the uncertainty regarding articles' status and functions in grammar and in discourse has clear repercussions, on the one hand, in studying and teaching Spanish as a foreign language, and on the other hand, more generally, in the comprehension of the role of articles in achieving nominal reference and in the understanding of their place in the whole architecture of language.

Regarding the first point, studying a foreign language is a challenging task and second language learners encounter many difficulties due to the competition between their native language and second language constructions (Ellis & Cadierno, 2009). The acquisition of articles is one of the most problematic aspects of Spanish grammar for non-native learners, even at advanced levels of proficiency (Fernández, 1997; Vázquez, 1999). For many, they become fossilized errors—they refer to aspects of a foreign language that have been already learnt by a student but continue to take place and become a

habit; it is believed that these errors cannot be corrected. Galindo Merino (2007), analysing second language acquisition, notes that the phenomenon of fossilization—the stagnant stage of second language acquisition that cannot be overcome—is of psycholinguistic nature. Posing the question what means "to know theoretically the uses of the article", Fernández (1997) assumes that they are false generalizations that are responsible for language fossilization, while Lee (2015) argues that one of the main causes of fossilization is conceptual deviance. Usually, the article acquisition is said to be difficult just for those who do not have articles in their mother tongue, but, in fact, the use of articles differs from one language to another, even between languages that belong to the same linguistic family. Thus, for example, the equivalent for a generic construction in English expressed by a bare plural, as in 1(a), will require the plural definite article in Spanish:

(1) a. *Horses are mammals.* (Radden, 2009, p. 208)
b. *Los caballos son mamíferos.*

In Italian, in some cases, the definite article is necessary, whereas in Spanish it is not:

(2) a. *Gli uni e gli altri*
b. *Unos y otros* (Porras Castro, 1993, p. 69)

(3) a. *Tengo coche.*
b. *Ho la macchina.* (Solís García, 2011, p. 21)

In these cases, transfer errors tend to be produced, caused by the interference of the mother tongue of the learner (see Jarvis, 2011).

With that, based on the traditional discrete-item-syllabus assumption (Grundy, 2004), the existing curricula and textbooks do not clarify the issue. Thus, the Curricular Plan of the Cervantes Institute *(Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes*, further - CPCI; Instituto Cervantes, 2006), while describing grammatical content accordingly to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Consejo de Europa, 2002), from A1 to C2 level, provides explanations that are only partially true: for instance, the syllabus announces the general incompatibility of the definite article with the verb *haber* (A1) and obligatory use of the definite article with nouns that express leisure activities and with noun subjects in constructions with verbs like *apetecer, encantar* (A2). Both in everyday speech and in literature, there are a lot of contradictions to these rules:

(4) a. *Ya no* ***hay el*** *consenso nacional y se rompe la ideal unidad.*

b. *Juegan a* ***un fútbol*** *tosco.*

c. ***Me encanta una frase*** *que dice Coleman: No es mi primer amor, no es mi gran amor, pero sí, es mi último amor.* (CREA)

In fact, non-canonical cases—if they can be called so—constitute probably most uses of language (Sinha, 1999). Thus, trying to deal with all the cases and depending on the level, the CPCI affirms that, for example, *hay* is obligatory with the indefinite article (A2), but at the same time that it is compatible with the absence of determination, as in *Hay árboles en la plaza* and *No hay leche en la nevera* (A1), and finally, that in some cases, when used with restrictive modifiers, it is compatible with the definite article, *En esta clase hay el lío de siempre* (C1).

All these statements made in the CPCI, inconsistent between themselves, can become rather confusing for learners, since no textbook actually explains

why each and every use is possible. In Grundy`s (2004, pp. 122–123) words, "the discrete-item-syllabus . . . seems to not work at any deep level, seemingly because it presents language without a real context, and therefore without the background in relation to which it is meaningful". A similar view is held by Langacker (2008, p. 3), who points out that, "in foreign-language instruction, grammar is often presented through mechanical exercises, the learning of irregularities, and the memorization of seemingly endless paradigms". All that triggers the question to which degree these rules, which then are constantly violated, are arbitrarily postulated.

Neither the study of articles in Spanish by scholars, despite its long tradition, provides insights on why various meanings of articles are associated with concrete forms (*el/la/los/las* and *un/una/unos/unas*). In nearly all previous accounts of definiteness, different uses of articles are represented in a piecemeal fashion. Epstein (1994) points out that all previous studies fail to provide explanation for each and every use of articles, intentionally ignoring difficult cases, and Solís García (2011, p. 100) emphasizes the explanatory weakness of "este tipo de explicaciones en que se proponen como sistemáticos comportamientos que después se contradicen y en que se justifican las excepciones a una supuesta regla general". An apparent inconsistency related to the major theories of definiteness that have been developed in Linguistics throughout the XXth century—such as familiarity, uniqueness, existence, identification, or inclusiveness—is that every theory (at least in the way it has been formulated) has counterexamples that invalidate its core principals. Thus, for example, Solís García (2011) criticizes the concept of identification, now preferred by many authors, providing an example where the nominal, which has been introduced in the discourse, is picked up again as indefinite:

(5) *En la calle había* ***un hombre*** *sentado en la acera de la esquina;* ***un hombre*** *de unos 50 años, con el pelo blanco...* (Solís García, 2011, p. 58)

To this respect, the criteria that are traditionally provided for the determination of the use of articles can be argued to be nothing but a mere enumeration of the epiphenomena of their real function, as "merely symptomatic of their conceptual import" (Langacker, 2008, p. 364).

Talking about grammatical organization, the problem to account for definiteness is partially owed to the traditionally assumed status of articles as grammatical elements. Some researchers even declared that articles do not have their inherent semantic values. Only Cognitive Grammar developed by Langacker (1991b, 2008), as the framework that regards each element in grammar as meaningful, sheds some light to the role of articles in English in transmitting conceptual content in discourse. As for articles in Spanish, cognitively oriented approaches that have appeared recently (Alonso Raya et al., 2006; Alejandro Castañeda Castro & Chamorro, 2014; Chamorro et al., 2006; López García, 2005; Montero Gálvez, 2011), to a great extent, are influenced by the legacy of the framework of objectivist semantics and do not take into account fundamental Langacker's Cognitive Grammar assumptions, largely repeating the previous findings. In all of them, the different uses of articles are described separately from each other.

Such state of affairs makes it necessary to undertake a new analysis of the role of articles in achieving nominal reference in Spanish. Therefore, in this dissertation, the following **hypothesis** has been adopted: it is possible to explain all different uses of articles in Spanish and the rationale underlying them within one unified framework.

So, the overall **aim** of this dissertation is to develop a coherent framework for the analysis of the article system in Spanish, which would permit

to account for all their possible uses and would explain mechanisms by which particular uses are linked to particular forms.

To this purpose, the **specific objectives** are**:**

1) To uncover the motivation that underlies different uses of the definite article and its forms (*el/la/los/las*)
2) To uncover the motivation that underlies different uses of the indefinite article and its forms (*un/una/unos/unos*)
3) To elucidate the motivation that sanctions the use of bare nouns

Consequently, to achieve these objectives, it is crucial to reconsider and, in some cases, totally abandon concepts that were repeatedly endorsed from analysis to analysis. Therefore, Cognitive Linguistics, and more particularly Cognitive Grammar, which views every element in grammar as meaning-bearing, will be adopted as the **methodological approach** of this work. This dissertation will make use of such important notions and premises of Cognitive Linguistics as prototype theory, polysemy network, the concept of motivation, the role of metonymy and metaphor in semantic change, and the continuum between grammar and lexicon, among others; these concepts will be explained further in upcoming sections.

By adopting the Cognitive Grammar perspective, I propose to analyze the articles in Spanish (*el/la/los/las* and *un/una/unos/unas*) as polysemous categories, assuming the view of linguistic meaning that has emerged from the very origin of Cognitive Linguistics as a new theoretical framework in the mid-1970s by which different meanings of a polysemous item are regarded as motivated and interrelated conceptually. In particular, these analyses have been realized for *there*-constructions (Lakoff, 1987), the preposition *over* (Brugman, 1983; Lakoff, 1987; Taylor, 1995; Tyler & Evans, 2003, 2004), the German preposition *über* (Meex, 2001), the past tense in English (Taylor, 1995), and the case in Icelandic (Smith, 2001), among others. Cognitive Linguistics is the only

framework that ties the human linguistic capacity to other basic cognitive abilities, which are shared by all human beings, and consequently, provides means to understand mental processes that underlie the construction of meaning. As Lakoff (1987, p. 316) points out:

> Polysemy is not just a matter of listing meanings disjunctively, as dictionaries do. . . . Such a listing does not tell us why [in Mixtec] the word for 'belly' is the same as the word for 'under' . . . . To understand the reasons, one has to understand *the conceptual system* [emphasis added].

I will give an explicit conceptual semantic description of the definite and the indefinite articles in Spanish based on the network model approach by which linguistic items are represented as prototype-based polysemous categories with radial structure (Cuyckens & Zawada, 2001; Geeraerts, 1985; Lakoff, 1987; Taylor, 1995; Tyler & Evans, 2004). Consequently, the correspondent structures of the definite and the indefinite articles will be represented as semantic networks of senses that are organized around prototypical centres and interconnected by categorizing relationships, which can be of four kinds: specialization, generalization, metaphor, and metonymy. Presupposing graded categorization, more peripheral meanings will exhibit family resemblance effects with regard to more central members. The approach to be developed here differs from the previous studies on articles since they will be regarded as meaning-bearing elements of grammar and it will be attempted to demonstrate the interconnectedness of different uses of articles in Spanish, traditionally described separately from each other (Abad Nebot, 1977; Álvarez Martínez, 1986; Leonetti, 1999).

In order to elucidate the structure of the categories of the definite and the indefinite articles in Spanish, which can be equated to conventional patterns that guide their use, as well as to explain cases where nouns appear without articles, the analysis will be based on the patterns outlined in the CPCI (Instituto

Cervantes, 2006), which thoroughly describes conventional uses of articles in Spanish from A1 to C2 level, and on some complementary examples taken from other sources like the fundamental work on Spanish grammar *Manual de la Nueva Gramática de la Lengua Española* issued by the Royal Spanish Academy and the Association of Academies of the Spanish Language ([RAE & ASALE], 2010) and *Gramática Descriptiva de la Lengua Española* (Bosque & Demonte, 1999), among others.

The dissertation is organized as follows: the next chapter will be dedicated to the review of the most influential theories of definiteness and the central literature on articles in Spanish and English linguistics. Then an introduction to some relevant concepts of Cognitive Linguistics and Cognitive Grammar will be given. It will be followed by a brief outline of the existing Cognitive Grammar accounts of articles in Spanish and English. In Chapter 3 and 4, the definite and the indefinite articles in Spanish will be analyzed as polysemous categories and their meanings will be represented in terms of radial networks, whose senses are motivated by family resemblances and intertwined through categorizing relationships. Chapter 3 and 4 together will discuss in detail the different uses of articles, traditionally regarded as random and not related to each other, and will demonstrate how the two networks are joined in a continuum of senses, providing an explanation for overlaps of meaning. Chapter 5 will examine cases of the absence of articles in Spanish, arguing against the concept of the zero article and describing various kinds nouns without an overt determiner. Finally, Chapter 6 will outline several implications of the proposed approach and will suggest new lines for future research.

CHAPTER 2

PREVIOUS RESEARCH AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The study of articles has a long tradition in Spanish linguistics, being closely related to and influenced by the study of reference in English. In this chapter, therefore, some previous approaches to the study of the article system in Spanish and English will be outlined. For the sake of discussion, all analyses that do not pertain to the Cognitive Linguistics framework—either descriptive, structural, generative, or functional approaches—will be referred to as traditional linguistics and will be considered first. Then, I will outline some relevant for the present study foundations of Cognitive Linguistics and the view on articles as grounding elements in Langacker's Cognitive Grammar. In the remainder of the chapter, I will discuss the existing cognitively oriented accounts of articles in Spanish and English.

2.1. Basic concepts of definiteness in English linguistics

Although the study of articles hardly can be claimed to be a new topic in linguistics, since article systems in modern European languages have been analyzed from a variety of theoretical perspectives, up to now there is no consensus on their status and functions. As Epstein (1994, p. 7) points out, "the bulk of the research on definiteness deals only with simple cases . . . it is widely recognized that no completely satisfactory solution has ever been agreed upon". And Solís García (2011, p. 69) notes that, although the previous studies on definiteness present all possible uses of articles, "sin una visión de conjunto del funcionamiento del sistema, es difícil presentar la casuística de las manifestaciones contextuales de modo coherente y sin contradicciones". Some

influential theories that have appeared throughout the XXth century are usually taken as the bases for particular analyses.

Throughout this dissertation, it will be maintained that articles serve to organize our conceptual world. Therefore, it is no surprise that the first attempt to investigate the nature of definiteness sprouted within philosophy, not linguistics, being based on truth-conditional understanding of meaning. The current view of definiteness, by all means, goes back to Bertrand Russell's (1905) theory of denoting, which stated that the definite article involves **uniqueness** of the object of denoting that is asserted to **exist** in the real world. With that, Russell (1905, p. 480) believed that articles have no meaning in themselves and that definite and indefinite descriptions are non-referential: the former because, in the opposite case, there would be no difference with proper names and the latter because they do not correspond to real-world objects. Russell also set out such problem as acquaintance with the denoted object, which then would be proposed as the core criterion in Christophersen's (1939) familiarity theory of definiteness. Thus, Russell (1905) reasoned that, even if an entity is denoted as definite,

> we have no immediate *acquaintance* with this point, which is only known to us by description. The distinction between *acquaintance* and *knowledge about* is the distinction between the things we have presentations of, and the things we only reach by means of denoting phrases. (p. 479, emphasis in original)

His opinion, thereby, diverged from the point of view of those who would consider the familiarity of the referent to be the decisive factor for the use of the definite article.

Russell's analysis of definiteness, which implied the uniqueness claim and the existence claim, later was criticized regarding both implications. Among other points, it was objected that the existence is not given but rather presupposed, that definite descriptions can, in fact, be referential, and that his

theory fails to account for plural count and mass nouns (Epstein, 1994; Guillemin, 2011); therefore, afterwards the uniqueness requirement has been sharpened and extended by other authors.

Another influential theory is the familiarity theory presented by Christophersen (1939). According to it, given that there is a basis of understanding between the speaker and hearer (p. 28), the definite article presupposes the mutual **familiarity** of the interlocutors with the referent, either direct or indirect, understood as "a certain association with previously acquired knowledge, by which it can be inferred that only one definite individual is meant" (Christophersen, 1939, p. 72). The indefinite article, in contrast, does not require previous knowledge, nor precludes it. It should be noted as well that the familiarity theory does not dismiss the uniqueness implication as such, since the definite referent must be unambiguously inferred. However, Christophersen's approach was not unproblematic. Christophersen (1939, p. 73) acknowledged himself that the familiarity with the referent "may be very slight" and that the term is "not always quite correct". Recalling that already Russell (1905) distinguished between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description, the appropriateness of the term itself served as the basis for criticism of the familiarity theory.

Thus, Jespersen (1949) was the one who offered degrees of familiarity: "complete unfamiliarity", "nearly complete familiarity", and "familiarity so complete that no article is needed". But Christophersen's theory faced its main criticism when it has been pointed out the existence of unfamiliar uses of the definite article. Such counterexamples to the familiarity theory, among others, are provided by Hawkins (1978/2015, pp. 101–102):

(6) *What's wrong with Bill? Oh,* ***the woman he went out with last night*** *was nasty to him.*

(7) *My wife and I share* ***the same secrets***.

Hawkins claims that in these cases no prior knowledge is presupposed and that the definite article is used to introduce a completely unknown referent to the hearer. Hawkins' approach is related to pragmatic "shared discourse sets" and the **locatability** of referents in them. Hawkins (2015, pp. 109, 199–200) departs from the strict truth-conditional understanding of reference, claiming that uniqueness of the referent should be relativized and interpreted only relative to a speaker-hearer shared set, where the referent is located, and that it is not necessary for the referent to exist in reality; it is sufficient if it exists in the minds of the speaker and hearer. But, as some authors mention, the notion of locatability results to be as unclear as familiarity (e.g., Epstein, 1994, p. 25).

However, the main contribution made by Hawkins is that he reformulates the contrast definiteness/indefiniteness as the distinction between **inclusiveness** and **exclusiveness** of reference. Admitting that the definite and the indefinite articles contrast with respect to the uniqueness requirement, Hawkins states that uniqueness does not explain all uses of the definite article, being a more general notion—inclusiveness—capable of accomplishing that. As he notes: "The reason why logicians and philosophers have not hit upon the universal or inclusiveness idea inherent in *the* is because they seem to be assuming . . . that uniqueness is an absolute rather than a relative notion" (Hawkins, 2015, p. 165). So, the inclusiveness of the definite article is understood as a reference to the totality of the objects within the relevant shared set of objects, in the singular form being equal to just one; while the indefinite article is understood as referring exclusively, to not-all the relevant objects, presupposing the existence of other possible referents of the kind, in other words, excluding at least one potential referent (Hawkins, 2015, p. 184,197). Moreover, the indefinite referent may be locatable or not within the shared set in question since "if the hearer cannot understand the reference to be exclusive within any shared set, he simply interprets the referent to exist

outside the pragmatic (shared set) domain in question, in such a way that exclusiveness can be satisfied" (p. 191). Hawkins (2015, pp. 221, 226), nevertheless, seems to be influenced by objectivism when providing some counterexamples to his own theory where, as he believes, the exclusiveness condition is absent:

(8) *I have* ***a head****.*

(9) *There is* ***a gentleman*** *who wants to see you.*

But, as a matter of fact, these referents, following Hawkins' argumentation, simply can be interpreted outside of the pragmatic sets in question and thus their exclusiveness will be fulfilled.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the proposed notions of inclusiveness and exclusiveness, just like uniqueness, also should be relativized. In fact, Hawkins (2015, p. 217) himself admits it: "the universality, or inclusiveness, of the definite reference seems to be pragmatically constrained"; while the exclusiveness of the indefinite reference is freer, being possible to extend its interpretation to the whole class of objects.

Bearing that in mind, however, it is possible to find some counterexamples to Hawkins's theory in which it can be argued that the indefinite reference presupposes inclusiveness and the definite reference, conversely, exclusiveness. The former type of cases is addressed by Hawkins himself. Thus, in the sentence *Airlines charge too much* (Bolinger's example as cited in Hawkins, 2015, p. 218) the exclusiveness condition disappears since the indefinite description *airlines* refers to all possible objects within the class. From the other hand, it is possible to argue that definite descriptions in some cases presuppose exclusiveness, in the sense that there are other potential referents of the kind that satisfy the given description. Thus, Epstein (1994, p. 40) observes that in the sentence like *The clouds are covering the moon*, the definite article

does not necessarily refer to all of the clouds within the universe of discourse. Referring to the same problem with the Spanish definite article, Leonetti (1999, p. 793), however, points out that "los conceptos de inclusividad y unicidad pueden mantenerse, de todas formas, si se supone que . . . la referencia al conjunto predomina sobre la referencia a los elementos integrantes del mismo, tomados uno por uno". But Laca (1999, p. 896) stresses that the notion of totality cannot explain the presence or absence of the article in the case of singular count nouns. Thus, being criticized on this point, in a later work, Hawkins (1991) substitutes the notion of inclusiveness with uniqueness within the pragmatic set in question.

Interestingly, within the Generative Grammar framework, in particular, Coppock and Beaver (2012) also affirm that the definite article is compatible with exclusive descriptions, introducing a so-called "anti-uniqueness effect" that eliminates the existence presupposition but, nevertheless, as they argue, still allows the uniqueness implication to be at issue. It is known as the **weak uniqueness condition** in which multiplicity is precluded and existence is not required. Moreover, revisiting the Russellian theory, they propose to apply a maximum sort filter and, similar to Hawkins's proposal, to regard plural definites as singleton sets that comprise the maximal number of their members: thus, the uniqueness presupposition will be fulfilled not only in the singular case but also in the plural case because there is "no more than one maximal element (which is always the case)" (Coppock & Beaver, 2012, p. 6). Although Coppock and Beaver are not the first to posit the maximal implication, they confirm that uniqueness is held for all uses of the definite article and that the existence implication is at issue only with referential uses (as they are understood in traditional linguistics).

Given that the notions of uniqueness, familiarity, and inclusiveness have not solved all the problems associated with definite descriptions, some attempts

to substitute them with the concept of **identifiability** have been made. Although the exact definition varies from author to author, generally speaking, identifiability of the referent means that it is presumed to be uniquely identifiable for the hearer on the basis of the context of discourse (Abbott, 2004; Epstein, 1994). But once again, identifiability is a very intuitive notion and "it is not sufficiently general to account for all the different uses of the definite and indefinite articles" (Epstein, 1994, p. 33). As a criterion for definiteness, identifiability, in particular, is criticized by von Heusinger (2002b), who understands an identifiable referent as one that is known by the speaker and hearer. However, the distinction *known/unknown* made by von Heusinger in the process of interpretation of the referent turns out to overlap with familiarity and specificity, while his view of familiarity seems to be associated with what other authors call "identifiability":

> The distinction between definite and indefinite NPs is that of familiarity: a definite expression receives a discourse referent that is linked to an already established discourse referent, while an indefinite receives a discourse referent that is not or cannot be linked. (von Heusinger, 2002a, p. 126)

From the other hand, von Heusinger clearly distinguishes definiteness from specificity, providing examples in which the referent of a specific indefinite is known/identifiable to both the speaker and the hearer:

(10) ***A body*** *was found in the river yesterday.* (von Heusinger, 2002b, p. 252)

A similar example is also provided by Hawkins (2015):

(11) *Oh yes, I remember. There we were, completely helpless, when* ***a nice friendly policeman*** *came rushing to the scene and instructed the signalman to stop the oncoming train.* (Hawkins, 2015, p. 193)

In both cases, as the authors point out, the definite article is possible. So, specific indefinite expressions constitute another group of counterexamples that are at variance with the unfamiliarity presupposition, while it has been demonstrated that the notion of specificity is independent from notion of definiteness.

Lately, many authors opt for the term **unique identifiability**, synthesizing uniqueness and identifiability, while, in fact, it appears to have no appreciable difference with simple identifiability. In particular, this term is used in Langacker's Cognitive Grammar, which will be discussed in Section 2.4.

Despite the extensive literature on the definite and the indefinite articles, their absence has received much less attention from scholars. In part, difficulties in theorizing stemmed from the positing of **the zero article** since Jakobson (1940), who contributed to the opposition between an overt article and no article, caused by the structural view of language and afterwards maintained by many scholars. Although it was already Christophersen (1939) who used the term *zero form*, for him it was just a label equivalent to the bare noun. After structuralists, few authors have opted for the use of the term *bare noun phrases* and, perhaps, one of the most relevant recent approaches is the work by Berezowski (2009), in which he totally discredits the postulation of the zero article, claiming that "the concept of the zero article should be put to rest along with other theoretical fictions that were postulated to explain observable facts but in time proved to be inadequate and were discarded" (p. 53). Berezowski (2009) begins his criticism by stating that proper names are inherently definite. This leads him to regard other cases of the absence of articles, such as uncountable and indefinite plural nouns, in order to conclude that "it is then tantamount to claiming that the zero article is both definite and indefinite at the same time, which would make it a most unusual grammatical entity"

(Berezowski, 2009, p. 15). However, trying to develop a coherent explanation, Berezowski elaborates it on the basis of the incomplete grammaticalization model and postulates a numerical requirement, basically reducing his analysis to role holder construals.

Summarizing, since numerous counterexamples were found for each of the accounts of definiteness, in the recent studies a more pragmatic vision of reference has been adopted. However, many questions have remained unsolved: for example, how discursive prominence accounts for the use of the definite article, how to deal with the ambiguity of the referent, and finally how all these non-standard cases can be incorporated into one of the existing theories of definiteness?

2.2. Articles in Spanish linguistics

The Spanish definite (*el/la/los/las*) and the indefinite articles (*un/una/unos/unas*), likewise articles in English, have been widely examined in Spanish linguistics. Within the Spanish tradition, the study of articles usually goes back to Andrés Bello (1995) and his definition of the function of the definite article as "objeto consabido". With that, applying Greek concepts to Spanish, grammarians had no tradition to regard *un* as an article. It was not until after the Port-Royal grammar that the existence of the indefinite articles was recognized. There are two oppositions that are usually established and from which the study of articles is approached by various scholars: the definite article vs. the indefinite article and the definite article vs. the absence of the article (Lapesa, 2000).

Many of the existing theoretical analyses make use of the concept of actualization, elaborated by Bally for the French language as a consequence of Saussure's structuralism, from whom Jakobson (1940) then would borrow the term *zero* when establishing the contrast between determined and non-

determined terms (Diehl, 2008)[1]. According to the theory of actualization, abstract concepts are said to be actualized in discourse by virtue of their identification with real representations (Abad Nebot, 1977, p. 51). Thus, articles have the capacity to actualize nouns, while bare nouns are considered to be purely virtual concepts. At the same time, it is distinguished between *actualizadores llenos*, that have semantic content (quantifiers, possessives, demonstratives, indefinites, and numerals), and *actualizadores vacíos*, without any semantic content (like articles) (Abad Nebot, 1977, p. 57; Álvarez Martínez, 1986, p. 61; Lapesa, 1987). In accordance with the theory of actualization, many authors have assumed that the definite article is empty of semantic content (cf. Alonso, 1982; Lapesa, 2000). Such a view, as Álvarez Martínez (1986, p. 50) notes, goes back to Aristotle, who described the article as "una palabra desprovista de significado". Álvarez Martínez (1986, p. 34), however, thinks that *el* possesses a certain semantic substance, having only grammatical meaning, while *un*, as it is generally recognized, has a lexical meaning. This specificity of *un* is characterized by its capacity to function as an autonomous element, being closely related to the pronoun *uno*. Indeed, the origin of the two articles is distinct: *un* proceeds from the Latin number *ūnus/ūna/ūnum*, while the definite article comes from the Latin demonstrative *ille/illa/illud* (RAE & ASALE, 2010, pp. 263–264). That is why many scholars insist that Spanish possesses only one article—*el*—while regarding *un* as a quantifier (Alarcos Llorach, 2000; Alonso, 1982; Álvarez Martínez, 1986; Coseriu, 1967), an indefinite adjective (Alarcos Llorach, 1968), or an indefinite pronoun (Alonso, 1982).

On the other hand, other authors, following the Port-Royal grammarians, consider *un* as the indefinite article (Abad Nebot, 1977; Lapesa, 1987; Leonetti, 1999; RAE & ASALE, 2010). Lapesa (1987, 2000) even thinks

[1] Christophersen (1939, pp. 54-55) attributes the "actualization theory" to Geijer (1898).

that there are three types of *un*: the indefinite article, the indefinite adjective, and the quantifier. But according to Leonetti (1999, p. 835), the common origin of these elements gives rise to the question whether the traditional distinction should be kept. He, therefore, views the issue as of secondary importance, just as a terminological one, observing that on many occasions it is not possible to distinguish the numeric value of *un* from its indefinite value. A similar view is expressed by Abad Nebot (1977, p. 53) who states that "los límites entre el numeral, el indefinido y el artículo indeterminado son borrosos y fluctuantes en algunos casos; o sea, que existe una verdadera superposición entre estas formas del contenido". Alarcos Llorach (1968, 2000) also maintains that the distinction between various types of *un* cannot be objectively justified. But he treats *un* as a quantifier, arguing that it indicates no more than the numeral meaning, being other aspects external to its semantic content. Therefore, for Alarcos Llorach (2000, pp. 122–124) the essential role of *un* is singularization. However, it can be observed that the meaning of *un* cannot be reduced to just the indication of number: as Leonetti (1999) notes, the numeral meaning is irrelevant in generic, non-specific, and attributive cases, and the Real Academia Española (2010, p. 284) points out that it is not admitted in the case of mass and plural nouns.

Influenced by the study of reference in English, Spanish linguistics has traditionally regarded articles as dependent on such notions as familiarity and uniqueness. Many scholars maintain that the definite article refers to familiar entities, while the indefinite article is used to introduce objects which were not mentioned previously in discourse or unknown for the hearer (Abad Nebot, 1977; Álvarez Martínez, 1986; Lapesa, 1987; López García, 2005; RAE & ASALE, 2010). That is why some authors emphasize the classifying function of *un* (Abad Nebot, 1977; Alarcos Llorach, 1968; Alonso, 1982). The Real Academia Española (2010) highlights, besides familiarity, uniqueness of the referent in some contexts, thereby expressing a synthesized viewpoint.

Conversely, Alonso (1982) and Leonetti (1999), similar to English authors, find the familiarity presupposition problematic. Thus, Leonetti (1999), in line with Hawkins' (2015) criticism of the familiarity theory, adduces that the notion of familiarity turns to be inaccurate, among others, in the case of superlatives, which are definite non-anaphoric expressions. Rather, Leonetti sees familiarity as derived from the proper definite status of the referent. But familiarity is not just a feature of definite expressions: specific indefinites also constitute expressions whose referent can be said to be familiar to the speaker and hearer (see Section 2.1.). In line with Hawkins' (2015, p. 223) opinion that in such cases the knowledge about the referents of specific indefinites is deliberately ignored, Álvarez Martínez (1986) and Abad Nebot (1977, p. 72) argue that specific indefinites are merely presented as if they were unknown. But these claims cannot mitigate the obvious incoherence of the notion of familiarity as related exclusively to definite expressions since the indefinite article can be used with familiar referents and the definite article with unfamiliar ones.

As an alternative to the familiarity theory, some authors resort to the concept of identifiability. Thus, Alarcos Llorach (2000) defines the identification of the designated object to be the principal function of the definite article: in his view, paired with the definite article, a common noun, which alone has only a classifying function, transforms into an *identifier*, functioning as a proper noun. Leonetti (1999) also views the unambiguous identification (in terms of **accessibility**) of the referent as the primary characteristic of the definite article. With that, Leonetti (1999, pp. 857, 871–872) states that the basic meaning of the definite article is invariable while all its other values can be explained as derived from such basic meaning. According to Leonetti, strictly speaking, the definite article does not have various meanings but only different "interpretations".

So, in what this basic meaning consists? Overall, Leonetti accepts that uniqueness (Russell, 1905) and compatible with it, more flexible, inclusiveness (Hawkins, 2015) are the central notions to define the basic meaning of the definite article. But he also points out some problematic for the two concepts cases. In relation to inclusiveness, it is not always the reference to the totality of the objects in question (see Section 2.1.); with regard to uniqueness, in cases like the following, according to Leonetti (1999, pp. 792–793), the uniqueness condition fails to be fulfilled:

(12) *Puso* ***la mano*** *sobre la mesa.*

(13) *Cuando llegamos, ella estaba en* ***la ventana****.*

Following Epstein (1994, to be discussed further), Leonetti argues, that in such examples the use of the definite article is determined by the discursive prominence of the referent.

The approach proposed by Leonetti, as Solís García (2011) argues, is not exempt from contradictions. Solís García (2011) notes that Leonetti does not succeed to explain all the range of interpretations of the definite article by means of one basic value, rather his analysis fits into "este tipo de explicaciones en que se proponen como sistemáticos comportamientos que después se contradicen y en que se justifican las excepciones a una supuesta regla general" (p. 100). Moreover, according to Solís García's view, uniqueness and inclusiveness are different concepts that consequently suppose different values of *el*. These notions, according to Solís García (2011, pp. 49–50) are not used by Leonetti in a systematic way. Moreover, she also provides counterexamples to the uniqueness and the inclusiveness theories, as in (14) and (15):

(14) *Había* ***un hombre*** *en el escenario. Después de un rato el hombre empezó a moverse.*

(15) *Me aprieta* ***el zapato***.

According to Solís García (2011, p. 49), in (14), the indefinite article has the same uniqueness value that the definite article does because it is possible for the referent to be interpreted as unique in the context of discourse. In (15), as in (12), the definite article, on the contrary, does not refer to the totality of the objects that satisfy the description. These examples are very similar to the above-mentioned counterexamples (exceptions) to Hawkins' theory.

With the indefinite article, what characterizes its basic meaning, according to Leonetti (1999, p. 838), is the absence of indications for the location of the referent, in other words, "lack of accessibility". Again, the basic meaning of *un,* which can be equated to the extraction of an element from a set, supposedly subsumes all specific, non-specific, and generic interpretations. Leonetti further claims that, due to its semantic features, *un* does not permit anaphoric uses that imply strict coreference. However, as Solís García points it out, he contradicts himself when describing that such uses are possible in cases of "late indefinites", the term borrowed from Epstein (1994):

(16) *En la cena, Eduardo llegó a emocionarse. No esperábamos algo así de* ***un hombre*** *que se había caracterizado siempre por su frialdad y su autocontrol.* (Leonetti, 1999, p. 840)

With regard to the indefinite article, Leonetti's explanation has other weaknesses, which are pointed out by Solís García (2011). Thus, his judgements of ungrammaticality include many examples that, if properly contextualized, are not ungrammatical. Leonetti (1999, pp. 847–848) judges as ungrammatical cases like **una publicación de este libro* or **una madre de los gemelos*. According to Solís García (2011, pp. 98–99), it is not a question of grammatical impossibility,

rather these are pragmatic limitations. Solís García notes that their ungrammaticality is owed to Leonetti's confusion between language and the extralinguistic world, outlining a range of possible contextualizations that invalidate the ungrammatical character of such expressions. In addition, on many occasions, more than one interpretation is possible: thus, *un problema de la corrupción* (Leonetti, 1999, p. 846) permits a partitive and a predicative interpretations, which, moreover, is acknowledged by Leonetti himself (Solís García, 2011, p. 134). Leonetti also considers uses of *un* in the preverbal position to be anomalous, while Solís García (2011, p. 100) convincingly shows that it is not the case of any grammatical restriction, they are just less frequent uses. Therefore, unjustified judgements about grammaticality, examples that do not reflect the real use of language and are not contextualized, as well as the lack of attention to pragmatic factors, according to Solís García (2011), constitute other weaknesses of the explanation proposed by Leonetti.

Nevertheless, it is worth to note that, despite many insightful comments, the analysis of Solís García (2011) is objectivist in nature, that is why she does not accept some arguments assumed by Leonetti, who, also an objectivist, is more flexible when manoeuvring concepts. Thus, she notes that throughout his work, Leonetti understands the existence of the referent in three different ways: as its existence in the extralinguistic world, as pragmatic existence, and as existence in discourse (Solís García, 2011, pp. 40–42). Apparently, Leonetti follows Hawkins (2015) whose understanding of reference has been expanded from the traditional reference to objects in the extralinguistic world to a more abstract existence of the referent in pragmatic sets within discourse. Neither Solís García accepts Leonetti's arguments for the consideration of expressions as *una arena muy fina* as countable nouns via a change of their semantic nature by means of recategorization. The similarity of functions that can be perfumed by the definite and the indefinite articles, in her view, is also a problem for any

systematic analysis. Instead, a greater emphasis should be made on their differences, which, as Solís García argues, can be achieved by distinguishing purely grammatical factors from pragmatical ones.

As it has been mentioned, Leonetti (1999), in order to explain all the variety of cases, recurs to a number of concepts of definiteness: the Russelian uniqueness, Hawkins' inclusiveness and locatability, Epstein's prominence theory (to be discussed later), and identifiability. Trying to remedy the limits of his explanation, Leonetti adapts these notions for every particular example, without postulating them in opposition to each other. Therefore, it seems that Leonetti uses the terms identification, location, and accessibility as synonymous, unlike Hawkins (2015), who distinguishes identifiability from locatability, arguing in favor of the latter. Summarizing, the above-mentioned notions of identifiability, accessibility, familiarity, and uniqueness are very intuitive, consequently being understood differently from author to author. Nor Spanish, nor English studies have succeeded in arriving to a consensus on which one can be regarded as the decisive factor of definiteness.

Bare nouns in Spanish (*los nombres escuetos* or *sustantivos escuetos)* are neither viewed unanimously by scholars. In accordance with the traditional assumption, stemming from Bally's concept of actualization and the Port-Royal grammar, the absence of determination presupposes the reference to the proper concept designated by the noun (Abad Nebot, 1977; Laca, 1999; Lapesa, 1987). As Abad Nebot (1977, p. 62) writes, "la ausencia de actualización denota lo conceptual-categórico, esto es, lo virtual, la realidad cualitativa de las cosas". Alonso (1982, p. 134) notes that a noun without article "no alude al individuo, ni tampoco al género cuantitativo, sino al rango categorial, al orden, a la clase considerada cualitativamente y no cuantitativamente". He claims that common nouns without article are mere mental abstractions. A similar view is held by Alarcos Llorach (2000) who thinks that, because of their qualitative character, they

perform a classifying function. This characteristic in some cases makes them impossible to be distinguished from adjectives (RAE, 1973):

(17) *Son españoles.*

Nevertheless, the qualitative dimension of bare nouns, according to Bosque (1996), however, does not constitute a category that could be analyzed grammatically. Although, due to this factor, certain similarities are observed in the grammatical behaviour of bare plural and mass nouns since both kinds of expressions denote extensions of corresponding entities (Bosque, 1996; Laca, 1999).

Mentioning the problem of distinguishing between the zero article and the absence of determiner, there are a number of scholars (Bosque, 1996; Iturrioz Leza, 1996; Laca, 1996, 1999; Lapesa, 1996; Lois, 1996) who prefer to speak about the absence of article, without postulating the zero article (the concept of the zero article will be examined in Section 2.5.).

It is traditionally assumed that bare nouns are non-referential (e.g., Laca, 1996, 1999). At the same time, while many authors emphasize the lack of numeric precision of bare nouns (Alarcos Llorach, 2000; Alonso, 1982; Garrido, 1996; RAE & ASALE, 2010), there is a discrepancy between them on the issue whether bare nouns are quantifying expressions. Thus, Laca (1996, 1999) argues that they are always non-quantified and, moreover, non-specific, constituting a type of generic expressions. Bosque (1996) cautiously notes that plural bare nouns can suppose some quantification. Importantly, Abad Nebot (1977) notices that on many occasions, instead of bare nouns, forms with the article can be used, thus, pointing to "la idea de un *continuo* en su contenido semántico que cada acto locutorio concreto 'polariza' en los resultados superficiales posibles." (p. 34, emphasis in original).

As in the case of the study of the definite and the indefinite articles, it turns out that the claims made by researchers can be controversial. Thus, Solís García (2011) notes that some expressions with bare nouns regarded as ungrammatical earlier, like *Había libro en su maletín* (Leonetti, 1999), restore their grammatical character if properly contextualized. Further, Solís García (2011) provides examples in which bare nouns can refer to extralinguistic entities:

(18) *Acabo de beber* ***agua*** */ He encontrado* ***piso*** *en Avilés /He traído* ***guitarra****, ¿cantamos?* (Solís García, 2011, p. 66)

She argues that in these examples bare nouns are to be interpreted as specific and referential. Consequently, this kind of examples challenges Laca's assumption that bare nouns "nunca pueden referirse a la totalidad del género en cuestión: un sintagma nominal sin artículo es en español siempre 'parti-genérico', quedando la expresión de la totalidad o de la inclusividad reservada al artículo definido" (Laca, 1999, p. 904). Laca (1999) also states that bare nouns do not contemplate the possibility of pronominal anaphora. But Montero Gálvez (2017, p. 558) adduces counterexamples like (19):

(19) *Se necesita* ***mecanógrafa*** *que sepa inglés.*

In addition, Laca (1999) and Leonetti (1999) maintain that proper nouns normally reject articles, however, both recognize that it is just a general rule and provide examples in which proper nouns can be accompanied by an article: for instance, *El Salvador, los Países Bajos, Argentina/la Argentina.*

As it can be seen, bare nouns, due to their heterogeneous nature, do not constitute a topic that can be easily accounted for. Some scholars suggest that the use of bare nouns depends on predicates with which they can combine.

