THE SEMANTICS OF (NOT SO) BARE NOMINALS IN RIOPLATENSE SPANISH

Carolina Oggiani*

ABSTRACT

In this article we examine a group of bare singular count nominals (BNs) in Rioplatense Spanish (RPS) that appear in argument position, thus far not deeply addressed in the literature (MASULLO, 1996; LACA, 1999). Despite BNs in RPS are considered to be part of a lexically restricted phenomenon, we argue for their productivity and systematic behaviour. Considering that general Spanish has a rich determiner system, we build a semantic model to explain why these nouns appear bare in argument positions. To this end, we present semantic and syntactic evidence that aims to show that BNs in RPS have different behaviours. Specifically, we account for their three possible interpretations: a weak definite reading, a weak indefinite reading and a strong definite reading. We associate these three readings to different functional projections above the NP. Even though BNs are superficially bare, we argue that their differences lie in different types of bareness.

Keywords: Bare Singulars, Rioplatense Spanish, Weak Definites, Weak Indefinites, Strong Definites

RESUMEN

En este artículo se examina un grupo de nombres singulares contables en posición argumental, frecuentes en el español rioplatense, aún no explorados en profundidad en la bibliografía (MASULLO, 1996; LACA, 1999). Si bien en esta variedad los nombres escuetos constituyen un fenómeno sujeto a restricciones léxicas, aquí argumentamos a favor de su productividad y sistematicidad. Considerando que el español posee un sistema de determinantes rico, nuestro modelo semántico permite explicar por qué estos nombres escuetos son capaces de aparecer como argumentos de distintos predicados. Con tal fin, ofrecemos evidencia semántica y sintáctica, para dar cuenta de sus tres interpretaciones posibles: una lectura definida débil, una lectura indefinida débil y una lectura definida fuerte. A su vez, asociamos estas tres lecturas a distintas proyecciones funcionales, que se encuentran por encima del SN. Así, aunque superficialmente se trate de nombres escuetos, entendemos que sus disferencias subyacen a diferentes tipos de escuetez.

Palabras clave: nombres escuetos, español rioplatense, definidos débiles, indefinidos débiles, definidos fuertes

* Universidad de la República, Uruguay (Udelar); Sistema Nacional de Investigadores (SNI). *E-mail*: carolinaoggiani@gmail.com.

1 INTRODUCTION

Despite Spanish being a language with a determiner system with definite and indefinite articles, it also allows nominals without determiners in argument position. As it is well-known, the literature claims that singular count nominals (BNs) are only possible in object position of so-called have predicates and intensional verbs (BOSQUE, 1996; DOBROVIE-SORIN et al., 2006; ESPINAL; MCNALLY, 2011; ESPINAL, 2010, among others). From a theoretical perspective, it has been assumed that BNs denote a property of an individual and that they undergo a process of semantic pseudo-incorporation when selected by these predicates.

Rioplatense Spanish (RPS) —a variety spoken in Montevideo, Buenos Aires, and their surroundings— seems to display a broader picture. RPS shares with peninsular Spanish the same determiner system and the same BNs in object position, but it also allows BNs in a wider range of contexts. Even though it is a lexically restricted phenomenon, we claim it is more productive than has been suggested to date. The data from (1) to (3) illustrate the paradigm.[1]

(1) Los jugadores de Uruguay están en cancha.
the players of Uruguay are in field
'The Uruguayan players are on the football field.'

(2) Secretaría está cerrada de mañana./ Pintaron secretaría el mes pasado.
secretary's office is closed of morning/ painted-3p.pl. secretary's office the last month
'The secretary's office is closed in the morning./ They painted the secretary's office last month.'

(3) Estrenamos obra la semana que viene.
release-1p.pl. play the week that come-3p.sing.
'We will release a play next week.'

This article addresses the semantic nature of BNs such as the ones presented in examples (1) to (3). We aim to show these BNs appear productively as complements of the locative preposition *en* (in) (1) with a weak definite interpretation. We mean weak definites in the sense that they have a definite reading but they do not seem to presuppose a unique entity, as regular definites do (AGUILAR-GUEVARA, 2014; DE SWART, 2015, among others). Other BNs — which are lexically restricted to institutional domains — occur freely in any argument position and have a strong definite reading, as exemplified in (2). We name them strong definites in the sense that they behave like proper names; that is, they refer to a specific and univocal identifiable object (LONGOBARDI, 1997). When selected by presentation and creation verbs in object position (3), BNs get a weak indefinite reading. By weak indefinites we refer to nominals that have an indefinite singular interpretation, but their defectiveness does not equate them to regular indefinites (DAYAL, 2011).

