February 14th, 2019 - The Bare Singular in BrP and Bare Nominals across languages

Chierchia (1998, 2010, 2015) - Neo-Carlsonian + a theory of plurality + semantic parameters

Mandarin, a mass language? Yes, Chierchia 1998. No, Chierchia 2010, 2015.

Plural is inclusive? No, Chierchia 1998. Yes, Chierchia 2010, 2015.

BrP Bare Singular does not fit anywhere in those systems.

Chierchia (1998) Semantic Parameters -

Do languages have bare nouns? [+/- arg; +/- pred] => 3 types of language: Exclusively, Mandarin [+ arg; - pred] (an e language); Yes but also determiner phrases English [+ arg, + pred], (an e, <e,t> language); No French [- arg; + pred], an <e,t> language

(1)   Dogs bark.   GEN
(2)   Dogs are barking   EPIS
(2)   A dog barks.
(3)   The dog barks.   GEN
(4)   * Dog barks.
(5)   John bought books.

"So we may actually want to represent kinds as individual concepts of type <s,e> (i.e. functions that at any world yield the totality of the manifestations of that kind in that world)" (115)

up and down operators

By the same token, we can define the 'down'-function as follows: (16) For any property P and world/situation s, $^\cap$P =λs ι Ps, if λs ι Ps is in K , undefined, otherwise 0, where Ps is the extension of P in s.

Let d be a kind. Then for any world/situation s, $^\cup$d = λx [x ≤ ds], if ds is defined {lλx [FALSE], otherwise where ds is the plural individual that comprises all of the atomic members of the kind.

low existential closure. Derived Kind Predication DKP
existential up down plural noun

Kinds are the maximal homogeneous pluralities (114).

[[-s P]] = λP λx. ∃ Q (Q ⊆ P ∧ x ⊔Q)

(29)   a. Gold is rare => rare (gold)
        b. Dogs are widespread => widespread ($^\cap$dogs)

Mass is a plural predicate in 1998. But look at the logical form he offers… It is unclear what happens, but the down operator could in principle apply.

Dogs bark.
b. Gn x, s [$^{\cup\cap}$dog-s(x) ∧ C(x, s)][bark(x, s)]

The down operator only applies to cumulative predicates (plural and mass). Thus, it does not apply to a singular property.

The system does not generate a Bare Singular as it appears in Brazilian Portuguese. If the language has plural morphology, then it has a Bare Plural and a Bare Mass.

Brazilian Portuguese has a plural morpheme, distinguishes mass and count, has a Bare Plural, a Bare Singular and Bare Mass.

Cachorros latem.
Cachorro late.
O cachorro late.

The Bare Singular is not singular. Schmitt & Munn, Müller it is a plural predicate; Pires de Oliveira & Rothstein, it is mass.

Chierchia (2010, 2015)   Number marking languages, English and French,
                          Classifier languages, Mandarin,
                          Number Neutral languages, Dené Suliné.

How do languages count? Plural morpheme, classifiers, or "adverbials"?

Mass and count denote atomic lattice-structures; the difference is epistemic. We know that the atoms of mass nouns are not stable through the worlds. We know that stable atoms are constant cross worldly.

Mass predicates denote a singleton, the maxim sum. Thus they look like proper names.

Nouns-as-properties => English <e,t>
Nouns-as-kind => Mandarin e

If in a language N maps into kind, [V N] mergers are freely possible. (141)

If a noun has obligatory classifiers, it lacks obligatory number marking.

Number Neutral languages are to my mind not well understood. Lima (2014) argues that Yudja is a Number Neutral Language. Chierchia interprets it as a classifier language with covert classifiers which are openly given in Mandarin.

As it is, it cannot explain BrP data, since it predicts that the Bare Singular is a plural count noun.

Exercise
How does your language count? Are classifiers obligatory? What about Plural morphology?

February 15th, 2019 - Comparison and the Mass-Count distinction

Pires de Oliveira & Rothstein, 2011. Ferreira, 2017 for a review on the literature

(1) João tá procurando secretária/ secretárias/ uma secretária.

(2) ? Baleia está em extinção.

(3) João tem mais casa que a Maria.

(4) John has more house than Mary.

BrP is an outlier (Pires de Oliveira & Bevilaqua, submitted)

Chierchia (1998, 2010, 2015) Rothstein (2017)

Pires de Oliveira & Rothstein (2011). Apply Carlson's tests:

(1)   a.   João tá procurando secretária.

       b.   João tá procurando uma secretária.   ambiguous

       c.   João tá procurando secretárias.

(2)   a.   Não tem uma mancha no chão.   ambiguous

       b.   Não tem mancha no chão.

(3)   a.   ? Tem um cachorro em todo lugar.

       b.   Tem cachorro em todo lugar.

(4)   a.   # João matou um coelho a tarde inteira.

       b.   João matou coelho a tarde inteira.

The BS in BrP is not an indefinite. It behaves as a kind denoting expression.

A note on Semantic Incorporation. Are all these structures productive in Spanish?

(5)   Baleia está em extinção.

Controversial judgments. However there is empirical evidence that it is accepted.

(6)   Baleia acabou/não tem mais.

