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ÚSTAV ANGLISTIKY

Bakalářská práce

Categorization of the definite article in English

Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Petr Kos, Ph.D.

Autor práce: Jan Gažák

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I confirm that this thesis is my own work written using solely the sources and literature properly quoted and acknowledged as works cited.

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Jan Gažák

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Anotace

Tato práce si klade za cíl kategorizovat určitý člen angličtiny. Konkrétně jej kategorizuje napříč pěti různými žánry. Mluvenou řečí, žurnalistikou, prózou, poezií a odbornými texty. Práce nejprve popisuje funkce určitého členu podle dostupných gramatik a posléze analyzuje jeho použití ve výše zmíněných žánrech.

Klíčová slova:

Určitý člen, kategorizace, reference, použití členu

Abstract

This work aims to categorize the definite article in English. It categorizes the definite article across five different genres. Prose, poetry, academic texts, journalism and spoken language. The thesis first describes the functions of the definite article according to the available grammars and then analyses its usage in the aforementioned genres.

Key words:

Categorization, the definite article, reference, the use of the definite article

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1. Introduction

Correct usage of the definite article “the” can be one of the hardest aspects of English grammar to master. The definite article is a vital feature of English grammar and its correct use is essential in providing familiarity or specifying a particular noun or noun phrase. However, the use of the definite article can depend on various levels of specificity and the context in which it is used, which can pose a challenge for learners and non-native speakers in correctly identifying and furthermore accurately applying it in their own written or spoken output.

This thesis aims to provide insight into the categorization of the definite article across different genres of the language. Specifically, it will examine its usage in five genres, fiction, journalism, academic language, poetry and spoken language. This analysis is intended to provide deeper insights into the nuances and subtleties of its use and provide foreign learners with data that will help them navigate the use of the definite article more accurately.

2. The English article system

The English article system is composed of the definite article “the”, the indefinite articles “a” and “an” and the zero article “Ø”. This system is used to express a relation between noun or noun phrase and the linguistic or situational context and it is expressed by the grammatical category of definiteness. The English article belongs to the determiners, which occur before the noun acting as the head of the noun phrase. (see Quirk 1985: 253)

3. The English definite article

The English definite article “the” is the same for both numbers, however, it has two phonetic variants. [ðə] which is used if the initial sound of the uttered word is a consonant for example:

(1) *the church* [ðə tʃɜ:tʃ]

(2) *the truck* [ðə trʌk]

and the variant [ði] that is used when the initially uttered sound is a vowel for example:

(3) *the elephant* [ði 'elɪfənt]

(4) *the igloo* [ði 'ɪɡlu:].

The latter variation may additionally change to /ði:/ before both vowel and consonant sounds, particularly when pronounced slowly or to emphasize a specific word, serving an "honouring" function in various words. (see Dušková 1988: 59)

The definite article is used to signal that the noun phrase refers to a specific entity that is known to both the speaker and the listener. The usage of the definite article may sometimes vary across different dialects and genres of the English language.

3.1 Difficulties in using the definite article

According to the British National Corpus, the most commonly used word in the English language is the definite article "the." Despite its seemingly insignificant size, the high frequency of this word can greatly impact a learner's proficiency in English. Mastering the English article system is an extremely challenging task for most learners due to the complex set of rules and internal structures that govern the language. One of the main reasons why the definite article is so difficult to master is because there are no

straightforward rules that can be easily applied. Unlike in some other languages where articles are determined by gender, case, or number, the English article system is based on a variety of factors. This can make it difficult for learners to know when to use the definite article correctly in each given situation.

3.2 Discourse

The English article system is complex, and discourse and discourse-related factors can play a crucial role in determining the appropriate usage of articles. Discourse refers to units of language that are longer than a single sentence, and in discourse, the use of the definite article has often been approached from two main perspectives: identifiability and familiarity.

However, neither of these factors is unique or identifiable for learners of English. The first factor, unique identifiability, refers to situations where the referent of the noun phrase is clear and can be easily identified by the listener or reader. The most appropriate use of the definite article requires that the referent of the noun phrase to be either familiar within the discourse or uniquely identifiable. However, in English discourse, identifying the referent can be challenging for non-native speakers.

The second factor, familiarity, refers to situations where the referent of the noun phrase is known to the listener or reader. In such cases, the definite article is preferred over indefinite articles. However, this factor can also be challenging for non-native speakers, as familiarity can vary depending on the speaker, the context, and the level of expertise of the listener or reader. (see Harb 91-92)

3.3. Accessibility

Accessibility refers to the degree of activation of information in long or short-term memory. In other words, the definiteness of a noun or noun phrase is not an inherent property of the noun itself, but rather an expression of how accessible the referent is to the reader or listener. The so called Highly accessible Mental entities are those that are most active in consciousness and require less processing effort to be successfully retrieved and implemented. Epstein mentions four factors that affect the level of accessibility: recency of mention (the more recent the last mention of an entity is, the more accessible it will be), saliency (either physical or discourse salience), competition (relative salience of an entity compared to other entities of the same type that may also

be present in the context) and unity (whether an antecedent is within the same paragraph/frame/point of view as an anaphor) (see Epstein 2001:344). In the accessibility hierarchy, definite descriptions are analysed as markers of relatively low accessibility. This argument is supported by two main observations. Firstly, definite descriptions are usually very rich in information signalling that they are used to identify entities that are not highly accessible in memory and secondly, they are usually used to refer to relatively distant antecedents, instead of those that are immediately accessible. (see Epstein 2001: 340-343) To illustrate:

(5) *There is a cat in the yard. It is eating a mouse.*

(6) *There is a cat in the yard. The cat is eating a mouse.*

(7) *There's a cat and a dog in the yard. The cat is eating a mouse.*

“The referents of both it in (5) and the cat in (6) are uniquely identifiable/ familiar by virtue of having been previously introduced with the noun phrase a cat, yet the cat in (6) is quite unnatural. The problem is that the cat is the topic of the initial sentence in (6). Therefore, at this stage in the discourse, the referent is highly accessible. Whereas in (7) the cat is more natural because, the presence of the dog in (7) lowers the accessibility of the cat, making the definite description a natural choice in the context (more so than a pronoun, whose meaning would be ambiguous in (7) because of the presence of the two competing referents.” (Epstein 2001: 340-345)

4. Generic reference

The definite article tends to be very limited, when it is used in its generic function. Its occurrence in singular noun phrases tends to be formal or literary in tone as seen below.

4.1 Singular noun phrase

The definite article "the" is often used in a generic sense to refer to a class or category of things, where it signifies the typical or representative specimen of that class. (Dušková 1988: 63-64)

For example:

(8) *The Lion can run up to 80 kilometres per hour.*

(9) *The Rhino is almost extinct.*

The generic reference also encompasses musical instruments and dances. To illustrate:

(10) *Play the piano.*

(11) *She was dancing the salsa.*

However, when referring to human beings or groups of them, using the definite article in a generic sense can be inappropriate or even offensive. For example:

(12) *The judge is always right.*

The sentence above can imply that judges are a homogenous group with identical characteristics and backgrounds, which is rarely the case. In such cases, the use of the zero article is preferred. (see Quirk 1985 :282-293)

4.2 Plural noun phrase.

We can identify two main cases where the generic use of the definite article occurs with plural noun phrases. The first case is with nationality nouns, which refer to groups of people based on their nationality or ethnicity, such as "*Chinese*" or "*Italian*." The second case is with adjectival heads, such as "*the young*," "*the rich*," or "*the blind*." (see Quirk 1985:283). According to Dušková these cases of the use of the definite article are morphologically motivated and work as conversion. (1988 :63-64).

5. Specific reference

The definite article in specific references is used as a marker of the phrase it introduces, thus making the said phrase definite.

5.1 Identifiability and familiarity based categories

The use of the definite article is dependent on the shared knowledge. According to Quirk there are several ways in which the identity of the referent can be recovered, as seen below. (Quirk 1985: 266)

5.1.1 Immediate situation

Immediate situation may be used in cases where the definite article is used to refer to a specific object, event or person that is immediately present and relevant in the context. For example:

(13) *Can you pass me the ketchup?*

This sentence suggests that both the speaker and the hearer are present in the same room, where the ketchup is present in their immediate field of view, making them share a common extralinguistic context. “It is, of course, possible for the speaker to misjudge the knowledge of the hearer, in which case the hearer may need to seek clarification through a which- or what-question (with the nucleus on the wh-item).” (Quirk 1985:266)

(14) *Have you seen the movie? Which movie?*

(15) *Is not the dog cute? What dog?*

However, there are situations where the referent might not be present in the respondents immediate surroundings or field of view, these situations force the respondent to do a certain amount of guesswork in order to properly comprehend the situation. Take a look at notices like:

(16) *Beware the dog!*

(17) *Mind the step.*

(18) *Watch the gap.*

5.1.2 Larger general knowledge

In this use of the definite article, the speaker presumes that he/she and the listener share some knowledge about the referent which is spoken about. In contrast to the “immediate situation” the specific referent may not be immediately present but can be inferred from the shared knowledge between both participants. This larger general knowledge can be worldwide (*the Pope, the Dalai Lama*) or it can be specific to a certain situation in a given state (*the President, the Prime Minister*). In the second example, almost all inhabitants of the said country should be able to deduce which president or prime

minister is being referred to by the phrase. This use of the definite article is also common when referring to common objects or concepts such as (*the sun, the moon, the earth, the sky etc.*). (see Quirk 1985: 266-267)

5.1.3 Anaphoric reference

Anaphoric reference is created when the definite article is used to refer to a noun or a noun phrase that was already mentioned in the same discourse or conversation. Anaphoric references are used to make the discourse more concise and cohesive. There are two main ways by which we determine identifiability. Direct and Indirect.

