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**Míra užívání jednotlivých způsobů vyjadřování  
generické reference u anglických podstatných jmen**

**Jan Vála**

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**Faculty of Education**

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**The competition of individual means of expressing  
generic reference with English nouns**

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V Plzni dne 28. června 2013

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Jméno a příjmení

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## **Abstract**

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The competition of individual means of expressing generic reference with English nouns.

Supervisor: PhDr. Jarmila Petrlíková, Ph.D.

The main aim of this undergraduate thesis is to investigate the competition of individual means of expressing generic reference with the English noun. This thesis contains theoretical background which is the first part of the work and also the analysis of the excerpts that follows the theoretical background. The theoretical background starts with the basic explanation of what a noun is according to Biber et al. and it also comprises the basic grammatical categories of an English noun. Thereafter the category of definiteness is more explained – Russell’s theory of uniqueness and Christophersen’s theory of familiarity followed by the whole idea interpreted by a Czech linguist Belán (his terms reference and determination are explained). Also Chesterman’s idea of division of countability to three subcategories - locatability, inclusiveness and extensivity, is added. It concludes with Dušková’s interpretation of definiteness. This thesis also deals with countability, its function and general diversion to countable and uncountable nouns. Also the Quirk’s problem of dual class membership is mentioned. Then, examples of nouns that can be countable or uncountable are mentioned and finally, Dušková’s partition of nouns on countable, uncountable and nouns that connect with low or high numbers is adverted. Next, the grammatical category of reference is mentioned. At first, the general information is given, and then the chapter is divided to other two subchapters, each describing different type of reference – generic and non-generic. The last chapter of the theoretical part deals with the usage of articles and determiners among uncountable nouns.

The analytical part deals with 255 excerpts from a Stephen King’s novel, *Duma Key* (2008). These excerpts are present in appendix A. The results of the research are present in the conclusion and supported by graphs with percentage count provided in Appendix B. The results of the research are: 78% of the nouns used to describe generic reference are concrete and 22% are abstract. The most common occurrence of the generic reference is with the countable nouns – 79%, and with the zero article (93%). This thesis submits only a limited number of examples of generic reference, so it cannot be taken as a general result.

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# 1 Introduction

This thesis deals with generic reference of an English noun. In the Czech language, the noun is defined by four basic grammatical categories (casus, numerus, genus, paradigma). In English there is one more grammatical category of nouns that is determined and that is definiteness. In the Czech language the reference of a noun or a noun phrase can be expressed by other means such as demonstrative pronouns or context but not by an article. That is one of the reasons for choosing this topic as the underground thesis; to describe and analyze the functions of reference.

The whole work consists of two main parts. These are the theoretical background, which had been extracted from the sources given in the reference list and the analytical part which then uses the theory described in the theoretical part and applies it to the excerpts. These examples of the grammatical category discussed are extracted from a Stephen King's novel, *Duma Key*. The main idea of the research focuses on expressing of the generic reference and the competition of these means of expression. The questions are: Why are they used? How often are they used? How are they realized?

The first part of the work is the theoretical background as mentioned above. This part is divided into 5 subchapters; first is a brief description of an English noun following by the description of three categories of an English noun that are closely related to reference. These are definiteness and countability. Then the category of reference is explained and divided into subchapters involving generic and non-generic reference.

The analytical part starts with the description of the research method used and is followed by the conclusion which is supported by graphical representation in Appendix B. The 255 excerpts which are further analyzed are drawn directly from the book, can be found in Appendix A as well as the description of the main attributes. The main chapter of the analytical part is the conclusion, which tries to find similarities and shared attributes among them.

## 2 Theoretical Background

### 2.1 General Definition of the English Noun

Biber et al. (2000) writes that there are several characteristics of a noun:

If the morphological point of view is considered, nouns are words inflected; by number (table, tables) and case (John's car). This does not apply for uncountable nouns (e.g. air, lead). Nouns can also be compound or derived with a complex morphological structure – e.g. derived and compound nouns.

From the semantic point of view nouns denote concrete entities, such as people and things in the extra-linguistic reality (e.g. table, boy), but they may also denote qualities and states (e.g. love, friendship).

From the syntactic point of view, the head of a noun phrase (NP) can be a noun. As in the Czech language, NPs function as subjects, direct objects, indirect objects, etc. The usability of NPs is wide.

Parrot (2003) enriched the popular definition of an English noun as follows: “it describes person, place or thing” (p. 55) and he says that a noun “expresses a range of additional meanings such as concepts, qualities, organizations, communities, sensations and events, and they convey a substantial proportion of the information in most texts”. (p.55)

Nouns are distinguished by their semantic meaning, grammatical categories, syntactic functions and morphological structure as written above.

### 2.2 Noun classes

Nouns can be divided into two main sub-groups: common and proper.

Proper nouns – these are used for a person, place, thing or idea, which is, or is imagined to be unique. These nouns lack the contrast in articles and therefore contrast in definiteness, and they also lack contrast in number (e.g. Sue, but not normally Sues, a Sue, the Sue) and they also do not have the full range of determiners (Biber et al., 2000).

Common nouns – these nouns can be further dividable to countable and uncountable.



In general, countable nouns are those nouns that can be counted. They both have singular and plural form. In both of these forms there is a contrast between the definite and indefinite forms (a cat v. the cat, cats v. the cats). Countable nouns denote individual separable objects. The variation of the grammatical category of number is the most significant grammatical feature of a countable noun. Countability is also reflected in co-occurrence patterns with determiners (Biber et al., 2000). On the other hand, uncountable nouns refer to entities which cannot be counted and denote undifferentiated mass.

From the semantic point of view, nouns can be divided into concrete and abstract. Concrete nouns are accessible to the senses, observable and measurable; abstract nouns cannot be observed and measured. Countable and uncountable nouns both can be either concrete or abstract. There occurs a certain tendency for concrete nouns to be countable and for abstract nouns to be uncountable (Quirk et al., 1985).

Biber et al. (2000) distinguishes six main types of the English noun: countable and uncountable nouns, singular and plural nouns, collective and proper nouns.

### 2.3 Dual membership nouns

Some objects in the language can be approached from both the countable and uncountable point of view. Quirk et al. (1985) gives us the example of the noun *cake*.

- a. I'd like a cake, two cakes, several cakes...
- b. I'd like some cake, another piece of cake...

These nouns can be used as countable for single items, objects and things. That happens when the speaker wants to refer to one piece or a thing that is made from the material. The material itself is viewed upon as uncountable (Alexander, 1998). An example is given below:

- chicken

**Countable noun:** *Our grandmother used to have chickens.*

*Chicken* as a countable noun is a large bird that is kept for its eggs or meat.

**Uncountable noun:** *What meat would you like? Beef or chicken?*

*Chicken* is used in the meaning of a piece of meat from a chicken.

Nouns ending in “-ing” such as *being*, *building*, *setting* refer to activities in a general way so they are usually uncountable, but a few of them can refer to a specific thing or event (Alexander, 1998).

Abstract nouns can also have countable forms, despite the fact that they tend to be uncountable. As mentioned above, uncountable nouns refer to general phenomenon, while countable to individual types or instances (Biber et al., 2000):

- a. I don't think her parents gave her much – very much freedom. (Uncountable)
- b. These are tiny freedoms, and if a woman enjoys being part of a couple, they should count for nothing. (Countable)

This thesis will focus on the reference of an English noun that is closely connected with the categories of countability and definiteness.

## 2.2 Definiteness

For some people the grammatical category of definiteness and might seem straightforward and clear but the fact is that it had been a matter of confusion and lot of discussion throughout history. Definiteness is, in the English language, applied to noun phrases (NPs). Two types of articles are distinguished in English - definite and indefinite. The definite article uses the central determiner (the) while the indefinite type uses the determiners (a, an). NPs that begin with the definite article (the – e.g. the book) are called “definite descriptions” and can be taken as prototypical examples of the definite NPs in English. However, it should be noted that not all of these NPs show the same pieces of behavior that have come to be taken as a rule for definiteness. NPs that begin with the indefinite articles (a, an – e.g. an apple, a house), in this case the “indefinite descriptions” are prototypical examples of indefinite NPs. If plural indefinite description appears, the determiner some is used. The problem is to define what the term definiteness actually means and how is it distinguished whether the NP is definite or indefinite. Definiteness is a formal property of NPs but it is also a conceptual property of entities in the discourse (Chesterman, 1991). The two main theories about the meaning of definiteness are uniqueness and familiarity.

