

Types of noun phrase

- 5.1 The noun phrase typically functions as subject, object, and complement of clauses and as complement of prepositional phrases. Consider the different subjects in the following sentences:

<i>The girl</i>	} is my sister.	[1]
<i>The blonde girl</i>		[2]
<i>The blonde girl in blue jeans</i>		[3]
<i>The blonde girl wearing blue jeans</i>		[4]
<i>The blonde girl who is wearing blue jeans</i>		[5]
<i>She</i>		[6]

Sentences [1–5] are alike in having the same noun (*girl*) as noun-phrase head (cf 2.28, 17.2). The noun phrase in [1] has the simplest structure, consisting of only the definite article and the head; in [2] it also has a premodifying adjective (*blonde*); in [3–5] the noun phrase has, in addition, postmodification: in [3] a prepositional phrase (*in blue jeans*); in [4] a nonfinite clause (*wearing blue jeans*); and in [5] a relative clause (*who is wearing blue jeans*). In [6] the noun phrase consists of only one word (*she*), which is one of a closed class of grammatical words called personal pronouns. Such pronouns can ‘deputize’ for noun phrases and hence cannot normally occur with determiners such as the definite article, premodification, or (normally) postmodification:

**the blonde she* ?*she in blue jeans*

Since noun phrases of the types illustrated in [2–5] include words and structures that will be dealt with in later chapters (adjectives, prepositional phrases, clauses), it will be convenient to reserve the treatment of ‘complex’ noun phrases incorporating such items until Chapter 17, which deals with the noun phrase as a whole. The present chapter will be restricted to the constituency of the ‘basic’ noun phrase, *ie* the classes of nouns together with articles or other closed-class determinative elements that can occur before the noun head, including predeterminers like *all*, central determiners like *these*, and postdeterminers like *last* and *few*:

all these last few days

The closed class of pronouns as in [6] is dealt with in Chapter 6.

Noun classes: count, noncount, and proper nouns

- 5.2 It is necessary, both for grammatical and semantic reasons, to see nouns as falling into different subclasses. That this is so can be demonstrated by taking the four nouns *Sid*, *book*, *furniture*, and *brick* and considering the extent to which it is possible for each to appear as head of the noun phrase functioning as object in the sentence *I saw ...*: without any determiner (a); with the lightly stressed determiners *the* /ðə/ (b), *a* /ə/ (c), *some* /səm/ (d); and in the plural (e). The result of this test can be seen in Table 5.2:

Table 5.2 Test table for noun classes

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(2 + 3)
(a)	<i>Sid</i>	* <i>book</i>	<i>furniture</i>	<i>brick</i>
(b)	* <i>the Sid</i>	<i>the book</i>	<i>the furniture</i>	<i>the brick</i>
(c)	* <i>a Sid</i>	<i>a book</i>	* <i>a furniture</i>	<i>a brick</i>
(d)	* <i>some Sid</i>	* <i>some book</i>	<i>some furniture</i>	<i>some brick</i>
(e)	* <i>Sids</i>	<i>books</i>	* <i>furnitures</i>	<i>bricks</i>

The difference between column 1 (with only one possibility) and column 2 + 3 (with all possibilities) indicates the degree of variation between the noun classes. Nouns that behave like *Sid* in column 1 (*Confucius, Paris, Sierra Leone*, etc) are PROPER NOUNS, which will be further discussed in 5.60ff.

The nouns in the other columns are COMMON NOUNS, but there are important differences between them. Those which, like *book* in column 2 (*bottle, chair, forest, idea*, etc), must be seen as denoting individual countable entities and not as an undifferentiated mass, are called COUNT nouns. Nouns which, like *furniture*, conform to the pattern of column 3 (as do *bread, grass, warmth, music*, etc), must by contrast be seen as denoting an undifferentiated mass or continuum. These are called NONCOUNT nouns.

Finally we have nouns in column 2 + 3 which can be either count or noncount nouns (eg: *brick, cake, paper, stone*), in that we can view a noun like *brick* either as the noncount material [1], or as constituting the countable object [2]:

The house is built of *brick*. [1]
He used *bricks* to build the house. [2]

The type headed 2 + 3 may be classified grammatically in two ways: (a) either as a lexical class of noun which combines the characteristics of count nouns and noncount nouns, or (b) as two separate items, one count and the other noncount. The former mode of analysis is convenient for nouns like *brick* and *cake* with little difference in meaning between count and noncount uses. Therefore such nouns will be said to have 'dual class membership' (cf 5.4).

Although in sentences such as *I like music, I like Sid*, the two nouns look superficially alike in terms of article usage, we will say that *music* has ZERO ARTICLE but that *Sid* has NO ARTICLE. The label 'zero' is appropriate in the case of common nouns which have article contrast, eg: *music* as opposed to *the music* (cf 5.52ff) in:

I like *music* and dancing.
I think *the music* is too loud in here.

If, however, we disregard special grammatical environments like *the Sid I mean is tall* (cf 5.64), proper nouns have no article contrast (*Sid*/**the Sid*), and will therefore be said to have 'no article'.

Note COUNT nouns, as they are termed in this book, are by some grammarians called 'countable' nouns; similarly, our term NONCOUNT nouns corresponds to 'mass' nouns or 'uncountable' nouns in other grammars.

Concrete and abstract nouns

5.3 Cutting across the grammatical and semantic count/noncount distinction, there is a semantic division into nouns like *pig* which are CONCRETE (ie accessible to the senses, observable, measurable, etc) and nouns like *difficulty* which are ABSTRACT (typically nonobservable and nonmeasurable). But while abstract nouns may be count (like *remark/remarks*) or noncount (like *warmth/*warmths*), there is a considerable degree of overlap between abstract and noncount (cf 5.58). Figure 5.3 shows the noun classes introduced so far.