1 The data presented throughout this paper mainly belong to a colloquial register of Rioplatense Spanish. They come from different sources, such as emails and spontaneous conversations. Please note that they do not constitute any sort of a formal corpus, since they were not collected in a systematic manner.

In a nutshell, after offering empirical semantic and syntactic evidence in favour of three different groups of BN in RPS, we build our proposal based on certain lexical features that a noun can have when entering the derivation (based on DE SWART, 2015). Depending on the lexical feature of the noun therefore, and on the kind of predicate it combines with, we can arrive at a weak definite interpretation, a weak indefinite interpretation, and a strong definite interpretation. Furthermore, we argue that the absence of an overt determiner in all cases leads to semantic enrichment; in other words, apart from their compositional meaning, these structures all add a stereotypical meaning.

This paper is laid out according to the following four sections: section 2 works out the distribution and descriptive behaviour of BNs in RP; section 3 discusses the main results of BNs, whilst section 4 provides the main theoretical assumptions on the nominal domain and builds on our semantic model. Finally, section 5 offers some final observations on the phenomenon of bare nominal expressions.

2 SEMANTIC AND SYNTACTIC PROPERTIES OF BNS IN RPS

In this section we present some diagnostics that aim to show the differences between BNs in RPS. The principal claim — as mentioned in the previous section — is that they can be interpreted as weak definites (1), weak indefinites (2) or strong definites (3), and we will correlate these interpretations with different types of functional projections. With regards to their semantic properties, we will examine their scope, number interpretation and semantic enrichment, and as for their syntactic properties, modification and adjacency will be tested.

2.1. SEMANTIC PROPERTIES OF BNS IN RPS

Weak definites appear as complements of locative prepositions (and also of directional prepositions).[2] The logical form in (4) demonstrates that they accept both wide and narrow scope. We therefore argue that the bare noun takes scope under the universal quantifier so that we can interpret that all the players are in different fields. Given the availability of wide scope, the bare noun can also take scope over the universal quantifier, making it possible to interpret that all the players are in the same field.

(4) Todos los jugadores están en cancha.
all the players are in field
'All the players are in the field.'

a. Available reading: $\forall x[\text{player}(x) \rightarrow \exists y[\text{field}(y) \wedge \text{be-in}(x, y)]]$
b. Available reading: $\exists y[\text{field}(y) \wedge \forall x[\text{player}(x) \rightarrow \text{be-in}(x, y)]]$

2 The observation that weak definites appear only as complements of certain prepositions when bare — as *to be in jail, be at home* — has already been made for English (STVAN, 2009; CARLSON; SUSSMAN, 2005; CARLSON et al., 2006).

Strong definites can appear in any argument position and they always call for wide scope. Then, the only available reading in (5) is that all the students are in the same secretary's office.

(5) Todos los estudiantes están en secretaría.
all the students are in secretary's office
'All the students are in the secretary's office.'

a. Available reading: ∃y[secretary's office (y) & ∀x[student(x) → be-in (x, y)]]
b. Not available reading: ∀x[student(x) → ∃y[secretary's office t(y) & be-in (x, y)]]

Regarding weak indefinites, they are compatible with narrow and wide scope. Hence, in (6) we get the most plausible reading that all the companies released one play —being a different one for each company—, but the interpretation that all the companies released the same play is also available.

(6) Todas las compañías teatrales estrenaron obra.
all the companies theater release-3p.pl. play
'All the theater companies released a play.'

a. Available reading: ∀x[company (x) → ∃y[play (y) ∧ release (x, y)]]
b. Available reading: ∃y[play(y)∧∀x[company(x)→ release (x, y)]]

The second diagnostic, to test number interpretation, is VP ellipsis and discourse anaphora. We claim that weak definites are not sensitive to number, thus they are number neutral. Considering that the descriptive content of the elided VP does not necessarily match the descriptive content of the first sentence, we argue for a sloppy interpretation. As such, in (7) we interpret either that Mario and Juan are on different routes or that they are in the same route.