### 2.2.1 Uniqueness

One of the two theories comes from philosophical literature - Bertrand Russell's classic work on denoting phrases. In his work, what distinguishes (*the*) from (*a, an*) is uniqueness – more specifically the existence of one and only one entity that meets the descriptive content of the NP. So, while the use of an indefinite description in a simple positive sentence merely claims the existence of an entity meeting the description, use of the definite description asserts in addition its uniqueness in that regard. While (1a) is paraphrasable as (1b), (2a) is equivalent to (2b) (Russell, 1905).

(1)

- a. I saw a dog of my neighbor.
- b. My neighbor has at least one dog that I saw.

(2)

- a. I saw the dog of my neighbor.
- b. My neighbor has one and only one dog and I saw this particular one.

It should be noted that Russell was concerned to capture the meaning of definite descriptions in a formal language of logic. Russell's theory is in accordance with our intuition. Also, when the definite article is stressed contrastively, it brings out the sense of uniqueness.

(3) Did you saw **a** dog of your neighbor or **the** dog? – seems to be inquiring as to whether there is more than one owner, or only one. It might seem that this approach would necessarily be confined to singular NPs.

However, as argued by Hawkins (1978), the notion of uniqueness can be extended to plurals by applying the idea of exhaustiveness – the denotation of a definite NP consists of everything meeting the descriptive content of the NP. A NP like *the neighbor's dogs* would be considered similar to *all the neighbors' dogs*.

### 2.2.2 Familiarity

The second theory connected to the problematic of definiteness is originally from the Danish grammarian Paul Christophersen. He uses the fact whether or not the addressee of the utterance is presumed to be acquainted with the referent of the NP. For better comprehension see the passage often cited from Christophersen (1939), “Now the speaker must always be supposed to know which individual he is thinking of; the interesting thing is that the the-form supposes that the hearer knows it too” (p. 28).

This approach appears to fare better with examples like: Please, put this on the table where, indeed, it seems that the speaker must be assuming that the addressee knows which table the speaker is referring to.

This theory is very acceptable for a number of uses of definite descriptions, but it does not cover all of these cases very well. There are some examples, for instance the definite descriptions, where the descriptive content of the NP is sufficient to determine a unique referent, no matter what the context. Some examples are given in (4).

(4)

- a. Mary asked the oldest student in the class to explain everything.
- b. Philip rejected the idea that languages are strictly finite.

Here it is not assumed that that the addressee is familiar with the referents of the underlined NPs, or that these referents had been mentioned previously in the conversation. In this particular case the usage of the indefinite article is not allowed.

(5)

- a. \* Mary asked an oldest student in the class to explain everything.
- b. \* Philip rejected an idea that languages are strictly finite.

\* *not formed well*

If the descriptive content is not sufficient to determine a unique referent relative to the whole world, there are examples where the content may determine a unique referent in context. In these cases the definite article may also be used, even if the addressee is not assumed to know who or what is being talked about. An example is given (6).

(6) Sue is mad because the realtor who sold her house overcharged his fee.

The idea is that addressees are willing to accept a definite description if they are able to figure out the intended referent.

### 2.2.3 Some puzzling cases

While most of the uses of definite descriptions go down well with the uniqueness and the familiarity theory, there are several kinds which do not match either of them.

Examples in (7):

(7)

- a. Horace took the bus to Phoenix.
- b. The elevator will take you to the top floor.

Here, the addressee cannot be familiar with the particular bus or elevator. The singular definite description can be used due to the fact that there are many busses to Phoenix or elevators in the building.

Another case is illustrated in (8).

(8)

- a. My uncle wrote something on the wall.
- b. We camped by the side of a river.
- c. She shot herself in the foot.

Examples given above are formed well, despite the fact that rooms have more than one wall, people more than one foot and river has always two sides. All of the above are locations and, as pointed out by Du Bois (1980), if there would be an indefinite article used, it would put too much emphasis on these locations.

Third kind of examples shows us the dialectical variation in American and British English(9).

(9)

- a. Our sister was in **the** hospital.

This example is well formed in American English but in British, the article would be missing.

In comparison the examples below are well formed in both dialects. (10)

(10)

- a. Bill went to school this morning.
- b. If you're very good, you'll get to heaven someday.

From the examples given, it is obvious that some nouns require the definite article while others are fine without it.

In English, some adjectives require the use of the definite article, they are not restricting the reference and they occur in either a unique or a familiar referent. (11)

(11) She gave the wrong answer and had to be disqualified.

Hlavsa (1975) gives us two other terms that can help us comprehend definiteness. The terms are *reference* and *determination*.

*Reference* - points out to something and it is a problem to define it. *Reference* in this thesis is understood as a relationship between a linguistic structure and the referent.

*Determination* - is an expression of the referential relationship in the surface structure of the language. With the noun phrase, determiners are typical operators of definiteness (Hlavsa, 1975).

Chesterman (1991), on the other hand, says that definiteness has three sub-categories and he distinguishes locatability, inclusiveness and extensivity. He claims, that locatability applies to referents being locatable or not. This term is introduced by Hawkins (1978). Quirk (1985) does not use locatability but specificity. Another term is presented by Lyons (1999), identifiability. All of the above focus on one thing – if the referent can be located or identified.

Chesterman (1991) understands the term inclusiveness as an opposition in meaning between the articles (a, an, some and the).

Inclusiveness is a feature of a noun that refers to a set of all objects that meet the referring expression or refer to a subset of potential referents of the expression.

Every noun has its range of extensivity, to what extent it can be used to define things, people etc. Extensivity is a feature that helps us with classification. Nouns like mankind and nature are so abstract that they cannot be used other than in their abstract sense; these nouns do not have a wide range of extensivity. On the other hand, noun like *cake* has a greater range of extensivity and could be used in many different situations (Chesterman, 1991).

Dušková (1999) writes that definiteness is a grammatical category of an English NP which shows us its character. From definiteness we can define whether the noun is used as a notion or a concept which is fixed in our brain or as an individual and if this noun is defined or not. Definiteness is expressed by an article, which stands in front of the noun phrase and it gives the common noun information about the denotation – either if it is only a notion or if it is concrete. It also reflects the differences in the extra linguistic reality and it shows us how to understand the item it refers to. This goes along the grammatical categories and semantics. Definiteness is usually expressed by articles which can be definite (the), indefinite (a, an) and zero. In some cases, indefinite, possessive and demonstrative pronouns are also used as determiners. When considering reference, the usage of articles is essential by an English noun.

### **2.3 Countability**

According to Alexander (2005), "The distinction between countable and uncountable nouns is fundamental in English, for only by distinguishing between the two can we understand when to use singular or plural forms and when to use the indefinite, definite and zero articles, or the appropriate quantifier" (p. 38).

As Baldwin and Bond (2003) state, "The study of countability is complicated by the fact that most nouns can have their countability changed: either converted by a lexical rule or embedded in another noun phrase" (p. 2).

If an uncountable noun is taken with an interpretation as a substance but returns as a countable noun interpreted as a portion of the substance, it is an appropriate example of conversion. Example in (12)

(12) I would like two beers.

Quirk et al. (1985) uses the term reclassification in the meaning of conversion. Uncountable nouns can be embedded into countable nouns as complements of classifiers: *one piece of equipment* (Baldwin & Bond, 2003). These issues are used more closely with partitives.

Large amount of uncountables can be used as countable nouns in a given context. It cannot be distinguish if the noun is countable or not just by using our sense or judgment. Strict classifications of nouns as countable or uncountable are unreliable (Alexander, 2005).

Three types of countability are demonstrated by Bond et al. (1994):

1) Fully countable nouns

Fully countable nouns can undergo conversion rarely. Plural and singular forms are both present and cannot be used with determiners e.g. as much, little, a little, less.

2) Uncountable and Pluralia tantum

These nouns also undergo conversion rarely. Uncountables, such as *rice*, have no plural form, and can be used with the determiner *much*. Pluralia tantum lack the singular noun phrase: *trousers, stairs*.