A direct anaphoric reference occurs when the same noun head that has already been mentioned in the text appears again. (see Huddleston 2002: 370) For example:

(19) *I have a cat. The cat is very lovely.*

Indirect anaphoric reference happens when a reference is incorporated into the listener's knowledge indirectly rather than through direct mention for instance:

(20) *I lent John my television, but when he returned it, the screen was scratched.*

The example above is one of the two subcategories of the indirect anaphoric reference namely meronymy. We use meronymy when we want to refer to an object by using a part of it (in the example above the screen), assuming that the hearer will understand the intended meaning through shared knowledge or context.

The second subcategory is the use of indirect anaphoric reference through synonyms. It occurs when a noun or noun phrase is indirectly referenced through the use of a synonym or a word with a similar meaning. Meaning the reference is not made directly to the word that was already used, but rather to a related word that can be used to refer to it. Consider this example:

(21) *A parcel was lying on the floor. The package was too heavy to move.*

In this sentence, the noun "package" is used as an anaphoric reference to "the parcel," which was mentioned in the previous sentence. However, the reference is not made directly to the word "parcel." Instead, the word "package" is used as a synonym for "parcel" to indirectly refer to it. (see Quirk 1985: 267-268)

5.1.4 Sporadic reference

The definite article can also be used in reference to an institution of human society. To illustrate the following sentence has two possible interpretations of the gym:

(22) My brother goes to the gym twice a week.

It can mean a particular gym that my brother goes to frequently, say The STACA in České Budějovice. This use would fall under situational reference. However, it is entirely possible that my brother does not limit his workouts to just one gym, but instead visits different fitness centres depending on where he is staying at any given time. In this case, the use of "the gym" serves as a reference to the institution of fitness centres, rather than a specific location. This is an example of sporadic reference, where the definite article is used to refer to an institution that may be encountered at various places and times. Because of this, asking "Which gym?" in response to this statement would be inappropriate. The sporadic reference can be also used when referring to means of mass communication and modern transport. (see Quirk 1985: 269) As seen in the examples below:

(23) What is on the radio?

(24) Did you see the evening news?

(25) Lucas takes the bus every day.

(26) He took the train to London.

5.1.5 Cataphoric reference

The Cataphoric reference is the opposite of the anaphoric reference. What determines the referent is what follows the head noun. In a given context, the referent of a noun is typically restricted through the use of a restrictive relative clause or other modifiers, thereby establishing its uniqueness. For example:

(27) I appreciate the initiative that you have all shown.

The relative clause in this example determines which initiative we are speaking about. Another use of the cataphoric reference is the so called “of constructions”. For example:

(28) *The king of hearts*

(29) *The glamour of a Premier League game*

(30) *The feeling of despair*

In these examples, the referent is determined by the prepositional phrase of however, for it to work there has to exist an associative relationship between the words. For example, in (30) despair is hyponym of feeling. (see Dušková 1988: 66-67)

5.1.6 Logical use

The logical use of the definite article is reserved for cases, where the determination of the article comes from the logical interpretation of some words, most commonly adjectives and post determiners whose meaning is connected to the idea of uniqueness. (see Quirk 1985: 270)

For example:

(31) *The fastest man alive is no longer Usain Bolt.*

(32) *This is the only candy left.*

(33) *I finished in the last place.*

(34) *This is the best outcome.*

5.1.7 Reference to body parts

In English, it is common to use the definite article "the" when referring to body parts that come after a preposition, instead of using possessive pronouns such as "my," "your," "her," or "their." This tendency to use the definite article after preposition reflects how the English language moved to use prepositions as relational markers, rather than relying on inflexions or word order to indicate grammatical relationships (see Quirk 1985: 270-271). Examples of this use are:

(35) *Mary banged herself on the forehead.*

(36) *He pulled her by the hair.*

(37) *He took a hit on the chin.*

(38) *Stop poking me in the back.*

5.1.8 Names of geographical locations

This category encompasses geographical locations that are typically preceded by the definite article. These include:

Plural names: *The Netherlands, The Midlands*

Groups of Islands: *the Shetlands, the Bahamas*

Ranges of mountains: *the Alps, the Sierra Nevada*

Rivers: *the Avon, the Rhine*

Seas and oceans: *the Atlantic, the Baltic (see Quirk 1985: 296)*

The use of the definite article with geographical names can be motivated by several factors such as plurality (names of islands, ranges of mountains) and conversion (names of oceans). (see Quirk 1988: 294-297)

5.1.9 Ordinal use

This category refers to the use of the definite article before an ordinal number to denote the position of the object in the series. These objects are not logically unique as multiple objects can share the same position in certain instances. (see Quirk 1985:270)

To illustrate:

(39) *This was the third occurrence.*

(40) *He is reading the second chapter.*

5.2 Accessibility based categories

Since Quirks categories of the definite article failed to encompass all uses of the definite article in my research, I have decided to also include three categories by Epstein. These categories may partly overlap with Quirk's categorization; however, there are examples that do not fit Quirk's categorization as seen below.

5.2.1 Discourse prominence

This use of the definite article occurs when the entity being referred to holds an important role in the larger context of the discourse. One prevalent example of this is when a definite description is used as a literary technique to introduce a crucial character at the beginning of a narrative. This is done in order to draw the reader's attention towards that character. For example:

(41) The boy worked as a mechanic in New York and the woman would visit him often.
(Opening line of a book)

The definitive article in this instance is used to attract the reader's attention to the boy and the girl.

Another example of discourse prominence is the topical use. An entity enters the discourse with the definite article in order to signal that they will indeed be topics in subsequent portions of the text. To illustrate take a look at an excerpt from a story about James Hall:

(42) Hall has been thinking about God, psychiatry, analysis, fairy tales, dreams and the monkey trap. As a boy he saw a picture of a monkey trap in a book, and he has used it as a basis for a theory on human behaviour. A monkey trap is a hollowed gourd with bait inside. The monkey reaches in and wraps his fist around the bait but can't remove his hand unless he drops the bait. The monkey never does. Hall believes the stroke got him out of the monkey traps in his life and freed him to do what he really wanted to do—read and write and think. (Epstein 2001:347)

The use of the definite article, "the," in the phrase "*the monkey trap*" serves as an introduction to a new entity that is expected to be the primary focus of the subsequent text. It is worth noting that in the next mention, an indefinite article is used instead. This implies that the referent of the definite article in this instance may not be uniquely

identifiable, as it is not treated as such by the writer even upon subsequent mention. (see Epstein 2001: 345-350)

5.2.2 Role

This use of the definite is triggered when noun phrases designated roles refer to a fixed property instead of a specific individual. Additionally, the individual who fulfils the role, known as the role's "value," may change depending on contextual factors such as time, place, and situation. For instance, the role noun phrase "the president," used in the United States in 2000, would have the value, Clinton; used in the Czech Republic in 2015, it would have the value Zeman; and used in France in 2023, it would have the value Macron and so on.

The use of the definite article to designate roles is best illustrated in noun phrases in which the speaker has a choice between the indefinite and the definite article as illustrated below:

(43) Now Foreman's feet were planted. Now Moorer made the big mistake. He crouched ever so slightly. His chin was on a straight line with Foreman's feared right. It came straight and true and Moorer never had a chance. (Epstein 2001: 358)

In the given example, the definite article "the" is used to refer to a common role that is expected to occur in a boxing match - that is, one participant makes a big mistake leading to their defeat. The subsequent sentences describe the specific instance where Moorer made such a mistake in his fight against Foreman. If an indefinite article "a" had been used instead, it would have referred to a specific, isolated incident where Moorer made an important mistake in the fight, without implying that it is a typical occurrence in boxing matches. (see Epstein 2001: 359)

This category could align with the Quirks category of larger general knowledge as mentioned above; however, there are situations in which the referent cannot be uniquely identified as seen in the example below:

(44) Researchers who reported in July that family history appeared to play a slightly smaller role in breast cancer than previously believed backed off, saying they had erred — “We took the wrong number and multiplied it by the wrong number”, said Dr. Graham A. Colditz, a co-author of the study. (Epstein 2001: 360)

In this example, the two instances of “the wrong number” have non-unique roles in the context of the verb “multiplied.” These roles do not have unique values but are recognizable entities because it is typical for multiplication problems to involve two slots for numbers. It is also very important to note that the roles designated by noun phrases with the definite article do not need to be part of the general background knowledge shared by members of a certain community. Instead, the definite article itself can be used to indicate that a referent is brought into the discourse as a role, to enable the speaker to achieve some particular rhetorical goal in a specific context. Speakers commonly employ the definite article to bring new temporal roles into existence. See the example below:

(45) Conservatives never really liked or trusted Nixon the way they did, say, Ronald Reagan. And many liberals already feel disappointed, if not betrayed, by Clinton. But there is more to the distrust than ideology. A lot of it is purely personal. With Nixon, the joke was, ‘Would you buy a used car from this man?’ With Clinton, it’s endless variations on, ‘I didn’t inhale’. (Epstein 2001: 359)

