

Concept types and determination

SEBASTIAN LÖBNER

ABSTRACT

The paper offers a systematic account of four basic types of nouns, of four basic types of nominal determination, and of the interaction of noun type and determination type. The four basic noun types are sortal, individual, relational, and functional; they correspond to the four logical types $\langle e,t \rangle$, e , $\langle e,\langle e,t \rangle \rangle$, and $\langle e,e \rangle$ on the one hand, and to four types of concepts on the other. The four basic types of nominal determination are singular definite, indefinite (a variety of determinations including simple indefinite), absolute, and relative, where possessive determination is a combination of relative reference and possessor specification. Only inherently unique concepts are available for singular definite reference, only nonunique ones for indefinite use, only nonrelational concepts for absolute reference, and only relational ones for relative use. However, determiners of each type can be combined with nouns of each lexical type: if the type restrictions are not met, the noun is shifted to an appropriate type. On this basis, congruent and incongruent determinations are distinguished. Statistical, typological, and historical evidence is presented that corroborates the hypothesis that incongruent determination is a marked option and involves type shifts of the noun.

To appear in *Journal of Semantics*