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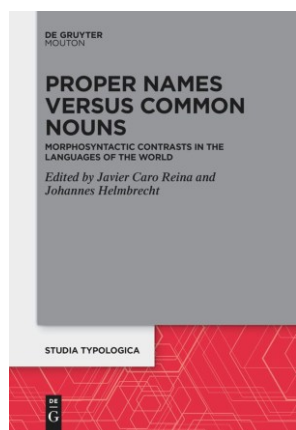
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As the title promises, this volume edited by Javier Caro Reina and Johannes Helmbrecht concerns itself with morphosyntactic properties that distinguish proper names from common nouns in different languages world-wide. Without claiming to be exhaustive, the volume offers a diverse overview over the phenomenology of proper names behaving differently from common nouns in grammar. The volume thus contributes to both general linguistics and onomastics – two (sub-)disciplines that usually operate separately from each other, even though a consideration of both perspectives would ultimately lead to a gain of knowledge beyond that of the two disciplines approaching the phenomena separately.

As pointed out in the introduction entitled *Morphosyntactic contrasts between proper names and common nouns: an introduction*, proper names are primarily researched in terms of etymology and history in onomastics, while they have overall received little attention in linguistic typology and have largely been regarded as a homogenous group. The volume’s goal as declared by the editors “is to make a contribution to fill this gap of linguistic knowledge on the descriptive level and to strive for generalizations and their explanations” (p. 3). The two editors point out that previous research shows that proper names may differ from common nouns in various grammatical aspects. Taking into consideration both earlier research and the contributions of their volume, they give an overview of how proper names differ from common nouns in various grammatical domains. The nine contributions (including the introduction) each address at least one of these domains from different perspectives by offering cross-linguistic and typological analyses, examinations of areal features, and more detailed studies on individual languages using both functional and formal approaches.

Following the introduction, the second chapter *Personal names versus common nouns: Crosslinguistic findings from morphology and syntax* by Corinna Handschuh addresses a variety of morphological and syntactic phenomena in which proper names – primarily personal names with a comment on place names here and there – differ from common nouns. As this contribution seems to be especially fruitful for the self-proclaimed goal of this volume and onomastic research in general, I will pay special attention to this paper. Handschuh investigates proper names “in their own right, and not as defective as compared to common nouns” (p. 22). The two main sections deal with phenomena concerning morphological marking (Section 3) and syntax (Section 4). In Section 3, the author addresses definiteness, case, number, and gender. First, she demonstrates not only that proper names are indeed used with definiteness markers in many

languages, but also that “differences between the usage of articles with personal names and place names appear to be quite common” (p. 26). Shifting to the topic of case marking, it is shown that proper names may be marked for more cases than common nouns in some languages and that other languages even have a split case system where common nouns may exhibit an ergative-absolutive system, while proper names are of the nominative-accusative type as in Meriam. In the subsection on number, it is noted that, although proper names are usually not used with the additive plural (at least in Europe), the associative plural is very typical for personal names and kinship terms. In the subsection on gender, the author finds that proper names may indeed be part of a language’s gender system and can even be assigned their own gender. Continuing with the syntactic domain, the topics of apposition, NP modifiers, and coordination are addressed. It is noted that proper names often appear in appositions and it is hypothesised that proper names tend to appear as the second element in an appositional construction. After that, the author observes that modification of proper names – be it with adjectives, relative clauses, or numerals – is restrictive in many languages and often requires syntactic constructions different from those for common nouns. Closing this section, it is noted that some languages employ a separate marker for the coordination of proper names. Overall, the paper addresses many aspects of grammar in which proper names have been found to behave differently from common nouns. The data show, however, that the expectations mainly stemming from earlier studies on primarily Indo-European languages are not always met cross-linguistically. Most importantly, proper nouns do not always differ from common nouns in that they are defective. Enriched with cross-linguistic data, the paper invites to do more research on proper names vs. common nouns in the areas addressed and beyond.

