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QUALIFICATION PAPER

General Review on the Article in English Grammar

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**THE QUALIFICATION PAPER
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INTRODUCTION

Development of a science as a whole and a linguistic science, in particular is connected not only to the decision of actually scientific problems, but also with features internal and foreign policy of the state, the maintenance of the state educational standards which are to the generators of progress providing social, economic society. It forms the society capable quickly to adapt in the modern world.¹

Conditions of reforming of all education system the question of the world assistance to improvement of quality of scientific-theoretical aspect of educational process is especially actually put. As President I. A. Karimov has declared in the program speech «Harmoniously development of generation a basis of progress of Uzbekistan» : “... all of us realize, that achievement of the great purpose put today before us, noble aspirations it is necessary for updating a society”. The effect and destiny of our reforms carried out in the name of progress and the future, results of our intentions are connected with highly skilled, conscious staff, the experts who are meeting the requirement of time.²

After the Independence was proclaimed the Republic was faced with the necessity of creating new legislation corresponding with new realities, with the conditions of Independence and the Parliament coped with this task, there have been adopted new Laws and new Resolutions.

For the first time in the history of our country, there adopted “The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Education” and “The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the National Programme of Personnel Training System”. The main objective of all reforms in the field of economic policy is the individual. Therefore the task of education, the task of rising up a new generation capable

¹ И. Каримов: «Наша высшая цель – независимость и процветание Родины, свобода и благополучие народа». Доклад на первой сессии Олий Мажлиса Республики Узбекистан второго созыва от 22,01,2000. Т : Узбекистан 2000 Е, 8-С, 322-340

²И.А.Каримов. Гармонично развитое поколение – основа прогресса Узбекистана Ташкент 1998 стр, 156-168

of national renaissance will remain the prerogative of the state and constitute a priority. At present great importance is attached to the study and teaching of foreign language.

The Subject matter of our qualification paper is the study the communicative function of the article in the modern English. Mainly, the study of functions, importance, the role and other various features of the article in English. Furthermore, it deals with the teaching Article to elementary level students.

The aim of the qualification paper is the thorough analysis of the problem of functions of articles in English. Besides to define the different peculiarities of the article.

In accordance with the presented aim the following **tasks** were put forward in the scientific work:

- To study the grammar of Modern English;
- To study the Morphology of English;
- To classify general notion of articles;
- To determine the analytical use of the article;
- To study the functions of the article in Modern English;
- To analyze the peculiar features of the article in different positions.

The novelty of the work is that the thorough analysis of articles in English which have not been researched deeply yet; moreover studying their functions.

The actuality of the work is to ease and solve the problems related to the articles of English Grammar by giving comparative definitions. And to show out the main properties of articles, as the function of determining the noun.

The theoretical value of the work is to explore the linguistic position of articles in Modern English.

The practical value of the work is that the results of the scientific work can be used in the course of lectures and seminars in English Grammar and also can be useful for those who study in the sphere of linguistics.

As the **research material**, we used the most active literature devoted to the English grammar like the works written by B.A. Ilyish, A. I., M.Y. Blokh, and also studied up to date British and American articles from international websites.

The methods used in the research paper are based on the styles and ways used by well-known linguists and famous scientists who worked in this very section of the English grammar.

Structurally our qualification paper consists of the following: Introduction, two chapters and their paragraphs, conclusion followed by the list of used literature during the research.

Introduction presents the aim and the tasks of the qualification paper. Besides, it gives short idea of the main problem of research.

The first chapter consists of two paragraphs. The first paragraph of the first chapter studies the general notion of articles. The second paragraph defines the article as a means of determination of noun.

The second chapter is devoted to the functions and the use of Articles in English. The first paragraph gives the full information about the use of articles in English. The second paragraph explains the use of articles in syntactic relations. The third paragraph analyzes the communicative and relativity functions of the Article in English.

The conclusion gives the general results of the work.

The scientific work ends with the list of literature used during the research.

CHAPTER I. GENERAL SURVEY ON THE ARTICLE IN ENGLISH.

§ 1.1. GENERAL NOTION OF ARTICLES

The article presents the student with one of the most difficult and intricate problems of language structure. Although a great number of philologists have treated the article both in English and in other languages, it will be only fair to say that even the most essential points concerning the theory of the articles still remain doubtful.

In embarking now on a study of the Modern English article, we should first of all eliminate those problems which are of no real scientific interest, though they have been occasionally discussed. Thus, we will not dwell on the problem whether the article is a separate part of speech, since neither an affirmative nor a negative answer would in any way affect the really relevant questions concerning the article. We have not included the article in our list of parts of speech; but this should not be taken to mean that it cannot be included in that list. The problem is irrelevant.

Another problem, which, though not irrelevant, appears to have been frequently misstated, is this: is the article a word or a morpheme? It has been solved in different ways by different authors. There would always be some argument in favour of the article being a separate word, and some argument to show that it was a morpheme.³ This kind of approach, however, does not seem to be the right one. It would mean that we start examining the article, a very peculiar phenomenon, with ready-made notions of what a word and what a morpheme is. Instead we should first study the article as it actually exists and functions in the language, and only then see whether it will fit into any ready-

³ This applies to Modern English. In speaking of the German language, it would be impossible to assert that the article was a morpheme, since it is declined and, therefore, every form of it consists of two morphemes, e.g. genitive singular neuter d-es, as distinguished from the nominative and accusative d-as.

made category. It may well happen that it will not; then we shall have to face the situation and take it for what it is worth.

With respect to the article we must state, in the first place, that there are languages which have no article. Besides Russian and most other Slavonic languages, the Latin language belongs here. Ancient Greek had only one article — the definite one. Many languages (Italian, Spanish, German, Swedish, etc.) have two articles — the definite and the indefinite. As far as its form is concerned, the article is usually a separate unit which may be divided from its noun by other words, chiefly adjectives. However, in certain languages the article may also be a morpheme attached to the noun as a kind of suffix.

This is the case, for instance, in Bulgarian, where we find such formations as *селото* 'the village', *линиџа* 'the line', etc. The same may be said of Rumanian, e. g. *universal* 'the universe', *curentul* 'the courier', etc., where *-l* is the definite article corresponding etymologically to French *le*, Latin *ille*. A suffix article is also found in Swedish; compare, e. g., *dag* 'day', *dagen* 'the day'; *rum* 'room', *rummet* 'the room'. Alongside of this suffix article Swedish also has an article separate from the noun, as in *den* 'the'. The fact that a suffix article exists in several languages must of course be taken into consideration in a general theory of the article.

Numbers and meaning of articles

It has been a long debated question how many articles there are in English. Obviously there are only two material articles, the definite article *the* and the indefinite article *a* (*an*). The distinction thus is between, for instance, *the language* and *a language*. However, the noun *language*, and indeed many other nouns, are also used without any article, as in the sentence *Language is a means of communication*. It is obvious that the absence of the article in this sentence is in itself a means of showing that "language in general", and not any specific language (such as English, or French, etc.), is meant. Hence we may say that there are three variants: (1) *the language*, (2) *a language*, (3) *language*. Now the

question arises, how this third variant is to be treated. The older grammatical tradition described it as "omission of the article", which is obviously inadequate, since there is not the slightest reason to believe that the article in such cases was ever "omitted". Another view is that we should describe this as "absence of the article", and sometimes this notion is made more precise and the phenomenon is called "meaningful absence of article".⁴ A third view, which has been gaining ground lately, is that the very absence of the article is a special kind of article, which is then termed "zero article". According to this view, then, there would be three articles in English: definite, indefinite, and zero.

This idea of a zero article takes its origin in the notion of "zero morpheme", which has been applied to certain forms in inflected languages, — namely to forms having no ending and differing by this very absence from other forms of the same word, which have each their individual ending. A case in point in Russian is the genitive plural of some nouns (chiefly of the feminine gender), e. g. *рук*, which is characterised as a special form by the absence of any ending, as distinct from nominative singular *рука*, genitive singular *руки*, dative plural *рукам*, etc. The notion of "zero morpheme" may also be applied in English, for instance, to the singular form of nouns (*room*) as distinct from the plural form with its *-s*-inflection. If, therefore, we were to interpret the article as a morpheme, the idea of a zero article would make no difficulty. If, on the other hand, we take the article to be a word, the idea of a "zero word" would entail some difficulty. It has been pointed out that the notion of a "zero copula" has been applied to such Russian sentences as *он здоров*, where there is no verb. In this sentence the present tense is implied as distinct from *он был здоров* and *он будет здоров*, where the past or future tense is expressed by a form of the verb *быть*. However, in this case it is not a "zero copula", but a "zero form" of the copula *быть*. We might thus formulate the following tense system of this

⁴ See, for example, Т. Н. Сергеева, О значащем отсутствии артикля перед именами существительными в современном английском языке. Иностранные языки в школе, 1953, № 1.

copula: present tense — "zero", past tense *был*, English article, if the article is a word. We will therefore proceed on the assumption that the notion "zero article" is only possible if the article is not a word.

The two main views of the article are, then, these: (1) The article is a word (possibly a separate part of speech) and the collocation "article + noun" is a phrase (if of a peculiar kind). (2) The article is a form element in the system of the noun; it is thus a kind of morpheme, or if a word, an auxiliary word of the same kind as the auxiliary verbs. In that case the phrase "article + noun" is a morphological formation similar to the formation "auxiliary verb + infinitive or participle", which is an analytical form of the verb.⁵

Now, the very fact that two such widely divergent views of the article are possible shows that there are some quite peculiar difficulties here. Besides those already mentioned, there is the problem of the meaning of each article: we must find out whether it has one or several meanings, each of them appearing in a different context.

We can illustrate this problem by comparing, for example, the two sentences: (1) *The dog has come home* and (2) *The dog is a domestic animal*. Of course it is at once obvious that *the dog* in the former sentence means one individual dog, whereas *the dog* in the latter sentence means the dog in general, as a zoological species. The question, then, is whether the article itself has two distinct meanings (if so, the second of these is termed "the generic article") or whether the meaning of the article is the same in both sentences, and the difference in meaning between them depends on some other factor.

If we endorse the first view, we shall say that the definite article has at least two distinct meanings, viz. (1) it means that an object is singled out from

⁵ This view of the article has of late been emphatically stated once more. See Т. В. Строева и Л. Р. Зиидер, Грамматическая категория соотнесенности имени существительного в немецком языке. Проблемы языкознания. Учёные записки ЛГУ им. А. А. Жданова, Серия филол. наук, вып. 60. 1961, стр. 218—232.

all objects of the same class, (2) it means that the whole class of objects, as distinct from other classes, is referred to.

If we endorse the second view, we shall say that the definite article has one meaning only, viz. that of something singled out from other entities. Now, whether the essence thus singled out is a separate object or a whole class depends not on the article at all but on the other elements in the sentence, usually on the predicate.

