

Bare singular nominals in Dutch: A descriptive overview¹

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Recent years have seen an increase in the study of bare singular nominals (BSNs) in various languages and of various types. Typically, one particular bare construction is studied in isolation, without consideration of its possible similarities or relations with other bare constructions. Broader overviews of bare constructions in one language are relatively rare (but see Borthen 2003, Carlson no date, Munn & Schmitt 2005, De Swart & Zwarts 2009). The question arises to what extent determiner omission is a unified phenomenon, or whether we find different patterns, asking for different explanations.

The purpose of this paper is to give a general overview of bare constructions in one particular language, Dutch, together with a rough classification. The approach is descriptive, with the intention of laying the descriptive and typological groundwork for deeper and more explanatory principles for explaining the range and properties of bare singular constructions.

This paper consists of four sections. After some preliminary remarks in section 1, I will go through a list of bare constructions in section 2. Section 3 will then provide a typology of bare constructions, with some possible directions for further analysis.

1 Preliminaries

I will define a bare singular nominal BSN in the following way:

- (1) In a linguistic expression A, a noun phrase B is a bare singular nominal (BSN) if it is headed by a singular count common noun, but not specified by an article, other determiner or possessive noun phrase.

An expression A will be called a *bare example*, for short. In the following example A is the sentence *Dorothea speelt piano* and B is the bare noun *piano*. In the bare examples, the

¹ Most of the data in this paper are taken from the Dutch Eindhoven Corpus. Part of the data in this paper are based on the corpus work done by Ingmar van der Beld as part of his internship in the Weak Referentiality Project in 2008-9.

BSN is underlined. Most of the examples are taken from the Eindhoven Corpus, unless otherwise indicated.

- (2) [A Dorothea speelt [B piano]]
Dorothea plays piano
'Dorothea plays the piano.'

A singular count common noun is understood here as a singular noun that would usually, in other examples, need some sort of determiner with it, typically an indefinite or definite article. There are quite a few nouns that need to be kept apart from the class that we are interested in here, although the demarcation is not always straightforward. We are talking about singular count common nouns, ruling out proper nouns, as well as mass and plural nouns. Furthermore, we ignore singular count nouns that all by themselves seem to have moved into another non-noun word class, like *weg* (adverb) and *richting* (preposition).²

- (3) a. U gaat niet weg als de uitslag ongunstig voor u zou uitvallen? (2229)
You go not away if the result unfavourable for you would out-fall
'You are not leaving when the results are negative for you?'
- b. vanaf het station richting Centrum (12134)
from the station direction Center
'from the station in the direction of the City Center'

It could be that some of the bare singular nominals that we find should really be analyzed as proper nouns, mass nouns or non-nouns, but this is something that can only be decided if we can study these potential bare nouns in the broader context of a typology of bare constructions.

We are not working with individual bare examples, but with *bare constructions*, i.e. *types* of bare examples that form a relatively coherent and identifiable category. The classification of individual bare examples into bare constructions does not imply that such bare constructions exist as theoretical entities or that this is a definitive typology. It is first of

² Note that *richting* is itself one of those prepositions that allow their complement to be bare.

all a way to organize the data in a useful way. One of the goals of this paper is to group these constructions in more general classes.

The basis for this classification is a list of criteria that come from earlier studies on bare noun phrases (see the references at the end of this paper) and that might tell us something about the nature and level of bareness in these constructions:

- (4) a. *Can the head noun be put in the diminutive?*
Yes: Kindje, wat moet ik tegen je zeggen?
Child-DIM, what must I against you say
'Little child, what can I say to you?'
No: *Dorothea speelt pianootje.
Dorothea plays piano-DIM
- b. *Can the head noun be made plural?*
Yes: Kinderen, wat moet ik tegen jullie zeggen.
Children, what must I against you say
'Children, what can I say to you?'
No: *Dorothea speelt piano's.
Dorothea plays pianos
- c. *Is the nominal interpreted in a number-neutral way?*
Yes: We hebben het programma op disk gezet. (could be more than one)
We have the program on disk put
'We have put the program on disk.'
No: Kind, kom toch binnen. (only one child addressed)
Child, come PRT inside
'Child, do come in.'
- d. *Does the nominal allow for modifiers and complements?*
Yes: (regenachtige) dag na (regenachtige) dag
rainy day after rainy day
No: We zitten aan (*grote) tafel
We sit at (*big) table
- e. *Is the head noun an open class?*
Yes: als tafel, als bureau, als eettafel, als ... dienen
as table, as desk, as dining table, as ... serve

- No: aan tafel, *aan bureau, *aan eettafel zitten
 at table, at desk, at dining table sit
- f. *Does the construction allow an overt determiner?*
 Yes: (Een) interessant gevolg van internet is dat ...
 (An) interesting consequence of internet is that ...
 No: Hij is per (*de/*een) trein gekomen
 He is per (the/a) train come
 ‘He came by train’
- g. *If a determiner can occur, is the interpretation the same in that case?*
 Yes: (Een) interessant gevolg van internet is dat ... (same interpretation)
 (An) interesting consequence of internet is that ...
 No: Hij is dominee (profession) vs. Hij is een dominee (could be behaviour)
 He is vicar He is a vicar
- h. *What are the referential properties of the bare singular noun? Does it introduce discourse referents and license anaphoric pronouns of some sort?*
 Yes: Daar is tante₁. Ze₁ is boos.
 There is aunt. She is angry.
 No: Hij speelt piano₁. *Hij₁ is vals.
 He plays piano. *He is out of tune.
- i. *Does the bare nominal alternate with weak definite nominals (in other languages, with other nouns, in other constructions)?*
 Yes: Hij komt per bus. – Hij komt met de bus.
 He comes per bus – He comes with the bus
 Same meaning: ‘He comes by bus.’
 No: Klaas is dominee. – Klaas is de dominee.
 Klaas is vicar – Klaas is the vicar.
 ‘Klaas is a vicar.’ – ‘Klaas is the vicar.’ (Different meanings)
- j. *Is there semantic enrichment? In what sense is the interpretation of a bare construction enriched?*
 Yes: Hij gaat naar school.
 He goes to school
 ‘He goes to school’ (he is a student there, learning)

No: in onderstaande figuur
in mentioned below figure
'in the figure mentioned below' (no obvious enrichment)

We have to be careful, in answering these questions, not to change the construction by applying one of the tests. Very often plurals, modifiers or determiners *are* possible, but only when defining characteristics of the bare construction are lost. This can be illustrated with bare primary predication (De Swart et al. 2007). This construction has a professional meaning, can take special qualifiers (like *van beroep* 'by profession') and be number neutral.

- (5) a. Klaas is dominee.
Klaas is vicar
'Klaas is a vicar.'
- b. Klaas is dominee van beroep. (capacity qualifier)
Klaas is vicar of profession
'Klaas is a vicar by profession.'
- c. Klaas en Willem zijn dominee (van beroep). (number neutrality)
Klaas and Willem are vicar (of profession)
'Klaas and Willem are vicars (by profession).'

A determiner is possible, but incompatible with a qualifier and with number-neutrality:

- (6) a. Klaas is een dominee.
Klaas is a vicar
- b. *Klaas is een dominee van beroep.
Klaas is a vicar of profession
- c. *Klaas en Willem zijn een dominee.
Klaas and Willem are a vicar
- (7) a. Klaas en Willem zijn dominees.
Klaas and Willem are vicars
- b. *Klaas en Willem zijn dominees van beroep.
Klaas and Willem are vicars of profession

Furthermore, the appearance of an article or plural number still allows the professional meaning, but it is no longer the *only* meaning. In this way we can argue that the bare primary predication construction is number-neutral and does not allow pluralization or articles. It is not always possible to set the argumentation up like this and many cases remain unclear, but at least this illustrates the care that should and that can be taken in applying the properties to a given bare construction.

In addition to this list of more or less ‘binary’ criteria, there is also a set of questions to ask about the syntactic and semantic distribution of bare nominals. In what kind of contexts does a bare nominal occur? Is it governed by particular elements? Is it in a sentence-external or peripheral position? Does it occur on argument positions? What are the discourse properties of a particular bare nominal? Answering all these questions would require a book-length discussion, but here we will only try to indicate the rough lines.

2 List of bare constructions

This section contains a list of bare constructions, each with a label, a brief characterization, a few examples and some references to literature.³

2.1 Bare vocatives

A vocative is a noun phrase which is used out of the grammatical context of a sentence, predicatively applied to an addressee. Bare singular nominals can occur in this position:

- (8) a. Kind, wat moet ik tegen je zeggen? (15259)
Child-DIM, what must I against you say
‘Little child, what can I say to you?’
- b. Maffer, schreeuwden samengedromde arbeiders in de Van Woustraat tegen een trambestuurder (6751)
scab, screamed crowded workers in the Van Woustraat against a tramdriver
‘Scab, gathered workers screamed in the Van Woustreet against a tramdriver.’
- c. Gemeente, als we er niets meer van begrijpen, als we waden door Egyptische schaduwen des doods (2270)

³ In this preliminary version, not all of the data are fully complete yet.

Congregation, if we there nothing more of understand, if we wade through
Egyptian shadows of death
'Congregation, if we don't understand it anymore, if we pass through Egyptian
shadows of death ...'

Vocatives in Dutch can occur in the plural and diminutive form and be freely modified and complemented:

- (9) Ivoren wachters van het maagdarmkanaal, ...
Ivory guards of the gastrointestinal tract, ...

