

Calling things by their names – An experimental study on the referential status of nouns used in name-informing quotation

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Introduction



“Miranda”: *what I call* as running gag



There was a little, what I call, incident, in which the police unnecessarily got involved.

[Season 2, Episode 5]

The only thing missing is, what I call a groom.

[Season 3, Episode 8]

Problem



Notice the article

*The only thing missing is, what I call **a** groom.*

Demonstrations of linguistic shapes usually do not contain an article

“Sofa” has four letters.

**A “sofa” has four letters.*

Others, however, do

*A couch is also referred as “sofa” / **a** “sofa”.*

*The phenomenon is called “sun halo” / **a** “sun halo”.*



A couch is also referred as “sofa” / a “sofa”.

The phenomenon is called “sun halo” / a “sun halo”.

Härtl (2020):

- **Referential hybrids** between demonstrated and denotational content
- Predicate involves **copular relation**: *A couch is a sofa, The phenomenon is a sun halo*
- Copula entails a **referring interpretation** of the quoted nominal
- What are empirical reflectors of this assumption?
 - Is the name with an article “more” referential?
 - Use of quotation marks
 - Pronoun resolution

Name-informing quotation

Semantics of name-informing quotation



Name-informing quotation informs about shapes of conventionalized names

The purity of gold is referred to with the word “karat”.

Doctors call this disease “septicemia”.

call contains three thematic arguments

Doctors call this disease “septicemia”.

x call y “ n ”

$\lambda y \lambda n \lambda x$ [CALL(x , y , NAME(“ n ”, y))]

Semantics of name-informing quotation



Doctors call *this disease* “septicemia”.

$\lambda y \lambda n \lambda x [\text{CALL}(x, y, \text{NAME}(\text{“}n\text{”}, y))]$

$[[y]] = [[n]]$

Doctors call *this disease* “septicemia” and *this disease is a septicemia*.

#Doctors call *this disease* “septicemia” but *this disease is not a septicemia*.

→ name-informing *call* entails a copular relation

An underspecified copula

Two types of copulas



x call y “ n ”

$\lambda P \lambda y \lambda n \lambda x$ [CALL(x , y , NAME(“ n ”, y) \wedge P(y , n))]

(1) Identificational copula (e.g., Mikkelsen 2011, Higgins 1979)

Doctors call this disease “septicemia”.

→ *This disease is a septicemia.*

The phenomenon is called “sun halo”.

→ *The phenomenon is a sun halo.*

Non-referential pronoun in left dislocation configurations

*Die Erscheinung, **das** ist ein Sonnenring.* (‘the phenomenon that is a sun halo’)

**Die Erscheinung, die ist ein Sonnenring.*

Two types of copulas



(2) Identity copula

A couch is also referred to as a “sofa” → A couch is a sofa

A pullover is also called a “sweater” → A pullover is a sweater

No left dislocation: #*Eine Couch, das ist ein Sofa.*

Obligatory additive semantics: particle *also / can be called*

Empirical correlations



Quotes materialize the Manner principle:

An expression is mentioned rather than used denotatively

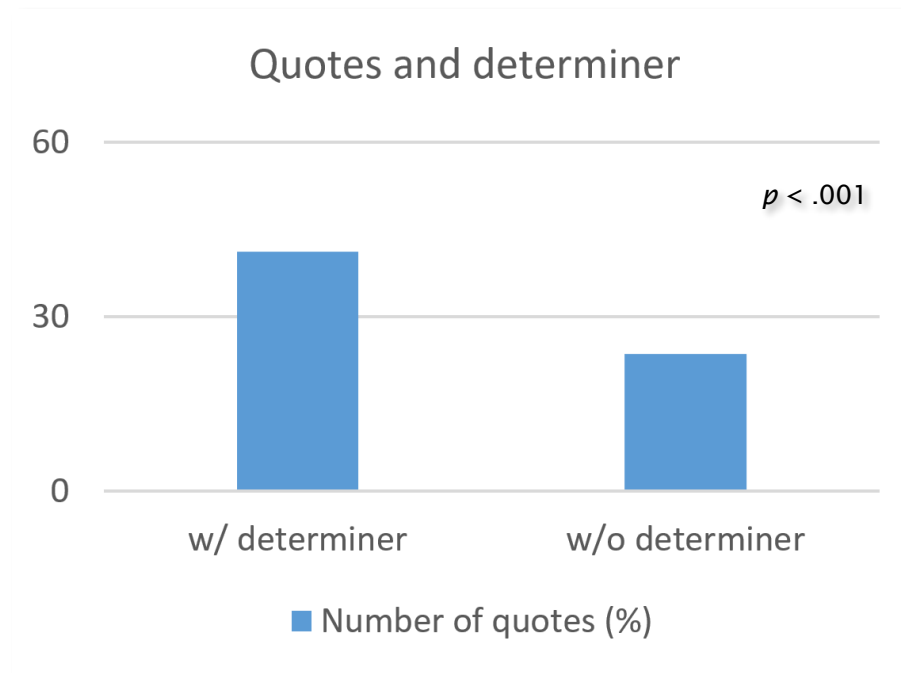
Hypothesis 1: Quotes are used more often in NIQ when an article occurs

Account: Quotes highlight the name's metalinguistic use in NIQ with article



German data (DeReKo): Sentences with *nennen* ('call') with and without *auch* ('also'), each N = 500

Construction: *Man nennt X (auch) Y*



Quotational *nennen*
(N = 1000)

→ Hypothesis 1 confirmed



Participants decided if they prefer (5-point Likert) quoted or non-quoted versions of a noun presented in two context sentences (see Raue 2020)