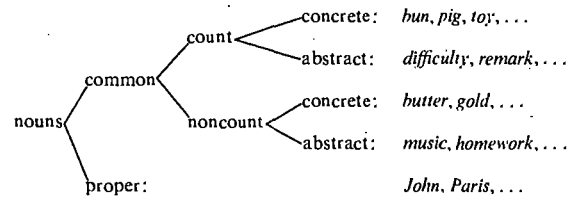


Fig 5.3 The most important noun classes

Nouns with dual class membership

5.4 The division of nouns according to countability into count nouns and noncount nouns is basic in English. Yet the language makes it possible to look upon some objects from the point of view of both count and noncount, as in the case of *cake*:

A: Would you like *a cake*? B: No, I don't like *cake*.

Such nouns may be said to have dual class membership. In other cases, eg: *paper*, there is no readily perceptible parallelism but a notable difference in meaning between the two nouns:

I want an evening *paper*. ['newspaper'] [1]
 Wrap the parcel up in brown *paper*. ['wrapping paper'] [1a]

Note also the variation of quantifiers (eg: *much/many*) in some of the following examples of count and noncount nouns:

- She was a *beauty* in her youth. [COUNT] [2]
- She had great *beauty* in her youth. [NONCOUNT] [2a]
- She's had many *difficulties*. [COUNT] [3]
- She's not had much *difficulty*. [NONCOUNT] [3a]
- He's had several odd *experiences*. [COUNT] [4]
- He hasn't had much *experience*. [NONCOUNT] [4a]
- There were bright *lights* and harsh *sounds*. [COUNT] [5]
- Light* travels faster than *sound*. [NONCOUNT] [5a]
- She will give a *talk* on Chinese art. [COUNT] [6]
- That's foolish *talk*. [NONCOUNT] [6a]
- The *lambs* were eating quietly. [COUNT] [7]
- There is *lamb* on the menu today. [NONCOUNT] [7a]

In many other cases, the type of distinction to be seen in the count noun *lamb*

(the animal, as in [7]) and the noncount noun *lamb* (the meat from the animal, as in [7a]) is achieved by separate lexical items, as in:

They raise a great many *calves*, *pigs*, and *sheep*. [8]
We eat a great deal of *veal*, *pork*, and *mutton*. [8a]

Other count/noncount pairs realized by different lexical items are the following:

<i>a garment</i> ~ <i>clothing</i>	<i>a job, a task</i> ~ <i>work</i> (cf 5.9)
<i>a laugh</i> ~ <i>laughter</i>	<i>a suitcase</i> ~ <i>luggage</i>
<i>a permit</i> ~ <i>permission</i>	<i>a poem</i> ~ <i>poetry</i>
<i>a weapon</i> ~ <i>arms</i> (cf 5.77)	<i>a machine</i> ~ <i>machinery</i>

Note also the contrast between the noncount noun *money* and the count nouns naming different units of money:

We haven't much *money* left. We've only got a few *coins*/two dollar *bills*/some pound *notes*.

Note The distinction between count nouns and noncount nouns is not fully explainable as necessarily inherent in 'real world' denotata. This is clear when we compare the words of languages closely related to English (cf 5.9). Rather, the justification for the count/noncount distinction is based on the grammatical characteristics of the English noun.

Reclassification

5.5 Nouns may also be shifted from one class to another by means of conversion (cf App 1.53). Thus a noncount noun like *cheese* can be 'reclassified' as a count noun involving a semantic shift so as to denote quality partition 'kind/type/form of', eg:

A: What *cheeses* have you got today?
B: Well, we have Cheddar, Gorgonzola, and Danish Blue.

Similarly, a noun like *coffee*, which is normally noncount, as in [1], can be reclassified as a count noun to mean an 'appropriate unit of' as in [1a] and [1b], or a 'kind/sort/brand of' as in [1c] and [1d]:

Do you want <i>tea</i> or <i>coffee</i> ?	[1]
Can I have a <i>coffee</i> , please. ['a cup of coffee']	[1a]
Two <i>coffees</i> , please. ['two cups of coffee']	[1b]
This is a nice <i>coffee</i> .	[1c]
I like <i>Brazilian coffees</i> best.	[1d]

Note There is a special case of reclassification in cases like the following:

Are you *cosmetics*?

Here there is no coreference relation between subject and complement as in *Are you a teacher?* The complement represents instead a compressed form of the predication; eg: *Are you (selling) cosmetics?* In this use of the noun there is an implied contrast: 'cosmetics as opposed to toys, jewellery, etc in a department store'. Similarly:

Are you *103*? ['the occupant of room number 103, as opposed to 104, etc']

The contrast may also be more explicit, as in:

Are you *church* or *chapel*? ['a member of the Church of England or a nonconformist']

In these last cases we may argue that the noun has been reclassified as an adjective (cf App 1.51), as in *They're very Oxbridge*.

Partitive constructions

Partition in respect of quality

- 5.6 Both count and noncount nouns can enter partitive constructions, *ie* constructions denoting a part of a whole. Such constructions express both quality partition (*eg: a kind of paper*) and quantity partition (*eg: a piece of paper*). Quality partition is expressed by a partitive count noun like *kind, sort, or type* followed by an *of*-phrase, *eg:*

SINGULAR PARTITIVES	PLURAL PARTITIVES
a new <i>kind of</i> computer	new <i>kinds of</i> computers
a delicious <i>sort of</i> bread	delicious <i>sorts of</i> bread
another <i>type of</i> research	other <i>types of</i> research

Quality partition of noncount nouns may thus be expressed either by a partitive construction or by reclassification (*cf* 5.5):

a nice kind of coffee ~ a nice coffee
English types of cheese ~ English cheeses

Note Whether we are dealing with count or noncount nouns, we can express the quality partition in the form *a + adjective + noun*, such that a sentence like the following is superficially ambiguous:
 We are importing *a new Italian shirt*.
 It may mean either 'a new type of' or 'a new item' (the former interpretation naturally being more likely in this case).