The use of definite or specific markers with proper names that has also been mentioned in Handschuh’s contribution is one of the most recurrent topics in onomastic research and several of this volume’s contributions deal with this issue. Four papers tackle this topic from a functional and cross-linguistic perspective, while one is written from a generative perspective, which I will come back to below. In Chapter 3, *The definite article with personal names in Romance languages*, Javier Caro Reina examines the occurrence of the definite article with personal names in eleven Romance languages whilst also taking account of dialectal variation. The author explains how the dimension of knowledge reaching from specific knowledge to general knowledge can influence the use of the definite article with personal names, as there are languages in which ordinary names (corresponding to specific knowledge) may take the definite article, while universally famous names (corresponding to general knowledge) may not – or vice versa. Furthermore, some examples from Romance languages show that it can make a difference whether personal names are used as referential or non-referential arguments. The main section on the survey of Romance languages contains a detailed analysis of the use of

the definite article with personal names in various Romance languages (and their dialects). Every sample language is described with some detail and it comes to show, that several factors may influence the use of the definite article. Caro Reina addresses three semantic/pragmatic factors (ordinary name, famous name, negative connotation), two lexical factors (personal name type, personal name class), two morphosyntactic factors (case, gender), two phonological factors (word-initial segment, word-final segment), and two sociolinguistic factors (non-standard, style) which have proven to have an influence on the use of the definite article in the selected Romance languages. Caro Reina suggests that the use of the definite article can be explained in terms of pragmaticalization rather than grammaticalization as there is no unidirectional pathway. Finally, the general absence of the definite article with personal names in the standard varieties of French, Italian, and Spanish and the (at least occasional) presence in colloquial speech and non-standard varieties leads the author to the hypothesis, that language prescription and standardisation of the languages may have played a decisive role for this absence. These concluding assumptions made for Romance languages are interesting and it would certainly be worthwhile to examine other languages and their standard and non-standard varieties to get a larger picture.

The use of the definite article is also the topic of Chapter 5, *Proper names with and without definite articles: preliminary results* by Johannes Helmbrecht. In this typological survey, the author examines 43 sample languages that make use of a definiteness marker. He identifies three different types, viz. languages that do not allow the definite article with personal names (ca. 50%), languages that require the definite article with personal names (ca. 25%), and languages that require the definite article under certain conditions (ca. 25%). He then looks at how place names in these languages behave with respect to the definite article. It is shown, that it is especially the (Indo-)European languages that show differential definiteness marking of personal names vs. place names, while most other languages are straightforward in using the definite article with both personal and place names or with neither. These results show that the markedness hierarchy corresponding to the prototypicality hierarchy as proposed by [Van Langendonck \(2007\)](#) fits for European languages, while cross-linguistic data challenge his assumptions. Helmbrecht's paper is an important contribution to the typological research on proper names in general and on the use of definiteness markers with proper names more specifically, as it offers crosslinguistic data from all over the world that shows that a Eurocentric look at this topic does not suffice to capture the whole picture.

Chapter 8, *D-marking on Basque personal names from a synchronic and diachronic perspective* by Iker Salaberri, offers a detailed analysis of the use of the D-marker *-a(k)* in Basque both synchronically and diachronically. It is explained that the D-marker is not only used for definiteness with common nouns, but can also mark indefinite specific and generic referents, complements with a generic interpretation, and it can also attach to vocatives. In contrast, the

D-marker is generally not attached to proper names, although a few exceptions in non-standard varieties are mentioned. This split is a typical feature of Standard Average European languages. Although Basque is an isolate, the author hypothesises that this feature of surrounding languages may have influenced this development. From a diachronic perspective, the D-marker seems to have grammaticalized from a demonstrative pronoun to a definite article that has developed indefinite specific, generic, and non-referential readings over time. With proper names, a number of instances of the D-marker with deity names is attested. However, the author shows that these occurrences are very marginal and decrease over time. In conclusion, Salaberri hypothesises that the increase of the use of the D-marker with common nouns in contrast to the decrease of the D-marker with proper names may hint at proper names developing into a distinct word class. Whether proper names form a word class on their own is one of the questions arising time and again in the linguistic research of names, as names are usually subsumed under the larger category of nouns. Salaberri's hypothesis based on the use of the D-marker in Basque is thus a rather strong claim that adds to the discussion on how different common nouns and proper names really are.