Material (48 sentences)

NIQ with article (NIQ Art)

Die Wanderer beobachten, dass ein vorübergehender, starker Niederschlag gefallen ist. Dieses Phänomen nennt man

einen Wolkenbruch. . . . einen „Wolkenbruch“.

NIQ without article (NIQ No Art)

Der Architekt schlägt vor, auf das neue Haus ein Dach mit abgewinkelten Seiten zu setzen. Man nennt diese Konstruktion

Satteldach. . . . „Satteldach“.

Controls

... *beklagt jedoch der Lehrer / der „Lehrer“*

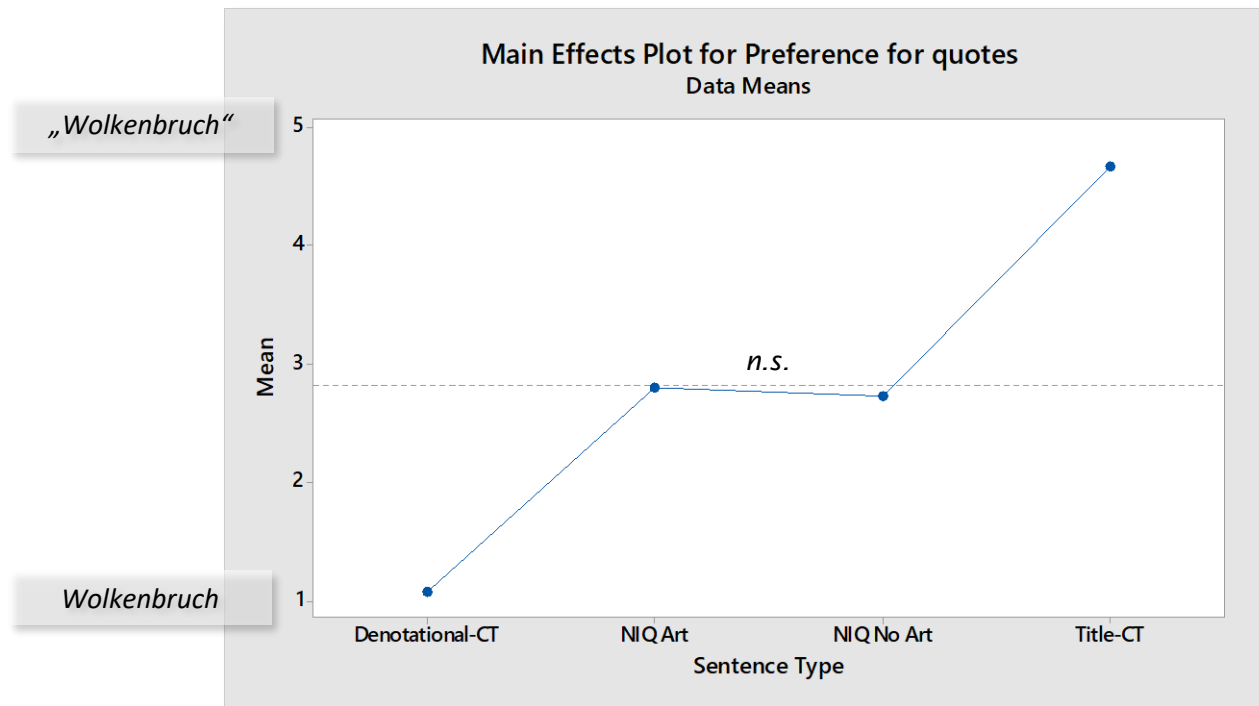
(Denotational-CT)