Usually three classes are distinguished: stage-level (episodic), individual-level (stative), and kind-level (generic) predicates (Bosque, 1996, p. 66). Nevertheless, no strict correlation has been revealed between this classification and the appearance of bare nouns in the argument position (that is, being either subjects or direct complements). Only punctual observations have been made. Thus, kind-level predicates seem to not accept bare nouns, independently of the linear order, since they refer to classes of objects:

(20) **Pinos abundan en la tundra. / *En la tundra abundan pinos.*
(Laca, 1996, p. 262)

Laca (1999, p. 906) observes that both the verbs *estar*, pertaining to the stage-level type, and *ser*, pertaining to the individual-level type, in principle, do not admit subjects expressed by bare nouns: for example, **Son inquietos niños* and **Están inquietos niños*. However, Bosque (1996, p. 24) provides some examples in which bare nouns can appear with stage-level predicates as subjects in the postverbal position in the so-called existential sentences, as in (20):

(21) *Están disponibles guías turísticas.*

On the other hand, it seems that the dynamic/stative nature of the verb has some influence on the appearance of bare nouns with stative predicates either stage-level, as (22), or individual-level, as (23), admitting them in the subject position:

(22) {*Faltan/quedan/sobran*} *libros.*
(23) *Arboles gigantescos bordean el camino.* (Laca, 1999, p. 906)

But Laca (1999, p. 907) also observes that stative, non-agentive predicates do not allow bare nouns as direct complements, while agentive predicates do. Moreover, as Bosque (1996, p. 92) notes, one and the same verb, as in (24b) can function both as stative and non-stative, consequently behaving differently with respect to its acceptance of bare nouns:

(24) a. *Como se parecía a una bruja, la vieja asustaba {*niños/a los niños}.*
b. *La vieja asustaba {niños/a los niños} por el puro placer de verlos gritar.* (Laca, 1996, p. 263)

Laca (1996) notes that *asustar niños* in (24b) functioning as an intentional predicate (Bosque, 1996, p. 92), and therefore being agentive, is interpreted as a habit. Apart from that, Bosque (1996) again associates the acceptance of bare nouns with the difference between the stage-level ((24b), the first interpretation) and the individual-level ((24a) and (24b), the second interpretation) predicates. Although this statement is not exempt from contradictions since, according to Bosque (1996, pp. 92-93), an episodic predicate being interpreted as a habitual action transforms into an individual-level predicate.

Another particularity related to the agentive/non-agentive distinction is that not all unaccusative verbs—those in which the subject is not an agent—admit bare nouns as subjects in the postverbal position (Bosque, 1996, p. 19):

(25) a. *Entra frío/ Llega gente / Sale humo.*
b. **Aumenta frío / *Molesta gente / *Perjudica humo.*

According to Masullo (1996, p. 187), many unaccusative verbs are existential and can appear with bare nouns.

At the same time, it has been noted that the perfective aspect of the predicate, either expressed by grammatical tense or by the verb itself, also rejects bare nouns:

(26) **Se durmieron animales / *Se cayeron piedras.* (Bosque, 1996, p. 23)

(27) **En cuanto corrija ejercicios, te atenderé.* (Laca, 1999, p. 904)

But it is not always the case since some verbs, despite their perfective form, do not permit a perfective interpretation and therefore admit bare nouns:

(28) *Se produjeron incendios /Se evaporó agua / Se levantó aire.*

(29) *Juan {bebió/*se bebió} leche.* (Bosque, 1996, pp. 20, 23)

On the other hand, another property of predicates that has been mentioned above—their existential character—neither permits to establish any kind of generalization that would have no exceptions. Thus, while cases such (26) reject bare nouns, some existential stage-level predicates, as (21) and (25a), can combine with them. With that, the existential character can be expressed not only by a verb but also can be obtained by the addition of a locative complement, as in (30b), thus making the bare noun acceptable:

(30) a. **Anidan cigüeñas*

b. *Aquí anidan cigüeñas.* (Masullo, 1996, p. 187)

In sum, it has been impossible for researchers to establish any kind of strict generalization with regard to the appearance of bare nouns with predicates of different types. The distinctions outlined above do not reveal any clear

pattern: the correlations established by scholars have a limited scope. A further inquiry into which criteria determine the use of bare nouns is needed.

2.3. Cognitive linguistics as an approach to the study of language

Cognitive Linguistics has appeared by the mid-1970s as a framework that has marked a before and after in the history of linguistics, challenging a number of basic assumptions that had stayed untouched for years. As a response to Chomsky's generativism, which was not able to account for linguistic phenomena via formal syntax, Cognitive Linguistics has related linguistic capacity to other human abilities and bodily experience, assuming a multidisciplinary perspective on language (Evans & Green, 2006; Ibarretxe-Antuñano & Valenzuela, 2012; Inchaurralde & Vázquez, 2000; Lakoff, 1987; Langacker, 2008). Cognitive linguists have argued that linguistic organization reflects our conceptual structure, which itself is embodied (cf. Talmy, 1988, p. 166).

The embodied basis of our cognition represents a major objection to the entire objectivist tradition, dominant in linguistics for a long time, and entails further claims that are at odds with previous approaches to language. This view presupposes that there is no totally objective truth, but a truth "relative to some understanding of it" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 227). This means that there are thousands of truths arising as a result of interactions with the world and objects in it, which are known to us by their "interactional properties that make sense only relative to human functioning" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 225). Thus, embodied truth is not absolutely objective, nor entirely subjective, rather it is a result of human interaction with the world and depends on embodied understanding (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999).

The implications of this position have represented a challenge for philosophy and linguistics. On the one hand, embodied realism permits to

conceive one and the same situation from different, equally valid perspectives. That is why Cognitive Linguistics, from its very origin, assumes the weak version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which is now supported by experimental studies (Boroditsky, 2001, 2011; Wolff & Holmes, 2011). Thus, Talmy identifies language as a cognitive system, while grammar "provides the basic schematic framework for conceptual organization within the cognitive system of language" (Talmy, 2000, p. 21). This is not to say that speakers of different languages have different incommensurable conceptual systems, in a linguistic determinism fashion (see, for a more detailed discussion, Lakoff, 1987, Chapter 18). It has to do with the understanding of meaning in Cognitive Linguistics.

One of the main characteristics of Langacker's Cognitive Grammar (2008) is that it claims that "grammar is symbolic in nature", consequently viewing **lexicon and grammar as a continuum**. All grammar consists of assemblies of **symbolic** structures that incorporate into themselves correspondent pairings between **semantic** and **phonological** structures. Thus, each symbolic structure can be fully described, since each grammatical element as inherently meaningful.

According to Cognitive Grammar, meanings are identified with **conceptualizations**. Explaining the difference between the terms *concept* and *conceptualization*, Langacker highlights that, unlike the former, the latter has a dynamic nature. For him, "conceptualization can thus be approached from either a phenomenological or a processing standpoint: we can attempt to characterize either our mental experience per se or the processing activity that constitutes it" (Langacker, 2008, p. 31). To illustrate it, Langacker brings out the difference between "any particular colour experience on a particular occasion"—which is a conceptualization—and a concept, for instance, RED (Langacker, 2008, pp. 44–45). *Conception* is a term neutral in both respects.

One and the same situation can be conceptualized differently not only in different languages but within one language and even by one person during different moments of life (Lakoff, 1987, p. 335). The way of viewing a particular situation is called **construal** (or **imagery** in Langacker, 1986) and it has various dimensions: the degree of specificity/schematicity, perspective, prominence, and focusing (Langacker, 2008, p. 55).

The degree of **specificity/schematicity** refers to the possibility of describing one scene at different levels of specificity. Any entity can be classified taxonomically in greater or lesser detail. This applies to lexical items, as in (31a), and to grammar, as in (31b), since there is no discrete boundary between them:

(31) a. *thing* → *object* → *tool* → *hammer* → *claw hammer*

b. *Something happened.* → *A person perceived a rodent.* → *A girl saw a porcupine.* → *An alert little girl wearing glasses caught a brief glimpse of a ferocious porcupine with sharp quills.* (Langacker, 2008, p. 56)

For any linguistic item in Cognitive Grammar, the most schematic possible characterization is its **constructional schema**, while specific realizations of a particular schema are called **instantiations**. A *schema*, therefore, is viewed as an abstracted representation of the commonality of specific instantiations valid for all instances and independent of any specific conceptual content (Langacker, 2008, pp. 167–170). It is possible due to our basic cognitive abilities, such as grouping and reification, the tendency to construct events as abstract objects (Langacker, 2008, pp. 95, 506; Radden & Dirven, 2007). A schema is immanent in every instantiation. Taylor (1995, pp. 65–68), however, argues that for some categories it is impossible to postulate an abstract schema. For the major word classes of nouns and verbs, Langacker proposes the schematic characterizations [THING] and [PROCESS] respectively. Consequently, the [THING] schema can be

instantiated by nouns of any degree of complexity: for example, [MOON], [TOOTHBRUSH], [MOONLESS NIGHT], etc. (Langacker, 1986, 2008).

The second dimension of construal is **perspective**, which presupposes "orientation, assumed vantage point, directionality, and how objectively an entity is construed" (Langacker, 1986, p. 12). One and the same scene will be viewed differently depending on the location of the speaker and hearer, their vantage point, which can be an actual physical place or a fictive one, adopted for linguistic purposes. The notion of perspective also pertains to how a situation is conceptualized with respect to its duration through time, whether the motion is physical or abstract; even if the motion in question is static, its directionality can be represented differently:

(32) a. *The lamp is above the table.*
b. *The table is below the lamp*. (Langacker, 2017, p. 12)

The difference between (32a) and (32b) leads me to regard another aspect of construal—focusing.

Focusing has to do with which conceptual content is foregrounded and which is foregrounded in linguistic expressions. The meaning of a linguistic expression evokes a set of domains necessary to the characterization of its semantic structure. According to Cognitive Grammar, a **domain** is "any sort of conceptualization: a perceptual experience, a concept, a conceptual complex, an elaborate knowledge system, and so forth" (Langacker, 1986, p. 4). The term is similar to *idealized cognitive model* used by Lakoff (1987), but less abstract (Littlemore, 2015), to *mental space* proposed by Fauconnier (1997), and Fillmore's *frame* (1982). Domains can be basic, cognitively irreducible conceptions, such as space or time, and non-basic; more complex domains are usually structured in terms of basic domains. Thus, many abstract domains are

metaphorical in nature. Thus, [WEEK] is the domain necessary to the characterization of [FRIDAY].

Domains invoked by a linguistic expression serve as its **conceptual base**, while only a part of the presented content is foregrounded as the focus of attention and consequently constitutes the expression's **profile**. This alignment reflects the perceptual phenomenon known as **figure/ground** organization. Thus, (32a) profiles the lamp, while (32b) profiles the table, while having the same conceptual base. The profile of linguistic expressions further determines their grammatical category: expressions can profile either things or relationships, which, in their turn, can be processual and non-processual (atemporal). Thus, verbs profile processes, while adjectives, adverbs, and prepositions profile various kinds of atemporal relationships. For things, while their most abstract characterization is the schema [THING], the specific content is provided by nouns, which in Cognitive Grammar are understood in a broader sense, including both lexical nouns and nominal expressions of any level of complexity. Thus, in Cognitive Grammar, *the lamp, the lamp on the table, those on the table,* etc. are considered nouns since all of them profile things.

The figure/ground alignment influences on a more implicit aspect: the **scope** of a linguistic expression. It can be described as "the extent of its coverage in relevant domains" (Langacker, 1991a, p. 7). The scope is always limited due to the fact in one linguistic expression the situation can viewed only from one vantage point, although the number of ways in which one and the same situation can be construed is unlimited. Langacker (2008, p. 63) distinguishes "between an expression's **maximal scope** in some domain, i.e. the full extent of its coverage, and a limited **immediate scope** (or *onstage region*), the portion directly relevant for a particular purpose". To illustrate this, body part terms are obvious examples. Thus, *hand* has an arm as its immediate scope (IS), being the whole body regarded as the maximal scope (MS) (Langacker,

2008, p. 64). Clarifying the difference, the profile of an expression is the specific focus of attention within the immediate scope (Langacker, 2008, p. 66).

Profiling as an aspect of construal is also related to the **prominence** (or *salience* in some sources) of conceived entities within a relationship. **Profiling** contributes to the asymmetry in the representation of the relational participants, which consequently have different degrees of prominence. In this respect, in (32a) t*he lamp* is more prominent than *the table*, while in (32b) the situation is reversed. Therefore, with respect to its prominence, the primary, most salient participant in a relationship is referred to as the **trajector** (tr), while the secondary salient participant is called the **landmark** (lm). The traditional distinction between the subject and object in a sentence structure is also a kind of the trajector/landmark organization (Langacker, 1986, p. 10). However, trajector and landmark are the notions that are not connected to any particular semantic role (such as mover or patient); any kinds of entities—either things or relationships—can comprise the trajector/landmark asymmetry.

Moreover, trajector and landmark as kinds of prominence exist at different levels of structural organization: the participant that has a status of trajector at one level can act as the landmark with respect to the composite structure at another level. In other words, a relationship at any structural level has its own trajector and landmark, which can coincide or not with the trajector and landmark of the whole composite structure. As a matter of example, in (32a), while the trajector is *the lamp*, the landmark is *the table*; in (32b) they are reversed. But at a lower level of organization, in the non-processual prepositional relationships *above the table* and *below the lamp*, both *the lamp* and *the table* are the landmarks (Langacker, 2008, p. 73).

With that, it is possible for a relationship to specify only one focal participant—the trajector or the landmark, the other one being left schematic or not existing at all. Thus, an adjective, which profiles an atemporal

relationship, has only one participant—trajector, which is always a thing. An adverb, also profiling a one-participant non-processual relationship, differs from an adjective only by the fact that its trajector is always a relationship. In contrast to adjectives and adverbs, another kind of non-processual relationship that is profiled by a preposition has two focal participants—the trajector and the landmark—the latter being always a thing. Its trajector can be a thing or a relationship. So, basically, these types of non-processual relationships are distinguished due to their trajector/landmark organization and the nature of their profile: either a thing or a relationship (Langacker, 2008, pp. 115–116).

All dimensions of construal are interconnected between themselves and influence one another. Thus, the choice of trajector in (32) leads to a difference in profiling, directionality, and prominence. In line with that, from the point of view of Cognitive Semantics absolute synonymy would not be possible because it is unlikely that differently construed semantic representations of one and the same situation would be totally identical, although semantically equivalent for communication purposes (Glynn, 2009; Langacker, 1976, p. 355). As Lakoff (1987) argues, our conceptual system is not monolithic and permits the coexistence of alternative and even contradictory conceptualizations. For Lakoff there are many types of relativism: "We all have alternative methods of conceptualization at our disposal, whether we are trying to understand our emotions or trying to comprehend the nature of the physical universe" (Lakoff, 1987, p. 306). Although the position regarding linguistic relativity is slightly different between various cognitive linguistic researchers, Cognitive Linguistics assumes both interlinguistic and intralinguistic relativities (Pederson, 2010, p. 1017).

Conceptualizations are specific in every language, but it does not imply that languages constrain thought. Langacker (1986, p. 13) evaluates this impact as superficial. In fact, lately, the results of empirical investigations have

demonstrated that language indeed can facilitate particular conceptualizations due to their conventionality in a certain linguistic community (Boroditsky, 2001, 2011; Evans & Green, 2006; Niemeier & Dirven, 2000; Wolff & Holmes, 2011). As Boroditsky (2001, p. 2) concludes, "languages force us to attend to certain aspects of our experience by making them grammatically obligatory. Therefore, speakers of different languages may be biased to attend to and encode different aspects of their experience while speaking". But what permits us to construe one and the same situation in alternate ways, according to Cognitive Linguistics, is the general conceptualizing capacity, which is common to all humans due to embodiment. As Lakoff (1987, p. 311) maintains, "people share a general conceptualizing capacity regardless of what differences they may have in conceptual systems". The sameness of basic experiences is not to be understood as an innate grammar "module", autonomous from other capacities and common to all languages, as it was postulated by Chomsky (1971). As Evans and Green (2006) describe it:

> Distinct conceptual systems are thought to emerge from a common conceptualising capacity, which derives from fundamental shared aspects of human cognition. Rather than positing universal linguistic principles, then, cognitive linguists posit a common set of cognitive abilities, which serve to both facilitate and constrain the development of our conceptual systems (our repository of concepts). (p. 56)

Our basic experiences, such as perception of physical objects, and other aspects of cognition, such as categorization, metaphorical and metonymic thinking, can be regarded universal (Evans & Green, 2006, pp. 97–98; Lakoff, 1987, p. 310). As López García (2005, p. 11) argues, our perception is "un mecanismo equidistante respecto a los distintos sistemas lingüísticos y básicamente similar en toda nuestra especie". Kinesthetic **image schemas**—recurring patterns of our everyday bodily experience, such as PART-WHOLE, UP-

DOWN, SOURCE-PATH-GOAL and basic structures, such as CONTAINERS, PATHS, FORCES—are also common to all human beings (Johnson, 2007, p. 46; Lakoff, 1987, pp. 267, 312). Summarizing, Cognitive Linguistics distinguishes between conceptual systems and conceptualizing capacities, "the same capacities can give rise to different systems . . . since experience does not determine conceptual systems, but only motivates them" (Lakoff, 1987, p. 310).

On the other hand, due to our sensorimotor apparatus, there are some limitations on what we can experience: "embodied cognition . . . serves to constrain what it is possible to experience, and thus what it is possible to express in language" (Evans & Green, 2006, p. 64). It turns out that interlinguistic variation is constrained by the very nature of our bodies. Thus, for example, the human eye can perceive only a portion of the colour spectrum (Evans & Green, 2006; López García, 2005). Another constraint associated with our perceptual mechanisms are the Gestalt principles that describe naturally occurring patterns of perception, such as figure/ground organization, the principles of proximity and similarity, among others (Evans & Green, 2006, pp. 65–68). Our experience and image schemas associated with it form experiential **gestalts**— multidimensional structured wholes—that serve to organize and make coherent our experience in terms of its natural dimensions, in the sense that it could not be thought of outside these dimensions (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 116, 164).

It is worth to mention that, on this point, there is a correlation with modern linguistic typology findings on constraints in cross-linguistic variation that are attested in the form of *implicational universals*—"restrictions on the logically possible patterns" in relation to some linguistic feature (Evans & Green, 2006, p. 58). An implicational universal establishes a set of possibilities and sometimes leaves the possibility for an *absolute universal*, which would be a case of cross-linguistic similarity (Evans & Green, 2006, pp. 58–59). However,

although it is assumed that there are some universal concepts and, indeed, around 60 *semantic primes*—basic concepts that could not be defined in simpler terms—have been found among all languages, their identification has not been exempt from criticism (Evans & Green, 2006, pp. 62–63; Inchaurralde & Vázquez, 2000, pp. 134–137). Anyway, their number is very reduced, what seems to be rather an epiphenomenon of the sameness of our bodily experience in the world.

For Cognitive Linguistics, universality proceeds from the embodied cognition thesis. The view of Cognitive Linguistics leans towards image schemas—"schematized patterns of activity abstracted from everyday bodily experience"—that are regarded as preconceptual structures that give rise to more complex conceptual structures (Langacker, 2008, pp. 32–33). Among them there are metaphorical projections, many of which are considered universal given the universality of basic bodily experiences (Kövecses, 2009). A number of metaphors can be regarded as *primary metaphors*, they are acquired automatically through neural learning and everyday experience, being part of the cognitive unconscious (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 92). Based on this knowledge, which initially is not conceptual nor propositional, we understand more abstract domains (Johnson, 2007, p. 64). Primary metaphors are the basis for more complex conventional metaphors. In any case, from a conceptual point of view, both types have the same mechanism of formation through mappings.

Conceptual metaphor in Cognitive Linguistics is understood as a mapping between a source domain and a target domain. Normally, these cross-domain mappings are produced from a concrete domain to an abstract one (Lakoff, 1987; Langacker, 2008; Niemeier, 2004; Taylor, 1995). Among conceptual metaphors, there are many non-linguistic metaphors that are manifested in art, gesture, and other forms of cultural expression (Lakoff &

Johnson, 1999, p. 93). Only a part of conceptual metaphors is manifested in the lexicogrammatical continuum. For example, as in (33):

(33) *Love is a journey.* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 103)

The correspondence realized by metaphor helps to structure the abstract domain by means of knowledge based in perception and physical experience and to ground its representation in the mind (Boroditsky y Prinz, 2008, p. 106). In (33), the abstract domain of LOVE is metaphorically structured in terms of a more basic domain of JOURNEY, associated with physical experience in the actual world. Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 213) distinguish two types of experiential correlations for conceptual metaphors—experiential co-occurrence and experiential similarity—which then permit to form gestalts of experience. The relationship between the source and the target domains should be isomorphic, that is, conceptually the two domains have to be organized in the same fashion, demonstrating structural similarity (Lakoff, 1987, p. 278; Panther & Thornburg, 2009, p. 16). This isomorphism, or similarity, to a large extent is culturally dependent (Kövecses, 2009).

Metaphorical thinking is an important characteristic of human conceptual system. Another common to all human beings capacity is metonymic thinking. **Metonymy**, according to Panther and Radden (1999, p. 1), "is a cognitive phenomenon that may be even more fundamental than metaphor". Some of metonymies are so conventional that are even not recognized as such (Littlemore, 2015, p. 13). Though widely studied in recent years, different approaches to metonymy have not been unproblematic, since metonymy has been seen primarily as a referential phenomenon (Barcelona, 2009; Blank, 1999; Gibbs, 1999; Koch, 1999; Lakoff, 1987). But the role of

metonymy is much wider: as Lakoff and Johnson (1980, pp. 59–60) note, it structures our language, thoughts, and actions, emerging through experience even more directly than metaphor does.

It has been traditionally assumed that metonymy is based on contiguity (Koch, 1999). Within the Cognitive Linguistics framework, in general, it is agreed to consider **metonymy** as a mapping between two entities within one conceptual domain, in this sense distinguishing it from metaphor, which operates between two domains (cf. Barcelona, 2012b; Radden & Kövecses, 2007). For instance, (34) is an example of the metonymy CREATOR FOR CREATION, where the target concept provides access to the source concept pertaining to the same domain:

(34) *Tiene un Picasso en su casa.* (CPCI)

There are many well-known kinds of metonymic relationships: for instance, CAUSE FOR EFFECT, CONTAINER FOR CONTAINED, PLACE FOR INSTITUTION. One of the more ubiquitous metonymies in natural languages is the WHOLE FOR PART metonymy, a Gestalt-based relation. Our ability to think metonymically permits to infer whole from parts and parts from wholes (Gibbs, 1999). Unlike metaphor, normally metonymy is a reversible process (Panther & Radden, 1999). However, some metonymies are more conventional and natural than others. The substitution of the whole for a part or a part for the whole by some scholars is referred to as *synecdoche*, which, in its turn, is considered to be either a subcategory of metonymy or a concept independent from it (e.g., Gibbs, 1999; Taylor, 1995). Here I will regard it as a case of metonymy since to all intents and purposes it is a stand-for relationship, that is, where one entity stands for another, accomplishing the referential function of metonymy in the broadest sense.

In fact, Al-Sharafi (2004, pp. 112–113) argues that all types of reference are metonymic in nature, "in the sense that there is a process of substitution in referencing and there is a process of signification in substitution". For him, such stand-for relationships are given between texts and concepts, between nouns and pronouns, and also in ellipsis, which is seen as FORM FOR FORM metonymic relation, following Radden and Kövecses (2007). Panther and Thornburg (2003), moreover, argue that the contiguous relation between the metonymic source and its target may vary in strength and depends on their conceptual closeness. A similar relation between two nominals, where the strength of their conceptual connectivity varies, is observed by van Hoek (1995) with regard to pronominal anaphora. Therefore, in line with Al-Sharafi's claim, it is possible to consider pronominal anaphora as a kind of metonymy as well. Metonymic "conceptual anaphors" are also attested in Gibbs (1999).

As Koch (1999, p. 145) and Blank (1999, p. 171) note, metonymy as a linguistic phenomenon is based on extralinguistic world knowledge. However, there is no a problem from a Cognitive Linguistics point view since no rigid boundary is posited between linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge. Such frontiers are seen as artificially imposed. For cognitive linguists, there is no boundary between semantic and pragmatic meanings either. These notions are regarded as gradations because our conceptualizing activity is a complex process that requires a range of various cognitive abilities (cf. Langacker, 2008, pp. 36–37). The view expressed by Littlemore (2015) is relevant in this respect:

> One of the reasons why we need metonymy is that it is impossible to encapsulate all aspects of our intended meaning in the language that we use. In other words, language always "underspecifies" meaning in that it cannot possibly express everything that is relevant to its interpretation. (p.4)

That is why Croft (2002) proposes that the meaning of a linguistic item always invokes a set of possible domains for its interpretation, a *domain matrix*, whose one or another part in highlighted depending on the context. Through these salient parts, a large amount of information is inferred, so this process is also metonymic. Salient parts of some knowledge that are going to participate in a metonymic relationship are referred to as "active zones" (Langacker, 1991a, p. 190). Langacker (2008, p. 69) characterizes metonymy as shift in profile. Since meaning, associated in Cognitive Grammar with conceptualization, necessarily evokes some conceptual content from the domain matrix, only a part of it is foregrounded as its profile. A metonymic shift presupposes a change in the focus of attention to another active zone and consequently a change in profile. In fact, as Langacker (2008) claims, metonymy is a reference-point phenomenon since any reference point relationship presupposes a metonymic shift. And Koch (1999, p. 151) states that, "from a gestalt perspective, metonymy turns out to be a 'figure/ground' effect".

Metonymy is present on various levels of our conceptual organization. Thus, Gibbs (1999, pp. 68–69) distinguishes metonymic processing of language from processing metonymic language. Apart from contributing to coherence and cohesion in discourse (Al-Sharafi, 2004; Littlemore, 2015; Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Diez Velasco, 2004), metonymy is a basic characteristic of human cognition and underlies our thinking processes. Its manifestation in language is just a reflection of such conceptual status (Gibbs, 1999, p. 62; Panther & Radden, 1999, p. 2). As Panther and Radden (1999, p. 21) note, the areas where metonymy function are quite wide:

> Metonymic processes are thus not restricted to reference; they occur at the purely conceptual level (categorization, linguistic reasoning), at different levels of language (lexis, morphology, syntax, discourse), in different linguistic functions (reference, predication, speech acts), and as a

linkage interrelating different ontological realms (concepts, forms and things/events).

Many metonymies turn out to be multi-tiered or chained, that is, based on more than one conceptual shift (Brdar, 2007; Hilpert, 2007). And, due to the continuum between lexicon and grammar, they can be lexical as well as grammatical.

Moreover, the boundary between metonymy and metaphor is not clear-cut. Many linguistic statements reflect both metaphor and metonymy (Gibbs, 1999, p. 63). As Warren (1999, p. 133) insightfully notes, "the interpretation of metonyms involves retrieving a relation, whereas the interpretation of metaphors involves retrieving at least one attribute shared by the conventional and intended referents. This means that even a resemblance relation can occasionally be metonymic". In addition, metaphorical and metonymic mappings can be combined, forming metaphtonimies (Brdar, 2007; Goossens, 1990). Like chained metonymies, such phenomena are also basically chained processes. But, more importantly, both metaphor and metonymy as mechanisms of semantic change are sources for polysemy.

Cognitive Linguistics considers **polysemy**, traditionally regarded as the capacity for a word to have multiple meanings (Taylor, 1995, p. 99), not as a simple linguistic phenomenon but as a conceptual one. Thus, Lakoff (1987, p. 334) states that "the generalizations governing polysemy can only be described and explained in terms of conceptual organization". Seeing polysemy as the norm, Cognitive Linguistics claims that almost any linguistic item is polysemous. Furthermore, given that there is no sharp boundary between lexicon and grammar (Langacker, 2008, pp. 18–20), the phenomenon of polysemy is manifested in both lexical items and in grammatical organization. These premises have given rise to the proliferation of research on polysemy within the cognitive linguistic framework, e.g.: the analysis of *there*-constructions

(Lakoff, 1987), various accounts of the preposition *over* (Brugman, 1983; Lakoff, 1987; Taylor, 1995; Tyler & Evans, 2003, 2004), of the German preposition *über* (Meex, 2001), the past tense in English (Taylor, 1995), the case in Icelandic (Smith, 2001). The phenomenon of polysemy became one of the central issues in Cognitive Semantics (Valenzuela, Ibarretxe-Antuñano, & Hilferty, 2012, pp. 53–54).

In Cognitive Linguistics, polysemy is viewed as a form of categorization. According to Rosch (2009, p. 41), categorization, being one of the primary principles of conceptual and, therefore, linguistic organization, is a "process by which distinguishable objects or events are treated equivalently". The characterization of different senses of a linguistic unit as interrelated and forming a category has been possible due to a drastic change that the view of categorization has undergone with the rejection of the classical theory of categorization, caused by the results of experimental investigations about colour perception by Rosch (publishing as Heider, 1972). Cognitive Linguistics rejects the Aristotelian view of "necessary and sufficient conditions" for making dichotomous judgements about category membership, arguing in favour of flexible concepts with no rigid boundaries that are grounded in our bodily experience (Johnson, 2007; Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). Cognitive Psychology has introduced a model of graded categorization known as **prototype theory** (Lakoff, 1987; Rosch, 2009; Taylor, 1995; Vicente & Falkum, 2016). In accordance with it, categorization is prototype-centered and category membership is determined by similarity to one or several prototypical centres. Some members of the category are more central and others more peripheral; all of them form a radially structured category being organized—using the Wittgensteinian notion—in a **family resemblance** structure (Lakoff, 1987; Taylor, 1995, Chapter 3,6).

Hence, cognitive linguists argue that the meaning of any linguistic item can be arranged in a **network** of senses, which are structured around a prototype (or prototypes) and linked by categorizing relationships. Categorizing relationships can be of two sorts: **elaborations** and **extensions** (Geeraerts, 1985; Langacker, 2008). More particularly, an elaboration presupposes a **generalization** or a **specialization** of the given pattern (Geeraerts, 1985, pp. 139–140). Basically, it is a matter of specificity/schematicity (Langacker, 2008, p. 17). Thus, specific instantiations with respect to the constructional schema constitute its elaborations: *book, a book, that green book on the shelve* are elaborations of the schema [THING]. *A book* is an elaboration of *book,* and so on. On the other hand, an extension conflicts in some degree with the elaborated construction: extensions can be **metaphorical** or **metonymic**. These for processes constitute mechanisms of semantic change within a polysemous network.

The radial network approach permits to overcome the limitations of the dictionary view of semantics, arguing against the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign, maintained by scholars from Saussure onwards, and against the predictability of different senses of a linguistic item by general rules. Instead, it postulates that the senses in a category are **motivated** by family resemblances and intertwined, being organized around its prototypical (central) meanings. Given this view, different meanings of a polysemous item, therefore, are no more viewed as disjunctive.

Lakoff (1987, pp. 65, 84) emphasizes that "the noncentral members are not predictable from the central member, they are 'motivated' by it, in the sense that they bear family resemblances to it": these variations are conventionalized and should be learnt. Indeed, particular categorizations are what differentiates one language from another. Though many construals are possible, which ones will be used is a matter of linguistic conventions within a speech community.

As Langacker states (2008, p. 132, 143), "learning such conventions is part of mastering a language. Yet there is always the option of a novel construal, hence an altered grammatical potential". Therefore, there is always a possibility for a speaker to be linguistically creative according to his/her needs (Zawada, 2009). Langacker argues that all expressions have their degrees of **conventionality** and every novel expression is assessed by its degree of conventionality within a particular speech community. If an expression become entrenched, it receives a status of conventional unit. There's no any sharp boundary between novel and conventional expressions. For example, given the variety of possible construal, a noun can be construed as count or as mass, and one or another construction can be more or less conventional. In this way, in (35b), the mass construal of *niño* is less frequent and less conventional.

(35) a. *En cada adulto hay* ***un niño****, pero no un adulto en cada niño.*

b. *También odontología, medicina preventiva y un área donde se enseña a las señoras a preparar papillas nutritivas y de bajo costo, porque aquí hay* ***mucho niño*** *desnutrido.* (CREA)

These conventional patterns are the result of categorization. As Dienhart (1999, p. 98) writes, "patterns govern our lives, be they patterns of material culture, or patterns of language". Such patterns of language, in the Cognitive Linguistics view, compose grammar, being abstractions from actual usage events and representing their commonality (Langacker, 2008). Inversely, they are then instantiated by specific linguistic expressions. Langacker (2008, p. 38) maintains that the knowledge of how the linguistic unit is used resides not in any single sense but in the entire network. Thus, "in learning to use the word properly, a speaker masters the entire network (not just the schema or the prototype)" (Langacker, 2008, p. 225).

Nevertheless, some researchers criticize the radial network approach to polysemy as methodologically vague, questioning its psychological validity (cf. Queller, 2003; Rice, 2003; Sandra & Rice, 1995). The sense enumerative approach—how it had been termed by its critics—has been accused as giving rise to the "polysemy fallacy": an indefinite proliferation of senses (Vicente & Falkum, 2016). It has been noted that, for example, in the case of the English preposition *over*, there are as many types of polysemous network of *over* as its analyses, which differ from researcher to researcher. In particular, Sennet (2016) objects that it is not clear how the senses within the network are individuated. Sandra and Rice (1995) claim the necessity of principled arguments and empirical data in order to clarify the methodological vagueness of the prepositional network approach. However, the experiments conducted by Sandra and Rice (1995) regarding the identification of distinct senses in a lexical network and the relationship between them provide only partial answers, leaving the questions about the polysemous or monosemous character of mental representations and the role of context-dependent meanings open. Moreover, it could be argued that the fact that language users do not perceive a relational link between two usages, probably, is not owed to the absence of such relation but to the unconsciousness of the process.

There is another line of criticism by which the role of context is emphasized. Thus, Queller (2003), paying attention to the emergence of contextual senses, emphasizes the creative role of the hearer in the interpretation of utterances. Queller (2003) proposes a context-based reanalysis via "semantic backformation", denying the existence of metonymic shifts in the process of inferring the meaning. Allwood (2003) and Janssen (2003) also challenge the sense enumerative approach and argue in favour of contextual determination of meaning. Yet they reject the strong monosemy view, Allwood (2003) suggests that linguistic items tend to be monosemous while having a

meaning potential that can activate other information related to the context. Moreover, Allwood (2003, p. 45) argues against a reified, static view of meaning, pointing out that the "difference between a reifying polysemy approach and the meaning potential approach would be that in the latter the different meanings are not seen as a constant feature of a particular word". Janssen (2003) suggests that polysemous and monosemous approaches are not mutually exclusive but complementary to each other. Janssen (2003) also notes an emergent character of context conceptualizations, thus approaching to the division between emergent and emerging constructions that is made within the Emergent Grammar approach (Hopper, 2011). So, the works of Allwood (2003) and Janssen (2003) are characterized by a departure from the reified view of word meaning towards a dynamic usage-based approach, which is also proposed in Queller (2003).

In order to shade some light to the problem of "separate meaning", Tyler and Evans (2003) have suggested a model of "principled polysemy" as a method of identifying different senses within a lexical network in a principled manner. Their approach, which is illustrated as applied to English spatial prepositions, is based on two criteria: (i) "a distinct sense must involve non-spatial meaning or a different configuration between the TR [trajector] and LM [landmark] than found in the proto-scene"; (ii) it should be context independent (Tyler & Evans, 2003, pp. 42–43). As Riemer (2005, p. 156) argues, Tyler and Evans' attempt to avoid the exaggeration of distinct meanings seems to allow "sense division to follow directly from the representation of meaning, since a word has as many senses as it requires separate definitional representations". Moreover, Riemer (2005, p. 166) also notes that the metonymic relation as a principle of categorization is the same independently of whether it is postulated between two glosses or between two distinct senses, that is, if one and the same item is regarded as monosemous or polysemous.

Moreover, it has been alleged that the variety of polysemy tests elaborated to distinguish between ambiguity, vagueness, monosemy, homonymy, and polysemy have not given satisfactory results (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 2007). Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (2007), following Taylor (1995), emphasizes that the boundaries between these notions are fuzzy. This argument constitutes another point in favour of the radial network approach.

In line with the above-mentioned investigations that lean towards a dynamic view of meaning (Allwood, 2003; Janssen, 2003; Queller, 2003), Langacker (2008) stresses the internal dynamicity of the nodes within the radial network, developing further his dynamic usage-based model (Langacker, 2000). Langacker (2009, p. 154) highlights the continuous character of the senses, claiming that they could be regarded as "schematized patterns of action", and that overlaps of meaning can be viewed as overlaps in processing "activity comprising the connected elements" (Langacker, 2016, pp. 19–20). Langacker (2008, p. 50) also suggests that "it may be that, strictly speaking, a lexeme is never used twice with exactly the same meaning". In this respect, therefore, it is possible to view meanings as having no constant value. Moreover, bearing in mind that, according to Cognitive Grammar, every novel expression is anyway assessed in terms of its degree of conventionality, the existence of a discrete word sense as such, in consequence, is questioned and only usage patterns are recognized. This dynamic view of meaning acquires special relevance given the breakthroughs in Cognitive Semantics by which meanings are viewed as actions (Sinha, 1999) and as interdependent meaningful wholes (Rosch, 1999). Thus, as Dirven (2005, p. 25) writes, Rosch's viewpoint presupposes "a radically embodied conception of categories, which are not static representations, not even representations, but instruments for action in the world". Meaning, therefore, is viewed nowadays by scholars as a dynamic notion.

2.4. An overview of Langacker's Cognitive Grammar: articles as grounding elements

With the rejection of the classical view of categorization, which asserted the existence of universal and objective categories that are independent from our perception, it could be claimed that in the field of linguistics—based on findings in psychology and philosophy—cognitive linguists have turned around the idea of how the process of reasoning is occurred. Cognitive Grammar emerges as a usage-based grammar, linked to our bodily experience in the world but, from the other hand, also being disengaged from it through memory and abstraction. That is why grammar is seen rather as set of conventional patterns established within one linguistic community than a set of rules to be combined in order to specify some truth conditions. In the cognitive conception, grammar represents abstractions from actual usage events by means of extracting their commonality (Langacker, 2008).

These conventional patterns are a result of categorization and experiential gestalts that are formed even in the prelinguistic phase of language development, when any kind of meaning is acquired, which initially is not conceptual nor propositional (Johnson, 2007; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Abstractions tend to be more schematic than actual experiences, that is why the grammatical pole of the lexical-grammatical continuum is more schematic (Langacker, 2008, p. 525). Like gestalts of experience, grammatical patterns serve to make coherent separate experiences. There is no any inconsistency. Since language is assumed to be the reflection of our conceptual organization, grammatical phenomena are interrelated with experiential phenomena. Primary metaphors, mentioned in the previous section, are such an example since they are acquired automatically through neural learning, forming part of the cognitive unconscious (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 92). Categorization

processes and other general mental abilities are also manifested in the proper linguistic organization.

The human conceptual system in Cognitive Linguistics is equated with language itself and linguistic meanings–with conceptualizations, which people make encompassing the actual or any imagined world (Langacker, 2008; Talmy, 1988). Linguistic meanings are apprehended by the principal conceptualizers—the speaker and the hearer—who interact in discourse. They can construe one and the same situation (i.e. some conceptual content) in a number of different ways depending on the level of specificity/schematicity, focusing, the degree of salience, and the adopted perspective (Langacker, 1986, 2008). These dimensions of construal affect what linguistic expressions will mean. From the Cognitive Linguistics viewpoint, we categorize things and processes, so there are two possibilities: expressions can profile a thing or a relationship (Langacker, 2008, p. 67).

As it has been noted in Section 2.3., [THING] is a schematic characterization for nouns, denoting any kind of conceptual reification and being an expression's conceptual referent (e.g., Langacker 2008, pp. 70, 98; Radden & Dirven, 2007, pp. 63-64). The specific content for any [THING] is provided by its **type** specification, which is accomplished by nouns of any degree of complexity, including both lexical nouns and nominal expressions (Langacker, 2008, p. 310, 2017). Regarding the term *type*, Langacker (2008, p. 323) specifies:

> The word "type" must be flexibly interpreted. It cannot be limited to the standard, culturally recognized types invoked by lexical nouns, or even to what are called types in ordinary usage: while *a table* is certainly a type of thing, *a small table* would not ordinarily be considered a type of table, and *a small table near the door* would never be. We resort to modifyers precisely because standard, lexically coded types are inadequate for the task at hand,

and often the needed description makes reference to nonstandard properties or wholly contingent circumstances.

Now then, in order to discern the noun from an innumerable array of entities pertaining to its type, a complementary strategy is needed. English and the Romance languages make use of a dual strategy—the combination of the **deictic** and the **descriptive** strategies (Langacker, 2008, 2009). This dualism is necessary because of the unlimited nature of our mental universe. There are so many entities that it subsumes and can subsume in every future moment, that it would be impossible to cope with only one of the strategies. If the descriptive strategy is accomplished by a type description, that is, a noun in its broadest definition, the deictic strategy serves to identify the referent in relative terms (Langacker, 2008, p. 277). Langacker (2008) stresses that the identification is not done "in absolute terms (reference in the world)", which supposes another point of contrast with respect to the classical theory of categorization and truth-conditional semantics.

