

Responses to reviewers:

Reviewer 1:

The paper is very well written and I recommend it for publication. One thing that the author needs to explain is the tone-marking convention. While the convention that the author adopts may be familiar to those who work in tonology or on Kru languages, it is not necessarily familiar for one who works on languages in which tone is marked on syllables. One does not, for instance, understand why the plural suffix –l gets contour LH numbering in example 5 but level tone in example 4. I can understand that the author might consider this information to be distracting. However, it can be placed in a footnote.

Explanatory footnote added before Table 1.

More important is the distinction between the interpretations of examples such as (8b) as opposed to (12). What does ‘all coconut’ in the former mean? Also, how does one get the definite interpretation, such as one gets when the universal quantifier modifies true mass nouns. Once again, I understand that since this is a proceedings paper, the author cannot go into detail in discussing these issues. However, the questions beg to be answered, and I hope they can be touched upon briefly, even if in a footnote.

Footnote added at example 8.

Reviewer 2:

Specific comments for author(s)

Page 4: In example (5) please explain what ‘#’ stands for as it may not be obvious to all those who read your paper.

Explanation added before example 5.

Page 10: Please fix Last sentence in 3.1. It seems there should be two or there is a word missing. Colon added.

Page 11: A more detailed explanation of (19) and/or the mereological theoretical concept involved is required in order for the reader to easily understand (20). Removal of non-atomic members needs more explanation as it is not obvious why & which ones they would be when considering a real situation of coconuts or ants. Is it really removal or reconfiguration so that there are only atomic members? Perhaps, you need to explain what the schema in (19) would mean in terms of coconuts or ants. Is everything supposed to be in the same bracket or are these alternatives: {abc}, {ab}, {bc}, etc.? Wouldn’t (20) be straightforward if the group is just {abc}. In such a case the SG suffix then reconfigures {abc} so that it becomes {a,b,c}. It seems having {abc, de, fg} reconfigured as {a, b, c, d, e, f, g} would also make sense unless there is something I have missed from your explanation. Whatever the case is, a clearer explanation is required.

We have expanded the discussion surrounding (19) and (20) to be more explicit: the denotations contain both non-overlapping atomic individuals (e.g. individual coconuts or ants) and sums of those atomic individuals (e.g. the sum of two or three coconuts). The SG suffix

removes those sums, so the resulting denotation consists entirely of atomic individuals (like a count noun).

The reviewer raises an alternative analysis: SG does not remove sums from the denotation, but instead reconfigures a cumulative member into its component atomic parts. This analysis essentially removes the denotational distinction between true mass nouns and bare countable mass nouns: neither denotation would contain atomic individuals, but only overlapping sums. An additional constraint would then be needed to restrict the SG suffix to countable mass nouns and disallow it from combining with true mass nouns, the SG suffix would need to determine which subparts of the element count as atomic individuals. (The constraint could in principle be a matter of extra-linguistic world knowledge about the divisibility of coconuts and ants vs sand and salt.) We prefer to include individuals in the denotations of countable mass nouns to distinguish them from true mass nouns linguistically (which still allows for some language specific arbitrariness in which predicates have which sort of denotation), and to draw the parallels between these nouns and “fake” mass nouns in English and individual-denoting nouns in classifier languages.

Page 12: You need to explain or say a little more about “fake mass” nouns to make your point clear.

A clarification sentence about the properties of fake mass nouns was added below example 19.