Chierchia (1998) => no place for the BrP. It is not as English, because it allows for a Bare Singular in argument position. The down operator only applies to cumulative denotations. Solution: the BS is cumulative, thus it cannot be "singular". How do we derive the system?

Schmitt & Munn (1999) => It denotes the kind, there is an empty determiner. It is a count noun, but not a misguided plural. They are not clear. They suggest it is an inclusive plurality versus exclusive.

(7)   a.   Criança nessa idade pesa 20 k

       b.   ?? Ouro nessa loja pesa 20 g

Müller (2002) => number neutral count noun. The Bare Plural is exclusive. Moreover, the BS is an indefinite. This cannot be right if (1) to (3) are to be explained. Plural cannot be

semantically exclusive, either. See Chierchia (2010). If it were, we expect that (5) is true if Maria has one child.

(8)   Maria não tem filhos.

That might be the case, but only with particular prosody, some sort of metalinguistic negation. Moreover, it behaves inclusively in downward entailment contexts:

(9)   Se a Maria tem filhos, ela recebe seguro.

She gets the insurance even if she has just one child.

Pires de Oliveira & Rothstein (2011) argue that the BS behaves as mass noun, whereas the BP is a plural predicate.

(10)   Mobília nessa loja encaixa uma na outra.

It is not grammatical atomicity that is playing a role in (7b). Rothstein (2017) distinction between natural and grammatical atomicity

They support this view with the fact that the BS may be interpreted by volume:

(11)   É muito livro pra carregar.   volume or count
        is much/many book to carry

It might be true in a situation where there are few books but they are thick.

Experimental results from judgment tasks => only the BS allows for volume reading, but it also allows for count readings.
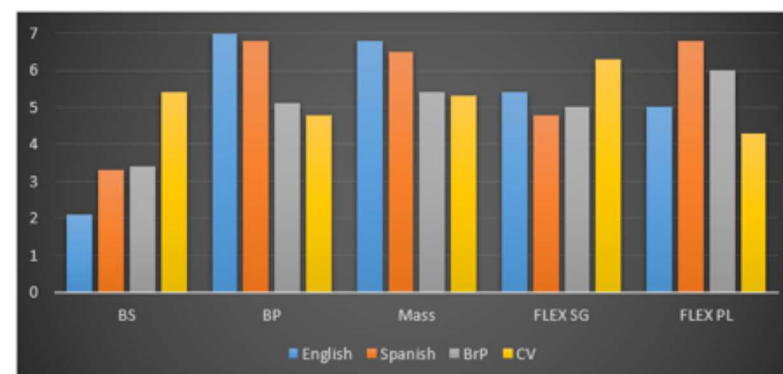
Bevilaqua & Pires de Oliveira (2018)

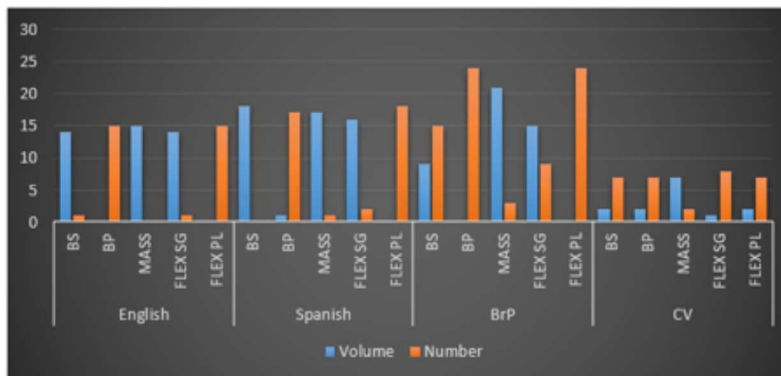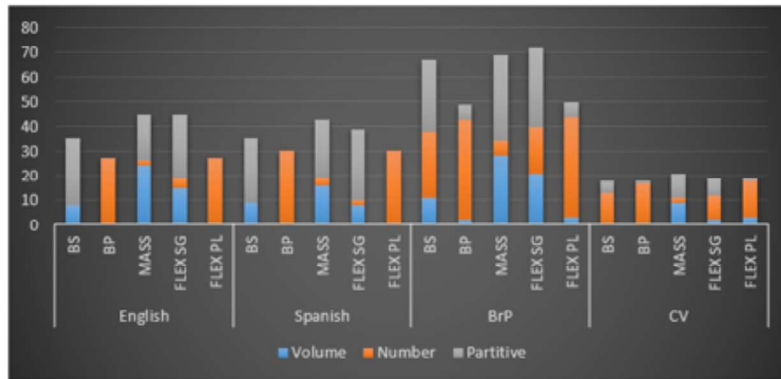3 tests in 4 languages: English, Spanish, BrP, and Cape Verdean

(i) grammaticality judgment
(ii) free interpretation
(iii) quantity judgment

The Noun Phrase has 5 levels: Bare Count Singular Noun (BS); Bare Plural (BP); Flexible nouns in a singular form (FLEX-SG); Flexible nouns in a plural form (FLEX-PL); and Mass nouns (MASS).

Pires de Oliveira & Bevilaqua (submitted) - relying on Scontras *et al* (2017) => no cue for atomicity. Atomicity is constructional.

Proposal