(7) Juan está en ruta y Mario también.
Juan is in route and Mario too
'Juan is in the route and Mario is too.'

The second piece of evidence in favour of number neutrality is that in a continuation sentence they accept being picked up both by a singular and a plural nominal expression (8).

(8) Mujica estuvo en prisión.
Mujica was in prison

a. Estuvo en Punta Carretas.
was in Punta Carretas

b. Estuvo en Punta Carretas y en otra.
was in Punta Carretas and in other
'Mujica was in prison. He was in Punta Carretas/ He was in Punta Carretas and in another one.'

Strong definites do not have a sloppy reading. In this case, the elided VP is referentially linked to the overt one, so that the elided noun must refer to the same entity that the overt noun refers to (9).

(9) Sara está en bedelía y Facundo también.
Sara is in the registration office and Mario too
'Sara is in the registration office and Facundo is too.'

Likewise, strong definites only accept a singular nominal expression in a continuation sentence, never a plural (10):

(10) Facultad$_i$ está cerrada.
faculty is closed

a. pro$_i$ abre tarde.
pro open-3p.sing. late

b. *Una abre tarde y la otra temprano.
one open-3p.sing. late and the other early
'The faculty is closed. It opens late./ One opens late and the other, early.'

With respect to weak indefinites, we argue that they denote in the singular domain. In (11) the most plausible interpretation is that Juan and Pedro recorded a different album, although it is also possible to interpret that they are part of the same band and that they recorded the same album.

(11) Juan grabó disco y Pedro también.
Juan recorded-3p.sing album and Pedro too
'Juan recorded an album and Pedro did too.'

In support of their singular reading, we rely on the continuation sentence test. As exemplified below in (12), the BN accepts only being picked up by the singular pronoun *la* (12a) and not by the plural pronoun *las* (12b), nor by the indefinites (13b).

(12) Este año estrenamos obra.
this year release-1p.pl. play

a. La estrenamos en julio.
lt-sing. release-1p.pl in July

b. *Las estrenamos en julio.
lt-pl. release-1p.pl in July

c. #Estrenamos una en julio y la otra en agosto.
release-1p.pl. one in July and the other in August
'This year we will release a play. We will release it in July/ We will release them in July/ We will release one in July and the other in August.'

In the third case, we claim that the absence of a determiner in RPS always leads to semantic enrichment. Thereby, besides the literal meaning, the sentences with weak definites (13), strong definites (14), and weak indefinites (15) show some degree of a non-compositional meaning that is related to a culturally determined stereotypical activity or event[3] (DAYAL, 2011; AGUILAR-GUEVARA, 2014).

(13) El doctor está en consultorio.
the doctor is in clinic
'The doctor is in the clinic (treating patients).'

(14) Hoy voy a facultad.
Today go-1p.sing to faculty
'I go to the university (where I work/ am a student/ am a professor).'

(15) Cecilia terminó monografía de Semántica.
Cecilia finished-3p.sing paper of Semantics
'Cecilia, (who is a university student), finished a paper on Semantics.'

So far, we have determined that BNs in RPS have different interpretations. The tests provided above demonstrate that, apart from their distribution, they are different in terms of scope, number interpretation and, in addition, of a stereotypical meaning on top of their literal meaning.

2.2.SYNTACTIC PROPERTIES OF BNS

This section analyses three syntactic aspects of BNs in RPS: the type of modifiers they combine with and the degree of adjacency between the BN and the predicate.

With regards to modification, RPS BNs are sensitive to modification, but in different ways. As will be demonstrated below, modifiers are not entirely productive when combined with BNs. In (16), weak definites only accept kind modifiers and reject individual predicates, such as descriptive or evaluative adjectives.

(16) El doctor está en consultorio pediátrico/ *grande/ *feo.
the doctor is in clinic pediatric big ugly
'They doctor is in the pediatric clinic.'

Strong definites tend to reject modification. They cannot be modified by prenominal or postnominal individual predicates (17a) nor by kind level modifiers (17b).

3 I maintain the label *semantic enrichment* (developed in AGUILAR-GUEVARA, 2014), although I am aware that the three types of BNs are not equally semantically enriched. I prefer to adopt a loose version of semantic enrichment, as an umbrella term, in order to account for their different prototypical meanings. Please note that if we replace the BN with a determiner, the prototypical meaning is no longer a prerequisite of the nominal expression.

