

〔Refereed Article〕

Countability of Emotion Nouns and State Nouns

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Abstract

Grammatical behavior of abstract nouns denoting emotions (e.g. *anger*) and states (e.g. *silence*) is examined with the data collected from the Bank of English and other corpora to explore what makes these two types of nouns behave as count or noncount nouns. Emotion nouns and state nouns behave differently in terms of countability. The basic difference is: i) Emotion nouns are count when the focus is on the source of a feeling or when they refer to various types of feelings; ii) State nouns are count when the focus is on boundedness in temporal space, which allows an event interpretation. State nouns are generally not conceptualized in type space, except for *illness*. Pre-modifying adjectives may have some influence on the use of the indefinite article (*a/an*) and zero determiner (\emptyset). Adjectives that emphasize the quality of a referent (e.g. *absolute silence*, *total silence*) motivate the use of \emptyset , while those that emphasize boundedness in temporal space (e.g. *long silence*, *short silence*) motivate the use of *a/an*.

1. Introduction

It has been a well-known fact that some abstract noncount nouns (ANNs) in English admit *a/an* (e.g. *a good knowledge*) and pluralization (e.g. *happineses*). “Despite the vast literature on the count-mass distinction, the exact nature of what guides countability for abstract nouns is currently little understood” (Grimm 2014: 182). Linguists and lexicographers have proposed several conditions that influence ANNs to admit *a/an* and pluralization. They can be summarized into four groups: 1) types of nouns (Quirk et al. 1985, Sinclair et al. 1990, Swan 1995, 2005, 2016, LDOCE, MEDAL¹⁾; 2) modification, especially pre-modifying adjectives (Francis et al. 1998, Jespersen 1949, OALD, LAAD, COBUILD, MALED); 3) reference to an instance (Biber et al. 1999, Downing & Locke 2002, CALD); 4) context, i.e. emphasis on the individual, particular nature of a referent (Berry 1993, Downing & Locke 2002, Hewson 1972); 5) ontological contrasts, i.e. physical and temporal bounding (Croft & Cruse 2004, Langacker 1987, 1991, 2008, Lee 2001, Radden & Dirven 2007, Talmy 2000). None of these conditions has been clearly described in the way that would help L2 learners of English grasp when to use *a/an* with ANNs or to pluralize ANNs. This article is an effort to uncover some of the distinctions that determine the countability of abstract nouns. The following two hypotheses will be proposed on the assumption that ANNs belonging to the same semantic group (e.g. emotion nouns such as *fear* and *happiness*) share the same conditions:

- i) Emotion nouns (e.g. *worry*) are count when the focus is on the source of a feeling or when they refer to various types of feelings.
- ii) State nouns (e.g. *silence*) are count when the focus is on boundedness in temporal space.

When not sure about the countability of a noun, L2 learners are advised to use learner's dictionaries to check if a noun is count (or countable) or noncount (or uncountable) (Swan 2016: 119.2). Learner's dictionaries have grammar labels 'countable' and 'uncountable,' but labeling often varies from dictionary to dictionary. For example, *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (LDOCE) and *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (CALD) label *worry* in the sense of the feeling of anxiety as both countable and uncountable, while *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (OALD) and *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary* (COBUILD) label it as uncountable. This confusion in count-noncount labeling comes from the fact that difference in meaning does not fit count/noncount distinction. *Worry* has basically two different meanings: the feeling of being worried and the source of the feeling (i.e. a problem that causes the feeling). *Worry* in the first sense is generally labeled as noncount, while *worry* in the second sense as count. LDOCE and CALD provide the following example sentences (a, b) to demonstrate that *worry* denoting the feeling can be count, while COBUILD provides a sentence (c) to demonstrate that *worry* denoting a source of the feeling is count.