Only third person possessive (*mijn kind* 'my child') and maybe demonstrative determiners (*die maffer* 'that scab') are possible as overt counterparts, no ordinary definite or indefinite articles. The class of vocative nouns is open. One indication that vocatives are referential is that they allow non-restrictive relative clause:

- (10) Lieve vrienden, die mij altijd trouw zijn gebleven, ik ben blij dat u gekomen bent.
Dear friends, who my always loyal are stayed, I am happy that you come are
'Dear friends, who always were loyal to me, I am happy that you came.'

Finally, vocatives are not number neutral: a plural audience cannot be addressed with a singular vocative.

Literature: Corver (2008); Longobardi (1984);

2.2 Bare coordination

In a bare coordination at least one BSN is conjoined with another nominal:

- (11) a. Tram en bus worden echter meer benut door mensen met lagere inkomens.
(51588)
tram and bus are however more used by people with lower incomes
'Tram and bus, however, are used more by lower income people.'

- b. de elektronische mogelijkheden van basgitaar, orgel, elektrische piano en saxofoon (17792)
the electronic possibilities of bass guitar, organ, electrical piano and saxophone
- c. En nu dreigt onze generaal ster en erekruis te moeten missen. (9313)
and now threatens our general star and cross of honour to must miss
'An now our general is in danger of having to miss star and cross of honour.'

That plurals are allowed in this construction is shown by the following examples, where the bare plurals in the coordination have a definite interpretation:

- (12) a. De verdiensten van trainers en pikeurs blijven ver onder hetgeen hun redelijkerwijs zou toekomen. (11756)
The earnings of trainers and horsemen stay far under what them reasonably would belong
'The earnings of trainers and horsemen falls short of they are reasonably entitled to.'
- b. Bij arbeid die staande wordt uitgevoerd, rust gans het lichaamsgewicht op benen en voeten. (36362)
by work that standing is executed, rest whole the body weigth on legs and feet
'With work that is done in a standing position, the weight of the whole body rests on legs and feet.'
- c. In het communiqué van het bestuur heet het, dat deze brief werd opgesteld door bestuur en studenten samen (1236)
in the communiqué of the board calls it, that this letter was formulated by board and students together
'In the statement of the board it says that this letter was formulated by board and students together.'

Complementation is possible, as well as modification, but only postnominally it seems, by PPs en relative clauses (both restrictive and non-restrictive):

- (13) a. poederdoos of lippenstift om zich op te maken kenden ze niet (32403)
powder compact or lipstick to themselves up to make know they not
'They were not familiar with powder compact or lipstick to do one's face.'

- b. bouw en werking van het slot van deze wapens verschilden niet met die van het geweer (34401)
 construction and operation of the lock of these weapons differed not with those of the gun
 ‘Construction and operation of the lock of these weapons did not differ from those of the gun.’

An overt article in these examples seems always possible, definite or indefinite.

Literature: Heycock & Zamparelli (2003); Lambrecht (1984); Postma (1995); Roodenburg (2004).

2.3 Bare enumeration

Bare singular nouns can also be found in an enumeration:

- (14) a. Deze jonkheren oefenen in de 20ste eeuw o.a. de volgende beroepen uit:
 landbouwer, boekhouder, procuratiehouder, hoofdcommies ptt, verzekeringsagent, textielarbeider, metaalbewerker, gasfitter, typograaf, kapper, monteur, timmerman, straatmaker, metselaar. (10529)
 These esquires practise in the 20th century a.o. the next professions out:
 agriculturalist, book keeper, attorney, principle clerk ptt, insurance agent, textile worker, metal worker, gas fitter, typographer, hairdresser, mechanic, carpenter, roadworker, bricklayer.
- b. Drie botjes, die wij nu kennen als onze middenoorbeentjes: hamer, aambeeld en stijgbeugel . (33883)
 Three bones, that we now know as our middle ear bones: hammer, anvil and stirrup.

- c. Hoe een trawlnet in elkaar zit, alle onderdelen: rug, buik, twee onderoren en twee bovenoren, de blinde lap en de kuil ... (22381)
 How a trawl net is put together, all parts: back, belly, two under ears and two upper ears, the blind piece and the cod⁴

The enumeration is not integrated in a sentence, unlike the coordination and it need not contain a conjunction element. If we look at enumerations more generally, we can see that they can also contain plurals, diminutives, definite and indefinite noun phrases, modified nominals. The class of nouns occurring in enumerations is unlimited. The bare noun is not number neutral. The nouns *rug* and *buik* in the third example above can only refer to individual entities.

2.4 Bare incorporation

A BSN can be the incorporated object of a verb.

- (15) a. Dorothea speelt piano (37074)
 Dorothea plays piano
 ‘Dorothea plays the piano.’
- b. De behandeling van de zedelijkheids wetten heeft plaats eind februari en begin maart 1911. (13255)
 the handling of the morality laws has place end February and begin March 1911
 ‘The handling of the morality laws takes place at the end of February and the beginning of March 1911.’
- c. De samenzweerders hadden post gevat in een portiek aan de overkant (27165)
 The conspirators had stand taken in a doorway at the other side
 ‘The conspirators had taken stationed themselves in a doorway at the other side of the street.’

Modification and complementation are not possible, unless the resulting nominal refers to a established subtype. The incorporated noun itself can not be pluralized (**piano's spelen* pianos play), but incorporated nouns *can* be plural (e.g. *aardappels schillen* potatoes peel

⁴ These are probably not the correct English terms for trawl net parts, but the idea should be clear.

‘peel potatoes’). Diminutive formation leads to diverse results: impossible for one class (**pianootje spelen* piano-DIM play), possible (or obligatory?) for another (*doktertje spelen* doctor-DIM play ‘play doctors and nurses’).

Literature: Booij (2008), Espinal & McNally (2006), Farkas & De Swart (2003) and many others.

2.5 Bare titles

In this construction there is a BSN in front of and qualifying a proper name or namelike expression:

- (16) a. Sprintster Cora Schouten stelde echter danig teleur. (189)
sprinter-FEM Cora Schouten let however rather down
‘The sprinter Cora Schouten was rather disappointing however.’
- b. Machinefabriek Reineveld in Delft heeft een moeilijk jaar gehad in 1969. (2839)
machine factory Reineveld in Delft has a difficult year had in 1969
‘The machine factory Reineveld in Delft had a difficult year in 1969.’
- c. In hoofdstuk 11 gaan wij dieper in op evaluatie en supervisie. (36744)
in chapter 11 go we deeper in on evaluation and supervision
‘In chapter 11 we will go deeper into evaluation and supervision.’

De Belder (2009) claims that plurals and diminutives are possible, and in fact we find such examples:

- (17) a. Vooral dat laatste wordt lastig aan te tonen, menen ministers Bos en Donner.⁵
especially that last thing is difficult to show, think ministers Bos and Donner
‘Especially that last thing will be difficult to demonstrate, according to the ministers Bos and Donner.’
- b. Maar als prinsesje Amalia voor het eerst naar school gaat, moet dat natuurlijk op de voorpagina.⁶
but when princess-DIM Amalia for the first to school goes, must that of course on the front page

⁵ http://www.volkskrant.nl/archief_gratis/article1127226.ece/Kritiek_op_nationaliseren_van_arbeid

⁶ <http://www.nu.nl/achterklap/1356404/roddelbladen-abnormale-amalia-en-de-botte-baardmans.html>

‘However, when the little princess Amalia goes to school for the first time, then that of course should be on the first page.’

She also claims that the nouns that can be used in this way constitute an open class.

Complementation is possible and subtype modification:

- (18) a. althans volgens organisatorisch directeur Sikkema (41944)
at.least according.to organizing director Sikkema
- b. Machinefabriek Reineveld in Delft heeft een moeilijk jaar gehad in 1969 (2839)
machine factory Reineveld in Delft has a difficult year had in 1969
‘The machine factory Reineveld in Delft had a difficult year in 1969.’
- c. Minister Nelissen van Economische Zaken heeft zich herhaaldelijk een hartstochtelijk voorstander van het staalbedrijf getoond (8909)
minister Nelissen of Economic Affairs has himself repeatedly a passionate supporter of the steel company shown
‘Minister Nelissen of Economic Affairs has presented himself as a passionate supporter of the steel company.’

Notice however that adjectives must be of the same special type that we see with bare primary predicates and bare incorporation. In the second example we might wonder whether *in Delft* could not also modify the proper name *Reineveld*. However, in the third example we are more clearly dealing with a complement it seems. Non-restrictive relative clause can be shown to attach to these nominal phrases, as shown by the fact that the relative pronoun *die* is only possible when a title of the appropriate ‘de’ gender is present:

- (19) a. De aanleiding is het honderdjarig bestaan van voetbalclub Feyenoord, die/dat werd opgericht op 19 juli 1908.
the reason is the hundredth anniversary of soccer club Feyenoord, that was founded on 19 July 1908
- b. De aanleiding is het honderdjarig bestaan van Feyenoord, dat werd opgericht op 19 juli 1908.
the reason is the hundredth anniversary of Feyenoord, that was founded on 19 July 1908

- c. * De aanleiding is het honderdjarig bestaan van Feyenoord, die werd opgericht op 19 juli 1908.

the reason is the hundredth anniversary of Feyenoord, that was founded on 19 July 1908

De Belder (2009) claims that the class of title nouns is open. However, some nouns are (almost) always used with an article:

- (20) a. *(de) staat Washington vs. staat nummer 9
the state Washington vs. state number 9
b. ?(de) dichteres Vasalis vs. dichteres nummer 1
the poetess Vasalis vs. poetess number 1

So we have to conclude that the class of title nouns is limited, but probably not in an arbitrary lexical way.