(17) a. *El trámite lo hice en nueva bedelía/ bedelía nueva.
the paper-work it did in new registration-office/ registration-office new

b. *Bedelía universitaria abre de mañana.
Registration-office academic open-3p.sing. of morning

As for weak indefinites, they are restricted to kind level modifiers. However, as illustrated in (18), not all kind level modifiers seem to be productive, then some seem to be incompatible with this class of BNs. [4]

(18) Estrenó obra de terror/ ??internacional/ *teatral.
release-3p.sing. play of horror/ international/ theater
'He/she released a horror play.'

By looking at adjacency, we want to explore how syntactically independent BNs in RPS are. Within this context, adjacency aims to test whether BNs are required to appear contiguous to their predicate.

It is worth noting that adjacency between a nominal expression and its preposition— as is the case for weak definites— is difficult to test. This is because the noun (being an NP or even a regular DP) is inherently adjacent to the preposition. Considering that it is not possible to apply this test with these weak definites, we will take a step forward and make some further assumptions. We will, in particular, assume that [P + BNs] have the same behavioural characteristics as other weak definite nominals. As has been attested for English (and other languages such as Dutch), weak definites usually alternate between presence and absence of the definite article in VPs, like *play (the) guitar, play (the) violin* (AGUILAR-GUEVARA, 2014; DE SWART, 2015). Indeed, RPS also provides constructions like the ones in English, which will be used here to test adjacency. As illustrated in (19), an adjunct (*todas las mañanas*/ 'every morning'; *todavía*/ 'still') can intercede between the BN (*taxi*, *guitarra*) and the verb (*tomar*, *tocar*), so we can pose that strict adjacency does not seem to be a property of weak definites:

(19) a. Juan toma todas las mañanas taxi.
Juan take-3p.sing. all the mornings taxi
'Juan takes the taxi every morning.'

b. Pedro toca todavía guitarra.
Pedro play-3p.sing. still guitar
'Pedro still plays the guitar.'

4 The fact that that weak indefinites combine only with some kind level modifiers (and not all) may have to do with contextual restrictions. A deeper analysis on this matter, that goes beyond the scope of this paper, remains for future research.

Moreover, due to their syntactic independence, they can be moved outside the main clause, as in cleft sentences (20).

(20) Tele es lo que vas a mirar ahora.
TV is it-sing. what go-2p.sing. to watch now
'TV is what you are going to watch now.'

Concerning strong definites, they are syntactically independent, for they do not need to be adjacent to the predicate (21). Likewise, they also appear in cleft sentences (22):

(21) a. Remodelaron ayer Rectorado.
renovated-3p.pl. yesterday rectorate
'Yesterday they renovated the rectorate.'

b. Rectorado ayer estaba cerrado.
rectorate yesterday was closed
'The rectorate was closed yesterday.'

(22) Rectorado es lo que remodelaron el semestre pasado.
rectorate is it-sing. what renovated-3p.pl. the semester last
'The rectorate is what was renovated last semester.'

In contrast, weak indefinites are syntactically dependent from their predicate. As exemplified in (23), they do not admit an adjunct *enseguida* ('right away') between the BN and the verb. In the same way, clefts lead to ill-formed sentences (24).

(23) *Abrimos enseguida cuenta porque nos casamos el año que viene.
open-1p.pl. right-away account because we marry the year that come-3p.sing.

(24) *Espéctáculo es lo que presentaron en el Teatro de Verano.
Show is it-sing what presented-3p.pl. in the Teatro de Verano

In this section, we have therefore offered empirical syntactic evidence in favour of our claim that BNs in RPS fall into three classes. As demonstrated, they accept different modifiers and they also show different levels of adjacency to their predicate. We now turn to a summary of their properties and their different interpretations.

3 SUMMARY OF BNS IN RPS

The data, summarized here in Table 1, show that BNs behave differently.

TABLE 1 — SEMANTIC AND SYNTACTIC PROPERTIES OF BNS IN RPS

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
	Weak definites	**Strong definites**	**Weak indefinites**
Scope	narrow-wide	wide	narrow-wide
Number interpretation	neutral	singular	singular
Semantic enrichment	yes	yes	yes
Modification	kind	none	kind (restricted)
Adjacency	not required	not required	required

Source: elaborated by the author.