3) Strongly and weakly countable

Conversion of these nouns from countable to uncountable and vice versa is done easily. Countable to uncountable e.g. *pie* is strongly countable. Uncountable to countable such as *water* is weakly countable.

Countability is not the same for all languages, it differs from one another. Quirk gives us examples of nouns, that are uncountable in English but are countable in different languages: *applause, anger, chaos, chess, conduct, courage, dancing, education, harm,*



*hospitality, leisure, melancholy, moonlight, parking, photography, poetry, publicity, resistance, safety, shopping, smoking, violence, weather, etc.* (Quirk et al., 1984).

If we consider countability with nouns in one particular language, some of them can be defined countably or uncountably such as: *jobs/ work*.

According to Quirk et al. (1985):

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. Rather, the justification for the count/noncount distinction is based on the grammatical characteristics of the English noun. (p. 238).

In other words, although the distinction between countable and uncountable nouns is based on the reality of what the nouns describe, the distinction is more grammatical than real.

Countability goes hand in hand with the studies of the English articles. This is because in English, articles are used to express the countability of a noun. These words, if we can classify them as words, because the (zero) article has no representation in an utterance; it serve us to identify a noun. We can distinguish three articles in the English language; indefinite (a, an), definite (the) and the zero article (all also called central determiners), while morphemes of the grammatical category of number can be also used in front of a noun. But articles in English do not only express countability, but also definiteness and number (Quirk et al., 1985).

In general we might say that all countable singular nouns have to have an article. If the noun is uncountable, it has zero article. Quirk et al. (1985) admits that this approach causes too many nouns to have “dual class membership”. This means, that the noun can be countable and uncountable at the same time. We can see these on examples (13):

(13)

- a. Do you want a piece of cake?
- b. I’m baking a cake.

In the first sentence, the noun *cake* is understood not as the whole thing, but only part of it. In the second sentence (b.) *cake* is connected to the whole thing. It's sometimes very hard to distinguish if the noun is countable or not. Quirk et al. (1985) distinguishes uncountable with zero article or countable with an article.

Countability also provides us additional information about the plural form of the noun. It plays a role when defying the meaning of the word due to the context. For example, if we take the word *water* – it can be countable or uncountable depending on the meaning:

- a. There are fish in the *water*.
- b. I would like to have two glasses of *water*.

The first example (a.) of the noun *water* is understood as an uncountable, we imagine water as a substance. Second example (b.) is not understood as a substance, but as glasses with drink, we get when on a visit. In English, it is essential to learn if the noun is countable or not, because there are many exceptions in the language.

Countability has the function of defining, whether the object that the noun is referring to, is a discrete unit; these are the items, that have solid and defined boundaries and that can be separated from each other. These nouns are generally countable. If a noun, on the other hand, is an entity creating a continuum, and it does not have solid boundaries and cannot be separated from each other, it is considered uncountable. It shows us the differences in the extra-linguistic reality and it has both grammatical and semantic function; therefore it is a semantic-grammatical category (Dušková, 1999).

Dušková (1999) also separates English nouns into three categories:

*Countable nouns* – discrete units having their particular borders, they are separable from each other; concrete objects (persons, animals)

*Uncountable nouns* - continuous entities, substances that cannot be separated (water, glass, sand), abstract items – love, anger

*Between these two categories, there are nouns that do not connect with low numbers, but can connect with some words approximately defying the amount.* (p. 120).

## 2.4 Reclassification

In some cases, uncountable nouns can be changed to countable. This shift from uncountable to count is called reclassification. According to Quirk et al. (1985), “nouns may be shifted from one class to another by means of conversion. Thus a uncountable noun like *cheese* can be ‘reclassified’ as a count noun involving a semantic shift so as to denote quality partition ‘kind/type/form of’, e. g.” (p. 248).

- a. What cheeses have you got today?
- b. Well, we have Cheddar, Gorgonzola, and Danish Blue.

Normally an uncountable noun can be reclassified as a countable noun to mean an ‘appropriate unit of’ (a) or a ‘kind/sort/brand of’ (b) Quirk et al., (1985) gives us examples,

- a. “Two teas and four coffees, please.
- b. I like Brazilian coffees best.” (p. 187).

Alexander (2005) did not use the term reclassification, but he dealt with normally uncountable nouns as countable in different situations, what basically corresponds to reclassification. Normally uncountable nouns can be used as countable if we refer to particular varieties. Nouns are often preceded by an adjective (a) in these cases, or there is some kind of specification (b).

- a. This region produces **an excellent wine**. (a kind of wine which...)
- b. Kalamata produces some of the best olive oil in the world; it is **an oil of very high quality**. (a kind of oil which...)

Alexander (2005) states that normally uncountable nouns used exceptionally as countable nouns can also occur in plural, "This region produces **some awful wines** as well as good ones. I go out in **all weathers**." (p. 140).

We can use (a, an) to mean e.g. *a glass of* or numbers in front of words for drinks, or we can make them plural, for example when we are ordering in a restaurant:

A (or one) wine, please. Two teas and four coffees, please

## 2.5 Reference

Using determiners is an integral part of the whole category of reference. The choice of articles depends on if a person is referring to a noun in a general or individual in a non-specific or a specific way. The definite, indefinite and zero articles can express different kind of reference. If we compare sentences:

- a. Cats are lovely animals.
- b. I saw the two cats standing in front of me.

In the first sentence, the reference of the noun *cats* is generic, because we do not think of any cat in particular. We just consider all the animals that have the specific attributes of a cat. Such as four legs, fur, etc. In the second sentence, we are not referring to a whole group of animals, in this case cats, but we are pointing out two particular cats, that we know.

We distinguish two different types of reference:

- 1) Generic reference
- 2) Non-generic (specific) reference

Generic reference is referring to a notion, a concept. On the other hand, specific reference refers to a specific object, that can be or defined (non-generic, definite) or might not be defined (non-generic, indefinite) in the utterance or in written text. Generic reference is less sensitive when considering what article will precede the noun for the reason that it takes the whole class or species in consideration. In specific reference the proper usage of articles is very important, because it refers only to a particular specimen of a group.

### 2.5.1. Non-Generic (Specific) Reference:

At first we must say that the definite article is used for all of the noun classes including singular countable, plural countable and uncountable nouns with definite specific reference (Quirk et al., 1984).

- a. Who is the man that I have seen?
- b. Who are the men that I have seen?
- c. Where is the grass that I have mowed?

Definite article (the) is used when referring to something which is unique in general knowledge and can be identified by both the listener and also the speaker.

With Indefinite specific reference, uncountable nouns take zero article or the 'light quantitative article' *some* (and any in non-assertive contexts), as well as plural countable nouns, but singular count nouns take the indefinite article a/an. E.g. I want a pen/ some pens/ some ink (Quirk et al., 1984).

If something is not uniquely identifiable for the hearer or speaker, in their shared general knowledge the indefinite article is used. The indefinite article (a, an) does not appear with uncountable nouns and countable nouns in their plural form.

Non-generic reference refers to an individual entity (ex. person, thing) with distinct and real existence.

Non-generic reference is further divided into two groups and sub-groups:

- a. Indefinite reference; the referent of a noun cannot be identified at the moment.
  - i) Specific
  - ii) Non-specific
- b. Definite reference; the referent a noun is identified at the moment of mentioning.
  - i) Contextual (anaphoric, indirect, cataphoric)
  - ii) Situational (immediate situation, larger situation)

Non-generic reference is not what this thesis is going to focus on.

### **2.5.2 Generic reference**

According to Quirk et al. (1985):

When they have generic reference, both concrete and abstract noncount nouns, and usually also plural count nouns, are used with the zero article:

He likes wine/music/games.

Prepositional postmodification by an of-phrase usually requires the definite article with a head noun which thus has limited generic reference:

He likes the wine(s)/ the music/ the lakes of France.

He likes the wines of this shop. (p.71).

(This is limited generic reference, since that it does not refer to any particular wines at any one time.)

If the uncountable abstract noun is premodified. (a. ) the zero article is used.

- a. She is studying European history.
- b. She is studying the history of Europe.

On the other hand, if it is postmodified e.g. with an of-phrase (b.) the definite article is used.