Literature: Broekhuis et al. (2003:566-567); De Belder (2007); De Belder (2009).

2.6 Bare predication

When used as a primary predicate, a BSN can be used without an article.

- (21) a. Mijn man is machinebankwerker. (19372)
My husband is lathe operator.
'My husband is a lathe operator.'
- b. Het terrein heeft een capaciteit voor 2000 personen en is eigendom van de NV Creatief te Ommen. (6308)
The territory has a capacity for 2000 persons and is property of the plc Creative at Ommen
- c. Ook hij is slachtoffer geworden van de oplichting. (3145)
Also he is victim become of the swindle
'He also became a victim of the swindle.'

De Swart, Winter and Zwarts (2007) show that modification is very restricted and that pluralization is possible, but that it leads to a different meaning. Diminutives are also excluded.

Literature: Matushansky & Spector (2005); Munn & Schmitt (2005); De Swart, Winter & Zwarts (2007), Zamparelli (2008).

2.7 Bare temporal adverbs

In this section I take together a few constructions that show bareness of singular temporal nouns in adverbial usage. I distinguish three instances of this phenomenon.

(i) Bare relative dates

It is possible to omit the article with nouns like *week* and *maand*, if a deictic adjective like *volgende* or *vorige* is present. For want of a better term, I will call these relative dates.

- (22) a. Vorige week bedankte penningmeester Van Dongen. (3364)
last week thanked treasurer Van Dongen
'Last week the treasurer Van Dongen resigned.'
- b. De EBU komt volgende maand in Helsinki bijeen. (5299)
the EBU comes next month in Helsinki together
'The EBU will gather next month in Helsinki.'

Notice that these bare relative dates refer deictically to the period preceding or following the moment of speech, lacking a more general sequential meaning that the definite forms *de vorige week* 'the last week', *de volgende maand* 'the next month' still have. When modified, pluralized or made diminutive, this deictic reading disappears and a definite article has to be used.

- (23) a. De volgende weken maakte ik een zorgvuldige studie van de politieposten.
(19631)
the next weeks made I a careful study of the police posts
'The next weeks I made a careful study of the police posts.'
- b. *Volgende weken maakte ik een zorgvuldige studie van de politieposten.
next weeks made I a careful study of the police posts

(ii) Bare day terms

Nouns that refer to a day of the week (with an optional part noun like *morgen*) can be used bare:

- (24) a. Tot gisteren werden sinds maandag al 32.000 betonblokken in zee gestort. (441)
until yesterday were since Monday already 32.000 concrete blocks in sea dumped
'Until yesterday already 32,000 concrete blocks were dumped into the sea since Monday.'
- b. De EEG-raad van ministers van landbouw heeft maandag in Luxemburg in
beginsel overeenstemming bereikt. (4459)
the EEC council of ministers of agriculture has Monday in Luxemburg in
principle agreement reached
'The ECC council of ministers of agriculture has in principle reached an
agreement on Monday in Luxemburg.'
- c. Vroeger op zondagmorgen, maar in dit seizoen op maandagavond om half negen.
(5475)
previously on Sunday morning but in this season on Monday evening at half nine

There are different referential possibilities, including reference to the particular day preceding or following the speech moment. No modulation of the noun is possible.

(iii) Bare temporal part nouns

A particular class of nouns (like *begin* ‘begin’, *eind* ‘end’, *midden* ‘mid’, *medio* ‘mid’, *hartje* ‘heart-DIM’, *klokslag* ‘striking of the clock’) can occur without an article, when they precede a time period (like *mei* ‘May’ or *1971*).

- (25) a. Rotterdam en Delft zullen begin mei de sensatie beleven van een massale opstijging van luchtballons. (3325)
Rotterdam and Delft will begin May the sensation experience of a massive ascent of air balloons
‘Rotterdam and Delft will experience the sensation of a massive ascent of air balloons in the beginning of May.’
- b. De produktie zal eind 1971 moeten beginnen. (1033)
the production will end 1971 must begin
‘The production will have to start at the end of 1971.’
- c. De werkgroepen zijn ingesteld medio 1974. (51458)
the working groups are established mid 1974
‘The working groups were established in the middle of 1974.’

The bare noun is completely fixed here. A diminutive occurs with the noun *hartje*, but obligatorily:

- (26) a. Hartje zomer zijn er meestal weinig soorten waar te nemen.⁷
heart-DIM summer are there mostly few species to observe
‘At the height of summer not many species can be observed.’
- b. *Hart zomer zijn er meestal weinig soorten waar te nemen.
heart summer are there mostly few species to observe

Maybe spatial expressions allow some bare nouns in this way too, but the possibilities seem much more limited there:

⁷ <http://www.museumkennis.nl/nnm.dossiers/museumkennis/i003190.html>

- (27) a. Er komt een enorm duivenhok in hartje stad Rotterdam. (1197)
 There comes an enormous dovecot in heart-DIM city Rotterdam
 ‘An enormous dovecot will come in the heart of the city of Rotterdam.’
- b. Ik schoot eens vanaf randje strafschoopgebied voluit.⁸
 I shot once from edge-DIM penalty.area at.full.force
 ‘I once made a shot from the edge of the penalty area at full force.’

2.8 Bare reduplication

Two identical BSNs can occur with a preposition in between:

- (28) a. en nu, reactie op reactie: hoeden zijn mooi, ze staan uitstekend (6440)
 and now, response on response: hats are beautiful, they stand excellent
 ‘And now, response on respons: hats are beautiful, they look excellent.’
- b. nek aan nek vocht dit tweetal als leuwen (1144)
 neck on neck fought this couple like lions
 ‘Neck and neck, this couple fought like lions.’
- c. dat is ‘n hele uitzoekerij om zo woord voor woord en betekenis voor betekenis na te gaan (42040)
 that is a quite sorting.out to so word for word and meaning for meaning after to go
 ‘That is quite a thing to figure out word by word and meaning by meaning.’

A combination of two prepositions (*van ... naar ...* or *van ... tot ...* or *van ... op ...*) is also possible:

- (29) a. slechts de emporen kennen een alternerend stelsel met blinde bogen van pijler naar pijler (35107)
 only the emperors know an alternating system with blind arches from pillar to pillar
 ‘Only the emperors know an alternating system with blind arches from pillar to pillar.’
- b. in enkele minuten tijds gonst het bericht van straat tot straat, van huis tot huis (2376)

⁸ <http://feyenoord.messagebase.nl/showthread.php?p=880512>

in several minutes time-GEN buzzes the message from street to street, from house to house

‘In several minutes the word is buzzing round, from street to street, from house to house.’

- c. de journalisten en dus de burgers, blijven heel nauwkeurig en van week tot week op de hoogte (658)
the journalist and so the citizens, stay very accurate and from week to week on the height

‘The journalist and therefore also the citizens stay informed, very accurately and from week to week.’

- d. zij zouden van geslacht op geslacht worden overgedragen (34761)
they would from generation on generation be transferred
‘They are said to be carried over from generation to generation.’

Plurals are not possible in this construction, diminutives seem no problem. Treatments of this construction in English do report modification and indeed, we can also find these in Dutch, although they seem to be rare:

- (30) a. Bladzijde na bladzijde met te opgemaakte Jordaanse vrouwen en netjes in blouse gestoken mannen.⁹

page after page with too made up Jordanese women and smart in blouse dressed men

‘Page after page with women that were too heavily made up and men that were smartly dressed in blouses’

- b. Het is alleen dat het lamlechtige gevoel maar niet weg wil, regenachtige dag na regenachtige dag.¹⁰

it is only that the wretched feeling but not away wants, rainy day after rainy day

‘It is only that that wretched feeling doesn’t go away, rainy day after rainy day.’

Literature: Jackendoff (2008); Munn & Schmitt (2005), Pi (1995), Poss (2007); Postma (1985), Travis (0000).

⁹ <http://maaikereist.blogspot.com/2007/03/layalina.html>

¹⁰ <http://wilgengebroad.web-log.nl/wilgengebroad/2006/05/index.html>

2.9 Bare textual reference

There are two types here, which might be unrelated.

(i) Bare external textual reference

In a certain type of more formal (legal) discourse it is possible to use bare singular nouns to refer to the speaker or writer or to other prominent referents:

- (31) a. ondergetekende kan bevestigen dat de in vraag 1 bedoelde overeenstemming is bereikt (52445)
undersigned can confirm that the in question 1 intended agreement is reached
'I, the undersigned, can confirm that the agreement, referred to in question 1, is reached.'
- b. spreker liet het aan de commissie over om te beoordelen van waar deze brief naar Aruba is verstuurd (52623)
speaker let it to the commission over to to evaluate from where this letter to Aruba is sent
'The speaker left it to the commission to evaluate from where this letter Aruba is sent.'
- c. schrijver dezes is sociologisch employee van het NVV (13372)
writer this-GEN is sociological collaborator of the NVV
'The writer of this text is a sociological employee of the NVV.'