Class 1 BNs present all the properties typically attributed to weak definites, already attested in the literature (AGUILAR-GUEVARA, 2014; DE SWART, 2015, among others), the only difference being that RPS provides rich empirical evidence in favour of BNs (besides DPs) with a weak definite reading. Then, we confirm that weak definites alternate between the presence and absence of the determiner. We assume that they are weak (as opposed to regular definites) in that they do not pick an individual, but a kind. Assuming that they denote an abstract object, we can easily explain some of the properties listed in Table 1. Namely, they allow for narrow scope; they are number neutral; and they combine with kind level modifiers. Syntactically, we claim that they are DPs —due to their syntactic independence— with a null definite determiner and that they lack NumP projection, which explains their kind denotation (BORIK; ESPINAL, 2012): $[_{DP}$ D ∅ $[_{NP}$ N]].

Class 2 BNs, on the other hand, have a strong definite interpretation and behave like proper names, then they refer to an inherently unique individual (in the sense of LÖBNER, 2011. See also LONGOBARDI, 1997, for a similar insight). That is to say, they exclusively pick an individual object that is well-known to speaker and/or hearer. This is why they accept only wide scope; they denote exclusively in the singular domain; and they reject any kind of modification. On this view, we explain their syntactic independence by arguing that they are DPs with a null definite article. Based on their singular interpretation, they project a NumP above NP: $[_{DP}$ D ∅ $[_{NumP}$ Num sing. $[_{NP}$ N]]].

Class 3 BNs have a weak indefinite interpretation. Their defective behaviour (unlike DPs with an overt indefinite article) suggests that they have an indefinite singular reading, but are defective in that they allow for wide and narrow scope; reject almost all types of modifiers and require strict adjacency. Due to their syntactic dependence from their predicate, they do not reach a DP layer, but they project up to NumP: $[_{NumP}$ Num sing. $[_{NP}$ N]]. We advocate these BNs can be analysed as a clear case of pseudo-incorporation, in line with Dayal (2011).

4. TOWARDS A SEMANTIC PROPOSAL FOR THE THREE CLASSES OF BNS IN RPS

This section presents our main theoretical assumptions which serve as a starting point to construct our model on the nominal domain. Following this, a formal analysis for the three types of BNs in RPS is provided.

4.1. SOME ASSUMPTIONS ON THE NOMINAL DOMAIN

To begin, we assume that firstly, the canonical syntactic structures for nominal expressions in a language like Spanish, with number morphology and determiners is [$_{DP}$ D [$_{NumP}$ Num [$_{NP}$ N]]] (BORIK; ESPINAL, 2012, p. 128). We maintain the assumption that this nominal structure can lack one (or more) of its layers.

Secondly, we consider that there is a direct mapping between the semantic and the syntactic representation for the nominal domain. Namely, that nouns denote properties: they are ambiguous in that they can denote a property of an object or a property of a kind (<$e^{o/k}$,t>). The NumP projection correlates exclusively with the denotation of a property of an object (<e^{o},t>), it being compatible with atomicity.[5] As for D, it correlates with the ι operator, which denotes the only individual that is salient in the context.

Thirdly, and assuming that all nouns denote properties (MATUSHANSKY, 2006), we argue that nouns enter the derivation with an ambiguous feature. This means they can either behave as common nouns or as weak nouns (25a), depending on the denotation of their predicate. We also claim that some nouns enter the derivation with a strong feature, being a combination between proper names and common nouns. They are defined as having the property of being x (just like common nouns), besides being named x (25b) (GOMESHI; MASSAM, 2009).[6]

(25) a. Noun $_{[common/weak]}$: { $x^{o/k}$: property of x}
b. Noun $_{[strong]}$: { $x^{o/k}$: property of x ∧ is-named x}

Bearing these three basic assumptions in mind, in the next subsection we develop our model for BNs in RPS.

4.2. A SEMANTIC ANALYSIS FOR BNS IN RPS

In this section we follow the analysis of Aguilar-Guevara (2014) in that weak definites denote a kind. We also redefine de Swart (2015)'s analysis in terms of the lexical features

5 I follow Borik and Espinal (2012) in that NumP correlates with the denotation of a property of an object, thus leaving aside kinds, which — under this analysis — lack the NumP projection.