Partition in respect of quantity

- 5.7 (a) Noncount nouns

Noncount nouns are seen, as we have said, as denoting an undifferentiated mass. However, the expression of quantity and thus countability may be achieved by means of certain GENERAL PARTITIVE NOUNS, in particular *piece, bit, item*, followed by an *of*-phrase:

SINGULAR PARTITIVES	PLURAL PARTITIVES
<i>a piece of</i> cake	<i>two pieces of</i> cake
<i>a bit of</i> chalk	<i>some bits of</i> chalk
<i>an item of</i> news	<i>several items of</i> news

Quantity of noncount nouns may thus often be expressed either by partitive nouns or by reclassification (*cf* 5.5): *two lumps of sugar = two sugars*.

The most widely used partitive expression is *a piece of*, which can be combined with both concrete and abstract nouns, *eg:*

Concrete: *a piece of* bacon/chalk/coal/land/paper
 Abstract: *a piece of* advice/information/news/research/work

Bit generally implies a small quantity: *a bit of* rice/news/fun/research. With abstract nouns, *item* is used (besides *piece*):

an item of business/information/news ['a news item']

Item is not generally used with concrete nouns: **an item of* oil/cake (BUT *an item of* clothing).

In addition to these general partitives there are some more restricted and

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descriptive TYPICAL PARTITIVES which form expressions with specific concrete noncount nouns, such as the following:

- an *atom/grain* of truth
- a *bar* of chocolate/soap/gold/iron
- a *blade* of grass
- a *block* of ice/flats <BrE>/seats [in a theatre]/shares [in a business]
- a *cut* of lamb/meat; a *joint* of meat <BrE>
- a *drop* of water/oil/whisky
- a *grain* of corn/rice/sand/salt
- a *loaf* of bread
- a *lump* of coal/lead/sugar
- a *sheet* of paper/metal/ice
- a *slice* of bacon/bread/cake/meat
- a *speck* of dust/dirt
- a *stick* of chalk/dynamite/celery/rock [a sweet] <BrE>/candy <AmE>
- a *strip* of cloth/land/paper
- a *suit* of clothing/clothes/armour

(b) Plural count nouns

Whereas the general partitive *a piece of* can be used with many of the noncount nouns (*a piece of paper/bacon/news*, etc), it cannot be used with plural count nouns (including invariably plural nouns like *cattle*; cf 5.76ff). Other partitives are used with them, eg:

- a (large) *crowd* of people
- a (huge) *flock* of birds/sheep
- a (small) *herd* of cattle
- a *packet* <BrE>/*pack* <esp AmE> of cigarettes
- a *series* of incidents/concerts/lectures
- a *bunch* of flowers/keys [In informal style, *bunch* is also used about people, like 'group': *a bunch of teenagers*.]

(c) Singular count nouns

Partition can also be expressed in reference to singular count nouns, eg:

- a *piece* of a loaf
- a *branch* of a tree
- a *page* of a book
- a *section* of a newspaper
- a *verse* of a poem

Fractional partition can also be expressed by such general quantitative items as *half*, *all*, *whole* + *of* + noun (cf 5.16f):

I'd like { *half of*
a quarter of
all of
the whole of
the rest of
the remainder of } that piece (of meat).

Note [a] When we modify a partitive noun sequence, the modification applies to the group as a whole: an expensive *cup of coffee* [The *cup of coffee* cost a lot.]

But, of course, since in many cases the adjective modifying the whole group could equally apply to the second noun, we have some instances like the following where the meanings of the two phrases differ little, if at all:

- a hot [*cup of tea*] = a cup of hot tea
- a good [*stroke of luck*] = a stroke of good luck
- a beautiful [*pair of legs*] = a pair of beautiful legs

The premodifiers (*hot*, etc) in such cases often apply more appropriately to the second noun than to the first; *ie* it is not the cup but the tea that is hot in *a hot cup of tea*. In *a nice glass of whisky*, *nice* is roughly equivalent to 'welcome' and offers only implicit comment on the quality of the liquor.

[b] Typical partitives sometimes have a negative intensifying force (cf 8.111):

- A: Did you sleep well?
- B: No, I didn't get *a wink* (of sleep).

[c] When the two partitive constructions combine, the quantity partitive is included in the scope of the quality partitive:

- [*two kinds of*] [*loaves of bread*]
- but not: **two loaves of kinds of bread*

Measure partitive nouns

5.8 The measure partitives relate to precise quantities denoting length, area, volume, and weight, for example (note the compulsory *of*):

- Length: a *foot* of copper wire
a *metre* <BrE>/a *meter* <AmE>/a *yard* of cloth
a *mile* of cable
- Area: an *acre*/a *hectare* of land
- Volume: a *litre* <BrE>/a *liter* <AmE> of wine
a *pint*/a *quart* of milk
- Weight: an *ounce* of tobacco a *pound* of butter
a *kilo* of apples a *ton* of coal

Measure partitives can be either singular or plural:

- a/one *gallon*
 - two/several *gallons*
- } of water

If count, the second noun must be plural:

- one *kilo of*
 - two *kilos of*
- } { *apples*
**apple*

Noncount nouns and their count equivalents

5.9 It may be noted that, apart from a tendency for concrete nouns to be count and for abstract nouns to be noncount, there is no necessary connection between the classes of nouns and the entities to which they refer. In some related languages, the nouns corresponding to *information*, *money*, *news*, and *work*, for example, are count nouns, but in English they are noncount:

- He didn't give us *much information*.
- Do you need *all this money*?
- The news* is rather bad today.
- She doesn't like *hard work*.