In this passage, the definite noun phrase "the joke" serves to create a new, commonly held notion of a "standard joke about the current President." This construction is used by the journalist to draw a parallel between Clinton and Nixon and their shared experiences of personal animosity. The definite article implies that each American president is associated with a single, unique joke. However, the specific content of the joke (i.e., the "value" of the role) varies depending on the president in question. (see Epstein 2001: 359-361)

5.2.3 Point of view

The definite article serves another important purpose in English, which is to shift the point of view. Usually, what we say or write reflects our own perspective, but there are other perspectives that can be conveyed through language. The definite article is one of many ways to convey these different points of view. In literature, definite descriptions are often used to refer to entities that have not been previously mentioned in the text. This strategy is especially common in the opening sentences of novels or short stories, and it aims to encourage readers to empathize with or adopt the viewpoint of, the narrator. For example:

(46) *The train went on up the track out of sight, around one of the hills of burnt timber. Nick sat down . . . (Epstein 2001: 363-364)*

“In this example, there is evidently no point in asking with whom the knowledge of the train or the track was judged to be shared. These entities are identifiable only to Nick, not to readers. The definite articles in the train and the track have the function of indicating that this portion of the discourse represents the protagonist’s (Nick’s) point of view. This interpretation of the passage is favoured by the pragmatic context, in particular, the occurrence of definite descriptions in the first sentence whose referents are not accessible to the reader plus the immediate mention of Nick at the beginning of the second sentence. In mental spaces terms, the articles prompt the reader to set up an alternate base space N, representing the reality of the character Nick. Since any base space represents a conceptualizer, N is a potential viewpoint space. Space N is embedded under the base space B, which represents the world of the story (by convention, the default reference point for a fictional text). The entities introduced in the first sentence of (the train, the track, the hills, etc.) are set up in N, rather than B, because they are part of Nick’s perceptions. The articles prompt a shift in viewpoint from B to N because at this point in the discourse, access to these entities is restricted to space N—Nick is the only one who knows about them. By default, we assume that Nick’s perceptions are correct, so the elements in N also have counterparts in B because these entities exist in the world of the story (unless there are indications to the contrary, we assume they are not just figments of the character’s imagination).” (Epstein 2001: 364)

6. Data acquisition method

The data for categorization of the definite article were obtained by analysing 100 occurrences per genre, which were divided into at least four randomly selected texts or recordings. In each text, 25 uses of the definite article were analysed. Sadly, I had to move away from an entirely corpus-based collection of data, which would be more fitting for this type of research, due to the nature of the anaphoric reference category and to a lesser extent point of view category. The length of the broader context text that was provided by the corpora was insufficient to correctly identify these categories. What

follows are the categorizations in each genre, the categories that registered frequency higher than 5 occurrences are further commented on.

7. The Definite article in spoken language

Spoken language differs from the other genres by the oral transmission of the linguistic element. In most cases it is highly dynamic, immediate and involves interaction between the speaker and the listener. All examples below were taken from the demographic part of the spoken British National Corpus.

7.1 Anaphoric use

Examples of direct anaphoric reference in spoken language:

(47) (FLPPS002) [23] I think a lot of people get carried away with the occasion and it's actually supposed to be a very romantic day, and, you know, that's what it was for me.

(FLPPS000) [24] So it was everything you hoped it would be?

(FLPPS002) [25] Yes.

[26] But I think people do get carried away with traditions and the occasion and this grand affair ... and really, it could be a very small low-key affair, but it's, it's meant to be a very romantic special day for two people. (BNC)

(48) (J8JPS008) [116] It would start probably because they are illegal, erm ... but basically because everybody else running about me ... er, was trying it, my friends so ... it basically boiled down to peer pressure ... at the start.

(J8JPS000) [117] So what were you taking?

(J8JPS008) [118] Heroin.

(J8JPS000) [119] From the start? (BNC)

(49) [10] And a high risk group, multiple tumours at diagnosis and a positive three month cystoscopy.

[11] ... The suggested protocols for these patients were as follows.

[12] The low risk category one patients would go straight onto annual check cystoscopy following the first three month check.

[13] The intermediate risk group would have a three monthly cystoscopy for a year and then go onto six monthly for a further year and then annual thereafter.

[14] And the high risk group would have three monthly check cystoscopies for two years and then go onto annual check cystoscopies. (BNC)

Examples of indirect anaphoric reference:

(50)

(FXHPS001) [60] [...] time to give me a wee shot at my blood pressure as well
Doctor.

Doctor
(PS232) [61] Right.

(FXHPS001) [62] Cos it's months before I had the time.

Doctor [63] [...] never get to Heaven.

(PS232) [64] You'll never got to Heaven.

[65] ... Made a shocking mess of that.

(FXHPS001) [laugh]

Doctor
(PS232) [66] Is this is this you wanting a [...] pump?

(FXHPS000) [67] [laughing] That's what I said. []

(FXHPS001) [68] [...] for the daughter, she's [...] and she cannae carry it off, and
whether she [...]

Doctor [69] It's a good job it's not you.

(PS232) [70] [laugh] I'd be

(FXHPS001) [71] If it was me I'd be I'd need a miracle.

Doctor [72] *I'd be sending for the police.*
 (PS232) [73] *That's what I'd be doing.*
 (FXHPS001) [74] *Aye, so would I be. [laugh]*

Doctor [75] *Well that's that's for the [...].*
 (PS232)
 (FXHPS000) [76] *That's the stuff alright.*

Doctor [77] *That's that's the stuff.*
 (PS232) [78] *[...] it's got a green card in it and it's got enough stuff to last you until [...]*
 (FXHPS000) [79] *Will that be alright by [...] aye?*
 (FXHPS001) [80] *I actually and sometimes I come right up.*

Doctor [81] *That's right, right up there and right up, that's right.*
 (PS232)
 (FXHPS001) [82] *[...] that's right, aye.*

Doctor [83] *You see, you'd think I knew about these things wouldn't you, you'd think I knew*
 (PS232)
 (FXHPS000) [...]

Doctor [84] *about these things.*
 (PS232) [85] *[...] your muscles.*
 (FXHPS001) [...]

Doctor [86] *Just go on [...] Just the one. (BNC)*
 (PS232)

Anaphoric reference was the most frequent use of the definite article in the spoken language. It has appeared in 41 out of 100 occurrences of the definite article. This is not surprising, as anaphoric reference is the most common use of the definite article “the” in the English language. It helps the speaker to refer back to a noun or noun phrase that has been already mentioned in the conversation and also allows the conversation to remain fluent and coherent for both parties.

The definite article in the role of the direct anaphoric reference appeared 15 times, which is a surprising result because I expected the speakers to try to avoid using it as much as possible. Its relatively high occurrence might be attributed to the types of

conversations that were chosen. It has most frequently appeared in the speaker's response to the listener's request to further describe or elaborate on the topic that was mentioned beforehand.

The definite article in the role of the indirect anaphoric reference was used 26 times. Its more frequent use can be attributed to the idea, that the speakers prioritize indirect anaphoric reference over direct anaphoric reference to avoid sounding repetitive and monotonous.

7.2 Cataphoric use

Examples of Cataphoric reference of construction:

(51) [52] *Weddings are a very important part, and a part that er, we all enjoy*
(FLPPS006) *... but erm ... we, I wouldn't say it was the major part of a florist's*
business, there's quite a few other aspects... (BNC)

(52) [18] *so it's ... a rare occasion have to use it, but I probably have ... to*
(J8JPS001) *have one with me all, for the rest of my life. (BNC)*

Cataphoric reference relative clause:

(53) [129] *But through the help er, the group that I'm well involved in, which is Carlton*
Athletic Recovery Group

(54) [132] *And what was the point at which you thought ... I want to stop*
(J8JPS000) *doing* *this?*
[133] *I want to get off drugs? (BNC)*

Cataphoric reference appositive modifier:

(55) [323] *Like the woman said there, there seems to be a lot of help for people who are*
on drugs, and who then want to come off them, but the after-care service seems to be ...
you know, a lot ... erm, there's not a lot help for the people, they get the help to come off

the drugs and then they're put back into the society that they are from ... and they seem to still have that pressure to go back to where they were previously. (BNC)

The cataphoric reference was the second most used category of the definite article with 19 uses. This is due to its ability to refer to an entity that has not been introduced in the discourse but will be discussed later in the conversation. This pragmatic feature enhances the effectiveness and cohesiveness of the speaker's speech by enabling the establishment of a shared context with the listeners. According to data speakers tend to prefer the "of construction" (14 uses) over relative clause (3 uses) and appositive modifier (2 uses) when using cataphoric reference in their utterances. One possible explanation for the prevalence of the "of construction" over relative clauses or appositions when using the cataphoric definite article in spoken language may be related to the relative ease and brevity of the former construction. The "of construction" offers a straightforward way to establish a relationship between two nouns, without requiring complex syntax or mental processing. On the other hand, relative clauses and appositions can be more structurally intricate and cognitively demanding, often requiring the listener to hold multiple elements in memory to fully comprehend the intended meaning. Furthermore, the prevalence of the "of construction" in idiomatic expressions may also contribute to its frequent use in spoken language. Such expressions, which are commonly used and understood by native speakers, can provide a natural and intuitive way to convey a particular meaning or relationship between two entities.

7.3 Immediate situation

Examples:

(56) Doctor (PS232) [229] I'll get the door.

(FXHPS001) [230] Right Dr .

Doctor (PS232) [231] There we are.