Reverting to the two sentences, (1) *The dog has come home* and (2) *The dog is a domestic animal*, we shall see that each of the predicates has several peculiarities which influence the meaning of the sentence one way or another. Let us analyze each of these. First, the grammatical peculiarities. In (1) the predicate is a verb in the present perfect tense, in (2) it is a group "link verb + predicative", and the link verb is in the present tense. That of course would not in itself be sufficient to show the different meanings of the sentences, but it does give a certain indication this way: the verb in the present perfect tense is more likely than not to express a concrete action (i.e. one that has taken place once), while the group "link verb in the present tense + predicative" is very likely to express some general characteristic.

Now, these grammatical points are supplemented by some lexical points, which make the difference quite clear. In (1) the verb *come* and the adverb *home* denote a concrete physical action and the place to which it is directed, while in (2) the predicative *a domestic animal*' denotes a zoological idea and thus proves that by *the dog* is meant not an individual dog but the whole species. According to this view, then, the meaning of the definite article itself is the same in both sentences, and the difference proceeds from the peculiarities of the predicates and the words expressing them. Which of the two views is the more convincing one? Both views seem to be defensible, and the decision will have to be made on the ground of some guiding principle.

Such a principle may be that of the invariable, i.e. of a stable element in the meaning of a word preserved throughout all the changes and combinations in which the word may be found. This principle of the invariable has been recently very forcefully defended by A. Isachenko in his paper on grammatical meaning.⁶ The principle may be briefly formulated in this way: "State an invariable wherever possible," or negatively in this way: "Do not state differences wherever this is not strictly necessary." In short, the principle amounts to this. Whenever a word, or a word-form, appears to have different meanings in different contexts, look for that element of its meaning which is always there and does not depend on any context: that is the invariable. If we adhere to this view (as it appears we should) we will say that there is no difference in the meaning of the definite article between the sentences *The dog has come home* and *The dog is a domestic animal*; the difference proceeds from other sources, as we have explained above. It is obvious, however, that not everybody will accept the principle of the invariable, and for those who will not do so, the question of the meaning of the definite article will appear in a different light. The same may be said about the indefinite article. If we compare the two sentences, (1) *There is a hill behind our house*, and (2) *A hill is the opposite of a valley*, the question will arise, whether the indefinite article with the noun *hill* has different meanings in the two sentences. If we think it has, we shall say that in (1) it serves to denote an individual object, without reference to its individual peculiarities, and in (2) any object of a given class. If, on the other hand, we endorse the principle of the invariable, the article will be said to have the same meaning of indefiniteness in both sentences, and the difference in meaning will have to be sought elsewhere. We shall first of all note the different types of predicate in the two sentences. In (1) we have the predicate *there is*, in (2) the group "link verb + predicative", and the predicative is a noun. There is, besides, an adverbial modifier in (1) and an object in (2). From the lexical point of view,

⁶ See A. В. Исаченко, О грамматическом значении. Вопросы языкознания. 1961, № 1.

it is important to note that in (1) we find three words with a meaning pointing to a concrete situation, viz. *behind*, denoting a relation in space, *house*, and especially *our*. In (2), on the other hand, there is the group *the opposite of a valley*, which expresses some general notion, not restricted to any concrete position in space or time. The indefinite article before *valley* is of course quite parallel to that before *hill*, and they are bound to be used in quite the same way. All these peculiarities in (2) point to the sentence having a general meaning, i. e. expressing a definition. Such, then, are the factors on which the general meaning of each sentence and the use of the indefinite article depend. Taking this line, then, we should say that the invariable in the indefinite article is its meaning of taking an object without its individual peculiarities. Whether the noun used with this article is used to denote "a certain hill" or "any hill", is outside the meaning of the article itself, and depends on a series of different factors, which we have tried to point out. It must be emphasised, of course, that if the principle of the invariable is not accepted the result of the analysis will be different.

In coming now to the difference in meaning between the definite and the indefinite article, we should start by comparing two sentences which are exactly alike in everything except that one has the definite article where the other has the indefinite. We ought to find several pairs of this kind, and then try to get at the essence of the difference between them. So let us take these two, in the first place: *Give me a newspaper, please!* and *Give me the newspaper, please!* Here the difference is obvious: the one sentence means, 'Give me some newspaper, no matter which', and the other means, 'Give me that particular newspaper that you are reading at the moment, or the one that is lying on the table, or the one that you had in your hand as you came in', etc., depending on the situation. Of course many similar pairs of sentences might be found. Here, then, the difference is that between "individual object with its own characteristics", and "some object belonging to that particular class of objects". This may indeed be called the difference between definite and indefinite in the usual sense of the words.

However, this distinction will not apply to all cases and we must proceed to look at the sentences where the line of distinction is of another kind. Let us now take these two sentences, *The door opened, and the young man came in,* and *The door opened, and a young man came in.* We need not deny that at the bottom of this distinction there is one between "definite" and "indefinite"; however, another element has come in here, which may be briefly described like this. We can only say *The door opened, and the young man came in,* if we knew in advance that the person standing, say, in the corridor was a young man; if there was a knock at the door, and we did not know who had knocked, and we said, "Come in," we can only say, *The door opened, and a young man came in,* which might be made more explicit in the following way, *...and the person who came in proved to be a young man* (implying, not an old man, not a young girl, etc.). Thus the fact that it was a young man would be new, it would be the central point of the sentence. Coming back now to the sentence with the definite article, we can say that its meaning is approximately this, 'The door opened, and the young man (did not stay out but) came in'. Here, then, the central point would be that he came in. Now, this element of the sentence which is the central point may be said to correspond to the semantic predicate, or the rheme. Then the indefinite article, as opposed to the definite article in sentences of this kind, would be a means of expressing the semantic predicate of the sentence. How should we then define its meaning? To use the simplest words possible, we might say that the indefinite article expresses what is new, and the definite article expresses what is known already, or at least what is not presented as new. This opposition would then be superimposed on that between definite and indefinite.

To make the point quite clear, let us consider two more sentences. Let us assume that we are speaking about what happened in a classroom during a lesson: *The door opened and a teacher came in.* — *The door opened and the headmaster came in.* In both cases we did not know in advance who was

coming, we only learnt it when the door opened. We would then say, ...*a teacher came in*, but not ...*a headmaster came in*. How are we to account for the difference? Obviously the reason is this. There are many teachers in a school, but only one headmaster. Therefore the sentence *The door opened, and a headmaster came in* would have no reasonable sense. Apparently, the idea of definiteness (there being only one headmaster in every school) takes the upper hand and the idea of newness is not expressed at all. Thus, the sentence *The headmaster came in*, which in this case corresponds to the Russian вошел директор, might, in another context, correspond to the Russian директор вошел: in that case *came in*, and not *the headmaster*, would be the semantic predicate.

Let us now see in what relation the absence of the article stands to the meanings of the definite and the indefinite article.

When we consider the absence of the article, we have to distinguish between the singular and the plural number. Broadly speaking, the absence of the article with a noun in the plural corresponds to the indefinite article with that noun in the singular, whereas the absence of the article with a noun in the singular stands apart and does not correspond to anything in the plural.⁷

We will first consider the absence of the article with a noun in the singular and start with nouns which can equally be used with the definite and the indefinite article and without any article. One of these is the noun *language*. We take three sentences: *Language is a means of communication. English is the foreign language I know best. Everyone must study a foreign language.* The difference here is obvious enough. *Language* without article does not refer to any one language (Russian, English, German, etc.) but to the general idea of that means of communication. Compare also the following three sentences: *He has eaten the egg. He has eaten an egg. He has egg on his sleeve.* In the latter sentence, what is meant is not a "unit", an oval-shaped hen's egg, but some

⁷ Ilyish B. *The Structure of Modern English* 1965. p .

"material", which happens to have stuck to his sleeve. Similar observations might be made on a number of other nouns.

From this we may also draw some conclusions about nouns which cannot be used with the indefinite article. Compare: *Water boils at 100° centigrade* and *The water is boiling*; *Snow is white* and *The snow has melted*. In each of these pairs, the first sentence expresses a general truth, without reference to any particular occasion, while the second expresses a concrete occurrence at a certain moment (this is seen from the form of the verb used in each case). The noun *water* without any article is the name of the substance in general, whereas with the article it denotes a certain quantity of that substance found at a certain concrete place. The same of course applies to the noun *snow*. The indefinite article is not possible with these nouns.

The absence of the article with a noun in the plural, as we have said, corresponds to a certain extent to the indefinite article with the noun in the singular. However, this is far from being always the case. This may be shown by some very simple examples. If we take, for instance, the sentence *I have read a novel by Thackeray* and if we want to change it in such a way as to show that more than one novel is meant we will of course say *I have read some novels by Thackeray*, i.e. we shall have to use the word *some*, and not merely drop the article. Though the word *some* is not an article, it does come close in meaning to the indefinite article in one of its uses.

The absence of the article with a noun in the plural is the only possibility in sentences expressing general statements, such as, *Dogs are domestic animals*, or *Goose quills were in common use formerly*. The article is also absent in such sentences as, *Pencils, pens, and sheets of paper were strewn all over the table*, where indefinitely large quantities are meant.

Such would seem to be the main factors determining the use of the definite or indefinite article and the absence of the article. They do not cover all possible cases, and a considerable number of examples will be found to He

outside the sphere of the grammatical system and to be due to occasional causes which sometimes remain obscure. To give only a few examples, if a noun is modified by the adjective *wrong* meaning 'not the one needed', the definite article is always used with it, as in / *took the wrong bus*, or *He walked in the wrong direction*. The underlying idea seems to be that there were two alternatives, the one right, and the other wrong, and the wrong one happened to be chosen. This, however, is not quite convincing, since, for example, in the case of buses, there often would be more than one bus line which might prove "wrong". Such peculiar cases do not easily fit into any system.

Another peculiar case is that of the absence of the article with nouns used in pairs. A typical example is the sentence *In the quiet, quaintly-named streets, in town-mead and market place, in the lord's mill beside the stream, in the bell that swung out its summons to the crowded borough-mote, in merchant-gild and church-gild and craft-gild, lay the life of Englishmen who were doing more than knight and baron to make England what she is . . .* (J. R. GREEN) No article is found here either with the noun *knight* or with the noun *baron*. If only one of these nouns had been used, the article could not possibly be absent. This also applies to the other nouns in this sentence, and this usage may be found elsewhere. It appears to be strictly literary.

There are many other special cases defying grammatical analysis, such as the use of the definite article with certain geographical names, etc.

Having considered the main meanings of the articles and the main factors determining their use, we will now look into the question of the essence of the article and its place in the English language.

The question arises whether the group "article + noun" can be a form of the noun in the same way as, for example, the group *will speak* is a form of the verb *speak*. If we were to take that view, some nouns would have three forms, two of them analytical, e. g. *room, the room, a room*; while other nouns would have two forms, one of them analytical, e. g. *water, the water*, etc. It must be

said that the problem is hard to solve, as unmistakable objective criteria are missing. There seems to be nothing to prevent us from thinking that *a room* is an analytical form of the noun *room*, and there seems to be nothing to compel us to think so. If we endorse the view that the group "article + noun" is an analytical form of the noun we shall have to set up a grammatical category in the noun which is expressed by one or the other article or by its absence. That category might be called determination. In that case we could also find a "zero article". If, on the other hand, we stick to the view that the group "article + noun" is not an analytical form of the noun and the group is a peculiar type of phrase, no "zero article" is possible, and the meanings of each of the two articles (definite and indefinite) are to be taken as individual meanings of words. The choice between the two alternatives remains a matter of opinion, rather than admitting of a binding conclusion. On the whole the second view (denying the analytical forms of nouns) seems preferable, but we cannot, for the time being at least, prove that it is the only correct view of the English article.