Some noncount nouns with count equivalents are given below:

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NONCOUNT NOUN	COUNT EQUIVALENT
This is important <i>information</i> .	a <i>piece/bit/word</i> of information
Have you any <i>news</i> ?	a <i>piece/a bit/an item</i> of good news
a lot of <i>abuse</i>	a <i>term/word</i> of abuse
some good <i>advice</i>	a <i>piece/word</i> of good advice
warm <i>applause</i>	a <i>round</i> of applause
How's <i>business</i> ?	a <i>piece/bit</i> of business
There is <i>evidence</i> that . . .	a <i>piece</i> of evidence
expensive <i>furniture</i>	a <i>piece/an article/a suite</i> of furniture
The <i>interest</i> is only 5 per cent.	a (low) <i>rate</i> of interest
What (bad/good) <i>luck</i> !	a <i>piece</i> of (bad/good) luck

Since such differences between languages can be adequately treated only in contrastive grammars, we will restrict the list below to a sample of some nouns (in addition to those mentioned earlier) which are noncount in English but correspond to count nouns in some other languages:

<i>anger</i>	<i>behaviour</i>	<i>cash</i>
<i>chaos</i>	<i>chess</i>	' <i>conduct</i>
<i>courage</i>	<i>dancing</i>	<i>education</i>
<i>equipment</i>	<i>fun</i>	<i>harm</i>
<i>homework</i>	<i>hospitality</i>	<i>leisure</i>
<i>moonlight</i>	<i>music</i>	<i>parking</i>
<i>photography</i>	<i>publicity</i>	' <i>refuse</i>
<i>research</i>	<i>resistance</i>	<i>safety</i>
<i>scenery</i>	<i>shopping</i>	<i>smoking</i>
<i>sunshine</i>	<i>traffic</i>	<i>violence</i>

Note [a] Some of the noncount nouns can be count nouns with special meanings, eg: *moneys* 'amounts of money', as can be seen in a dictionary.

[b] It can be argued that some nouns, like *weather*, are neither count (**a weather*) nor noncount (**a lot of weather*), but these nouns share features belonging to both classes. Noncount noun features include the premodified structures *a lot of good weather*, *some bad weather*, *what lovely weather*. On the other hand, count noun features include the plural *go out in all weathers*, *in the worst of weathers*.

[c] On the use of *fun* as adjective, cf 7.14 Note [c].

[d] Some noncount nouns accept the indefinite article when they are modified (cf 5.59), eg:

They are doing *a brisk business*. (NOT **a business*)

In some cases no modification seems to be required. In the following example, however, modification is in fact implied:

She has had *an education*. ['a good education']

[e] Names of languages are all noncount, eg:

She speaks *good English*. [~ 'a good English']

Occasionally, however, they are count, as in the partitive sense described in 5.6:

She speaks *a dialectal French*. ['a dialectal form of French']

Determinatives

- 5.10 When used in discourse, noun phrases refer to the linguistic or situational context. The kind of reference a particular noun phrase has depends on its DETERMINATIVE element, *ie* the item which 'determines' it. This function is typically realized by a set of closed-class items, or DETERMINERS, which occur before the noun acting as head of the noun phrase (or before its premodifiers) (*cf* 2.28*ff*). Thus we say that the noun phrase in [1] has indefinite reference, whereas the noun phrase in [2] has definite reference:

Have you seen $\begin{cases} \text{a bicycle?} & [1] \\ \text{the bicycle?} & [2] \end{cases}$

Indefinite reference is typically indicated by the indefinite article *a/an*, and definite reference is typically indicated by the definite article *the*, but, as we shall see, there are also other determiners with a similar function.

We distinguish three classes of determiners:

- (I) PREDETERMINERS, *eg*: *half, all, double*;
- (II) CENTRAL DETERMINERS, *eg*: the articles *the, a/an*;
- (III) POSTDETERMINERS, *eg*: cardinal and ordinal numerals, *many, few*.

The three classes of determiners have been set up on the basis of their position in the noun phrase in relation to each other. Thus we do not find central determiner + predeterminer (**their all trouble*), or postdeterminer + central determiner + predeterminer (**five the all boys*), but only the order I + II + III given above: *all their trouble, all the five boys*.

We begin by discussing the articles and other central determiners (5.11–14), and then go on to predeterminers (5.15–19), and postdeterminers (5.20–25).

Central determiners

The articles

- 5.11 The most common and typical central determiners are the definite and indefinite articles, *the* and *a/an*, respectively. We have seen in 5.2 that different noun classes require different articles. For the two classes of common nouns, the count and noncount nouns, the distribution into number (singular/plural) and definiteness (definite/indefinite) can be stated as follows:

Table 5.11 Use of the articles with count and noncount nouns

		COUNT	NONCOUNT
SINGULAR	definite	<i>the book</i>	<i>the furniture</i>
	indefinite	<i>a book</i>	<i>furniture</i>
PLURAL	definite	<i>the books</i>	
	indefinite	<i>books</i>	

The forms of the articles depend on the initial sound of the following word.

In its unstressed (and normal) use, the definite article is always written *the* but pronounced /ðə/ before consonants and /ði/ before vowels. The unstressed indefinite article is *a* /ə/ before consonants and *an* /ən/ before vowels. Note that it is the pronunciation, not the spelling, of the following word that determines their form:

$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{the } /ðə/ \\ \text{a } /ə/ \end{array} \right\} \text{boy, usage, hole}$	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{the } /ði/ \\ \text{an } /ən/ \end{array} \right\} \text{understanding, hour}$
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The use of the articles is discussed in 5.26ff.

Note [a] The indefinite article *a/an* can be regarded as an unstressed numeral, equivalent to stressed *one*. Compare:

a pound or two *one or two pounds*

A/an cannot cooccur with *one* (except, in limited cases, when *one* is the head of a noun phrase: *You are a one!*, cf 6.55 Note [b]), and may sometimes replace *one* (cf 5.38).

[b] There is fluctuation in the form of the indefinite article before some words that are written with initial *h*, depending on whether the *h* is pronounced or not:

<i>a</i>	{	<i>hotel, herb</i>		
<i>an</i>	{	<i>historical novel</i>	BUT: <i>a history</i>	
		<i>habitual drunkard</i>	BUT: <i>a habit</i>	

[c] The initial *h* is not pronounced in *hour* (*hourly*), *honest*, *honour* (*honourable*), *heir* (*heir*, *heirloom*). Thus: *an hour ago*, *an honours degree*.