(FXHPS001) [232] Right cheerio Doctor .

Doctor (PS232) [233] Right [...] (BNC)

Doctor (PS232) [132] *How is your mum?*

(FXHPS001) [133] *Ah she's [...].*
[134] *Thanks a lot.*

Doctor (PS232) [135] *Thanks a lot. ...*

(FXHPS001) [136] *And as for Jackie's [...].*

Doctor (PS232) [137] *The paracetamol is that the dissolving ones?* (BNC)

The definite article as an immediate situation indicator was the third most used category of the definite article. However, it has occurred only 16 times, meaning that its use is far below the anaphoric use and even below the cataphoric use of the definite article. This is surprising result as I have expected the immediate situation to rival or even surpass the cataphoric reference in the context of the spoken language, since speakers tend to refer to objects in their surroundings during conversations. The lack of the use of the immediate situation might be attributed to the nature of the selected recordings, as it has appeared quite frequently in the recording of the doctor's appointment, where all the participants share the knowledge of the town and even discuss their immediate surroundings. On the other hand, its occurrence in the rest of the recordings is quite low, perhaps due to the setting and focused topics of the recordings.

7.4 Logical use

Examples:

(57) [182] *Probably the only way to try and prevent it is to go into the schools ... and get people that have been through the proble , the problem themselves ... to go into the schools and try and educate the kids to stay off drugs.*

[183] *Because, you're getting it, I know in the east end of Glasgow where I come from*
(BNC)

(58) FLPPS001) [13] *Yes it was, yeah.*
[14] *You're the only person there wearing the ball gown, you're*

the only person there getting their photograph taken a hundred times over

Unknown speaker

(FLPPSUNK) [laugh]

(FLPPS001) [15] so you're made to feel the most special person on the earth and I think that makes it worth it for a lot of them.

(FLPPS000) [16] Did you like it so much you you'd you'd you'd do you would do it again?(BNC)

Logical use of the definite article was the fourth most frequent use counting 13 uses. This frequency can be attributed to two main factors. Firstly, speakers tend to use it a lot to further specify and narrow their points and secondly, topic of one of the recordings was “your experience as a bride” where the female respondents tended to use a surprising amount of superlatives.

7.5 Ordinal use

Examples:

(59) [199] that is run in the secondary schools in the first year ... where the children are talked to by the police and they see videos and they are a act (BNC)

Ordinal use of the definite article was the sixth most common use of the definite article appearing seven times. It was almost exclusively used with the word first.

Reference type	Number of Uses
Anaphoric Reference	41
- Direct	15
- Indirect	26
Cataphoric Reference	19
- Of construction	14
- Relative clause	3
- Appositive modifier	2
Immediate situation	16
Logical use	13
Ordinal use	7
Point of view	1
Discourse prominence	1
Sporadic use	1
General knowledge	1

Table 1 Number of uses in spoken language.

8. The definite article in journalism

Journalism is characterized by the collection, verification and subsequent presentation of information to a public audience. It attempts to deliver information in language that is short, solid, fluent, interesting, and clear to the reader/hearer.

8.1 Anaphoric use

Direct anaphoric reference:

(60) The manager had Covid and only met his new signing a fortnight later.

“It was just (assistant) Alan Irvine and I spoke with him about my work on the pitch. I spoke with the manager after 14 days of being here.

(61) *Fed officials were already expected to raise interest rates again at their meeting next week, and the wage data released Friday erased any remaining doubts, argued Omair Sharif, founder of Inflation Insights.*

(62) *“If any Fed officials were wavering on a May rate hike,” he wrote in a note to clients, the wage data “will likely push them to support at least one more hike.” (Casselman)*

Indirect anaphoric reference:

(63) *With his partner’s family based overseas in the Netherlands, the couple occasionally use the extra day to fit in a long weekend abroad, without the rush of jumping on a Friday-evening flight. (Tatum)*

(64) *West Ham’s march to within striking distance of the top four has been underpinned by players who at various stages of their careers have been written off, and a manager who has been sacked by the club once already.*

The indirect anaphoric reference was the more prevalent of the two subcategories appearing in 67.3% of the anaphoric reference. Direct anaphoric reference occurred in 32.7% of the cases. This preference for indirect anaphoric reference can be attributed to the idea that journalists should aim to avoid repetitive and cumbersome phrasing in order to maintain the reader’s attention, therefore they are inclined to the use of the indirect anaphoric reference.

8.2 Cataphoric use

Of construction:

(65) *Faster pay gains have helped workers, particularly those at the bottom of the earnings ladder, keep up with rapidly rising prices. (Casselman)*

(66) *With his partner’s family based overseas in the Netherlands, the couple occasionally use the extra day to fit in a long weekend abroad, without the rush of jumping on a Friday-evening flight. (Tatum)*

Relative clause:

(67) Coufal rejected the chance to return to Banik and, after battling his way to a successful career in England, gives the impression that even the most lucrative contract in football would not persuade him to play for them again. (McGrath)

(68) For Euan Jennings, the prospect of a four-day workweek was one of the factors that originally drew him to his job as a digital content creator at Edinburgh-based brewery Vault City. (Tatum)

Appositive:

(69) Coufal rejected the chance to return to Banik and, after battling his way to a successful career in England, gives the impression that even the most lucrative contract in football would not persuade him to play for them again. (McGrath)

(70) The wage figures released Friday tell a similar story: Pay is no longer rising as rapidly as it was in the middle of last year, but it is still rising much faster than before the pandemic. (Casselman)

The use of definite articles in cataphoric reference was a common feature in journalism. A dominant trend was observed with the use of “of construction” in 63.33% of cases. In addition, there was an inclination for the use of apposition (26.67%) over relative clause (10%). This preference for apposition over relative clause can be attributed to the process of journalistic writing. It is known that editors strive to make the text as concise as possible to fit the preselected format of web magazines and printed newspapers. This effort to ensure brevity is done while still maintaining the functionality of the text. Therefore, the use of apposition allows journalists to convey their message efficiently while minimizing the length of the text.

It can also be noted that the use of the definite article in cataphoric reference serves an important function in journalism, as it aids in creating a coherent and cohesive piece of writing. This is because the definite article is used to refer to a specific person, place or thing, and helps to avoid ambiguity. Thus, the use of the definite article is an essential tool in journalistic writing, allowing the writer to convey information clearly and concisely, while still maintaining the coherence of the text.

8.3 Role

Examples:

(71) *The president is due to speak at a homecoming celebration outside St Muredach's Cathedral in the town of Ballina on Friday night. (The president says)*

(72) *It's like six months into normal relationships, when the chemicals rebalance, or two years – or however long it takes the chemical balance of lovers ...” (Williams)*

Category of role was the third most used category of the definite article in journalism, appearing in 6% of uses. The prominence of this category in journalism can be explained by the nature of news reporting. Journalists frequently report on individuals who occupy important positions or roles in society, such as politicians, business leaders, and celebrities. The use of the definite article in such cases serves to signal to the reader that the person being referred to is well-known or important. Furthermore, the use of the definite article in the role category can also convey a sense of authority and formality. By referring to someone as "the president" or "the CEO", the writer is using language to create a sense of respect and deference towards the person in question. This is particularly important in news reporting, where accuracy and credibility are paramount.

Reference type	Number of Uses
Anaphoric	43
- Direct	14
- Indirect	29
Cataphoric	31
- Of construction	20
- Relative clause	3
- Appositive modifier	8
Role	6
Logical use	4
Ordinal use	3
Sporadic	3
Discourse prominence	3
Larger general knowledge	3
Geographical location	3
Point of view	1

Table 2 Number of uses in journalism.

9. The Definite article in prose

Prose can be defined as a primarily written language in its ordinary form. It has undergone many changes before arriving to its contemporary development. Prose can be further categorized into three types: description, narrative and argument.

9.1 Cataphoric use

Of construction:

(73) Most of us float in the direction of the current, swimming a little, or walking, or treading water. (Smith 2017)

(74) *Late in the afternoon of the day of that fortunate wayside encounter, a Durham coal miner named James Bordon, who was married to Billy Blair's sister Nan, was standing near the head of a steep-sided and thickly wooded ravine known locally as the Dene. (Unsworth 2012: 12)*

Appositive:

(75) *He had known it all his life; he had played here as a child, made tree houses with other children, fished for sticklebacks and newts in the beck that ran through the gorge below him, slate gray in color now, under this lowering sky. (Unsworth 2012: 12)*

(76) *Soft twists of mist invade the alleys, rise up from the slow river like exhalations of an exhausted spirit, seep in through the cracks in the window frames so that the contours of their high, lonely apartment waver and melt. (Carter 2015: 2)*

Relative clause:

(77) *This is how Yuli , son of Alehaw , came to a place called Oldorando , where his descendants flourished in the better days that were to come . (Aldiss 2001: 5)*

(78) *He had known it all his life; he had played here as a child, made tree houses with other children, fished for sticklebacks and newts in the beck that ran through the gorge below him, slate gray in color now, under this lowering sky. (Unsworth 2012: 12)*

The cataphoric reference was the most prevalent use of the definite article in prose with 35 uses. This can be attributed to its ability to build anticipation and create a sense of expectation in the reader. By referring to an upcoming element or concept before it has been introduced, the writer can create a sense of intrigue and encourage the reader to continue reading in order to discover more. “Of construction “was the preferred version of the cataphoric reference, accounting for 77.1% of its usage. This construction is particularly effective as it allows the writer to introduce a noun phrase that refers to an upcoming concept, thereby priming the reader for what is to come. In contrast, the use of apposition and relative clauses as forms of cataphoric reference account only for 17.1% and 5.8%, respectively.