It appears that the cataphoric *the* is added in examples like '*the history of Europe*' because the effect of the of-phrase is to single out a particular subclass of the phenomenon denoted by the noun, and thereby to change a generic meaning into a specific or partitive one. '*The history of Europe*' implies that she is studying the history of Europe as a whole, '*European history*' allows the interpretation that she is studying only some aspects of European history or a particular college course (Quirk et al., 1985).

The indefinite article is used with nouns which are normally uncountable when they refer to a quality or other abstraction which is attributed to a person; or when the noun is premodified and/or postmodified (the greater the amount of modification, the greater the acceptability of a/an) (Quirk et al., 1985).

E. g.

- a. Mavis had a bad education.
- b. My daughter suffers from a strange dislike of mathematics.

As Dušková (1999) writes, the best way to identify the generic reference is that it can be interchanged the singular and plural form of an English noun, when the number can be neutralized. Quirk et al. (1985) adds that generic reference is simply thinking about not one specimen, but a whole group.

Generic reference is most used with types of people or animals, flowers, cultural or technical products. Below, there are examples of the usage:

- a. (A, The) tiger can be dangerous to man.

- b. Tigers can be dangerous to man.

All of the three articles (a/an, the, zero) can be used to express generics. But Dušková (1999) also adds that the interchangeability of these three forms isn't always possible. We cannot interchange articles, without having a slight effect on the understanding. The first difference is that the definite article (the), if not in a function of subject, keeps the generic function, this does not apply to zero article or (a, an). These articles are less likely to retain their generic function.

The indefinite article (a, an) as mentioned, stands for a whole group or class and it could be replaced with "thus" in some cases. The indefinite article however cannot be used in attributing properties which belong to the class or species as a whole (Quirk et al., 1985).

The plural form of a generic noun phrase can sometimes have the definite article (the). This case limits the noun for a certain sub-class.

- a. Airlines charge too much.
- b. The airlines charge too much.

In (a.) "airlines" are thought of as a whole, airlines in general. On the other hand, in (b.) it is an example of one type of transportation.

The exceptions from this rule are then groups of people that share the same properties. As in: the rich, the old, the young. In these cases, definite article (the) is a means of realization of a noun.

Another exception can be seen when using the noun "*man*" to express a person/people in a biological way.

- a. Man has always been the smartest of the living.

When using generic reference with connection with an uncountable noun, a zero article is often used when we consider either concrete or abstract things.

- a. Air is a need for a living creature to survive.
- b. Lead is poisonous.

The exceptions here are same as in the case of generic plural forms, which are created by a partial conversion from an adjective as in *the rare* – here, the article also represents the means of realization of a noun.

The most widely spread noun that is connected with the generic reference is the plural form with a zero article. If we consider the definite article in generic reference, we must say, that the difference between them is both semantic and stylistic.

Quirk et al. (1985) gives us examples:

- a. My neighbor has apparently dogs; I can hear them bark at night.
- b. Dogs make admirable companions for children and adults alike.

From the two examples we can clearly define, that in (a.) the reference is specific. (We know the two dogs that belong to our neighbor) And (b.) just tells us a fact about a class of animals that share the same attributes.

All of the three articles (a, an; the; zero) can make a generic reference. With countable nouns, articles (a, an, or the) are used. Zero article is then used with uncountable nouns and plural countable nouns.

Zero article is considered to be the most natural way of expressing generics.

### 2.5.3 Determiners

These determiners can be used with uncountable nouns (Quirk et al., 1985).

Central determiners:

- a. the (the furniture)
- b. possessive - my, our, your, his, her, its, their (my luggage)
- c. no (no music)
- d. whose, which (ever), what (ever); (which information)
- e. assertive some, non-assertive any (I want some bread. Have we got any bread?)
- f. zero article
- g. enough (enough music)
- h. this, that (*this music*)



Predeterminers:

- half (the, my, ..., this, that) e.g.: half (of) the cost/ half of it

- all (the, my, ..., this, that, zero article) e.g.: all (of) the meat/ all of it

All and half have of-constructions, which are optional with nouns and obligatory with personal pronouns.

They can occur before the articles (all the time), possessive determiners (all my time), demonstrative determiners (all this time). Since they are themselves quantifiers, all and half do not occur with the quantitative determiners some, any, no and enough.

- double, twice, three/four...times (twice his strength, three times this amount)

Postdeterminers:

Closed-class quantifiers: much (comparative – more, superlative – most), (A) little (comparative – less, superlative –least).

e. g. She has not got much money. She has little (not much) money. She has a little (some) money.

A little (a little music) cannot be analyzed as consisting of the indefinite article a plus the quantifier little, since the indefinite article does not occur with uncountable nouns (\*a music). There is semantic difference: little is negative (not much), a little (some) positive (or at least neutral) term.

Open-class quantifiers:

- |                            |   |           |
|----------------------------|---|-----------|
| i. plenty of               | } | furniture |
| j. a lot of                |   |           |
| k. lots of                 |   |           |
| l. a great/good deal of    | } | money     |
| m. large/small quantity of |   |           |
| n. large/small amount of   |   |           |

The open-class quantifiers that occur with uncountable nouns have both structural and semantic relations with the partitives (general, typical and measures).

According to Quirk et al. (1985), the proper use of an article is dependent on the noun it refers to; its countability. When the noun is countable, generic reference is expressed by the indefinite article with the singular form of the noun, definite article and the singular form of a noun and zero article with singular or plural form of a noun. In case of an uncountable noun, the zero article is used.

Specific reference is expressed with the countable nouns by an indefinite article with the singular form of a noun, in plural with the zero article or with some.

Same means of expressing reference occur only at non-generic definite reference, where the nouns (countable and uncountable) are expressed by a definite article.

Reference	Countable	Uncountable
Generic	The cat, A cat, cats	Music, milk
Non-generic		
Definite	The cat, the cats	The music, the milk
Indefinite	A cat, cats, some cats	Music, some music, milk, some milk

The specific definite reference is connected to the relation between the referent of the noun. We can identify the object that is the noun referring to. On the other side, specific indefinite reference is bringing a new object into our mind.

We can use definite, indefinite, singular or plural in the generic reference without changing the semantic meaning of the whole NP.

### **3 Analysis**

This analysis, dealing with the usage of generic reference and the occurrence of generic reference in the written text, deals with the excerpts that are not divided into chapters but are chronologically listed as appeared in the book. All of the examples given in the analysis are extracted from a novel by Stephen King, *Duma Key* and I have used 255 examples directly from it. I have chosen this author because I like his work and he does not write in any specific or scientific language that would subvert the principles of an English noun.

After writing down these excerpts it was essential to avoid any cases that cannot be considered as the generic reference. To fully analyze the examples, the context is very important. Further analysis followed and the number, definiteness, animation and semantic meaning were defined.

Next step was to count how many nouns are singular, plural, concrete or abstract, uncountable and countable, inanimate and animate. The task that followed was to find any similarities in these nouns and make general statements that can be used to determine the most frequent way of realizing generic reference and also considering the occurrence of articles with the generic reference.

All of the excerpts are in Appendix A and therefore conclusion follows this description of the actual analysis.

## 4 Conclusion

This thesis deals with the competition of individual means of expressing generic reference with English nouns and, as written above, this specific grammatical element is unique to the English language. We distinguish two basic types of reference; generic and non-generic. The main difference between these two types of reference is that generic reference often refers to a group or an individual, but is not defined. This is closely connected with the usage of articles that is specific for each type of reference. Some articles can be used either in the generic or in non-generic reference.

The analytical part is focused on the competition of expressing generic reference with the English noun. Generic reference, as written in the theoretical part, is connected with notions rather than individuals.

The number of examples of generic reference is 255 (100%). 92 (36%) of these nouns are singular, 163 (64%) nouns are in plural form. 54 (21%) are uncountable and 201 (79%) are countable. When considering semantic types of nouns then 198 (78%) are concrete and 57 (22%) are abstract. 122 (48%) are inanimate and 133 (52%) are animate. This proves us the facts mentioned in the theoretical part that plural countable nouns are considered to be most used when expressing generic reference. Most of these examples refer to individual specimens of groups of people or animals or things. Animation was also considered when analyzing, but there was no specific outcome from this feature. The indefinite article “a” was used in 16 (6%) cases, definite article “the” in 2 (1%) cases and zero article in 237 (93%) cases found in the novel.