Plurals are possible, but modified instances are difficult to find or construct:

- (32) a. Ondergetekenden zijn van mening dat er wat betreft het bovengenoemde sprake is van nieuwe feiten¹¹
undersigned-PL are of opinion that there what concerns the above-mentioned question is of new facts
'The people who signed this text are of the opinion that there are no new facts concerned what is mentioned above.'
- b. Er is meerdere malen geprobeerd contact te maken met schrijver van de email¹²

¹¹ <http://www.nieuwsbank.nl/inp/2000/03/0303E060.htm>

There is more times tried contact to make with writer of the email
'More than once attempts were made to make contact with the writer of the email.'

(ii) Bare internal textual reference

We also find (at least with the adjectives *onderstaand* en *bovenstaand*) the possibility to refer with a bare noun to something inside the text:

- (33) a. in onderstaande tabel wordt een overzicht gegeven (32033)
in below-standing table is an overview given
'An overview is given in the table below.'
- b. uw oplossing moet dan wel binnen een week en per voorkeur per briefkaart aan bovenstaand adres gezonden worden (2444)
your solution must then AFF within a week and by preference by postcard to above-standing address send be
'Then your solution has to send in within a week by postcard and to the address mentioned above.'

Plurals and diminutives are possible, as well as modification:

- (34) a. Op veler verzoek heeft de illustrator onderstaande figuurtjes vervaardigd.¹³
at many-GEN request has the illustrator below-standing figure-DIM-PL created
'At the request of many people the illustrator has created the figures below.'
- b. De genoemde punten zijn aangegeven op onderstaande schematische afbeelding van de uitgraving.¹⁴
the mentioned points are indicated on below-standing schematic figure of the excavation
'The points mentioned are indicated in the schematic figure of the excavation standing below.'

¹²

<http://www.bestuur.centrum.amsterdam.nl/Bestuursarchief/2008/Commissie%20WO/Stukken/WOST20080916nietgehonwijnamsterdammers.pdf>

¹³ http://www.kaartmix.nl/b_site/zookie2/zookie2.html

¹⁴ http://www.velpeleven.be/art1977_6_opgravingenbutsel.htm

2.10 Bare intimate terms

Kinship nouns and some other special nouns (like *dominee*) can be used bare when the speaker has an intimate relation to the referent.

- (35) a. ik ken d'r vijf gulden voor krijgen van dominee (44049)
I can there five guilders for get from vicar
'I can get five guilders for it from the vicar.'
- b. "je kan zo'n jong ding toch niet alleen met de rekels laten," zegt tante (14107)
you can such-a young thing PRT not alone with the rascals let, says aunt
'"You can't let such a young thing alone with the rascals," says aunty.'
- c. vader vecht graag tegen schimmen (17257)
father fights gladly against ghosts
'Father likes to fight against ghosts.'

Plurals are not possible. Diminutives are. Modification seems impossible, except maybe with a emotional qualifier like *lieve* 'dear'.

2.11 Bare kind noun complements

There are probably two types here.

(i) Ordinary kind noun complements

Nouns like *soort* 'kind' and *type* 'type' (kind nouns) allow a nominal complement that can be a bare singular.

- (36) a. het is een soort sinterklaaspakket met gevarieerde inhoud (1433)
it is a kind St. Nicholas-kit with varied contents
'It is a kind of St. Nicholas surprise packet with all sorts of things in it.'
- b. je zou het een soort van meccano-doos kunnen noemen (415)
you would it a kind of meccano-box could call
'One could call it a kind of meccano set.'
- c. het is een kleiner type schip (4202)

it is a smaller type ship
'It is a smaller type of ship.'

Here we find plurals too, diminutive forms and unrestricted modification possibilities:

- (37) a. Het is een soort van kleinschalig landschap waarin voldoende dekking aanwezig is.¹⁵
it is a kind of small-scale landscape in-which sufficient cover present is
'It is a kind of small-scale landscape that offers sufficient coverage.'
- b. Het zijn een soort weegschalen die de druk van het water op de zeebodem meten.¹⁶
it are a kind scales that the pressure of the water on the sea-floor measure
'They are a kind of scales that measure the pressure of the water on the sea-floor.'
- c. Het is een soort schaaltje.¹⁷
it is a kind plate-DIM
'It is a kind of small plate.'

In another sense, number behaves in an interesting way here:

- (38) a. Het is een soort sinterklaaspakket.
it is a kind St. Nicholas packet
- b. Het zijn een soort sinterklaaspakketten.
it are a kind St. Nicholas packets
- c. * Het zijn een soort sinterklaaspakket.
it are a kind St. Nicholas packet

which shows that the kind noun complement is not number-neutral.

Literature: Broekhuis et al. (2003).

¹⁵ <http://www.vzz.nl/node/274>

¹⁶ <http://www.kennislink.nl/web/show?id=128363>

¹⁷ http://www.retinoblastoom.nl/kidz_watis.php

(ii) Learned bare kind noun complements

In biological terminology we find examples like (especially with Latin terminology, but that is not so interesting here):

- (39) a. het geslacht aster
the genus aster
b. de soort rode klaver
the species red clover

Note that the terms *aster* or *rode klaver* do not occur bare in other circumstances, even though the bare noun might be name-like. This construction is closely related to a construction in which any sort of noun can occur bare, namely in a metalinguistic sense:

- (40) a. het begrip informatiesysteem
the notion information-system
b. het concept ‘zilte proeftuin’
the concept saline experimental garden
c. het woord klerelijer
the word rotter

We are also reminded here of the caption construction, which might function here in a special embedded way.

2.12 Bare abstract predicates (*Feit is dat* construction)

When an abstract nominal that predicates over a clause or abstract noun phrase is topicalized it can omit its article:

- (41) a. doel is de verzoening van alle volkeren (1119)
aim is the reconciliation of all people
‘The aim is the reconciliation of all people.’
b. hoofdzaak is dat hij de “adelaar” houdt (22366)
main-point is that he the eagle keeps
‘The main point is that he keeps the “eagle”.’

- c. achtergrond voor deze veronderstelling is de stelling dat de verschillende elementen geen grote verschillen in belangrijkheid voor de bevolking van de desbetreffende gebieden bezitten (32058)
 background for this supposition is the claim that the different elements no big differences in importance for the population of the relevant areas possess
 ‘The background for this supposition is the claim that the various elements do not differ much in importance for the population of the relevant areas.’

We find modifiers, diminutives, but plurals are a bit less obvious at first sight:

- (42) a. Interessant gevolg van internet is dat vervolgens het publiek de media kunnen controleren¹⁸
 interesting consequence of internet is that subsequently the public the media can control
 ‘An interesting consequence of internet is that then the public can supervise the media.’
- b. Grappig fenomeen dat zich hierbij voordoet is dat het nemen van de juiste beslissing voor iedereen iets anders betekent.¹⁹
 funny phenomenon that REFL hereby occurs is that the take of the right decision for everyone something else means
 ‘The funny phenomenon that occurs here is that taking the right decision means something else for everyone.’
- c. Punt van belang is dat het blijkbaar niet lukt onze diepste beweegredenen over te brengen.²⁰
 point of importance is that it evidently not succeeds our deepest motivations over to bring
 ‘The important point is that it does not seem to work to communicate our deepest motives.’
- d. Klein minpuntje is dat u voor de komma en punt de Alt-toets moet indrukken.²¹
 small minus-point is that you for the comma and period the Alt-key must press

¹⁸ <http://www.netkwesties.nl/editie109/artikel3.html>

¹⁹ http://www.afm.nl/corporate/upl_documents/Artikel_beslisstijlen_in_INSIDEwonen7.pdf

²⁰ <http://www.nd.nl/artikelen/2005/juni/16/actie-tegen-rvu-moet-tot-verootmoediging-leiden>

²¹ <http://www.telecomwereld.nl/toon.cgi?scherms=showart&artid=460&versie=print>

‘A small negative point is that you have to press the Alt-key for the comma and the period.’

Plurals are probably not possible, but this is often due to the clausal status of the subject. We do find plurals when we use non-clausal subjects and superlative modifiers in the predicate:

- (43) a. Belangrijkste minpunten zijn het tegenvallende comfort, de teleurstellend kleine bagageruimte en het goedkope interieurplastic.
Major minus-points are the disappointing comfort, the disappointingly small storage-space and the cheap interior-plastic
‘The major negative points are the disappointing comfort, the disappointingly small luggage space and the cheap interior plastic.’
- b. * Het tegenvallende comfort, de teleurstellend kleine bagageruimte en het goedkope interieurplastic zijn belangrijkste minpunten.
- c. * Het tegenvallende comfort, de teleurstellend kleine bagageruimte en het goedkope interieurplastic zijn belangrijkste minpunt.

The second example shows that we are not dealing with an ordinary bare plural here, otherwise we would have expected the article to be missing also in non-topicalized position. The third example shows that lack of number neutrality here. The nouns that occur in this construction are quite limited, but not in an idiosyncratic way.

Referentiality can be demonstrated by adding a non-restrictive relative clause or epenthetical comment. In the following example *dat* refers back to *interessant gevolg van internet*.

- (44) Interessant gevolg van internet (dat niemand had verwacht) is dat vervolgens het publiek de media kunnen controleren
interesting consequence of internet (that nobody had expected) is that next the public the media can control
‘An interesting consequence of internet (that nobody had expected) is that the public can supervise the media.’

Literature: Hoeksema (2000).