The deictic strategy normally is accomplished by *grounding elements*, which are those that, identifying the thing in question, relate it to the **ground**. Langacker (2008, p. 78) uses the term *ground* to specify the particular context in which the discourse is produced, that is, "for the speaker and hearer, the speech event in which they participate, and their immediate circumstances (e.g. the time and place of speaking)". Langacker (2008, p. 272) emphasizes that grounding lies beyond grammar and pertains to our conceptual organization. In line with that, for example, it is no wonder that Barsalou (2010) proposes the term *grounded cognition* to encompass a broader scope of grounding mechanisms in the brain.

As an aspect of conceptual organization, grounding establishes a connection between the interlocutors and the conceptual content referred to (i.e. profiled) by linguistic expressions through different grounding strategies.

Among them, the most typical way is to use a grounding element. As Langacker (2008) writes:

> A grounding element specifies the status vis-à-vis the ground of the thing profiled by a nominal. . . . Through nominal grounding . . . , the speaker directs the hearer's attention to the intended discourse referent, which may or may not correspond to an actual individual. . . . If left ungrounded, this content has no discernible position in their mental universe and cannot be brought to bear on their situation. It simply floats unattached as an object of idle contemplation. (p. 259)

The referent can be a real-world object or a virtual one. As it is the case for some authors that do not pertain to the Cognitive Linguistics framework, like Hawkins (2015) or Leonetti (1999), the existence of referents in Cognitive Grammar is not limited to their existence only as extra-linguistic objects in the actual world, rather it is understood as existence in some domain. Since no arbitrary boundary is posited between linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge, from a Cognitive Grammar point of view, reference is not seen only as a relationship between language and the extralinguistic world, rather it is a stand-for metonymic relationship. Therefore, three types of reference are distinguished: at the conceptual level, at the discourse level, and in the actual world (Langacker, 2008, pp. 269–272, 2017).

Basically, the ground functions as an implicit point of reference at every moment of the interaction (Langacker, 2008, p. 78). To some degree, grounding always remains a subjective process and, in principle, the thing to be singled out for discourse purposes can be conceptualized in either way. The speaker and the addressee—the conceptualizers—act as the subjects of conception and what is conceptualized as the object of conception, corresponding to the expression's profile.

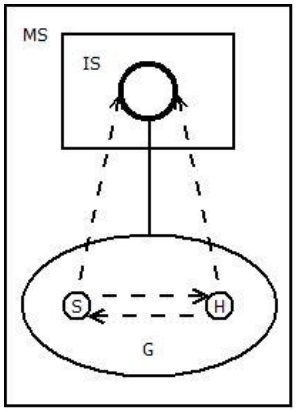


Figure 1. Grounding (Langacker, 2008, p. 261)
IS = immediate scope; MS = maximal scope; S = speaker; H = hearer; G = ground

Adapting four diagrams made by Langacker (2008, p. 261), the meaning of a nominal regarding the ground can be represented by figure 1, where the ground (G) is enclosed in ellipse and indicates the interaction and the presence—either explicit or implicit—of the speaker (S) and the hearer (H) in the context of discourse. They select some conceptual content as the basis for an expression's meaning (its maximal scope, abbreviated as MS in the diagram) focusing on a part of it. The directing of attention is indicated by means of dashed lines. In this cognitive operation, the interlocutors are guided by the pervasive perceptual phenomenon that is known in gestalt psychology as figure/ground organization (which should be distinguished from the Langackerian ground, the term under discussion). Figure/ground organization, originally applied to visual perception but expanded to other fields including linguistic, is the distinction made between what is foregrounded ("figure") and backgrounded ("ground") in our visual perception. Applying this to discourse organization, the content foregrounded in relation to the maximal scope is the immediate scope (IS) of an expression, or the general locus of attention. Within the immediate scope, the specific focus of attention is the profiled entity. The entity is represented as a circle serving to depict a noun which, according to

Cognitive Grammar, is conceptualized as a thing (Langacker, 2008; Mihatsch, 2009). The bold lines are used to indicate its profiling. A solid line from the ground to the thing means the connection established between them through a grounding element. Both focusing and scope as its component, according to Cognitive Grammar, are matters of selection (Langacker, 2008, pp. 57–65). Therefore, they are subjective and changeable for communicative purposes. As a result of their choice, one and the same situation can be conceived in different ways.

The nominal grounding system is idiosyncratic in every language. Consequently, there are many forms to express (in)definiteness, even in those languages that do not have explicit elements to indicate it; they then possess other strategies that serve the grounding function. Thus, for example, in languages that do not have articles, for the purpose of identification of the referent other determiners, like demonstratives, can be used (cf. Belaj & Matovac, 2015). Articles, therefore, are just one of the grounding options within the grounding system of a language. However, comparing to demonstratives, they are conceptually more abstract and more complex (Langacker, 2016, p. 43). Their conceptual weight is huge since they lie in the core of the whole human conceptual system, organizing concepts and objects in our mind, which, moreover, vary in their degree of complexity.

The definite and the indefinite articles in Spanish are members of the Spanish grounding system. In languages like English or Spanish, the article system is a subsystem within a larger grounding system that includes other determiners, quantifiers, quantifying constructions, possessives, etc. (Langacker, 2016). Articles are overt grounding elements, unlike proper names, whose grounding is, in many cases intrinsic, because "the very meanings of such expressions imply the identifiability of their referents" (Langacker, 2008, p. 272). As in the case of the English articles, examined by Langacker (2008), in

the structure of a nominal, Spanish articles also tend to occupy the most external position, which is owed to its conceptual weight: they provide the minimal information about the nominal itself, merely specifying the status of the profiled thing within the immediate scope, since the central semantic content is supplied by a type description. Differentiating between nouns and nominals, while nouns specify a type of thing, nominals specify an instance of a type, but they are also nouns in the broader sense of the term, being their grammatical elaborations (Langacker, 2016, p. 80).

While a noun specifies the type of thing that is being referred to, the meaning of the article is very schematic—it designates a thing but used alone fails to identify it. That is why the definite article cannot stand alone as a full nominal, functioning only with the type description provided by a noun (p. 286). The indefinite article represents a special case since it can stand alone, transforming into an indefinite pronoun *uno*. Articles, as Langacker (2008, p. 263) observes, are situated between the lexical and the grammatical poles of the lexicogrammatical continuum, being closer to the latter. The schematic meaning of the definite and indefinite articles can be represented by their respective constructional schemas [DEFART] and [INDEFART], while their pairings with a noun at the higher level of organization—as the schemas [DEFART N] and [INDEFART N] respectively. Since articles profile schematic things, they themselves can be regarded as schematic nominals. As Langacker (2008) points out:

> If one accepts that a noun profiles a thing, it can be shown that the same description applies to pronouns, demonstratives, and articles. Hence these are most reasonably seen not as disjoint from but as belonging to the class of nouns, being distinguished from "lexical" nouns by their additional, special properties. (p.122)

Langacker (2008, p. 263) also notes that the schematic meaning of articles as grounding elements is contained "more in construal than in any specific conceptual content". With that, articles cannot be specified otherwise than by a pairing with a noun, forming the schema [ART + N] at the higher level of composite organization.

The definite and the indefinite articles—in order to fulfil the function of directing attention to the desired thing by indicating its relation to the ground—require an additional element or elements to specify the type of the thing in question (see Langacker (1986, 2009) for discussion about constructions and "elaboration sites"). Thus, in (36), the constructional schema of the definite article is further elaborated till a specific nominal *el libro*, also represented in the example by its schema, is obtained:

(36) [DEFART […]] → [DEFART N] → [EL LIBRO]

So, expressions as [EL LIBRO], [UN LIBRO], [LAS MESAS], [UNA MESA GRANDE], [EL SOL], etc., constitute instantiations of the definite and indefinite articles.

From a more holistic perspective, all grammar is seen as formed by such symbolic assemblies. In Cognitive Linguistics, the principle of **full compositionality** is considered just as a special case, involving that there is no rigid boundary between semantics and pragmatics. Being limited, compositionality, according to Langacker (2008), is partial: the composite structure as a whole is not predictable and distinct from its component parts. Cognitive Grammar views it as an **assembly of symbolic structures**, which, for their part, are interrelated through categorizing relationships and correspondences (Langacker, 2008, p. 164; van Hoek, 2010). In consequence, schematic assemblies describe grammatical patterns and for this purpose can

be expressed by means of **constructional schemas**.

Alternatively, the process instantiation also can be explained as follows: an ungrounded noun, representing the abstracted commonality of the type, requires a mental operation of bounding in the case of count nouns or discerning any portion of the type in the case of mass nouns within the immediate scope with a view to directing attention to it. By using the combination of the two strategies—descriptive and deictic—the profiled thing can be distinguished from an open-ended range of potential referents in our mental universe for immediate discourse purposes (Langacker, 2008, pp. 276-278). It is important to note that in constructions that can be represented by the schema [ART N], composed of an article and a noun, the article' profile and the noun's profile correspond. This is because the grounding element profiles a schematic thing, not the grounding relation (Langacker, 2008, pp. 261–262).

Based on this distinction between intrinsic and overt grounding, Langacker (2016) postulates two subtypes of nominal reference: **unique reference**, as it is the case for prototypical proper nouns, those that are used without articles; and **non-unique reference**, whose epistemic status in relation to the ground—that could be thought of as a process of anchoring to some reference point in order to acquire a certain meaning—is specified via grounding elements.

Langacker (2016, pp. 27–28) argues that the only common characteristic of nominal structures is their semantic function, or nominal reference in its traditional formulation. The above-described mechanisms for achieving unique and non-unique reference are prototypical strategies, the cases by default. Unique reference sometimes can borrow the mechanism of non-unique reference, which is normally achieved by two components, a grounding element and the type description. Since proper nouns, as many other linguistic elements,

constitute a prototypical category, not all of them are intrinsically grounded. Thus, in Spanish, there are proper nouns that are always used with the definite article (e.g., *los Pirineos, El Escorial*) or those whose grounding is optional (e.g., *la China / China*). Nevertheless, they are also cases of unique reference.

When achieving the semantic function of non-unique reference, grounding options also vary. While normally one of the elements of the grounding system is used, in Spanish grounding can also be covert as in [LIBROS]. In such case, the nominal is grounded in discourse in a broader sense. With that, Langacker stresses that non-unique reference is always identified in local terms, being based on the immediate discourse context (Langacker, 2016, p. 105). As Langacker (2008) explains:

> Since a given type usually corresponds to an open-ended set of actual or imagined instances, invoking it is not itself sufficient to single out the specific entity we want to talk about. Grounding provides a way of overcoming this limitation. From the array of entities selected by a type specification, it directs attention to the desired instance through an indication of its relation to the ground. (p. 266)

Articles, commonly considered as operators that do not have their own meaning, do not face this problem in Cognitive Grammar. Rather, for a Cognitive Grammar approach, the issue is to determine what their meaning is. Viewing grammar as inherently meaningful, Langacker (2009, p. 1) states that "lexicon and grammar are fully describable as assemblies of symbolic structures, where a symbolic structure is simply the pairing between a semantic structure and a phonological structure (its semantic and phonological poles)". Therefore, even such schematic elements as articles constitute symbolic structures that can be further described as having multiple, interrelated meanings. In the next chapters, I will proceed with the examination the definite and the indefinite article's semantic structures as radial categories, contrary to the point of view

of traditional linguistics, for example, Leonetti's (1999, pp. 871–872) viewpoint, who argues that their basic meanings are always invariable. But before that, I will outline some recent accounts of articles from a Cognitive Grammar perspective in Spanish and English linguistics.

2.5. Spanish Cognitive Grammar perspective on articles

In the last decades Cognitive Linguistics has gained popularity as a method for L2 learning. The usage-based approach to linguistic structure and the emphasis on meaning have turned out to be very fruitful in the field of foreign language learning and teaching, although as a methodological tool the Cognitive Linguistics framework is still in its beginning stages (Achard & Niemeier, 2004). Amongst other languages, it is being developed for Spanish L2 grammar. As a consequence, within the field of teaching Spanish as a foreign language, there are a number of recent studies on articles in Spanish (Alonso Raya et al., 2006; Castañeda Castro, 2014; Chamorro et al., 2006; López García, 2005; Montero Gálvez, 2011, 2014, 2017; Ruiz Campillo, 1998; Santiago Alonso, 2017). The majority of them have been developed within the movement of "operational grammar" (*la gramática operativa*) of Spanish for pedagogical purposes (J. P. Ruiz Campillo, A. Castañeda, and others). However, further it will be argued that the operational grammar's perspective on articles is quite different from Cognitive Grammar's view as it has been developed by Langacker.

One of the first grammar books for teaching Spanish as L2, which assumes a cognitive perspective on language, is the work of López García (2005). López García provides some initial insights on the role of Spanish articles in discourse for that he makes use of the notions figure and ground. López García (2005, p. 90) also considers that *el* is the prototype of the entire category of articles in Spanish with regard to the indefinite article *un,* the zero

article, and *lo*, which he treats as a neutral article. He mentions which uses can be regarded as prototypical for the definite and the indefinite articles, however, apparently without taking into account prototype theory. And it seems that López García (2005, p. 84) subscribes to the objectivist view of a real world since he assumes the traditional explanation that determiners do not have referents, although for him they do have some meaning. But the same time, this view coexists with his assumption of alternative ways of perception and representation of one and the same "world situation" due to different selection of figures and grounds. In line with the cognitive linguistic view, López García states that languages do not only differ in vocabulary but also in categories (p.81) and that human perception is "un mecanismo equidistante respecto a los distintos sistemas lingüísticos y básicamente similar en toda nuestra especie" (López García, 2005, p. 11).

The method of operational grammar of Spanish originates from the dissertation of Ruiz Campillo (1998), who expands his spatial model for the verbal system in Spanish to the article system in Spanish. In fact, he follows Langacker's (1991b) view on language organization who has announced the parallelism of clausal and nominal grounding. Ruiz Campillo defines the definite article in terms of the *positive* identification of the object (its situation in the *positive perceptual space*) and—by virtue of our encyclopedic knowledge of the world—the indefinite referent as pertaining to the *approximate perceptual space* (*espacio de percepción apoximativa*) versus the *virtual* perception of the object in the case of the zero article (*espacio de percepción virtual*). Yet his understanding of virtuality does not correspond with Langacker's (2008, 2016) conception, whereas the postulation of zero elements as such is dubious from a cognitively-oriented perspective. Apart from that, Ruiz Campillo makes no distinction between cases of the absence of articles, as it could be the difference between plural countable, mass nouns, and singular countable nouns. Moreover, it is not

clear in which perception space proper names are situated, are they positively identified in the three-dimensional environment or pertain to the virtual perceptual space? At the same time, more discrepancies arise if one tries to situate abstract notions such as *la violencia*, *la paciencia*, etc. in the three-dimensional space (which seems to be always the case for the positive perception space).

Though Ruiz Campillo tries to postulate a kind of frame, or mental space, in line with the Cognitive Linguistics approach, he posits only three types, or "spaces", of reference, basically associated with the obvious forms of nominal reference, which do not work well in explaining all variation in meaning that can be observed within these three options. Ruiz Campillo (1998, pp. 350, 355) also claims that his model of spatial placing (*modelo de colocación espacial*) is separated from pragmatic considerations such as Hawkins' shared sets. However, as Langacker (2016, p. 105) states, non-unique reference always deals with the immediate discourse context, which consequently means that it cannot be exempt of pragmatic considerations. From the other hand, Ruiz Campillo (1998) sees no problem in including the numerical value into the use of the indefinite article. With that, Ruiz Campillo also makes use of Bally's concept of actualization (Abad Nebot, 1977, pp. 51–68; Lapesa, 1987, pp. 47–56). It is questionable to which degree "actualization as a process that converts a virtual linguistic entity belonging to language to an actual entity of discourse" (Johansson & Suomela-Salmi, 2011, p. 79)—the concept originated within the objectivist tradition—can substitute the process of grounding, which is always subjective in nature and is based on empiricism. Summarizing, the approach of Ruiz Campillo results to be imprecise in some aspects and problematic in others.

The proposal of Ruiz Campillo is used in the textbook *El ventilador* (Chamorro et al., 2006). In contrast, in another grammar book issued by the

same publishing house and with Ruiz Campillo and Castañeda Castro among the authors (Alonso Raya et al., 2006), the explanation of the use of articles is based on the concept of identification, which is also assumed by Langacker (2016): with the definite article the referent is said to be identifiable for the hearer, while with the indefinite article the referent is considered to be unidentified. And it seems that the concept of identification is paired with the concept of actualization in a later grammar of Spanish as a foreign language (Castañeda Castro & Chamorro, 2014). Apparently, the authors join the notion of grounding with the concept of actualization, thus assuming that things are not profiled, which would be the term in use in Cognitive Grammar, but "actualized". Although Castrañeda Castro and Chamorro assume the Langackerian distinction between types and instances, they establish their proper distinctions for operations of determination—which can be quantification, selection, and location—and for operations of modification, distinguishing between explanation, specialization, and specification. However, such a postulation is not justified and seems to be rather arbitrary.

Moreover, Castañeda Castro and Chamorro (2014, p. 183) also affirm that the determinant imposes its profile on the combination ARTICLE+NOUN, while according to Langacker (2008, pp. 275–276) there is no profile determinant at this composite structure level since the profile of the determinant and the profile of the noun correspond. In addition, while they outline such fundamental Cognitive Grammar notions as base, grounding, and profile, these are not used for the subsequent analysis of articles at all. Nor they assume the distinction between plural mass and non-plural mass nouns introduced by Langacker (2008, pp. 130–131). Castañeda Castro and Chamorro's explanation of article use turns to be rather descriptive, than cognitive, since they do not allude to any cognitive grammar notion mentioned before. From their analysis, however, it is clear that they assume Hawkins'

concept of inclusiveness and prefer to talk about "the absence of article" than positing the zero article.

The problem with all recent accounts of articles in Spanish is that they intend to search for basic values of articles as it is also the case for Montero Gálvez's (2011, 2014a, 2014b, 2017) and Santiago Alonso's (2016, 2017) works. Thus, Montero Gálvez (2011), within the method of operational grammar, looks for one basic value for each article that could encompass all other values. Following Leonetti (1999), she takes Hawkins' inclusiveness as the primary value of the definite article and exclusiveness as the principal value of *un*, which she regards as a quantifier. Other uses are considered to be pragmatic actualizations of these essential values. Montero Gálvez also postulates the zero article for cases of the absence of article, later limiting it to those that have referential and quantifying value (Montero Gálvez, 2014b). In her dissertation Montero Gálvez (2017) reconsiders *un* as an article, adding to its exclusiveness the value of indefiniteness, meaning that the indefinite article's referent never presupposes common knowledge shared by the speaker and hearer, due to that its uniqueness cannot be guaranteed (Montero Gálvez, 2017, p. 457).

Montero Gálvez (2017, p. 464) further argues that the identifiability of the referent—apparently, on some occasions, substituted in her work as specificity—is irrelevant for explaining the contrast between the definite and the indefinite articles. However, also separating the notion of identifiability from definiteness, the work of von Heusinger (2002)—although outside of the cognitive linguistic framework—provides some examples of specific indefinites where the referent is known to both speaker and hearer. Also López García (2005), highlighting the exclusiveness of indefinite reference, observes that, although the referent of the indefinite article has not been mentioned previously, it is not necessarily unfamiliar since a definite referent can be unknown as well as an indefinite referent can be known previously. These

examples, therefore, make the claim alleged by Montero Gálvez difficult to sustain. In fact, this issue turns to be related to the concept of familiarity (Christophersen, 1939) that has been criticized by many scholars (e.g., Hawkins, 2015).

Moreover, in her analysis of articles Montero Gálvez (2017) does not assume the basic tenets of Cognitive Grammar developed by Langacker (1986, 1991b, 2008). Thus, Cognitive Grammar distinguishes three types of reference: at the conceptual level, at the discourse level, and in the actual world (Langacker, 2008, pp. 269–270). But Montero Gálvez does not recognize the view of referentiality adopted in Cognitive Grammar, seeing it only as a relationship between linguistic signs and their referents in the extralinguistic world. That is why she writes about non-referential uses of articles and considers proper names to be non-referential. Besides Montero Gálvez (2017, pp. 358–359) on many occasions seems to divide between linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge, criticizing Langacker's understanding of bounding and the division between plural and non-plural mass nouns. The same consideration leads her to conclude that exclusiveness of indefinite reference is questionable in non-specific readings since the existence of the referent is not guaranteed (Montero Gálvez, 2017, pp. 427, 430). This problem is also associated with her interpretation of virtuality of referents that is at odds with the one postulated by Langacker.

Montero Gálvez (2017) also criticizes Langacker's view of type in his distinction between types and instances, without taking into account that in principle any noun can be construed as mass or count and that the type conception is inherent in every instance. Furthermore, she does not bear in mind that instantiation conceptually is a more complex cognitive operation than type distinction, and by consequence, an instance occupies a higher composite structure level than type conception. Moreover, in the case of nouns the domain

of instantiation varies, it is not always the space of physical substances (Langacker, 2008, p. 144). Therefore, on all these points, Montero Gálvez (2017, pp. 355, 359, 368, 387) criticizes Langacker's approach in vain, to such an extent that she distorts his ideas on the structure of nominal reference.

Montero Gálvez also substitutes the notion of grounding elements with *actualizators* (*actualizadores*), coming from Bally's theory of actualization. Apparently reasoning from an objectivist point of view, she postulates the zero article and assume that verbs in constructions like *sentir miedo* are empty of meaning. Outlining some cognitive linguistic notions (the figure/ground distinction, prototypes, domains), she does not go further and makes no use of them for her analysis of articles. In sum, Montero Gálvez's work results to be rather a development of pedagogical cognitively oriented Spanish L2 grammar approach developed by the aforementioned authors than an account of articles originated from Langacker's Cognitive Grammar.

Likewise, Santiago Alonso (2016) looks for an invariant operational value that could explain different uses of articles in various contexts. Thus, distinguishing pragmatics from semantics, Santiago Alonso makes use of the actualization theory and attributes to articles actualization values, which consequently presupposes that she assumes the traditional view of categorization, not the empiricism of Cognitive Linguistics. Neither Santiago Alonso (2017) understands virtual referentiality as it is described in Langacker's Cognitive Grammar. According to Santiago Alonso, virtual referents are those that presuppose the use of the zero article, or the operator Ø. Hence in her analysis generic referents are not regarded as virtual instances, which would be the case of a cognitive grammar approach. It also seems that the tendency to incline towards the objectivist position makes her to distinguish strictly between linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge. Santiago Alonso also assumes the positive identification for *el* and the approximate accessibility for *un*, following

the pedagogical grammar proposal of Ruiz Campillo (1998). In her later work, Santiago Alonso (2017, p. 366) postulates two basic values for articles: referentiality and quantification, which results to be confusing since some referential uses, following her table, do not presuppose quantification and vice versa.

Summarizing, the aforementioned accounts of articles, which belong to the field of pedagogical grammar of Spanish as a foreign language, cannot be considered full-fledged Cognitive Grammar analyses since they retain much from the previous objectivist accounts, maintaining traditional distinctions (such as linguistic/extralinguistic knowledge, referential/non-referential uses, real-world/virtual objects, etc.). The search for the "basic value" of articles in Spanish, except Lopez García's work, characterizes all aforementioned accounts of articles. But these "valores de operación de las formas gramaticales que son unívocos y no están sujetos a excepciones" (Ruiz Campillo, 2008, p. 512), even understood as a bunch of semantic features, presuppose the classical Aristotelian view of categorization. In any case, one, equally valid for all uses value would be very abstract to describe all the range of possibilities and indeed already exists within the Cognitive Grammar approach: this is a semantic description provided by the constructional schema [ART N]. A schema in Cognitive Grammar is an abstracted representation of the commonality of specific instantiations valid for all instances and independent of any specific conceptual content. But the explicit semantic description of articles is possible only within their semantic networks, since "in learning to use the word properly, a speaker masters the entire network (not just the schema or the prototype)" (Langacker, 2008, p. 225). However, neither of these accounts takes into consideration the internal semantic complexity of articles as categories.

The cognitively oriented analyses of articles in Spanish considered in this chapter describe various uses of articles separately from each other and at best

partially applying some cognitive grammar notions to their explanations but ignoring such important theoretical premises of Cognitive Linguistics as the prototype view of categorization, family resemblance relations and the concept of motivation, the role of metonymy and metaphor in semantic change, just to name a few.

2.6. English Cognitive Linguistics: Epstein's Prominence Theory

Within the Cognitive Grammar approach to the English language, based on Langacker's (1991b, 2008, 2016, 2017) account of the role of articles in the English grounding system, Epstein (1994) postulates what he calls the Prominence Hypothesis. Epstein (2002b, p. 372) states that a variety of paradigms "determinedness, individualization, concretization, actualization, specialization, particularization, etc.—that have been used to define the meaning of *the*" in the end failed to account for the phenomenon of definiteness. And although, overall, it is admitted by researchers that there has been a lack of systematic accounts of articles, Epstein (1994, p. 7) makes it clear that: "the bulk of the research on definiteness deals only with simple cases . . . it is widely recognized that no completely satisfactory solution has ever been agreed upon". From his point of view, referential approaches of definiteness, such as familiarity and unique identifiability, are not sufficient to account for all uses of articles. Therefore, Epstein (1994, p. 8) focuses his research on the expressive function of articles, which in these uses are more "'speaker oriented' rather than hearer oriented", and postulates prominence as a decisive factor for the use of the definite article. According to Epstein (2002a, 2002b), such aspects as the high topicality of the referent. role/value statuses, or non-canonical viewpoints sanction the expressive use of the definite article. In contract, to deemphasize the importance of the referent, instead of the definite, the indefinite article can be used.

In his approach to expressive uses of the definite article, Epstein (1994) assumes a highly pragmatically based, subjective definiteness of the referent, which is not dependent on truth conditions. Before cognitive linguists, a similar understanding of the existence implication has been already introduced by Hawkins (2015, p. 199), who understood the existence of referents in a wider sense:

> It is strictly irrelevant to the rules of grammar whether the excluded referents exist in reality or not. It is sufficient that the speaker and hearer should believe that they do exist, and that these objects should, therefore, have an existence in the minds of speaker and hearer only.

However, following the objectivist tradition, technically Epstein still regards the expressive uses of articles as non-referential.

The second novelty of Epstein's approach is that the capacity of the hearer to uniquely identify the referent is argued to be a secondary concern. If the proper Hawkins (2015, p. 97) assumed that the speaker should have in mind "the hearer's assumed knowledge", Epstein (1994, p. 4) argues that the speaker does not always take into consideration what the hearer knows about the referent, thus granting more freedom to the speaker in the choice of article. This point of view perfectly fits in the Cognitive Grammar conception of grounding, which is always subjective. Thus, contrary to the objectivist view, Epstein focuses on the subjectivity of construal:

> These data suggest that article selection is an aspect of the active, dynamic process of referent construction, in which speakers construct discourse referents in such a way as to induce hearers to accept the referents into the discourse under distinct guises (to further their own communicative purposes). (Epstein, 2002b, pp. 371–372).

This flexibility of construal permits to Epstein (1994, p. 9) to admit that there can be cases in which both the definite and the indefinite articles can be

alternated. He also notes that the definite article's referent is more prominent than the indefinite article's one. More importantly, Epstein admits that articles are multifunctional since "the exact interpretation of any definite [and indefinite] description . . . is not specified by the grammar but must rather be determined in context" (Epstein, 2002b, p. 367).

Epstein's prominence theory is based on the accessibility theory of Ariel and Fauconnier's mental space theory. Dealing only with expressive uses, Epstein (1994, p. 354) defines definiteness in terms of accessibility, criticizing the uniqueness implication, while the indefinite article means that the entity is not accessible to the addressee. However, without analyzing in great detail the notions of uniqueness and familiarity, on many occasions he conjoins uniqueness with familiarity, and identifiability with specificity. However, he admits this himself, arguing that there are overlaps between familiar and uniquely identifiable entities (Epstein, 2002b, p. 336). But, in any case, the accessibility approach based on the mental space theory may be too vague to explain every choice of the definite article since, as Epstein (2002b, p. 367) himself notices, "the exact nature of the access path is anyway underspecified"; the definite article just signals the availability of this access path but gives no details on how it can be achieved.

Another point of criticism is that it seems that Epstein oversimplifies the concept of unique identifiability. Thus, Epstein (1994, p. 79) argues that not in all cases the referent is unique or contextually unique and that the uniqueness reading may be suspended in some cases. However, it could be said that in many cases in which Epstein believes that it is not necessary for the definite article's referent to be unique identifiable, because it can be explained in terms of accessibility, in fact, it can be argued that contextual uniqueness is at issue:

(37) *I never thought I'd live to say this, but I've grown to love World Cup soccer.*

It's as deliciously wacky as a Keystone Kops movie. The Marx Brothers have a ball. Everything but the pie in the face. What they used to call in Carole Lombard's day screwball comedy.

You watch the World Cup and you figure ***the guy*** *got the idea for it from "Alice in Wonderland".*

Get a load of these guys! I ask you, was Chaplin ever funnier?

(Epstein, 2002b, pp. 361–362)

Epstein (1994, p. 308, 2002b, p. 362) admits that on many occasions both explanations are possible and that basically prominence is at issue with all uses of the definite article: a definite article's referent is always construed as prominent. This raises the question to which degree prominence alone should be postulated as the explanation for the definite article's use, moreover, given that in Cognitive Grammar all uses are regarded as referential and prominence anyway constitutes a dimension of construal (see Section 2.3.).

So, the fact that Epstein distinguishes the expressive function of articles from their grounding function also represents a controversial issue from a Cognitive Grammar point of view. Even in expressive uses, articles remain to be grounding elements. Epstein also states that titles as in *John Smith is president of Acme Corporation* are not grounded. However, as Langacker (2008) argues, any expression in discourse is grounded in a broader sense, so titles also should be grounded, the question is to determine which type of grounding it is.

Nevertheless, Epstein (1994) foresees how the referential and the expressive functions of articles can be united and outlines that such prominence theory of definiteness would suppose that:

> Under such a theory, the definite article would be analyzed as possessing a single, highly schematic meaning, common to all of its uses. This meaning can be stated as follows: a definite article profiles an entity that is construed as prominent. . . . The basis for construing an entity as

> prominent varies, however, according to its degree of subjectivity. As a result, distinct usage types will be found all along the cline of subjectivity, with the most objective uses at one pole and the most subjective uses at the other. Some usage types will naturally be more frequent than others, giving rise to asymmetries, or prototype effects, within the category. (pp.308-309).

In line with the Cognitive Grammar view, Epstein suggests that within a category the number of prototypes should be defined empirically, stating that through the process of its evolution the diachronic change often consists of shifts in the category prototype(s).

So, Epstein's prominence theory presupposes a more dynamic view of definiteness, arguing in favour of "the active, dynamic process of referent construction" (Epstein, 2002b, p. 371). However, it seems that Epstein tends to substitute with prominence, which turns to be at issue with all uses of the definite article as a part of construal, due to the figure/ground alignment, the unique identifiability of the referent within a concrete cognitive domain. In addition, many uses that Epstein explains by prominence can be explained by metonymic shifts. Moreover, in his analysis, some concepts postulated by objectivist linguistics, such as the zero article or non-referentiality, still remain unquestioned. But, no doubts, Epstein's contribution in terms of prominence is a step towards a major reformulation of articles' functions.

CHAPTER 3

THE DEFINITE ARTICLE IN SPANISH AS A POLYSEMOUS CATEGORY

In this chapter the semantic structure of the definite article in Spanish, traditionally characterized as meaningless, will be re-examined from a Cognitive Grammar perspective. It will be argued that the definite article is a polysemous category with a radial structure, which is organized around two prototypical centres. It will be demonstrated how various senses of the definite article, which are motivated by family resemblances and interrelated through categorizing relationships of elaboration and extension, are linked in a polysemy network. Moreover, it will be held that the definite article's senses constitute a continuum, since expressions grounded by the definite article can run the gamut from profiling a unique thing of its type to denoting the whole class of things.

3.1. The central sense of the definite article in Spanish

Since Cognitive Linguistics postulates that there is no sharp boundary between the lexical and the grammatical poles of the lexicogrammatical continuum (Langacker, 2008, p. 263), polysemy, which is regarded not simply as a linguistic phenomenon but as a conceptual one, is manifested on both poles. Langacker (2008) notes that articles, being schematic elements, are situated closer to the grammatical pole. As it has been outlined in Section 2.3., rejecting the classical theory of categorization, cognitive linguists argue that the meaning of any linguistic item can be arranged in a network of senses, which are organized around a prototype (or prototypes) and linked by categorizing

relationships. Such an approach permits to overcome the limitations of the dictionary view of semantics by postulating that the different senses of an item are motivated by family resemblances to prototypical meanings and that the knowledge of how the linguistic unit is used does not reside in any single sense but in the entire network (Lakoff, 1987; Langacker, 2008, p. 38).

In order to represent the definite article in Spanish as a radially structured polysemous category, let me start the analysis of its semantic structure by defining its primary sense as a core from which other senses can be derived by means of categorizing relationships of elaboration and extension.

There is no clear agreement between scholars on which criteria for the identification of the prototype should be used. It is often described as the best example of a particular category. Taylor (1995, p. 262) proposes that a prototype can be characterized in terms of its semasiological salience. While some researchers associate the frequency of occurrence of an item with its degree of centrality in the whole category, Taylor (1995, p. 95) supposes that the perceived frequency of central members is rather a consequence of their central status. According to Rosch (2009, p. 44), there are several factors, such as earlier acquisition by children, greater association, better inference, etc., that can act as potential sources of prototypes; anyway, they all contribute for an item to be particularly salient. Geeraerts (1985, pp. 136–138) also sees the prototypical member as distinct in its structural weight among the other members within a category. With respect to the semantic change, Geeraerts (1985, p. 139) notes that due to the logical preponderance of central senses it is possible to derive from them other senses. On this point, he coincides with Lakoff (1987) who shares the viewpoint that the central category member can function as a generator or generative prototype to define the whole category.

Prototypes have a dynamic character because conceptual categories are also flexible and changes with the pass of time (e.g., the prototype for categories

phone or *mail* are not the same nowadays than twenty years before). Pointing out some constitutive properties of the prototype, Cifuentes Honrubia (1996) states that there cannot be any stable particular instance as such:

> Los mejores ejemplares son, si acaso, subcategorías y no instancias individuales . . . porque una categoría agrupa no sólo instancias particulares realmente existentes, sino también ocurrencias virtuales o contrafactuales. Al considerar los prototipos entidades no particulares, subcategorías, lo que los hablantes pueden tener en mente no es la subcategoría que constituye el mejor ejemplar, sino el concepto o imagen mental de esa subcategoría. (p. 190)

This opinion is close to Langacker's (2008, p. 34) point of view who, highlighting the role of the experiential basis in the linguistic organization, points out that "the prototypical meaning consists of an experientially grounded conceptual archetype". This means that, initially, we develop basic abilities to apprehend physical objects and only later extend some of them to other domains of experience. Langacker (1991b, p. 13, 2008) supposes that the archetype of the noun is a discrete physical object. Since it should be necessarily very abstract due to the heterogeneity of nouns, it is posited as a **thing**. It emerges due to our natural ability of conceptual **reification** (Langacker, 2008, p. 97; Radden & Dirven, 2007, p. 79).

Tyler and Evans (2003, p. 47) propose two criteria—linguistic and empirical—to define the primary sense for a concrete case of spatial particles, which conceptualize stable spatial relations within a language and constitute a closed word class. While in relation to the first, to date, there is a series of empirical studies, as for the linguistic evidence, Tyler and Evans (2003, p. 48) follow the criteria adduced earlier by Langacker that include: (i) earliest attested meaning, (ii) predominance in the semantic network, (iii) relations to other spatial particles, (iv) grammatical predictions, and (v) use in composite forms.

However, Tyler and Evans (2008) reject the latter criterion, considering it only as indirect evidence.

Although Tyler and Evans (2003) are cautious in their conclusions regarding applying the same criteria to other than spatial particulars categories, it can be argued that the definite article is characterized by similar properties: firstly, it is part of the closed word class; secondly, as a grounding element, it specifies the status of the profiled thing in relation to the ground, that is, the position of the entity in question in our mental universe. Therefore, it seems that the above-mentioned four linguistic criteria can be employed in the case of the definite article. Since "one likely candidate for the primary sense is the historically earliest sense" (Tyler & Evans, 2003, p. 47), some historical hints can serve as a justification for defining the definite article's prototype, which, as mentioned before, should be experientially grounded. In the Romance languages, similarly to English (Langacker, 2008, p. 286), the definite article has appeared from the Latin demonstrative *ille / illa / illud* due to various grammaticalization processes. Then, as a result of the evolution of the demonstrative pronoun to the definite article, its deictic meaning was lost (RAE & ASALE, 2010, pp. 263–264). This fact not only supports the importance of our bodily experience in the physical domain for the way we categorize other domains, which are grounded in it, but permits us to conclude that deictic senses of the definite article were the first ones to appear, referring to specific entities existing as real-world objects. Moreover, it has been already shown that children's acquisition of the noun class in English starts from concrete objects. Young children, while they still are not able to make generalizations, are likely to deal with individual instances that "experientially more basic and salient than abstract types" (Radden, 2009, p. 201).

With respect to the second evidence, predominance in the semantic network, it is the criterion of uniqueness in a particular domain involved in the

derivation of other senses that will be discussed further on. Likewise, it will be seen later that the definite article's central member is the only sense for which grammatical predictions are valid; this property of prototypes was already noticed by Lakoff (1987). He states that other senses, being linguistic conventions, cannot be predicted: instead they are motivated, being intertwined by means of family resemblance.

In line with systemic organization of grammar, emphasized by Langacker (2016, 2017) in his recent works, the meaning of the definite article can be partially defined in terms of its contrast with other members of the English grounding system. Grounding elements, as Langacker (2008, pp. 263–264) argues, tend to be organized in closed sets that consist of mutually exclusive elements. As a matter of example, demonstratives in English—*this*, *that*, *these*, and *those*—represent a very integrated system, which has two primary oppositions: the first one is the singular-plural contrast and the second one is the proximal-distant contrast. Since only four elements comprise this system, the level of their integration is very high and the opposition between them is very important (Langacker, 2016, p. 29). On the other hand, considering the system of demonstratives in Spanish, it can be seen that its elements are no more so tightly integrated because to the proximal-distant contrast a third option is added: spatial frames of reference in English and Spanish are different. Besides the number, demonstratives in Spanish mark the gender of the noun: *este/a, ese/a, aquel/la y esto/as, eso/as, aquello/as*. Therefore, the opposition between the Spanish demonstratives is not so strict as in the case of the English language.

Articles are also arranged in a closed word class, which, however, has not been totally invariable and, although slowly, had evolved through time. Langacker (2008, pp. 284–285, 2016, p. 117) notes that, stemming from the Latin demonstratives, the definite article in comparison to them, from the one

hand, has lost its directive force, and from the other, has neutralized the proximal-distal distinction. With that, the link that exists between the definite article and demonstratives permits them to be interchangeable in some cases. However, Langacker (2016, p. 44) points out that, unlike demonstratives, articles are conceptually more abstract and more complex.

So, in order to represent the central sense of the definite article *el*, in figure 2, I have transformed two graphical representations which López García (2005, pp. 91–92) uses to show the contrast with the indefinite article. As he points out, "estas dos situaciones reproducen un uso prototípico de *el* y *un*: *una mesa* significa un elemento cualquiera del conjunto de las mesas, mientras que *la mesa* significa ese mismo elemento una vez conocido" (López García, 2005, p. 92). For López García (1987), moreover, *el* is the prototype of the entire category of articles in Spanish with regard to the indefinite article *un* and *lo,* which he treats as a neutral article.