From the conclusion it is obvious, that the most used means of realization of the generic reference in this particular book is with zero article.

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## Summary in Czech

Hlavním cílem této bakalářské práce je zjistit konkurenci jednotlivých prostředků vyjadřování obecné reference u anglických podstatných jmen. Tato práce obsahuje teoretickou bázi, což je první část této práce a také analýzu úryvků, která následuje teoretickou část. Teoretická část začíná základním vysvětlením toho, co je podstatné jméno, zahrnujíc základní gramatické kategorie podstatných jmen v anglickém jazyce. Poté je vysvětlena kategorie určitosti – Základní popis je vysvětlen podle Belána, dále jsou vysvětleny pojmy jako reference a determinace. Také Chestermanova myšlenka rozdělení počitatelnosti do tří podkategorií - locatability, inclusiveness a extensivity jsou zmíněny. Tato část končí výtahem z Duškové. Práce se také zabývá počitatelností, což je funkce a obecné rozdělení substantiv na počitatelná a nepočitatelná. Dále je pak zmíněna dualita u počitatelnosti substantiv, kdy podstatné jméno může být i počitatelné tak nepočitatelné. Dále následují právě příklady substantiv, která mohou mít duální počitatelnost a nakonec následuje rozdělení substantiv dle počitatelnosti podle Duškové na počitatelná, nepočitatelná a podstatná jména, která jsou často spojována s nízkými nebo vysokými čísly. Následuje vysvětlení reference u podstatných jmen. Nejprve obecné informace a základní rozdělení reference na generickou a specifickou, pak je kapitola rozdělena do dalších podkapitol, z nichž každá popisuje daný typ reference. Poslední kapitola se zabývá využitím členů v generické a specifické referenci.

Analytická část se zabývá 225 výňatky z románu Stephena Kinga, *Ostrov Duma Key* (2008). Tyto příklady obecné reference jsou v příloze A. Výsledky výzkumu jsou potom v kapitole Závěr a jsou podpořeny 5 grafy s procentním vyjádřením, které jsou v příloze B. Výsledky tohoto výzkumu: 78% z prostředků používaných k popisu obecné reference jsou konkrétní a 22% jsou abstraktní. Nejběžnější výskyt obecné reference je u počitatelných substantiv (79%) v množném čísle (64%) a s nulovým členem (93%) Tato práce předkládá pouze omezený počet příkladů generické (obecné) reference, tak tento výzkum by neměl být brán jako obecné pravidlo.

## Appendix A

- 1) Pictures are magical, as you know. (p. 1)  
*-pictures: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 2) When I said I was mentally impaired, I mean that at first I didn't know who people were – not even my wife – or what had happened. (p. 3)  
*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 3) There were two older nurses that I called Dry Fuck One and Dry Fuck Two, as if they were characters from a dirty Dr. Seuss story. (p. 4)  
*-characters: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 4) When I grew stronger, I tried to hit people. (p. 4)  
*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 5) I don't know how long, because telling time is beyond me. (p. 5)  
*-time: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 6) I don't think it's the sort of thing women joke about six months after their husbands almost died in accidents, anyway. (p. 8)  
*-women: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-husbands: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-accidents: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 7) Of course, God loves surprises. (p.10)  
*-God: singular, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-surprises: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 8) On top of the pain medication, alcohol hit me hard; a single beer could turn me into a slurring drunk. (p. 12)  
*-alcohol: singular, abstract, countable, inanimate*  
*-a single beer: singular, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 9) Asked me if adults in their fifties had these unpleasant regressive interludes, did she had that to look forward to. (p. 12)  
*-adults: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 10) I don't know what you have seen in the movies, but broken ribs hurt for a long time. (p.15)  
*-the movies: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 11) All she does is work with paraplegics, quadriplegics, accident related amps like you and people recovering from traumatic head injuries. (p. 16)

- paraplegics: plural, concrete, countable, animate
  - quadriplegics: plural, concrete, countable, animate
  - accident related amps: plural, concrete, countable, animate
  - people: plural, concrete, countable, animate
- 12) It's a form of recovery often attempted by late-stage alcoholics. (p. 17)
- late-stage alcoholics: plural, concrete, countable, animate
- 13) One-armed men should tell the truth whenever possible. (p. 18)
- one-armed men: plural, concrete, countable, animate
- 14) I figured a thirty count on high heat would be at least a nod in the direction of what people mean when they say „cooking meat“. (p. 31)
- people: plural, concrete, countable, animate
- 15) My stomach didn't so much as quiver, just cried impatiently for food. (p. 32)
- food: singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate
- 16) Dreams mostly tell the truth, do they? (p. 32)
- dreams: plural, abstract, countable, inanimate
- 17) Guitars are made for righties, and school desks, and the control panels on American Cars. (p. 32)
- guitars: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate
  - righties: plural, concrete, countable, animate
  - school desks: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate
  - control panels: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate
- 18) So hungry for meat. (p. 34)
- meat: singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate
- 19) But now my words are like fish in the water. (p. 37)
- fish: plural, concrete, countable, animate
- 20) Successful retirement has its privileges. (p. 39)
- successful retirement: singular, abstract, countable, inanimate
- 21) And it's snake of course. (p. 40)
- snake: singular, concrete, countable, animate
- 22) Money talks. (p. 44)
- money: singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate
- 23) Maybe dogs are only people at their best. (p. 48)
- dogs: plural, concrete, countable, animate



- 24) I made two bologna sandwiches on white – where I grew up, children are raised to believe mayonnaise, bologna, and white bread are the food of the gods – and ate them at the kitchen table. (p. 52)  
*-children: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 25) I thought I'd probably get her machine – college girls are busy girls – but she answered on the first ring. (p. 53)  
*-college girls: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-busy girls: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 26) *Modern technology*. I can't catch up. (p. 53)  
*-technology: singular, abstract, countable, inanimate*
- 27) At first I thought it was machinery, but it was too uneven to be machinery. (p. 57)  
*-machinery: singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate*
- 28) Then I thought of teeth, but nothing had teeth that vast. (p. 57)  
*-teeth: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 29) It's shells I murmured, laying back down. (p. 57)  
*-shells: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 30) But the surface events of a country laboring under a dictatorship can appear boring, too — dictators like boring, dictators love boring — even as great changes are approaching beneath the surface. (p. 61)  
*-dictators: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 31) Exercise becomes addictive, and rainy days didn't put a stop to mine. The second floor of Big Pink was one large room. (p. 63)  
*-exercise: singular, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 32) ...couples sunning on blankets and slathering each other with tanning lotion, college kids playing volleyball with iPods strapped to their biceps, little kids in saggy swimsuits paddling at the edge of the water while Jet-Skis buzzed back and forth forty feet out. (p. 64)  
*-college kids: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 33) "It's not exactly tourist country here. See dolphins?(p. 64)  
*-dolphins: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 34) Amputees forget, that's all. (p.67)  
*-amputees: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 35) The night after that I tried palm trees, but that was no good, that one was another cliché, I could almost see girls and hear ukes strumming. (p. 68)

- girls: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 36) Children and vegetarians are not allowed. (p. 72)  
*-children: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-vegetarians: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 37) Residents must vote Republican and own small dogs with rhinestone collars, stupid eyes, and names that end in i. (p. 72)  
*-residents: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-small dogs: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-rhinestone collars: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*  
*-stupid eyes: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 38) “Take it easy,” I said. “They do miracles these days. I’m Exhibit A.” (p. 73)  
*-miracles: plural, abstract, countable, inanimate*
- 39) “Laughter’s the best medicine. I read it in Reader’s Digest.” (p. 74)  
*-laughter: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 40) Lin doesn’t want to go on the weenie roast because she doesn’t like hot dogs. (p. 75)  
*-hot dogs: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 41) Lin can’t wear that kind of sneakers because none of the kids in her class wear hightops anymore... (p. 76)  
*-hightops: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 42) It was information; it was also the name of the picture. (p. 79)  
*-information: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 43) Naming lends power. (p. 79)  
*-naming: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*  
*-power: singular, abstract, countable, inanimate*
- 44) Love conveys its own psychic powers, doesn’t it? (p. 81)  
*-love: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 45) “But he can let out a pretty good gosh-darn when somebody cuts him off in traffic. (p. 87)  
*-traffic: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 46) I remembered her looking at me the same way when she was four, asking me if there was any magic like in fairy tales. (p. 88)  
*-fairy tales: plural, abstract, countable, inanimate*
- 47) Pain is the biggest power of love. That’s what Wireman says. (p. 88)  
*-pain: singular, abstract, countable, inanimate*