1.2. ARTICLE IS A MEANS OF DETERMINATION OF NOUN

Article is a determining unit of specific nature accompanying the noun in communicative collocation. Its special character is clearly seen against the background of determining words of half-notional semantics. Whereas the function of the determiners such as *this*, *any*, *some* is to explicitly interpret the referent of the noun in relation to other objects or phenomena of a like kind, the semantic purpose of the article is to specify the nounal referent, as it were, altogether unostentatiously, to define it in the most general way, without any explicitly expressed contrasts.

This becomes obvious when we take the simplest examples ready at hand. *Cf.*: Will you give me *this* pen, Willy? (I.e. the pen that I am pointing out, not one of your choice.) — Will you give me *the* pen, please? (I.e. simply the pen from the desk, you understand which.) *Any* blade will do, I only want it for

scratching out the wrong word from the type-script. (I.e. any blade of the stock, however blunt it may be.) — Have you got something sharp? I need a penknife or *a* blade. (I.e. simply a blade, if not a knife, without additional implications.) *Some* woman called in your absence, she didn't give her name. (I.e. a woman strange to me.)— *A* woman called while you were out, she left a message. (I.e. simply a woman, without a further connotation.)

Another peculiarity of the article, as different from the determiners in question, is that, in the absence of a determiner, the use of the article with the noun is quite obligatory, in so far as the cases of non-use of the article are subject to no less definite rules than the use of it.⁸

Taking into consideration these peculiar features of the article, the linguist is called upon to make a sound statement about its segmental status in the system of morphology. Namely, his task is to decide whether the article is a purely auxiliary element of a special grammatical form of the noun which functions as a component of a definite morphological category, or it is a separate word, i.e. a lexical unit in the determiner word set, if of a more abstract meaning than other determiners.

The problem is a vexed one; it has inspired intensive research activity in the field, as well as animated discussion with various pros and cons affirmed, refuted and re-affirmed. In the course of these investigations, however, many positive facts about articles have been established, which at present enables an observer, proceeding from the systemic principle in its paradigmatic interpretation, to expose the status of the article with an attempt at demonstrative conviction. To arrive at a definite decision, we propose to consider the properties of the English articles in four successive stages, beginning with their semantic evaluation as such, then adding to the obtained data a situational estimation of their uses, thereafter analysing their categorial features in the light

⁸ Ilyish B. *The Structure of Modern English* 1965.

of the oppositional theory, and finally concluding the investigation by a paradigmatic generalisation.

A mere semantic observation of the articles in English, i.e. the definite article *the* and the indefinite article *a/an*, at once discloses not two, but three meaningful characterisations of the nounal referent achieved by their correlative functioning, namely: one rendered by the definite article, one rendered by the indefinite article, and one rendered by the absence (or non-use) of the article. Let us examine them separately.

The definite article expresses the identification or individualisation of the referent of the noun: the use of this article shows that the object denoted is taken in its concrete, individual quality. This meaning can be brought to explicit exposition by a substitution test. The test consists in replacing the article used in a construction by a demonstrative word, e.g. a demonstrative determiner, without causing a principal change in the general implication of the construction. Of course, such an "equivalent" substitution should be understood in fact as nothing else but analogy: the difference in meaning between a determiner and an article admits of no argument, and we pointed it out in the above passages. Still, the replacements of words as a special diagnostic procedure, which is applied with the necessary reservations and according to a planned scheme of research, is quite permissible. In our case it undoubtedly shows a direct relationship in the meanings of the determiner and the article, the relationship in which the determiner is semantically the more explicit element of the two. *Cf.*: But look at *the* apple-tree!—> But look at *this* apple-tree! *The* town lay still in the Indian summer sun.—» *That* town lay still in the Indian summer sun. *The* water is horribly hot.—> *This* water is horribly hot. It's *the* girls who are to blame.— » It's *those* girls who are to blame.

The justification of the applied substitution, as well as its explanatory character, may be proved by a counter-test, namely, by the change of the definite article into the indefinite article, or by omitting the article altogether. The

replacement either produces a radical, i.e. "non-equivalent" shift in the meaning of the construction, or else results in a grammatically unacceptable construction.

Cf: ...—» Look at *an* apple-tree!—> Look at apple-tree! ...—* A water is horribly hot.—> Water is horribly hot.

The indefinite article, as different from the definite article, is commonly interpreted as referring the object denoted by the noun to a certain class of similar objects; in other words, the indefinite article expresses a classifying generalisation of the noun referent, or takes it in a relatively general sense.⁹ To prove its relatively generalising functional meaning, we may use the diagnostic insertions of specifying-classifying phrases into the construction in question; we may also employ the transformation of implicit comparative constructions with the indefinite article into the corresponding explicit comparative constructions.

Cf:

We passed *a* water-mill. —> We passed *a certain* water-mill. It is *a* very young country, isn't it? —> It is *a* very young *kind of* country, isn't it? What *an* arrangement! —► What *sort of* arrangement! This child is *a* positive nightmare. —► This child is positively *like a* nightmare.

The procedure of a classifying contrast employed in practical text-books exposes the generalising nature of the indefinite article most clearly in many cases of its use. *E.g.:* A door opened in the wall. —► A door (not a window) opened in the wall

We saw *a* flower under the bush. —► We saw a flower (not a strawberry) under the bush.

As for the various uses of nouns without an article, from the semantic point of view they all should be divided into two types. In the first place, there are uses where the articles are deliberately omitted out of stylistic considerations. We see such uses, for instance, in telegraphic speech, in titles and headlines, in various notices. *E.g.:*

⁹ Блох М.Я. Теоретическая грамматика английского языка. М.1984.

Telegram received *room* reserved for *week end*. (The text of a telegram.)
Conference adjourned until further notice. (The text of an announcement.) *Big red bus* rushes food to *strikers*. (The title of a newspaper article.)

The purposeful elliptical omission of the article in cases like that is quite obvious, and the omitted articles may easily be restored in the constructions in the simplest "back-directed" refilling procedures. Cf:

... —► *The telegram* is received, *a room* is reserved for *the week-end*. *The conference* is adjourned until further notice. *A big red bus* rushes food to *the strikers*.

Alongside of free elliptical constructions, there are cases of the semantically unspecified non-use of the article in various combinations of fixed type, such as prepositional phrases (*on fire, at hand, in debt, etc.*), fixed verbal collocations (*take place, make use, cast anchor, etc.*), descriptive coordinative groups and repetition groups (*man and wife, dog and gun, day by day, etc.*), and the like. These cases of traditionally fixed absence of the article are quite similar to the cases of traditionally fixed uses of both indefinite and definite articles (cf: *in a hurry, at a loss, have a look, give a start, etc.; in the main, out of the question, on the look-out, etc.*).

Outside the elliptical constructions and fixed uses, however, we know a really semantic absence of the article with the noun. It is this semantic absence of the article that stands in immediate meaningful correlation with the definite and indefinite articles as such.

As is widely acknowledged, the meaningful non-uses of the article are not homogeneous; nevertheless, they admit of a very explicit classification founded on the countability characteristics of the noun. Why countability characteristics? For the two reasons. The first reason is inherent in the nature of the noun itself: the abstract generalization reflected through the meaningful non-use of the article is connected with the suppression of the idea of the number in the noun. The second reason is inherent in the nature of the article: the indefinite

article which plays the crucial role in the semantic correlation in question reveals the meaning of oneness within its semantic base, having originated from the indefinite pronoun *one*, and that is why the abstract use of the noun naturally goes with the absence of the article.

The essential points of the said classification are three in number.

First. The meaningful absence of the article before the countable noun in the singular signifies that the noun is taken in an abstract sense, expressing the most general idea of the object denoted. This meaning, which may be called the meaning of "absolute generalization", can be demonstrated by inserting in the tested construction a chosen generalizing modifier (such as *in general, in the abstract, in the broadest sense*). Cf:

Law (in general) begins with the beginning of human society. *Steam-engine* (in general) introduced for locomotion a couple of centuries ago has now become obsolete.

Second. The absence of the article before the uncountable noun corresponds to the two kinds of generalization: both relative and absolute. To decide which of the two meanings is realized in any particular case, the described tests should be earned out alternately. Cf:

John laughed with *great bitterness* (that sort of bitterness: relative generalization). The subject of *health* (in general: absolute generalization) was carefully avoided by everybody. *Coffee* (a kind of beverage served at the table: relative generalization) or *tea*, please? *Coffee* (in general: absolute generalization) stimulates the function of the heart.

Articles modify nouns, and their presence always indicates that a noun will follow. They are located either directly before the noun or before one or more adjectives that also modify the noun. There are two **indefinite articles** (*a* and *an*) and one **definite article** (*the*).

There are several cases in which you should not precede a noun with an article:

- Before the names of languages, sports, and fields of study

- When the noun is modified by a **demonstrative pronoun** (Examples: *this, that, those, these*, etc.)
- When the noun is modified by a **possessive pronoun** (Examples: *my, his, her, its, their, your*, etc.)
- When the noun is modified by various other **quantity words** that indicate a noun will follow
(Examples: *all, another, each, every, many, much, some*, etc.)

Often, you can tell which article to use with a noun by answering the following questions in the order listed. To better understand this process of selecting the correct article, refer to the chart at the end of this handout.

A **proper noun** is the specific name of an individual person, place, or thing (or the specific name of several such individuals). (Examples: *John, Tokyo, UVSC*)

Use *the* before **plural proper nouns**.

(Examples: *the Smiths, the Rocky Mountains*) Use no article before **singular proper nouns**. (Examples: *John Smith, Mount Rushmore*)

A **common noun** is not a name, but a general group. (Examples: *person, city, college*) To decide if a common noun needs an article, you must decide if the noun is specific or general (next section).

Exceptions: Use *the* with the **proper noun** (name) of a historical event, historical period, highway, building, hotel, museum, river, ocean, sea, point on a globe (Examples: *the Equator* or *the East*), desert, forest, gulf, or peninsula. Only use *the* with the name of a country if the name is plural, as in *the Netherlands*, or if it is a phrase, such as *the Dominican Republic*.

Specific nouns refer to a specific member or to several specific members of a general category.

Normally, they require the definite article, *the*. (Example: *The dogs are ugly*. [Here, the word *dogs* refers to specific, individual animals.])

General nouns always refer to a general class of something, rather than to a specific member of a class. (Example: *Dogs are man's best friends*. [The word

Dogs refers to a class of animals, not to any specific animals.]) To decide if a general noun needs an article, determine whether it is countable.

(See next section.)