6 The semantics for nouns with a [strong] lexical feature is inspired in Ghomeshi and Massam (2009, p. 74), who argue that proper names that enter the derivation with the value [name] pick out sets of individuals bearing the same name.

attributed to the nouns. Example (26) illustrates the logical form for weak definites BNs when combined with a locative preposition.

(26) en consultorio ('in clinic')

a. [[*consultorio*$_{[common/weak]}$]]: λx.consultorio<$e^{k/o}$,t>(x)
b. [*Ø consultorio*$_{[common/weak]}$]: ιx.consultorio<$e^{k/o}$>(x)
c. [[*en*$_2$]]: λzλy.en<e^k,et>(z)(y)
:λzλy∃v [REL(z)(v) ∧ en <e^k,et>(v)(y) ∧ U(y)(z)]
d. [[*en*$_2$ *consultorio*$_{[weak]}$]]: λy∃v[ιx.consultorio<e^k,t>(x) ∧ REL(z)(v) ∧ en<e^k,et>(v)(y) ∧ treat-in(y)(z)]

The lexical entry in (26a) states that nouns enter the derivation being a property of either a kind or an object. In (26b) the noun keeps the ambiguous lexical feature and combines with the ι operator that encodes the covert determiner, thus triggering the denotation of an entity. This leads us to believe that weak definites (either bare or with an overt determiner) constitute canonical arguments, then they project up to a DP (LONGOBARDI, 1994). Regarding the preposition, we contend with de Swart (2015) in that they have two different entries. In the second denotation, *en*$_2$ (26c) establishes a relation between a concrete figure and an abstract ground, namely the kind clinic. Furthermore, the Usage Stereotypical Relation (U) (AGUILAR-GUEVARA, 2014) accounts for semantic enrichment and the Realization Relation (REL) (AGUILAR-GUEVARA, 2014) instantiates a kind. Once it combines with its predicate, the noun specifies its weak feature (26d).

If we look at a regular definite expression with an overt determiner (27), the semantics stays the same as in weak definites ((26) and (26b)), but it differs in that the preposition *en*$_1$ selects for a concrete figure and a concrete ground (27c) (DE SWART, 2015). As such, in (27d) the noun specifies its common feature, lacking an enriched meaning (U) and the REL.

(27) en el consultorio ('in the clinic')

a. [[*consultorio*$_{[common/weak]}$]]: λx.consultorio<$e^{k/o}$,t>(x)
b. [[*el consultorio*$_{[common/weak]}$]]: ιx.consultorio<$e^{k/o}$>(x)
c. [[*en*$_1$]]: λzλy.en <e^o,et>(z)(y)]]
d. [[*en*$_1$ el consultorio$_{[common]}$]]: λy[ιx.consultorio <e^o,t>(x) ∧ en <e^o,et>(z)(y)]

As stated in the above, strong definites denote an inherently unique object. In particular, (28) shows a mixed semantics, in which they share the properties of common nouns and proper names.

(28) rectorado ('rectorate')

a. [[*rectorado*$_{[strong]}$]]: λx(rectorado: <$e^{k/o}$,t> (x) ∧ is-named (x))
b. [[*rectorado*$_{[strong]}$ (of speaker/hearer)]]: πx(rectorado: <e^o,t> (x) ∧ is-named (x)) ∧ Rpossession (speaker/hearer, x)
c. [[∅ *rectorado*$_{[strong]}$ (of speaker/hearer)]] ιx(πx rectorado: <e^o,t> (x) ∧ is-named (x)) ∧ Rpossession (speaker/hearer, x)

The semantics in (28a) states that the noun enters the derivation as a predicate of object level individuals and kinds, that has also the property of being named x. In (28b) we take up the π operator and the Relation Possession (BARKER, 2011, p. 1114). The π operator turns the noun into a relational noun, so that it changes its argumental structure. In this way, we can explain why *Rectorado está en primer piso* ('The rectorate is on the first floor') is interpreted as 'The rectorate of my university is in the first floor'. Furthermore, R stands for the Possession Relation as a free pragmatically controlled variable. In our analysis, the π operator and the Possession Relation account for the semantic enrichment of these BNs: the possessor is the speaker (or hearer) and the possessed entity is the object denoted by the BN. Note that at this point of the derivation the noun specifies its denotation as an <e°, t> type and in (28c), through ι operator (here realized as a covert determiner), it specifies its definite reading (e° type).