[d] Note words which are spelled with an initial vowel but pronounced with a consonant: *a European car*, *a UNESCO official*; and, conversely, words which are spelled with an initial consonant but pronounced with a vowel: *an MP*, *an RP accent*.

[e] The articles are stressed only for very special emphasis. Here the distinction between the pre-vowel and pre-consonant form is neutralized for the definite article:

'the /ði:/ *boy, usage, understanding, hour*
'a /eɪ/ *boy, usage*
'an /æn/ *understanding, hour*

In writing, emphasis is often indicated by italics or underlining: *'the man*'.

The stressed definite article is often used to indicate excellence or superiority in some respect [1, 2], or the identity of somebody well-known [3] (cf 5.63):

He would be <i>'the /ði:/ man</i> for the job.	[1]
The demonstration will be <i>'the /ði:/ event</i> this week.	[2]
You don't mean <i>'the /ði:/ Professor Hart</i> ?	[3]

There is some criticism of the overuse of stressed articles for expected unstressed articles, especially on radio and TV (cf overuse of stressed prepositions, 9.9 Note, 18.14 Note [b]).

[f] The indefinite article means 'a certain', 'a person giving his name as' (cf: *one* 5.63 Note [b]), in such cases as:

A Mr Johnson came to see you last night.

[g] On *a/an* in distributive expressions of frequency like *twice a day*, cf 5.18.

Other central determiners

5.12 The use of the articles is not the only possibility for 'determining' nouns. Instead of *a* or *the* with *book* we may have *eg: this/that/every/each/no book*. Like the articles, these words, and some others, are called central determiners. They form a set of closed-class items that are mutually exclusive with each other, *ie* there cannot be more than one occurring before the noun head: **a the boy* and **a some boy*. Thus, the central determiners are in a 'choice relation', *ie* they occur one instead of another. In this respect they are unlike *eg: all, many, and white*, which are in a 'chain relation' (cf 2.5), *ie* they occur one after another in the noun phrase: *all the many white houses*.

The articles have no function independent of the noun they precede. Most

other determiners have the additional function of pronouns, eg: *some, that,* and *either*:

DETERMINER FUNCTION	PRONOUN FUNCTION
A: I want <i>some ice</i> .	B: Here's <i>some</i> for you.
A: What's <i>that thing</i> over there?	B: <i>That's</i> our computer.
<i>Either book</i> will do.	You can have <i>either</i> (of the books).

On pronouns like *either* with or without the alternative *of*-construction, cf 6.48.

No and *every* are exceptional: like the articles, they cannot function independently as pronouns. They can, however, form part of compound pronouns when followed by (-)one, -body, or -thing (cf 6.45ff):

<i>no one</i>	<i>nobody</i>	<i>nothing</i>
<i>everyone</i>	<i>everybody</i>	<i>everything</i>

Unlike other central determiners, the articles have no lexical meaning but solely contribute definite or indefinite status to the nouns they determine. Yet the dependence is not unilateral. For example, a count noun like *boy* is, on its own, only a lexical item. To assume grammatical status, it requires an 'overt' determiner of some kind. The use of the articles will be discussed in 5.26ff, and the use of other central determiners in Chapter 6.

- Note [a] There are two exceptions to the rule that count nouns cannot occur without a determiner. One occurs in parallel structures (cf 5.50):
Man or boy, I don't like him.
 The other exceptional case is that of vocatives (cf 10.52f):
 Look here, *man!*
Man is also used generically without the article (cf 5.54 Note).
 [b] Coordinated noun-phrase heads can share a determiner placed before the first head (cf 13.67):
the boys and (the) girls
the radios, (the) tape recorders, and (the) television sets in this store
a knife, (a) fork, and (a) spoon

Central determiners and noun classes

- 5.13 We have noted in 5.2 that there are certain cooccurrence restrictions between articles and common nouns. The definite article can occur with all three noun classes (singular count, plural count, and singular noncount), but the zero and indefinite articles cannot do so. When we consider determiners as a whole, we will find that there are many more restrictions. For *no*, for example, we have all three possibilities:

no pen no pens no music

But there are incomplete paradigms for *this, either, and enough*:

<i>this pen</i>	* <i>this pens</i>	<i>this music</i>
<i>either pen</i>	* <i>either pens</i>	* <i>either music</i>
* <i>enough pen</i>	<i>enough pens</i>	<i>enough music</i>

- 5.14 The central determiners can be divided into five types with respect to their cooccurrence with the noun classes singular count (*chair, problem, etc*), plural count (*chairs, problems, etc*), and noncount nouns (*furniture, information, etc*).

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Type	SINGULAR COUNT	PLURAL COUNT	NONCOUNT
(a)	+	+	+
(b)	-	+	+
(c)	+	-	+
(d)	-	+	-
(e)	+	-	-

Fig 5.14 Cooccurrence of central determiners and noun classes

Type (a): Determiners of singular count, plural count, and noncount nouns.

(i) The definite article *the* (cf 5.27ff):

Where do you want me to put *the chair/the chairs/the furniture*?

(ii) The possessive pronouns as determiners: *my, our, your, his, her, its, their* (cf 6.29):

Have you seen *my suitcase/my suitcases/my luggage*?

(iii) The relative determiners *whose* (cf 6.34) and *which* (cf 6.35 Note [c]):

The lady *whose car* you hit was furious.

Call again at 11, by *which time* the meeting should be over.

(iv) The *wh*-determiners in *-ever* (cf 14.20):

Vote for *whichever proposal* you think most favourable.

For *whatever reason*, don't be late again.

Whosever idea this may be, I don't like it.

(v) The interrogative determiners *what, which, whose* (cf 6.36ff):

What colour?

Which information?

Whose ideas are these?

(vi) The negative determiner *no* (cf 6.62):

We have *no problem/problems* with violence here.

The sign said '*No parking*'.

Type (b): Determiners of plural count nouns and noncount nouns.

(i) Zero article (cf 5.39ff):

There were *people* everywhere.