- a. FEELING: We had **no worries** about safety. (LDOCE)
- b. FEELING: It was clear that Anna had **no worries** about her husband's attempts to flirt. (CALD)
- c. SOURCE: His wife Cheryl said she had **no worries** about his health. (COBUILD)

These sentences share the same construction, [Subject+to have+*no worries about* NP (Noun Phrase)], in which the term *worries* denotes the feeling of being worried, but not the sources of worry. *Worries* does not mean sources of the feeling (i.e. problems) in this construction. *We had no worries about safety* means that we did not worry about safety. Replacing *worries* with *problems* will mean *We had no problems about safety*. In terms of countability, *worry* has three meanings: the feeling in general, which is noncount (e.g. *His mother was desperate with worry*); a feeling caused by a particular source, which is count (e.g. *He has expressed serious worries over the conference to be held in London*); a source of the feeling, which is count (e.g. *His mother's health is a constant worry*). *Worry* is noncount when the focus is on the feeling, while it is count when the focus is on the source (or sources). Dictionaries should list these three senses if they give sufficient information about the count/noncount distinction of *worry*.

We need to provide L2 learners with guidelines which state the conditions that make abstract nouns behave as count or noncount nouns. In the following sections, we will examine the grammatical behavior of abstract nouns denoting emotions and feelings such as *anger* (hereafter referred to as *emotion nouns*) and nouns denoting states such as *silence* (hereafter referred to as *state nouns*) with the data collected from the Bank of English and other corpora, and we will see that the focus on the source of a feeling makes emotion nouns behave as count nouns, while the focus on boundedness in temporal space makes state nouns behave as count nouns.

2. Emotion nouns

The grammatical behavior of 15 abstract nouns that denote emotions and feelings are examined to

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explore what makes them admit \emptyset ²⁾, *a/an* and pluralization. The 15 nouns are: *anger, anxiety, comfort, fear, happiness, hatred, hope, joy, love, pleasure, sadness, sorrow, surprise, sympathy, worry*. Emotion nouns are generally classified as noncount when they denote the feelings, while they are classified as count when they refer to a source of the feeling (e.g. a situation, an event, a person, a fact, a piece of information, etc.) as shown in the following examples of *worry* and *surprise* (1–6).

WORRY

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| 1) FEELING (\emptyset): | His mother was desperate with worry . | (LDOCE) |
| 2) SOURCE (<i>a/an</i>): | His mother's health is a constant worry . | (MALED) ³⁾ |
| 3) SOURCE (pl.): | His money worries are over. | (MEDAL) ⁴⁾ |

SURPRISE

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 4) FEELING (\emptyset): | Many students expressed surprise at the news. | (MEDAL) |
| 5) SOURCE (<i>a/an</i>): | Their engagement announcement was a big surprise . | (LAAD) ⁵⁾ |
| 6) SOURCE (pl.): | Life's full of surprises . | (OALD) ⁶⁾ |

2.1. Emotion nouns and reference to sources of a feeling

Instances of 15 emotion nouns that occur in the [Subject+Copula *be*+Emotion Noun] construction have been searched, in which the subject is the source of a feeling: e.g. *His mother's health is a constant worry*. Twelve of these emotion nouns refer to a source of the feeling in this construction (*anxiety, comfort, fear, happiness, hope, joy, love, pleasure, sadness, sorrow, surprise, worry*). They behave as count nouns and occur with *a/an* and in the plural form (7–30). The emotion nouns of *anger, hatred* and *sympathy* do not occur in this construction where the emotion noun denotes the source of the feeling (31–34).

ANXIETY

- 7) Her son was **a continual anxiety**; he stole and went missing.
- 8) Alongside the more familiar **parental anxieties**—such as placing children in good schools and universities—there is now a new cause for concern.

COMFORT

- 9) His presence was **a great comfort** to Katharine, who guiltily spoilt him.
- 10) Eating may be one of **her few comforts** in life at present.

FEAR

- 11) Crime is **a constant fear**, especially in the cities.
- 12) Traffic and crime were **the greatest fears** for the 10- and 11-year-old children interviewed.

HAPPINESS

- 13) I always think of you as the one dear object whose presence has ever been **a great happiness** to me.
- 14) He afterwards regarded making friends with Lord Halifax as one of **the happinesses** of the York years.

HOPE

- 15) Every new job created is **a new hope** for someone.

16) These two athletes are **our main hopes** for the Olympics.

JOY

17) Swimming is **an absolute joy** when the local pool is outside.

18) Good chicken and good wine are **essential joys** of the table, of his family, and of his life.

