

PRACTICAL REALISATIONS OF ENGLISH DEFINITE AND INDEFINITE ARTICLES

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1. MODIFIERS AND SUBSTITUTORS

All of them share one main characteristic.

However, some of the groups act only one way, some limit the reference of the noun as deictics do and yet others can represent a noun or a phrase with the same form or with a different form by means of contextualised associations.

Whereas articles are only capable of limiting the reference of a noun or noun-like word, personal pronouns are capable of standing alone contextualising something identifiable which might include a phrase composed of noun or a noun-like word plus various constituents following but usually preceding it.

Thus, all the groups can limit the reference of a noun and with the exception of group of articles they can represent the noun

2. DETERMINERS AND NUMERALS

Whereas DETERMINERS indicate the kind of reference which the noun has, NUMERALS generally express quantity or order

Types	subclass	Examples	Theoretical hints
ARTICLES: the and a/an	indefinite	A teacher ∅ taxis	It is used when the noun is singular
	definite	the taxi the taxis	It is used before both singular and plural nouns.
NUMERALS	Ordinals	first impressions second chance third prize	They are determiners when they appear before a noun.
	Cardinals	one book two books twenty books	
	General ordinals	next week last orders previous engagement subsequent developments	They include a set of words which are not directly related to numbers (last, latter, next, previous, and subsequent)
	nouns	The two of us The first of many Three twos make six	Numerals are a subclass of nouns. And like nouns, they can take determiners:
QUANTIFIERS	determiners	ANY taxi SOME apple MANY taxis	They specify the number or amount of the head of the NP.
	nouns	Have you got ANY ∅? Are there MANY?	

3. DETERMINERS AND PRONOUNS

[Determiners always come before a noun, pronouns function in much the same way as nouns. Many words can be both, determiners and pronouns]

TYPES	SUBCLASSES		THEORETICAL HINTS
PERSONAL	DETERMINERS	PRONOUNS	
		I must talk to HIM about IT	They are never determiners
DEMONSTRATIVE	THAT question THOSE apples THIS paper	Who is THAT? What is THIS?	They set proximate or distant relations
POSSESSIVE	MY car is white HIS house is big	The white car is MINE . OURS is bigger	They limit the reference of the Head of the NP by establishing a connection with the participants.
REFLEXIVE		He likes HIMSELF She came to HERSELF after a while.	They set a relation with a preceding NP.
INDEFINITE	BOTH of them SOME books	I have got BOTH Send me SOME	They consist of a quantifier + a noun
		He's got EVERYTHING he needs. There must be SOMEBODY THERE	
RECIPROCAL		They love EACH OTHER	They indicate a relation between two entities
RELATIVE PRONOUNS		The house WHICH she bought He WHOM I met yesterday	They mark identity with the noun phrase
INTERROGATIVE	WHICH film did you like most? whose	WHO is he? WHAT is that?	They refer to entities to be specified.

4. THE DEFINITE ARTICLE

Uses	Examples	Omissions	
Singular & plural nouns	The dog, the dogs; the biggest black dog I had ever seen	Man or woman in an abstract sense	Woman must fight for her rights
Nouns considered to be unique	The Tower (of London), The House (of Commons), The Lord (God)	Countries, towns, proper names	She went to Italy Mr. Brown lives here Cf. That's the Mr. Brown who lives nearby.
Genitives	The girl's friends, the butcher's shop	Abstract nouns	Love makes the world go around Cf. The death of Mr. Smith was announced 2 days ago.
Nouns denoting a specific thing or person	He is in the garage (of this house) I gave it to the postman (the one who comes here)	Names of meals	Lunch is ready
Nouns specified by a phrase or clause	The box on the corner The girl who studies here	Parts of the body, articles of clothing	I wash my hands Put on your coat
Singular Nouns denoting a class	The Cobra is dangerous	Certain nouns of locality	Home, school, university, church, prison, etc.
Collective Nouns	The French, The army, the clergy,	Seasons	Summer hasn't arrived this year
Adjectives used as nouns	The poor, the sick, the rich, the blind,	Names of Streets, Buildings, Squares, etc.	Oxford Street Trafalgar Square The British Museum
Names of geographical features	The Thames, the Alps	Illnesses	She has anaemia.
Meals given in someone's honour	The dinner in honour of the President will be held on Monday next.	Transport + by	To go by bus
Superlatives	The best of the students in this class	Father, mother, nurse, cook	Father is ill.
Comparatives	The more you ask, the less you get. The sooner, the better	Days of the week, day, night, week, etc. + next/last	Next Monday Last Month
Ordinals	January 5 th [pronounced as (... the 5 th)]	Parallel structures	Day by day Arm in arm Man to man Face to face. Etc.
Week demonstrative	He is busy at the moment		

5. COMPARISON WITH SPANISH (DEFINITE ARTICLE)

ENGLISH	SPANISH
Woman have ...	Las mujeres tienen ...
Time is	EL tiempo es ...
Hats are ...	Los sombreros están ...
The more he has, the more he wants	Cuanto más tiene, tanto más quiere
King George III ...	EL rey Jorge 3º
Breakfast is ready	EL desayuno está preparado
Put on your coat	Ponte el abrigo
He doesn't like school	No le gusta EL colegio
We went to London last year	Fuimos a Londres EL año pasado
Trafalgar Square	La plaza de Trafalgar
To pay Court	Hacer la corte
Aunt has bought a new car	LA/MI/NUESTRA tía ha comprado un coche nuevo

6. THE INDEFINITE ARTICLE

USES	EXAMPLES	OMISSIONS	EXAMPLES
Singular countable nouns	A man, an apple, an hour, a table A Headquartes, a gallows	Plural nouns	houses
Singular countable nouns denoting a class	An elephant never forgets	Uncountables	Music, bread, information
Genitives Specifying Classifying	A man's best friend is his dog A barber's shop	Predicative nouns, nouns preceded by 'as'	He was mayor of Coventry As Justice of the Peace, I must warn you (...)
Noun complements	He is an intelligent boy He is a lawyer	Abstract nouns	Love, death, hope, beauty, etc. She was terrified at the thought of death
Numerical sense	I'll do it in a minute A hundred, a dozen, a couple, etc.	Names of meals	He always has supper at 9 o'clock He was invited to a dinner in honour of Mr. Bush.
Price, speed and ratio	Fifty pence a gallon, Forty miles an hour, Two pounds a yard He drinks four pints of beer a day	To turn	When he got married he turned Catholic
'Few and little'	I have a little money put by. We had a few friends for supper. I have only a little sugar left.		
Personal proper names + title	Do you know a Miss Smith who used to live nearby?		
Exclamations	What a good girl! What a nasty accident!		

7. COMPARISON WITH SPANISH

Spanish		English	
Uses	Omissions	Uses	Omissions
Un hombre Una mujer	∅ hombre (mujer) que cosas dices	A man, a woman An apple	
Unos hombres Unas mujeres			∅ Men ∅ Women Some men, women
Me ha dado un consejo muy bueno Es una música muy buena			-He has given me a very good piece of advice -It's a very sweet kind of music
	Es ∅ profesora. Es ∅ católico.	She is a teacher He is a Catholic	
	Cuarenta millas por hora A cincuenta peniques la docena	Forty miles an hour Fifty pence a dozen	
	¡Qué ∅ hombre!	What a man!	
	¡Qué ∅ lástima!	What a pity!	
	Tiene muchos amigos	He has a great many friends	
	El Sr. Jones, ∅ cirujano muy famoso, me quitó el apéndice	Mr. Jones, a very famous surgeon, took my appendix out	
El mejor amigo del hombre es el perro			A man's best friend is his dog