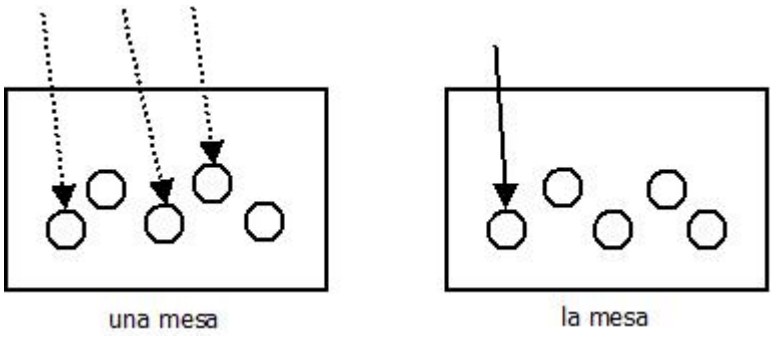


Figure 2. The contrast between *un* and *el*

Following the four criteria given above, it can be posited that the next example represents the prototypical deictic meaning of the definite article:

(38) *Ahí está la mesa.* (CPCI)

In (38), the singular definite article is used to pick out a location relative to the speaker with the help of the additional grounding element *(ahí)*. For Cognitive Grammar, there is no problem with exophoric reference, since no discrete boundary can be imposed between linguistic and extra-linguistic meanings (Langacker, 2008, p. 37). So, the following use is also based on the extralinguistic situation, referring to a concrete thing in physical space.

(39) *¿Puedes cerrar* ***la puerta****, por favor?* (CPCI)

Guided by considerations similar to those that are expressed by Lakoff (1987, pp. 482–485) in his analysis of deictic *there*-constructions, it can be assumed that various deictic uses of the definite article form a prototype-based subcategory with respect to the whole category. Such existential uses, according to Lakoff (1987, p. 543), are based on the conceptual metaphor EXISTENCE IS UNDERSTOOD AS LOCATION IN A CONCEPTUAL SPACE. There are other intermediate uses that are closer either to physical existence or to conceptual existence in an abstract space, which has no spatial location (Langacker, 2016, p. 133). All of them can be regarded as extensions from the physical domain.

In the process of engaging the world, due to general human cognitive capacities, the use of the definite article has transcended immediate reality and physical experience and has been extended to other—more abstracted—levels of mental construction. In the same fashion as with the spatial deictic use, the definite article can be expanded to other domains of experience, such as mental-physical space:

(40) *Hoy he recibido* ***la carta****.* (RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 263)

In this case, the definite article does not refer to a concrete location in space but rather to an abstract location in a conceptual space. Similarly, the use of the definite article can be expanded to the domain of time:

(41) *El cartero vino* ***el lunes***. (RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 270)

In (41), *el lunes* is conventionally understood as last Monday. Here it is necessary to remind that the term domain refers to the conceptual content evoked by an expression's meaning, understood as any kind of conception or realm of experience (Langacker, 2008, p. 44). This term is similar to *idealized cognitive model* (ICM) (Lakoff, 1987), *mental space* (Fauconnier, 1997), and *frame* (Fillmore, 1982). The context of discourse itself also can be regarded as a cognitive domain (Langacker, 2008, p. 45).

Given that Spanish and English are both Western European languages, although they differ in some aspects, for example, when referring to mass nouns or expressing generic reference (for more details see Whitley, 1986), the central sense of the definite article in Spanish is quite akin to the "basic function" of the English definite article *the* (Whitley, 1986, p. 154) about which Langacker (2008, p. 265) writes: "By grounding . . . with the definite article, the speaker directs the hearer's attention to a particular instance of this type, presumed uniquely identifiable by virtue of being the sole instance clearly evident in the current discourse context". Therefore, bearing in mind the criteria suggested by Tyler and Evans (2003) in order to avoid the proliferation of senses, it would seem that the definite article in its prototypical meaning encompasses not only deictic senses but also includes other domains of experience where the entity in question can be regarded as uniquely present there. It can be postulated, then, that the prototypical sense of the Spanish definite article in singular form is a **specific thing**, which refers to a particular entity in a discourse domain—not

necessarily spatial—uniquely apparent for both speaker and hearer. "Specific" here does not imply any cognitive acquaintance with the thing, it does not presuppose familiarity with the referent, nor precludes it; rather it is regarded as specific relative to its unique identification—which metaphorically can be described as location—within the **immediate scope** of the domain in question. With regards to the concept of specificity of the referent, which traditionally has been applied only to indefinite expressions, and its analogy, (non-)referentiality, for definite expressions, later also termed specificity (von Heusinger, 2002b, p. 248), the specific thing, using these terms, can be specific and non-specific:

(42) *John is looking for* ***the dean***.

a. . . . , *whoever it might be.* [non-specific]

b. . . . , *namely for Smith, who happens to be the dean.* [specific]

(von Heusinger, 2002b, p. 248)

In other words, the status of things within our system of knowingness in discourse is not marked in such languages as English or Spanish, and the concept of definiteness should be distinguished from the concept of specificity. Having postulated such prototypical meaning for the definite article, in order to avoid confusion, I have tried to explain the difference between the two terms, similar to one that exists between the term ground in discourse and its counterpart in figure/ground organization.

So, having regarded deictic uses of the definite article in a variety of domains, deixis also operates in the discourse domain. It can be asserted that deixis basically functions as a reference point. When the context of discourse is the domain by virtue of which a specific thing is identified as such, there are various coreference relations that make it possible. Thus, the phenomenon of

deixis is closely connected with anaphora. As Lyons (as cited in Cornish, 1999, p. 25) states, "anaphora involves . . . the reinterpretation of deictic existence in terms of what might be called textual existence". However, though related, traditionally anaphora and deixis have been characterized as separate forms of reference. Within the Cognitive Linguistics framework, it is suggested to see them as a gradation. In particular, Consten (2003) proposes a unified explanatory model of domain-bound reference, concept emerged from Langacker's (1991b, p. 97, 2016, p. 108) notion of **current discourse space** (CDS), which is understood as "everything intersubjectively accessible to the interlocutors as the basis for communication at a given moment in the flow of discourse" and which consists of discourse frames updated by the interlocutors at each stage of the unfolding discourse. The current discourse space, therefore, includes the ground, the immediate scope and itself from the atemporal perspective can be regarded as the maximal scope. The current discourse space provides a basis against which to interpret the next discourse fragment. As for deictic and anaphoric references, Consten (2003, p. 236) demonstrates that they should be treated analogously because both are interpreted with respect to a reference point in the CDS, with the only difference that the deictic referent is located in the non-textual domain while the anaphoric one is situated in the textual domain. This idea is supported by Cognitive Grammar's claim that there is no discrete boundary between linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge since they form a gradation (Langacker, 2008; van Hoek, 1995).

Coreference is acceptable when its referent is accessible within the immediate discourse context (Langacker, 2008; van Hoek, 1995). An anaphoric expression grounded by the definite article implies that its antecedent has already been singled out in the previous discourse frame, that is, that just a single instance of the specified type is available for anaphoric purposes within the current discourse frame. Moreover, analysing pronominal anaphor,

Langacker (2008, p. 314) and van Hoek (1995, p. 313) both argue that the reference point should be sufficiently prominent within the CDS so that the conceptualizer can make mental contact with that entity, that is, to be able to single it out. Thus, in (43), the thing profiled by the definite article is the only instance of its type within the relevant scope (Langacker, 2008, pp. 328, 497), being identified by virtue of the discourse domain as a specific thing, thereby representing the prototypical use of the definite article. The only difference with the previously discussed deictic uses is that they have not necessarily been the focus of attention in the previous discourse frame.

(43) *Quiero comprar un sofá.* ***El sofá*** *tiene que ser muy cómodo.* (CPCI)

The reference point phenomenon is cross-sentential, since in Cognitive Grammar no sharp division between syntax and discourse is postulated (van Hoek, 1995, p. 325). The principal concern, therefore, is conceptual connectivity between elements, which seen as a continuum (van Hoek, 1995, p. 332). (43) is an example of strong semantic connectivity because the referent is specified by the same type description as its reference point. Consten (2003) states that the degree of connectivity with the reference point affects whether the domain-bounded reference—both deictic and anaphoric—is direct or indirect. Thus, in (44), the conceptual connectivity between the two elements is weaker:

(44) *Viajaremos a Marruecos. El viaje será en barco.* (CPCI)

The reference can be either inter-, as in (44), or intra-sentential, as in (45):

(45) *Cogió un libro y miró el índice.* (CPCI)

So, if anaphora is indirect, the conceptual connectivity is weaker, but still the referent is accessible for the correct interpretation in the discourse. In (45), the notion [LIBRO] functions as the cognitive domain for [ÍNDICE] relative to which the meaning of [ÍNDICE] is understood (Langacker, 1986, p. 4). [LIBRO], thereby, being situated on a more fundamental level of the conceptual hierarchy, is as a presupposed conception for the characterization of [ÍNDICE], as a part in relation to the whole (the phenomenon of metonymy will be discussed in Section 3.4.1.). Since the conception [LIBRO] has been already introduced in the expression, the specific interpretation of [ÍNDICE] is readily possible—hence it is grounded by the definite article and a more basic concept functions as the immediate scope. Yet, it should be added that such construal of meaning is conventional, that is, follows conventional patterns of categorization, but not the only possible one.

The reference point model (Langacker, 2008; van Hoek, 2010) also provides a basis for the interpretation of the less frequent endophoric uses of the definite article where the profiled entity in the current discourse frame is specified in greater detail in the immediately subsequent discourse, due to that its grounding by the definite article is possible in advance:

(46) *Dibujó la cara de un niño.* (CPCI)

(47) *Y entonces Olga le dio la carta que había estado escribiendo durante toda la mañana.* (RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 269)

The adjacent to the grounded element discourse frame functions as the reference point providing a background for its interpretation. Moreover, this type of constructions supposes that at the corresponding level of organization,

the figure (the profiled thing) precedes the ground (the scope of interpretation) in the linear string. As regards the whole composite structure, in both cases, the grounded thing is the profiled complement specified by its modifier, which is part of the unprofiled base (for the notions of "complement" and "modifier" in Cognitive Grammar see, e.g., van Hoek, 1995). Thus, due to the asymmetry of reference point relationships, in (46) and (47), the only instance of the specified type is available for the identification in the immediate discourse context.

To sum up, the above-discussed uses of the singular definite article in Spanish are examples of its prototypical meaning, because in every case what is profiled is a specific thing, which—although identifiable by virtue of various factors—fulfils the criterion of uniqueness in a particular domain, whichever the nature of the domain is.

3.2. The secondary prototype

Since articles as well as other grounding elements are situated more towards the grammatical pole of the lexicogrammatical continuum, their meaning is very schematic and is fully unfolded by means of different construals, rather than in any specific instantiation (Langacker, 2008, p. 263). The schematic description of the definite article valid for all instances can be represented as [DEFART], and it is schematic in relation to different uses of *el, la, los* and *las* in specific contexts that instantiate this schematic pattern. On the other hand, as a lexical unit, the definite article can profile nouns (understood in a broader sense) of any degree of symbolic complexity and can vary in the degree of semantic specificity/schematicity, which will be addressed further below. The structure of the definite article is subject to the same cognitive phenomena of schematization and categorization which are inherently manifested in the conceptual organization of other linguistic categories.

Categorizing relationships are those that underlie the network structure of a polysemous item. Basically, they can be of two types—elaboration and extension (Geeraerts, 1985, p. 140; Langacker, 2008, p. 17). If the prototype of an item undergoes a process of semantic specialization or semantic generalization—as schematization can be carried out in two directions— it constitutes an elaboration (which at the same time is also an instantiation). If the instantiation conflicts in some degree with the schema, the relationship is one of extension (Langacker, 2008, pp. 17, 170).

In the previous section, it has been shown that the prototypical meaning of the singular definite article in Spanish in brief terms can be accounted for as profiling of a specific thing within the immediate scope. The main criterion for its identification is its status relative to the current discourse space of the speaker-hearer interaction. To be grounded by the definite article the thing in question should be the unique referent of the specified type in the immediate discourse context (Langacker, 2008, pp. 259–291). However, in some cases, the profiled thing can be unique by its very nature—similar to proper names, when the proper type description guarantees their uniqueness (Langacker, 2008, p. 286). In this respect, it is pertinent to recall the difference between unique and non-unique reference, discussed in section 2.4. Thus, the basis for achieving non-unique reference is always local, situated within the immediate discourse context, while unique reference is defined in global terms, it is universal in the speech community (Langacker, 2016).

From a Cognitive Grammar perspective, unique reference, of course, is not an absolute notion. In either case, it is a matter of established convention. Thus, the uniqueness of proper nouns is also constrained: as Langacker (2008, p. 317) explains, "this uniqueness follows from the idealized cognitive model for naming within a social group". In reality, there are a lot of people who share the same name or surname, there are cities named after other cities or countries,

etc. Nevertheless, owing to an established convention—deriving from an ICM—one referent will be particularly salient as the default referent. Langacker (2016, pp. 120–121) states that, with unique reference, "a referent can be identified in the sense of having an already established identity, a known place in the mental universe, quite independently of what is going on right now in the speech situation". However, even being based on global aspects, the independence of unique reference from the CDS is never absolute (Langacker, 2016, pp. 106–109).

So, similar to proper nouns, there are common nouns that by virtue of established conventions can be regarded as cases of unique reference; they can be identified by all members of the speech community. Their uniqueness can proceed from ICMs, myths, beliefs, etc. These cases form part of those uses that have been attested in literature as first mention definites. It can be said that with such nouns the assessment is made not only regarding the immediate scope but also regarding the maximal scope, that is, the whole conceptual content evoked for the interpretation of an expression. So, the maximal scope can be viewed as the atemporalized CDS (Langacker, 2016). In the following examples, it is not necessary to distinguish between maximal and immediate scope; the profiled things are identified in global terms, being unique per se:

(48) *El sol saldrá mañana a las 6.24.* (RAE, 2010, p. 268)

(49) *La Tierra* (CPCI)

The importance of the criterion of uniqueness for the identification of the status of the profiled thing in the context of a discourse is reflected in divergence of researchers regarding the "essential" semantic value of the definite article in Spanish. Thus, for example, roughly speaking, the Real

Academia Española (2010) joins uniqueness with familiarity, while Alarcos Llorach (2000) brings out identifiability as the fundamental function of the definite article; Montero Gálvez (2011, 2017) stresses inclusiveness and then uniqueness as its principal semantic characteristics, following Leonetti (1999), who combines inclusiveness with the notion of unique identifiability. Such discrepancy, apparently, is owed to the close correlation existing between uniqueness within a domain in the immediate context of discourse and uniqueness within all domains in the matrix. Uniqueness, thereby, is a relative notion, which depends on whether the referent is identified in local or in global terms. A clear differentiation sometimes results quite problematic, as the proper distinction between immediate and maximal scope is always established subjectively. Moreover, judgements in absolute terms are dubious from the philosophical point of view. Though objectivist semantics takes for granted that there is one correct account of reference, Cognitive Linguistics ties the act of cognizance of the external world with human bodily experience, thus postulating that the human conceptual system is its product and "there is no direct connection between human language and the world" (Lakoff, 1987, p. 206). So, the uniqueness of these nouns is rather established by convention, similar to the uniqueness of proper names, whose uniqueness, in fact, is also confined. In addition, despite the fact that a conception can indeed have a unique referent in the world, it is not impossible that in some imagined world, that could be conceived in any moment, it would not be so. One more observation is that even if the thing is unique, we often tend to discern various kinds, states, phases, stages, etc. of that entity (see Section 3.4.1).

Given the complexity of the issue, as Taylor (1995, p. 100) points out, "it is in many cases tantalizingly difficult to decide if two uses of a linguistic form instantiate two different senses, or whether they represent two exemplars, one perhaps more central than the other, of a single sense". Considering that the

boundary between the two senses is fuzzy, it can be agreed that their semantic separateness "might be more a matter of points on a continuum than of a dichotomy" (Taylor, 1995, p. 102). As for the methodology proposed by Tyler and Evans (2003), *unique thing* requires a separate from *specific thing* representation due to a shift in its meaning—the assessment is made relative to the maximal scope instead of the immediate scope. Therefore, the sense of **unique thing** can be considered as a distinct sense.

So, with unique reference, the thing in question is identifiable regardless of the immediate context, so a relationship of semantic specialization from the prototypical meaning is given. In figure 3, the elaboration of the prototype is indicated by a solid arrow.

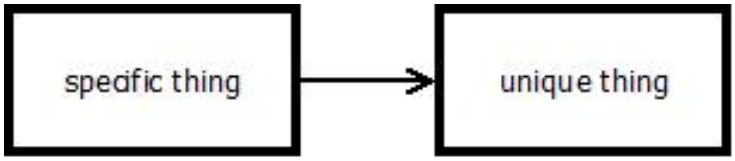


Figure 3. Specific thing and unique thing

This diagram only pretends to express the two semantic meanings of the definite article in Spanish for analytical purposes. Conversely, *specific thing* is a generalization from *unique thing*. To trace the development of their relationship a diachronic analysis would be needed, here I merely specify the nature of the link between the two meanings.

In fact, Langacker postulates that, within the systemic organization of grammar, prototypical proper nouns—those that have intrinsic grounding without any overt element—are the baseline for nominal reference. With respect to unique reference, non-unique reference is a higher stratum

(Langacker, 2016, p. 84). So, the things like in (48) and (49) can be said to have a dual place in the system of nominal reference. Their position is quite similar to proper nouns with overt grounding elements (*los Pirineos, El Escorial*), since they borrow the strategy of non-unique reference, comprised by a grounding element and a type description. However, the cases of unique reference as (48) and (49) lie more towards common nouns. Of course, with the same type description other instantiations can be construed. The change in construal will trigger a change in grounding. In this respect, the construal of proper nouns is more stable.

On the other hand, ICMs are evolving through time, instigating changes in conventionalities. Thus, nowadays the example regarded as ungrammatical in the CPCI is absolutely possible due to the fact that same-sex marriages are recognized in many countries of the world:

(50) **Una madre de Juan* (CPCI)

At the same time, other interpretations are conceivable. It may be the case that Juan has two mothers: one biological and one adoptive. So, apart from the default referent, other instantiations are less frequent but perfectly possible.

Unique thing and *specific thing* can be regarded as conceptually related centres of the definite article's category. Thus, Geeraerts (1985), unlike Rosch (1978), argues that a category can contain more than one prototypical centres which are mutually related. The same view is held by Taylor (1995, p. 99), who maintains that many categories "exhibit a polycentric, rather than a monocentric structure, i.e. category membership is a function of similarity to one of several prototype representations". So, the proposal here is to consider the semantic value of unique thing as a secondary prototype of the category of the definite article. The bold lines in figure 3 indicate that both meanings are

prototypes. The interconnectedness of the two prototypical meanings lies in the uniqueness of *unique thing* not only within the maximal scope, but also within the immediate scope, since they are related to each other by a part-whole relationship. Thus, *unique thing* in the immediate discourse scope gets closer to the meanings of *specific thing*. While, indeed, "the definite article indicates that just one instance of the specified type is immediately accessible in the CDS" (Langacker, 2016, p. 117) and "accessibility in the current discourse space does not require previous mention of the instance or even of the type" (Langacker, 2016, p. 118), I argue that, for the purpose of identification of nominal referents, the division of the notion of CDS into the immediate scope (equated to the current discourse frame) and the maximal scope (equated to the atemporalized CDS) is to be emphasized.

Moreover, the two prototypical meanings of the definite article in Spanish, *specific thing* and *unique thing*, can be thought of in terms of strata, similar to Langacker's (2016, pp. 48–50) analysis of the lexical item *cat*, which has two prototypical meanings at different strata. Langacker argues that *cat* can mean a domestic feline (PT_0), having another prototype at a higher stratum, meaning something like a wild animal (PT_1). Likewise, in the case of the definite article, the prototypical meaning of *unique thing* can be interpreted as its prototype at the stratum of unique reference, while *specific thing*—at the stratum of non-unique reference, which is, according to Langacker (2016), is a higher stratum with respect to unique reference, being its elaboration.

3.3. A particular way of conceptualization: possession

In Spanish, as in other Romance languages, body parts and some other relations of possession are conceptualized with the definite article, instead of using a possessive pronoun as in English or German. Therefore, the question

to consider here is not so much why they are grounded by the definite article but rather why these cases are not grounded by possessive pronouns:

(51) *Me duele [*mi] la cabeza* (CPCI)

(52) *Berta levantó [*su] la mano* (RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 352)

In English, for example, such expressions as (51) and (52) normally would indicate that the hand in movement does not belong to the actor (Langacker, 2008, p. 184). In Spanish, however, this body part is understood as belonging to the **conceptualizer** (i.e. the subject of conception). The difference in grounding, according to Langacker (2008), lies in conventionally established elaborations of the general constructional schema in various languages. In figure 4, I reproduce, almost unchanged, Langacker's (2008, p. 185) diagram, which illustrates a similar example in French, (53).

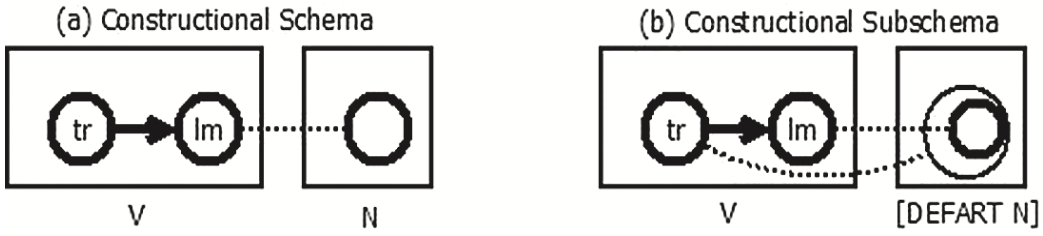


Figure 4. Possession subschema for the Romance languages
(Langacker, 2008, p. 185)
tr = trajector; lm = landmark; V = verb; N = noun

(53) *Je lève la main.* (Langacker, 2008, p. 184)

In (4a) the general pattern is sketched: the verb (V) profiles a relationship whose elements are the trajector (tr)—the most prominent participant—and the landmark (lm), a secondary focus of the expression; the landmark of the verb is a schematic thing that at the higher level elaborates a nominal (N). The dotted line indicates the correspondence between the landmark and the nominal's profile. In accordance with this schema, (51) and (52) would be grounded by a possessive pronoun.

But Spanish presupposes an additional correspondence by default, which is illustrated by the subschema (4b): the trajector is equated with the conceptualizer whose profiled body part corresponds to the landmark of the profiled relationship. Moreover, the body part and the conceptualizer are related in a part-to-whole relationship. This more specific subschema constitutes a usual interpretation of such expressions in the Romance languages, unless other elements present within the immediate context are to be understood as the landmark of the profiled relationship. The conceptualizer, previously identified as the profiled trajector, constitutes for the profiled body part the background against which it should be interpreted. Therefore, the body part in question is grounded by the definite article (represented in figure 4 by its constructional schema [DEFART N]). Likewise, even though there is more than one instance of the body part is available, it can be grounded by the definite article:

(54) *Se dio un golpe en* ***el brazo*** (RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 272)

Presumably, the use of the definite article in these cases is motivated by the extralinguistic situation, similar to spatial deictic uses (Section 3.1.). Leonetti (1999, p. 809) notes that these cases resemble associative anaphora phenomena. Besides that, the profiled body part is specific because the subject and the object

of conception overlap, the object of conception being the subject's part. So, the Spanish language presupposes the more specific interpretation of the general constructional schema as the conventionally established pattern. Relevant here the trajector/landmark alignment and the part-whole relationship, both are epiphenomena of figure/ground perception, which underlies our conceptualization processes.

Furthermore, the whole-part relation, playing an important role in the phenomenon of metonymy, can provide another plausible explanation of the possession pattern. In fact, some researchers have already suggested that in such cases the nominal profiled by the definite article does not refer to a particular actual referent but to the type. Thus, Epstein (2002b, p. 374) proposes to analyze them as frame-based role noun phrases whose identity does not matter. Beyssade (2003, p. 134), considering these cases as having "a flavor of genericity", notes that in such expressions definites and indefinites may alternate without any change in meaning and that "the definite determiner is used to shift from tokens to the type which groups tokens together and presents them as indistinguishable". In Cognitive Grammar terms, this process is not other than the TYPE FOR INSTANCE metonymy, which will be described in the next Section.

3.4. Extensions

Such conceptual mechanisms as metonymy and metaphor are the sources for the extended senses of a polysemous item and provide explanation for their motivation within the radial network.

3.4.1. Metonymy

Metonymy is a fundamental phenomenon of the human conceptual organization, defined in general terms as a mapping between two entities within

one conceptual domain; it is agreed that it is even more fundamental than metaphor as it underlies our thinking processes (Gibbs, 1999; Panther & Radden, 1999a).

The WHOLE FOR PART metonymy contributes to the polysemy of the definite article in Spanish by referring to the all instance of the specified type by means of one instance, and conversely. In figure 5, a dashed arrow indicates that the metonymic relation maintained between the two senses is an extension.

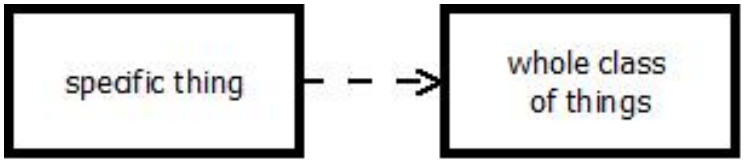


Figure 5. Metonymic relationship *specific thing – whole class of things*

In the following examples by virtue of the metonymic extension, instead of referring to a particular thing in a domain, the singular definite article profiles the whole category:

(55) ***El bolígrafo*** *se usa para escribir.* (CPCI)

(56) ***El dinosaurio*** *se extinguió en el Cretácico.* (RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 289)

(57) ***La gaviota*** *se alimenta de peces.* (RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 289)

In these cases, the nominal grounded by the definite article does not refer to any particular entity in the world: its referent is virtual. Virtual referents are those that "figure in tacit mental constructions, and while they correspond to

actual occurrences, they cannot be identified with them" (Langacker, 2008, p. 534). Though they do have referents at the discourse level. The profiled virtual referent is a general characterization of the specified type; the statement in such cases applies to all instances of the category. Thus, the metonymy INSTANCE FOR TYPE permits to construe a kind of generic reference where the type is invoked by means of an instance (Radden, 2009). Reflecting our tendency to generalize, the metonymy INSTANCE FOR TYPE is a sub-kind of the metonymy SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC. As Radden and Kövecses (2007) note, it is motivated by one of our cognitive mechanisms by which specific entities are perceived better than general entities and therefore form better gestalts. For Langacker (2016, p. 133), however, such cases are not generic but rather taxonomic statements, consequently being cases of unique reference. But in either case, they involve a metonymic part-whole relationship.

Generalizations can be carried to different degrees. Thus, a metonymic process CATEGORY FOR SUBCATEGORY (as a kind of the PART FOR WHOLE metonymy) is activated when generic reference allows for exceptions (Radden, 2009, p. 201). In contrast with (57), the generalization grounded by the plural definite article (to be discussed in Section 3.5.) does not necessarily include all members of the category but a representative part of them as a subcategory.

(58) ***Las gaviotas*** *se alimentan de pece*s. (RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 289)

In some cases, as it is for (57) and (58), generic references grounded by the singular definite article and by the plural definite article can be used interchangeably. As Radden (2009, p. 199) points out that "the borderlines between characterizing generalizations and direct reference to a kind are far from clear-cut." This example can be considered as an overlapping of

categories, that within the prototype theory are said to have fuzzy boundaries, contrary to the classical view of categorization (Lakoff, 1987; Taylor, 1995).

The metonymy CATEGORY FOR SUBCATEGORY gives rise to another kind of generic reference that neither applies to all instances of the type. In (59), a subcategory of the entire category is invoked by means of the most typical, representative member:

(59) ***Una gaviota*** *se alimenta de peces.* (RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 289)

In (59), the referent of the thing grounded by the singular indefinite article is virtual since it does not refer to any particular instance of the type. The statement reflects the prototypical conceptual organization of the human brain: by referring to a prototypical member, judgements about other members of the specified category are made, although the generalization in this case is not absolute. Again, (58) and (59), both invoking a subcategory of the whole category, can overlap conceptually. Moreover, there are cases where generalizations grounded by the singular indefinite and the singular definite articles can also overlap, as (55) with (60):

(60) ***Un bolígrafo*** *se usa para escribir.* (CPCI)

However, it is worth to be noted that overlaps are not complete because very rarely semantic representations, although treated equally for communication purposes, can be considered as totally equal (Langacker, 1976). In this sense absolute synonymy is an ideal rather than the norm.

The examples discussed above demonstrate a close conceptual interdependence of instance and type. Due to such metonymic thinking—since non-unique reference in Spanish is construed by means of the dual strategy (see

Section 2.4.)—the type specification is inherent to its instance's construal (Langacker, 2008; Radden, 2009). While the semantic structure of the indefinite article will be regarded in the next chapter, figure 6 illustrates this conceptual interrelatedness between the metonymic extensions of the definite article: a dotted line indicates the elaboration from singular to plural form, the dashed arrows mean extensions. The bold lines indicate prototypicality. As boundaries between generalizations are vague and give rise to overlaps, my proposition is to see them as a continuum. In this sense, the nodes in the network are not to be seen as completely static.

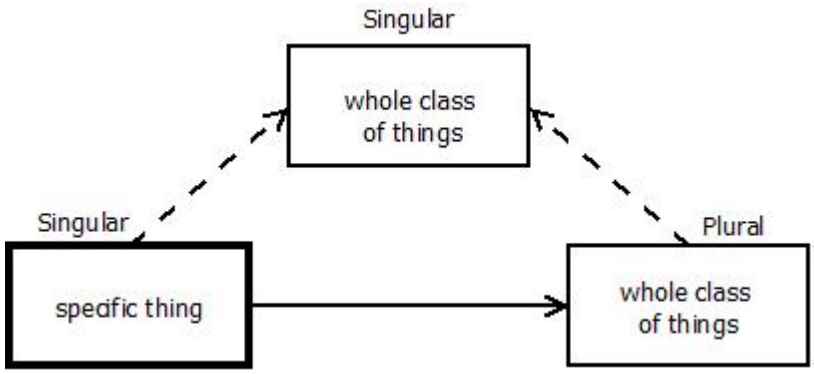


Figure 6. The interrelatedness of metonymic extensions and the prototype

Langacker (2008, p. 69) describes metonymy as a shift in profile: profiling of one entity instead of another associated with it in some domain. The choice of profile, therefore, plays a crucial role in the process of metonymic extension. If we take a closer look to the structure of nominals grounded by the definite article, we will see that its metonymic senses are owed to such shift in profile.

As already mentioned, nominal reference in discourse is achieved by the combination of the descriptive and deictic strategies (Langacker, 2008, pp. 276–

277). Through the descriptive strategy, the noun provides the type specification, while the deictic strategy singles out the intended referent belonging to the specified type by means of grounding and directs attention to it. The type fulfils a classificatory function and represents the abstracted commonality of all instances. As nouns conceptually are divided into two major classes, count and mass nouns, they differ in their semantic behaviour (Langacker, 2008, pp. 128–132). In the case of count nouns, an instance is construed as a discrete and bounded thing. On the contrary, mass nouns are not inherently bounded, any portion of a mass counts as an instance of the type, including its maximal extension (Langacker, 2008, p. 291). In Spanish, like in English, the maximal extension tends to be the most usual reference in the case of mass nouns. A mass noun normally is construed as *unique thing*, but in Spanish it differs from English, being instantiated by means of the non-unique reference strategy (similar to the uses discussed in Section 3.2.). In English, instead, the maximal extension of the type has an intrinsic, non-overt grounding, similar to prototypical proper nouns (e.g., *Water is life*).

Since one and the same situation can be perceived in various ways, alternating figure/ground selection (Langacker, 2008; López García, 2005), in principle, any noun can be construed either as count or mass; it depends on how a particular thing is conceptualized (Langacker, 2008, pp. 142–145). Preference for a particular construal is influenced by established conventions. It can be that both ways are conventional (Langacker, 2008). Now then, if, in the case of count nouns, instead of a particular instance what is profiled is its type—since the type specification is inherent to its instance's construal—a shift in profile will be accomplished. The result will be a virtual instance which subsumes the abstracted commonality of all instances of the type. It could be argued that the count noun is construed as a mass noun. This is the case for (55), (56) and (57). However, there are nouns that are conceptualized as mass

by default, that is, for which mass construal is an established convention, given our perceptual peculiarities as humans. They include, but not limited to, substances and abstract notions. Nominals like *el agua*, *la violencia, la confianza,* construed as an undifferentiated whole in its reference to the maximal extension, in themselves constitute the entire type. Therefore, in their case, to obtain a metonymic extension—since metonymy is a reversible phenomenon—the shift in profile can be done in the opposite direction: from the type to instances of the type. Due to this metonymic shift, a mass noun designating the type is construed as having multiple instances; however, in order to be distinguished from the uses of the mass noun as *unique* (the maximal extension) and *specific thing* (a specific portion of a mass within the immediate scope), the resulted instance should be provided with a fine-grained description, as in (61) or (62):

(61) *un agua muy clara* (CPCI)

(62) *brillaba un sol espléndido* (CPCI)

Since mass nouns due to their nature are distinguished by qualitative properties, any quantity the substance in question can be equated to an instance, since its inherent bounding is absent. Similar to instantiations in (61) and (62), a definite instance can be obtained, thereby, constituting a metonymic extension of the definite article. For sake of comparison, all the three above-discussed options are given below:

(63) a. **un agua / un agua muy clara* [= a kind of substance]
b. *el agua* [= maximal extension]
c. *el agua en el cubo* [= delimited portion]

(CPCI)

Radden and Dirven (2007) argue that the use of the definite article with mass nouns does not mean that they have become count nouns. Similarly, Langacker (1991b, p. 19) notes in relation to an example *The water in those two lakes* that the replicability as the characteristic of mass nouns is still at issue in higher-order constructions, that is why still the singular form is used, not *the waters*. The same pattern by default is observed in Spanish. This is because the metonymic vehicle, that is, the mass noun type, is present in the metonymic target, the obtained instance. This peculiarity of the metonymic construal also explains why qualitative properties of substances are retained in their instantiations grounded by articles, which consequently demand a finer-grained description, not being fully-fledged discrete instances.

As it has been observed, metonymic extensions of the definite article are owed to the shift in profile of nominals: from instance to type and vice versa. With that, the choice of profile itself is based on the ubiquitous metonymic part-whole relationship. But it turns out that metonymy in the semantics of the definite and the indefinite articles operates not only on the level of instantiation, provoking shifts in profile, but also on the type level, entailing shifts in construal between count and mass noun types. So, in fact, many of these cases compose chained metonymies, involving a series of metonymic mappings (Brdar, 2007; Hilpert, 2007). Let us look in more detail at how these metonymic processes are accomplished.

Instantiation is a more complex cognitive operation with respect to type distinction, but instances do not act in discourse independently from their types, the type conception is inherent in every instance (Langacker, 2009; Radden, 2009). This interdependence of types and their instances permits different kinds of the WHOLE FOR PART metonymy—MEMBER FOR CATEGORY,

REPRESENTATIVE MEMBER FOR PROTOTYPICAL SUBCATEGORY, CATEGORY FOR SUBCATEGORY, SUBCATEGORY FOR CATEGORY—to be produced. This is the case for (55)-(60). From the other hand, before an instantiation is done, metonymy, as a multilevel phenomenon (Barcelona, 2012b), also operates at the conceptual level of types. This is represented in figure 7. The dashed lines mean metonymic extensions, the solid lines indicate elaborations.

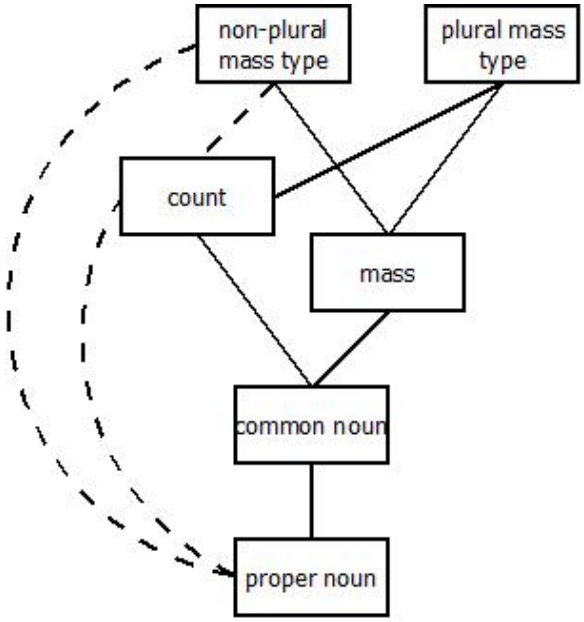


Figure 7. Metonymy on the type level in Spanish

Assuming the Langackerian organization of grammar in terms of strata (Langacker, 2016, 2017), the proper noun is regarded as the baseline for nominal structure, further giving rise to non-unique reference. With that, from a Cognitive Grammar perspective, changing the traditional point of view, plural nouns are regarded as a kind of mass nouns, differing from substances by the fact that the obtained mass is comprised by discrete elements (Langacker, 2016, p. 71). As a result, mass nouns in Cognitive Grammar include plural and non-

plural masses. Similar to substances, the referent of plural nouns is not bounded. As Langacker (2016, p. 88) writes, "plurals nouns . . . blend the properties of objects and substances, conceiving of multiple objects as a substance-like mass". For this reason, plural mass nouns are situated at a higher stratum with respect to count and non-plural mass nouns. This explains why plurals in some respect behave grammatically as mass nouns, but at the same time differ from them, being a higher-order type. Thus, Langacker (2016, p. 88) emphasizes the conceptual distinction that exists between the type *dog*, as a type of object, and the type *dogs*, as a higher-order type of mass. Their conceptual differences result in their grammatical differences and metonymy, on the other hand, motivates further changes in construal, affecting how and what is profiled by grounding elements. So, operating at on the type level and on the level of instantiation, different type-instance metonymies are the sources of polysemy for the definite and indefinite articles.

One other point to consider is that apart from being a mechanism of semantic change, metonymic substitution is also an important cohesive device at the discourse level. There are many works that examine referential functions of metonymy which occurs due to figure/ground effects in discourse (Al-Sharafi, 2004; Gibbs, 1999; Koch, 1999; Littlemore, 2015; Warren, 1999, to name a few). Al-Sharafi (2004) goes even further and argues that:

> In reality, all types of reference are metonymic, in the sense that there is a process of substitution in referencing and there is a process of signification in substitution. This view is even more plausible if we take into consideration that 'cognitive reference' is primary while 'textual reference' is secondary, because for a thing to be present in text is a special case of it being present in cognition at large. So in a sense whatever we find in a text stands in a part – whole relationship to what is in cognition. This is a proper metonymic relation. . . . This is a fundamental process of metonymic interpretation in which one form stands for another form. (pp. 112-113)

From this point of view, the types of domain-bound reference discussed in Section 3.1 are metonymic. Moreover, metonymy seen as a process of substitution, also integrates ellipsis. Although Ullmann (as discussed in Al-Sharafi, 2004) in his theory of metonymy distinguishes between metonymy and ellipsis, considering the latter as a relation based on spatial contiguity in the text, within the Cognitive Linguistics framework such distinction seems to be superfluous. Nowadays cognitive linguists admit that ellipsis is motivated by metonymy (Al-Sharafi, 2004; Barcelona, 2009). Within the metonymic FORM FOR FORM or CONCEPT FOR FORM relationship, ellipsis can be defined as a relation "where an empty slot stands for a previously mentioned form" (Al-Sharafi, 2004, p. 114), or rather as "substitution by zero" (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, pp. 142–145).

Taking this into account, it is possible to put forward that nominal ellipsis grounded by the definite article forms a kind of metonymic extension within its polysemous network (figure 8). The extension tends to occur with the prototypical meanings and their correspondent plural forms. Semantically, then, ellipsis can stand for *specific* or *unique thing*.

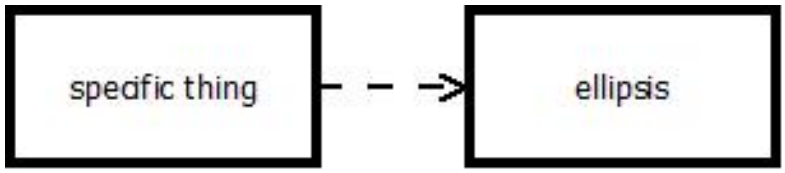


Figure 8. Metonymic relationship CONCEPT FOR FORM

In (64) and (65), the definite article as a part of the correspondent nominal expression takes on the meaning of the whole. Nevertheless, because of its incapacity to stay as a full nominal, the definite article can only function accompanied by complements in the sense of Langacker (2008, p. 203), which

elaborate a salient component of the dependent head, being themselves autonomous.

(64) *Compra* ***el nuevo***. (CPCI)

(65) *La séptima sinfonía de Beethoven me gusta más que* ***la octava***.
(RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 273)

Basically, ellipsis accomplishes the same as other metonymic references function: it permits to infer a great amount of information in the process of interpreting a text because words themselves, in fact, are in a stand-for relation with respect to the world of concepts.