- power of love: singular, abstract, countable, inanimate*
- 48) “Ye-ess?” I said, and made a picking-out gesture at the air with two fingers.  
Families have their own interior language, and that includes sign-language. (p. 89)  
*-families: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 49) “My first thought... don’t laugh... was skeletons on parade. Hundreds, marching around the house.” (p. 89)  
*-skeletons: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 50) The rest of the island is pure botanical pornography. Plants gone wild.” (p. 90)  
*-plants: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 51) “It looked like... I don’t know, a crossbow-pistol. Or something. Maybe she shoots snakes with it.” (p. 93)  
*-a crossbow-pistol: singular, concrete, countable, inanimate*  
*-snakes: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 52) I felt the anger rising in my throat like hot water. Or blood. Yes, more like that. (p. 96)  
*-hot water: singular, concrete, countable, inanimate*  
*-blood: singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate*
- 53) The habit of obedience dies hard — especially hard, maybe, between fathers and daughters. (p. 96)  
*-fathers: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-daughters: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 54) I kissed her. On the forehead. The skin was cool and damp. “Put your feet up, Miss Cookie — orders from headquarters. (p. 98)  
*-orders from headquarters: plural, abstract, countable, inanimate*
- 55) Although I remembered very little about making the drawing, I remembered enough to know this story was a lie. “Then I lay down and took a nap. End of story.” (p. 103)  
*-end of story: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 56) “This is the one I want. Only you have to name it. Artists have to name their pictures.” (p. 104)  
*-artists: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 57) I breathed deep of her hair — that good sweet smell of shampoo and young, healthy woman. (p. 104)  
*-young, healthy woman: singular, concrete, countable, animate*

- 58) Give it time, don't get mad, tell yourself you can do this, and the words usually come. (p. 106)  
*-time: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 59) "All things considered, Duma Key has never been a lucky place for daughters." (p. 108)  
*-daughters: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 60) It worked for Michelangelo, it worked for Picasso, and it works for a hundred thousand artists who do it not for love (although that may play a part) but in order to put food on the table. (p. 109)  
*-love: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*  
*-food: singular, abstract, countable, inanimate*
- 61) There's nothing as human as hunger. (p. 109)  
*-hunger: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 62) There's no creation without talent, I give you that, but talent is cheap. (p. 109)  
*-talent: singular, abstract, countable, inanimate*
- 63) Hunger is the piston of art. (p. 109)  
*-hunger: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 64) Clouds have wings. (p. 110)  
*-clouds: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*  
*-wings: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 65) In the meantime there was painting, and I took to it like peeps and pelicans take to water. (p. 114)  
*-peeps: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-pelicans: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 66) There was a guy in Nebraska who could predict tornadoes by the corns on his missing foot. (p. 115)  
*-tornadoes: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 67) Both had had several successes in helping the police find missing persons (perhaps failures as well, but these were not set out in the piece). (p. 116)  
*-persons: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 68) Friends with benefits. (p. 128)  
*-friends: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-benefits: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*

- 69) But then I closed my eyes and saw Pam sitting on the bed — some bed — in her panties, with a bra-strap lying across her leg like a dead snake. (p. 128)  
*-a dead snake: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 70) The glass plummeted straight down to the sand and stuck there, perfectly upright, like a cigarette-butt in one of those urns of sand you used to see beside elevators in hotel lobbies. (p. 132)  
*-elevators: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*  
*-hotel lobbies: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 71) A snatch of poetry read in high school, over thirty years before, suddenly came back to me with haunting clarity: Men do not sham convulsion, Nor simulate a throe. (p. 133)  
*-men: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 72) People don't read on the beach; the glare gives them headaches. (p. 135)  
*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-headaches: plural, abstract, countable, inanimate*  
*-the beach: singular, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 73) I sympathized with people with headaches. (p. 135)  
*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-headaches: plural, abstract, countable, inanimate*
- 74) He began to laugh again. He covered his mouth with both hands — like a child — but the laughter burst through. (p. 135)  
*-a child: singular, concrete, countable, animate*
- 75) I know that people come to Florida when they're old and sick because it's warm pretty much year-round, but I think the Gulf of Mexico has something else going for it. (p. 136)  
*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 76) I'm not afraid of hot weather — I guess they call it the mean season — but there's hurricanes to consider." (p. 137)  
*-hurricanes: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 77) "It's the way America does business," I said. (p. 140)  
*-business: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 78) "Money talks, bullshit walks." (p. 140)  
*-money: singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate*  
*-bullshit: singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate*

- 79) Friendships founded on laughter are always fortuitous.” (p.141)  
*-friendships: plural, abstract, countable, inanimate*  
*-laughter: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 80) The muscles there were tight and knotted. They felt like iron. (p. 148)  
*-iron: singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate*
- 81) . Do you think she’s the one who left that message on my answering machine about Duma Key not being a lucky place for daughters?” (p. 152)  
*-daughters: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 82) You said something about brothers and sisters yesterday, and I didn’t get a chance to correct you. (p. 152)  
*-brothers: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-sisters: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 83) All daughters. (p. 152)  
*-daughters: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 84) We looked at the water for a little while — those deceptively mild waves running up the beach like puppies — and said nothing. (p. 152)  
*-puppies: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 85) So... do you see why an old lady with onset-Alzheimer’s might consider Duma a bad place for daughters?” (p. 153)  
*-daughters: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 86) “It’s what makes children into... adults. (p. 154)  
*-children: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-adults: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 87) As bosses go, she’s a pretty nice one.” (p. 156)  
*-bosses: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 88) We’re like characters in a play! (p. 161)  
*-characters: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 89) Do you believe in art for art’s sake?” (p. 162)  
*-art: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 90) It would soon be more than forgetting names. (p. 165)  
*-names: plural, abstract, countable, inanimate*
- 91) I could do without Oprah, but a life without books is a thirsty life, and one without poetry is...” She laughed. (p. 165)  
*-a life: singular, abstract, countable, inanimate*

- books: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 92) “It’s like a life without pictures, don’t you think? (p. 165)  
*-pictures: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 93) “That’s all right, Edgar,” she said. “Poetry sometimes does that to me, as well. (p. 166)  
*-poetry: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 94) Men do not sham convulsion. (p. 166)  
*-men: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 95) . So she makes assumptions the way kids do, based on what she wants rather than on the facts. (p. 167)  
*-kids: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 96) Art is magic, no argument there, but all art, no matter how strange, starts in the humble everyday. (p. 170)  
*-art: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 97) Then things changed, didn’t they? Because art is magic, and not all magic is white. Not even for little girls. (p. 171)  
*-little girls: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 98) People who think there is no winter in Florida are very mistaken. (p. 172)  
*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 99) I can do this, I thought. It’s like where you put money when you want to hide it from the government. (p. 181)  
*-money: singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate*
- 100) You hide money from the government in offshore banks, I thought. (p. 181)  
*-money: singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate*
- 101) Art should be a place of hope, not doubt. (p. 195)  
*-art: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 102) “When I say truth, I mean beauty.” (p. 195)  
*-truth: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*  
*-beauty: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 103) It was a world where I had tried to communicate by hitting people and the only two emotions I really seemed capable of were fear and fury. (p. 204)  
*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 104) Duma Key isn’t a safe place for daughters. (p. 204)  
*-daughters: plural, concrete, countable, animate*