Thomas Stolz and Nataliya Levkovych examine five Austronesian languages with a special focus on Fijian in order to provide further evidence for the concept of *Special Onymic Grammar (SOG)* and its two subtypes *Special Anthroponymic Grammar (SAG)* and *Special Toponymic Grammar (STG)* in the ninth and last chapter of this volume titled *On Special Onymic Grammar (SOG): Definite markers in Fijian and selected Austronesian languages*. Fijian is an often-cited case where distinct definiteness markers are used for common nouns on the one hand and proper names on the other. On closer inspection, differences between the two major proper name classes, viz. personal names and place names, can be found. Personal names take an all-purpose spatial preposition, whereas place names, like common nouns, use three distinct prepositions for locative, allative, and ablative. Neither of the two proper name classes make use of the definiteness marker in PPs, while the respective marker is still used with common nouns in similar constructions. The authors thus conclude that there is both SAG and STG in Fijian. In comparison, the other four Austronesian languages show different properties when it comes to their markers. Maori is similar to Fijian in that there is one common-noun and one proper-name marker. However, differences between personal names and place names can be found in different syntactic constructions, so that there is again (covert) proof for both SAG and STG. These differences are more overt in Nadrogā and Chamorro as three distinct markers are employed, as well as in Taiof where place names are zero-marked in contrast to the overt distinct marking of common nouns and personal names. They conclude that there are several types of languages, viz. languages without SOG and languages with SOG, the latter of which can be subdivided into those with one uniform SOG and those with SAG/STG. The authors explicitly invite further exploration of this classification in future cross-linguistic studies.

Chapter 7, *Von Heidel- nach Bamberg, von Eng- nach Irland? 'From Heidel- to Bamberg, from Eng- to Ireland?'* *On the delimitation of appellative proper names and genuine proper names*, is one of the few chapters that does not primarily deal with definiteness marking, although this issue is also addressed here. Damaris Nübling presents five criteria that can be used to distinguish appellative proper names from genuine proper names in German. The author argues that the semantic criterion, that forms the basis of Harweg's (1983) analysis, alone does not suffice to distinguish between the two proper name types, and that grammatical criteria should also be taken into consideration. In the main section, the criteria semantic mismatches, loss of headedness in referential gender assignment, diverging behaviour of determiners, the (im-)possibility of partial ellipsis, and genitive and plural inflection are introduced and corroborated by persuasive examples of German toponyms. It is shown that appellative proper names are located between common nouns and genuine proper names when it comes to the five criteria examined in the study. In some aspects, appellative proper names are closer to common nouns, while in others, they behave more like genuine proper names. The author hypothesises that genuine proper names have undergone a diachronic process from common nouns via appellative proper names to genuine proper names.

Among the primarily functional, cross-linguistic, and typological approaches in this volume, two contributions stand out in that they use a generative approach. As mentioned before, there is one more chapter on definiteness markers, which examines this issue from a generative perspective. In their contribution *River names. Definite articles and place names in West-Germanic and Romance*, Yves D'hulst, Rolf Thieroff, and Trudel Meisenburg attempt to explain why river names behave so uniformly in West-Germanic and Romance languages in that they require a definite article. According to the authors, river names – like common nouns and unlike other proper names – are not rigid designators, i.e., there is referential vagueness. Furthermore, they are underspecified for boundedness. This underspecification is then resolved by syntactic means, i.e., by the definite article.

The sixth chapter is another contribution with a generative background. *On personal names in construct states in Modern and Biblical Hebrew* by Elisheva Jeffay and Susan Rothstein offers an analysis of the construct state in Modern and Biblical Hebrew and a possible explanation why personal names cannot appear in the annex position of construct states in Modern Hebrew, while they freely occurred in this position in Biblical Hebrew. According to the authors' hypothesis, the annex must be filled by an NP in both Modern and Biblical Hebrew. The authors suggest, that personal names have undergone a shift so that they are now referential in Modern Hebrew and form DPs rather than NP predicates. As DPs may not fill the annex position in a construct state, personal names are consequently not allowed in this position.

Overall, the volume represents an important contribution to the linguistic

research of names. The editors and Handschuh in particular point out that it is not a rare phenomenon that proper names follow rules different from common nouns in various grammatical domains all over the world. The well-foundedness of this assumption has recently been confirmed in a book-length typological study dedicated to the special morphosyntactic behaviour of personal names and place names in cross-linguistic perspective (Stolz & Nintemann 2024). As to the edited volume under review, the different approaches reaching from functionalism to formalism and from studies on individual languages to cross-linguistic studies show, that it is worthwhile to research proper names from different perspectives in the larger field of linguistics. The volume unequivocally demonstrates that proper names deserve to be recognized as a research topic by linguists of all persuasions.

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