3.4.2. Metaphor

In contrast to metonymy, metaphor in Cognitive Linguistics is understood as a mapping between two conceptual domains, a source one and a target one (Lakoff, 1987; Langacker, 2008; Taylor, 1995), as in (66):

(66) *Luis es un lince.* (CPCI)

The Cognitive Linguistics movement from its very outset has been marked by the focus on conceptual metaphors by which abstract concepts are defined in terms of physical experience. Bearing in mind that lexicon and grammar are viewed as a continuum, it is reasonable to assume that the phenomenon of metaphor is manifested also on the grammatical pole, like metonymy, which is present at various levels of conceptual organization. The concept of grammatical metaphor, however, has been introduced and developed within another framework—Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (Taverniers, 2003).

It has been postulated as complementing lexical metaphor, because SFL also assumes a continuum between lexicon and grammar, however, diverging with Cognitive Linguistics in other fundamental issues. Within SFL, grammatical metaphor was defined as "variation in the *expression* of a given meaning, rather than variation in the meaning of a given expression" (Taverniers, 2003, p. 7, emphasis in original). The term has been coined by cognitive linguists afterwards, notwithstanding their understanding of the notion is not the same (Panther & Thornburg, 2009).

The concept of grammatical metaphor sanctions the analysis of nominalizations grounded by the definite article as its metaphorical extensions. The process of nominalization has first been regarded as grammatical metaphor within the systemic-functional framework (Heyvaert, 2003; Taverniers, 2003). Within the Cognitive Linguistics framework, Panther and Thornburg (2009, pp. 13–14) argue against its analogous interpretation, but they admit that the English present participle taken as an example in Taverniers (2003), *They started a letter writing campaign*, from a cognitive linguistic perspective, can be also considered as a kind of metaphor. It can be denominated ACTIVITIES ARE SUBSTANCES. Panther and Thornburg's definition of metaphor, thereby, is as follows:

> It is sufficient to define conceptual metaphor as a case of structural similarity, i.e. a set of correspondences (mappings) between two conceptual structures (source and target). The relation between source and target can be seen as iconic (isomorphic): the target meaning is, mostly, conceptually organized in the same way as the source meaning, although certain correspondences may be blocked due to the inherent conceptual structure of the target meaning. (Panther & Thornburg, 2009, p. 16)

So, Panther and Thornburg (2009, pp. 13-14), examining a set of correspondences in the structure of the source and the target domain of the example in question, affirm that one of the metaphorical mappings is blocked

because activities have limited duration, while substances are stable across time. However, Radden and Dirven (2007, p. 63) argue that not all things are time-stable; for them, conceptual independence is the main semantic characteristic of nouns. With that, Langacker (2016, pp. 27-28) argues that the only common to all nouns feature is their semantic function (in other words, meaning), which consists in their identification as things. For Langacker (2008, pp. 125, 412–413), nominalization presupposes a suspension of the verb's sequential scanning and the imposition of summary scanning on the verbal process—its atemporalization—with a consequent shift in profile. As Langacker (2008, p. 332) points out, "semantically, the nominalization consists in the conceptual reification of this activity, producing an abstract thing . . . which is profiled by the noun". Taking these arguments into account, it can be argued that the metaphorical mapping in the above-discussed example has been accomplished completely.

Although expressing slightly different points of view regarding some aspects, Panther and Thornburg (2009) and Radden and Dirven (2007) admit that nominalizations are motivated by ontological metaphors, namely PROCESSES ARE THINGS (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 73) or ACTIVITIES ARE SUBSTANCES (Panther & Thornburg, 2009, p. 13). However, Langacker (2008, p. 119) regards any shift in profile—in this case, from a relationship to a thing—as a metonymic process. But if we bear in mind the criteria adduced by Panther and Thornburg (2009) and recall that metaphor is characterized "by the conceptualization of one cognitive domain in terms of components more usually associated with another cognitive domain" (Taylor, 1995, pp. 132–133), it will be possible to argue that we deal with grammatical metaphor, functioning the grammatical categories of nouns and verbs as cognitive domains.

Moreover, it could be claimed that, in any case, nominalizations involve an additional metonymic process because the transformation of processes into

things further implies that it may be possible to construe the nominal as a case of unique or non-unique reference. There is no inconsistency with the above-discussed explanations, since nominalization presupposes two steps: firstly, the construal of the situation in summary fashion; and secondly, a shift in profile. Many metonymic relationships presuppose more than one shift having a complex nature and being grouped in chains of metonymies, in some cases metaphtonimies are possible, or even overlaps between metonymy and metaphor. In either way, the nature of the semantic change is uncovered.

Thus, nominalizations, due to their reification of processual relationships, function grammatically as nouns. Consequently, when nominalizations are grounded by the definite article, they can be considered the definite article's metaphorical extensions because they profile things. The meanings that they can acquire, as in the case of ellipsis, are *specific* and *unique thing*. So, it can be said that these extensions endeavour to approach the definite article's prototypical meanings. Spanish admits various kinds of nominalizations; only some of them are grounded by the definite article:

(67) [*El*] **florecer de las plantas* (CPCI)

(68) *No sabemos el cuándo ni el dónde.* (CPCI)

In (67) and (68), the non-processual relationships are construed in such a way that profile abstract things. "Nominalization products seem to reify relational concepts (i.e. processes and qualities), which can then be manipulated metaphorically like a physical object" (Mihatsch, 2009, p. 94). The process of flowering in (67) is no longer scanned sequentially as a process unfolding through time but construed in summary fashion due to the infinitival marking. It can also be added that this kind of nominalized expressions resemble mass

nouns in the sense that they demonstrate the same as mass nouns properties like the absence of inherent bounding and spatial discontinuity. But they also can be construed as count or even plural mass types due to the metonymic processes that occur on the type level.

The degree to which relationships are reified may also vary. This is owed to the fact that nouns themselves comprise a prototypically structured category whose members have different degrees of nouniness (Lakoff, 1987, p. 64; Taylor, 1995, p. 193). Therefore, there are nominalizations that have been transformed into full-fledged lexical nouns (RAE & ASALE, 2010, pp. 246, 494); others are marginal, situated far away from the centre. Nominalizations obtained from different grammatical categories aspire to nouns with the highest degree of centrality, demonstrating a centripetal tendency. But nominalized extensions can also have a quite complex structure: they can be formed by an assembly of units that as a whole construction at a particular composite level performs the semantic function of the noun (e.g., *los que vienen a examinar*se). Other nominalizations can rest somewhere on the frontiers of the nouns' radial network as examples of the overlapping of categories. Thus, depending on the degree of reification, it may be even unclear whether a relationship or a thing is profiled. Since relationships are grounded not through nominal but clausal grounding (see Langacker, 2008), such uncertainty results in their optional grounding by the definite article:

(69) *[(el)] ser de otro país* (CPCI)

(70) *Me preocupa [(el)] que no me lo haya dicho todavía.* (CPCI)

According to the traditional explanation, the grounding of the (69) and (70) is optional because there is an alternation with the construction *el hecho de*

(Instituto Cervantes, 2006; RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 821). From a Cognitive Grammar point of view, I argue that the grounding by the definite article here is optional since the process is not fully reified and it is unclear to which pole it is closer to. The relative clause, such in (32), in fact, can serve the purpose of identification of the nominal, which at the highest composite level functions as the landmark of the profiled relationship (see also Chapter 5). Langacker (2008) observes the same tendency in English and Hopi:

> It is reasonably supposed that its profile is indeed superseded at a higher level of organization: in each case, the relative clause is part of a nominal which, taken as a whole, designates a participant in the clausal process rather than that process itself. These are cases where the nominal and clausal components are closely connected and the clause has no other purpose than to identify the nominal referent. Yet there are also many cases where the clause is more loosely connected with the nominal or contributes semantically in other ways. These factors facilitate its being apprehended autonomously and retaining its processual profile. (p. 427)

The marking of the relational clause by the definite grounding, therefore, supposes its conceptual reification—its construction as a thing. The variant without overt grounding, as in the case with *-ing* marking in English (Langacker, 2008, p. 439), indicates just a certain atemporalization of the process, which however does not appear to be reified. Therefore, nominalization as a complex and heterogeneous process can be carried to different degrees; it is a gradual process that can be sanctioned by different strategies: overt (infinitivization, participial marking)/non-overt marking, overt/non-overt grounding, lexical items/complex structured items, etc. And importantly, nominalization may also give rise to overlappings of categories in its process of approaching to the prototypical noun.

One more question to consider is a special case of nominalization that involves a change in the choice of trajector/landmark alignment and

consequently in profiling. In (71), the profiled qualities are reified instead of indicating stable relationships with their trajectors:

(71) *el inepto de tu hermano, la buena de María* (CPCI)

Diagrammatically it is shown in figure 9:

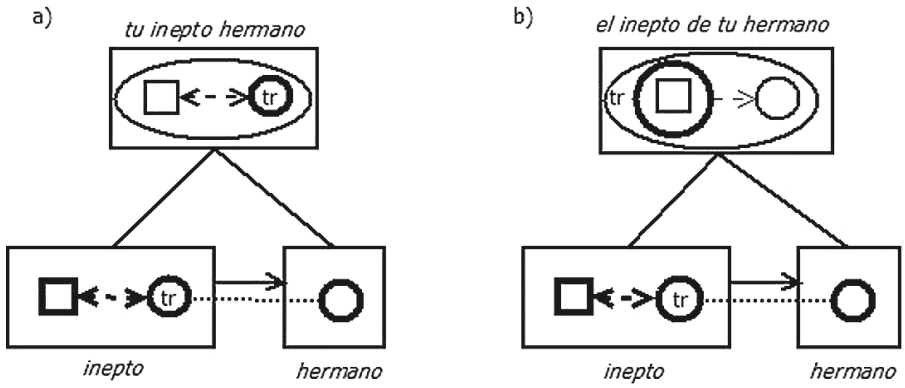


Figure 9. Metaphtonymy in *el inepto de tu hermano*

While an adjective normally profiles a non-processual relationship conferring trajector status on the actor (figure 9a), in figure 9b, there is a case of topicalization by conferring focal prominence on the nominalized quality. Consequently, in 9b, the alternate constituency—"the order in which simpler symbolic structures are progressively integrated to form more complex ones"—is derived by transformation (Langacker, 1986, p. 35). The transformation in question is realized by a metaphor that can be called QUALITIES ARE THINGS. In the process of nominalization of the adjective, the trajector and the landmark have been inverted, which resulted, moreover, in the increase of prominence of the reified quality. Since this nominalization presupposes an additional shift in profile, which is a manifestation of metonymy, it can be considered as a case of

metaphtonymy (Goossens, 1990; Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Galera-Masegosa, 2011), the phenomenon based on the interaction of metaphor and metonymy.

3.5. Elaborations and continuum of senses

Within the framework of Cognitive Linguistics, it is widely maintained that different senses within a polysemous category, grouped around prototypical centres and linked by categorizing relationships, are motivated by family resemblances to prototypical members (Geeraerts, 1985; Lakoff, 1987; Taylor, 1995). In the previous section, I have discussed metaphorical and metonymic extensions of the definite article in Spanish. Another type of relationships within a semantic network is based on elaborations from a more central meaning—realized either by specialization or by generalization—because "schematization can be carried to different degrees, depending on the diversity of the elements it is based on" (Langacker, 2008, p. 17).

Given that on some occasions unique reference borrows the strategy of non-unique reference (Section 3.2.), the boundary between unique and non-unique reference is not clear-cut. Proper nouns, as a case of unique reference, do not constitute a homogeneous category. Thus, the grounding of prototypical members is intrinsic (non-overt), that is, they do not require a separate grounding element for their identification. Instead, some of proper names are grounded by the definite article by default, others can obtain definite grounding as a result of a semantic change. It can be argued, then, that proper names grounded by the definite article constitute elaborations from its prototypical meaning of *specific thing*. With that, there is a conceptual interconnection between prototypical proper names that denote unique things and count nouns, which, according to Langacker (2016), are situated on a higher stratum. This point will be addressed below.

We have seen that, in the case of the prototypical meanings of the definite article, the uniqueness of a thing—either with respect to the immediate or to the maximal scope—is a relative issue. By the same token, in the case of metonymic and metaphorical extensions, the boundaries between different senses and categories have been said to be fuzzy: in particular, the overlaps between various kinds of generic reference, between definite and indefinite grounding, between relationships and things have been pointed out. Bearing this in mind, it can be suggested that the variable grounding of proper names can also be seen as a continuum, given that proper nouns, as many other linguistic notions, constitute a kind of prototype category.

In Spanish, like in English, the grounding of many proper names is intrinsic because "the very meanings of such expressions imply the identifiability of their referents" (Langacker, 2008, p. 272). They are easily identifiable in our mental universe just by their conventional labels. The use of the article is unnecessary because by virtue of their type description it is evident that there is only one instance identifiable independently of the immediate discourse context (although within the maximal scope). Such proper nouns can be considered prototypical (Fernández Leborans, 1999, p. 80):

(72) *María, Antonio* (CPCI)

(73) *Madrid, París, Alcalá de Henar*es (CPCI)

Other proper nouns in Spanish are always used with the definite article. Moreover, in (74) the article is integral part of the proper noun and is written starting with capital letter:

(74) *La Coruña, El Escorial, La Habana* (CPCI)

(75) *el Ebro, los Pirineos, el Teide* (CPCI)

Additionally, there are proper names whose grounding by the definite article is optional:

(76) *la China / China, el Japón / Japón, las Canarias / Canarias* (CPCI)

The reasons for the presence, absence or alternation of the definite article are not clear in all cases and up to now the use of the definite article with proper nouns has been determined by established conventions (RAE & ASALE, 2010). Supposedly, it is a matter of continuum throughout the historical processes of grammaticalization. As Alarcos Llorach (2000, p.68) points out, "en los tres casos la referencia del nombre propio es la misma: cumplen la identificación del objeto designado en el campo de situación de los hablantes". So, if proper nouns represent unique things identifiable per se, the uniqueness provided by the definite article to common nouns is limited (Langacker, 2008, p. 291). Alarcos Llorach (2000, pp. 68–69) describes the role of the definite article in the following manner: "El sustantivo común con artículo se convierte en *identificador* como lo es el nombre propio".

As it has been discussed in Section 3.2., even though proper nouns are said to be unmistakably identifiable against the background of an expression, the dimensions of our mental universe and the complexity of the human conceptual system make thinking in absolute terms problematic. Thus, proper names designating individuals, as in (72), obviously pertain to more than one person, and that is why in practice they entail the narrowing of the scope of our attention in order to identify the referent. Given that, it not surprising that proper nouns with intrinsic grounding can undergo a process of generalization

and therefore can be treated as common nouns. In such cases, an overlap of categories takes place. Analogously to the common noun's type, which has multiple instances, the type description of a proper noun, designated by the name itself, presupposes the existence of more than one instance of its type (Langacker, 2008, pp. 316–318). Taking this into account, it is inconsistent to state that proper nouns lack lexical meaning (see, e.g., Fernández Leborans, 1999).

Paradoxically, when grounded by the definite article, the proper noun becomes more prominent (in fact, it is the alternative constituency that makes the item more salient):

(77) *la Ana a la que yo me refiero* (CPCI)

In (39), the name itself designates a type of thing (*Ana*) and it is thought of as having many instances, so it is specified by narrowing the focus of attention. The emphasis can serve various purposes, including a derogatory one, as in (78):

(78) *Se presentó la Ana (esta) como si nada.* (CPCI)

Additionally, the use of the definite article with proper names in rather typical in colloquial speech in some regions in the south of Spain, in Catalonia, and in Latin America.

These cases can be regarded as generalizations from the prototypical meaning of the proper noun, which presupposes the existence of only one instance, and at the same time, as the definite article's elaborations from the prototypical meaning of *specific thing*. Due to the close conceptual interconnection of type and instance in the construction of nominal reference, this change in profile can also be explained as motivated by the metonymy

INSTANCE FOR TYPE. In other words, proper nouns can be regarded as instances of a type that has only one instance, or alternatively, as instances that do not have a type description. Depending on which view is assumed, the above-mentioned cases can be considered as metonymies or as generalizations. However, there is no problem with both accounts since metonymic thinking underlies and sanctions a large number of linguistic phenomena.

Undergoing such a transformation, a proper noun can behave not only as a count noun but can also be construed as a mass noun, as a whole. Invoking figure 7, it can be seen that the proper noun, due to its generalization, became a common noun and therefore behaves as a common noun with respect to the count/mass distinction. If such proper noun is assumed to be a mass noun, it is possible to discern various "patches" of its type:

(79) *la España franquista* (CPCI)

In (79), it is implicitly presupposed that other instances of the type *España* can be created: *la España de Alfonso XIII, la España del siglo XVI, …,* etc. As the type is construed as a mass noun, the instances should be provided with a fine-grained description.

Thus, proper nouns in the continuum of definite grounding, when they are treated as common nouns, semantically approach to the definite article's prototypical meaning of *specific thing*, referring to a concrete instance of the specified type which, in this case, is the proper noun itself. Yet, semantically it is more salient than a grounded by the definite article common noun. This owes to the assumption that proper nouns are more salient than common nouns (Cook, 2003, p. 161). Moreover, an alternative constituency itself can contribute to the prominence of the structure in question (Langacker, 1986, p. 35). The situation is depicted schematically in figure 10.

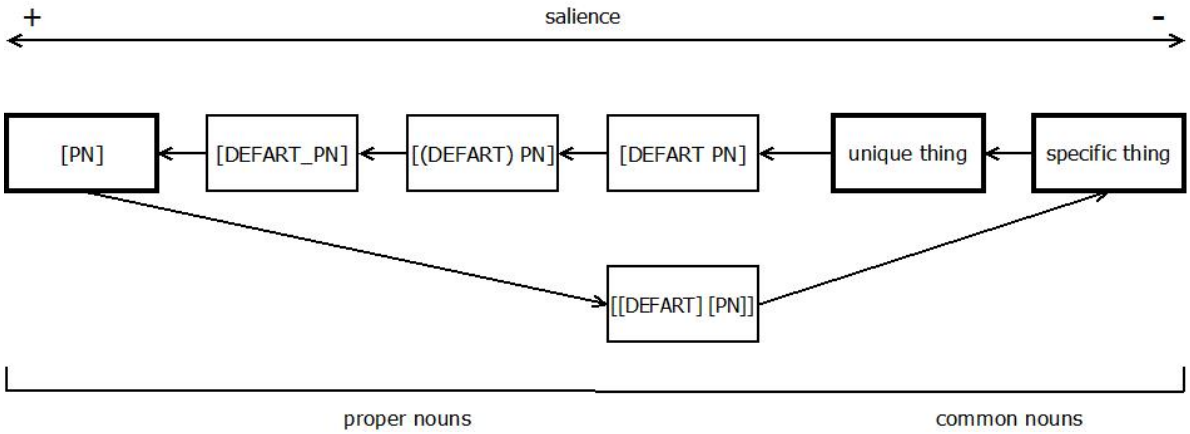


Figure 10. Definiteness continuum of proper and common nouns

In figure (10), proper nouns are designated abbreviately by their constructional schemas [PN], [DEFART_PN], [(DEFART) PN], [DEFART PN], and [[DEFART] [PN]]—corresponding to the examples (72,73), (74), (76), (75) and (77, 78, 79) respectively. Solid arrows are used for elaborations. Prototypical meanings are given in bold. It is assumed that the elements on the left are more salient than the elements on the right. From the notion of unique thing, an array of elaborations is expanded continuously towards the prototypical proper noun whose grounding is intrinsic. The proper nouns whose grounding is optional, as in (76), and those that incorporate the article in their phonological form, as in (74), are more salient than the proper nouns as in (75) because, otherwise, without an overt grounding element, some of them run the risk to not to be considered as proper nouns. For example, various confusions can take place: between the proper noun *los Alpes* and a rarely used common noun *alpes*, which means "very high hill"; between *los Pirineos* and the plural form of the adjective *pirineos*, etc. The meanings such (77), (78), and (79), through generalization, elaborate the proper name's type, approaching to the

definite article's prototypical meaning of specific thing and producing an overlap between proper names and common nouns. The depicted in figure 10 meanings form between themselves a continuum with blurry boundaries.

An analogous to the process of semantic generalization of proper nouns with intrinsic grounding is the process of specialization of indefinite nouns resulting in their particular cognitive salience. Such elaboration consists of bringing a nominal closer to the semantic value of unique thing. Since definite nouns are assumed to be more salient than indefinite nouns (Cook, 2003, p. 161; Epstein, 1994, p. 308), due to the process of specialization, the profiled thing is grounded by the definite article contrary to the conventional pattern:

(80) *No es una película, es* ***la película***. (CPCI)

(81) *La Paceña es* ***la cerveza***. (RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 265)

Omitting a detailed semantic characterization of the indefinite article, which will be further examined in Chapter 4, here I only specify that the elaboration structure will be abbreviated in the diagram by its constructional schema, [INDEFART N]. So, the process of specialization can be represented as follows:

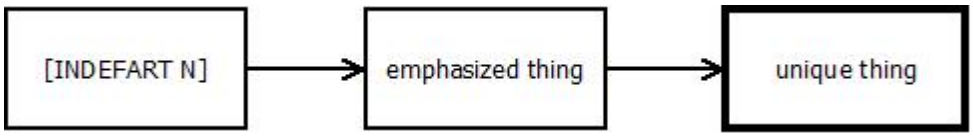


Figure 11. Emphasized specific thing

In figure 11, through specialization, the emphasized thing endeavours to approach the semantic value of unique thing but fails to do it due to the lack of structural weight. As a result, the emphasized thing can never be equal to a unique thing, however, it remains in constant movement towards it. The conceptualizers are aware that its status as a unique thing is artificial. So, this is one more case of the overlapping of categories.

The grammatical number of nouns also affects the semantics of definiteness in Spanish. Since language is intimately tied with other fundamental human capacities, the meaning of the plural definite article in Spanish can be explained by taking a deeper insight into the nature of pluralization. Logically, only count nouns can be pluralized, while unique things and proper nouns, in principle, are thought of as not having plural forms. Langacker (2008, p. 346) argues that, conceptually, pluralization as a mental operation is situated at a higher level than the distinction between mass and count types of things. This is because pluralization itself requires "the capacity for conceiving multiple objects as a mass" (Langacker, 2016, p. 53). Therefore, as it has been mentioned, Langacker (2008, p. 130, 2016) argues that the category of mass nouns includes both mass nouns as such and plural nouns.[2] As Langacker (2008, p.342) writes, the phenomenon of unitization of a mass "is basically the inverse of pluralization: instead of replicating a discrete entity to create a mass, it creates a discrete entity by bounding a mass". Mass nouns, when construed as conceptually bounded entities, similar to count nouns, can be replicated. The mental operation of pluralization is linked with categorization, as reduplication presupposes as a previous step the act of abstracting common properties. Pluralization, therefore, is a grouping by means of multiplication of instances.

[2] Interestingly, generative linguists have also recently come to the conclusion that mass nouns are inherently plural. For further discussion, see: Chierchia, G. 1998. Plurality of mass nouns and the notion of "semantic parameter." In S. Rothstein (Ed.), Events and grammar, 53–103. Dordrecht: Springer Science+Business Media.

With respect to its role in the semantic network, pluralization is an elaboration (generalization). So, the plural definite article profiles multiple specific things either within the immediate scope, as in (82, 83), or within the maximal scope, as in (84), that is understood as referring to all instances of the type in all domains of the matrix. It may be the case that the distinction between the immediate and the maximal scope is neutralized or that the maximal scope is equal to all members of a class (similar to the maximal extension of a mass noun). The relationship between the immediate and the maximal scope itself is one of elaboration (figure 12).

(82) *Juán va con los pocos amigos que tiene.* (CPCI)

(83) *los dos amigos* (CPCI)

(84) *La mayoría de los alumnos prefiere ir a clase por la mañana.* (CPCI)

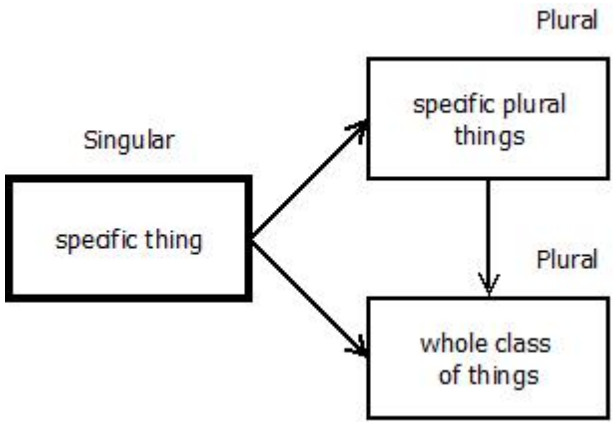


Figure 12. Pluralization

As we have seen before, if the requirement of uniqueness for a proper noun is not fulfilled it behaves as a common noun. When pluralized, proper nouns acquire the semantic value of common nouns in plural (figure 13). In figure 13, the proper noun in plural is represented by its constructional schema, [[DEFART] [PN]]; the dotted lines indicate correspondences by which its meaning is equated to the definite article's plural forms. However, the proper noun's type retains its spelling with a capital letter, as in (85) and (86).

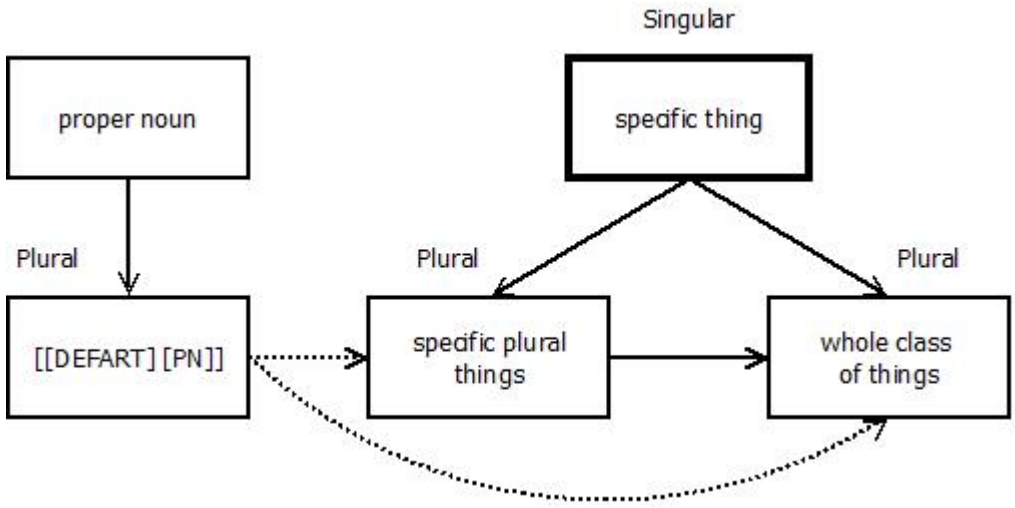


Figure 13. Pluralization of proper nouns

(85) *los Fernández, los González* (CPCI)

(86) *los Escipiones, los Borbones* (CPCI)

The interpretation of (85) and (86) is to be done against the immediate or the maximal scope of an expression and will be feasible due to other elements (e.g., relational participants) that will necessarily evoke the rest of the conceptual

content and the ground when these examples will be contextualized. In this respect, these cases are similar to relative quantifiers, whose interpretation is to be done either regarding a contextually relevant extension or the maximal extension, which can be deduced "just from the discourse context without any overt signaling" (Langacker, 2016, p. 160).

There is an observable tendency that only prototypical proper nouns, as having intrinsic instead of overt grounding, are subject to such behaviour. This restriction has been already noted by Lakoff (1987) in relation to other polysemous categories. At the same time, with peripheral members a centripetal tendency is observed, that is, less central members tend to move towards the prototype of the category. So, the above-discussed elaborations of the definite article constitute a gradation, giving rise to overlaps between different categories. In addition, it can be noted that border meanings tend to originate from the prototype of one category and approach the prototypical meaning of the other.

3.6. A complete network of senses for the definite article in Spanish

The senses of the definite article in Spanish discussed in the previous sections form a polysemous network which is represented in figure 14. The indefinite article, represented in the diagram by a schema for its instantiation [INDEFART N], forms its proper network and has its proper prototypical meaning, which will be discussed in the next chapter. But it can be anticipated that the definite article's and the indefinite article's networks are related. In figure 14, the senses within the definite article's network are motivated by family resemblances to the two prototypical centres, being linked by categorizing relationships of specialization, generalization, metonymy, and metaphor. Solid

arrows indicate specialization or generalization, while dashed arrows mean extensions, either metonymic or metaphorical.

Taking a closer look at the nodes, it can be concluded that the definite article in Spanish can run the gamut from profiling a unique thing of its type to denoting the whole class of things. By means of this polysemous network and the elicitation of conceptual relationships underlying the structure of the definite article, I hope to have shown that the various senses of the definite article constitute a coherent system. It is important to highlight that it is not claimed that the nodes within the network exist as discrete meanings, quite the contrary, an attempt to unveil a continuous nature of their metamorphoses has been made. It has been shown that the postulated continuum between various senses of the definite article produces overlaps between different categories, demonstrating that their boundaries are fuzzy. Thus, the definite article's elaborations and extensions form a gradation that gives rise to overlaps between definite and indefinite grounding, count and mass nouns, relationships and things, proper and common nouns. The phenomena of metaphor and metonymy, moreover, have been examined as applicable to both meaning and form. Likewise, the prototypical meanings of specific and unique thing form a continuum since they differ only in the basis for their identification, either relative to the immediate or to the maximal scope, taking into account that sometimes this distinction is neutralized.

With that, the aforementioned accounts of the definite article from a Cognitive Grammar perspective, which have been discussed in Section 2.5. (Alonso Raya et al., 2006; Alejandro Castañeda Castro & Chamorro, 2014; Chamorro et al., 2006; López García, 2005; Montero Gálvez, 2011, 2017; Santiago Alonso, 2017), had not taken into consideration the internal semantic complexity of the structure of the definite article. The analysis proposed in this chapter demonstrates that the meaning of the definite article, which is

polysemous, cannot be reduced to only one essential value, as Leonetti (1990) and Montero Gálvez (2011) propose. As a criticism to such an approach, it can be adduced Geeraerts's (1985, p. 138) opinion who states that "the senses within one cluster cannot be covered by a single definition but have to be related by devices such as family resemblance". A similar view is held by Langacker (2008, p. 38) who maintains that "a single abstract meaning does not fully describe a lexical item's established semantic value" because it is too schematic to be able to explain the range of specific conventional senses of an item. According to Cognitive Grammar, the only possible characterization valid for all instances of the definite article is its constructional schema, which is [DEFART], but it has no specific conceptual content. Rather the meaning of the definite article as one of the elements of the Spanish grounding system is expressed in its instantiations, which entail different possibilities of construal. Following Langacker (2008), it is strongly argued that the meaning of the definite article as a polysemous category resides not just in the prototype but in the entire polysemous network and the kinds of relationships that motivate its various senses.

For this analysis to be complete, however, it is necessary to analyze its indefinite counterpart, the indefinite article, and also to examine cases of the absence of articles, that is, where grounding is covert. It will be done in the next chapters.

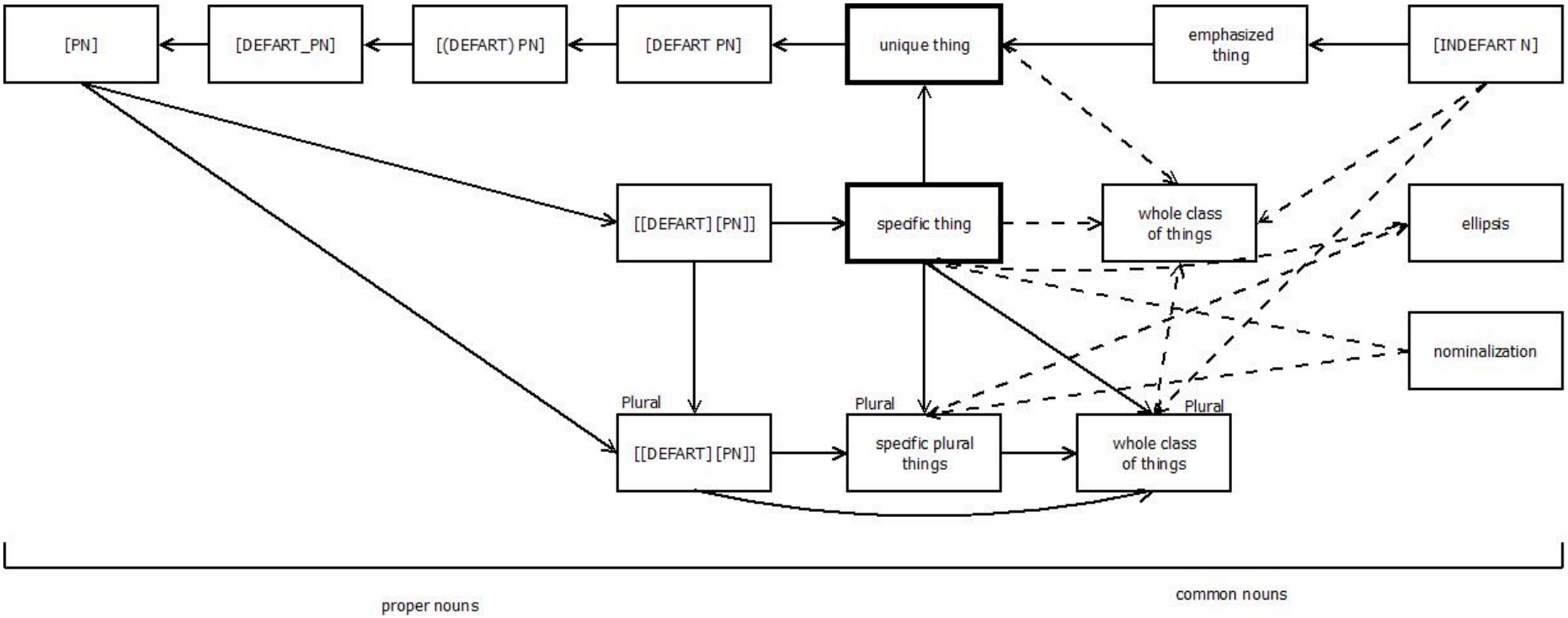


Figure 14. Semantic network of the definite article in Spanish

CHAPTER 4

THE INDEFINITE ARTICLE IN SPANISH AS A POLYSEMOUS CATEGORY

This chapter reconsiders the semantic structure of the indefinite article in Spanish from a Cognitive Grammar perspective. Like in the case of the definite article, it will be argued that the indefinite article is a polysemous grounding element and its different meanings, traditionally regarded as random and not related to each other, will be analyzed as constituting a prototype category. By the elucidation of categorizing relationships underlying its structure, the category of the indefinite article in Spanish will be represented as a polysemous semantic network.

4.1. Prototypical meaning of the indefinite article

The current state of the research on the indefinite article in Spanish consists of a complex of concepts such as non-familiarity, specificity, non-identifiability, and non-uniqueness, or exclusiveness, which, nevertheless, seem to be incapable to account for the whole range of uses of the indefinite article. Unlike to the definite article, which has been said to be meaningless, traditional linguistics from the very beginning has admitted that *un* has some semantic content (cf. Abad Nebot, 1977; Álvarez Martínez, 1986). However, for a long time, it has not been regarded as an article (see Section 2.2.). Semantically, *un* has been characterized as the presenter of nouns that were not mentioned previously in discourse or unknown for the interlocutors (e.g., Abad Nebot, 1977; Álvarez Martínez, 1986; Lapesa, 1987), in other words, as performing a

classifying function (Abad Nebot, 1977; Alarcos Llorach, 1968; Alonso, 1982). There is also a wide acceptance of Hawkins' postulation of the exclusiveness condition of indefinite reference, which is understood as "referring to not-all objects of the required kind in this set, i.e. to a proper subset as opposed to the totality" (Hawkins, 2015, p. 184). In particular, non-uniqueness—or exclusiveness—serves as the basis for the accounts of the indefinite article in English elaborated within the Cognitive Grammar framework: in Langacker's (2008, 2016, 2017) Cognitive Grammar and in Radden and Dirven's (2007) account of indefinite reference.

In order to proceed with the analysis of the indefinite article as a polysemous category, it is pertinent, first, to define its central meaning as the core in relation to which category membership is defined since, starting from Rosch's (publishing as Heider, 1972; Rosch, 2009) experiments onward, it has been revealed that human categorization is prototype-centered and is based on a measure of similarity to the prototype. The prototype, once defined, serves to derive from it other senses.

There are no rigid criteria on which to determine the meaning that would be regarded as prototypical. Scholars posit among others such factors as salience (Geeraerts, 1985; Rosch, 2009; Taylor, 1995), the prototype's generator function (Lakoff, 1987) and its experiential basis (Langacker, 2008), considering the frequency of occurrence of central members to be a mere consequence of their centrality (Taylor, 1995, p. 52). Among the criteria for its determination, it is also pointed out that the prototype tends to be historically the earliest sense (Tyler & Evans, 2003).

So, bearing in mind that the indefinite article in Spanish proceeds from the Latin number *ūnus/ūna/ūnum* (RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 264) and participates in the achievement of non-unique reference (Langacker 2016), let me suggest that the central meaning of the indefinite article can be described as

a category member. As it has been discussed in the previous chapter, non-unique reference is constructed by an overt grounding element (versus intrinsic grounding of prototypical proper nouns such as *María, Antonio, Madrid*) and a grounded structure that specifies the type of the thing in question (Langacker, 2016, p. 91). However, indefiniteness can be expressed by other strategies: non-unique reference can be achieved without a determiner (e.g., *libros*) or can have no head noun (e.g., *unos que viven fuera de Cataluña*) (CREA), in opposition to the traditional interpretation (Álvarez Martínez, 1986, p. 111). The type specification can be of any degree of complexity, consisting of one lexical noun (e.g., *un amigo*) or having various components (e.g., *unos que viven fuera de Cataluña*).

So, the noun in the broader sense evokes some conceptual content because the grounding element alone is too schematic, neither the type specification is sufficient for its instantiation, and as a result of their grouping an instance of the type is profiled. In the case of the indefinite article, the proposed prototype—a category member—fulfils the function of instantiating the type, being instantiation itself based on a metonymic part-whole relation (Radden, 2009). Regarding the view of *un* as a quantifier, Radden and Dirven (2007, p. 67) point out that "the indefinite article . . . still requires its noun to be countable". The widely discussed numerical value of un, therefore, is inherent in its conception, moreover, given that it is often not possible to establish a clear distinction between an expression's possible interpretations, nor it is necessary in terms of their semantic function.

The proposed definition of the prototypical meaning of the indefinite article is also in concordance with the postulated by Hawkins exclusiveness of indefinite reference, or reference to not-all (Hawkins, 2015, p. 201). Some counterexamples provided by Hawkins himself (see Section 2.1.), where he believed that the exclusiveness condition is absent and found no explanation,

can be easily understood as exclusive once the objectivist view underlying truth-conditional semantics is rejected. An important conclusion that could be made from Hawkins' approach is that, due to his postulation of the exclusiveness condition, it is possible to reveal that indefinite reference is based on the metonymic PART-WHOLE relation or the INSTANCE-TYPE relation. Such conceptual organization of indefinite reference proves once again the metonymic organization of our mental activity, already noted by many scholars (Gibbs, 1999; Lakoff, 1987; Panther & Radden, 1999).

Thus, by using the indefinite article, we are realizing the metonymic process in which a part is defined in relation to a larger whole. In this conceptual operation, we apply our conceptualizing capacities to narrow the scope of attention within our mental universe by categorizing the thing in question and indicating that it is an instance of some type to which it pertains. Hence, there is the presentational function of *un*—the introduction into discourse of an object not mentioned earlier—misleadingly adopted by many linguists as its primary role. The fact that the indefinite article is used for first mentions is a mere epiphenomenon of its conceptual status because it establishes membership. Logically, this is the first thing one does for narrowing the scope of possible candidates since our mental universe subsumes multiple entities and it is impossible to have a separate label for each of them, as it is the case for prototypical proper nouns (Langacker, 2008, p. 276). So, by using the indefinite article with a noun to introduce an object in the discourse, the type of the thing in question is specified and its countable nature is indicated.