Do you want to play *chess*?

(ii) The assertive determiner *some* (unstressed: /səm/) and the nonassertive determiner *any* (cf 6.59ff):

I want *some rolls/bread*, please.

Have we got *any rolls/bread* for breakfast tomorrow?

(iii) The quantitative determiner *enough* (cf 6.57):

I haven't got *enough equipment/tools* to do the job.

Type (c): Determiners of singular count nouns and singular noncount nouns. The demonstrative determiners *this* and *that* (cf 6.40ff):

Have you read *this/that book*?

Type (d): Determiners of plural count nouns. The demonstrative determiners *these* and *those* (cf 6.40ff):

Have you seen *these/those plays*?

Type (e): Determiners of singular count nouns.

(i) The indefinite article *a/an* (cf 5.36ff):

Have you got *a pen*?

(ii) The universal determiners *every* and *each* (cf 6.51):

I want to interview *every/each student* individually.

(iii) The nonassertive determiner *either* (cf 6.59ff):

You can park on *either side*.

(iv) The negative determiner *neither* (cf 6.62):

Neither party accepted the arbitration proposal.

Note [a] Strongly stressed *some* can occur also with certain singular count nouns, especially temporal nouns (cf 6.52):

Some day he will get his scholarship.

With the meaning 'a certain', etc, stressed *some* can also cooccur with other singular count nouns:

Some odd person asked for you on the phone.

[b] Stressed *any* can occur also with singular count nouns under certain conditions (cf 6.61):

I will consider *any offer/offers*. ['it doesn't matter which']

[c] *Every* is exceptional among central determiners in occasionally allowing a genitive or a possessive determiner to precede it:

His every action shows that he is a very determined young man. BUT NOT: **the/an every action*

Predeterminers

5.15 Predeterminers, which can occur before certain central determiners, include:

(i) *all, both, and half* (cf 5.16f):

all (the) girls, both those cars, half an hour

(ii) the multipliers *double, twice, three times*, etc (cf 5.18):

double the sum, twice my salary

(iii) the fractions *one-third, one-fifth*, etc (cf 5.19):

one-third the time

(iv) *such, what* (cf 7.63, 17.96):

Such a surprise!

What a fine day!

Predeterminers are mutually exclusive:

all girls, both girls BUT NOT: **all both girls*
half the sum, double the sum BUT NOT: **half double the sum*

Note The combination *all such*, as in [1], is an exception to the rule, just noted, that predeterminers are mutually exclusive:

Although every attempt is made to find suitable foster-homes for the children, it cannot be assumed that *all such* placements will be successful. [1]

The predeterminer *such*, used in this way as a pro-form (cf 2.44, 6.44 Note [b]), can also follow quantifiers such as *any*, *no*, and *many*, as well as cardinal numerals:

Outbreaks of small-arms fire along the frontier became more frequent in May,

{ but { *no*
 hardly any }
and { *several*
 many
 forty-one } } *such* incidents were officially investigated. [2]

All, both, half

5.16 The predeterminers *all*, *both*, and *half* have restrictions on cooccurrence with determiners and noun heads. They can occur before the articles (*all the time*), possessive determiners (*all my time*, etc), demonstrative determiners (*all this time*). However, since they are themselves quantifiers, *all*, *both*, and *half* do not occur with the 'quantitative' determiners *every*, (*neither*, *each*, *some*, *any*, *no*, *enough* (but cf 5.17 Note [a])). *Both* can occur only with plural nouns and has dual number (see below):

<i>all (the) day</i>	<i>all (the) days</i>	<i>all (the) furniture</i>
<i>half a day</i>	<i>half my days</i>	<i>half the furniture</i>
	<i>both (the/my) eyes</i>	

In addition to this predeterminer function, *all*, *both*, and *half* as pronouns can take partitive *of*-phrases, which are optional with nouns and obligatory with pronouns (cf 'of-pronouns', 6.48):

<i>all (of) the students</i>	<i>all of them/whom</i>
<i>both (of) his eyes</i>	<i>both of them/which</i>
<i>half (of) the time/cost</i>	<i>half of it/this</i>

With a quantifier following, the *of*-phrase is preferred (esp in AmE):

all of the many boys

All three can be used as independent pronouns:

All/both/half passed their exams.

All and *both* (but not *half*) can occur after the head, either immediately or in the *M* adverb position (after the operator, cf 8.16). For *all* and *both* we have, then, the following possibilities:

<i>All students</i> were accepted.	[1]
<i>All the students</i> were accepted.	[2]
<i>All of the students</i> were accepted.	[3]
<i>The students</i> were <i>all</i> accepted.	[4]
<i>All</i> were accepted.	[5]
<i>All of them</i> were accepted.	[6]

They were all accepted. [7]
 ?*They all were accepted.* [8]

All is considered a pronoun in all these constructions except [1] and [2], where it is a predeterminer.

The predeterminer *both* and the central determiners *either* and *neither* are not plural proper but 'dual', ie they can refer to only two entities. Compared with the numeral *two*, *both* is emphatic:

Both (the) } students were excellent.
The two }

For the use of these items as pronouns, cf 6.50 (*all, both*), 6.57 (*half*).

All and whole

5.17 The form *all* + noun with no article usually has generic reference (cf 5.26):

All men are created equal. [generic reference]

Contrast: *All the men* in the mine wore helmets. [specific reference]

But *all* + noun is not necessarily generic, eg:

I will see *all (the) students* at 11 a.m.

All (the) men must leave their coats here, but (the) women may take theirs with them.

The predeterminer *all* and the quantity partitive *whole* (cf 5.7) appear in parallel expressions. In *the whole of*, the definite article is obligatory. The use of *all (of) (the)* and *the whole (of)* is far from straightforward.