2.13 Bare apposition

A bare singular noun can follow a referential noun as an apposition:

- (45) a. één van de duidelijkste lawaai-patiëntjes is Hanneke Ratsma, dochtertje van onderwijzer Rienk Ratsma (13670)
one of the clearest noise patient-DIM-PL is Hanneke Ratsma, daughter of teacher Rienk Ratsma
‘One of the noisiest little patients is Hanneke Ratsma, the daughter of the teacher Rienk Ratsma.’
- b. de witte olifant, voorloper van een nieuw tijdperk in het burgervliegwezen, kwam jaren te vroeg (17140)
the white elephant, forerunner of a new age in the civil-aviation, came years too early
‘The white elephant, the forerunner of a new age in civil aviation, came many years too early.’
- c. Miachiavelli, Italiaans staatsman en wijsgeer in het laatst van de vijftiende en het begin van de zestiende eeuw (37209)
Machiavelli, Italian statesman and philosopher in the last of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century
‘Machiavelli, an Italian statesman and philosopher in the last part of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century’
- d. ik zal u vertellen hoe het nou precies zit met Jan Bols, enig erfgenaam etc. (6833)
I will you tell how it now exactly sits with Jan Bols, sole heir ...
‘Let me tell you now exactly the situation with Jan Bols, the sole heir ...’

We already see cases of modification here and a diminutive. Plurals are also possible in apposition and there is no number-neutrality, as shown in the following example:

- (46) *Hanneke en Janneke, dochtertje van onderwijzer Rienk Ratsma
Hanneke and Janneke, daughter-DIM of teacher Rienk Ratsma

Referentiality is not so easy to check (at least not with antecedent-ship), given the independent presence of the referential ‘anchor’.

2.14 Bare absolute predicates

A special construction in Dutch involves a BSN relativizing the predicate position of a relative clause, resulting in a type of appositional noun phrase:

- (47) a. dat verdient hij niet, vriend van het concertgebouworkest en voortreffelijk en gedegen musicus die hij is (37)
that deserves he not, friend of the concert-hall-orchestra and excellent and reputable musician that he is
‘As a friend of the concert hall orchestra and as an excellent and reputable musician, he does not deserve that.’
- b. Buitengewoon africhter en stoutmoedig stuntman als hij is, begint Mario Luraschi een bekende persoonlijkheid te worden in de showwereld²²
extraordinary trainer and bold stuntman as he is starts Mario Luraschi a well-known personality to become in the show-world
‘As an extraordinary trainer and bold stuntman, Mario Luraschi starts to become well-known in the world of shows.’
- c. Zij belijden God te kennen, maar verloochenen hem met hun werken, afschuwelijke mensen als zij zijn, die niet kunnen luisteren²³
they confess God to know but deny him with their works, awful people as they are, that can’t listen
‘They confess to know God, but deny him with their works, being awful people that can’t listen.’
- d. Dat het Denert pissig zal maken da's wel een feit, rancuneus mannetje als hij is.²⁴
that it Denert pissed-off wil make, that-is AFF a fact, vindictive man-DIM as he is
‘It is a fact that it will make Denert pissed off, because he is a vindictive little man.’

We see plurals, modifiers and diminutives here. The construction seems limited to human referents with a certain evaluative meaning dimension, but within that class fully productive.

²² <http://kunst-en-cultuur.infonu.nl/mensen/26129-mario-luraschi-een-bekende-paardenman.html>

²³ <http://www.willibrordbijbel.nl/?j=Titus%201,5-9>

²⁴ <http://www.politicsinfo.net/forum/post-607065.html>

Interestingly, an overt article, definite or indefinite is not possible. There is no clear number-neutrality, as shown in the following example:

- (48) a. Hij belijdt God te kennen, maar verloochent hem met zijn werken, afschuwelijk mens als hij is.
he confess God to know but denies him with his works awful human-being as he is
- b. Zij belijden God te kennen, maar verloochenen hem met hun werken, afschuwelijke mensen als zij zijn.
they confess God to know but deny him with their works awful people as they are
- c. ? Zij belijden God te kennen, maar verloochenen hem met hun werken, afschuwelijk mens als zij zijn.
they confess God to know but deny him with their works awful people as they are

Notice the contrast with the primary predication construction:

- (49) a. Zij zijn dominee.
They are vicar
- b. * Zij zijn afschuwelijk mens.
They are awful human-being

2.15 Bare *eigen*

The adjective *eigen* has the property to allow bareness, probably only in the context of a preposition:

- (50) a. er zijn werkgevers die in zo'n geval aansturen op ontslag op eigen verzoek (18599)
there are employers that in such-a case head for discharge on own request
'There are employers that in such a situation head for a discharge at the request of the person who gets fired.'
- b. ik was een gevangene in eigen hol (25765)
I was a prisoner in own hole
'I was a prisoner in my own hole.'

- c. terwijl er voor eigen deur nog zo heel veel te vegen valt (15430)
 while there for own door still so very many to sweep falls
 ‘While there is still a lot of sweeping to be done in front of our own door.’

I’m not sure yet whether pluralization, diminution and modification always preserves the definite meaning that we find here. The following example sounds ‘existential’ and modifiers don’t seem possible.

- (51) Voor eigen kinderen hoeft u tijdens uw overblijfmoment niet te betalen.
 for own children need you during your staying-moments not to pay
 ‘You don’t need to pay for your own children when you stay.’

However, we find examples like the following, that are definite:

- (52) met eigen ogen, op eigen benen, in eigen gelederen
 with own eyes, on own legs, in own ranks

Notice that we also find a lot of fixed expressions here. Apart from the idiomatic *op eigen houtje* (on one’s own initiative) we also find cases like *in eigen landje* (in one’s own little country), *in eigen kringetje* (in one’s own small circle). Number neutrality is not entirely clear here, since singular nouns with plural possessors are possible here. However, the same is true also with overt determiners (*in (hun/het) eigen land passen zij wel op* ‘they will watch out in their own country’).

2.16 Bare captions

In labels for paintings, books, topics, etcetera the article can be omitted:

- (53) a. getiteld: workshop voor zelfexpressie (18476)
 titled: workshop for self-expression
 b. volgende onderwerp is getiteld: snor (44666)
 next topic is titled: moustache
 c. ondertitel: registratie van geweld en moord door alle tijden (8270)
 subtitle: registration of violence and murder through all times

A very ‘open’ construction allowing unrestrictive modification, plurals, and diminutives.

2.17 Bare exclamative predicates

When an exclamative noun phrase with a scalar adjective is topicalized, it allows its determiner (*wat een* or *een*) to be omitted:

- (54) a. mooie plaats om je verjaardag te vieren, dacht hij (22908)
nice place to your birthday to celebrate, thought he
‘What a nice place to celebrate your birthday, he thought.’
- b. Leuk huis heb je zeg²⁵
nice house have you say
‘Say, what a nice house do you have.’
- c. Mooie film was dat²⁶
nice film was that
‘That was a nice film!’

An adjective is obligatory here. The first example shows a relative clause. Plurals are possible too, if we accept that the non-topicalized version is not acceptable under the same strong exclamative interpretation as the topicalized one.

- (55) a. Leuke meubels heb je.²⁷
nice furniture-PL have you
‘What a nice furniture do you have!’
- b. ? Je hebt leuke meubels.
you have nice furniture-PL

Notice that the bare phrase licenses pronominal anaphors, as shown in the following example, where *het* is anaphoric to *leuk huis*:

²⁵ http://eenlogvoorida.web-log.nl/mijn_weblog/2008/01/even_gluren.html

²⁶ <http://baby.prikpagina.nl/read.php?f=540&i=5294686&t=5294686>

²⁷ <http://export.habbo.nl/home/arjaantje92>

- (56) Leuk huis heb je zeg! Heb je het zelf ingericht?
 nice house have you say have you it self fixed-up
 ‘What a nice house do you have! Did you fix it up yourself?’

Literature: Baauw et al. (2002).

2.18 Bare absolute subjects of small clauses

A bare singular nominal functioning as the subject of certain absolute small clause can be used without an article:

- (57) a. Kijk hoe hij zich liet portretteren op de website van Spigthoff: jasje los, hand in de zak²⁸
 look how he himself let portray on the website of Spigthoff: jacket loose, hand in the pocket
 ‘Look at how he had himself portrayed on the website of Spigthoff: with his jacket open, his hand in his pocket.’
- b. Mensen, hij stond met het contract klaar, pen in de hand²⁹
 people, he stood with the contract ready, pen in the hand
 ‘He stood waiting with the contract, with his pen in his hand.’
- c. Tiuri bleef staan en keek naar de vier ridders. Zij waren in volle wapenrusting, vizier neergeslagen, schild aan de arm, hand op het gevest van het zwaard.³⁰
 Tiuri kept standing and looked to the four knights. they were in full armour, visor down, shield on the arm, hand on the hilt of the sword
 ‘Tiuri stood still and watched the four knights. They were in full armour, with their visors down, they shields on their arms, and their hands on the hilts of their swords.’

Modifiers seem possible as well as plurals, as the following examples show:

- (58) a. Hij zat geconcentreerd achter het stuur, ogen op de weg gericht.
 He sat concentrated behind the wheel, eyes on the road aimed

²⁸ http://www.volkskrant.nl/economie/article396399.ece/De_val_van_een_een_briljant_advocaat

²⁹ <http://www.consumentenbond.nl/forum/printthread.php?t=4061>

³⁰ Tonke Dragt, De brief voor de koning, 113.