... *findet sich in Der kleine Prinz / „Der kleine Prinz“*

(Title-CT)



Results



→ Hypothesis 1 rejected



Man nennt diese Konstruktion ein Satteldach ... es ...

Man nennt diese Konstruktion Satteldach ... es ...



Hypotheses:

(1) Names used **with an article** in NIQ are **referentially “more” active** than names used without an article.

(2) Names used **without an article** in NIQ are “more” metalinguistic and **referentially opaque**.

Reading-time study:

Test the hypotheses using pronouns in follow-up sentences and check for latencies in reading time



Material

32 items each containing eight conditions and controls for each of those

Critical conditions

- NIQ w/ article (= “referring”) vs. NIQ w/o article (= “metalinguistic”)
- Endocentric compounds (NN, VN) as names, controlled for frequency
- *nennen* vs. *bezeichnen als*
- Canonical vs. focal word order

Controls

*Die Ausgabe*_{FEM} *betrachtet man als einen Kostenfaktor*_{MASC} (referring use)

*Man vernimmt das Wort*_{NEUT} *Schneeregen*_{MASC} (metalinguistic use)



Participants read (self-paced) short paragraphs and had to answer a yes-no question afterwards

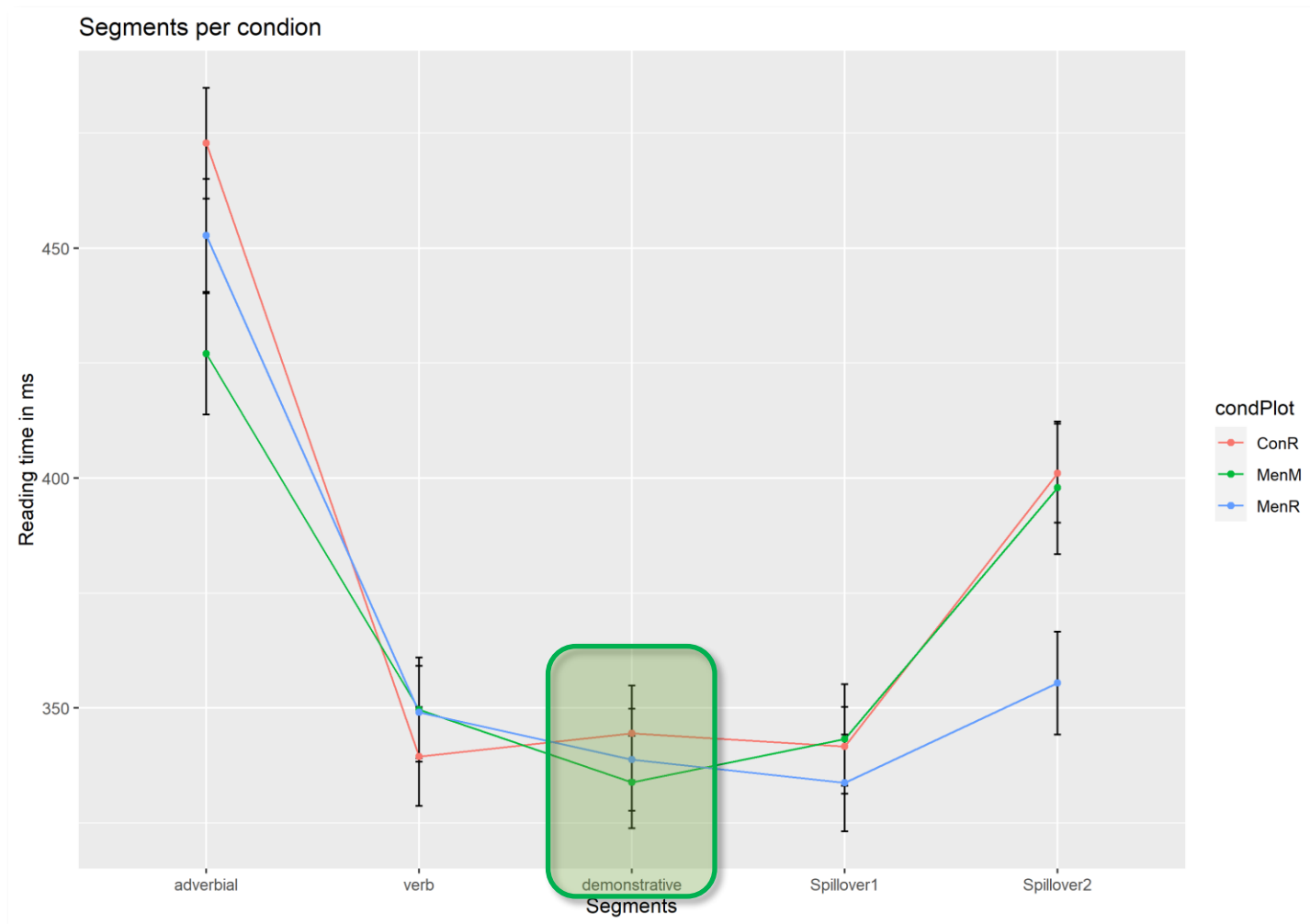
Example (NIQ w/ article)

Context	<i>Leckere Fruchtpürees aus Bananen und Äpfeln werden mit einer Küchenmaschine schnell zubereitet.</i>					
Intro	<i>Man</i>	<i>nennt</i>	<i>das Gerät</i> _{NEUT}	<i>einen Standmixer</i> _{MASC}		
Target	<i>Teilweise</i>	<i>funktioniert</i>	<i>dieser</i> _{MASC}	<i>bis zu</i>	<i>10 Jahre</i>	<i>lang.</i>
Content question	<i>Hält ein Standmixer teilweise länger als fünf Jahre?</i>					<i>JA</i>