LOVE

19) Baseball is **a love** of mine.

20) Family and sports were his greatest **loves**.

PLEASURE

21) A good nonfiction book should be **a pleasure** to read.

22) It's often life's **simpler pleasures** — like listening to music, reading a book or having a massage — that offer the most immediate gratification.

SADNESS

23) Princess Margaret's passing was **a sadness** for the royal family.

24) Yet the qualities that make *Ulysses* so loved are often overlooked. It is a deeply humane, compassionate novel. Joyce's account of the small joys and quiet **sadnesses** of Bloom's life is unsurpassed in its intimacy.

SORROW

25) Her passing is **a sorrow** to us all and our thoughts and sympathies are with her family.

26) Your death was only one of **many sorrows** I had been through.

SURPRISE

27) Allan's decision is **a surprise** to all of us.

28) There are **a few surprises** during the show, but I won't spill the beans.

WORRY

29) With a family to support, money was **a constant worry** for Hincks.

30) In the countryside, wind farms and rubbish dumps are **the main worries**, along with large roads and airports.

ANGER, HATRED, SYMPATHY

31) ?His presence is an anger/a hatred.

32) ?Traffic and crime are angers/hatreds.

33) ?His death was a sympathy.

34) ?His death was one of my sympathies.

2.2. Emotion nouns and reference to the feeling

I have searched for instances of 15 emotion nouns⁷⁾ that occur in the [to express/feel+up to 2 words+Noun] construction in which nouns denote the feeling but not a source of the feeling: e.g. *They expressed anger at the decision* (See Table A1, A2 in Appendix A). Seven nouns (*anger, anxiety, fear, hatred, hope, pleasure, worry*) behave as both count and noncount nouns, and they admit *ø, a/an* and pluralization (35–55). Five nouns (*love, sadness, sorrow, surprise, sympathy*⁸⁾) behave as noncount nouns, although they admit *a/an* when the individual, particular nature of the feeling is emphasized, often post-modified by a relative clause (56–66).

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COUNT

ANGER

- 35) Anti-abortion activists expressed **anger** at the decision yesterday.
- 36) An Auschwitz survivor seized the microphone to express **a bewildered anger**, undiminished by six decades.
- 37) I'm not saying that anger at the externals should be suppressed — just the opposite. Patients must be encouraged to express **all their angers**, resentments, hatreds, and fears.

ANXIETY

- 38) One year after the unveiling of Roy Romanow's landmark report on medicare, Canadians' gloom over the health system is beginning to lift as considerably fewer voters express **anxiety** about the future.
- 39) As Stephen Jessel reports from Paris, the schoolchildren are also expressing **a deeper anxiety** about their own future.
- 40) Britain has expressed **anxieties** about the situation in Kenya and has urged the early release of detainees there.

FEAR

- 41) When their plane was forced by weather to stay overnight in El Salvador, a Salvadoran woman and a Guatemalan woman expressed **fear** that they'd be murdered by death squads if they deplaned.
- 42) However, the tenants on the two estates, who voted more than two-to-one against the scheme, had expressed **a fear** that rents would have gone up under the new arrangements.
- 43) The child may then express **some unrealistic fears** and the parents will have an opportunity to explore **these fears** and reassure the child.

HATRED

- 44) However, he **expressed hatred** for Robert Kennedy because of Kennedy's support of Israel.
- 45) But he did **express a hatred** toward police. "I do hate police. Police are a big lie. Kids are taught that police are the good guys, that you should trust them and they will protect you," said Sand.
- 46) Religions and God-talk generally offer us tools and languages for expressing our ideals, **hatreds**, aspirations, fears, and feelings

HOPE

- 47) Mr. de Villepin expressed **hope** that relations with Washington will become smoother.
- 48) And he expressed **a hope** that the government would soon release the political detainees.
- 49) They expressed **hopes** that Pakistan and the Soviet Union would work together for stability and progress in the region.

PLEASURE

- 50) She expressed **pleasure** at her poll numbers.
- 51) Barnaby looks down at Kate's hand: it is small and very feminine with shell-pink nails. The touch of that hand makes Barnaby feel **a pleasure** he has almost forgotten.
- 52) She forgot the painful lessons of the past and felt only **the pleasures** of the present streaming through her.