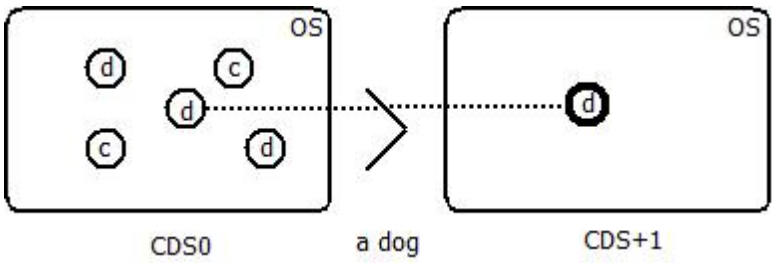
The indefinite article always presupposes this "an instance of the type" metonymic thinking. According to Radden and Dirven (2007, p. 91), "indefinite reference involves singling out a particular element from a reference mass, or a set. . . . A set may also be implicitly defined by a pragmatic situation". Langacker (2008, pp. 286–287, 2016, pp. 117–118) postulates that the indefinite article is

used "either because there are multiple candidates (onstage instances of the specified type) or because there are none", that is, that there are no candidates onstage, in opposition to the definite article that profiles an instance uniquely identifiable for the interlocutors within the immediate scope. "Onstage" means to be within the immediate scope: every linguistic expression invokes some portion of information that constitutes an expression's scope which is arranged in terms of figure/ground organization. Therefore, as it has been discussed in relation to the definite article, Cognitive Grammar distinguishes between the foregrounded immediate and the backgrounded maximal scope. The things that are onstage are in the focus of attention of the interlocutors. Summarizing, indefinite reference always involves a process of instantiation, or singularization, whether it is defined in relation to the objects of the same type that are onstage or with respect to a broader scope—all instances of the category.

Regarding the prototypical role of the indefinite article in discourse, although other cases will be described further below, it can be outlined that Langacker (2016, p. 117) defines it as used "either because there are multiple candidates (onstage instances of the specified type) [Figure 15a] or because there are none" [Figure 15b], that is, that there's no candidates onstage.

a) *I saw dogs and cats there.*] CDS_0

> *Jill was petting* ***a dog****.*] CDS_{+1}



b) *Jill looked in the pet shop.*] CDS_0

> *She saw* ***a dog****.*] CDS_{+1}

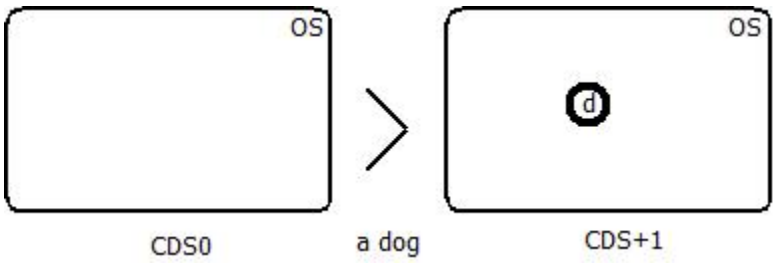


Figure 15. The functioning of the indefinite article in discourse
(Langacker, 2016, p. 123, 2017, p. 332)
CDS = current discourse space, OS = onstage region, d = dog, c = cat

This is a case of non-unique reference. For the sake of clarity, this definition should be completed by an observation that in the case of unique reference, in relation to the prototypical meaning of *unique thing* of the definite article, there may be the case that no candidate is available within the immediate scope (onstage region), at first glance similar to the situation depicted in figure (15b). However, conceptually, the situation is not the same, since the thing is unique within the maximal scope and, therefore, can be brought onstage as definite. It will be the case for proper nouns and definite article's instantiations that semantically have been described as unique things in Section 3.2. Let me illustrate it with the example of *the moon*, also discussed in Langacker (2016) as having a previously established identity, when it acts as a case of unique reference (these cases, as it has been mentioned above, have a dual place in the system of nominal reference). The situation is depicted in figure 16, wherein

the maximal scope is viewed as the atemporalized CDS. The bold lines indicate its profiling as the focus of attention.

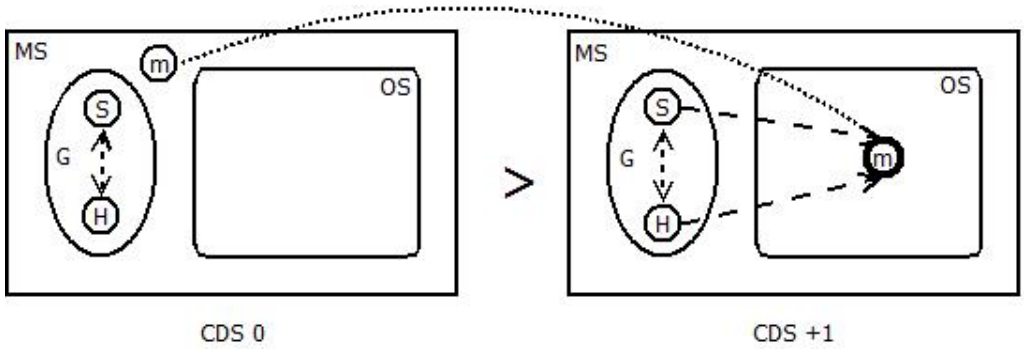


Figure 16. *Unique thing* in discourse

S = speaker, H = hearer, G = ground, OS = onstage region (immediate scope), MS = maximal scope, m = moon, CDS = current discourse space

Returning to the issue of the indefinite article, as with the definite article, the dual strategy is at issue: firstly, we need to choose a type of thing from our mental universe, which consists of innumerable labels, and secondly, we need to narrow the scope of possible candidates (Langacker, 2008, p. 276). So, the indefinite article specifies the type of the thing in question and indicates its countable nature when used to introduce an object in the current discourse space. In addition, it should be noted that such distinction as specificity/non-specificity, or even ambiguity (Radden & Dirven, 2007, p. 94), of referents is not marked in English, Spanish and many other languages, unlike, for example, in Turkish (von Heusinger, 2002b, p. 254), and the description of *un* as a category member subsumes these notions. Besides, it is necessary to bear in mind that specificity and definiteness are independent of each other (von Heusinger, 2002b).

Finally, the question of referentiality, by some scholars equated to specificity (cf. von Heusinger, 2002b), has been reconsidered in Langacker's Cognitive Grammar as the distinction between actual and virtual referents (Langacker, 2008, 2016, 2017). Those nominals that traditionally have been regarded as non-referential (e.g., generic) in Cognitive Grammar are understood as having virtual referents. And besides, Langacker (2016) argues that every indefinite referent at first is virtual, at least just for a moment. This distinction is also adopted by Radden and Dirven (2007), due to that all non-specific indefinites are regarded as virtual. The semantic representation of the indefinite referent as a category member, in both cases, is the same. Leaving an in-depth study of virtuality out of the scope of this work, however, it could be suggested that further research regarding the speaker and the hearer knowledge in each case is needed, bearing in mind that discourse reference is always intersubjective. In addition, the recent statement expressed in Langacker (2016, p. 127)—according to which there are various degrees of virtuality—is relevant in this respect.

4.2. Extensions

It is generally assumed that the prototypical meaning of a polysemous item can undergo two processes of meaning change—elaboration and extension—which, in fact, are the categorizing relationships that organize different senses in the whole polysemous network (e.g., Langacker, 2008; Taylor, 1995). The elaboration can be accomplished in two directions: via schematization or specialization. More atypical, peripheral senses are created by relationships of semantic extension, which can be of metaphorical or metonymic nature. Since metonymy is "a cognitive phenomenon that may be even more fundamental than metaphor" (Panther & Radden, 1999, p. 1; Taylor,

1995, p. 124), firstly, the metonymic extensions of the Spanish indefinite article, as more complex and numerous, will be discussed.

4.2.1. Metonymic extensions

Metonymy is ubiquitous in our cognition and language, being the latter a reflection of the former, and is grounded in human bodily experience (Gibbs, 1999; Panther & Radden, 1999). In general terms, it could be defined as a mapping between two entities within one conceptual domain by which the name of one entity is used to provide mental access to another entity (Barcelona, 2012a; Radden & Kövecses, 2007). There are many well-known kinds of metonymic relationships such as PART FOR WHOLE, CAUSE FOR EFFECT, CONTAINER FOR CONTAINED. The meanings of the indefinite article in Spanish traditionally considered as generic are nothing but examples of the PART FOR WHOLE metonymy:

(87) *Un bolígrafo se usa para escribir.* (CPCI)

For generics with *un*, what is at issue is a double metonymic process: the INSTANCE FOR TYPE metonymy, which corresponds to the process of instantiation and involves a further metonymic process CATEGORY FOR SUBCATEGORY, or TYPE FOR SUBTYPE (Radden, 2009). Those metonymies that presuppose more than one conceptual shift are referred to as chained by Hilpert (2007) or multi-tiered by Brdar (2007). Thus, by the chained metonymy in (87) a representative instance of its class is obtained, being selected randomly (Christophersen, 1939; Hawkins, 2015; Leonetti, 1999). This generic reference allows for exceptions and differs from the direct reference to the whole category for which the definite article would be used. A generic expression with

the indefinite article does not necessarily refer to all members of the category because by means of a representative instance only a prototypical part of the category is what counts; therefore, it is compatible only with essential, prototypical properties of the category (Radden, 2009, pp. 199–207). The referent of such generic expression is virtual, it is "imagined to be representative of actual instances" (Langacker, 2016, p. 134). In comparison to definite generic expressions, Radden and Dirven (2007, p. 107) note that "as in individuative reference, indefinite generic referents are mainly used to open a mental space for an instance, while definite generic referents are used for instances for which a space has already been opened". Similar to the prototypical meaning of the indefinite article, the representative generic instance is being introduced to discourse, conjured up for communicative purposes. In addition, as a consequence of their semantic function, representative generics comply with the exclusiveness of indefinite reference.

The representative generic has connections with other types of generic reference in Spanish, achieved via the definite article. The frontiers between various types of generic reference are blurry, seen by scholars as "forming a cline from full to marginal genericity" (Radden, 2009, p. 199). As a result, a partial overlap can be produced:

(88) *El / Un bolígrafo se usa para escribir.* (CPCI)

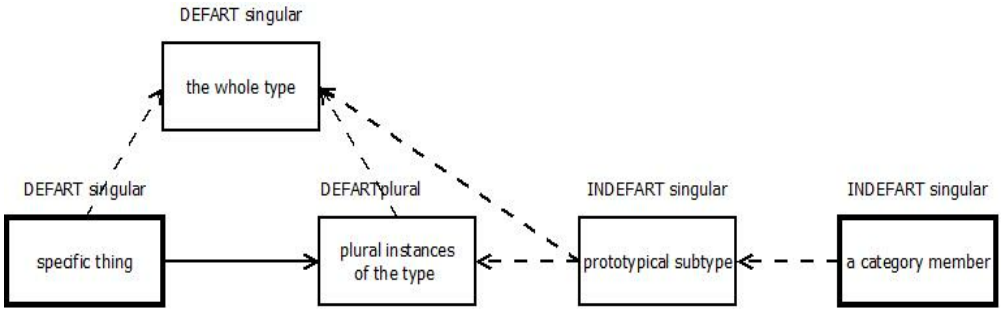


Figure 17. The interplay between generic referents

This situation is represented in Figure 17. From the right to the left there are chained metonymies. They are derived from the prototypical meaning of *un*—a category member—by means of extensions, which are depicted by means of dashed lines. The representative instance, construed by the indefinite article (marked as "INDEFART singular"), stands for the prototypical subtype, as in (87). At the same time, the whole category is comprehended via the prototypical subcategory, therefore the metonymic relationships SUBTYPE FOR TYPE are depicted as extensions to the singular definite article ("DEFART singular") and to the plural definite article ("DEFART plural"), when it refers to a representative proportion or to all instances of the type. It should be noted as well that most metonymic relationships are reversible processes. Compare also:

(89) a. *Un guepardo es fácil de domesticar.*

b. *El guepardo es fácil de domesticar.*

c. *Los guepardos son fáciles de domesticar.* (Leonetti, 1999, p. 870)

The representative generic can overlap with the meaning grounded by the definite article, as in (88) and (89), other overlaps such as between DEFART singular and DEFART plural in (89) also can be produced. The relationship of extension is indicated by dashed lines. The solid line means elaboration: in this case, from the prototypical meaning of the singular definite article (a specific thing) to its plural form. The prototypical meanings are indicated in bold. Thereby, I advocate for a continuum not only between the different types of generic reference in Spanish but also for a broader continuum between other senses of the definite and the indefinite articles.

The representative generic can also appear with proper names, when they have suffered a metonymic process of conversion into common nouns. It means that they are construed as countable, as if the type, profiled by a proper noun, had multiple entities. The emerging representative generic refers to only to a prototypical subcategory:

(90) *Un Buñuel solo puede aparecer una vez.* (CPCI)

(91) *una España diferente*

It might be added that the examples (90) and (91) illustrate that the continuum of senses represented in figure 17 extends to proper names, which by virtue of metonymic processes can be transformed into common nouns (Langacker, 2008, pp. 316–318), or in other words, that unique reference can be transformed into non-unique reference.

The examples presented so far have been concerned with count nouns. But I argue that mass nouns also can suffer a metonymic process INSTANCE FOR TYPE, although in a different way. The metonymic processes that result in a mass noun's indefinite instance are similar to those that derive a delimited

portion of the substance in question from its maximal extension by means its definite grounding, as it has been described in Section 3.4.1. Since any object in principle can be construed either as count or as mass (Langacker, 2008), a continuum between objects and substances can be postulated (Radden & Dirven, 2007, p. 71). Of course, there are many factors, such as the established conventionalities and peculiarities of our perception that determine a preference for a particular construal. Mass nouns by nature are construed as an undifferentiated whole and refer by default to the maximal extension of a substance. So, if a shift in profile is done in the opposite direction: from the TYPE to an INSTANCE, the mass noun turns to be construed as a count noun. Let me recall the example (63) from the previous chapter. The usual reference to a mass noun by default is the maximal extension, which semantically can be equated to the meaning of unique thing, as in (63b). A delimited specific portion of a mass onstage represents a kind of specific thing, as in (63c), and therefore it is regarded as an extension of the definite article. In (63a), an instance of the type is profiled. Since qualitative factors are what distinguishes one kind of substance from another, the obtained instance should be provided with a fine-grained description accompanied by modifiers, describing in more detail the type that represents a part with respect to the maximal extension. A similar example is shown in (92).

(63)	a.	**un agua / un agua muy clara*	[= an instance]
	b.	*el agua*	[= maximal extension]
	c.	*el agua en el cubo*	[= delimited portion]
			(CPCI)

(92) *Hacía un calor horrible, brillaba un sol espléndido.* (CPCI)

Since metonymy is a multilevel phenomenon, before an instantiation is done, it already operates on the type level. Therefore, when unique reference converts into non-unique reference, that is, when a proper noun becomes a common noun, it is possible to construe it either as count, as in (90), or as mass. In the case of mass construal, just like in (63a), the extension will be created by adding modifiers to specify the type in order to instantiate it:

(93) *Escuchamos a un Carreras pletórico.* (CPCI)

Given the above-described mechanisms of semantic change, in figure 18 it can be seen how the part-whole metonymy contributes to the polysemy of articles in Spanish on the level of instantiation in the case of generic reference.

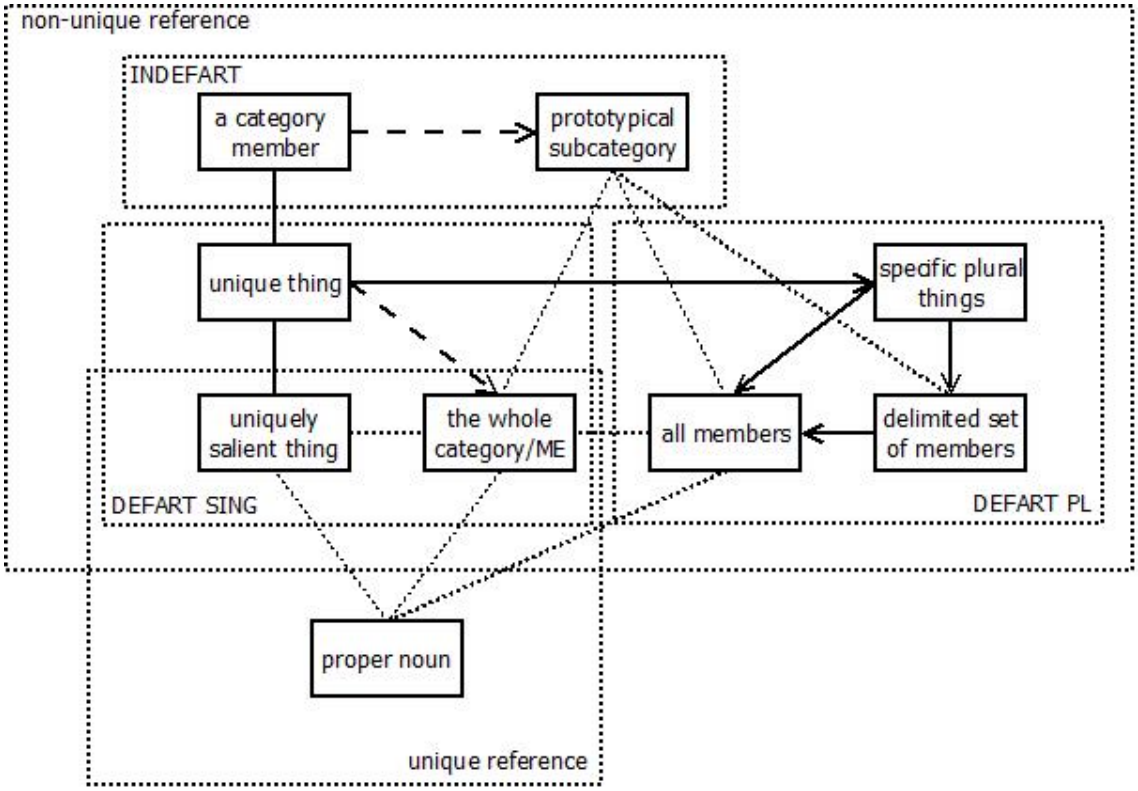


Figure 18. Metonymy of the level of instantiation: generic reference.

ME = the maximal extension; DEFART SING = the singular definite article, DEFART PL = the plural definite article; INDEFART = the indefinite article

Figure 18 depicts the different types of generic reference that have been regarded so far as metonymic extensions of the definite and the indefinite articles. It can be seen how these metonymies, being intertwined by family resemblances, motivate changes of construal and grammatical polysemy. Moreover, this diagram shows that there is an overlap between non-unique and unique reference, which on some occasions borrows the grounding strategy of the former. The elaborations and extensions are marked by solid and dashed lines respectively. The dotted lines mean correspondences that indicate cases of conceptual closeness, which are achieved by different grounding strategies as a result of the variety of type-instance metonymies (MEMBER FOR CATEGORY, REPRESENTATIVE MEMBER FOR PROTOTYPICAL SUBCATEGORY, CATEGORY FOR SUBCATEGORY, SUBCATEGORY FOR CATEGORY). This conceptual closeness permits to account for overlaps in meaning, which can be viewed as "overlap[s] in the activity comprising the connected elements" (Langacker, 2016, pp. 19–20), in line with the view of linguistic meanings as actions (Sinha, 1999) and as interdependent meaningful wholes (Rosch, 1999).

So, manifesting itself as multilevel phenomenon, metonymy operates both on the type level and on the level of instantiation, consequently affecting how and what is profiled by grounding elements. Recalling the diagram represented in figure 7 regarding the functioning of the phenomenon of metonymy on the type level, now it is possible to provide a more holistic view on how metonymy operates on both levels: this is represented in figure 19. As a result of its functioning, the interconnection of type and instance in the construction of nominal reference gives rise to a number of part-whole metonymic relationships, which produce shifts in profile and motivate change

of construal and grammatical polysemy. Consequently, these conceptual metonymies based on the type-instance interaction allow to posit various continuums: between unique and non-unique reference, between proper and common nouns, between grounding by the definite and the indefinite articles.

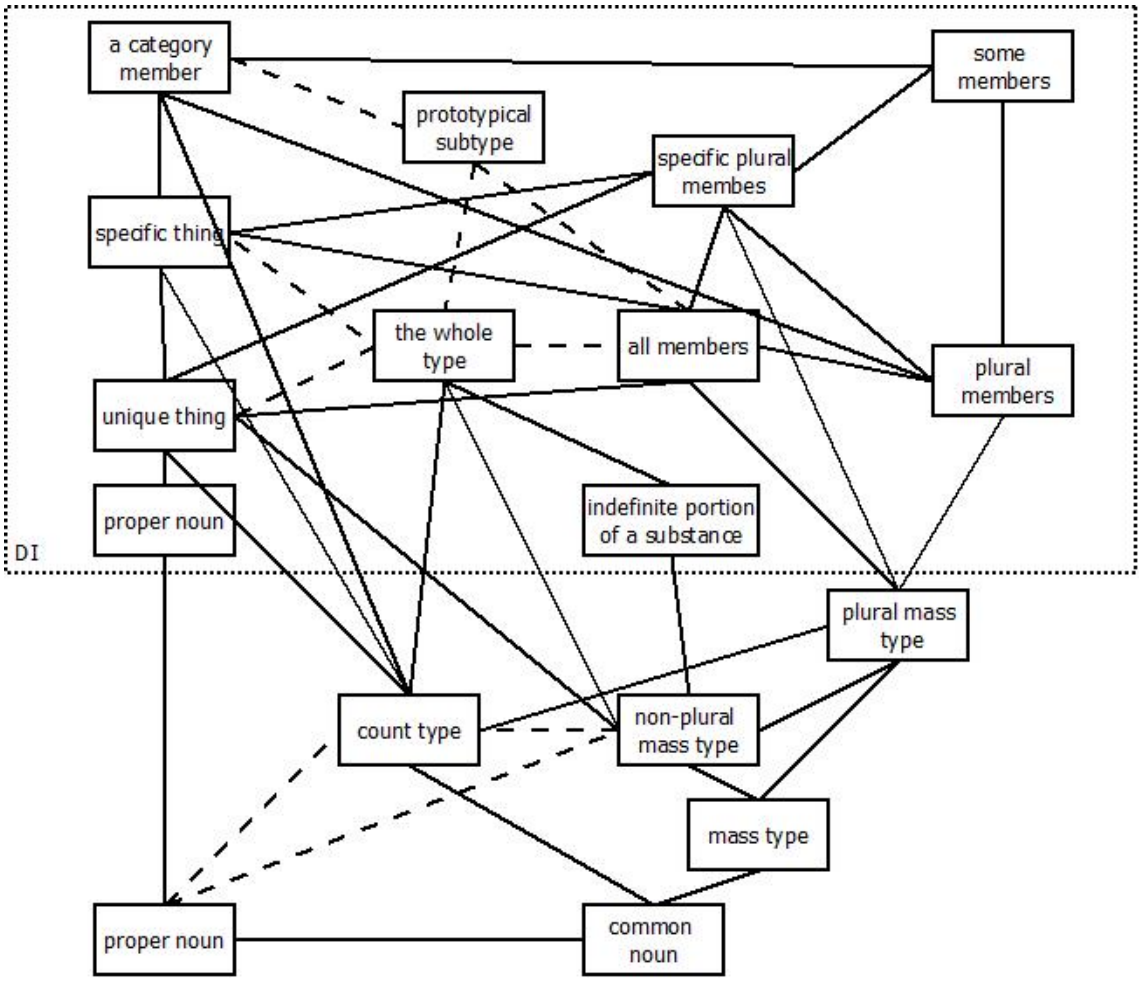


Figure 19. The interplay of elaborations and extensions

DI = domain of instantiation

However, the metonymic extensions of the indefinite article in Spanish are not limited to cases of the WHOLE FOR PART metonymy and its sub-kinds, such as CATEGORY FOR SUBCATEGORY or INSTANCE FOR TYPE. There are many

types of metonymic relationships that can sanction a shift in profile, for example, another sort of metonymy is CREATOR FOR CREATION:

(94) *Tiene un Picasso en su casa.* (CPCI)

Another one is CONTAINER FOR CONTAINED metonymy:

(95) *un café* [= *una taza de café*] (CPCI)

Nominal ellipsis, defined as "substitution by zero" (Halliday & Hasan, 1976), is also a kind of metonymy, which can be described as FORM FOR FORM or CONCEPT FOR FORM. It is a metonymic relationship "where an empty slot stands for a previously mentioned form" (Al-Sharafi, 2004, p. 114). Thus, the indefinite article creates extensions via ellipsis, as (96) and (97). With that, (97) is a chained metonymy given that there is a prior shift accomplished on the type level and exemplified in (92).

(96) *¡Tengo una de libros viejos!* (CPCI)

(97) *¡Hacía un calor...!, ¡Brillaba un sol…!* (CPCI)

In this section, the metonymic extensions of the Spanish indefinite article have been discussed. It has been shown that the phenomenon of metonymy provides the explanation of how at first glance unrelated meanings—namely, representative generics, cases of non-unique reference based on the transformation of unique reference and instantiated by mass and proper nouns, lexical metonymies, and nominal ellipses—are motivated in relation to the prototypical meaning of the indefinite article.

4.2.2. Metaphorical extensions

Apart from metonymies, the other sources for polysemy are metaphorical extensions. Unlike metonymy, metaphor operates between two conceptual domains (Lakoff 1987; Taylor 1995). As metonymy, metaphor is embodied and usually expresses an abstract concept in terms of a more familiar and concrete experience (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Niemeier, 2004; Taylor, 1995, pp. 132–133). Metaphor is subject to structural similarity between the two conceptual domains, the source and the target, exhibiting a certain isomorphism between them (Panther and Thornburg, 2009, p. 16). Situated somewhere between lexicon and grammar in the lexicogrammatical continuum, the indefinite article in Spanish can assume lexical metaphors:

(98) *Luis es un lince.* (CPCI)

(99) *Clara es (un desastre/un cielo/un prodigio…)* (Leonetti, 1999, p. 852)

On the other hand, grammatical metaphor also can act as a source for extended meanings of the indefinite article. As it has been described in Section 3.4.2., grammatical metaphor has received more attention in Systemic Functional Linguistics (Taverniers, 2003) than in Cognitive Linguistics. The definitions of grammatical metaphor within the two frameworks do not correspond. However, both coincide in that nominalizations, though due to different factors, can be regarded as grammatical metaphors (Panther & Thornburg, 2009, p. 13). Thus, Panther and Thornburg (2009) admit that processes, profiled by verbs, can be conceptualized as things, which according to Cognitive Linguistics are profiled by nominals. Therefore, the conceptual

metaphor ACTIVITIES ARE SUBSTANCES guides the metaphorization of processes into things. Radden and Dirven (2007, pp. 78–79) also regard reification as a metaphorical shift from states and events into things, naming it an "ontological metaphor". But at the same time, there is another perspective available: Langacker (2008) treats any change in profile as a metonymic process, and according to him, nominalization is a conceptual reification that presupposes the suspension of the verb's sequential scanning and the imposition of summary scanning on the verbal process with its consequent atemporalization by a shift in profile. Moreover, nominalization is seen as a gradual process:

> Atemporalization of the clausal process—viewing it holistically rather than sequentially—is one step in the direction of its nominalization. Many subordinate clauses take the further step of construing the profiled relationship as an abstract thing, making it nominal rather than clausal at higher levels of grammatical organization. The extent to which they are nominal in form depends on whether the structure that undergoes the nominalization . . . is a full clause, a partial clause, or just a verb. (Langacker, 2008, pp. 125, 412–413)

Anyway, in both cases, nominalization is to be regarded as an extended meaning, the difference lies in the nature of the link—whether it is treated as metonymic or metaphorical one. It is supposed here that if the change in profile implies a change in linguistic category, the process can be considered as grammatical metaphor, functioning the corresponding linguistic categories as distinct domains of instantiation. Therefore, this approach sanctions the analysis of nominalizations grounded by the indefinite article as metaphorical extensions:

(100) *un despertar sin sosiego* (CPCI)

However, the process can be regarded as metaphtonymic as well (Brdar, 2007; Goossens, 1990; Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Galera-Masegosa, 2011) given that such nominalizations involve an additional metonymic process, since the transformation of processes into things implies that it may be possible to construe the nominal as a case of unique or non-unique reference. As Radden and Dirven (2007, p. 80) argue, "like concrete things, abstract things may be construed as objects or substances, and hence be expressed as count nouns or mass nouns". Therefore, they can be grounded by the definite article (e.g., *el despertar*) or by the indefinite article, as in (100). The examples like (100) presuppose that the nominal, previously construed as mass, has undergone a metonymic process INSTANCE FOR TYPE and is conceptualized as having multiple instances of its type. Consequently, one instance of the type is profiled and grounded by the indefinite article. It is worth to mention that, construed as a thing, the initial process becomes more prominent in discourse.

Some of these nominalizations have already suffered the lexical conversion and become totally conventionalized: cf. *atardecer – el atardecer*. These kinds of nominalizations have not suffered a morphological transformation, but there are others that undergo further changes, for instance, by means of adding a suffix, in their process of approximation to the prototypical noun. Anyway, all extensions aspire to the prototypical meaning, demonstrating what can be called a centripetal tendency in their behaviour.

Exhibiting a certain parallelism with the metonymic extensions, the metaphorical extensions of the indefinite article in Spanish are not limited to the conversion of processes into things but also permit to construe other linguistic categories as things: for example, *un porqué, un pero*. Therefore, processual as well non-processual relationships can be reified by accomplishing a metaphorical shift.

4.3. Elaborations

The structure of a polysemous category consists of conceptual links that not only include extensions, but other possible and perhaps even more basic relationships such as elaborations. Elaborations are defined as conceptions of greater specificity or schematicity derived from the prototype, hence being regarded either specializations or generalizations (Langacker, 2008; Taylor, 1995). In this respect, instantiations themselves can be regarded as elaborations because they make a type conception more specific (Langacker, 2008, pp. 17, 267). Plural correspondences are also elaborations, this has been recognized by Langacker (2016, 2017) in his recent works.

Following these arguments, the plural forms of the Spanish indefinite article—*unos* and *unas*—are elaborations. Hawkins (2015, pp. 185–186) notes that plural indefinites have the same exclusiveness condition as singular indefinite nouns. This makes it possible to sustain that the discussed part-whole relationship is still at issue with plural expressions that are grounded by the indefinite article. There are two main options for pluralization of *un* in Spanish, as in the case of (101a): although *unos* is the plural form of the indefinite article, as in (101c), the elaboration to the bare plural is also possible due to their conceptual closeness, as in (101b):

(101) a. *Tengo* ***un libro***.
b. *Tengo* ***libros***.
c. *Tengo* ***unos libros***. (CPCI)

The elaborations that are at issue here are generalizations. *Unos* in (101c) implies a more limited quantity of instances than the expression (101b) with covert grounding, which denotes an extension of the type. In this respect, the

reformulation of the conception of mass nouns made by Langacker (2008, p. 130), which includes traditional plural (e.g., *árboles*) and mass nouns as such (e.g., *agua*) provides additional clarification: (101b) refers to a type comprised of multiple bounded instances whose number is not inherently limited (Langacker 2016, p. 72). Therefore, (101b) is more abstract than (101c), being an elaboration from *unos* or even from *un* because on many occasions it is a "more natural" case of pluralization. With that, the meaning of *unos* can be described as *some members*. Figure 20 depicts the relation between the three senses exemplified in (101). While *unos* is an elaboration from the prototype, which is indicated by a solid line, a plural mass noun such as *libros* is their subsequent elaboration. It profiles a more schematic meaning represented in Figure 20 by its constructional schema [LIBROS].

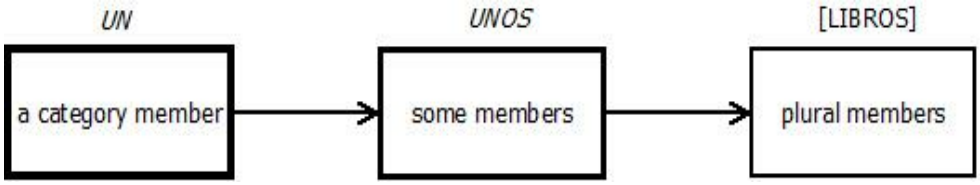


Figure 20. Elaborations from *un*

Unos can also serve for the purposes of emphasis in cases when a change of construal from a type conception to a more prominent construction with *unos* takes place, like in *Son irresponsables – Son unos irresponsables*.[3] This possibility to use articles for expressive purposes has been already stressed by Epstein (1994) in relation to articles in English, who states that the prominence of the referent is a matter of the speaker's construal of the situation. As it has been

[3] I would like to thank Rita Bueno Maia (CECC, Universidade Católica Portuguesa) for reminding me about this case.

already mentioned, within an expression, any change of construal implies a change in the relative prominence of its relational participants (Langacker, 1986). This relates to our natural ability to represent one and the same conceptual content in alternate ways. For nominals grounded by articles, a typical strategy for adding or minimizing prominence is to move between neighbouring nodes. A similar example has been regarded in Section 3.5.: (81) *La Paceña es la cerveza*, where—instead of *La Paceña es una cerveza*—a more prominent construal is chosen in order to achieve the emphasized meaning. Such fluctuations between neighbouring nodes are normal: it is common for one neighbouring node to (de)emphasize the meaning of the other by elaborating it: *Es holgazán – Es un holgazán*, *Tengo un coche – Tengo coche* (Alonso, 1982, p. 155). In consequence, to emphasize a meaning a specialization is used, and to deemphasize it—a generalization.

Moreover, similar to the singular indefinite article, *unos* itself can also have metaphorical, as in (102a), and metonymic, as in (102b), extensions:

(102) a. *Eran (unos borregos/unos linces/unos buitres).*

b. *Tomamos unas copas.* (Leonetti 1999, p. 852)

Other metonymic extensions such as nominal ellipses and nominalizations, regarded as grammatical metaphors in this work, are possible as well, being construed according to the mechanisms discussed in Sections 4.2.1. and 4.2.2. Serving as the source for extended meanings, *unos* thereby can be considered as a local-level prototype (Langacker, 2009, p. 4; Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 2007, p. 148). For that reason, in figure 20 its status within the category of the indefinite article is marked by a thinner bold line than the prototypical meaning of the indefinite article.

4.4. The whole polysemous network of the Spanish indefinite article

I conclude this chapter by representing the above-discussed uses of the indefinite article in Spanish, previously described by scholars in a non-unified way, as members of a polysemous, prototypically organized category (figure 21). Providing a more holistic perspective, the nature of the relationship between its various meanings has been elucidated: it has been accounted for them as intertwined by the categorizing relationships of elaboration (schematization and generalization) and extension (metaphor and metonymy).

In figure 21, the notation used in the previous sections is maintained: the solid arrows are used for elaborations and the dashed arrows for extensions, the prototypical meanings are enclosed in bold rectangles. The nodes that correspond to the definite article in Spanish are marked as DEFART singular and DEFART plural. The represented in figure 21 prototypical meanings of the definite article, in accordance with the approach adopted in Chapter 3, are marked as *unique thing* (e.g., mass nouns as el *agua* that by default refer to the maximal extension of a substance) and *specific thing* (e.g., things that, pertaining to non-unique reference, designate a uniquely identifiable instance of its type within the immediate scope of the discourse). The metonymy INSTANCE FOR TYPE guides the relation of the definite article's prototypical meanings and prototypical proper nouns with the indefinite article, as it has been outlined in Section 4.2. The constructional schema [ÁRBOLES] is used as an example for bare plural forms with covert grounding. Elaborations between the extensions of *un* and *unos* indicate their possibility to undergo pluralization.

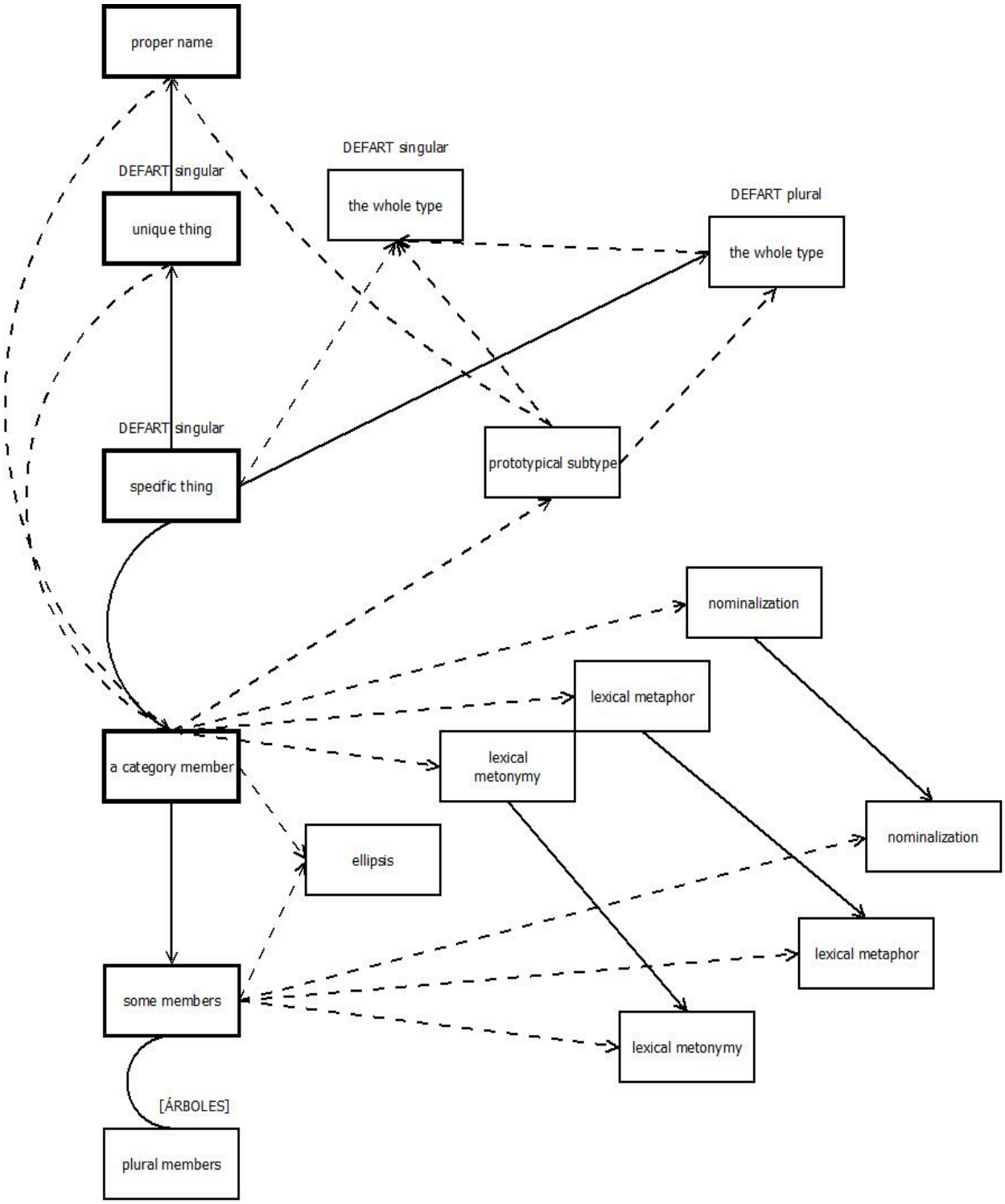


Figure 21. The Spanish indefinite article's polysemous network

It is argued here in favour of a dynamic nature of the nodes within the network, in line with Langacker's (2008, p. 227) view that "emphasizes continuity rather than discreteness" and other dynamic views on meaning (Dirven, 2005; Rosch, 1999; Sinha, 1999). Given that the boundaries between different categories are fuzzy, a number of overlaps can be produced, given the resulting conceptual closeness between two instances. Such cases can be regarded as functional overlays in terms of strata, "consisting in the conceptual elaboration of a baseline structure" (Langacker 2016, p. 120). Therefore, the approach I advocate for is that there exists a continuum between common and proper nouns and consequently between unique and non-unique reference, as well as between the definite and indefinite articles. In this respect, it should be noted that, apart from the indefinite article, in figure 21, only the prototypical meanings of the other corresponding categories are represented. They themselves constitute their own polysemous networks with fuzzy boundaries. In addition, in fiure 21, from the bottom to the top there is an increase of prominence between the prototypes because proper names are said to be more prominent than common nouns (Cook, 2003, p. 161), while nouns profiled by the definite article are more prominent than those that are grounded by the indefinite article (Epstein, 1994), and bare plurals are more schematic and therefore less prominent with respect to both.