Self-paced reading

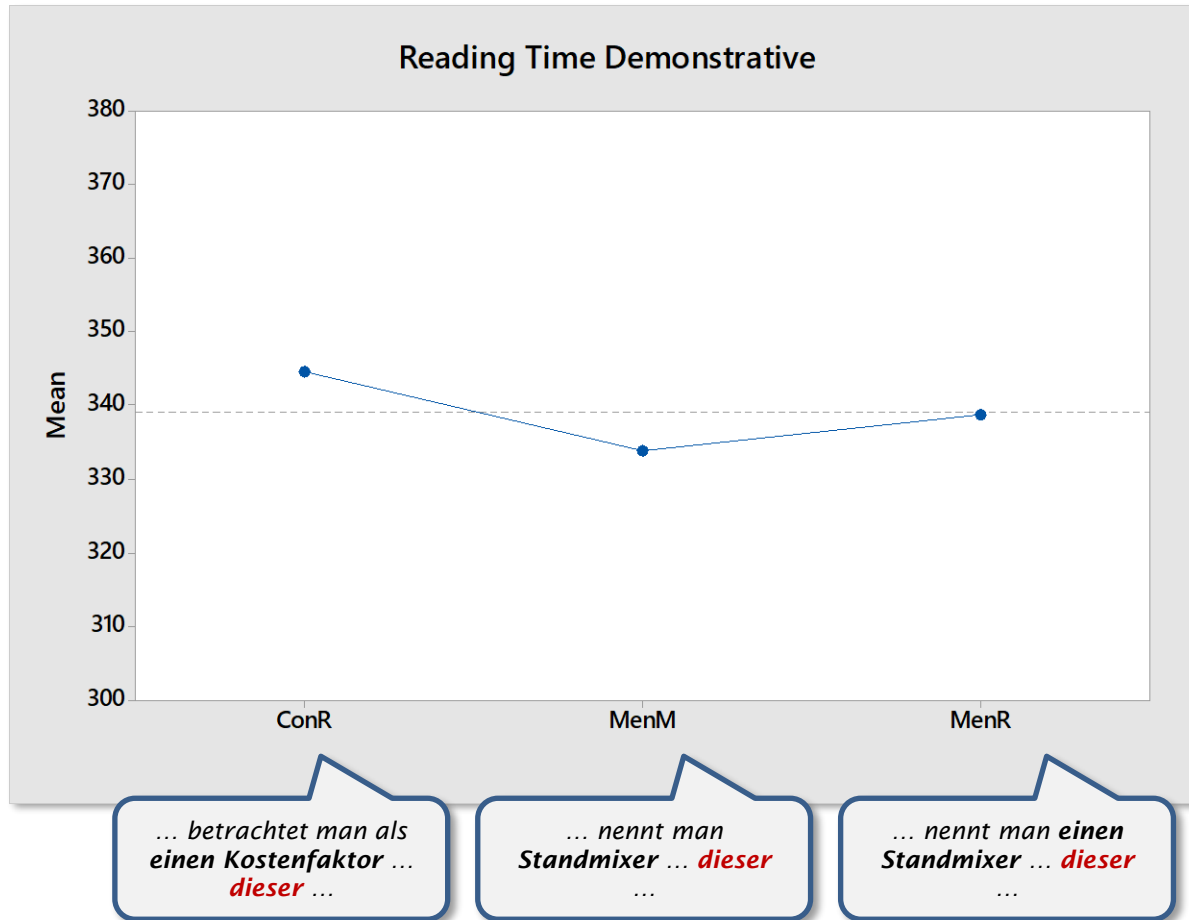


Current results RTs across target sentences (N = 14)