9.2 Anaphoric use

Direct:

(79) *Yuli was seven years old, virtually a grown man, when he crouched under a skin bivouac with his father and gazed down the wilderness of a land known even at that time known as Campannlat . He had roused from a light doze with his father 's elbow in his rib and his harsh voice saying, " Storm 's dying. " The storm had been blowing from the west for three days bringing with it snow and particles of ice off the Barriers. It filled the world with howling energy, transforming it to a grey-white darkness, like a great voice that no man could withstand. The ledge on which the bivouac was pitched afforded little protection from the worst of the blast; father and son could do nothing but be where they were under the skin, dozing, once in a while chewing on a piece of smoked fish, while the weather battered away above their heads. (Aldiss 2001: 5)*

Indirect:

(80) *Sad; so sad, those smoky-rose, smoky-mauve evenings of late autumn, sad enough to pierce the heart. The sun departs the sky in winding sheets of gaudy cloud; anguish enters the city, a sense of the bitterest regret, a nostalgia for things we never knew, anguish of the turn of the year, the time of impotent yearning, the inconsolable season. (Carter 2015: 2)*

(81) *And having entered the Lazy River we must have a flotation device, even though we know, rationally, that the artificial current is buoyancy enough. (Smith 2017)*

Anaphoric reference was the second most used type of the definite article in prose with 29 uses. This is in contrast to the two previous genres where it was the dominant form of the definite article. One possible explanation for this is that prose, by its nature, is often more focused on the narrative flow and storytelling aspects of writing. As such, writers in this genre may prioritize maintaining a consistent narrative structure over explicitly signalling the referent of each noun phrase. Another factor might be the preference for cataphoric reference as mentioned above. Writers substantially preferred the use of indirect the anaphoric reference (82.8%) over the direct anaphoric reference (17.2%).

9.3 Point of view

Examples:

(82) *For the rest of us, the moment arrives when we come to see that the lifeguard was right: these devices are too large; they are awkward to manage, tiresome. (Smith 2017)*

(83) *Both father and son rose by instinct, stretching, stamping their feet, throwing their arms violently about the massive barrels. (Aldiss 2001: 6)*

The category of Point of View was very frequent, appearing in 17 instances. This represents a notable surge in comparison to its relative frequency of occurrence in other genres. This can be attributed to the inherent nature of prose writing, which often employs a prominent literary device known as the narrative voice. In order to effectively execute this device, the writer must compel the reader to adopt the perspective of the narrator or protagonist, necessitating the use of the definite article to signal the specific point of view being presented. Therefore, the prevalence of the Point of View category in prose can be seen as a natural consequence of the narrative voice technique and its importance in the genre.

9.4 Larger general knowledge

Examples:

(84) *The storm had been blowing from the west for three days bringing with it snow and particles of ice off the Barriers. It filled the world with howling energy, transforming it to a grey-white darkness, like a great voice that no man could withstand. (Aldiss 2001: 5)*

(85) *Although Freyr was high in the sky - for the hunters were within the tropics - it seemed to hang there frozen. (Aldiss 2001: 5)*

Instances of the larger general knowledge category appeared 6 times. This slight rise in its frequency compared to other genres can be attributed to the nature of prose, which encompasses descriptions of nature and characters surroundings in order to establish the frame of the narrative.

Reference type	Number of Uses
Cataphoric	35
- of construction	27
- apposition	6
- relative clause	2
Anaphoric	29
- Indirect	24
- Direct	5
Point of view	17
Larger general knowledge	6
Logical use	4
Role	3
Generic reference	2
Geographical location	2
Discourse prominence	2

Table 3 Number of uses in prose.

10. The definite article in poetry

Poetry as a genre can be mostly characterized by its regularity, be it in its meter, or its ordering into stanzas. This regularity is immediately noticeable to the reader making it easily distinguishable from other genres. It attempts to evoke emotions and convey vivid imagery in the reader's mind.

10.1 Cataphoric use

Of construction examples:

*(86) I gathered birchwood branches,
like time in no particular order,*

from the chaos of bark,
tied each one piece by piece. (Seneviratne 2020: 49)

(87) *Weighing kofte bari, çemen out behind the splint-fillings of Yeni mosque.* (Byrne 2020: 51)

Apposition examples:

(88) *The security guard at the door rattles prayer beads behind his back.* (Byrne 2020: 52)

(89) *That will put her heart out like an only eye. Widow. The dead syllable, with its shadow Of an echo, exposes the panel in the wall* (Plath 2004: 6)

Relative clause example:

(90) *Widow. The dead syllable, with its shadow Of an echo, exposes the panel in the wall Behind which the secret passage lies—stale air, Fusty remembrances, the coiled-spring stair That opens at the top onto nothing at all...* (Plath 2004: 6)

The cataphoric reference dominated the poetry with a frequency of 38 uses. One possible explanation for the dominance of cataphoric reference in poetry is that it allows for a more creative and dynamic use of language. By referring to something that has not yet been mentioned, the poet can create a sense of suspense in the reader or listener who then eagerly awaits the continuation of the poem. It can also allow for more ambiguity and different interpretations of the text, as the referent may not be immediately clear. It might also give the poem a more united feeling, by establishing the referent at the beginning of the stanza and then using the cataphoric reference to link subsequent images back to that referent.

The data suggest that the preferred type of cataphoric reference in poetry is "of construction", which appeared in 68.42% of cases, while "apposition" appeared in 28.95% of cases, and the use of "relative clause" was almost non-existent, accounting only for 2.63%

10.2 Point of view

Examples:

(91) *After the nightshift you would park the Mazda*

on the drive, rest the paper on the steering wheel (Makoha 2020: 61)

(92) *The security guard at the door rattles prayer beads behind his back. (Byrne 2020: 52)*

The point of view category was the second most prevalent type of definite article reference found in poetry, appearing 24 times. The purpose of this use of the definite article is to establish a specific point of view or perspective from which the reader should interpret the text. This point of view can encompass various perspectives, such as the speaker of the poem, the poet themselves, or a character in a poem. By employing this category, poets can establish a particular tone or mood within the poem, enhancing the reader's understanding and engagement with the text.

10.3 Anaphoric use

Direct Examples:

(93) *Place a hand on the wish column. The sweating column*

Laugh out your tears on the weeping column. (Byrne 2020: 52)

Indirect Examples:

(94) *A GIRL IN THE WOODS*

I make myself clean in the forest,

I brush my arms over the ferns. (Seneviratne 2020: 49)

(95) *Widow. The bitter spider sits And sits in the center of her loveless spokes (Plath 2020: 6)*

Anaphoric reference in poetry was used only 16 times which is the lowest count across all genres. One reason is that poetry often utilizes imagery and figurative language to convey meaning and evoke emotions, rather than relying on clear and straightforward references. Anaphoric references, which rely on previously mentioned words or phrases to establish context, can disrupt the imagery and figurative language in a poem.

Another reason is that poetry often values brevity and concision, as the genre requires careful attention to both the language and the structure used. Anaphoric references can sometimes have a negative impact on the poems, as they can sound repetitive and add unnecessary words, which can disturb the flow and timings of the poem.

Indirect anaphoric reference (81.25%) was naturally the preferred type of anaphoric reference to direct anaphora (19.75%).

10.4 Larger general knowledge

Examples:

*(96) That the hand of another
will carry you through the sky. (Byrne 2020: 52)*

(97) Under the eyes of the stars and the moon's rictus. (Plath 2020: 6)

The larger general knowledge category appeared 6 times in poetry. As in prose, its use can be attributed to the use of generally known objects of nature such as the sea, the stars or the sky that the authors use to invoke certain images in the reader's or listener's mind.

Reference type	Number of Uses
Cataphoric	38
- of construction	26
- apposition	11
- relative clause	1
Point of view	24
Anaphoric	16
- Indirect	13
- Direct	3
Larger general knowledge	6
Generic reference	5
Logical use	5
Discourse prominence	3
Geographical location	2
Role	1

Table 4 Number of uses in poetry

11. The definite article in academic language

Academic writing is a genre of language that aims to convey information, articulate argument, or contribute to the discourse within an academic field. It may drastically vary between academic fields; however, it is always strict and clear in its structure, tone, and organization.