Note: Often when a specific noun is mentioned for the first time, it is treated like a general noun.

However, any time the noun is mentioned thereafter, the definite article (*the*) is used. (Example: *Yesterday morning, I bought **a book**. But it was not until evening that I was finally able to read **the book**.*)

Uncountable nouns cannot be numbered. (Examples: *jewelry, happiness, and dirt* [These words are uncountable, since it makes no sense to discuss *three jewelries, three happinesses, or three dirt*s.])

Generally, you should not precede uncountable nouns with articles.

Countable nouns refer to something that can be counted. (Examples: *baby, thought, and problem*). To determine if a countable noun needs an article, decide if it is plural or singular (next section).

Exceptions: Sometimes, an uncountable noun can be made a specific noun. In such cases, use the definite article *the*. This normally occurs (1) if the uncountable noun is modified by a phrase or clause that makes it more specific and limited or (2) if the uncountable noun refers to a specific portion, amount, or collection of the uncountable noun.

Example: John ate dirt. (The word *dirt* does not refer to any specific pile of dirt.)

Example: John scooped up some dirt with his shovel. Then, to my dismay, he ate the dirt. (The word *dirt* is preceded by *the* because the writer is referring to a specific pile of dirt.)

If the noun is **plural** (and also general), no article is needed.

If the noun is **singular**, an indefinite article (*a* or *an*) is needed.

Exceptions: A countable, singular noun may sometimes take the definite article (*the*) when it refers to a general group. (Example: *The cat is a great pet.* [*The cat* refers to the general group of all cats.])

Use “**an**” before a word that begins with a vowel sound.

Use “**a**” before a word that begins with a consonant sound.

Note that the choice is determined by the word directly after the article, even if the word is an adjective, rather than the noun. (Example: *An ugly dog* versus *a dog*)

Also, note that the choice is determined by the **sound** of the following word, not the written letter.

(Examples: *an hour*, *a uniform*, *a wonderful day*, *an FBI agent*)

The article *the* is always used in the following cases: before the word *same* and before an ordinal number. (Example: *the first child*).

CHAPTER II. FUNCTIONS AND THE USE OF ARTICLES IN ENGLISH.

2.1. THE USE OF ARTICLES IN ENGLISH

Use of articles with common nouns

Class nouns are used with the indefinite article:

1. When the speaker presents the object expressed by the noun as belonging to a certain class. In this case the indefinite article has the meaning of "кандайдир, канакадир, бир" in Uzbek.

*She has **a** watch of her own.*

*On the green surface **of** the lake **a** little boat, with white wings faintly fluttering, rocked in the dewy breeze. (Voynich)*

Close beside them grew **a** rose-bush covered with scarlet hips. (Voynich)

In the plural no article is used in this case. If the idea of number is implied the noun is preceded by the pronoun *some*.

I liked the room because there were flowers in it.

"I have brought you some flowers..." "I hate to wear flowers." (Voynich)

2. With a predicative noun, when the speaker states that the object denoted by the noun belongs to a certain class.

*Miss Sharp's father was **an** artist. (Thackeray)*

*"Is your brother an agreeable man, Peggotty?" "Oh, what **an** agreeable man he is!" (Dickens)*

*She works as **a** chemist. (Cronin)*

In the plural neither the article nor the pronoun *some* is used.

*They are **good** children, no doubt. (E. Bronte)*

"... they were business men when I was in the nursery." (Voynich)

After the conjunction *as* a predicative noun is often used without an article.

She was engaged as governess.

3. When the noun is used in a general sense. What is said **of** one representative **of** a class can be applied to all the representatives of the class. The article has the meaning of “every”.

A drowning man catches at a straw.

In the plural neither the article nor the pronoun *some* is used.

Real friends should have everything In common. (Wilde)

4. There are cases when the indefinite article preserves its old original meaning of 'one'.

A stitch in time saves nine.

*He had hardly spoken **a** word since they left Riccardo's door ... (Voynich)*

This meaning is generally found with:

(a) nouns denoting time, measure and weight.

A week or two passed. (Ch. Bronte)

*"I'll overtake you in **a** minute," said Godfrey. (Eliot)*

(b) The numerals *hundred, thousand, million* and the nouns *dozen, score*.

*He seems to have half **a** dozen languages at his finger-tips. (Voynich)*

With nouns in the plural *some* is used.

Oliver's sobs checked his utterance for some minutes. (Dickens)

The use of the definite article with class nouns.

Class nouns are used with the definite article:

1. When the noun denotes an object or objects which the speaker singles out from all the objects of a given class.

An object is singled out in the following cases:

(a) when the speaker and the hearer know what particular object is meant.

No special indication is necessary.

*How did you like **the** play? I have got **the** magazine.* Менда журнал бор (журнал менда).

Note. - It should be borne in mind that there is a difference between knowing what object is spoken about and knowing the object itself.

1) A. *I do not care to speak to **the** girl. I have never seen her.*

Won't you speak to her?

B. *But I do not know the girl either.*

2) A. *Who told you about it?*

B. *A girl.*

A. *What girl?*

B. *My sister.*

In the first dialogue the speaker and the hearer do not know the person at all, but they know whom they mean, so the definite article is used. In the second the speaker knows the person, but he presents her to the hearer merely as one of a class, so the indefinite article is used.

(b) when the speaker uses an attribute pointing out a particular object.

This is the house that Jack built.

(c) when the situation itself makes the object definite.

*The wedding looked dismal. **The** bride was too old and **the** bridegroom was too young. (Dickens)*

When an object is singled out from all the objects of a given class the definite article retains its demonstrative meaning, and the English use the definite article much oftener than the demonstrative pronouns *this* or *that*.¹⁰ Thus the Russian sentence *Дайте мне эту книгу* should be rendered in English by *Let me have the book*.

As a rule the definite article is not translated into Russian. However, there are cases when it must be rendered by *этом*.

You told me before you wished to be a governess; but, my dear, if you remember; I did not encourage **the** idea. (*Ch. Bronte*)

... я не одобрила эту мысль.

2. When the noun denotes a thing unique (*the sun, the moon, the universe*) or a class.

¹⁰ Каушанская В.Л. Грамматика английского языка. 1976

***The** sun was getting warmer. (Abrahams)*

***The** bourgeoisie is cowardly. (London)*

The indefinite article can be used when we mean a certain aspect in which the sun, moon and sky appear to us, a certain state of the sun, the moon, the sky. In this case an attribute is used.

A pearl-white moon smiles through the green trees. (Ch. Bronte)

3. With nouns used in a generic sense.

A noun used in a generic sense denotes a genus taken as a whole, a thing taken as a type, a genre.

***The** tiger has always had the reputation of being a man-eater.*

***The** telephone was invented in the 19th century.*

***The** tragedy and **the** comedy first appeared in Greece.*

When the noun *man* is used in a generic sense no article is used.

Silas felt that his trust in man had been cruelly destroyed. (Eliot)

When the noun *woman* is used in a generic sense it is used with the definite article or occasionally without an article.

*He had always been interested in that mysterious being - **the** woman. (Bennett)*

Woman is man's helpmate.

A noun used in a generic sense should not be confused with a noun used in a general sense.

A noun used in a general sense denotes an object regarded as an individual representative of a class.

A detective story helps to while away the time.

(Every or any detective story is meant here.)

A noun in a generic sense denotes the whole class.

*Conan Doyle is a master of **the** detective story.*

(The detective story is regarded here as a certain genre.)

Additional notes on the use of the definite article

The definite article is used:

(1) with nouns modified by adjectives in the superlative degree.

Miss Tox had **the** softest voice that ever was heard. (*Dickens*)

(2) with nouns in word-groups the first component of which is *some, many, none, most* and the second a noun with the preposition of.

Most of **the** gentlemen looked both angry and uncomfortable. (*Voynich*)

(3) with nouns modified by the pronoun *same* and the adjectives *wrong* (не тот), *right* (тот), *very* (именно тот, тот самый).

*To all invitations he replied with **the** same courteous and positive refusal.* (*F*)

*I do wish we had not opened the door of **the** wrong room.* (*Jerome*) "*Ah! Mr. Burton!*" exclaimed the Director, "***the** very person I wanted.*" "... именно тот (как раз тот) человек, который мне нужен". Signora Grassini hated Gemma for **the** very expression of her face. Синьора Грассини ненавидела Джемму за самое выражение ее лица.

(4) with substantivized adjectives and participles partially substantivized adjectives).

Only **the** simple and **the** humble were abroad at that early hour. (*Bennett*)

Grey conveyed some of his love of the beautiful to Cowperwood. (*Dreiser*)

The listeners noted something beyond **the** usual in his voice. (*Galsworthy*)

Note.-With countable abstract nouns the use of the articles is the same as with class nouns.

It is a capital idea if only one could carry it out. (*Voynich*)

The use of articles with class nouns modified by attributes.

The definite article is used when a noun is modified by an attribute which shows that a particular object is meant, i.e. by an attribute which might be called a particularizing attribute. A particularizing attribute is used to single out an object from all the objects of the class, to point out one particular object or group of

objects.¹¹ The use of a particularizing attribute implies the idea of 'тот, который'; 'ИМЕННО ТОТ, ЭТОТ.

A particularizing attribute can be expressed by an o/-phrase or an attributive clause. It is always used in post-position.

*He knocked at **the** door of a very neat house. (Marryat)*

***The** letters that I have here have come to me quite by accident. (Dreiser)*

A particularizing attribute should not be confused with a descriptive attribute.

A descriptive attribute is used to describe an object or to give some additional information about it.

*In a fortnight I got **a** long letter, which I considered odd. (E. Bronte)*

*The post on her left was occupied by Mr. Erskine of Treadley, **an** old gentleman of considerable charm and culture. (Wilde)*

The use of a descriptive attribute does not affect the use of the article. The same articles would be used if there were no attribute whatever.

*One day in January he called at the seminary to return **a** book which he had borrowed. (Voynich)*

*I have just spoken to **the** woman, who seems to have changed her mind. (Bennett)*

*They went side by side, hand in hand, silently toward **the** hedge, where the May flower, both pink and white, was in full bloom. (Galsworthy)*

In the first example the indefinite article is used with the noun *book* because the object denoted by it is presented as belonging to a class. The noun *woman* is used with the definite article because the speaker and the hearer know what particular person is meant. The noun *hedge* is used with the definite article because the situation makes the object definite.

Nouns of materials

With nouns of material used in a general sense, when a certain material as such is meant, no article is used.

¹¹ Каушанская В.Л. Грамматика английского языка. 1976

Honey is wholesome.

*On hearing what had happened, she (Katie) ran for warm water...
(Voynich)*

When a definite part of the substance is meant (when the noun is modified by a particularizing attribute or is made definite by the situation), the definite article is used.

*Pettinger gulped down a glass of **the** sheny which Cornelius had finally brought.
(Heym)*

***The** meat was good and White Fang was hungry. (London)*

When an indefinite part of the substance is meant, *some* is used.

We took some bread and cheese with us, and got some goat's milk up there on the pasture. (Voynich)

Nouns of material denoting different sorts of material are countables and the articles are used according to the general use of articles with class nouns.