- 105) How would I know what was important to artists? (p. 205)  
*-artists: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 106) When it comes to your kids, you find yourself making some weird calls from time to time and just hoping they turn out all right — calls and kids. Parenting is the greatest of hum-a-few-bars-and-I’ll-fake-it skills. (p. 214)  
*-calls plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*  
*-kids: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 107) Amazing how much neighbors see, even when they’re not really close friends. (p. 219)  
*-neighbors: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 108) You couldn’t call them arrows; they were too short. Harpoonlets still seemed like the right word.(p. 231)  
*-arrows: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*  
*-harpoonlets: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 109) For children, meanness is usually funny only when it’s imagined. (p. 236)  
*-children: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 110) I mean an actual circus, one with big cats and aerialists. (p. 252)  
*-big cats: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-aerialists: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 111) He laughed again, as people do when remembering some crazy boner they’ve pulled. (p. 260)  
*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 112) But of course there are people. (p. 262)  
*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 113) Applicant must supply resume and recommendations to match excellent salary and benefits. (p. 281)  
*-applicant: singular, concrete, countable, animate*
- 114) We ate like football players that night. (p. 292)  
*-football players: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 115) “I’d love her to come. But your boss-lady says Duma Key is no place for daughters, and I sort of believe her.” (p. 293)  
*-daughters: plural, concrete, countable, animate*



- 116) Tears pricked the backs of my eyelids. I don't know what it's like to have sons, but I'm sure it can't be as rewarding — as plain nice— as having daughters.  
(p. 293)  
*-daughters: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 117) There were undoubtedly strange forces at work here, but not every *shadow* was a *ghost*.(p.304)  
*-shadow: singular, concrete, countable, inanimate*  
*-a ghost: singular, concrete, countable, animate*
- 118) “Edgar... I don't think *ghosts* can hurt *people*.”(p. 328)  
*-ghosts: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 119) That's the beauty of doing things like this on *a computer*.”(p. 335)  
*-a computer: singular, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 120) Elizabeth was dozing off, but her hair was flying against her cheeks and she pawed at them like a woman troubled by insects.(p. 342)  
*-a woman: singular, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-insects: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 121) God hates *a coward*, Wireman says.(p. 343)  
*-God: singular, abstract, countable, animate*  
*-coward: singular, concrete, countable, animate*
- 122) ... when memory takes its strongest hold, our own bodies become *ghosts*, haunting us with the gestures of our younger selves.(p. 342)  
*-ghosts: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 123) I swallowed them one after the other, like *medicine*. (p. 347)  
*-medicine: singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate*

124) “A million and one for under your pillow,” she said, as if humoring a child.

(p.351)

*-a child: singular, concrete, countable, animate*

125) “Dad, do *people* ever deserve second chances?” (p. 353)

*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*

126) I felt uneasy about Ilse — the way *parents* are always uneasy about the problems of their children. (p. 355)

*-parents: plural, concrete, countable, animate*

127) Life is more than *love and pleasure*. (p. 355)

*-life: singular, abstract, countable, inanimate*

*-love: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*

*-pleasure: singular, abstract, countable, inanimate*

128) Then I looked at the audience and saw they were just *people*. (p. 360)

*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*

129) As for *demons*, most were probably in my mind. (p. 360)

*-demons: plural, concrete, countable, animate*

130) They gasped the way *people* do when they have been blindsided by something completely unexpected. (p. 363)

*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*

131) “I grew up believing *folks* were supposed to work hard at what they do — I think that’s all it is. (p. 372)

*-folks: plural, concrete, countable, animate*

132) “In order to get the right spacing between a subject’s eyes, *painters* will often imagine or even block a third eye between the two actual ones. (p. 377)

*-painters: plural, concrete, countable, animate*

- 133) Back then *people* sometimes still came home from church to find *alligators* in their swimming pools and *bobcats* rooting in their trash.” (p. 380)
- people*: plural, concrete, countable, animate
- alligators*: plural, concrete, countable, animate
- bobcats*: plural, concrete, countable, animate
- 134) “If you’re talking *football*, my interest begins with the Vikings and ends with the Packers.” (p. 389)
- football*: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate
- 135) She said she was like one of those wealthy college alumni, except she was interested in *art* instead of *football*. (p. 389)
- art*: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate
- football*: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate
- 136) She asked for *food*. (p. 393)
- food*: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate
- 137) I told myself there was *time*. (p. 395)
- time*: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate
- 138) His reply was “Bullshit, boss,” and we laughed like *maniacs*. (p. 397)
- maniacs*: plural, concrete, countable, animate
- 139) *Diving* and *snorkeling* may have been his hobby in the early twenties, but I think that around 1925, eating dinner became his chief diversion. (p. 410)
- diving*: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate
- snorkeling*: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate
- 140) Do you have *daughters*? (p. 413)
- daughters*: plural, concrete, countable, animate

- 141) Elizabeth was fiercely talented, but she was only a child— and with  
*children*, faith is a given. (p. 416)  
*-children: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 142) *Art* is the concrete artifact of faith and expectation, the realization of a world  
.... (p. 416)  
*-art: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 143) “*Art* is *memory*, Edgar. (p. 440)  
*-art: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 144) *Pain* is the biggest power of *love*. (p. 462)  
*-pain: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*  
*-love: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 145) No one said *art* was always a zephyr; sometimes it’s a hurricane. (p. 465)  
*-art: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 146) It happens that way all the time. In *books and movies*, anyway. (p. 469)  
*-books: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*  
*-movies: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 147) Ask any *drunk* in a *bar* who’s been thrown out by his wife. (p. 470)  
*-drunk: singular, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-bar: singular, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 148) *Bed* is not neutral ground.” (p. 471)  
*-bed: singular, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 149) “When the issues aren’t resolved, *bed* is a *battleground*. (p. 471)  
*-bed: singular, concrete, countable, inanimate*  
*-battleground: singular, concrete, countable, inanimate*

- 150) And even if they had been something more... *ghosts* didn't have to unlock doors, did they? (p. 475)  
*-ghosts: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-doors: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 151) "Edgar... if those little girls were here... can *ghosts* write on canvas?" (p. 485)  
*-ghosts: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 152) "But I don't see *ghosts* unlocking my front door. Or putting a canvas up on the easel to begin with." (p. 485)  
*-ghosts: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 153) "This wouldn't go very far in *water*," I said. "Not as heavy as it is." (p. 493)  
*-water: singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate*
- 154) "Besides, it takes *a vampire* to make *a vampire*." (p. 494)  
*-a vampire: singular, concrete, countable, animate*
- 155) "*Silver bullets* are what you use to kill *werewolves*." (p. 494)  
*-silver bullets: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 156) I don't know if *silver* works on vampires or not, but obviously somebody thought it did. (p. 494)  
*-silver: singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate*  
*-vampires: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 157) I don't know if silver works on *vampires* or not, but obviously somebody thought it did. (p. 494)  
*-vampires: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 158) "But there are no such things as *vampires*, Edgar." (p. 494)  
*-vampires: plural, concrete, countable, animate*

- 159) There could be *ghosts*, I'll give you that much — I think almost everyone believes there could be *ghosts* — but there's no such thing as *vampires*.” (p. 494)  
*-ghosts: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-vampires: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 160) “What are you talking about?” Jack asked. “*Zombies*?” (p. 495)  
*-zombies: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 161) The gift is always hungry, start with what you know — but mostly it was pictures. *Pictures* were the real language we shared. (p. 505)  
*-pictures: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 162) *Memory* is identity. (p. 505)  
*-memory: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 163) “They're not *vampires*,” I said. (p. 516)  
*-vampires: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 164) There was that story in the paper, and presumably everyone who read it was amazed over breakfast... but you know how *people* are—” (p. 524)  
*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 165) I mean, who gets bored quicker than a three-year-old?” “Only *puppies* and *parakeets*,” Wireman said. (p. 525)  
*-a three-year-old: singular, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-puppies: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-parakeets: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 166) That much it does have in common with *vampires*. (p. 528)  
*-vampires: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 167) *People* knew they were gone. (p. 531)  
*-people: plural, concrete, countable, animate*

