

The Non-Bare Proper Nouns questionnaire

Ana Aguilar Guevara (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México), Timo Buchholz (Universität zu Köln), Rafael Herrera Jiménez (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México), Klaus von Heusinger (Universität zu Köln), Carolina Oggiani (Universidad de la República), Julia Pozas Loyo (El Colegio de México).

In this talk we will present a questionnaire aimed to investigate and compare the morphosyntactic properties of proper nouns (PNs) across languages. PNs form, together with common nouns (CN) (*boy*) and mass nouns (*gold*), the word class of nominals. They share many features with CNs, for instance, they are good arguments of verbs (*They love Mary / the girl*) and they can also appear in predicative position (*That seems to be John / a boy*). Another similarity is that both PNs and CNs can be modified (e.g. *The John/ the boy I know is tall*).

On the other hand, we also observe differences between PNs and CNs. In contrast with CNs, when combined with demonstratives, PNs can bring along a pejorative inference regarding the referent (e.g. *I saw this Mary/ this girl*). Likewise, some nominal markers are restricted to PNs (e.g. the closeness expressing morpheme *-iux* in Mexican Spanish, as in *María/Mariux* vs. *niña/*niñiux* ‘table’).

In order to understand the similarities and differences between PNs and CNs across languages, this questionnaire aims to be a tool to assess, in a diverse sample of languages, their behavior in different syntactic positions and in combination with various nominal markings. Our ultimate goal is to identify common patterns across languages and specific phenomena that will allow us to better understand the grammatical category of PNs.