Anticipating possible critiques to the concept of a radially extended polysemous network, it can be said that the proliferation of distinct senses in the case of the indefinite article is highly restricted by its proper nature: the indefinite article is a very schematic element, situated closer to the grammatical pole in the continuum of lexicon and grammar (Langacker, 2008), therefore the senses within its network are schematic by definition, being abstractions from particular instantiations, which occur in actual usage-events. I have paid attention to the criterion adduced by Riemer (2005, p. 156), according to which

"a word has as many senses as it requires separate definitional representations", since the proposed methodologies for determination of discrete word senses still have not provided a convincing alternative (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 2007; Riemer, 2005). The principled polysemy approach (Tyler and Evans, 2003), which has been developed for the English preposition *over*, can indeed be applicable to articles, as it has been demonstrated in the case of the definite article in Spanish in Section 3.1. However, on the other hand, some objections can be made: firstly, for nominal reference the domain of instantiation is not the principal concern; secondly, with respect to grammatical predictions, the criterion of context independence is of questionable relevance since every expression according to Cognitive Linguistics is context-dependent, understood in relation to some domains of experience (Evans & Green, 2006, p. 211). As Langacker (2008, p. 50) notes, "it may be that, strictly speaking, a lexeme is never used twice with exactly the same meaning". Without adopting an extreme position of regarding each contextual interpretation as a distinct sense, it is worth to recall that every novel expression anyway is assessed in terms of its degree of conventionality, having as consequence that the existence of a discrete word sense as such is questioned and only usage patterns are recognized. In this respect, it is possible to view meanings as having no constant value (Langacker 2008, p. 50), which makes more sense considering the emphasized recently dynamic view of linguistic meaning (Dirven, 2005; Queller, 2003; Sinha, 1999).

Given that cognitive linguists suggest that the boundaries between ambiguity, vagueness, monosemy, homonymy, and polysemy are fuzzy (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 2007; Taylor, 1995) and bearing in mind the continuum of meanings of the indefinite article in Spanish postulated in this work, the problem of sense division and separate meanings may cease to be essential. As Riemer (2005, p. 166) points out, such mechanism as, for example,

metonymy is the same regardless of whether it is viewed as produced between two glosses or between two senses. In either case, the phenomenon of metonymy provides the explanation of how conceptualizations are formed, being one of the mechanisms of semantic change that operate inside the polysemous network. Therefore, by describing the nature of these categorization processes, Cognitive Linguistics views polysemy as a form of categorization. Finally, I suppose that viewing meanings as actions (Sinha, 1999) and highlighting their participatory nature as interdependent meaningful wholes (Rosch, 1999) within grammar, which itself is regarded in recent Langacker's (2016, 2017) works as activity, can totally reformulate and set aside the problem of sense division.

CHAPTER 5

A COGNITIVE GRAMMAR APPROACH TO THE ABSENCE OF ARTICLES IN SPANISH

This chapter will examine cases of the absence of articles in Spanish, which do not constitute a homogeneous group but include a broad range of possibilities, from profiling a unique thing to profiling the abstracted commonality of a type. Arguing against the postulation of the zero article, the cases of the absence of articles to be analyzed will be described as kinds of non-overt (intrinsic or covert) grounding, which in its turn is claimed to be a gradual notion.

5.1. Previous approaches

In Spanish as well as English linguistics, the absence of the article, or the so-called zero article, has received much less attention than the definite and the indefinite articles. Many researchers have taken for granted the existence of the zero article as a consequence of the structural view of language (see Section 2.1.). With accordance to these assumptions, the absence of determination presupposes reference to the concept or the essence of nouns, while articles serve to actualize them in discourse. The view is assumed to originate from Bally's concept of actualization, although Christophersen (1939) attributes this theory to an earlier work by Geijer. All Spanish L2 Cognitive Grammar approaches to different degrees make use of the concept of the zero article.

Thus, Ruiz Campillo (1998, pp. 349, 358) argues that with the zero article the object is placed in the virtual space of perception (see Section 2.5.), it is just

named or mentioned by its label. Ruiz Campillo maintains that in the case of the zero article the meaning in referential terms is virtual: "La ausencia de artículo constituye la pura extracción del objeto de la conciencia del mundo lingüísticamente codificado de los participantes, donde el significado, en términos referenciales, es virtual y se delimita 'verticalmente' (paradigmáticamente)" (Ruiz Campillo, 1998, p. 350). Nevertheless, it is not clear how "a mere mention" of the object, which according to Ruiz Campillo is not effectively manifested, functions in case of proper names, plural and non-plural mass nouns, and singular countable nouns.

In the textbook *El ventilador* (Chamorro et al., 2006), which uses the proposal of Ruiz Campillo (1998), more problems associated with the virtual identification of referents arise. Thus, according to the textbook, such virtual identification also includes cases as *Tiene treinta años* and *Estos pantalones son de mi hermano* (Chamorro et al., 2006, p. 208), which means that there is a confusion between the absence of article—covert grounding—and the presence of other grounding elements such as quantifiers or possessives.

On the other hand, Montero Gálvez (2014b, p. 57) limits the application of the zero article to those nominals that have referential and quantifying value, differentiating between "those that are a full nominal expression profiling quantified entities (usually, singular mass nouns and plurals), and those others that are confined to be part of an adjectival, adverbial or verbal expression (usually, singular count nouns)". She follows the proposals of Bosque (1996) and Laca (1996, 1999), who, instead of the zero article, use the term *bare nouns* (*nombres escuetos*) and note that not all bare nouns behave in the same way. With that, Laca (1999) negates that bare nouns possess referential or quantifying value since they are always non-specific.

The problem I see with the concept of the zero article, and more generally with the concept of actualization, is that, originated within the

objectivist tradition, it presupposes the classical Aristotelian view of categorization, inverse to the empiricism of Cognitive Linguistics, according to which abstractions arise from actual occurrences of language. Moreover, the concept of the zero article turns out to be inefficient to explain the whole range of cases in which the absence of article takes place. Besides, its postulation per se is dubious from a human cognition point of view. At the same time, paradoxically, the fact that many scholars, especially in foreign-language oriented approaches, tend to consider the zero article as the third option has a cognitive explanation: we perceive wholes (gestalts) better than ungrouped objects. However, in terms of its coherent explanation, in the case of bare nouns, there are different epistemic concerns that are at issue, as it will be shown below.

On the other hand, some researchers have tried to depart from the zero-article paradigm. Thus, Lassen (2003), who belongs to SFL, includes the cases of article omission to the analysis of grammatical metaphors. She suggests that the omission of the definite article is a textural metaphor. However, such an approach cannot be justified within the Cognitive Linguistics framework. Furthermore, all cases where the article is absent are of different nature.

More importantly, Berezowski (2009) questions the very postulation of the zero article. Berezowski (2009, p. 53) claims that "the zero article is a linguistic myth that can now be safely retired and need no longer clutter grammatical descriptions". His principal critique of positing the zero article is the inherent definiteness of proper names. Furthermore, in English—and in some cases in Spanish—no article is used with uncountable and indefinite plural nouns, that, according to Berezowski (2009, p. 15), "is then tantamount to claiming that the zero article is both definite and indefinite at the same time, which would make it a most unusual grammatical entity". The difference between English and Spanish is that while in English covert grounding is the

option by default that refers to the maximal extension of a substance, in Spanish the maximal extension is expressed by means of definite grounding, but for an indefinite part of a substance (which normally corresponds to its landmark position in an expression), the grounding strategy by default is covert. In English, the use of nominals without articles, according to Berezowski (2009), lies in the incomplete grammaticalization of the definite and indefinite articles. However, trying to develop a coherent explanation for bare noun phrases, Berezowski (2009) postulates a numerical requirement, basically reducing his analysis to role holder construals. However, as it will be argued in the next sections, the absence of overt determiners takes place in wider contexts and entails more complex epistemic statuses in relation to the ground.

Even in Langacker's Cognitive Grammar the absence of article firstly has been regarded as the "zero determiner" (Langacker, 1991b, p. 96), which has been noticed by Berezowski (2009, p. 11). However, in the latest works Langacker (2016, 2017, p. 379) acknowledges that "zero elements are theoretically suspect". As Langacker (2016, p. 52) notes, "the issue [of zero morphemes] arises in a small, tightly integrated system of semantic options, where it's very common for one option to be indicated by zero – the absence of symbolization by any overt phonological content". This kind of system is the article system in Spanish, which is a tightly integrated system that has only eight overt elements—*el/la/losslas* and *un/una/unos/unas*—and, roughly speaking, zero marking. The article system in Spanish forms part of the broader system of determiners in Spanish; it is one more example of the organization of grammar in terms of strata. In fact, the baseline/elaboration (B/E) organization of grammar proposed by Langacker (2016, 2017) can be seen as an alternative for the positing of zero-elements.

Thus, Langacker's view of nominal reference in English presupposes that prototypical proper nouns—those that have intrinsic grounding, that is, whose

form is zero-marked—constitute the baseline stratum (Langacker, 2016, p. 53). According to B/E organization, which acts within the systemic organization of grammar, there are further elaborations from the baseline: thus, common nouns use the non-unique reference strategy, composed of a grounding element and the type description. A similar example is provided by Langacker (2016, p. 155) regarding the type construction: thus, for example, he argues that if *cat* and *cats* are analyzed in terms of strata, the issue of a zero morpheme does not arise. However, there is a need to precise the place of other cases where articles are not used in B/E organization. In order to shed more light on this issue in the case of Spanish bare nouns, in the next section, the notion of grounding will be regarded in more detail. In order to depart completely from the concept of the zero article, I will not use the term zero even in technical terms, instead regarding such contexts as cases of non-overt grounding.

5.2. Grounding as a prototypical category

The Spanish grounding system, apart from the definite and the indefinite articles, include other grounding options: determiners, possessives, quantifiers and quantifying constructions of all sort, such as *un poco de*. According to Langacker (2016, p. 127), grounding elements—since they lie towards the grammatical pole of the lexicogrammatical continuum—tend to be organized "in closed sets of mutually exclusive forms that are partially defined in opposition to one another". Thus, for instance, this is the organization of demonstratives in English—*this, that, these*, and *those*—represent a very integrated system that contains two principal oppositions: the first one is between singular and plural nouns and the second one is the proximal-distant contrast (Langacker, 2008, p. 263). From the other hand, when considering Spanish demonstratives, it is possible to see that they are no longer so closely integrated since to the near/far distinction a third option is added: the spatial

frame of reference system in Spanish is not the same as in English. Moreover, apart from the number, the demonstratives in Spanish mark the gender of nouns: *este/a, ese/a, aquel/la y esto/as, eso/as, aquello/as*. As a result, the opposition between the demonstratives in Spanish will not be so strict as in the case of English, which only has four mutually exclusive elements.

Another option within the Spanish grounding system is non-overt grounding, that is, when no explicit grounding element is used to construct a nominal. From a Cognitive Grammar point of view, common nouns without grounding are regarded as specifying a type of thing. In a certain sense, Alarcos Llorach's (2000) understanding of common nouns as having a classifying function with respect to objects approaches this view. Nevertheless, within discourse, as Langacker (2008, 2016) argues, every nominal is grounded in a broader sense, even if there is no overt grounding element. In discourse, nouns can have various epistemic statuses in relation to the ground, which is understood as "the interlocutors, their interaction, and their immediate circumstances" (Langacker, 2016, p. 110). There is no need in articles: if there is another grounding element present, like a demonstrative or a possessive, nominals in such a case are identified by virtue of these grounding strategies. However, it may be the case that there is no overt element to specify the status of the nominal vis-à-vis the ground.

Thus, in languages that do not have articles, like Latin (López García, 2005, p. 83) or Luiseño (Langacker, 2008), nominals are grounded anyway. As Langacker (2008, pp. 496–497) stresses, given that Cognitive Linguistics does not postulate the boundary between grammar and discourse, there is no any discrepancy: a nominal can be considered as grounded if it is interpreted with respect to the discourse and not in isolation. This argument finds its empirical evidence in the case of covert grounding in Spanish, with regard to some example that have been considered as ungrammatical by scholars, while in

reality they have been decontextualized and regarded separately from the context. Thus, Solís García (2011, pp. 74–75) argues that the examples like **Había libro en su maletín* can be perfectly possible in certain contexts.

Given that, I propose to regard grounding as a is a prototypically organized category. If there is no grounding element, the grounding function, logically, can be accomplished by less canonical elements, as in (103):

(103) ***Hombres así*** *no vienen a menudo por aquí.* (Bosque, 1996, p. 26)

Así divides the type *hombres*, restricting it those instances of the type that are the focus of attention in the given speech situation and permitting their—although rather schematic—identification.

Even a relative clause, which specifies the type in more detail, can serve for the purpose of grounding:

(104) ***Mujer que no resista la mirada de nuestro padre*** *es mujer pecadora*
(G. Mirtó as cited in Alonso, 1982, p. 148)

Similar examples are attested in English:

(105) ***The Danes who are rich*** *are well-educated.* (Hawkins, 2015, p. 283)

Hawkins (2015) notes that, in (105), the restrictive relative clause sub-divides the characterized nominal, having a restrictive effect. This is also pointed out by Epstein (1994, p. 85), who comments on this example that the relative restrictive clause "not only asserts that some Danes are rich but also presupposes that some Danes are not rich". Therefore, the effect achieved by a relative clause, since it implies an identifying function, is that the baseline type

turns out to be subdivided in two subtypes: one that is elaborated by the relative clause itself and the rest, which is highly schematic and encompasses everything that is left out by the description. The restrictive relative clause, therefore, makes the instance based on grouping of various people to be specified by a more limited and concrete type with respect to the whole type, demonstrating the figure/ground asymmetry. Given that the restrictive relative clause serves for the purpose of identification by means of a more detailed description of the type, it fulfills the grounding function.

Such restrictive effect, in fact, can be achieved by a number of elements, not only by relative restrictive clauses. Thus, for example, it can be realized by adjectives. Compare:

(106) a. **Yo temo a enemigos.*

b. *Yo temo a enemigos reales, no a fantasmas.* (Bosque, 1996, p. 81)

In (106a), the baseline type description is elaborated by an adjective, while the obtained subdivision is then emphasized by contrasting it with the part of the type that is out of the scope of attention: in fact, there is a metonymic process of substitution that is at issue with the latter, since the backgrounded part of the type, which can be denominated as *enemigos irreales*, is specified as *fantasmas*. This opposition of the two subtypes within the expression also serves for the purpose of the identification of the referent. Obviously, even identified in discourse, all these nominals are very schematic, due to the schematicity of their construal. In this respect, in terms of prominence, bare nominals are less prominent than things profiled by the indefinite and the definite articles.

It may be said that if a relationship permits to identify its participants, no "additional" grounding element will be required, since they will be grounded per se. This is largely the case for prototypical proper nouns, whose grounding

is intrinsic. This is why for common nouns, which have numerous and even unlimited possible referents, the non-unique reference strategy is used. However, on some occasions, two referents considered jointly within a bounded domain matrix can stand alone similar to proper nouns. This phenomenon is known as coordination in traditional linguistics:

(107) ***Habitación y desayuno*** *cuestan 80 euros.* (Solís García, 2011, p. 104)

(108) ***Madre e hijo*** *permanecieron allí breves días.* (Bosque, 1996, p. 27)

Bosque (1996, pp. 27–28) emphasizes the idea that "con las coordinaciones copulativas obtenemos los mismos rasgos que con un cuantificador explícito" and argues that such coordinations are definite. Bosque (1996) also points out the meaning of such coordinated groups surpasses the sum of its components, which leads to the conclusion that, in Cognitive Linguistics terms, such groupings act as gestalts, once more challenging the principle of full compositionality. Moreover, the appearance of definite singular count nominals in the position corresponding to the grammatical subject—in Cognitive Grammar terms—being the trajector of the profiled process, challenges Laca's (1999) statements about the impossibility for bare nouns to act as subjects. The coordinated instances are the biplex trajector of the process, which should be as bounded as possible in order to limit the scope of attention and permit to the coordinated referents to act as if they were proper nouns. Nevertheless, their artificial proper-like status limits their activity: thus, following from Bosque (1996) analysis, it seems that the process should be always bounded (in time, since for processes the domain of instantiation is time). Thus, this boundedness in (108) is expressed by the perfective aspect of the event. Another constraint is that these referents cannot be identified

separately from each other, therefore, the two coordinated bare nouns can only act as a gestalt, conceived by means of grouping and being biplex in nature.

Similar cases of bare coordination can be observed in English. While there is a difference in reference strategies in English and in Spanish and the maximal extension of mass nouns in English is referred to by means of covert grounding, with respect to singular count nouns the pattern in the same that in Spanish: the status of singular instances in relation to the ground by default should be specified by a grounding element. However, like in Spanish, when two things act as a coordinated gestalt, no overt grounding is necessary. Similar to Bosque (1996), Zwarts (2008) argues that these bare nominals are definite:

(109) ***Mother and child*** *stay at the hospital for four days.*

(110) *He used* ***fork and knife.*** (Zwarts, 2008, p. 1)

More importantly Zwarts (2008) observes a further restriction: he notes that not all nouns can permit such coordination, they should be conceptually close. However, since Zwarts' approach does not pertain to the Cognitive Linguistics framework, he concludes that "it is not clear how definiteness relates to conceptual closeness" (Zwarts, 2008, p. 2). Meanwhile, Cognitive Linguistics provides a plausible explanation for such constraint: in order to be coordinated, two instances should pertain to the same domain. That is, they can be anchored to each other in the previous discourse space or, more broadly, having an already established connection within an ICM, as in (109) and (110). In these examples the prototypical scenarios (Lakoff, 1987) of a maternal care center and of the act of eating are invoked. In this sense, in principle, not all nouns can be coordinated in a such a way, but all nouns can be coordinated in this

fashion if the appropriate context is provided by the previous discourse frames, that is, within the maximal scope of an expression.

Grounding, in a wider perspective, is a reference point phenomenon because it provides means to access particular instances, which in the case of nominal grounding are things. It can be regarded as analogous to the anchoring function within a clause, which Langacker (2009, p. 250) describes as "an instruction to interpret it [the anchor] with respect to a particular domain of knowledge or a certain aspect of the situation described". I would like to point out that such anchors can serve the purpose of nominal grounding, though not being prototypical elements. This is the case when the linear order of the clause does turn to be very important from the point of view of structural organization since the clause's initial elements serve the grounding (anchoring) function for all following semantic content. Compare:

(111) a. *?? Juegan niños.*
b. *En este parque juegan niños.* (Bosque, 1996, pp. 65–66)

(112) a. **Niños juegan en el patio.*
b. *En el patio juegan niños.* (CPCI)

Langacker (2008, pp. 81–82, 206) argues that the linear order is, in fact, the temporal order, which presents elements sequentially in the flow of discourse:

> The words of an expression occur in a certain temporal sequence, which linguists (unwittingly using spatial metaphor) refer to as "linear order". This temporal sequencing defines one salient path of access to the conceptions symbolized. Since we necessarily encounter these words sequentially, in either speaking or understanding, linear order always has some effect on meaning—a difference in word order always implies a

> semantic contrast (though in practical terms it may be slight or even negligible).

In the case of nominals, such semantic contrast turns to be more significant since it affects grounding. With respect to their identification, therefore, it is important that the correspondent frame has been introduced earlier, as in (111b) and (112b).

In this respect, as in the case of bare coordination, the scope of attention is limited in order to identify the intended referent, even if it is very schematic. Therefore, regarding the analysis of cases without any overt grounding, Langacker (2016) points out that:

> If you only look at the form, it's just a noun in that it's not overtly grounded with a determiner. However, if a clause is viewed in terms of semantic functions, the object counts as a nominal. The nominal function of grounding is fulfilled through a discourse construction. (p. 125)

Therefore, it is possible to see that grounding in a broader sense can be achieved by various strategies: not only through overt grounding elements, but also the prior discourse itself or the proper clause (the discourse frame) can serve this function. According to Langacker (2016), nominals are regarded as nominals only by virtue of their semantic function, which is profiling of things. Cognitive Grammar sees the semantic function as more fundamental to grammar than the question of form. In consequence, nominal grounding as nouns and many other grammatical notions can be viewed as a prototypically organized category, which by means of different strategies achieves the identification of the referent. Moreover, its fundamental for grammatical organization status raises the issue of its recognition as an important grammatical constituent.

5.3. The type conception

For the purposes of linguistic description, Cognitive Grammar recognizes three types of reference: at the discourse level, at the conceptual level, and in the actual world (Langacker, 2008, pp. 269–270). Similarly to Langacker, Radden and Kövecses (1999) distinguish the world of forms (language), the world of concepts, and the world of things and events. So, at the conceptual level, it may be the case that we have no need to refer to a virtual instance of the type (e.g., a representative generic instance, *un tigre*), or any abstract concept conceived as a mass noun in its maximal extension (e.g., *la violencia*). It can be that a particular reference does not occur in the domain of instantiation but rests in the world of abstract commonalities of different types. That is, we refer to a type in our mental space, without instantiating it further in any domain of instantiation. As Langacker (2008, p. 526) argues, "types and representative instances arise from actual entities through different kinds of abstraction. . . . an instance is thought of as having a particular, distinguishing location in the domain of instantiation (DI). We obtain a type conception by abstracting away from this property". If no instance is singled out, only the descriptive, without the deictic, strategy will be used. Compare:

(113) a. *¿Tienes* ***boli****?*

b. *¿Tienes* ***un boli****?*

(113a) is more schematic than (113b), where one instance is instantiated. Instead, in (113a) no instance is profiled, only the type conception; it is so schematic that some scholars analyze such examples as forming part of verbal constructions (Bosque, 1996; Lapesa, 1996; Masullo, 1996). From a Cognitive Grammar point of view, two explanations are possible. In accordance with the

first possibility, there is a metonymic process, which imposes a mass-noun construal on count nouns. Talmy (2000, p. 52) calls this process *debounding*, according to which the referent is conceptualized "in a form with indefinite extension". This shift in profile sanctions expressions like *Tiene casa; Tiene perro*; *Tiene agua, pan; Juán tiene miedo; Juán tiene coche*. But, considered as mass nouns, these instances are very schematic as there is no clear indication of number, the qualitative factor prevails. In this respect, here it is relevant to adduce Alarcos Llorach's (1967, p. 23) example:

(114) "*¿Tiene auto?"*
"Sí, tiene tres."

The "indifference to the number" (Alarcos Llorach, 1967) that demonstrate these expressions is thus explained by their mass construal.

A second plausible explanation that, in (113a), the noun indeed forms part of a relational expression *tener boli* and consequently profiles the abstracted commonality of its type, which describes the type of process is more detail. *Tener boli* is therefore an elaboration from the schema [TENER N], where the noun (N) can give rise to other instantiations like *tener miedo, tener casa, tener sed,* etc. At a higher constructional level, therefore, *boli* does not function as a noun, being part of the verb description, which profiles a relationship.

From the other hand, the profiling of the abstracted commonality of the type is realized by means of a metonymic mapping. The construal in question is to be interpreted as the metonymy ABSTRACTED COMMONALITY OF THE TYPE FOR INSTANCE, equally resulting in its numeric vagueness. Thus, in (115) and (116) the abstracted commonality of the type is profiled:

(115) *Tiene casa en el pueblo donde nació.* (RAE & ASALE, 2009, p. 1146)

(116) *Consiguió piso en pocos días.* (Laca, 1999, p. 905)

A similar to the ABSTRACTED COMMONALITY OF THE TYPE FOR INSTANCE metonymy, the metonymic relationship TYPE FOR INSTANCE has been examined in Section 3.3 in relation to body part terms, where the type specification of the referent is more important than its quantification.

With respect to the metonymic mapping, Radden (2009, p. 226), following Panther and Thornburg, comments that "the metonymic source is not erased but still conceptually present; however, the metonymic target is dominant". This observation permits to consider phrases like *Hoy lleva pantalón* from the point of view of figure/ground organization. Therefore, the metonymic target, the abstracted commonality of the type, is what is foregrounded as the focus of attention. That is why to account for this kind of expressions was a problem for all objectivist analyses since they were constrained by their understanding of reference only as a relationship between linguistic signs and the extra-linguistic world. In their opinion, in the example above linguistic elements should have indicated, somehow, that there is one pair of trousers that the person is wearing. But from the point of view of Cognitive Grammar, this example can be seen as another manifestation of metonymy, which is at issue with other cases of nominal reference. Given our possibility to construe one and the same situation in different ways, particularly in this kind of constructions the abstracted commonality of the type is more important that the actual instance of this type. Therefore, the identification of referents as instances is not realized. It is deemphasized, since their identity as actual instances does not matter, while the abstracted commonality of the type instead acquires a special prominence.

Moreover, it should be noted that, since not instantiated, the abstracted commonality of the type is not construed neither as mass, nor as count, its conception is more schematic than the conception of any instance. As a consequence of such conceptualization, since no instance is profiled, the abstracted commonality of the type cannot be coreferential:

(117) **Tengo perro/casa/trabajo que me hace feliz.* (Montero Gálvez, 2017, p. 542)

The metonymic target—the abstracted commonality of the type—prevails, and even though we understand that there are some actual instances, they are backgrounded and conceptually are not retrievable for coreference.

The two proposed explanations, in fact, are two of the options that can be at issue with covert grounding. Mass construals with covert grounding and the abstracted commonality of the type are conceptually related, therefore, overlaps in meaning can take place. In the next section, I will regard a number of cases where it is not clear whether an indefinite extension of a mass—due to the conceptual operation of debounding (Talmy, 2000)—or the abstracted commonality of the type is profiled. I suppose that if the profiled type description can function as a reference point, that is, if there is a possibility of coreference, the construal is mass, conceptualized as an unbounded quantity and, therefore, being a very schematic but nevertheless an instantiation. The abstracted commonality of the type (referred in the previous chapters as the type description in the process of construction of nominal reference) can function at more complex composite levels not only as a thing but being part of relational expressions.

With that, the expressions as (115) and (116), similar to bare coordination cases, are to be interpreted relative to some prototypical scenarios that are matters of established conventions. In fact, these constraints have been

observed by scholars. The schematic construal of these expressions makes them very generic that is why traditionally they has been regarded as describing habits and customs or stable properties of individuals (RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 296). Thus, Bosque (1996, p. 35) draws attention to the "prototypical character" of such individual-level predicates and Lapesa (1996) notes that normally they refer to a valuable sign, social category or a habit. Moreover, Laca (1999, p. 919) observes that such constructions normally presuppose part-whole relations (or relations of possession that are also a kind of part-whole relations). In this respect, Alonso (1982) points out the adjectival nature of such constructions, which rather characterize the possessor, as if it were his/her characterizing property. In Cognitive Grammar terms, it can be concluded that this kind of expressions pertains to cultural ICMs, which can be briefly described as "relatively stable mental representations that represent theories about the world" (Evans & Green, 2006, p. 270). However, these conventions are never static, in the sense that it is impossible to enumerate all of them. Thus, the explanation adopted in the CPCI, which interprets such cases as stereotypes, is quite misleading and decontextualized. Thus, an example regarded by the CPCI as ungrammatical, *tener palacio*, can indeed go without explicit grounding in some contexts where it is commonplace to have a palace. In other words, there is no grammatical constrains to use the type construal with words like *palacio*, the restriction proceeds from the ICM, since generally it is not conventional in a society where one lives. However, it does not mean that it could not be so—or subjectively believed to be so by the conceptualizers—in any community in the actual world or in another imagined world: there are a lot of possibilities, so that similar construals, which profile only the abstracted commonality of the type, can be created.

5.4. Count-mass construal

Any noun, in principle, can be construed as mass or count: the result will depend on whether a particular categorization is entrenched and established as a linguistic unit or constitutes a novel expression (Langacker, 2008, p. 143). Thus, mass noun construal, depending on its degree of conventionality with regard to a particular type of thing, can be regarded as more or less conventional.

In the previous section, I have outlined that mass construals and cases in which the abstracted commonality of the type is profiled conceptually are very close, which can give rise to overlaps in meaning. Moreover, the construal of plural mass instances coincides with the plural mass noun type: for example, in the expression *Vende libros* it should be distinguished between *libros*, which is an instantiation, and [LIBROS], which is the type description. Their conceptual connectedness explains why the conceptualizers' decisions on what is profiled on many occasions are vague and why this kind of expressions permits to make comparisons between different types, without instantiating them. In this sense, as Bosque (1996, pp. 13–15) points out, to the sentence *Juan vende libros* it is possible to add "…*no tebeos"*. I would say that *Juan vende libros, no tebeos* would profile the type (its abstracted commonality), while *Juan vende libros* can be interpreted in either way: it can refer to an indefinite quantity of a mass or to the abstracted commonality of the type.

A similar example is provided by Alonso (1982, p. 139):

(118) *Villanos te matan, no hidalgos.*

Again, what is in focus, this is not the instance that means some villains, but the qualitative factor, the type conception, which is made prominent by virtue of

the ABSTRACTED COMMONALITY OF THE TYPE FOR INSTANCE metonymy. Since it is a case where the construal of plural mass instances in form is equal to the plural mass type, the profiled instance is so schematic that we don't know the exact number of actual discrete components that comprise it. In terms of the degree of specificity/schematicity, these instances with covert grounding can be described as occupying a place somewhere between the abstracted commonality of the type (e.g., [AGUA]) and instances that denote an indefinite extension of a mass but are grounded by some grounding element (e.g., *un poco de agua*).

The semantic schematicity of construals with covert grounding explains why Laca (1999) argues that they are not quantified expressions and Bosque (1996) proposes that they denote "dominios o restricciones de la cuantificación". In cases where a mass or the abstracted commonality of the type can be profiled, I suppose that, from a Cognitive Grammar perspective, the issue is even more basic: at this level, the type only potentially can be construed either as count or as mass, being possible its pluralization as a further step. That is why at this level it is not a matter of quantification. In other words, as Langacker (1991b, p. 75) points out, "the conception of a type per se . . . since it lacks the notion of instantiation, the question of quantity does not arise". If the construal without overt grounding is interpreted as a mass noun and, therefore, presuppose the instantiation process, the quantification of such an instance is completely indeterminate.

Their high degree of schematicity also explains why with this type of constructions some restrictions concerning coreference are associated (cf. van Hoek, 1995). Indeed, being more schematic, they are not able to permit coreference with the same ease as, for instance, nominals grounded by the definite article, but anyway they permit coreference between abstracted commonalities or in domains of virtual instances, since the type conception is

immanent in every instance. Note that in (120), with respect to the virtuality of referents, instances grounded by the indefinite article are always virtual, at least for a moment, even if in the flow of discourse they will turn out to correspond to actual ones (Langacker, 2016, 2017).

(119) *En 1945 surgió petróleo en Chiapas y un año después volvió a surgir en Yucatán.*
(Laca, 1999, p. 902)

(120) *La policía no encontró huellas en el salón. En cambio, encontró una en la cocina.*
(Alcina Caudet as cited in Montero Gálvez, 2017, p. 104)

The more schematic the instantiation is, the less possibilities for coreference it will entail, since to some degree it is also the question of prominence. However, coreference will be left out of the scope of the present work, referring the reader to the works by van Hoek (1995, 2010) on pronominal anaphora and her model of conceptual reference points.

Contrary to the traditional explanation that the use of the article or its omission largely depends on the verb, I argue that there is a semantic criterion: if the noun is construed as mass, even more so if we deal with the abstract commonality, there is no precise bounding of the referent in question. In the following example, due to the lack of bounding, a mass noun is profiled:

(121) a. *Sabe ruso.*
b. *Sabe *el ruso / *la filosofía.* (CPCI)

While the semantic content provided by the verb does influence on how it will be constructed at a higher composite level, as in (121b), where there is a cognitive constrain that is impossible to know something in its totality, there

are many possibilities of construal between the two components. Contrary to the claim in the CPCI that the definite article is incompatible with the verb *saber*, in reality, there are no such restrictions. So, the construal in (121a) is very schematic. As it has been discussed in Chapter 3 and 4 in relation to the metonymic extensions of the definite and the indefinite articles, in order to be grounded by an article, conceptually the extension of the mass noun should be bounded by means of its instantiation. Its division in parts is realized via a metonymic process:

(121) … *no sabe la filosofía de Hipócrates.* (CREA)

Another type of the part-whole relationship can be expressed by *de*, which here is partitive and serves to excerpt a portion from the type, but its amount is not precise:

(122) *Todo el mundo está convencido de que sabe de filosofía y está en condiciones de juzgarla.* (Hegel, 2012)

A language possesses various means for expressing the cognitive operation of portion excerpting. Thus, in (122), this operation is based on the foregrounding of a portion from an unbounded quantity (Talmy, 2000, p. 51).

Due to the conceptual closeness of the type description and its maximal extension, which is equated to its construction as a unique thing, in some cases both construals are possible, however, semantically they will be slightly different:

(123) *Entiende inglés / Entiende el inglés*

Therefore, with regards to (123), it is impossible to agree with Laca (1999, p. 904) who states that bare nouns in Spanish never can refer to the totality. Rather, the numerical value of these instances is indeterminate. In English the type description and the unique reference patterns coincide in form. In Spanish, unlike in English, the maximal extension/unique thing requires grounding by the definite article. A similar example is provided by Garrido (1996, p. 295):

(123) a. *Perdí confianza.*
b. *Perdí la confianza.*

As Garrido (1996, pp. 294-295) points out, (123a) does not mean a certain quantity of confidence but indicates the nature of what is lost, that is, the qualitative character of the referent. Therefore, in (123a) it is not a mass noun construal, what is referred to is the abstracted commonality of the type, the type description. The abstracted commonality of the type, as it has been discussed in relation to (117), at a higher level of organization functions as a part of the profiled process, describing it in more detail. Since it does not profile an instance, it is not quantified; *confianza* in (123a) is not even construed as an undifferentiated whole (mass noun construal), which means that portion excerpting cannot be realized, (124):

(124) **Perdí completamente / en gran parte / por completo confianza.*
(Garrido, 1996, p. 295)

Neither (123) permits coreference. In addition, there is a need to clarify that, differing from (123a), in (123b), the type is construed as a unique thing (or a mass noun in its maximal extension, since these strategies overlap) by means of creating a virtual instance, which subsumes all its possible instantiations.

To better illustrate the contrast between the above-discussed options, they are represented in figure 22:

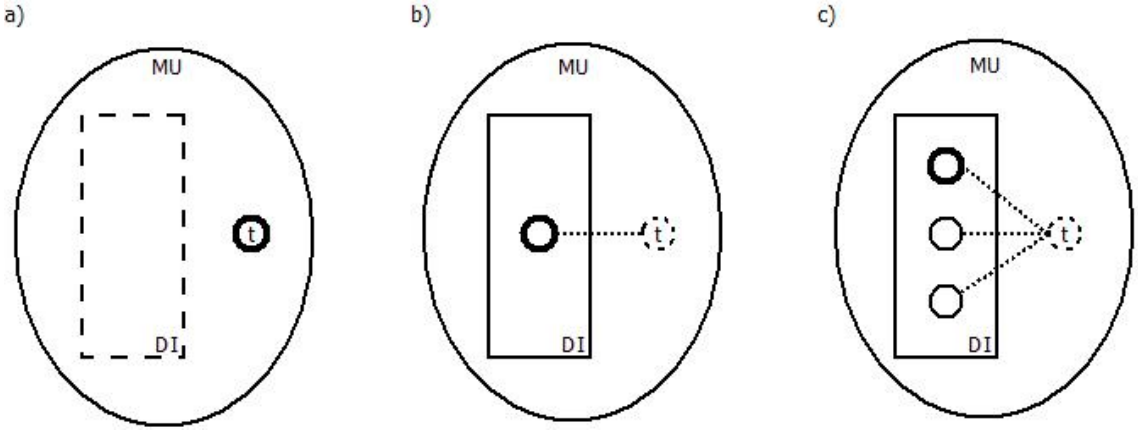


Figure 22. Type instantiations

MU = mental universe, DI = domain of instantiation, t = type conception

In figure 22, 22a depicts the abstracted commonality of the type: the process of instantiation is not accomplished, therefore no instance is profiled, though we are conscious that it could be done. The dashed lines indicate such a possibility in a domain of instantiation. The abstracted commonality of the type represented by the type description is thought of as occupying a place in our mental universe. This mental universe is defined by Langacker (2008, p. 266) as "subsuming everything we are capable of conceptualizing". Our mental universe itself also can be regarded as a kind of domain, however, for the sake of clarity and to avoid confusion with domains of instantiation for virtual instances, in this work it is not referred in this way. So, the profiled in figure 22a abstracted commonality of the type is very schematic. 22b and 22c correspond to virtual instances. Figure 22b profiles what is called the direct reference to a kind (Radden, 2009), while 22c depicts a representative generic

instance, which presupposes the existence of other non-prototypical instances. In both cases they are virtual instances created by virtue of metonymic processes discussed in Sections 3.4.1 and 4.2.1. 22b also corresponds to the maximal extension of a substance in the case of mass nouns, to the definite article's prototypical meaning of unique thing, and to the proper noun, which can be regarded as the only instance of its type. The bold lines indicated profiling. 22a indicates that only the type conception is profiled. 22c also represents a process of instantiation of count nouns. Note that any type theoretically can be construed as mass or count, the transformations sanctioned by metonymy operating on the type level have been described in Section 3.4.1.

In some constructions, the interconnectedness of the abstracted commonality of the type and the mass construal becomes even more evident due to the way in which expression is construed. Since with mass nouns their qualitative characteristics are essential, Langacker (2008, p. 342) analyzing the construction *a flock of geese* in English notes:

> Due to their coincidence, it may be indeterminate whether the composite expression refers to the unit or just to the mass it delimits. The point is often moot: if I see a flock of geese, I see both the flock (which consists of geese) and the geese (which constitute the flock).

Due to the subjectivity of construal, quantitative factors of mass nouns can be foregrounded. It can be expressed by an explicit grounding of a mass noun as a quantifying construction, which is by its nature a metonymic process. The domain of instantiation, therefore, will be changed from quality space, which is the usual domain of instantiation for mass nouns, to physical space, the usual one in the case of count nouns. Moreover, by the further choice of construal the subjective attitude towards the conceptualized thing can be expressed. In the example provided by Castañeda Castro and Alonso Raya (2009, pp. 5, 11), the authors point out that the quantity of paper can be the same in both cases,

but in (125a) *un poco* presupposes a positive assessment of the quantity in question, while *poco* in (125b) implies a negative impact:

(125) a. *Queda un poco de papel.*
b. *Queda poco papel.*

The difference is similar to the distinction between *a few* and *few* in English (Langacker, 2016, pp. 150–151).

In either way, each construal demonstrates the possibility of construing one and the same situation in alternate ways. So, as it can be observed, a limited number of linguistic elements with the help of metonymic shifts turn to be very versatile when it comes to expressing slightest nuances of meaning. At the same time, these elements are dependent from such construals since any change in them entails conceptual shifts because of the very way they are constructed and due to their conceptual interconnection.

There is a further point that is pertinent to consider. Many researches have noted the parallelism in the behaviour of the so-called bare plural and singular mass nouns. That is why in Cognitive Grammar they are regarded as plural and non-plural mass nouns. Their behaviour indeed in many aspects is identical:

(126) *Hay* ***árboles*** *en la plaza.* (CPCI)

(127) *No hay* ***leche*** *en la nevera.* (CPCI)

These are two examples of mass nouns. These instances are grounded in the broader sense. Both represent an example of artificial bounding, constructed subjectively for communicative purposes; the boundaries of these instance are

virtual. However, there are some differences as well. (126) represents a virtual instance of its type with multiple components. There is no intrinsic limit to the number of elements that comprise the instance in question. Anyway, any portion of a substance counts as an instance of a mass-noun type. Of course, the instance in question can be specified in greater detail by means of an elaboration: for example, *Hay cinco árboles en la plaza*. Instead, the referent in (127) is a virtual instance, whose components cannot be discerned, since they are not discrete entities. This is the distinction between the plural and non-plural mass types. The difference between them is depicted in figure 23 and figure 24.

The verb *haber* in impersonal constructions is normally characterized as subjectless, so the profiled process has a highly schematic trajector. As Langakcer (2008, p. 395, 2016, p. 126) argues, the trajector of an impersonal verb is left unspecified. Whether the profiled nominal functions as a subject or a direct object in such expressions, see, for example, the discussion in Claes (2014); it is out of the scope of this work to discuss its status. Here, in line with Langacker's (2017, p. 18) account, *hay* is analyzed as a relationship which is held between the components of the one verbal participant. In figure 23, the temporal dimension is omitted. *Árboles* represents an instance of the type with multiple discrete elements, a plural mass noun (Langacker, 2016, p. 72).