- ‘He sat behind the steering wheel, concentrated, eyes on the road.’
- b. Hij was netjes gekleed, modieus nieuw jasje losjes om de schouders.
 He was neatly dressed, fashionable new jacket loosely around the shoulders
 ‘He was neatly dressed, with a fashionable new jacket loosely around his
 shoulders.’

With respect to number neutrality, facts are not completely clear at first. Notice that singular nouns are possible in the Tiuri example (c) above, even though the antecedent possessor is plural. However with eyes or hands we don’t get the kind of number neutrality that we find in other cases:

- (59) a. Hij zat geconcentreerd achter het stuur, ogen (*oog)op de weg gericht.
 He sat concentrated behind the wheel, eyes (*eye) on the road aimed
- b. Hij zat onderuit op de bank, benen (*been) op de tafel.
 He sat sprawled on the couch, legs (*leg) on the table

Number neutral: oogziekenhuis, goed ter been zijn, oog hebben voor, ...
 eye-hospital, goog to leg be (‘be a good walker’), eye have for (‘take
 heed of’)

For this reason I conclude that bare small clause subjects are *not* number neutral.

Overt counterparts are possible: in all the examples an appropriate definite or indefinite article or possessive pronoun can be inserted.

Literature: Carlson (no date).

2.19 Bare prepositional phrases

There is a whole range of bare constructions that involve prepositions and that I group here in one big class without further subdivisions at this point. Here are some general examples, followed by some preposition-specific classes.³¹

- (60) a. de ministers zullen oordelen mede op basis van dit rapport (854)

³¹ For a bigger collection from the Eindhoven Corpus see the bachelor thesis of Marlies Paenen: *PP’s met kale nomina in het Nederlands* (Utrecht 2009).

<http://www.let.uu.nl/~Bert.leBruyn/personal/wr/files/scriptiempaenen.pdf>

the ministers will judge also on basis of this report

‘The ministers will make a judgement on the basis of this report too.’

- b. wanneer is een kind oud genoeg om alleen naar school te kunnen ? (1405)

when is a child old enough to alone to school to can

‘When is a child old enough to go to school alone.’

- c. onlangs was ook Herb Alpert hier op tournee (13638)

recently was also Herb Alpert here on tour

‘Recently, Herb Alpert was here on tour too.’

Literature: Baldwin et al. (2006); Van der Beek (2005); Himmelmann (1998); McIntyre (2007); Munn & Schmitt (2005); Pérez-Leroux & Roeper (1999).

(i) Als

A predicative BN occurring as the complement of the preposition *als*. There might be different versions of this one.

- (61) a. vanaf 1965 ben ik uitsluitend actief geweest als schrijver (534)

since 1965 am I exclusively active been as writer

‘Since 1965 I have only been active as a writer.’

- b. ook de keuze van de sociale werkplaats als voorportaal voor het eigenlijke werk in het bedrijfsleven, biedt voordelen (1597)

also the choice of the social working-place as porch for the real work in the business-life offers advantages

‘Also the choice of the sociale sheltered workshops as gate for the real work in trade and industry offers advantages.’

- c. ze kunnen dan in de winter mooi dienst doen als nachtverblijf (14915)

they can then in the winter nice service do as loding-for-the-night

‘In that way they can nicely serve as lodgings for the night in winter.’

Modification:

- (62) a. als vermoedelijke oorzaak van Masons moeilijkheden in Traffic noem ik de onmogelijkheid om twee complete talenten in een groep te hebben (7201)

as probably cause of Mason's problems in traffic call I the impossibility of two complete talents in a group to have

'A likely cause of Mason's problems in Traffic I would like to mention the impossibility to have two complete talents in one group.'

- b. als eenvoudig infanterist in het Hongaarse leger ging hij van huis (26300)

as simple infantryman in the Hungarian army went he from home

'He left home when he was still a simple infantry man in the Hungarian army.'

- c. en nu mag hij als enige Nederlandse jongen veertien dagen naar London, waar 500 natuurkunde-keien uit alle delen van de wereld getrakteerd worden op excursies en lezingen (1373)

and now may he as only Dutch boy fourteen days to London where 500 physics cracks from all parts of the world treated are on excursions and lectures

'An now he can go, the only Dutch boy, to London for fourteen days, where 500 physics cracks from all parts of the world get a treat of excursions and lectures.'

- d. aangehaald *als* woord dat alleen in Vlaanderen voorkomt³²

cited as word that only in Flanders occurs

'cited as a word that only occurs in Flanders'

Also, plurals and diminutives seem to be possible:

- (63) a. Als echte Nederlanders wensen wij onszelf te blijven. (12757)

as real Dutchmen wish we ourselves to stay

'As real Dutchmen we would like to stay who we are.'

- b. Als scheepsmaatje diende hij op de geuzenvloot tijdens de slag op de Zuiderzee. (32356)

as ship-boy served he on the Beggars' fleet during the battle on the Zuiderzee

'As a ship boy he served on the Beggars' fleet during the battle on the Zuiderzee.'

The BSN can be number neutral, allow an unrestricted class of nouns, and it seems not to allow overt articles:

- (64) a. overlevingsstrategieën die wij als kind hebben aangeleerd³³

³² <http://www.woordvandedag.nl/Woord.aspx/Pandoering>

³³ http://www.nechbet.com/htm_pages/counseling.htm

survival strategies that we as child have learned
'survival strategies that we learned when we were still children'

- b. als jonge sterke moeder ≠ als een jonge sterke moeder
as young strong mother ≠ as a young strong mother
'as a young strong mother' ≠ 'like a young strong mother'

Without the article the *als* phrase is taken as a literal qualification (she actually is a mother, *as* in English), but with the article the meaning is metaphorical (she resembles a mother, *like* in English).

(ii) Predicative *tot*

A predicative BN occurring as the complement of the preposition *tot*, expressing the goal of a transition).

- (65) a. omdat alles wat aan zee ligt en niet totaal onbereikbaar is, in onze tijd tot badplaats wordt opgeschroefd (1634)
because all what at sea lies and not totally unreachable is in our time to seaside-resort is inflated
'because everything that is situated at the sea coast and that is not totally inaccessible is hyped up to become a seaside resort.'
- b. en in 1963 werd zij benoemd tot ridder in de orde van Oranje-Nassau (5547)
and in 1963 was she nominated to knight in the order of Oranje-Nassau
'And in 1963 she was nominated knight in the order of Oranje-Nassau.'
- c. het spreekt dan ook vanzelf dat de militaire regering zichzelf tot idiot maakt (7192)
it speaks then also from-self that the military government itself to idiot makes
'It is obvious that the military government makes an idiot of itself.'

Satellites seem restricted to those modifiers and complements that are strictly related to the type of noun:

- (66) a. het sociale vaderschap behoeft dus niet samen te vallen met het biologische vaderschap; het kan zelfs gebeuren dat een man waar de vrouw niet mee getrouwd

is de pijl-en-boog ceremonie verricht, en dus tot sociaal vader gemaakt wordt (34504)

the social fatherhood needs so not together to fall with the biological fatherhood; it can even happen that a man where the woman not with married is the bow-and-arrow ceremony perform and so to social father made is

‘Social and biological fatherhood need not coincide; it can even happen that a man that is not married to the woman performs the bow-and-arrow ceremony and becomes social father because of that.’

- b. de benoeming tot burgemeester van Middelburg is zeer snel afgekomen (2072)

the appointment to mayor of Middelburg is very fast finished

‘The appointment to mayor of Middelburg is finished very quickly.’

- c. Dr. Houwink, pas benoemd tot hoogleraar in de preventieve en sociale tandheelkunde aan de VU (10377)

Dr. Houwink, recently appointed to professor in the preventive and social dentistry at the VU

‘Dr. Houwink, recently appointed professor in preventive and social dentistry at the Free University of Amsterdam’

Plural is possible with *tot*:³⁴

- (67) Talrijke nationalisten en rexisten zijn tot burgemeesters benoemd.

numerous nationalists and rexists are to mayors appointed

‘Numerous nationalists and rexists are appointed mayor.’

(iii) Means *per*

Here we find a BN occurring as the complement of the preposition *per*, expressing means of transport or communication.

- (68) a. vier jonge Rotterdammers willen deze zomer per auto naar Japan (1177)

four young Rotterdammers want this summer by car to Japan

³⁴ This contrast in an interesting way with the behavior of predicative *voor*, as pointed out by Marijana Marelj (pc). Compare *Zij studeren voor leerkracht*. ‘They study to become teachers’ vs. *Zij studeren voor leerkrachten*, with the plural.

- ‘Four young Rotterdammers want to go to Japan by car this summer.’
- b. dat kan allemaal per post gebeuren (8500)
that can all by mail happen
‘That can all be done by mail.’
- c. zaterdag 15 augustus is het honderd jaar geleden dat voor het eerst luchtpost per ballon in nederland aankwam (3656)
Saturday 15 Augustus is it hundred years ago that for the first airmail by balloon in Netherlands arrived
‘On Saturday August 15th it is a hundred years ago that for the first time airmail arrived by balloon in the Netherlands.’

Modification is limited, maybe of the basic type (e.g. specifying a special subtype of transportation).

- (69) Dit vervoer ging per omgebouwde luxe auto.³⁵
this transport went by converted luxe car
‘This way of transport happened in a converted private car.’