A pleasure to give a good wine to a young woman who looked so well. (Galsworthy)

This use is very rare.

Abstract nouns

When abstract nouns are used in a general sense, no article is used.

While there is life there is hope.

When abstract nouns are modified by a particularizing attribute or when the situation makes the idea definite, they are used with the definite article.

*He (Cowperwood) was **the** courage and force of his father, **the** spirit and opportunity of his brothers, **the** hope of his children, the dignity and significance of the Cowperwood name. (Dreiser)*

Last night I heard Carmen and enjoyed the music.

Note 1. - It should be borne in mind that abstract nouns modified by an attribute in preposition are used without articles unless they are modified by particularizing attributes; *English literature, Russian art, Soviet music.*

Note 2 - The abstract noun *weather* is never used with the indefinite article.

What fine weather! It is burning weather. (Ch. Bronte)

When the noun *weather* is used in a general sense, the definite article is used.

*There are people who say that **the** weather can influence people's mood. (Bennett)*

Abstract nouns can be used with the indefinite article. In this case the abstract noun denotes a certain kind (оттенок) of a quality, feeling, state, etc. The noun nearly always has a descriptive attribute.¹²

How clever you are, Mr. Hopper. You have a cleverness quite of your own. (Wilde)

In her eyes there was an eagerness, which could hardly be seen without delight. (Austen)

The indefinite article is used with the nouns *period, population, distance, height, salary*, etc. followed by *of + numeral + noun*.

Simpson was out of the city for a period of ten days. (Dreiser)

Use of articles with proper nouns

Names of persons.

1. Names of persons are used without articles.

Sarie looked at Lanny and Celia. (Abrahams)

2. Names denoting the whole family are used with the definite article.

The Dashwoods were now settled at Berton. (Austen)

3. When names of persons are used to denote a representative of a family, the indefinite article is used.

"Florence will never, never, never be a Dombey," said Mrs. Chick. (Dickens)

4. Names of persons modified by a particularizing attribute are used with the definite article.

You're not the Andrew Manson I married. (Cronin)

¹² Каушанская В.Л. Грамматика английского языка. 1976

The tall blond man of forty is not much changed in feature from the Godfrey Cass of six-and-twenty. (Eliot)

5. Names of persons used as common nouns take the article according to the general rule on the use of articles.

Swithin smiled and nodding at Bosinney said, "Why, you are quite a Monte Cristo." (Galsworthy)

Mozart has been called the Raphael of music.

6. Nouns denoting military ranks and titles such as *academician, professor, doctor* (both a profession and a title), *count, lord*, etc. followed by names of persons do not take the article. In such cases only the proper noun is stressed: *Colonel 'Brown, Doctor' Strong*.

Common nouns denoting professions followed by names of persons are generally used with the definite article. In this case both nouns are stressed.

The painter Gainsborough has left many fine pictures.

Note. However if the name of a person is nearly always used with the common noun denoting his profession, the word group becomes an indivisible unit and the article may be omitted: Judge Brown.

7. Nouns expressing relationship followed by names of persons do not take the article: *Aunt Polly, Uncle James*.

She turned to Cousin Clixam. (Bennett)

Nouns expressing relationship not followed by a proper noun and the nouns *nurse, cook, baby* do not take the article when used by members of the family.

"I'd like to see Mother," said Emily. (Galsworthy)

If other people's relations are meant, the article is used.

The son is as clever as the father.

8. The use of articles with names of persons modified by adjectives is varied.

In most cases no article is used with names of persons modified by the adjectives *old, young, poor, dear, little, honest, lazy*.

... she is the widow of poor Giovanni Bolla ... (Voynich)

He saw that old Chapin wanted to moralize a little. (Dreiser)

When modified by other adjectives and participles names of persons take the definite article.

He thought Amelia worthy even of the brilliant George Osborne. (Thackeray)

The astonished Tom could not say a word.

9. Names of persons modified by the adjective *certain* are used with the indefinite article.

I heard it from a certain Mr. Brown.

Geographical names.

1. Geographical names like all the other proper nouns are used without articles: *England, France, Moscow, London.*

The same holds good when a geographical name is modified by an attribute in preposition: *Soviet Russia, North America, Latin America, Central Asia.*

Note.-The word groups *the Soviet Union, the United States* are always used with the definite article.

2. Geographical names modified by a particularizing attribute are used with the definite article.

The Philadelphia into which Frank Algernon Cowperwood was born was a city of two hundred and fifty thousand and more. (Dreiser)

3. With names of oceans, seas, rivers the definite article is used: *the Pacific Ocean (the Pacific), the Black Sea, the Thames, the Ohio River.*

4. Names of lakes do not take the article if the word *lake* is used, which is nearly always the case; if it is not mentioned we find the definite article: *Lake Winder mere, Lake Ontario, the Ontario.*

5. With names of mountain chains the definite article is used: *the Urals, the Alps.* With names of mountain peaks no article is used: *Elbrus, Everest.*

6. With names of groups of islands the definite article is used: *the Hebrides, the Bermudas.*

With names of single islands there is no article: *Madagascar*.

7. The names of the following towns, countries and provinces are used with the definite article: *the Hague, the Netherlands, the West Indies, the Ruhr, the Riviera, the Crimea, the Ukraine, the Caucasus, the Congo*. *The Lebanon* is generally used with the definite article, occasionally without the article.

8. Names of streets and squares are used without articles: *Oxford Street, Wall Street, Trafalgar Square, Russell Square*.

There are a few exceptions: *the High Street, the Strand*.

Names of hotels, ships, newspapers and magazines.

Names of hotels, ships, newspapers and magazines are used with the definite article.

And he added that the Independent had accepted and was about to publish two poems which he had been able to write because of her. (Dreiser)

The three men came to the turning at the corner of the Grosvenor Hotel. (Hichens)

Names of cardinal points.

With the names of cardinal points the definite article is used: *the North, the South, the West, the East*.

In the expressions *from East to West, from North to South* no article is used.

Names of months and days.

As a rule names of months and days are used without articles.

May is a spring month.

My day off is Friday.

When these nouns are modified by a particularizing attribute the definite article is used.

The May of 1949 will always rest in my memory.

Miss Trotwood came on the Friday when David was born.

Names of days are used with the indefinite article when we mean one of many Mondays, Fridays, etc.

*Robinson Crusoe found his servant on **a** Friday.*

*I do not remember exactly when he came from Moscow, but I am sure it was on **a** Monday.*

Names of months are used with the indefinite article when modified by a descriptive attribute.

A cold May is the usual thing in Leningrad.

The use of articles with nouns modified by proper nouns.

If a noun is modified by a proper noun in the genitive case no article is used.

I met Robert's father.

A noun modified by a proper noun in the common case is used with the definite article.

*Last summer I visited **the** Tretyakov Gallery.*

*The sailor led him back to the little irregular square by **the** Medici Palace. (Voynich)*

2.2. THE USE OF ARTICLES IN SYNTACTIC RELATIONS

The use of articles with predicative nouns.

As stated above a predicative noun is used with the indefinite article if the speaker states that the object denoted by the noun belongs to a certain class.

If a predicative noun is modified by a particularizing attribute, the definite article is used.¹³

*He is **the** student you wanted to speak to.*

If a predicative noun denotes a post which can be occupied by one person at a time, either no article or the definite article is used.

Mr. Henderson is manager, not under-manager any longer. (Lindsay)

Montanelli was director of the theological seminary at Pisa.

Comrade N. is the dean of our faculty.

¹³ Ганшина М. А. English Grammar. М. 1975 pp. 321-386

No article is used with predicative nouns after the verbs *to turn, to commence, to appoint, to elect*.

Compeyson turned traitor.

Компейсон соткин булиб чикди.

Shakespeare commenced actor.

They appointed him head-teacher.

A predicative noun sometimes has an adjectival character, especially when it is followed by the adverb *enough*. In this case no article is used.

Surely Bolla isn't fool enough to believe that sort of stuff? (Voynich)

When a predicative noun in an adverbial clause of concession is placed at the head of the clause, no article is used.

Child as he was, David understood that Creakle was an ignorant man.

The nouns *son* and *daughter* used predicatively take the definite article when modified by an of-phrase, though there may be several sons and daughters in the family.

*Lomonosov was **the** son of a fisherman. Becky Sharp was **the** daughter of an artist.*

The use of articles with nouns in apposition.

Nouns in apposition and nouns forming part of an apposition are used with the indefinite article if the speaker states that the object expressed by the noun in apposition belongs to a certain class.

I want to introduce you to Comrade B., a great friend of mine.

In the plural no article is used.

I want to introduce you to Comrades B. and D., great friends of mine.

Nouns in apposition or nouns forming part of an apposition are used with the definite article if they are modified by a particularizing attribute.

*Comrade B., **the** student you have mentioned, has come.*

If the noun denotes a well-known person or work of art, the definite article is generally used.

Pushkin, the great Russian poet, died in 1837.

Hamlet, the immortal tragedy by Shakespeare, was written in the first years of the 17th century.

But if the person or the work of art is not widely known the indefinite article is used.

Pericles, a comedy by Shakespeare, is hardly ever staged.

No article is generally used with a noun in apposition when the apposition expresses a post which can be occupied by one person at a time. Occasionally the definite article is used.

Professor Petrov, director (the director) of the Medical Institute, is going to deliver a lecture.

Comrade Smirnov, dean (the dean) of the English department, has left for Moscow.

Class nouns used in address take no article.

*Come downstairs, **child**. (Voynich)*

Place of the article.

The usual place of the article is before the noun if it is not modified by an attribute; if the noun is modified by an attribute, the article is placed before the latter.

However, there are cases when the article follows the attribute.

1. The definite article follows the attribute expressed by the pronouns *both, all*.

Both the stories were interesting. All the stories were interesting.

2. The indefinite article follows the attribute expressed by an adjective after *so, too, as*.

Mr. Pickwick could not resist so tempting an opportunity of studying human nature. (Dickens)

You compel me to tell you that this is too serious a matter to be treated in such a fashion. (Dreiser)

It was as black a house inside as outside. (Dickens)

3. The indefinite article follows *quite, such, what* (*what* in exclamatory sentences).

She is quite a child.

I've never heard of such a thing.

What a wonderful piece of luck!

The indefinite article either precedes or follows *rather*.

This enquiry involved the respected lady in rather a delicate position.

(*Dickens*)

They stop and interchange a rather heated look. (Dickens)

Special difficulties in the use of articles

The use of articles with the nouns *day, night, morning, evening*.

The nouns *day, night, morning, evening* are used without articles:

(a) if *day* and *morning* mean 'light' and *night* and *evening* mean 'darkness', or if they denote a certain part of the day.

The sun had gone and night had come. (Abrahams)

Day is meant for work, night for sleep.

It was evening. The river was before them. (Dreiser)

(b) in the expressions *by day, at night, from morning till night*.

It is easier to work by day than at night.

The definite article is used when these nouns are modified by a particularizing attribute or when the situation makes them definite.

He will never forget the day when he met her.