11.1 Cataphoric use

Of construction examples:

(98) *Cognitive Grammar is based on the insight that grammar is the product of human cognition. (Günter 2007: 1)*

(99) *Expanding commerce and international trade have fostered tremendous growth in the traffic of large ships as well as increased potential for mortality of marine mammals through direct strikes by hulls and propellers. (O'Shea 2023: 530)*

Apposition examples:

(100) *The country's first large-scale mining project, the Panguna mine on the island of Bougainville, began its operations in 1972, with the Ok Tedi mine in the country's Western Province following 12 years later. (Skrzypek 2023: 43)*

(1001) *One can begin to traverse the issue of memory in song, memory expressed through song, and song as memory with Beethoven's *An dieferne Gelleble*, one of the great song cycles in the literature of the Lied. (Jürgen 2023: 264)*

Relative clause examples:

(102) *Sonic were alive during the factory whaling era. which ended (with few exceptions. including ongoing whaling by Japan) at the time of the 1982 International Whaling Commission moratorium: whaling has been characterized as I of the world's "most spatially extensive foams of exploitation of wild living resources. (O'Shea 2023: 531)*

(103) *In order to capitalise on these resources, the government enters into agreements with mining companies, which have the financial and technological capacity to operate resource extraction projects, and the host area communities who claim customary ownership over the land. (Skrzypek 2023: 43)*

The dominance of cataphoric reference in academic texts with 56 occurrences can be attributed to various factors that characterize the academic discourse. One possible reason is that academic texts are meant to introduce new ideas, theories, and concepts to the reader, and then gradually elaborate on them in subsequent sentences or paragraphs. As such, the use of the definite cataphoric reference can be a useful tool for writers to signal to the reader that a specific noun phrase will be elaborated upon further in the text. Additionally, the use of cataphoric reference in academic writing can also aid in maintaining the text's precision and clarity. The definite article can help indicate the

importance and specificity of the upcoming noun phrase, thereby aiding in the reader's comprehension of the text. The preferred type of the cataphoric reference, as in all other genres, is "of construction" accounting for 67.85% of cases, followed by "apposition," which makes up 26.78%. However, in the academic text genre, "relative clause" is used in only 5.37% of cases. This suggests that academic writers tend to use the "of construction" and "apposition" more frequently as they provide a more direct and concise way of introducing and referring to concepts and ideas.

11.2 Anaphoric reference

Indirect anaphoric reference examples:

(104) *Ecological effects of interactions between marine mammals and fisheries can be indirect or direct. The latter include injuries and mortality in fishing gear. (O'Shea 2023: 531)*

(105) *Following a similar tradition, Thomas Mann lets the news of Joseph being alive be brought to Jacob in the form of a song by Jacob's granddaughter—a more prosaic rendition of that news, the guilt-stricken brothers argue, might kill the old man—it is one of the most moving moments in Mann's novel *Joseph and seine Bruder*. (Jürgen 2023: 264)*

Direct anaphoric reference examples:

(106) *Typically, the speaker can choose among many possible "construals", i.e., alternative ways of conceiving and expressing a situation. For example, we may describe a situation from our point of view or from that of the hearer. Another type of cognitive operation relates to the speaker's packaging of information as "mental spaces". As a rule, a considerable amount of information which the speaker intends to convey is not expressed explicitly. The hearer therefore needs to infer the meanings the speaker wants to communicate. (Günter 2007: 1)*

The usage of anaphoric reference in the academic text genre was found to be relatively infrequent, with only 26 occurrences recorded in the sample analysed. This finding can be explained by the prevalence of cataphoric reference as a standard convention of the

genre, as mentioned above. Notably, it was observed that the direct and indirect forms of anaphoric reference were utilized with comparable frequency, with direct anaphora appearing in 42.30% and indirect anaphora in 57.70% of cases. This is in a strict contrast to all other genres that heavily favoured the use of the indirect anaphoric reference. This suggests that the writers of academic text do not mind repeating the same words or phrases, as doing so can help their text to be more understandable and avoid ambiguity or confusion.

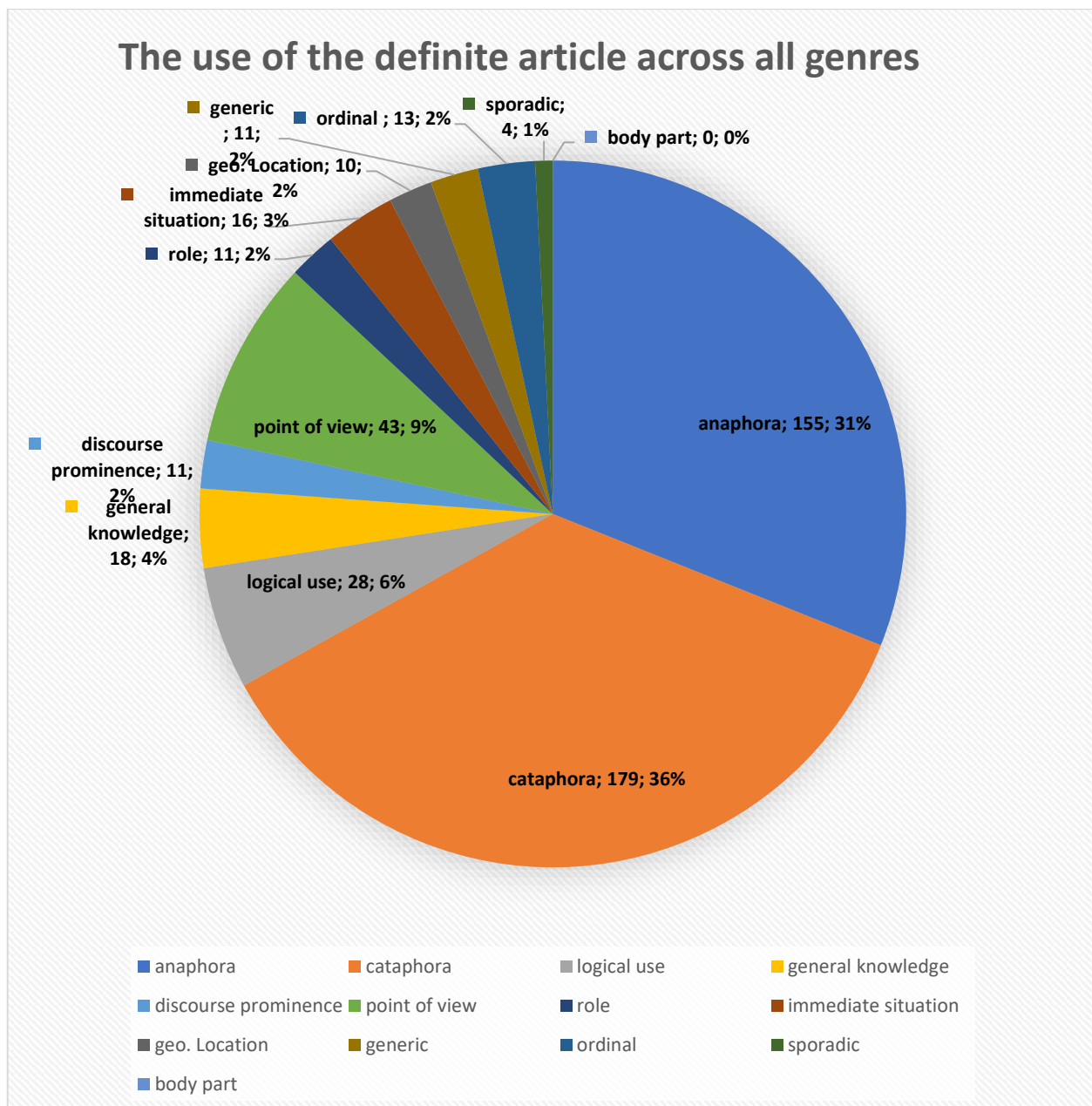
Reference type	Number of Uses
Cataphoric	56
- of construction	38
- apposition	15
- relative clause	3
Anaphoric	26
- Indirect	15
- Direct	11
Ordinal	4
Generic	4
Geographical location	3
Logical use	2
Larger general knowledge	2
Discourse prominence	2
Role	1

Table 5 Number of uses in academic language

	Poetry	Academic L.	Prose	Spoken L.	Journalism
Anaphora	16	26	29	41	43
Cataphora	38	56	35	19	31
Logical	5	2	4	13	4
General k.	6	2	6	1	3
Discourse	3	2	2	1	3
Point of view	24	0	17	1	1
Role	1	1	3	0	6
Immediate s.	0	0	0	16	0
Geographical	2	3	2	0	3
Generic	5	4	2	0	0
Ordinal	0	4	0	7	3
Sporadic	0	0	0	1	3
Body part	0	0	0	0	0

Table 6 Summary table

As seen in the table number 6 anaphoric reference is the preferred type of reference in spoken language and journalism. Cataphoric reference is the most used type of reference in 3 out of 5 genres. It dominated poetry and academic language categories, while also marginally winning in prose category. Category of logical uniqueness is modestly represented across all genres, achieving slightly higher frequency in spoken language. Categories of general knowledge, geographical locations and discourse prominence are spread across all genres with relatively similar frequency, suggesting that they might not have a preferred genre. Point of view is exclusively used in literary genres, achieving significant use both in prose and poetry. Immediate situation category is only used in the spoken language, being replaced by already mentioned point of view category in other genres.



Graph 1 The definite article across all genres

12. Limitations

This study is subject to certain limitations that might have influenced the results of the data. Probably the most prominent limitation is the variety of authors whose works were analysed. The data was collected from 20 different authors, each of whom may have

had their own unique style and approach to using the definite article. This could have resulted in some level of variation in the usage of certain categories of the definite article. It is therefore important to acknowledge the potential for author-based variation when interpreting the results.

The second potential limitation of this work may be based in the size of the data set. Although 500 uses of the definite article may seem like a significant number, it is still a relatively small sample size to draw definite conclusions from.

Finally, it should be acknowledged that the present thesis relied on a manual collection and categorization of the data. This method might have introduced a certain level of subjectivity into the study. Meaning there may have been some degree of inconsistency or bias in the categorization of the data, despite the best efforts to minimize such factors.

13. Conclusion

The main aim of the thesis was to categorize the use of the definite article across 5 different genres, namely prose, poetry, journalism, academic texts and spoken language. For this purpose, a dataset of 500 uses of the definite article across 20 different texts was created.