In contrast, regular definites can potentially behave as common or weak nouns, depending on the predicate selecting them. The logical form in (29) shows that the noun denotes a property (either of an object or kind), and the ι operator gives the definite reading, in this case though, an overt determiner. Depending on its predicate, the noun will specify a common or weak reading in further levels of derivation.

(29) el rectorado ('the rectorate')

a. $[[rectorado_{[common/weak]}]]$: λx.rectorado $e^{k/o}$,t(x)
b. $[[el\ rectorado_{[common/weak]}]]$: ιx.rectorado $e^{k/o}$,t(x)

Turning to weak indefinites, as any noun, they enter the derivation as a property (30a) and in (30b) a NumP operator is introduced, which is required to account for atomicity. In (30c) we provide the semantics for the second entry-denotation of a transitive verb, which has the capacity to pseudo-incorporate a BN (DAYAL, 2011). In this way, the second entry-denotation of *estrenar* ('release') takes an agent as the external argument and a property P as the internal argument, which provides the descriptive content of *obra* ('play'). Finally, in (30d), once the noun combines with its predicate, it specifies its weak feature.

(30) estrenar obra ('release a play')

a. $[[obra_{[common/weak]}]]$: λx.obra<$e^{k/o}$,t>(x
b. $[[NumP\ obra_{[common/weak]}]]$ λx.obra<e°,t>(x)obra
c. $[[estrenar_2]]$: λP λy λe [estrenar-P(e) ∧ Agent(e)= y]
d. $[[estrenar_2\ obra_{[weak]}]]$: λy λe [estrenar-obra <e°,t>(e) ∧ Agent(e)= y]

As for the semantic enrichment, we follow Dayal (2003, p. 16). In (31) the modal operator points to prototypically determined events, that may vary from one culture to another. For RPS, as argued in this paper, these constructions seem to be lexically and contextually restricted.

(31) a. λP <eo,t> λy λe [V-P(e) ∧ Agent(e) = y ∧ Appropriately-Classificatory(e)]
b. An event denoted by a predicate δ that incorporates a property γ is appropriately classificatory iff $\Diamond_{probable}$ (∃e [δ (e) ∧ ∃y [Agent(e) = y] ∧ ∃x [γ (x) & Theme(e) = x]])

In turn, we propose a straightforward semantics for regular indefinites which are preceded by an overt indefinite article. In (32a) the noun denotes a property and in (32b) the indefinite article triggers an existential interpretation. Lastly, the second entry of the transitive verb (32c) takes an agent as the external argument and an object as the internal argument. As expected, in the final derivation (31d) there is no semantic enrichment involved, given the presence of an overt determiner.

(32) estrenar una obra ('release a play')

a. [[*obra* $_{[common/weak]}$]]: λx.obra $e^{k/o}$,t(x)
b. [[*una obra* $_{[common]}$]]: λx∃x(obra $e^{k/o}$,t(x))
c. [[*estrenar*$_1$]]: λx λy λe [estrenar(e) ∧ Agent(e)= y ∧ Theme(e)= x]
d. [[[*estrenar*$_1$ *una obra*$_{[common]}$]]:λxλyλe [estrenar(e) ∧ Agent(e)= y ∧ Theme(e)= λx∃x(obra e^{o},t(x))]

In sum, the semantics above aims to account for the different interpretations of BNs in RP: weak definites, strong definites and weak indefinites. We depart from the assumption that all nouns denote properties (either of a kind or an object) and by assigning them a weak, a common or a strong lexical feature we derive the denotation of BNs and common nouns.

5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

I have examined the behaviour of BNs in RPS by providing a series of semantic and syntactic diagnostics. Based on empirical evidence, I argue that BNs behave as weak definites, strong definites and weak indefinites. Theoretically, I argue that the differences lie in different types of bareness, which are directly captured by their semantics and their functional projections. Even though I have attributed distinct logical forms to three different classes of BNs, I argue that they still constitute a unified phenomenon: they all have no phonological realized determiner, which leads to different semantic behaviours of semantic enrichments, and they are all lexically restricted constructions.