The night was warm and beautifully still. (*Voynich*)

The definite article is also used in the expressions: *in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening*.

The indefinite article is used when the noun is modified by a descriptive attribute.

I spent a sleepless night.

When the nouns *morning* and *evening* are modified by the adjectives *early* and *late*, no articles are used because these adjectives do not describe the morning or night, but only show the time.

It was early morning when the train pulled into the little siding.
(Abrahams)

The use of articles with names of seasons.

Names of seasons are used without articles if they show a certain time of the year.

It was spring. I like spring.

The definite article is used when these nouns are modified by a particularizing attribute or when the situation makes them definite.

It happened in the spring of 1930

The spring was cold and rainy.

The indefinite article is used when these nouns are modified by a descriptive attribute.

*It was **a** cold spring.*

When names of seasons are modified by **the** adjectives *early* **or** *late*, no articles are used.

It was early spring.

The use of articles with the nouns *school, college, bed, prison, jail.*

The nouns *school, college, bed, prison, jail* are used without an article when they lose their concrete meaning and express the purpose for which the objects denoted by these nouns serve.

When these nouns denote concrete objects the articles are used according to the general principle, (a) *School, college.*

to be at school - to be a schoolboy (schoolgirl)

to go to school - to be a schoolboy (schoolgirl)

to be at college - to be a student of a college

to leave school - to finish or drop one's studies

School begins at five.

She went to College in the North. (*Oow and D'Usseau*)

His history since he left school had been indicated in the last page.
(*Thackeray*)

It was at seventeen that he decided to leave school.
to go to the school - not as a pupil (the building is meant)
to leave the school - to leave the building

Mother went to the school yesterday to attend a parents' meeting. She left the school at 7 o'clock.

She worked at a school in Siberia,

(c) *Prison, jail.*

to be in prison (in jail) - to be a prisoner to be sent to prison as a prisoner
to be put in prison as a prisoner

Mr. Dorrit was in prison many years. Mr. Dorrit was sent to prison for debt.

The last they had heard of him was that he was in jail for having killed a person in a fight. (Abrahams)

to be in the prison - not as a prisoner (the building is meant)
to go to the prison - not as a prisoner (the building is meant)

*Mr. Don-it's family lived in **the** prison.*

The prison proper dated from 1822. (Dreiser)

The use of articles with the noun *town*.

The noun *town* when used with prepositions does not take an article:

- (a) when we mean the nearest town (if we live in the country) or the town we live in.

You cannot go to town tomorrow. (Austen)

What can you have to do in town...? (Austen)

- (b) when the noun *town* is opposed to the noun *country*.

He was not used to country life, having spent twenty years in town.
Otherwise the noun *town* is used with the definite or indefinite article.

I want to go to the town where I was born.

The use of articles with the names of meals.

Names of meals are used without articles.

When did you have dinner?

Is dinner ready?

Mother is cooking dinner.

While they were at breakfast, the letters were brought in (Austen)

I have finished breakfast, ring the bell. (Ch. Bronte)

The definite article is used when the nouns are modified by a particularizing attribute or when the situation makes them definite.

The dinner we had to day was very substantial.

The dinner was a success.

The indefinite article is used if the name of a meal is modified by a descriptive attribute.

After a hearty breakfast the four gentlemen sallied forth to walk to Gravesend. (Dickens)

The use of articles with names of languages.

Names of languages when they are not followed by the noun language are used without articles.

She knows English.

Note. the peculiar use of the definite article in: (1) *It is a translation from the English (the French, etc.),* (2) *What is the English (the French, etc.) for “сочна”?* The definite article is used if the noun is modified by a particularizing attribute:

The English of America differs from English of England.

When the noun *language* is mentioned the definite article is used: *the English language, the German language.*

Use of articles with nouns modified by certain adjectives, pronouns and numerals.

Most

- (a) Most + adjective.

The definite article is used when most serves to form the superlative degree of an adjective.

*This is **the most** interesting chapter in the book.*

The use of the indefinite article shows that a high degree of a quality is meant. *Most* has the same meaning as *very, exceedingly*. Caroline found that the old maid had been a most devoted daughter and sister. (Ch. Bronte)

Note. Occasionally the form of the superlative degree does not express comparison, but a high degree of a quality.

*He listened with **the most** profound attention.*

*He listened with **the** deepest attention.*

- (b) *Most* + *of* + noun.

When definite people or things are meant the noun is used with the definite article and *most* is followed by the preposition *of*.

Most of the flower in the garden were planted by the schoolchildren.

Most of the gentlemen looked both angry and uncomfortable. (Voynich)

When say *most*, not *most of the*, when we do not mean definite people or things. The noun is used in a general sense.

Most flowers smell sweet.

Few, a few the few; a little, the little.

Few means “мало”, it has a negative meaning.

A few means “несколько”, it has a positive meaning.

The few means “те немногие (которые)”.

He was a very good man. There are few like him in the world today.

(Abrahams)

He left after a few moments. (Dreiser)

You need not fear to hear the few remaining words we have to say.

(Dickens)

Little means “мало”, it has a negative meaning.

A little means “некоторое количество”, it has a positive meaning.

The little means “небольшое количество (которое)”.

We can't go skiing today. There is too little snow.

We have a little time. Let us take a walk in the garden.

Don't waste the little time you have.

Two, the two; three, the three, etc.

Two means “два”.

The two means “оба, те два”

Two students entered the room.

The two friends travelled together.

The two books you lent me proved very interesting.

The second, a second.

The second is an ordinal numeral meaning “второй”.

The second attempt proved more successful than the first.

A second means “another, one more”. Having eaten the gruel, Oliver asked for a second portion.

In *the third, a third, the fourth, a fourth*, etc. we see the same difference in the meaning.

He made an experiment which proved his theory.

He made a second, a third, a fourth experiment with the same results.

A second time means “once more”.

I rang the bell, but nobody answered it, so I had to ring a second time.

Another, the other.

The pronoun *another* has two meanings:

(a) “какой-либо другой”.

Give me another pen, I don't like this one.

(b) “еще один”,

I am thirsty; I should like another cup of tea.

The other means “определенный другой”.

There are two books here, take one and I'll take the other.

Last, the last.

Nouns modified by the adjective *last* are always used with the definite article except in the expressions *last month, last year, last week, last summer (winter, autumn, spring)*.

The last word remained with George.

Last summer, in Switzerland, he was quite well. (Voynich)

Next, the next.

Next means “будущий” when referring to time: *next month, next week*.

The next means “следующий”: *the next room, at the next lesson*.

Next time means “в следующий раз”.

In reference to time viewed from the past both *next* and *the next* mean “следующий”.

We spent a fortnight in Kiev. The next week was spent in Odessa (or: Next week was spent in Odessa)

A number, the number.

A number of means “many”. It is rendered in Russian by много, ряд.

The number means “число, количество”.

His father and a number of his cronies were in the dining-room. (Dreiser)

The number of mistakes he makes is startling.

Omission of the Article

Sometimes the article is not used where we naturally expect to find it in accordance with the rules. No change of meaning is observed in these cases.

The article is often omitted in newspaper headings, telegrams, in stage directions.

Gas Blast Kills Woman. (Daily Worker)

Girl Gymnast Keeps Title (Moscow News)

The article is often omitted with homogeneous members closely connected with each other and joined by the conjunction and. In most cases they go in pairs.

The breakfast was taken away, and that meal over, it was the general custom of uncle and niece to separate. (Ch. Bronte).

2.3. COMMUNICATIVE AND RELATIVITY FUNCTIONS OF THE ARTICLE IN ENGLISH

Passing to the situational estimation of the article uses, we must point out that the basic principle of their differentiation here is not a direct consideration of their meanings, but disclosing the informational characteristics that the article conveys to its noun in concrete contextual conditions. Examined from this angle, the definite article serves as an indicator of the type of nounal information which is presented as the “facts already known”, i.e. as the starting point of the communication. In contrast to this, the indefinite article or the meaningful absence of the article introduces the central communicative nounal part of the sentence, i.e. the part rendering the immediate informative data to be conveyed from the speaker to the listener. In the situational study of syntax the starting point of the communication is called its “theme”, while the central informative part is called its “rheme”.¹⁴

In accord with the said situational functions, the typical syntactic position of the noun modified by the definite article is the “thematic” subject, while the typical syntactic position of the noun modified by the indefinite article or by the meaningful absence of the article is the “rhematic” predicative. Cf.:

The day (subject) was drawing to a close, *the busy noises of the city* (subject) were dying down. How to handle the situation was a *big question* (predicative). The sky was *pure gold* (predicative) above the setting sun.

¹⁴ Кобрина Н.А. An English grammar. М. 1985 p. 65-67

It should be noted that in many other cases of syntactic use, i.e. non=subjective or non-predicative, the articles reflect the same situational functions.¹⁵ This can be probed by reducing the constructions in question on re-arrangement lines to the logically “canonized” link-type constructions. Cf.:

If you would care to verify *the incident* (object), pray do so. → If you would care *the incident* (subject) to be verified, pray have it verified. I am going to make a *rather strange request* (object) to you. → What I am going to make is a *rather strange request* (predicative) to you.

You are talking *nonsense* (object), lad. → What you are talking, lad, is *nonsense* (predicative)

Another essential contextual-situational characteristic of the article is their immediate connection with the two types of attributes to the noun. The first type is a “limiting” attribute, which requires the definite article before the noun, the second type is a “descriptive” attribute, which requires the indefinite article or the meaningful absence of the article before the noun. Cf.:

The events *chronicled in this narrative* took place some four years ago. (A limiting attribute) She was a person of *strong will iron self-control*. (a descriptive attribute) He listened to her story with *grave and kindly* attention. (a descriptive attribute).

The role of descriptive attributes in the situational aspect of articles is particularly worthy of note in the constructions of syntactic “convergencies”, i.e. chained attributive – repetitional phrases modifying the same referent from the different angles. Cf.: My longing for *a house, a fine and beautiful house, such a house I could never hope* to have, flowered into life again.

We have now come to the third stage of the undertaken analysis of the English articles, namely, to their consideration in the light of the oppositional theory. The oppositional examination of any grammatically relevant set of lingual objects is of especial importance from the point of view of the systemic

¹⁵ Блох М.Я. Теоретическая грамматика английского языка. М. 1984.

conception of language, since oppositions constitute the basis of the structure of grammatical paradigms.

Bearing in mind the facts established at the two previous stage of observation, it is easy to see that oppositionally, the article determination of the noun should be divided into two binary correlations connected with each other hierarchically.

The opposition of the higher level operates in the whole system of articles. It contrasts the definite article with the noun against the two forms of article determination of the noun, i.e. the indefinite article and the meaningful absence of the article. In this opposition the definite article should be interpreted as the strong member by virtue of its identifying and individualizing function, while the other forms of article determination should be interpreted as the weak member, i.e. the member that leaves the feature in question (“identification”) unmarked.