By contrast, *leche* in figure 25 is distinct from *árboles*, since it is not formed by discrete patches; they cannot be discerned. Moreover, *leche* is negative, which even more brings it closer to the type conception and result in their conceptual closeness to due to the schematicity of both construals. In (126) and (127), both the abstracted commonality of the type and the mass instances can be profiled.

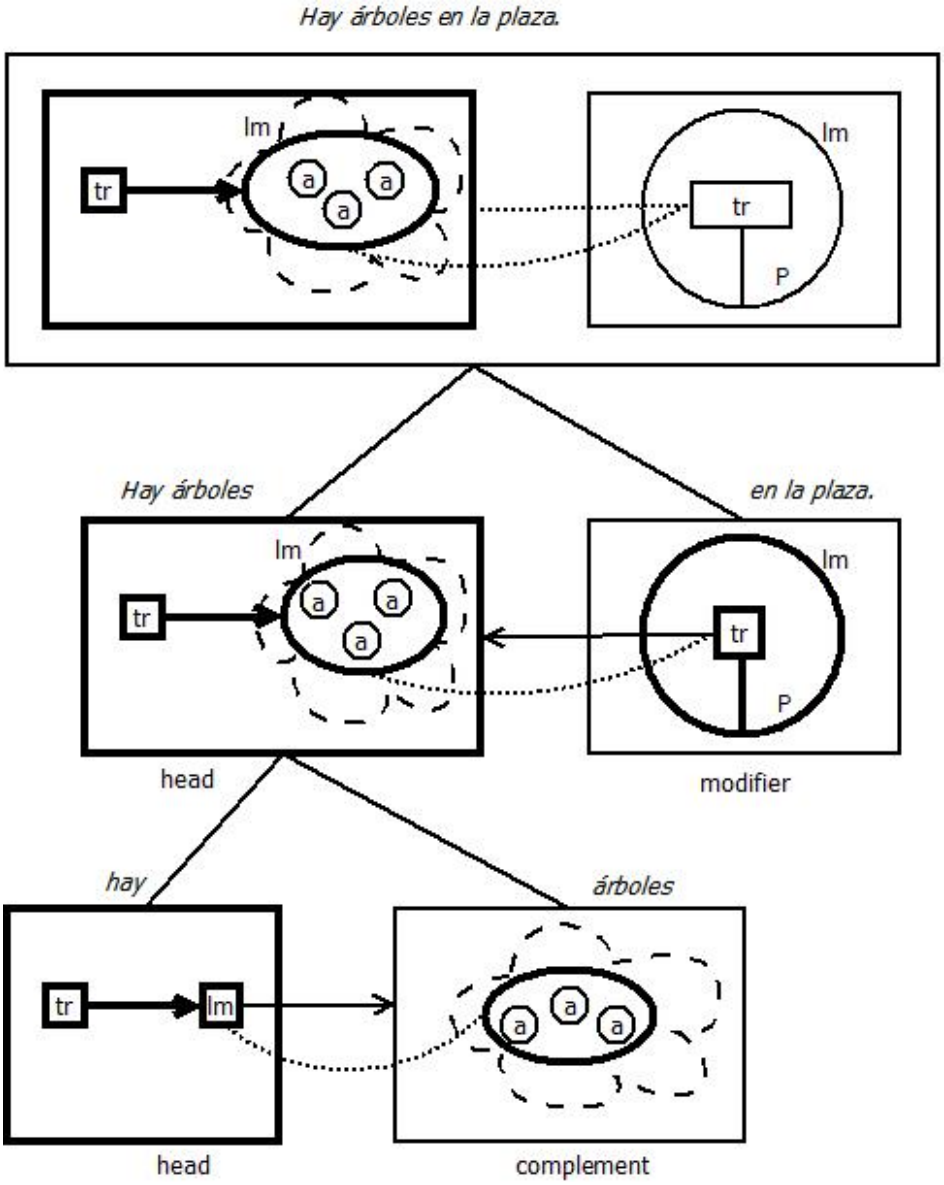


Figure 23. The assembly *Hay árboles en la plaza*

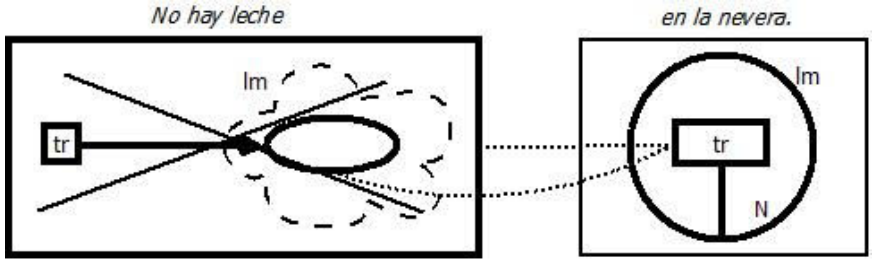


Figure 24. *No hay leche en la nevera*

So, these cases represent examples of overlapping of categories, when it can be indeterminate whether a mass or the abstracted commonality of the type is profiled. In the latter case, it functions as a type description and therefore can form part of relational constructions at a higher level of organization, participating in the profiling of a relationship. Therefore, as it is shown in figure 23, as a complement at the lower level of organization, *árboles* is a noun, however, at the next level, it is already a part of the head and acts as the landmark (lm) in the processual relationship. Therefore, as Langacker (2016, p. 126) argues, analyzing mass nouns in similar cases in English, "they count as nominals because the semantic function of grounding is fulfilled – in this case not by the prior discourse, but by the current clause itself. The profiled event itself let us infer both delimitation and identification".

Due to the overlap, such schematic construal permits to make the conception of the type more prominent than the need for a conceptual delimitation of the referent. This happens in (128): the type conception is more important than the number or any other feature that could serve to their identification:

(128) *No se puede dejar ese asunto en manos de* ***irresponsables.***
(RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 295)

It is appropriate here to recall that any change in construal entails a change in the relative prominence of the relational participants (Langacker, 1986). As it has been discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, normally a neighbouring strategy is used for the purposes of emphasis. Thus, semantically (129) is more prominent than (128), referring to figure 20.

(129) *No se puede dejar ese asunto en manos* ***de unos irresponsables.***
(RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 295)

Unos always is more prominent than a more schematic noun construal. This change of construal adds expressiveness to the construction, thus, accomplishing "multifaceted interactive function" (Langacker, 2008, p. 7), without the necessity to posit any arbitrary boundary between expressive and referential uses of articles, like in Epstein's (1994) work.

But *unos* is not always associated with the increase of prominence, as it has been already discussed, it can also indicate just a more limited quantity of instances in comparison with the instance of the same type with covert grounding, which denotes an indeterminate extension of the type. It profiles multiple bounded instances, but their number is completely indeterminate. Recall the example from Section 4.3:

(101) a. *Tengo un libro.*
b. *Tengo libros.*
c. *Tengo unos libros.* (CPCI)

The mass-count distinction is not only associated with the metonymic processes on the type level, it also depends on the cognitive operation of bounding on the level of instantiation (Langacker, 2016, p. 72). Consider:

(130) a. *Luis comió bistec*
b. *Luis se comió * bistec* (CPCI)
c. *Luis se comió un bistec.*

In (130a), the nominal referent is conceived as unbounded and in (130c) as bounded. The distinction is similar to one pointed out by Talmy (2000) in English:

(131) a. **We flew over water in one hour.* [unbounded]
b. *We flew over a sea in one hour.* [bounded]
c. **She slept in eight hours.* [unbounded]
d. *She dressed in eight minutes.* [bounded]
(Talmy, 2000, p. 51)

According to Talmy (2000, p. 51):

> *water* and (*to*) *sleep* basically specify unbounded quantities, whereas *sea* and (*to*) *dress* basically specify bounded ones. These specifications are demonstrated by the fact that these words are, respectively, unacceptable and acceptable in construction with the grammatical complex '*in* $NP_{extent\text{-}of\text{-}time}$', which itself specifies boundedness.

The distinction in Spanish is of similar kind. But I would like to stress that the necessity of a grounding element is not dependent on the verb after which it goes, as traditional explanations were assuming (Bosque, 1996), rather it is the conceptual content of such constructions that logically imposes the impossibility of mass, unbounded construal in (130b-c). The perfective aspect of the process profiled in (130c), which per se is a finite bounded action, requires for the landmark to have boundaries as well, coincident with the beginning and the end of the action, since *se* accomplishes a delimiting function. In (130a) the qualitative specification of the referent is in focus and its quantity is understood as unbounded, since the process itself in not bounded as in (130c). In (130c), consequently, the emphasis is made on the physical nature of the instance, which can be either an actual or virtual one.

5.5. The open-closed continuum: the type specification

Paradoxically, the type can be very schematic and very specific, pertaining to both poles of the scale of prominence, because, on the one hand, it can profile the abstracted commonality of the type, and the other, the proper noun, which itself is a type that by default has only one instance. These constructional possibilities demonstrate the relativity of human reasoning. To give an example, by virtue of metonymic processes, proper nouns can be converted into common nouns, while, in fact, the identifiability of proper nouns by default is a matter of convention: thus, more than one person have one and the same name. These properties of the type give rise to some overlapping cases, where the distinction between the type and its instance is neutralized, similar to proper nouns.

Thus, in such cases like *Vamos a casa* [used in Peninsular Spanish] (CPCI), two explanations are plausible: similar to the construction *Lleva pantalón*, there is a metonymic process by virtue of which the type description is profiled. The particular identity of the referent as an actual instance in the world is not important and therefore deemphasized, being profiled and foregrounded the type description by virtue of a metonymic process ABSTRACTED COMMONALITY OF THE TYPE FOR INSTANCE.

Interestingly, a similar generalizing effect is observed by Epstein (1994, p. 259) in Old French in relation to "the possibility of portraying a nominal as having non-specific reference (with the zero article)[*sic*] in a context where a specific referent fitting that description exists". Epstein (1994) provides some examples in which referents are potentially uniquely identifiable but they are construed as nominals with covert grounding. Epstein suggests that through such construal their generic nature is emphasized, while generalization per se leads to the deemphasis of these specific entities.

The emphasis on the generic nature of a situation is nothing more than the indication of its prototypical place within an ICM. The type description in these uses, therefore, approaches to the prototypical proper noun, based on the prototypical scenario that every person has a place to live. Indeed, the two plausible interpretations of these cases—as the abstracted commonality of the type (the type description) and the proper noun—are not mutually exclusive. Thus, in Latin America, the definite pattern is extended: *Vamos a la casa* [Latin American Spanish] (CPCI). This use, therefore, equates to the definite article's unique thing, moreover, stressing its possessive value, based on the whole-part relationship. It is worth to be mentioned that there is another possible overlap: *Vamos a casa* can also approach the semantic value of such adverbial constructions as *estar en casa*, at a higher level of organization profiling a non-processual relationship, similar to *Vamos allí.* In such a way, it can overlap with the category of adverbs. Therefore, with regards to the continuum of definiteness, postulated in Section 3.5., it can be said that it locks up with the cognitive overlap carried out by the type specification, which can be very specific and very schematic at the same time. From the other hand, this continuum is open, in the sense that it can subsume any possible type/instance of our mental universe.

That is why, among scholars, two tendencies in the analysis of these expressions exist: some interpret them as specific and other as non-specific (RAE & ASALE 2009, p. 1135). Indeed, on many occasions both specific and schematic interpretations are possible, which gives rise to the conventionalization of one or another pattern depending on the region (Laca, 1999, p. 922). Similarly, regarding an example provided by Suñer (as cited in Bosque, 1996, p. 72), Montero Gálvez (2017, p. 114) notes that there is no apparent difference between the two options:

(132) *La cosecha fue destruida por langostas / las langostas.*
(Montero Gálvez, 2017, p. 114)

Due to their close conceptual connection of the two construals, overlaps with generics are possible.

Ellipsis in titles, presentations, proverb, etc., anyway regarded as a metonymic relation FORM FOR FORM, can be also considered either as a very schematic type specifications or as instances approaching to the proper noun value. In the flow of discourse, normally, these types will be elaborated.

(133) *Alcalde desobedece una sentencia; Ministro implicado en fraude* (CPCI)

(134) *Se necesita camarero* (CPCI)

Cases like (134) can be interpreted as profiling only the type specification, not an instance, since, basically, we do not know how many people are needed. However, the opposite perspective is also possible. Since the question of form is inseparable from the semantic function, it is worth to mention that there are several metonymic processes at issue, which make an ellipsis to be the result of a number of chained metonymies. Recalling figure 22b, in which the unique instance of its type can be equated to the type description by means of a metonymic mapping, ellipsis examples can be regarded as proper nouns. Again, here we deal with an overlap.

Therefore, contrary to Laca's (1999, p. 904) observation that nominals without the article never can refer to the totality, which is to be expressed by the definite article, it can be argued that these cases are possible, given the type-instance metonymic shift. In particular, Lapesa (1996, p. 124) and Bosque (1996, p. 42), following him, accept that titles can function as proper nouns.

The conceptual interconnection of the type description and the prototypical proper noun in such cases results in the fuzziness of the boundaries between them:

(135) *Lo dejé en (la) recepción.* (CPCI)

In some cases, they even adopt the spelling with a capital letter:

(136) *La solicitud se recoge en Rectorado.* (RAE & ASALE, 2010, p. 297)

(137) *Patría es Humanidad.* (Alonso, 1982, p. 143)

These examples of nominals with non-overt grounding show that they can refer to the totality of objects in question, consequently the reference in such cases in inclusive. However, when a conceptual blend between the type and the proper noun takes place, the interconnection between them tends to be so close that conceptually it cannot be discerned to which pole the referent is closer:

(138) *Resbalada no es caída.* (Alonso, 1982, p. 141)

By the same token, the type specification is also at issue with proverbs and idioms:

(139) *Casa con dos puertas mala es de guardar.* (Alonso, 1982, p. 145)

That is why Alonso (1982, p. 145) writes that "se trata siempre de crear un nuevo tipo de objetos . . . para hacer sobre sus individuos una afirmación que

pretende validez general". Since in such expressions what is profiled is the type description (the abstracted commonality of the type), they can be instantiated in either way. This fact is noted by Alonso (1982), who states that examples like (139) can be used with any of the articles.

Another case adduced by Alonso (1982, p. 134) comes from Miguel de Cervantes with the words of Sancho "*Yo salí de mi tierra, y dejé hijos y mujer por venir a servir a vuestra merced*". Likewise, Alonso argues that *hijos y mujer* could have been marked with the definite or the indefinite article, or the possessive. In Cognitive Grammar terms, Alonso (1982, p. 135) basically acknowledges that the choice of construal is subjective: he describes the choice of article as the desire of the speaker to emphasize the quality of what is abandoned; recall the example in (123a). Moreover, I would argue that there is another point of contact: the closeness between the type and proper names by virtue of the aforementioned metonymic process. The use of *hijos y mujer* approximates to proper names similar to how Italian kinship terms are used: without articles, since the scope for their assessment is limited by the established convention, based on the relationship of possession. I have regarded cases of bare coordination in Section 5.2. Here, I simply provide a more holistic perspective on the variety of complex phenomena sanctioned by the interdependence of types and instance. Since any change of construal leads to the increase of prominence of some components and the deemphasis of others, by choosing the construal without overt grounding, the qualitative part of the things in question is emphasized. This kind of process is also metonymic in nature. Possibly, it could be defined as the expressive value in the sense how Epstein (1994) understands it, but adding that expressive uses are also referential.

In the construction of a nominal, the type basically provides an essential description for the thing, which at the higher level of organization is grounded by a certain grounding element. But, as it has been mentioned, it may be the

case that the type serves to describe in more detail a relation: a process or an atemporal relation:

(140) *formar parte, echar mano* (Laca, 1999, p. 920)

(141) a. *ir en tren* (CPCI)
b. ir en el tren

Note that in (141a), *en tren* is an atemporal relation, the noun does not profile any instance of the type; it forms a complex adverb. Moreover, such atemporal relation is incorporated at the next level of organization to the temporal relation, serving thereby to describe in more detail a complex process, forming a type of action. Thus, the difference between (141a) and (141b) is that, while in the former the process is profiled by a complex verb, which incorporates a static relationship profiled by the preposition and the noun, (141b) is a process whose landmark is the profiled instance of its type that denotes location.

Schematic prepositional relations describe the verb in more detail. As Laca (1999, p. 922) points out, "la construcción sin artículo no designa simplemente el lugar físico, sino un estado, condición o actividad particular". Therefore, I would rather argue that there is no information about a physical place since, from a Cognitive Grammar point of view, despite being expressed via nouns, at a higher composite level, there is no thing profiled. They are atemporal relations, which are incorporated to the description of the process at the subsequent level of organization. Similar cases are:

(142) *a cuestas, en broma, en consecuencia, a mano* (Bosque, 1996, pp. 49-50)

The type specification can also contribute to the description of processual relationships, as in (140). As it has been regarded in the previous sections, mass instances with covert grounding are conceptually close to the abstracted commonality of the type, owing to that often they are prone to shifts in profile. I would argue that these construals are rather type conceptions when they function as components of constructions like in (140), which profile an instance of a process. In (140) they are left ungrounded (about clausal grounding see Langacker, 2008). That is, that the type specification provided by noun serves to specify in more detail a kind of process; again, quantification here is not at issue, since we deal with the abstracted commonality of the type. Just as nouns can be of any degree of complexity, verbs as well can be complex. They describe better the process profiled by the verb and functions at this composite structure level as verbs because, taken as a compound, they are verbs. Other examples of such verbs are:

(143) *hacer noche, tener lugar, dar clase, dar besos, poner fecha* (CPCI)

Traditionally these cases have been described as incorporation (Bosque, 1996; Masullo, 1996). It is not inconsistent with the Cognitive Grammar perspective: incorporation implies the schematization of the referent, its abstraction, which, on the other hand, explains why only processes that pertain to prototypical scenarios are subject to this phenomenon. This constraint is observed by Bosque (1996, pp. 38–39):

(144) a. *Hice fotocopia, Adjunto informe, Se formuló resolución, Recibí carta tuya*
b. **Rompí fotocopia, *Tiré carta tuya.*

The fact that language is never a stable system permits to suppose why only prototypical actions form such complex types of processes, while others are not accepted, or rather are not sufficiently conventionalized. Thus, *hacer fotocopia* can only have appeared with the invention of printers. This tendency to occur with only prototypical types of processes reminds a similar behaviour of the definite and the indefinite articles' extensions, which usually are produced between prototypical members of different categories: thus, the metonymic conversion of proper nouns into common nouns is observable mostly with prototypical proper nouns with intrinsic grounding. This tendency can be denominated as prototype centripetal tendency.

Apart from relations, a similar mechanism is at issue with complex nouns, providing more description or specifying in greater detail the thing:

(145) *silla de ruedas, profesor de universidad, lápiz de labios, libro de reclamaciones* (CPCI)

At a higher composite level, it can function as an instantiation forming part of a just-created subtype:

(146) *Se encontró con un señor de traje oscuro.*

There is another overlap between categories that should be regarded: it is the overlap between adjectives and nouns. Similar to expressions as *tener casa,* cases like (147) by some scholars are viewed as having an adjectival or quasi-adjectival nature (see discussion in Bosque, 1996):

(147) *Es profesora de español.* (CPCI)

For Alonso (1982, pp. 140–141), however, they are nouns. According to him, the difference lies in the nature of categorized objects. Thus, Alonso (1982) states that *reina* in *Tú eres reina* qualifies, categorizes; in contrast, *la reina* in *Tú eres la reina* identifies. From a Cognitive Grammar point of view, in (147) there is a very schematic construal where, moreover, the conceptual equation of trajector with its landmark takes place. Presumably, it is a matter a convention, since, for example, in English another type of pattern is extended: e.g., *He is a teacher*, where the trajector is regarded as a category member of the set in question. Therefore, in English we deal with an instantiation. However, the construals in English and Spanish are not equivalent; in Spanish, the process of instantiation is not accomplished. The type description per se does not single out any instance (Langacker, 2016, p. 84). The type as such only potentially can be instantiated. In Spanish, the very schematic construal by which someone's occupation is described—again, the extension of this pattern is limited by the established convention—serves only to describe or characterize the important property of the trajector. The importance of having a profession is explained by the social organization of our society, where individuals should hold a role. Therefore, this description provided by a type specification can be regarded as an adjective, whose prototypical function is to specify properties of its trajector (Langacker, 2008).

In this respect, (147) profiles an atemporal relationship with a unique focal participant. The noun *profesora de español* functions only as the abstracted commonality of the type, providing a type description, coinciding with the semantic function of the adjective. In fact, Comrie (1989, p. 109) writes about "the continuum-like nature of the distinction between adjectival and substantival properties". Since the boundaries between categories are blurry, in such expressions these schematic nouns can be situated somewhere between the two categories. As a consequence of this semantic status, this kind of

expressions does not permit anaphoric reference because instantiation is not yet an issue at this level.

On the other hand, as it has been noted with other cases, the prominence of the referent is often acquired with the aid of the neighbouring nodes within the network. Thus, recalling figure 20, in order to convey prominence, the indefinite article should be used, modifying the initial construal.

(148) *Juan es un médico* (Marcos Marín, 1999, p. 1093)

Thus, in (148), the prominence of the quality—to be an exemplary doctor—is increased. Note that, in this sense, this construction is neither equivalent to the above-mentioned English construction, which indicates a member of the category. Furthermore, the construal in (148) can be elaborated more:

(149) *Es todo un médico.* (CPCI)

With regards to the baseline strategy, the construal in (149) is even more complex. There is a further increase in prominence by approximating the referent to the prototypical representative subtype, which is expressed by a virtual representative instance of the type, similar to the one that is used in generic statements like *Un médico siempre se compromete a guardar el secreto médico* (see also Sections 3.4.1. and 4.2.1.). Therefore, (149) is based on the interaction of a number of elaborations and extensions.

It should be added that (147) represents a kind of reference point relationship. The profile of the trajector and the schematic profile of the landmark correspond, similar to the correspondence that exist between the profile of a grounding element and the nominal it grounds. Hence, what tends to be expressed by such constructions is the property of belonging to a certain

type. Therefore, they are not limited to the cases of belonging to a professional, national, or religious group, although such occurrences are apparently more frequent. It can be another type that conveys belonging:

(150) *Don Pedro era hombre de mal carácter.* (Lapesa, 1987, p. 61)

Equally these construals are possible with inanimate subjects:

(151) *Todo lo que dijo fue pura fantasía.* (Lapesa, 1987, p. 61)

Appositional constructions such as *el concepto de madre, la idea de libertad* (Laca, 1999, p. 895) also presuppose a correspondence between the trajector and the landmark and equally to the above-regarded cases involve only one focal participant. *De*—like *of* in English (Langacker, 2008, p. 343)—profiles an intrinsic reference point relationship between two entities, which consequently serves for their grounding in a broader sense. The components of this type of appositional constructions, nevertheless, do not have the same weight. The landmark is not an instantiation, it is a type description, therefore this relationship is asymmetrical (Langacker, 2008, p. 523). In this sense, they differ from constructions like *My good friend Geraldine Ferraro* (Langacker, 1986, pp. 32–34) in which there is no basis for recognizing one of the components as the head.

By the same token, in (152), we do not deal with an instantiation:

(152) *La nombraron embajadora.* (CPCI)

Despite the fact that in Spanish and English there are some differences in grounding strategies, cases similar to (152) are also attested in English. Thus, one of the examples is provided by Berezowski (2009, p. 54):

(153) *Ronald Reagan* ***was President of the United States****, but the real power lay with advisers like Caspar Weinberger, who wielded enormous behind-the-scenes influence.*

Berezowski (2009, p. 55) notes that the status of nominals designating offices held by single individuals has not been bereft of controversy and that scholars, due to various arguments, tended to regard such predicate nominals as definite. However, Berezowski stresses that all provided arguments are rather weak and another explanation is needed. Berezowski's solution is that the numerical requirement cannot sanction neither the use of the definite article—because such predicate nominals are inherently indefinite—nor the use of the indefinite article, since the exclusion of other members, necessary for its use, is problematic. The problem with this account is that Berezowski (2009), as well Epstein (1994), thinks that in such cases we deal with an instantiation, while in this work it is argued that it is only a type description, the abstracted commonality of the type. However, Epstein (2002b, p. 357) in a later work comes close to this view, affirming that "NPs [noun phrases] that designate roles are used to refer to a fixed property, not to a particular individual."

In sum, the cases analyzed in this chapter demonstrate that bare nouns in Spanish can be specific, can refer to actual instances, can be in the preverbal position, etc., so the extended objectivist view, which tried to limit bare nouns' functions, can be easily refuted. I have examined cases in which the absence of article can be seen as a gradation whose one pole is represented by cases where the noun approaches to the prototypical proper noun (with intrinsic

grounding), and whose other pole is represented by cases where only the abstracted commonality of the type is profiled, without profiling any instance. In the latter case, the type at a higher composite structure level can act as an adjective, an adverb, as a part of a complex noun or as a part of a verb. Basically, the noun in its type conception can be part of processual and non-processual relationships and things, which means that it is present in the majority of grammatical classes, thus demonstrating its great versatility. Bearing in mind that nominals without any overt grounding, except those that function as proper names, are less prominent than those profiled by means of the indefinite or the definite articles, this continuum of nominal reference in terms of prominence can be represented in the following form:

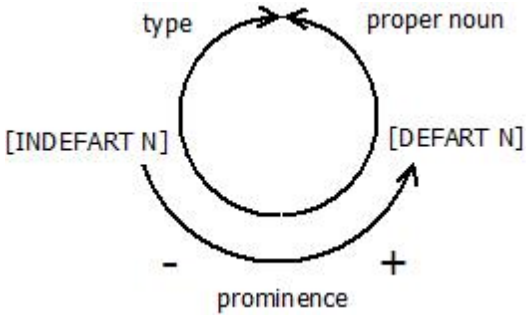


Figure 25. The open-closed continuum of nominal reference

Figure 25 details the continuum between proper nouns and type specifications. I have argued, following Epstein (1994) and Cook (2003) among others, that nominals profiled by the definite article are more prominent by default than those that are profiled by the indefinite article. Proper nouns are said to be more prominent than common nouns. The type conception is more abstract and schematic than instantiations. Of course, for discourse purposes any change of construal can lead to a shift in prominence.

From the point of view of the systemic organization of grammar (Langacker, 2016, 2017), the prototypical proper noun (with intrinsic grounding), which pertains to the unique reference strategy, is the baseline, being all other cases elaborations from it. In figure 25, I have graphically indicated only the definite and the indefinite article via their constructional schemas, but the continuum actually includes all kinds of grounding elements that can be ranged along it (possessives, quantifiers, etc.), although it is out of the scope of this work. Then, moving along the continuum and approaching to the abstracted commonality of the type, there will be schematic instances with non-overt grounding and finally the type conception itself. Figure 25 depicts the possible overlap and conceptual interconnection of the type and the proper noun, although by default they both represent the two opposite poles in terms of prominence and form two different reference strategies: unique and non-unique reference. But the type conception is inherent in every instance and consequently gives rise to a number of metonymic phenomena, which then can produce overlaps in meaning. Therefore, I conclude this chapter by arguing that along this continuum there are overlaps between proper nouns and the definite article, between the definite and the indefinite articles, between the type conception and the proper noun, between the strategies of unique and non-unique reference.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Towards a new theory of definiteness

In this dissertation, in order to shed light to the problem of the role of articles in achieving nominal reference in Spanish, situating the analysis within the framework of Cognitive Grammar, the definite and the indefinite articles have been examined as inherently meaningful grammatical elements. On the one hand, I have regarded articles as grounding elements, as it had been postulated and analyzed by Langacker (1991b, 2008, 2016, 2017) in the case of the English grounding system. On the other hand, to account for their meaning, I have adopted the radial network approach, representing the definite and the indefinite articles as radially structured polysemous categories. Given the continuum between lexicon and grammar, assumed within the Cognitive Grammar framework, it has been possible to expand the phenomenon of polysemy to such elements as articles, which are situated closer to the grammatical pole of the lexicogrammatical continuum.

Therefore, it has been argued that the definite and the indefinite articles represent prototypically organized categories, whose different uses, previously described by scholars in a non-unified way, are motivated and interrelated by categorizing relationships of elaboration and extension. The proposed perspective, in consequence, to a large extent, challenges nearly all previous accounts of articles in Spanish.

My primary purpose has been to explain the mechanisms that underlie the semantic structure of the definite and the indefinite articles. As a result, it

has been shown that the definite article runs the gamut from profiling a unique thing of its type to referring to the whole class of things, while the exclusiveness of indefinite reference has been reconsidered as presupposing a part-whole relationship, due to that the indefinite article's role in establishing category membership has been explained. It has been demonstrated that such traditionally associated with definiteness notions as familiarity, specificity, or existence are mere epiphenomena of the referent's conceptual status. From the other hand, a longstanding debate on whether *un* can be considered as an article has proved to be irrelevant since, from a Cognitive Grammar point of view, linguistic items are not characterized as disjoint lexical categories; rather, what prevails is their semantic function, which in the case of all nominals is the profiling of things. In this respect, it is argued that articles are themselves can be regarded as schematic nominals.

It has been shown that various senses of the definite and the indefinite articles in Spanish can be represented as organized in radial networks and interrelated by family resemblance relationships. A certain **parallelism** in their semantic networks can be noticed, which partly is explained by their role within the grammatical system. With that, I have tried to show that there is a **continuum** between different senses inside the prototype networks and that these meanings are not static but dynamic. Due to the fuzziness of the boundaries between categories, assumed within the Cognitive Linguistics framework, there can be overlaps in meaning between different construals, achieved by virtue of the four mechanisms of semantic change: specialization, generalization, metonymy, and metaphor. This point is of special relevance given the recent findings on the dynamic nature of meaning.

In particular, discussing a number of conventional patterns in the construction of nominal reference in Spanish, it has been argued that different type-instance metonymies (count-mass conversion, MEMBER FOR CATEGORY,

REPRESENTATIVE MEMBER FOR PROTOTYPICAL SUBCATEGORY, CATEGORY FOR SUBCATEGORY, SUBCATEGORY FOR CATEGORY metonymies) operate on the type level and on the level of instantiation, consequently affecting what and how is profiled. Motivating changes of construal and grammatical polysemy, many of these relations compose complex, chained metonymies and even metaphtonimies. Thus, for example, the recategorization of a proper noun into a common noun involves a further choice of construal: the proper noun can be construed either as a count or a non-plural mass type. Moreover, such shifts in profile—although achieved by different grounding strategies—manifest conceptual closeness, resulting in overlaps in meaning. Therefore, it has been argued that the conceptual metonymies based on the type-instance interaction allow to posit various continuums: between unique and non-unique reference, between proper and common nouns, between grounding by the definite and the indefinite articles.

In the last chapter, I have argued that grounding itself is a prototypically organized notion, therefore, apart from overt grounding elements such as articles, there are various strategies due to which a nominal can be grounded in discourse. Consequently, bare nominals have been regarded as having covert grounding, profiling the abstracted commonality of the type, or as having intrinsic grounding, that is, acquiring the semantic value of prototypical proper nouns. It has been demonstrated how the type conception can profile things and also relational expressions at higher levels of organization, thus producing shifts in category membership. Rejecting the concept of the zero article as being artificially imposed, I have proposed to posit a continuum between the abstracted commonality of the type and the proper noun. The postulation of such continuous view of definiteness, in my view, permits to encompass all these heterogeneous cases that have been problematic within the previous accounts.

The infelicity of the previous theories of definiteness is owed to the assumptions of the objectivist semantics, such as the artificial divisions between linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge and between semantics and pragmatics, among others. No previous account of definiteness has succeeded in explaining all uses of the definite and indefinite articles; each of them had postulated a paradigm, which then was incapable to account for the majority of cases that were regarded as exceptional. The advantage of the present Cognitive Grammar account of articles in Spanish is that by means of the explicit description of their semantic function, revealing conceptual processes that underlie their use, each usage pattern can be elucidated and described. Although it should be acknowledged that a number of observations regarding the behaviour of articles in discourse have been already expressed by scholars, nevertheless, due to the constraints of their methodological paradigms, they could not be further developed and justified. Only Langacker's Cognitive Grammar provides means to provide an explicit linguistic description of articles as meaningful grammatical elements.

So, the proposal presented here suggests to consider nominal reference and definiteness as **continuous phenomena**. It has been shown that no discrete boundary can be posited between unique and non-unique reference. With that, it is important to emphasize that the uniqueness of the referent has been analyzed as a relative notion, even in cases where its basis is thought of as global. That is why, on many occasions, it is typical for the strategy of unique reference to borrow the semantic strategy of non-unique reference. At the same time, a similar behaviour is demonstrated by all network members with respect to prominence: in order to emphasize or de-emphasize their meaning, they tend to use the strategy of the neighbouring node. Moreover, it has been pointed out that in their behaviour a **centripetal force** can be observed: non-prototypical meanings endeavour to approach the prototypical meaning of the category.

Overlaps are possible between proper nouns and the definite article; between the definite and the indefinite articles; and even between the type conception and the proper noun, since it represents the type that is instantiated by only one instance. The continuous understanding of definiteness also includes a continuous character of anaphora, deixis, linguistic/extra-linguistic meanings, the metonymy-metaphor continuum, and other phenomena that motivate polysemous meanings within the network. In addition, such phenomena as emphasis, ellipsis and nominalization can cross with each other to form more complex conceptual structures: emphasis + ellipsis, ellipsis + nominalization, etc. With that, in line with the systemic organization of grammar proposed by Langacker (2016, 2017), definiteness is seen as a systemic notion, as many other grammatical notions, whose elements are organized in opposition to each other. So, by this study of the article system in Spanish a new understanding of definiteness is proposed.

Finally, originated with the purpose to solve the problem of the constant misuse of articles among non-native speakers, even at advanced levels of proficiency, this research is thought of to serve as a sort of handbook for researchers, teachers, and students, inviting them to consciously construct the meaning of nominal expressions in Spanish by means of the description of conceptual mechanisms that underlie the existing conventional patterns of article usage in Spanish. Therefore, as a recapitulation of the various mechanisms for achieving nominal reference in Spanish, figure 26 represents the interaction between the definite and the indefinite articles in the form of a complex single network.

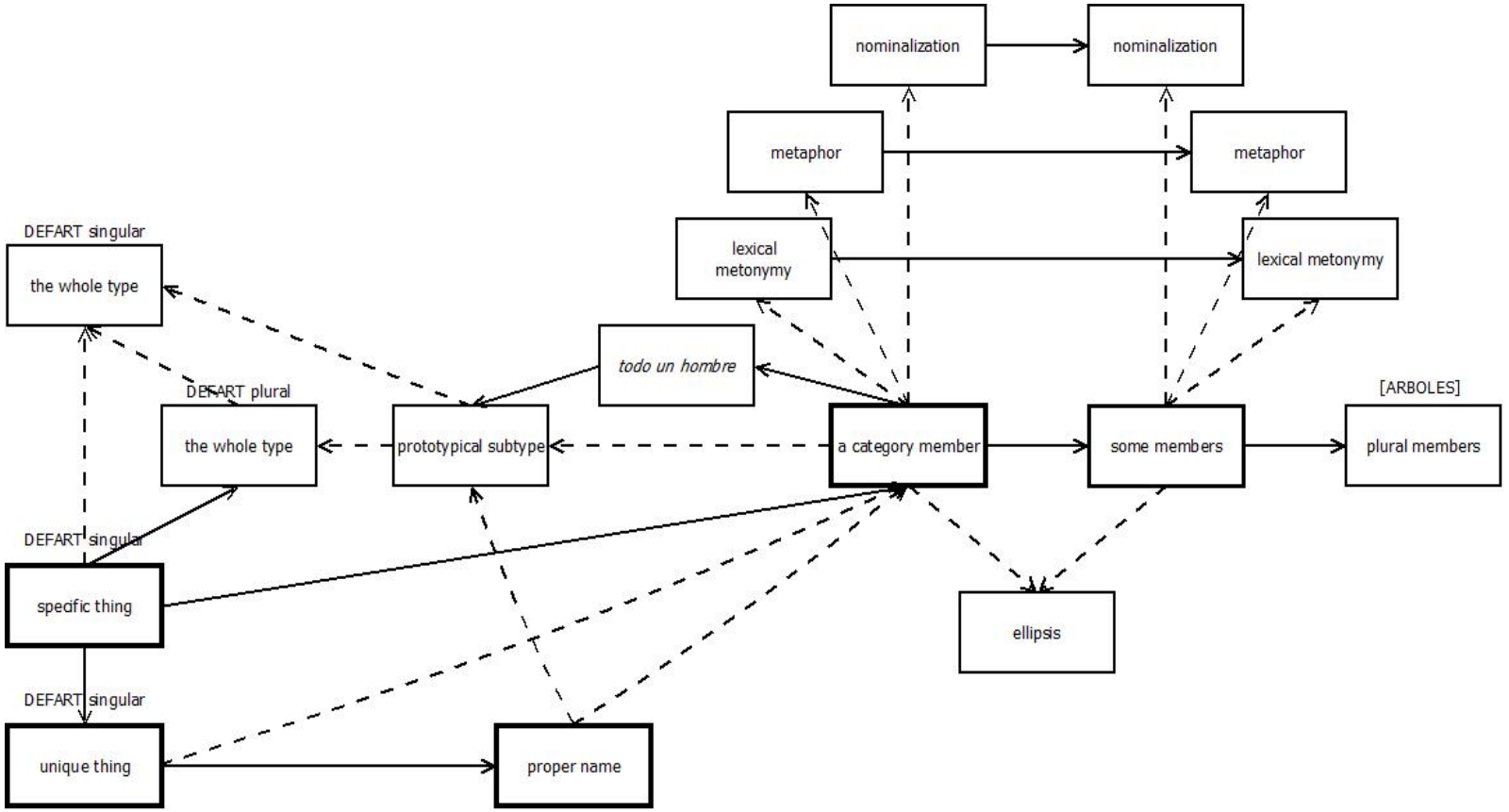


Figure 26. The joint network of the definite and the indefinite articles in Spanish

6.2. Directions for future research

The results of the present work suggest two main lines for further research: a theoretical one and an experimental one.

Firstly, in a future research, in order to obtain a more holistic view of the Spanish grounding system, it would be worth to examine other elements that form part of it, including demonstratives, possessives, quantifiers and quantifying constructions. As Langacker (2016) notes, articles are situated somewhere between the demonstratives and quantifiers, being the definite article close to the former and the indefinite article close to the latter. Therefore, such a wider perspective would permit to elucidate more correspondences and overlaps produced between different grounding strategies. Moreover, further examination of the behaviour of the definite and the indefinite article in discourse can be undertaken, using corpus-based research methods.

Furthermore, from a comparative point of view, a cross-linguistic approach is to be adopted in order to analyze how different grounding strategies operate through languages, how they overlap. A contrastive approach is worth to the extent that it permits to elucidate differences between existing conventional patterns that are always motivated within their own language systems (for instance, as the maximal extension of a substance is referred to by covert grounding in English and by the definite grounding in Spanish). Thinking cross-linguistically, articles in other languages, like in English, also can be considered as polysemous radial categories. Such an analysis can explain a range of phenomena associated with reference and definiteness in English and account for problematic cases, similar to how it has been done in relation to the article system in Spanish in this work.

Ultimately, another theoretical implication of this study relates to recent findings on the dynamic nature of meaning (Allwood, 2003; Renè Dirven, 2005; Rosch, 1999; Sinha, 1999) and the systemic organization of grammar, emphasized by Langacker (2008, 2016, 2017). Postulating a systemic view of linguistic categories, I believe that it would be possible to combine the Cognitive Grammar framework with the approach suggested by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1969) within the General Systems Theory by regarding linguistic categories as open systems. As a matter of example, it can be thought of as a solution for the problem of sense division and the polysemy fallacy. Such an approach would permit to reconcile the monosemist and polysemist positions as well as the reified and dynamic views of meaning, accounting for contextual interpretations by updating the prototype network model via a stronger incorporation of a dynamic perspective, consequently, setting aside the recent criticisms of the network model.

From the other hand, the application of these research results in the field of teaching and learning Spanish as a foreign language is a second, more experimental line of research. The postulated semantic networks of the definite and the indefinite articles in Spanish can be used in the foreign language classroom as a method to overcome the so-called fossilized errors in article usage. The created networks can be regarded as the conceptual maps for non-native speakers, which could permit them to construe conventional expressions by instantiation of different semantic representations as well as to create new meanings according to the analyzed strategies of meaning extension. It can be hypothesized that Cognitive Grammar as a methodological tool has the potential to reduce/eradicate fossilized errors concerning article usage.

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