- 168) My missing hand sensed death, impending like *rain* in clouds. (p. 538)  
-rain: *singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate*  
-clouds: *plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 169) Excellent for dealing with *six-year-old girls*, not so good against grown men, especially when armed with silver-tipped harpoons. (p. 541)  
-six-year-old girls: *plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
-grown men: *plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 170) I had even named it for her, because she said *artists* had to name their pictures. (p. 543)  
-artists: *plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 171) There was a broom meant for sweeping *sand* off the walk leaning against the side of the house. (p. 559)  
-sand: *singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate*
- 172) “It does,” I said, and maybe in *time* it would. (p. 563)  
-time: *singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 173) “Do we have *time*?” (p. 564)  
-time: *singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate*
- 174) In *the movies*, you get clopped once and you’re out like a light. (p. 565)  
-the movies: *plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*  
-a light: *singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate*
- 175) “Surprised you can even think of *food*,” (p. 567)  
-food: *singular, concrete, uncountable, inanimate*
- 176) “She also claimed there are *snakes*,” he said, finally turning around. “I have a horror of *snakes*.” (p. 570)  
-snakes: *plural, concrete, countable, animate*

- 177) “I don’t have anything against *snakes*. (p. 570)  
*-snakes: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 178) ...because when I was in the work, the pain and grief were at bay. The work was like *a drug*. (p. 571)  
*-a drug: singular, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 179) “Yep,” he said. “And probably full of *snakes*. Ugh. Look on the west side, Edgar.” (p. 581)  
*-snakes: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 180) With Wireman it’s *snakes*. With me it’s *bats*. (p. 588)  
*-snakes: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-bats: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 181) I had no idea I was afraid of *alligators* until I saw that chunk of prehistoric darkness... (p. 590)  
*-alligators: plural, concrete, countable, animate*
- 182) “Because, *muchacho*, you’re in mourning. And that makes *a man* tired. (p. 596)  
*-a man: singular, concrete, countable, animate*
- 183) “Sometimes *dolls* get scary.” (p. 604)  
*-dolls: plural, concrete, countable, inanimate*
- 184) The heron’s something she just rides, the way *a man* rides *a horse*. (p. 626)  
*-a man: singular, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-a horse: singular, concrete, countable, animate*
- 185) “I don’t, actually. *Children* don’t mourn like *adults*.” (p. 629)  
*-children: plural, concrete, countable, animate*  
*-adults: plural, concrete, countable, animate*



186) “Beggars can’t be choosers,” Wireman said. (p. 647)

-beggars: plural, concrete, countable, animate

-choosers: plural, concrete, countable, animate

187) Wireman laughed without *humor*. (p. 655)

-humor: singular, abstract, uncountable, inanimate

188) “Yeah. I grabbed one out of his belt and did the same. I don’t know how long it would have worked over the long haul, though — they were like *mad dogs*.” (p. 667)

-mad dogs, plural, concrete, countable, animate

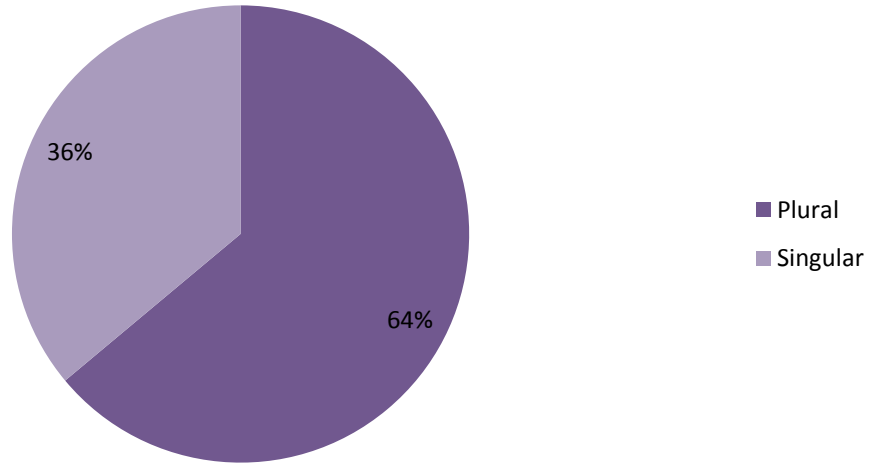
189) This lake is pretty much for *pleasure-boaters*. And *swimmers*, in close to shore. (p. 681)

-pleasure-boaters: plural, concrete, countable, animate

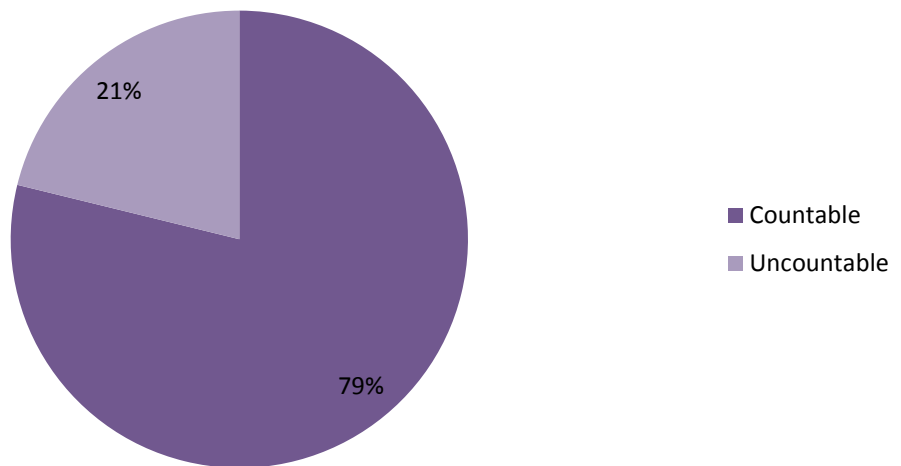
-swimmers: plural, concrete, countable, animate

## Appendix B

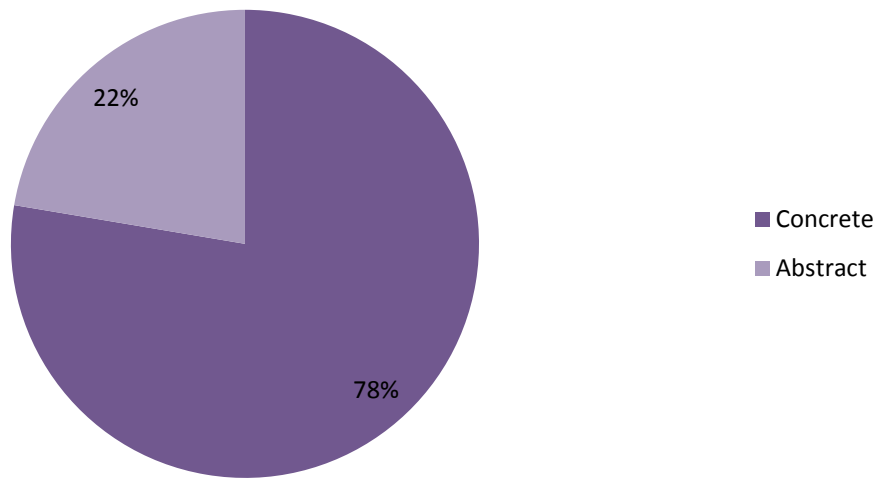
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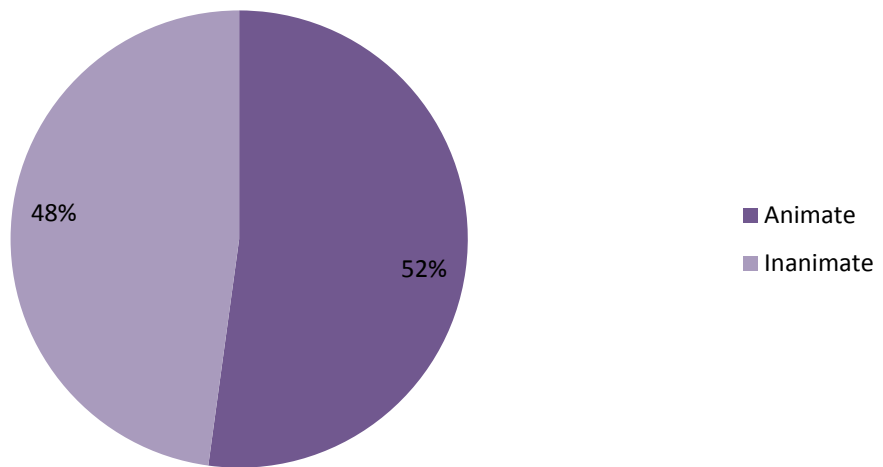
### Countability



### Semantic point of view



### Animation



## Articles