The opposition of the lower level operates within the article subsystem that forms the weak member of the upper opposition. This opposition contrasts the two types of generalization, i.e. the relative generalization distinguishing its strong member (the indefinite article plus the meaningful absence of the article as its analogue with uncountable nouns and nouns in the plural) and the absolute, or “abstract” generalization distinguishing the weak member of the opposition (the meaningful absence of the article).

It is the oppositional description of the English articles that involves the interpretation of the article non-use as the zero form of the article, since the opposition of the positive exponent of the feature to the negative exponent of the feature (i.e. its absence) realizes an important part of the integral article determination semantics.¹⁶ As for the heterogeneity of functions displayed by the absence of the article, it by no means can be taken as a ground for denying the relevance or expedience of introducing the notion of zero in the article

¹⁶ Блох М.Я. Теоретическая грамматика английского языка. М. 1984.

system. As a matter of fact, each of the two essential meanings of this dialectically complex form is clearly revealed in its special oppositional correlation and, consequently, corresponds to the really existing lingual facts irrespective of the name given to the form by the observer.

The best way of demonstrating the actual oppositional value of the article on the immediate textual material is to contrast them in syntactically equivalent conditions in pairs. *Cf.*: the examples given below.¹⁷

Identical nounal positions for the pair “the definite article – the indefinite article”: The *train* hooted (the train). – A *train* hooted (some train).

Correlative nounal positions for the pair “the definite article – the absence of the article”: I’m afraid the *oxygen* is out (our supply of oxygen). – *Oxygen* is necessary for life (oxygen in general, life in general).

Correlative nounal positions for the pair “the indefinite article – the absence of the article”: Be careful, there is a *puddle* under your feet (a kind of puddle). – Be careful, there is *mud* on the ground (as different from clean space).

Finally, correlative nounal positions for the easily neutralized pair “the zero article of relative generalization – the zero article of absolute generalization”: *New information* should be gathered on this subject (some information). – *Scientific information* should be gathered systematically in all fields of human knowledge (information in general).

On the basis of the oppositional definition of the article it becomes possible to explicate the semantic function of the article determination of nouns for case where the inherent value of the article is contrasted against its contrary semantic value of the noun or the nounal collocation.

In particular, the indefinite article may occasionally be used with a nounal collocation of normally individualizing meaning, e.g.:

¹⁷ Allen W. S. Living English Structure. 1980 p. 18-26

Rodney Harrington laughed out loud as he caught *a last glimpse of Allison Mackenzie and Norman Page* in his rear-vision mirror (Gr. Metalious). After all, *you've got a best side and a worst side of yourself* and it's no good showing the worst side and harping on it. (A. Christie).

Conversely, the definite article may occasionally be used with a nounal collocation of normally descriptive meaning, e.g.: Ethel still went in the evenings to bathe in *the silent pool* (S. Maugham).

The indefinite article may occasionally be used with a unique referent noun, e.g.: Ted Latimer from beyond her murmured: "The sun here isn't *a real sun*" (A. Christie)

The zero article may occasionally be used with an ordinary concrete noun the semantic nature of which stands, as it were, in sharp contradiction to the idea of uncountable generalization, e.g.: The glasses had a habit of slipping down her button nose which did not have enough *bridge* to hold them up (S. M. Desney). He went up a well-kept drive to a modern house with a square roof and a good deal of *window* (A. Christie)

In all these and similar cases, by virtue of being correlated with semantic elements of contrary nature, the inherent categorical meanings of the articles appear, as it were, in their original, pure quality. Having no environmental support, the articles become intensely self-dependent in the expression of their categorical semantics, and against the alien contextual background, traces of transposition can be seen in their use.

Having established the functional value of articles in oppositional estimation, we can now, in broader systemic contraposition, probe the correlation of the meanings of articles with the meanings of functional determiners. As a result of this observation, within the system of the determiners two separate subsets can be defined, one of which is centered around the definite article with its individualizing semantics (*this – these, that – those, my, our,*

your, his, her, its, their), and the other one around the indefinite article with its generalizing semantics (*another, some, any*).

But unhappy the *wife* wasn't listening. – But unhappily *his wife* wasn't listening. *The whispering* voices caught the attention of the guards. – *Those whispering voices* caught their attention. What could *a woman* do in a situation like that? – What could *any woman* do in that sort of situation? At least I saw *interest* in her eyes. – At least I saw *some interest* in her eyes. Not *a word* had been pronounced about the terms of the document. – *No word* had been pronounced about those terms.

The demonstration of the organic connection between the articles and semi-notional determiners, in its turn, makes it possible to disclose the true function of the grammatical use of articles with proper nouns, e.g.:

“This”, said Froelich, “is the *James Walker* who wrote ‘The Last of the Old Lords’” (M. Bradbury). Cf.: This is *the same James Walker*. I came out to Iraq with *a Mrs. Kelsey* (A. Christie). Cf.: The woman was *a certain Mrs. Kelsey*. It was like seeing a *Vesuvius* at the height of its eruption. Cf.: The sight looked to us like *another Vesuvius*. “I prophesy *a wet August*,” said Old Moore Abinger (M. Dickens). Cf.: Next August will be a wet month, unlike *some other Augusts* in retrospect.

In the exemplified grammatical uses transpositional features are revealed similar to those the article acquires when used with a noun characterized by a contrary semantic base. On the other hand, the analysis of these case clearly stamps the traditional proper name combinations with embedded articles, both of the onomastic set (*Alexander the Great*, etc.) and the toponymic set (*The Hague*, etc.) as lexicalized collocations that only come into contact with periphery of grammar.

The data obtained show that the English noun, besides the variable categories of number and case, distinguished also the category of determination expressed by the article paradigm of three grammatical forms: the definite, the

indefinite, the zero. The paradigm is generalized for the whole system of proper nouns. Various cases of asymmetry in the realization of this paradigm (such as the article determination of certain nouns of the types *singularia tantum* and *pluralia tantum*), similar to, and in connection with the expression of the category of number, are balanced by suppletive collocations. *Cf.*: a progress – a kind of progress, some progress – the progress; news – an item of news – the news, etc.

The semi-notional determiners used with nouns in the absence of articles, expose the essential article meanings as in-built in their semantic structure.

Thus, the status of the combination of the article with the noun should be defined as basically analytical, the article construction as such being localized by its segmental properties between the free syntactic combination of words (the upper bordering level) and the combination of a grammatical affix with a notional stem in the morphological composition of an indivisible word (the lower bordering level). The article itself is a special type of grammatical auxiliary.

CHAPTER III. The problems related to teaching Articles to A2 level students

3.1 Approaches to teach Articles for low levels

Teaching the articles of English as any EFL instructor knows, can be a complicated procedure. Often low level students encounter exceptions for the given rules: why do English speakers say the flu but not the headache or the United Kingdom but not the Canada? Even when students do understand article usage, errors can still appear after years of study. Teaching the article system of English to language learners can seem like an insurmountable task.

However, being informed about the various perspectives on both article usage and pedagogy can help instructors begin to make some sense of this complicated system. The more options instructors have for conceptualizing and presenting articles to their students, the better equipped they will be to help a wide variety of students with different levels of English proficiency and learning needs. In this paper, I will present a variety of options for conceptualizing article pedagogy and usage. My purpose here is not to argue for the advancement of one theory over another. Instead, I wish merely to raise awareness of the varied ways that exist for understanding articles and discuss their pedagogical implications.

Two main general approaches to article pedagogy exist. On the one hand, some theorists believe that article pedagogy should focus on form. Others, most notably Pica (1983), believe that article pedagogy should focus on a communicative approach. Both approaches have valid claims.

Proponents of the communicative approach claim that most article mistakes are insignificant for communicative purposes. Even some proponents of more form-

based approaches, such as Master (1994), did acknowledge article usage rarely hinders oral communication. Master gave an example of a waitress who placed a slice of pie on the order counter and told her cook to “make a pie hot”. In this instance, although the waitress did not use the correct grammar, there can be no doubt of her meaning. In oral discourse, articles are usually not necessary for comprehension.

Pica (1983) also noted that the common patterns taught in English language courses are not typically demonstrated in actual discourse. In one study, participants responding to the question “Can you tell me where I can find a drugstore?” never used the to name that place again. Instead, the respondents used words such as it and one as well as synonyms or forms of the proper noun. Pica (1983) concluded, “patterns of article use revealed in the natural data could not be correctly or completely described by the rules of article usage presented in the instructional materials”. According to such an approach, patterns of natural usage should be explicitly presented to students. Pica suggested using recordings of restaurant dialogues and other communicative situations and asking students to analyze these recordings for article usage.

A final objection of proponents of the communicative approach is the presentation of rules governing article usage. So many rules and exceptions to these rules exist, and students cannot possibly learn all of them. Pica even claimed that instruction might not influence acquisition of articles; in one study she found that explicit instruction did not facilitate acquisition of the article a because the grammatical structure was too difficult as stated in Master (1994). Instead, Pica and other proponents of the communicative approach believe that students will gain a mastery of articles by developing awareness of article usage in communicative contexts.

Those who favour an approach focused on form criticise communicative approaches for reliance on exposure to the use of articles in communicative contexts. Master (1994) noted that articles such as the and a, because they are not stressed in conversation, can be very difficult for non-native speakers to distinguish. This results in the speaker either ignoring articles completely or using them randomly. Avoiding such mistakes will become even more important when the learner begins to write.

Overall, it is important to remember that such approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Indeed, the two approaches might be viewed on a continuum, with communicative methods such as the natural approach at one end of the continuum and the translation method at the opposite end. Knowing the advantages and drawbacks of each focus, though, might help instructors know where on the continuum they should situate their pedagogy for a particular context.

Just as knowledge of more general approaches to teaching articles can be useful, so can knowledge of more specific schemas or conceptualizations of the article system. Ways of viewing articles as a system vary widely. A few schemas include some in their treatment of articles, while others ignore some in its capacity as an article. Others present article usage as a complex array of choices, while some claim that article usage can be explained by one feature. Basic schemas might be applicable to present to beginning learners or as an explanation for a certain error, while more complicated schemas will be more appropriate at advanced levels.

Such a schema illustrates several rules of article usage that beginning students might find useful. For example, the chart shows that singular countable nouns must

always take an article. It also shows that plural countable and uncountable nouns cannot be used with a/an. This schema might be helpful in explaining why the following sentence is incorrect: “Change takes a long time”. Of course, this schema will not explain when a vs the should be used. To explain more complicated usage rules, a more complex schema is necessary.

Quirk and Greenbaum, however, did present a basic schema that provides a simple explanation of when the various articles should be used. A valuable facet of this schema is that it includes some; many other sources consider some to be a determiner.

This schema shows that article usage varies depending on the type of reference. As Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) explained, the definite article is used for all noun classes for definite specific references. With indefinite specific reference, a is used with singular count nouns while the zero article or some is used with non-count or plural nouns. The schema also illustrates that the, a, and the zero article can all be used to indicate generic reference. Standwell (1997) stated that English does not permit the use of the definite article in the plural in the generic sense. It is correct to say: Horses are useful animals, but not The horses are useful animals.