(iv) Quantification *per*

A BN occurring as the complement of the preposition *per*, expressing the restriction of a universal quantifier ‘for every’.

- (70) a. per regio treden er aanzienlijke verschillen op (52376)
per region appear there considerable differences up
‘Per region there are considerable differences.’
- b. de per bed betaalde huren zijn veel te hoog (3797)
the per bed paid rents are much too high
‘The rent paid per bed is much too high.’
- c. ik verdiende twee dubbeltjes per uur (49214)
I earned two ten-cent pieces per hour
‘I earned two tuppenny pieces per hour.’

³⁵ <http://www.ehbo-westland.nl/index.php?id=14>

With this type of *per* we find unrestricted quantification, diminutives and all sorts of nouns, but no plurals.

(v) Information carrier *op*

The preposition *op* can be used in combination with a certain class of nouns that refer to information carriers.

- (71) a. Daarna zijn er 5 versies van het lied op grammofoon uitgebracht.³⁶
thereafter are there 5 versions of the song on gramophone released
'After that 5 versions of the song have been released on gramophone.'
- b. Wij hebben de impressies op film vastgelegd ...³⁷
we have the impressions on film recorded
'We recorded the impressions on film.'

The construction is clearly number-neutral. Modifiers don't seem to be possible, but plurals are not entirely impossible.

(vi) *Zonder*

A BSN can occur as the complement of the preposition *zonder*.

- (72) a. onze oma's hebben het altijd al geweten : een dame op straat zonder hoed is geen dame (6437)
our grandma's have it always already known: a lady at street without hat is no lady
'Our grandmothers already knew it: a lady out of doors without a hat is no lady.'
- b. het was onwettig een pistool te kopen zonder vergunning (19521)
it was illegal a gun to buy without license
'It was illegal to buy a gun without a license.'
- c. het herhaalde aandringen van Prof. Snouck om een arabist-indoloog aan ons gezantschap te verbinden was zonder resultaat gebleven (35743)

³⁶ http://bakeliedjes.multiply.com/video/item/66/Wim_Sonneveld_-_Aan_De_Amsterdamse_Grachten

³⁷ http://www.adviesgroepvmbo.nl/index.php?option=com_search&searchword=bijeenkomsten

the repeated urge of Prof. Snouck to an arabist-indologist to our mission to connect was without result stayed
'The repeated urging of Prof. Snouck to add an arabist-indologist to our mission stayed without any result.'

Modification is without restriction here:

- (73) a. opvallende koerswinst maakten Eastman-Kodak op 825/8 (25/8) en Twenty-Century-Fox op 17,5 (2), zonder aanwijsbare reden (497)
striking market profit made Eastman-Kodak on 825/8 (25/8) and Twenty-Century-Fox on 17,5 (2) without apparent reason
Striking profits were made by Eastman-Kodak and Twenty-Century-Fox without apparent reason.'
- b. tot het opnieuw kon vertrekken vanaf het nulpunt, zonder spoor van materiaalmofheid (21866)
until it again could leave from the zero-point, without trace of material fatigue
'until it could leave again from the zero point, without a trace of material fatigue.'
- c. maar zonder verwant alternatief dat eventueel voldoende (protest)stemmen kan weglukken (8275)
but without related alternative that possibly sufficient (protest) votes can away-lure
'but without a related alternative that could lure away enough protest votes'

(vii) Met

A BSN can also occur as the complement of the preposition *met*.

- (74) a. chauffeur A.J. Hugens (25) uit Halsteren, die de zware truck met oplegger van de firma Van Egeraat uit Bergen op Zoom reed, was al eerder gaan remmen (5072)
driver A.J. Hugens (25) from Halsteren, who the heavy truck with trailer of the company Van Egeraat from Bergen op Zoom drove, was already earlier going
braking
'The driver A.J. Hugens (25) from Halsteren, who drove the heavy articulated truck of the company Van Egeraat from Bergen op Zoom, had started braking already earlier.'

- b. ik draaide me om met stoel en al, doch bleef zitten (27472)
 I turned me around with chair and all, but stayed sit
 ‘I turned around with chair and all, but kept sitting.’
- c. machines met duwschroeven werden ontworpen, maar de vliegprestaties waren minder dan die van van de vliegtuigen met trekschroef (34466)
 machines with push-screws were designed, but the flight-performances were less than those of the airplanes with pull-screw

Adjectival modification is possible, but relative clauses and postnominal PPs seem impossible.

- (75) a. terwijl een groepje leden van de oranjegarde, bibberend in het overhemdje met oranje stropdas in de regen luidkeels juichte bij het uitstappen van alle koninklijke gasten (3249)
 while a group-DIM members of the orange guard shivering in the shirt-DIM with orange tie in the rain loudly cheered with the alighting of all royal guests
 ‘while a small group of members of the orange guard, shivering in the shirt with orange tie, was loudly cheering in the rain for all the royal guests that were alighting’
- b. hij droeg een shirt met open kraag en donkerblauwe spijkerbroek (5251)
 he wore a shirt with open collar and dark-blue jeans

(viii) Various locatives

There are various basic locative PPs without an article, like:

- (76) a. de nieuwe dienst zal zich bezighouden met leerlingen die moeilijkheden hebben op school (2904)
 the new department will self occupy with students that difficulties have at school
 ‘The new department will deal with students that have difficulties at school.’
- b. donderdag hoorde ik echter dat ik naar huis mocht (1039)
 Thursday heard I however that I to house was.allowed
 ‘On Thursday however I heard I could go home.’
- c. en wie een slot op het tuinhek maakt, gaat de melkboer helpen terwijl het kind in bad zit (13151)

and who a lock on the garden-gate makes, goes the milkman help while the child in bath sits

‘And who makes a lock on the garden gate will help the milkman while the child is in the bathtub.’

No modification and no plurals.

2.20 Bareness in telegraphic registers

Bareness is of course very common in the ‘telegraphic’ register in one way or another. I will keep this separate from the constructions presented earlier, and restrict myself to giving some examples here.

(77) *Headlines and telegrams*

- a. akkoord over toekomst Antillen³⁸
agreement about future Antilles
- b. stop levering gaarne binnen drie dagen stop (16328)
STOP delivery please within three days STOP

(78) *Brief expressions*

- a. mondje open (23451)
mouth-DIM open
‘Mouth open!’
- b. Bijna iedere Nederlander kent die verlamrende ontdekking: fiets weg!³⁹
almost every Dutchman knows that paralyzing discovery: bike gone
‘Almost every Dutchman knows that paralyzing discovery: bike gone!’

(79) *Sayings*

- a. Zo vader, zo zoon.
so father, so son
‘Like father, like son.’
- b. Boompje groot, plantjertje dood.

³⁸ <http://www.nos.nl/nos/artikelen/2008/12/art000001C95F2AE33B42D2.html>

³⁹ NRC Handelsblad 14/15 februari 2009, Zaterdag &cetera p5.

tree-DIM big, planter-DIM dead

‘When the tree is big, then the person who planted it is dead.’

(80) *Directions in a screenplay*

- a. In het begin zal ik op de voorgrond blijven, maar daarna kom ik wel (maakt gebaar met handen van onder naar boven) naar boven.
in the beginning will I on the foreground stay but then come I AFF (makes gesture with hands from down to up) to up
‘Initially I will stay in the foreground, but then I will come up (makes gesture with hands up).’
- b. (moeder tot een klein kind:) Nu gaan we lekker slapen.
(mother to a small child:) Now go we nice sleep
‘(mother to a small child:) Let’s now go to sleep.’
- c. (verpleegster tot een patiënt:) Wat hebben we nou gedaan? Al het eten laten staan?
(nurse to a patient:) What have we now done? All the food let stand?
‘(nurse to a patient) What have we done now? You left all the food?’

(81) *Football reports*

Aldridge neer, vrije trap, overtreding Tsjidjatoelin (Onze Taal)

Aldridge down, free kick, offence Tsjidjatoelin

(82) *Diaries*

Vandaag ziek thuis gebleven. Schop gerepareerd. Brood geroosterd. Dokter schrijft kamprust voor.

today ill home stayed. shovel repaired. bread toasted. doctor prescribes camp-rest

‘Today home ill. Repaired shovel. Toasted bread. Doctor prescribes rest in sanatorium.’

(83) *Recipes*

Aardappels onderin schaal leggen, prei erop, champignons erover.

potatoes at-the-bottom-of dish lay, leek on-top, mushrooms on-top

‘Put potatoes in dish, then leek on top, mushrooms on top of that.’