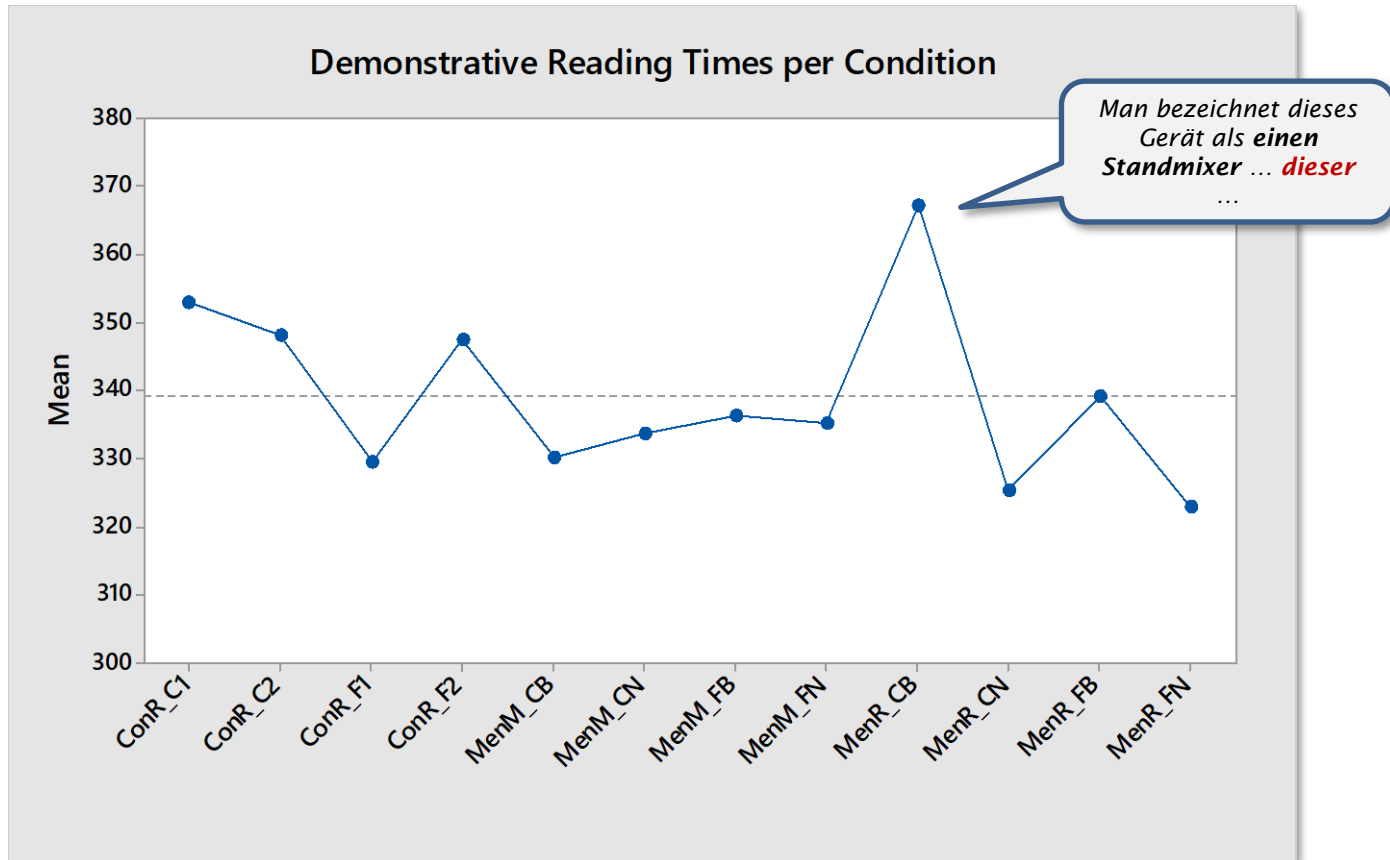


Current results RTs for demonstrative (N = 14, *n.s.*)





Current results RTs per condition





- ▶ Name-informing quotation can involve referring nouns
- ▶ Name-informing predicates introduce copular relation: identificational & identity copula
- ▶ Corpus data indicate a correlation between article use and the use of quotes
- ▶ No evidence for this in survey data
- ▶ No evidence so far for a stronger referentiality of NIQ w/ article as compared to NIQ w/o article: One semantics for both!
- ▶ Further data and analysis needed

Thank you.



All references can be found in Härtl (2020):

Härtl, Holden (2020) [Referring nouns in name-informing quotation: A copula-based approach](#).

In: Michael Franke, Nikola Kompa, Mingya Liu, Jutta L. Mueller & Juliane Schwab

(eds.) [Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung 24 - Vol. 1](#). U Osnabrück / HU Berlin, 291-304.

Raue, Natascha (in prep.) *Reference to Names: A Theoretical and Empirical Exploration of Name Mentioning*. Staatsexamen thesis, U Kassel.