(i) *All, all the, or the whole* is used with temporal nouns, eg:

all (the) } day/morning/week
the whole }

All of the + unit of time is rather uncommon:

?*all of the* day/hour/week

In the negated expression *I haven't seen him all day*, only the zero form is used. With indefinite reference, only *whole* can be used:

I spent { *a whole morning* } studying the script. ['full, entire']
 { *the whole morning* }

(ii) *All the* or *the whole* is used with other count nouns that are understood to be divisible:

all the } family/way/story
the whole }

All + noun occurs occasionally with concrete singular count nouns [1, 2], and it is less rare with contrastive stress [1a, 2a], where *book* and *banana* are treated as a divisible mass:

?I haven't read *all the BOOK*. [1]

The monkey ate *all the banana*. [2]
 I haven't read *ALL the book*. [1a]
 The monkey ate *ALL the banana*. [2a]

The normal constructions would be:

all of the } *book/banana*
the whole }

Also with abstract nouns, *the whole* is often preferable to *all the*; eg:

the whole truth/distance/environment

(iii) With proper nouns and other nouns without the definite article, *all (of)* or *the whole of* is used:

all (of) } *Finland/London/next month*
the whole of }

The use of *all* + a geographical name to denote the population is rather formal:

All Paris welcomed the General.

In less formal contexts, *The whole of Paris* . . . would be normal in denoting the population, or (more likely) referring to the city area.

(iv) With noncount nouns *all (of) the* is used:

Have you used up *all (of) the coffee*?

All (of) the music on the programme was modern.

The whole of is less preferred and *the whole* is unacceptable here.

- Note [a] There is also an adverb *half* which can cooccur with noun heads, as in:
 It is *half wine, half water*.
 In the colloquial negation *n't half* (esp BrE), *half* can precede *enough* (cf 8.107 Note [b]):
 He hasn't *half enough* money.
- [b] *Both* and *half* with the *of*-construction are sometimes (especially dialectally) preceded by the definite article:
 You don't know *the half of it*.
 I've had enough of *the both of you*.
- [c] The postposed pronoun *all* in *They were all hungry* must not be confused with *all* as an informal intensifying adverb in *He is all upset* (cf 7.57).
- [d] For the following uses of *quite*, *rather*, *such*, and *what*, cf 7.56 Note [b], 7.63:
 It was *quite a party*. It's *rather an odd story*.
Such a fine present! *What a stupid idea!*
- [e] 'Restrictives' like *just*, *only*, *especially*, etc also occur before determiners:
Only the best cars are exported.

However, they have no special relation to noun phrase structure, since they can also modify verbs, adverbs, and adjectives (cf focusing subjuncts, 8.116f):

He's *just* { a boy.
 feeling sick.
 a little sick.
 sleepy.

The multipliers *double*, *twice*, etc

- 5.18 The second type of predeterminer includes the multipliers which occur with nouns denoting quantity:

twice { his strength
her age } *double* { the amount
their salaries }
three times { this amount
the usual cost
the sum }

Once, twice, and three, four, etc times can cooccur with the determiners *a, every, each,* and (less commonly) *per* to form 'distributive' expressions of frequency with a temporal noun as head (cf 8.64):

once } *twice* } *three* } *four* } *times* } { *a* } { *every* } { *each* } { *per* } } { *day* } { *week* } { *month* } { *year* } { *decade* }

Such expressions can also occur with *every* + spatial nouns:

We stopped *once every mile*.

Both with temporal and spatial nouns, *every* can be followed by a numeral in such expressions as the above:

once every three months
twice every hundred miles

The fractions *one-third, two-fifths, etc*

- 5.19 The fractions can also be followed by determiners. Unlike the multipliers, the fractions have the alternative *of*-construction. The indefinite article can replace *one* (cf 5.38):

He did it in { *one-third* } { *a third* } (*of*) *the time* it took me.

Postdeterminers

- 5.20 Postdeterminers follow predeterminers or central determiners (if such determiners are present). But they precede any adjectives and other premodifying items (cf 17.2). Postdeterminers include:

- (a) Cardinal numerals (cf 5.21): *my three children*
- (b) Ordinal numerals and 'general ordinals' (cf 5.22): *the first day, the last month*
- (c) Closed-class quantifiers (cf 5.23f): *few people*
- (d) Open-class quantifiers (cf 5.25): *a large number of people*

(a) Cardinal numerals

- 5.21 *One* cooccurs with singular count nouns (*one sister*), and the other cardinal numerals (cf 6.63) cooccur with plural count nouns (*two, three, etc brothers*). In many contexts, *one* may be regarded as a stressed form of the indefinite article and may sometimes replace it (cf 5.19, 5.38):

I would like { *a* } { *one* } photocopy of this article.

Thus, the indefinite article normally cannot cooccur with *one*, but the definite article can:

**a one* book
the one ['only'] book } I like best
the two books

(b) Ordinal numerals and 'general ordinals'

5.22 The ordinal numerals have a one-for-one relation with the cardinals: *first/one, second/two, third/three, fourth/four, twentieth/twenty*, etc (cf 6.63f).

The 'general ordinals' include items like *next, last, past, (an)other, additional*, and *further* ['additional'], which resemble the ordinal numerals grammatically and semantically.

Ordinals cooccur with count nouns and usually precede any cardinal numbers in the noun phrase:

the *first two* days *another three* weeks

Note [a] The general ordinals *last, past*, and *next* may precede or follow cardinals with a difference of meaning. For example: *the last two pages* would mean 'the last and penultimate page of a book', whereas *the two last pages* could mean 'the last page in each of two books'. On divided concord usage, eg: *The last two months is/are . . .*, cf 10.35 Note[b].

[b] *Another* has two functions. It can be the unstressed form of 'one other' in contrast with *the other* (definite; cf 6.58), as in [1]; or it can have the meaning of 'further', 'additional', 'second', in which case there is no definite form, as in [2]:

I don't like this room. I'd prefer $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{another} \\ \textit{the other} \end{array} \right\}$ *one*. [1]

We need *another two rooms* for the meeting.

[two more rooms'; cf: *the other two rooms* 'the two different rooms'] [2]

Note that when it is followed by a plural cardinal number, *another* takes a plural noun as head.