3 Typology of bare constructions

On the basis of the most important properties that we mentioned the following table can be made:

	<i>Distr</i>	<i>Dim</i>	<i>Plurals</i>	<i>NrNeut</i>	<i>Satel</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Overt</i>
<i>Als</i>	gov	+	+	+	full	+	-
<i>Enumeration</i>	indep	+	+	-	full	+	+
<i>Apposition</i>	indep	+	+	-	full	+H	+
<i>Absolute predicate</i>	indep	+	+	-	full	+H	-
<i>Captions</i>	indep	+	+	-	full	+	+
<i>Small clause subject</i>	indep	+	+	-	full	+	+
<i>Vocatives</i>	indep	+	+	-	full	+	±
<i>Exclamatives</i>	top	+	+	-	full	+	+
<i>Feit is dat</i>	top	+	+	-	full	±	+
<i>P_{zonder}</i>	gov, P	+	+	?	full	+	+
<i>Kind complements</i>	gov, N	+	+	-	full	+	-
<i>Int text reference</i>	free	+	+	-	full	+but	+
<i>P_{met_en al}</i>	gov, P	+	+	-	limited	+	-
<i>Eigen</i>	gov, P?	+	+	?	limited	±	±
<i>Coordination</i>	gov, C	+	+	-	only post	+	+
<i>Titles</i>	free	+	+?	-	basic	+but	±
<i>Intimate terms</i>	free	+	-	-	none	-	±
<i>P_{op-information}</i>	Gov, P	-	?	+	none	+but	+
<i>Reduplication</i>	gov, P	+	-	?	full?	+	-?
<i>P_{per-means}</i>	gov, P	+	-	+	basic	+but	-
<i>P_{per-proportion}</i>	gov, P	+	-	?	full	+	-
<i>P_{tot}</i>	gov, P	-?	+	+	basic	+	-
<i>Ext text reference</i>	free	-	+	-	basic?	-	+
<i>Incorporation</i>	gov, V	-	±	?	basic	±	-
<i>Predication</i>	gov, Cop?	-	-	+	basic	+but	-but
<i>Relative dates</i>	free	-	-	-	none	-	+
<i>Day terms</i>	free	-	-	-?	some	-	-
<i>Temporal parts</i>	free	-	-	-	none	-	-
<i>P_{locatives}</i>	gov, P	-	-	?	none	-	+but

The properties can be explained as follows:

(84) Distr = Distribution: free, top(icalized), indep(endent)

Dim = Diminutives

Plurals

NrNeut = Number neutral

Satel = Satellites (modifiers and complements): full, basic, none

Open = open class (H(uman), 'but' means with systematic restrictions)

Overt = overt determiner possible ('but' means: other meaning)

I would like to suggest that these constructions can be divided in three broad classes:

(85) *Three types of bareness*

- a. Peripheral bareness
- b. Referential bareness
- c. Governed bareness

3.1 Peripheral bareness

The first class consists of bare nominals that allow plurals, show no number-neutrality, exhibit the full range of modifiers and are typically quite open in lexical membership. In most cases the missing article can be made overt. Some of these bare nominals are clearly referential, as we showed with anaphora or relative clause tests. They consist at least of the following constructions, but the absolute predicates have a special status as we will see:

(86) *Peripheral bare constructions*

Apposition: Hanneke Ratsma, dochtertje van onderwijzer Rienk Ratsma

Hanneke Ratsma, daughter of teacher Rienk Ratsma

Captions: getiteld: workshop voor zelfexpressie

titled: workshop for self-expression

Small clause subject: Hij stond met het contract klaar, pen in de hand

he stood with the contract ready, pen in the hand

Vocatives: Kind, wat moet ik tegen je zeggen?

Child-DIM, what must I against you say

Exclamatives: Leuk huis heb je zeg

nice house have you say

- Enumeration: Verder zit er in: portemonnee, mobiel, naaisetje (zo'n hoteldingetje), maandverband, pen, pleisters, bergen oude bonnetjes, mp3 speler, ... furthermore sits there in: wallet, cellphone, sewingbox (such a hotelthingy), sanitary napkin, pen, sticking plaster, heaps old tickets, mp3 player, ...
- Abstract topic. pred.: Klein minpuntje is dat u voor de komma en punt ...
small minus-point is that you for the comma and period the Alt-key must press
- Absolute predicates: dat verdient hij niet, vriend van het concertgebouworkest en voortreffelijk en gedegen musicus die hij is
that deserves he not, friend of the concert-hall-orchestra and excellent and reputable musician that he is

In their distribution they are either independent of the sentence context or topicalized. In other words, these bare expressions are never on a 'regular' argument position. Furthermore, inside the bare noun itself there is no structural or lexical element that can be taken to be responsible for the bareness (in contrast to the uniqueness bareness that we will introduce later on).

My suggestion is that the bareness in these cases is relatively superficial, involving only the (sometimes optional) omission of the determiner of a full noun phrase, leaving much of the syntax and morphology of the noun phrase intact. There are at least two general conditions necessary for this omission, in addition to other, more specific conditions per individual construction: (i) the bare nominal needs to be in an independent or peripheral syntactic position (in a way to be made more precise) and (ii) the bare nominal is often in a referentially dependent relation with a discourse entity, typically as a kind of predicate.

3.2 Uniqueness bare nominals

The next type consists of bare nominals that contain clear internal lexical or structural factors that allow them to occur bare or license the bareness. This is the list of candidate constructions:

(87) *Unique bare constructions*

Titles: sprintster Cora Schouten
 sprint-FEM-er Cora Schouten

Relative dates:	vorige week
	last week
Day terms:	maandag
	Monday
Part nouns:	begin mei
	beginning May
External textual reference:	ondergetekende
	undersigned
Internal textual reference:	onderstaande tabel
	table below
Intimate terms:	dominee
	vicar
Eigen:	op eigen verzoek
	at own request

We can distinguish three subclasses here, that can be organized in the following way:

(88)

	A	NN ('construct')	N ('proper')
Argument	onderstaande figuur eigen verzoek	sprintster CS	ondergetekende dominee
Adverb	volgende week	begin mei	maandag

The bareness can be licensed through an adjective (A), through a 'construct state' (see also Belder), or entirely from the meaning or the use of the noun itself as a kind of proper name. Orthogonally to this we can distinguish constructions that behave more as arguments and those that behave more like (temporal) adverbs.

In these constructions modification is very limited or non-existent. Plurals are typically not possible. Distribution of the bare nominal as a whole is relatively free (in argument or adverb positions) and does not need a special governor or special position (except maybe for the case with *eigen*). This suggests that the factors explaining bareness come entirely from within, from intrinsic referential properties of nouns or adjectives that make the use of determiners impossible or unnecessary.

3.3 Governed bareness

In the third and last class are grouped all the remaining bare constructions. Almost all of these involve some sort of *governor* (typically a preposition, sometimes a noun, verb, conjunction or more abstract element). This is what distinguishes them from the previous two classes that either occur outside any syntactic context at all, or that distribute across vary argument positions. The only bare construction that does not easily fit here is bare predication, because there is not always a particular word fulfilling the role of governor, unless we take a copula (or some more abstract syntactic counterpart of that) as the relevant governor here.

Apart from the presence of a governor we find a great variety of properties here, ranging from full freedom in modification and number to extreme limitation, as shown in the following table:

(89) *Subtypology of governed bare nominals*

	<i>full modification</i> (<i>open class</i>)	<i>basic modification</i> (<i>semantic class</i>)	<i>no modification</i> (<i>lexically restricted</i>)
<i>only singular</i>	reduplication P _{per-proportion}	P _{per-means} P _{tot} predication V _{spelen+instrument}	P _{locative} idiomatic incorporation
<i>also plural</i>	P _{zonder} <i>als</i> kind complements coordination		

There are nominals here that seem to allow the full range of modifiers and have an open class of nouns. Other nominals allow only more basic modification and only a restricted class of singular nouns or even no modification at all and a lexically restricted class (this is the case locative PPs like *op zee, in bed*). Apart from differences in number and modification, we also find (but that is not indicated here) that some constructions show semantic enrichment or alternate with weak referential noun phrases in other languages or constructions. How these other properties distribute over the various construction in this class is something that still needs to be investigated.

What can explain the pattern of properties that we see now? Given that the notion of governor plays such an important role here, we could hypothesize that these properties are also determined by the governor, in two ways. The first hypothesis is that the governor *selects* (semantic and/or syntactically) for particular types of non-referential complements, with different properties. More specifically, some governors might simply select for more productive *set* expressions (the ones in the first column), while other governors might select for particular more restricted abstract objects (properties, capacities, institutes, roles, types; the ones in the second column). The second hypothesis is that certain combinations of governor + complement can be idiomatic. This is particular true of the third column.

Obviously, this rough descriptive overview can only give the global and tentative outlines of a typology of bare constructions. There are still leaks between the three types and problematic constructions (important ones like coordination and predication). Also the theoretical basis for the typology still needs to be consolidated and many of the diagnostics worked out. Some diagnostics need to be applied more carefully (like the property of semantic enrichment or the contrast between bare and overt, possibly weak, nominals). Notice also that there are some constructions in the fourth type (telegraphic bare nominals) that really belong in one of the more grammatical classes (like bare nominals in commands).

In another important sense the three types might be related to each other (apart from the obvious drop of articles). In many bare constructions, ‘human nouns’ play an important role in the sense that only (or mostly) human nouns occur. This is true, for instance, for apposition (peripheral type), for titles (referential type), and for predication (governed type). Whether this is accidental, due to independent factors, or whether it reveals something about some underlying unity in bare constructions remains to be seen.

By putting all the bare nominals in one large overview we can see more clearly where we need to look for explanatory principles for various constructions. For peripheral bare constructions we need to look at discourse properties, illocutionary force, clause types, situational context, indexicality, expressiveness, all phenomena at a somewhat higher, clausal level of semantics. For referential bare constructions we need to involve theories about deictic and proper name semantics. Governed bare constructions are situated at a somewhat lower, lexical semantic level, where the combinatorial properties of functions and arguments play a role, both at a more general type-theoretical level (where discussions about incorporation, modes of composition, saturation play a role), but also at a more detailed lexical level (with for instance qualia and stereotypicality.).

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