WORRY

- 53) Penner also expressed **worry** that Bush may lack the political will to block any spending increases approved by Congress.
- 54) It expressed **a worry** that broadcasters were finding ways of portraying violence in subtler ways.
- 55) The Environment Secretary, Mr Chris Patten, has expressed **serious worries** over the conference to be held in London by the UN Environment programme later this month on measures to protect the ozone layer.

NONCOUNT

LOVE

- 56) If the parents struggle to express **love** to one another openly, the child can sense that she is living in a “loveless” environment and imagine that she is not loved.
- 57) While some expressed **a love** of their work, most were concerned with long hours damaging family, friendships and community life.

SADNESS

- 58) The Queen, however, has no intention of saying sorry. She is likely, British officials say, to express **sadness** at the loss of civilian life during the bombing raids, but stop short of an apology.
- 59) *Homeless* and *Blues for Mama* express **a sadness** that is all the more poignant for their dry delivery and lack of bluster.

SORROW

- 60) Gorbachev expressed **sorrow** at the death of former Czechoslovak leader Alexander Dubcek.
- 61) In room 2105 of the Jiadi Tower in the Chinese border town of Dandong, a shabby procession of mourners entered to express **a sorrow** that seemed to be private, wrenching and real. (WordbankOnline)

SURPRISE

- 62) Leaders from the prime minister's B. J. P party and its allies expressed **surprise** at the election results.
- 63) When many of Haney's celebrated coaching colleagues were told that Haney was spending about 30 percent of his time with one prized client [Tiger Woods], they expressed **a surprise** that bordered on astonishment. (COCA)

SYMPATHY

- 64) Pope John Paul expressed **sympathy** for the families of the dead.
- 65) So when he offered asylum to the Dalai Lama and expressed **a cautious sympathy** with him, the Chinese were furious.
- 66) “On behalf of the entire organization, I wish to express **my deepest sympathies** to the Cheek family,” stated Blue Jays president.

Emotion nouns denoting a feeling (e.g. *anger*, *fear*) are count and can be pluralized when a referent is recognized as bounded in type space (i.e. referring to various types) or when recognized as bounded in both physical and temporal spaces (i.e. referring to individual events). A noun is pluralized

under the following three conditions: i) when it refers to more than one type of a feeling (67–68); ii) when it refers to a feeling that a particular person has experienced on more than one occasion (69–70); iii) when it refers to a feeling that more than one person experiences (71–72).

- 67) There is **anger** that is a transformation of fear; **explosive anger** that pushes or recognizes the limits of one's possibilities in resistance to oppression; **controlled anger** that is measured because of one's intent to communicate within the official world of sense; **anger** addressed to one's peers in resistance; **anger** addressed to one's peers in self-hatred; **anger** that isolates the resistant self in germination; **anger** that judges and demands respect; **anger** that challenges respectability. Many of **these angers** can be understood as "outlaw emotions": emotions that are conventionally unacceptable.
- 68) Walker identifies **the five main fears** that control our actions as **fear of death, ageing, freedom, isolation and lack of meaning**.
- 69) But it sounds like your fury is fueled by a build-up of past **angers** at men for forcing and at women for giving in.
- 70) Communication is most helpful in reducing the child's anxiety and, for that matter, the adult's anxiety. The child may then express **some unrealistic fears** and the parents will have an opportunity to explore **these fears** and reassure the child.
- 71) When we walk down the street, or walk into a room, or talk on the phone, we feel feelings that are not our own, and pick up on other people's **angers**, hurts, and yearnings we don't even want to know about.
- 72) Solicitors frequently learn of forced marriages from third parties, although a few individuals do come to lawyers' offices and **express fears** that they will be forced to marry against their will.

3. State nouns

The grammatical behavior of 15 abstract nouns that denote states are examined to explore what makes them admit \emptyset , *a/an* and pluralization. The 15 nouns are: *absence, confusion, dependence, freedom, health, illness, independence, marriage, peace, poverty, presence, silence, sleep, unemployment, war*. These nouns can be divided into two groups. Group 1: Nouns that are basically noncount: *dependence, freedom, health, independence, peace, poverty, unemployment*. Group 2: Nouns that are both count and noncount in the same meaning: *absence, confusion, illness, marriage, presence, silence, sleep, war*.