One interesting theoretical schema for viewing article usage came from Hewson (1972). He suggested that the article system has a basic contrast or binary; the difference between the indefinite and definite article is the direction of movement towards the general or the particular. In other words, a/an, because it is introductory and singular, signals a movement from general mention to particular mention (Mizuno 1999):

A table is a useful article of furniture. (general)

A table stands in the corner of the room. (specific)

The, because of its anaphoric quality, begins a movement from the specific to a second general or universal (Mizuno 1999):

The table stands in the corner of the room. (specific)

The table is a useful article of furniture. (general)

According to Hewson (1972, p.73), “the kinetic values of the indefinite are all oriented toward the particular and singular; those of the definite towards the general and universal”. In Hewson’s schema, nouns that take the zero article are “bare nouns” which present a “limitless, formless, continue entity”. While Hewson’s schema undoubtedly would be rather confusing for English learners, his concept of articles as binaries is an important one that forms the basis for later, more pedagogically-based schemas.

Hawkins (1978) proposed a “location” theory for article usage. When the definite article is used, Hawkins claims, a hearer must be able to identify “either an immediate situation, one of a fair number of larger situations, or else one of a vast number of sets of associated objects.” The hearer must be able to “identify some set and locate the referent in it”. In contrast, the indefinite article introduces a referent to a hearer or refers to a subset (not all) of the potential referents. Hawkins’ schema is too difficult to directly teach to English learners. His schema simply provides the language teacher another possible tool for understanding articles.

According to Mizuno (1999), learners or acquirers of English occupy a particular point in space and a particular point in time. Examples of this contrast between (0) and the are as follows:

There is a dog in the front of the car.

There is a dog in (0) front of the car.

As Master (1990) noted, Whitman does not include the generic uses of a/an and the in his schema because this usage is not common and best taught to more advanced learners.

As does Hewson, Master (1990) proposed a binary schema for viewing article usage. His schema, a classification-identification system, is more pedagogical than that of Hewson, but like Hewson, Master collapsed other distinctions into a binary. According to Master, the linguistic features of article usage include definiteness, specificity, count and number. Number, he claimed, is just a subset of count. The two main characteristics, definiteness and specificity can be seen in the following examples:

- A. [-definite][+specific] A tick entered my car.
- B. [-definite][-specific] A tick carries disease.
- C. [+definite][+specific] The computer is down today.
- D. [+definite][-specific] The computer is changing our lives.

Master proposed that these two features can be combined into a single feature, which he calls identification; a noun can either be identified (+identification) or classified (-identification). The distinction between sentences A and B then becomes less important. In both cases, “something that can be classified as a tick” is the subject (Master 1990). In sentences C and D, the computer is being identified as opposed to classified. In other words, „if a noun phrase is given (i.e., thematic, it is identified; if it is new (i.e., rhematic), it is classified’ (Master 1990).

In such a system, a noun marked for identification would automatically use the, whether count or non-count, plural or singular, while a noun that lacked

identification would either use a or the zero article, depending on whether it was singular, plural or non-count. In another paper, Master (1996) explained this difference: articles classify nouns (using a/an or the zero article) to indicate that a noun is a member of a group of similar items or they identify the noun (using the) to demonstrate that the noun has been marked somehow.

In a later paper, Master (1994) also proposed another potential schema for viewing articles. He suggested that article usage has six major aspects which can be put in the form of a series of choices, or distinctions, that students can make:

1. Countable-uncountable and singular-plural distinctions:

There is a tree in my garden.

There are followers in my garden.

There is grass in my garden.

2. Indefinite a(n), [0] vs. definite the

There is a tree in my garden. The tree is losing its leaves.

There are flowers in my garden. The flowers are blooming.

3. Premodified-postmodified distinction:

A mangy old cat came into the room.

The cat which lives down the street came into the room.

4. Specific-generic distinction:

I received a book for my birthday.

A book makes a great gift.

5. Common noun-proper noun distinction:

A doctor came to see me.

Dr. Smith came to see me.

6. Idiomatic phrase-nonidiomatic phrase distinction

He is always on edge.

He lives on the edge of town.

Master demonstrated that students who have been taught from this systematic schema use articles significantly more correctly than students who have not had such exposure. In two experiments at UCLA, students in classes where this schema was taught increased their ability to correctly use articles over students who were not given any systematic instruction on article usage. Master states that this instruction was “a means of accelerating that acquisition by making students aware of and increasing their conscious control of the way the article system works”.

All of these schemas represent viable ways of conceptualizing the same system. Schema choice will depend on perspective and purpose. A theoretical description of article usage will of course view articles differently than a pedagogical framework. Whether theoretical or pedagogical, each way of viewing articles can be valuable to the language teacher in a particular context.

3.2 The obstacles that teachers face while teaching articles

As English grammar articles pose great difficulties for both the teachers, and learners of English, it is suggested a few teaching strategies for teaching them, aiming to help both teachers and learners to teach and learn the English grammar articles effectively. The following teaching strategies suggested are adapted from the English grammar articles' exercises and notes from various grammar books and journals on the teaching of English grammar articles.

First and foremost, teachers are encouraged to tap on the concept of noun countability before start to teach the English grammar articles to the ESL/EFL learners. It is crucial to educate the learners on the distinction between count nouns and non-count nouns in order to help the learners to distinguish between count nouns and non-count nouns. According to Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freem, the “lexical classification of English common nouns into count and non-count nouns is a very important preliminary to correct use of articles”. Thus, the correct use of the articles depends highly on the learners' knowledge of count and non-count nouns. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman have also suggested on teaching the count and non-count nouns prior to the teaching of the articles to the learners. Hence, teachers should provide exercises and activities on count and non-count nouns to the learners as to provide the opportunities to the learners “to practice the difference between count and non-comt nouns). This can be done by creating exercise/activity with table or grid with two columns separating the count noun from the non-count nouns and ask the learners to sort the given nouns into the appropriate columns whether the noun should be in the count noun column of the non-count noun column. For example,

Indefinite article

This is pen. (a/an)

This is eraser. (a/an)

This is bird. (a/an)

This is eagle. (a/an)

This exercise is aimed to provide the opportunity to the learners to be able to identify and use the appropriate indefinite article with the noun given.

As for definite article, the exercise would be similar to the exercise for the indefinite article but more information would be given to aid the learners to identify the use of the definite article.

Definite article

That is my pencil. Can you please pass pencil to me?

 water in this cup is filthy.

Please submit form to me.

The above exercise on the definite article above highlighted on the use of definite article the with the nouns that are mention for the second time and with the non-count noun.

Once the learners have the knowledge on the use of the definite and indefinite articles, teachers can slowly introduce the exercises that are of higher cognitive level, for instance, the cloze text. The cloze text is the most used exercise / activity in the teaching of articles and most of the time serves as the grammar drills in the teaching of articles as cloze text is “a powerful and economical measure” of ESL proficiency. A cloze text which is well constructed is capable to test language skills, and even the mastery of grammatical items ranging from the most basic to the most advanced. Hence, cloze text is also used for testing purposes. An example of an easier cloze test is as follows:

Instruction: Listen as your teacher reads the following passage, fill in the articles you hear the teacher say.

Before going out of town, I asked _____ friend to keep my car in his garage for couple of days. He agreed. When _____ emergency arose, he used my car and accident occurred in which _____ car suffered damages. Is _____ friend responsible for _____ damages? Yes. Without clear permission to use _____ car, he has no right to use it for his personal benefit.

The cloze text above is the most basic and the easiest cloze test as learners do not have to decide for themselves on which articles that they should use but fill in the blanks in the cloze test with the articles that their teachers dictate in the lesson.

Apart from this cloze test, there are also some other cloze texts which are more difficult and advanced that cater for the advanced learners. Using the most basic cloze text to the more advanced cloze text is also a good way to evaluate the learners' progress in the learning and mastery of the use of the articles.

Instruction : Fill in the blanks with a, an or the.

If learners are capable and face no difficulties in completing the above cloze text, then, teachers can proceed to a higher level of the teaching of articles which will involve a grammar-checking activity where learners are required to act as the teacher to line out the missing articles that are supposed to be in the passage given. All the articles are omitted on purpose for this activity.

The teaching and learning of the article usage has never been easy to both the teachers and learners of the English Language. Hence, strategies for teaching the articles a, an, and the are suggested to ease the teaching process of the articles in the classrooms, besides, helping the learners to achieve excellent mastery in the use of articles. These strategies are also outlined as a means to ensure that the teaching and learning process of the English grammar articles will be effective.

CONCLUSION

The subject matter of our qualification paper is to study the function of articles, mainly to explore the communicative function of articles.

The article presents the student with one of the most difficult and intricate problems of language structure. Although a great number of philologists have treated the article both in English and in other languages, it will be only fair to say that even the most essential points concerning the theory of the articles still remain doubtful.

Articles are sometimes used as the means of syntactic relations. As stated in the research, a predicative noun is used with the indefinite article if the speaker states that the object denoted by the noun belongs to a certain class.

If a predicative noun is modified by a particularizing attribute, the definite article is used.

*He is **the** student you wanted to speak to.*

If a predicative noun denotes a post which can be occupied by one person at a time, either no article or the definite article is used.

Mr. Henderson is manager, not under-manager any longer. (Lindsay)

Mountanelli was director of the theological seminary at Pisa.

Comrade N. is the dean of our faculty.

No article is used with predicative nouns after the verbs to turn, to commence, to appoint, to elect.

Compeyson turned traitor.

Компейсон соткин булиб чикди.

They appointed him head-teacher.

A predicative noun sometimes has an adjectival character, especially when it is followed by the adverb enough. In this case no article is used.

Surely Bolla isn't fool enough to believe that sort of stuff? (Voynich)

When a predicative noun in an adverbial clause of concession is placed at the head of the clause, no article is used.

Child as he was, Davis understood that Creakle was an ignorant man.

The nouns *son* and *daughter* used predicatively take the definite article when modified by an of-phrase, though there may be several sons and daughters in the family.

*Lomonosov was **the** son of a fisherman.*

*Becky Sharp was **the** daughter of an artist.*

Besides those already mentioned, there is the problem of the meaning of each article: we must find out whether it has one or several meanings, each of them appearing in a different context. We can illustrate this problem by comparing, for example, the two sentences: (1) *The dog has come home* and (2) *The dog is a domestic animal*. Of course it is at once obvious that the dog in the former sentence means one individual dog, whereas *the dog* in the latter sentence means *the dog* in general, as a zoological species. The question, then, is whether the article itself has two distinct meanings or whether the meaning of the article is the same in both sentences, and the difference in meaning between them depends on some other factor.

After this general survey on English article we are to turn to the main study of the research and to explore the communicative function of the article.

Article in colloquial language has the communicative function especially when used with proper nouns. The status of the combination of the article with the noun should be defined as basically analytical, the article construction as such being localized by its segmental properties between the free syntactic combination of words and the combination of a grammatical affix with a notional stem in the morphological composition of an indivisible word. The article itself is a special type of grammatical auxiliary.

Though the given subject was not a wide one, we tried to investigate it as possible as could be done. Summing up, we are to note this subject needs further studying in the future.

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