REFERENCES

AGUILAR-GUEVARA, Ana. *Semantics, lexicon and pragmatics*. Utrecht: LOT, 2014.

BARKER, Chris. Possessives and relational nouns. *In*: MAIENBORN, Claudia; VON HEUSINGER, Klaus; PORTNER, Paul (ed.). *Semantics:* An International Handbook of Natural Language Meaning. Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2011.

BORIK, Olga; ESPINAL, María Teresa. On definite kinds. *Recherches linguistiques de Vincennes*, França, v. 41, p. 123-146, 2012.

BOSQUE, Ignacio. *El sustantivo sin determinación:* la ausencia del determinante en la lengua española. Madrid: Visor, 1996.

CARLSON, Greg; SUSSMAN, Rachel. Seemingly indefinite definites. *In*: KESPER, Stephan; REIS, Marga (ed.). *Linguistic evidence*: Empirical, theoretical, and computational perspectives, v. 85. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005. p. 71-86.

CARLSON, Greg; SUSSMAN, Rachel; KLEIN, Natalie; TANENHAUS, Michael. Weak Definite Noun Phrases. *In*: DAVIS, Christopher; ZABBAL, Youri (ed.). *Nels 36*: Proceedings of the 36th Annual Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society. Amherst: GLSA, 2006. p. 179-196.

ESPINAL, María Teresa. Bare nominals in Catalan and Spanish. Their structure and meaning. *Lingua*, v. 120, n. 4, p. 984-1009, 2010.

ESPINAL, María Teresa; MCNALLY, Louise. Bare nominals and incorporating verbs in Spanish and Catalan. *Journal of Linguistics*, v. 47, n. 1, p. 87-128, 2011.

DAYAL, Veneeta. *A semantics for pseudo-incorporation*. New Jersey: Ms. Rutgers University, 2003.

DAYAL, Veneeta. Hindi pseudo-incorporation. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory*, v. 29, n. 1, p. 123-167, 2011.

DE SWART, Henriëtte. Constructions with and without articles. *In*: BORIK, Olga; GEHRKE, Berit (ed.). *The Syntax and Semantics of Pseudo-Incorporation*. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2015. p. 126-156.

DOBROVIE-SORIN, Carmen; BLEAM, Tonia; ESPINAL, María Teresa. Bare nouns, number and types of incorporation. *In*: VOGELEER, Svetlana; TASMOVSKI, Liliane (ed.). *Non-definiteness and Plurality*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2006. p. 51-79.

GHOMESHI, Jila; MASSAM, Diane. The proper D connection. *In*: GHOMESHI, Jila; PAUL, Ileana; WILTSCHKO, Martina (ed.). *Determiners*: Universals and variation, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2009. p. 67-96.

LACA, Brenda. Presencia y ausencia de determinante. *In*: BOSQUE, Ignacio; DEMONTE, Violeta (ed.). *Gramática descriptiva de la lengua española*. Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1999. p. 891-928.

LONGOBARDI, Giuseppe. Reference and proper names: A theory of n-movement in syntax and logical form. *Linguistic Inquiry*, Massachusetts, v. 25, n. 4, p. 609-665, 1994.

LONGOBARDI, Giuseppe. N-raising and place names. *In*: AMBROSINI, Riccardo; BOLOGNA, Maria Patrizia; MOTTA, Filippo; ORLANDI, Chatia. (ed.). *Scríbthair a ainm n-ogaim. Scritti in memoria di Enrico Campanile*. Pisa: Pacini, 1997.

LÖBNER, Sebastian. Concept types and determination. *Journal of Semantics*, v. 28, n. 3, p. 279-333, 2011.

MASULLO, Pascual. Los sintagmas nominales sin determinante: una propuesta incorporacionista. *In*: BOSQUE, Ignacio (ed.). *El sustantivo sin determinación*: la ausencia del determinante en la lengua española. Madrid: Visor, 1996. p. 169-200.

MATUSHANSKY, Ora. Why rose is the rose: On the use of definite articles in proper names. *Empirical Issues in Syntax and Semantics*, v. 6, p. 285-307, 2006.

STVAN, Laurel. Semantic incorporation as an account for some bare singular count noun uses in English. *Lingua*, v. 119, n. 2, p. 314-333, 2009.

Paper received on October 24, 2022.
Paper accepted on December 7, 2022.