3.1. State nouns Group 1: *dependence, freedom, health, independence, peace, poverty, unemployment*

3.1.1. *A/an* and emphasis on the particular nature of a referent

Nouns in this group are basically noncount. They rarely occur in the plural although they may occur with *a/an* (See Tables B1–B7 in Appendix B).⁹ They admit *a/an* when the individual, particular nature of a referent is emphasized, often with a post-modifying relative clause (73–79). For example, *peace* is noncount when it denotes the general state in which there is no war or fighting (e.g. *All of us*

long for peace.), but *a/an* is used when the speaker wants to make clear the nature of a referent that she or he has in mind, often with a detailed description of the referent as in (77).

- 73) In hiring people to ease their lives, parents can find they have also complicated them; the flip side of personal service is personal dependence, **a dependence** that can mean a drain on money, time, and emotions.
- 74) The Afghans are discussing issues that they have not discussed with **a freedom** they have not had during the past 5,000-year history.
- 75) He had, since his return in 1660, enjoyed **a positively rude good health**, with the exception of a brief, though acute, bout of fever in August 1679.
- 76) We restored **an independence** which Egypt had not enjoyed since some time before Alexander the Great.
- 77) “Even if we are required to make painful compromises, I will be willing to make them for the sake of true peace — **a peace** for generations, the peace that we all yearn for,” Sharon said.
- 78) With independence has come disenchantment among the people. A threat of protest lies heavy over the streets, as the memories of the celebrations fade and thoughts turn to poverty — **a poverty** that’s deepening now that the society isn’t being subsidised by the Indonesians and UNTAET.
- 79) Meciar is a nationalist who promised a painless economic transition for Slovakia which is now suffering **a painful unemployment** that’s three times what it is in the Czech republic.

3.1.2. Count use and conceptual reification

Abstract nouns may admit *a/an* and pluralization when referents are construed as objects. It is a type of metaphorical shift called reification (also known as ontological metaphors), which allow us to construe states in terms of things (Radden & Dirven 2007: 78–79). A well-known example is *beauty*, which can refer to a beautiful woman (e.g. *all these Bond beauties*).

Some nouns in this group may have a sense other than the general state, in which they admit *a/an*. For example, *unemployment* is basically noncount when it denotes the state of being unemployed, but it admits *a/an* when it refers to an unemployment rate (80). Some other nouns may have a sense in which they behave as count nouns. *Peace*, for example, admits *a/an* and pluralization when it denotes an agreement to end a war (81–84). *Peace* occurs with *a/an* very frequently when it is pre-modified by such adjectives as *comprehensive*, *negotiated* and *separate*, which induce the agreement interpretation (Table B5). In the same way, *freedom* and *employment* may admit *a/an* and pluralization when they denote a right to do something (85–86) and an occupation (87–89) respectively.

Pre-modifying adjectives may have some influence on the use of *a/an*. As shown in Table B5, *peace* occurs with *a/an* very frequently when it is pre-modified by such adjectives as *fragile* and *uneasy*, which emphasize the individual, particular nature of a referent (90–91). Also, as we have seen in 3.1.2, *peace* occurs with *a/an* very frequently when modified by *comprehensive*, *negotiated*, and *separate*, which indicate that *peace* denotes an agreement, in which sense *peace* is count. For other nouns in this group, adjectives do not seem to have any strong influence on the use of *a/an* (see Tables B1–B7).