(c) Closed-class quantifiers

5.23 There are two small groups of closed-class quantifiers which function as postdeterminers (cf 6.53ff).

(i) *Many, (a) few*, and *several* cooccur only with plural count nouns:

There were $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{too many} \\ \textit{only a few} \\ \textit{very few} \\ \textit{several} \end{array} \right\}$ mistakes in your essay.

(ii) *Much* and *(a) little* cooccur only with noncount nouns:

She hasn't got *much* money.

She has only got *(a) little* money.

There are restrictions on the use of *much* with singular and *many* with plural nouns, and the corresponding open-class postdeterminers are widely used instead (cf 6.53). Thus *much* is typically used in a nonassertive sentence like [1]; but in an assertive sentence like [2], usually *a lot of* (chiefly in informal style), or a similar colloquial postdeterminer, is used:

We don't have *much* time. [1]

We have $\left. \begin{array}{l} \textit{plenty of} \\ \textit{a lot of} \\ \textit{lots of} \end{array} \right\}$ time. [2]

In the case of *(a) few* ['a small number'] and *(a) little* ['a small quantity'], there is positive/negative contrast according to whether the indefinite article is used or not. When *a/an* does not precede, *few* and *little* are stressed:

He wrote $\left. \begin{array}{l} \textit{a few} \textit{'books. ['some, several']} \\ \textit{few} \textit{'books. ['not many']} \\ \textit{a little} \textit{'poetry. ['some']} \\ \textit{little} \textit{'poetry. ['not much']} \end{array} \right\}$

The postdeterminers *(a) few* and *(a) little* (cf 6.53, 6.62), the determiners *any*, *no*, and *some* (cf 5.39f, 6.52), and the predeterminers *all* and *both* are all quantifiers although they belong to different syntactic classes.

- Note [a] *Few* and *little* may be preceded by central determiners other than *a*, eg: *these few days*, *that little money*, but we shall refer only to *a few* versus *few*, *a little* versus *little* where the distinction is clearest.
- [b] *Several* can be preceded by a possessive determiner in the sense of 'separate', 'respective': *their several opinions*.
- [c] *Many* and *few* can also be used predicatively in formal style (cf 6.53 Note [b], 6.62):
His faults were *many/few*.
Many can also function as a predeterminer with singular count nouns preceded by the indefinite article:
many a good student (rather formal) [*many good students*']
- [d] The quantifier *enough* is used with both count and noncount nouns:
There are (not) *enough* students.
There is (not) *enough* money.
Occasionally it follows the noun (especially noncount: *money enough*), but this use strikes many people as archaic or dialectal.

5.24 Since *a few* determines plural count nouns (*a few books*), and *a little* determines noncount nouns (*a little poetry*), neither of which noun classes cooccurs with the indefinite article, it will be clear that in these instances *a* belongs to the quantifier alone.

Few, *little*, *much*, and *many* are gradable, and also have comparative and superlative forms (cf 7.74ff):

<i>few/fewer/fewest</i> dollars	<i>many/more/most</i> dollars
<i>little/less/least</i> money	<i>much/more/most</i> money

There is a tendency to use *less* (instead of *fewer*) and *least* (instead of *fewest*) also with count nouns:

You've made *less* mistakes than last time.

This usage is however often condemned. *No less than* is more generally accepted:

No less than fifty people were killed in the accident.

Being gradable, *many*, *much*, *few*, and *little* can be modified by intensifying adverbs (cf 7.87ff): *too much*, *very few*, etc.

- Note The quantifier *little* ['not much'] should be distinguished from the homonymous adjective *little*

['small'], which cooccurs with singular or plural count nouns: *a little girl, five little girls*. Thus *a little cake* is ambiguous according to whether it means 'a small cake' [*little* = adjective] or 'a small amount of cake' [*little* = postdeterminer].

(d) **Open-class quantifiers**

- 5.25 There is also a large open class of phrasal quantifiers which function semantically like the closed-class quantifiers, but most of which consist of a noun of quantity (*lot, deal, amount*, etc) followed by *of* and often preceded by the indefinite article. Some of these, including *plenty of*, can cooccur equally with noncount and plural count nouns:

The room contained $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{plenty of} \\ \textit{a lot of} \\ \textit{lots of} \end{array} \right\} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{students.} \\ \textit{furniture.} \end{array} \right.$

These quantifiers (especially *lots*) are chiefly used informally.

Others are restricted to quantifying only noncount nouns [1], or plural count nouns [2]:

The chest contained $a \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{great} \\ \textit{good} \\ \textit{(large)} \\ \textit{(small)} \end{array} \right\} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{deal} \\ \textit{quantity} \\ \textit{amount} \end{array} \right\} \textit{of money.}$ [1]

The hall contained $a \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{(great)} \\ \textit{(large)} \\ \textit{(good)} \end{array} \right\} \textit{number of students.}$ [2]

As the examples suggest, it is usual for these open-class quantifiers to be modified by a quantifying adjective, the latter being obligatory in Standard English with *deal*. (On concord with open-class quantifiers, cf 10.43.)

Although the quantity nouns *lot, deal*, etc look like the head of a noun phrase, there are grounds for arguing that the whole expression (*a lot of, a good deal of*, etc) functions as a determiner. Notably, the verb regularly has number concord with the second noun, rather than the first, as in:

$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{Lots of food was} \\ \textit{= There was lots of food} \end{array} \right.$ on the table.

- Note [a] As with *less* and *least*, there is a tendency (esp in AmE) to use *amount* for the more generally acceptable *number* also with count nouns, despite objections to this usage:

There were *large amounts of tourists* on the ferry.
This hall can seat *a large amount of people*.

- [b] In familiar spoken English we find a wide range of quantifiers roughly synonymous with *lots of*, eg:

We've got *bags of* time.
She's got $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{stacks of} \\ \textit{heaps of} \\ \textit{loads of} \end{array} \right\}$ money.
They have *umpteens* jazz records.