The first finding of this thesis was that Quirk's and Huddleston's categorizations which were based on the identifiability and familiarity of the referent were insufficient to encompass all uses of the definite article in the dataset. For this purpose, Epstein's accessibility-based categories that helped include all uses of the definite article were added.

Cataphoric use of the definite article was the most prevalent use of the definite article appearing 179 times. It dominated academic text and poetry genres. This is a rather surprising finding because the commonly accepted notion is that the anaphoric use is the most common use of the definite article. This result might be attributed to the fact that all genres had the same numerical representation in this thesis, even though some like academic writing and poetry represent only a small percentage of the language. "Of

construction” is undisputedly the preferred version of the cataphoric use of the definite article, being the favoured form across all genres.

Anaphoric use of the definite article ranked closely second with 155 uses. It was heavily favoured in spoken language and journalism. The speakers and the writers are inclined towards the indirect use of anaphoric reference in all genres. Interestingly the direct anaphoric use closely rivalled the indirect use in academic texts. Suggesting that the genre does not mind repetitiveness as long as it provides clarity.

Accessibility based categories such as point of view, role and discourse prominence accounted for 67 occurrences which is a hefty amount for categories that are not included in most of the grammars. They were most frequently used in the more creative genres like prose and poetry. This can be attributed to the use of literary devices such as narrative voice that are staples of the genres.

The immediate situation category was exclusively used in the spoken language, as it was replaced by the point of view category in other genres, where the communication is between the reader and the writer, therefore they do not share a common immediate context, and thus the reader cannot determine the definiteness of the referent on his own and has to adapt the point of view of a character to whom the referent is definite.

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Appendix

Database

Prose

The Lazy river – topical use
The children – point of view
The Lazy river – anaphoric reference direct
The depth of – cataphoric reference of construction
The walls – anaphoric reference indirect
The nearest – logical
The direction of – cataphoric reference of construction
The current – anaphoric reference indirect
Going with the flow – anaphoric reference indirect
The Lazy river – anaphoric reference direct
The artificial current – anaphoric reference indirect
The time – role
The rest of - cataphoric reference of construction
The moment – anaphoric reference indirect
The lifeguard – point of view
The plain fact – role
The Lazy river – anaphoric reference
The same rate – anaphoric reference indirect
The same sun – cataphoric reference of construction
The other way – anaphoric reference indirect
The current – anaphoric reference indirect
The others – role
The whole length – point of view
The better days - cataphoric reference relative clause
The wilderness of – cataphoric reference of construction
The storm – point of view
The west – larger general knowledge
The Barriers – point of view
The world – larger general knowledge
The ledge – cataphoric reference apposition
The bivouac – anaphoric reference direct
The worst – logical
The blast – anaphoric reference indirect
The skin – anaphoric reference indirect
The weather – anaphoric reference indirect
The wind – point of view

The snow – point of view
The drab landscape – anaphoric reference indirect
The sky – larger general knowledge
The hunters – anaphoric reference indirect
The tropics - geographical location
The lights – point of view
The fringes - anaphoric reference indirect
The ground – point of view
The folds – anaphoric reference indirect
The leaden zenith – cataphoric reference of construction
The massive barrels – point of view
The storm – anaphoric reference direct
The afternoon of – cataphoric reference of construction
The day of – cataphoric reference of construction
The head of – cataphoric reference of construction
The Dene – geographical location
The direction of – cataphoric reference of construction
The sea – larger general knowledge
The quality – cataphoric reference of construction
The colliery village of – cataphoric reference of construction
The upper – point of view
The bolder clay – point of view
The rock – point of view
The millions – anaphoric reference indirect
The Dene – anaphoric reference direct
The beck – cataphoric reference relative clause
The Gorge- cataphoric reference apposition
The age – cataphoric reference of construction
The general habit – cataphoric reference apposition
The mine – point of view
The years of - cataphoric reference of construction
The pit – point of view
The acrid smell - cataphoric reference of construction
The sweat of - cataphoric reference of construction
The folds of - cataphoric reference of construction
The coal – anaphoric reference indirect
The face – anaphoric reference indirect
Six in the morning – cataphoric reference appositive
The heart – generic reference
The sun – larger general knowledge
The sky – larger general knowledge
The city – point of view
The bitterest – logical
The turn of – anaphoric reference indirect
The year – topical use
The time of - cataphoric reference of construction
The inconsolable season – anaphoric reference indirect
The Fall – anaphoric reference indirect

The Fall of - cataphoric reference of construction
The fatal drama - cataphoric reference of construction
The primal fruit theft – larger general knowledge
The same time of - cataphoric reference of construction
The most – logical use
The choice – cataphoric reference appositive
The hard way – anaphoric reference indirect
The meaning - cataphoric reference of construction
The word – cataphoric reference appositive
The woman – anaphoric reference indirect
The alleys -anaphoric reference indirect
The slow river – point of view
The cracks -cataphoric reference appositive
The window frames – generic reference
The contours - cataphoric reference of construction
The custard apple - cataphoric reference of construction

Poetry

The language of – cataphoric reference of construction
The trees – generic reference
The smallest – logical use
The uses of - cataphoric reference of construction
The stillness of - cataphoric reference of construction
The chaos of - cataphoric reference of construction
The tricks of - cataphoric reference of construction
The uses of - cataphoric reference of construction
The woods – topical use
The forest – anaphoric reference indirect
The ferns . point of view
The forest – anaphoric reference direct
The trees – generic reference
The way – point of view
The dark – role
The bark of - cataphoric reference of construction
The woods – anaphoric reference indirect
The splint-fillings - cataphoric reference of construction
The broker – point of view
The end – logical use
The line – anaphoric reference indirect
The unravelling bribe – cataphoric reference apposition
The throat- generic reference
The cost of - cataphoric reference of construction
The Bosphorus – geographical location
The winning goal – anaphoric reference indirect
The visa – generic reference
The flight grounds – generic reference
The landing boat – point of view

The Marmaran sea – geographical location
The window pane - point of view
The wish column – point of view
The sweating column – anaphoric reference direct
The weeping column – anaphoric reference direct
The muezzin’s voice – point of view
The last – logical use
The security guard – cataphoric reference apposition
At the door – point of view
The treasury chamber – cataphoric reference apposition
The dome – point of view
The divan’s eiderdown – point of view
The Malfili of – cataphoric reference of construction
The blue /green mosaics – anaphoric reference indirect
The hand of – cataphoric reference of construction
The sky – larger general knowledge
The holy texts – anaphoric reference indirect
The same tiles – anaphoric reference indirect
The translation of – cataphoric reference of construction
The ten commandments – larger general knowledge
The guidebook – point of view
The gold – cataphoric reference apposition
The night sky – larger general knowledge
The periods of - cataphoric reference of construction
The light – cataphoric reference apposition
They eyes - cataphoric reference of construction
The stars – larger general knowledge
The movie – cataphoric reference apposition
The days of - cataphoric reference of construction
The tedium of - cataphoric reference of construction
The waking of - cataphoric reference of construction
The hole – cataphoric reference of construction
The end – logical use
The slots of - cataphoric reference of construction
The flicker - cataphoric reference of construction
The granite yard – point of view
The city – topical use
The word – anaphoric reference indirect
The fire - topical use
The updraft – anaphoric reference indirect
The scalding – anaphoric reference indirect
The dead syllable – anaphoric reference indirect
The panel – cataphoric reference apposition
The wall – point of view
The passage – point of view
The stair – cataphoric reference relative clause
The top – logical use
The spider – anaphoric reference indirect

The center of – cataphoric reference of construction
The dress – cataphoric reference apposition
The face of – cataphoric reference of construction
The way – cataphoric reference apposition
The voice of – cataphoric reference of construction
The stars – larger general knowledge
The space of – cataphoric reference of construction
The trees of – cataphoric reference of construction
The landscape – point of view
The world – larger general knowledge
The sea – larger general knowledge
The end of – cataphoric reference of construction
The nightshift – point of view
The Mazda - point of view
The drive - point of view
The paper - point of view
The wheel - point of view
The sweeper- point of view
The pavement - point of view
The radio - point of view
The cigar – cataphoric reference apposition
The car – anaphoric reference indirect
The report – cataphoric reference apposition

Spoken language

The happiest day of your life: cataphoric reference of construction
Make the leap: anaphoric reference indirect
The happiest day : anaphoric reference direct
The only day : logical use
The most special : logical use
The only person: logical use
The ball gown: anaphoric reference indirect meronym
The only person: logical use
The most : logical use
The earth: general knowledge
The build up : discourse prominence
The big day: anaphoric reference indirect
The experience of : cataphoric reference of construction
The sixty eight of your ex wives: cataphoric reference of construction
The occasion: anaphoric reference indirect
The occasion: anaphoric reference direct
The occasion: anaphoric reference direct
The most important : logical use
The most important day: logical use
The same same person: immediate situation
The first time : ordinal use
The English: point of view

The kilt : anaphoric reference direct
The major part of : cataphoric reference of construction
The same : anaphoric reference indirect
The wind – immediate situation
The wind – anaphoric reference direct
In the bottom – cataphoric reference of construction
On the other side – immediate situation
The word - anaphoric reference indirect
I had the time - immediate situation
For the daughter – immediate situation
The police – immediate situation
The stuff – anaphoric reference indirect
The one - anaphoric reference indirect
The two - anaphoric reference indirect
The paracetamol – immediate situation
The dissolving ones – anaphoric reference indirect
The swallowing – anaphoric reference indirect
The ones – anaphoric reference indirect
The dissolving ones – anaphoric reference indirect
By the way – fixed phrase
The same – anaphoric reference indirect
The extra stuff - immediate situation
The change – anaphoric reference indirect
By the Lodge - immediate situation
The Health Board – immediate situation
The regulations - immediate situation
The door - immediate situation
The rest of – cataphoric reference of construction
The family – immediate situation
The result of – cataphoric reference of construction
The first – ordinal use
The end of - cataphoric reference of construction
The nurse – anaphoric reference direct
The worse part – anaphoric reference indirect
The same thing – anaphoric reference indirect
The most common – logical use
At the start – immediate situation
From the start – anaphoric reference direct
The help – cataphoric reference
The group – cataphoric reference relative clause
The point at - cataphoric reference relative clause
Well the point – anaphoric reference direct
Shut the door - fixed phrase
The drugs – anaphoric reference direct
The children – anaphoric reference direct
The decision – anaphoric reference indirect
The end – logical use
The two children – anaphoric reference direct

The question – anaphoric reference indirect
The response – immediate situation
The doctors: sporadic reference
The odd joint – general knowledge frequency
the simplest – logical use
the MRC workign parties – cataphoric reference relative clause
the last – logical use
the point of view – cataphoric referece of construction
the others - anaphoric reference indirect
the first one – ordinal use
the result of – cataphoric reference of construction
the three month check – cataphoric reference
the second one – logical use ordinal
the number of – cataphoric reference of construction
the suggested protocols – anaphoric reference indirect
the low risk – anaphoric reference direct
the first – ordinal use
the intermidiate risk – anaphoric reference direct
the high risk group – anaphoric reference direct
the three month check – anaphoric reference direct
the beginning – anaphoric reference indirect
one of the groups – cataphoric reference of construction
the other on of the groups – cataphoric reference of construction
the criticisms of – cataphoric reference of construction
the MRc – anaphoric reference direct
The secondary – ordinal use
The first year – ordinal
The children – anaphoric reference indirect
the police – immediate situation
the drug – anaphoric reference indirect

Journalism

The rise of - cataphoric reference of construction
The gate crashers- cataphoric reference apposition
The top – logical use
the Czech Republic – article with geographical names
the glamour - cataphoric reference of construction
the chance - cataphoric reference apposition
the impression- cataphoric reference relative clause
the most- logical use
the game – anaphoric reference indirect
the gym- sporadic use
the third – ordinal use
the feeling- anaphoric reference indirect
the top – logical use
the club – anaphoric reference indirect
the family – anaphoric reference indirect

the limelight- discourse prominence
the family – anaphoric reference direct
The final – cataphoric reference of construction
The county – anaphoric reference direct
The president – role
The town – anaphoric reference indirect
The streets of – cataphoric reference of construction
the town – anaphoric reference direct
The event – anaphoric reference indirect
The president – role
The last surviving – logical
In the town – anaphoric reference direct
The mayor of Ballina – cataphoric reference of construction
The president – Role
The area – anaphoric reference indirect
for the president – role
On the one hand – anaphoric reference indirect
The President Joe – role
The locals – anaphoric reference indirect
The star of not – cataphoric reference of construction
The film – anaphoric reference indirect
The business – anaphoric reference indirect
The face – cataphoric reference of construction
The self-effacing manners – cataphoric reference of construction
The audience – point of view
The real world – larger general knowledge
The bugs – cataphoric reference appositive
The worms – cataphoric reference appositive
The crickets – anaphoric reference indirect
The project – anaphoric reference indirect
The novel – anaphoric reference indirect
The film – anaphoric reference direct
The wooing – anaphoric reference direct
The chemicals - role
The chemical – cataphoric reference of construction
The rapper – cataphoric reference apposition
The devil – larger general knowledge
The switch – anaphoric reference indirect
The weekend – anaphoric reference direct
The most – cataphoric reference of construction
The squeeze – discourse prominence
The prospect – cataphoric reference of construction
The factors – cataphoric reference relative clause
The company – anaphoric reference indirect
The change – anaphoric reference indirect
The same – anaphoric reference indirect
The job – anaphoric reference indirect

The 25 year old – anaphoric reference indirect
The Netherlands – geographical location
The time – anaphoric reference indirect
The gym – sporadic use
The Netherlands – geographical location
The couple – anaphoric reference indirect
The extra day – anaphoric reference indirect
The rush of – cataphoric reference of construction
The value of – cataphoric reference of construction
The first quater – ordinal use
The Fed – discourse prominence
The Federal reserve – anaphoric reference indirect
The rising cost of – cataphoric reference of construction
The Labor department – sporadic
The same growth – anaphoric reference indirect
The Fed – anaphoric reference direct
The labor market . cataphoric reference appositive
The results of – cataphoric reference of construction
The first quater – ordinal use
The economy – anaphoric reference direct
The labor market – anaphoric reference direct
The wage figures- cataphoric reference appositive
The middle of – cataphoric reference of construction
The pandemic - larger general knowledge
The wage data – cataphoric reference appositive
The wage data – anaphoric reference direct
The Fed – anaphoric reference direct
The bottom of – cataphoric reference of construction
The Fed – anaphoric reference direct
The recent bout of – cataphoric reference of construction
The central bank’s target of – cataphoric reference of construction
The pandemic-era – cataphoric reference relative clause
The initial pop of – cataphoric reference of construction
at the time – anaphoric reference indirect
the club – anaphoric reference indirect
The manager – anaphoric reference indirect
The pitch – anaphoric reference indirect
The manager – anaphoric reference direct

Academic language

The cognitive framework – topical use
The insight – cataphoric reference relative clause
The product of – cataphoric reference of construction
The principles of - cataphoric reference of construction
The first three chapters – cataphoric reference apposition

The cognitive framework – anaphoric reference direct
The grammar of – cataphoric reference of construction
The reader - generic reference
The basic units of - cataphoric reference of construction
The cognitive approach – cataphoric reference apposition
The cognitive processes – anaphoric reference indirect
The inventor of - cataphoric reference of construction
The meanings of - cataphoric reference of construction
The cognitive operations – cataphoric reference apposition
The final product of - cataphoric reference of construction
The speaker – generic reference
The hearer – generic reference
The packaging - cataphoric reference of construction
The speaker – anaphoric reference direct
The hearer – anaphoric reference direct
The speaker – anaphoric reference direct
The hearer – anaphoric reference direct
The meanings – cataphoric reference apposition
The speaker – anaphoric reference direct
The recipient of - cataphoric reference of construction
The North Slope of - cataphoric reference of construction
The spring hunt of - cataphoric reference of construction
The clonal musculature of - cataphoric reference of construction
The population of - cataphoric reference of construction
The Atlantic coast of - cataphoric reference of construction
The two species – cataphoric reference apposition
The baleen whales – anaphoric reference direct
The striking changes – cataphoric reference apposition
The factory whaling era – cataphoric reference relative clause.
The time of - cataphoric reference of construction
The 1982. – ordinal
The world’s whaling populations – anaphoric reference indirect
The trophic structure of - cataphoric reference of construction
The traffic of - cataphoric reference of construction
The whale – anaphoric reference direct
The side of - cataphoric reference of construction
The result of - cataphoric reference of construction
The human impact – cataphoric reference apposition
The ability of - cataphoric reference of construction
The base of - cataphoric reference of construction
The latter – anaphoric reference indirect
The conservation - cataphoric reference of construction
The regions – cataphoric reference apposition
The 1940s – larger general knowledge
The winds – generic reference
The scale of - cataphoric reference of construction
The Project – topical use
The notion of - cataphoric reference of construction

The world – larger general knowledge
The state . anaphoric reference indirect
The owner of - cataphoric reference of construction
The resources – anaphoric reference indirect
The regulators of – cataphoric reference of construction
The extractive sector – anaphoric reference indirect
The government – anaphoric reference indirect
The capacity – cataphoric reference apposition
The communities – cataphoric reference relative clause
The land – anaphoric reference indirect
The project . cataphoric reference apposition
The Panguna mine – geographical location
The island of - cataphoric reference of construction
The Ok Tedi mine - geographical location
The Province – geographical location
The 1980s– larger general knowlege
The two mines – anaphoric reference direct
The sector – anaphoric reference indirect
The Ok Tedi mine – anaphoric reference direct
The most famous – logical use
The history of – cataphoric reference of construction
The industry – anaphoric reference indirect
The legacy of – cataphoric reference of construction
the function of - cataphoric reference of construction
the emotions - cataphoric reference apposition
The melody – cataphoric reference apposition
The pop song – cataphoric reference apposition
The function of - cataphoric reference of construction
The artist – anaphoric reference indirect
The Old Testament – larger general knowledge
The narrative – anaphoric reference indirect
The form of - cataphoric reference of construction
The news of - cataphoric reference of construction
The brothers – anaphoric reference indirect
The old man – anaphoric reference indirect
The most moving moments – logical use
The evocation of - cataphoric reference of construction
The nineteenth century – ordinal
The present – role
The present – anaphoric reference direct
The stanza of - cataphoric reference of construction
The lyrics – anaphoric reference indirect
The stardust of - cataphoric reference of construction
The emotions – cataphoric reference apposition
The issue of - cataphoric reference of construction
The song cycles – cataphoric reference apposition
The literature of – cataphoric reference of construction