- 80) Montreal has a **lower unemployment** than Toronto.
- 81) Baker said it's up to the parties involved to break the barriers of mutual mistrust and reach a **comprehensive peace** in the Middle East.
- 82) If Israel cannot reach a **negotiated peace** with the Palestinians and doesn't withdraw from Palestinian cities, Arabs will outnumber Jews in 15 years.
- 83) With no help from the west in prospect, Soviet leader Josef Stalin might have decided to make a **separate peace** with Hitler.
- 84) In the longer term the official said he hoped Israel would now be ready to take the next step, that is talking to the Palestinians real representative, the PLO itself and would not skip the Palestinian question by making **separate peaces** with Arab states only.
- 85) In his essay, *On Liberty*, Mill argued forcefully for **an absolute freedom** of expression.
- 86) Cubans are denied due process of law. They are denied privacy rights and the **freedoms** of speech, press, assembly, and association.
- 87) During a **previous employment** a number of years ago I inappropriately failed to register the sale of a supply of goods to the value of Euro 1,700.
- 88) You could also consider consolidating your pensions from **previous employments** and transferring them all into one fund. (WordbanksOnline)
- 89) The best form of society, he argued, would be a planned cooperative socialist society. [...] All persons would become skilled in a variety of occupations and would regularly alternate **employments** in order to eliminate the monotony of work.
- 90) A **fragile peace** descended on war-torn El Salvador today.
- 91) In Europe **an uneasy peace** prevailed under the Treaty of Amiens.

3.2. State nouns Group 2 : *absence, confusion, illness, marriage, presence, silence, sleep, war*

Nouns in this group can be used as both count and noncount in the same meaning. They are noncount when they denote a general state (e.g. *silence* denoting the state of being silent), while they are count when they refer to an instance that is bounded in temporal space (e.g. *silence* referring to a period of time without speech or noise). Adjectives may have some influence on the use of *o* and *a/an*. Emphasizing adjectives that focus on the quality of a referent motivate the use of *o* (e.g. *absolute silence, poor sleep, total war*), while measurement adjectives that focus on boundedness in temporal space (e.g. *long silence, long sleep, long war*) and those that emphasize the individual, particular nature of a referent (e.g. *awkward silence, unpopular war*) motivate the use of *a/an*.

Silence, for example, is noncount when it denotes the general state of being silent (92), while it is count when it refers to a period of time without speech or noise (93–94). As Table B8 shows, *silence* occurs with *a/an* far more frequently than *o* (over 90%) when it is modified by measurement adjectives, such as *brief, long, short* and *two-minute* (95–103). On the other hand, *silence* occurs with *o* far more frequently than with *a/an* or in the plural form (over 90%) when it is modified by emphasizing adjectives such as *absolute, complete, total* and *utter* (104–107). This difference can be explained by the fact that measurement adjectives focus on boundedness in temporal space, whereas emphasizing adjectives focus on the quality of a referent. Adjectives, however, do not force the use of *a/an* or *o*. *Silence*, with emphasizing adjectives such as *absolute silence, total silence* and *utter silence*,

can still refer to a temporary bounded instance of silence and admit *a/an* (108–110).

- 92) In children, **silence** is a common reaction to uncertainty.
- 93) There was **a silence**. Quite **a long silence**. Then his voice came through again.
- 94) Don't feel obliged to fill **silences** with anything that comes into your head — you might lose control of your argument.
- 95) There's **a brief silence** in the crowd. They're thinking about it.
- 96) Most churches plan their preludes, hymns, offertories, and choral selections. They also include long, reverential pauses for prayer and **brief silences** during transitions. (WordbanksOnline)
- 97) There was **a long silence** before Dino spoke again.
- 98) There were **long silences** between speeches.
- 99) There was **a short silence**, then she broke suddenly into giggles.
- 100) There is no one-to-one correspondence between silences in fluent speech and word boundaries — **many short silences** occur within words, and many word boundaries do not coincide with silence.
- 101) “Not only did I go through the horrible trauma of losing my mother at a very young age, but also I was beside her at the moment of the accident,” Stephanie said in 2002, after **a 20-year silence** about the tragedy.
- 102) Marley Leger and Jody Carter placed wreaths in their honour during **a two minute silence**.
- 103) Universities, businesses, shops, and visitor attractions are among the many organisations expected to observe **two-minute silences**.
- 104) For ten to 15 minutes there was **absolute silence** in the car.
- 105) There was **total silence** for one long moment.
- 106) There was **utter silence** in the room except for clocks ticking among the clutter.
- 107) There was **complete silence** for a while.
- 108) The coach has maintained **an absolute silence** about his private life throughout his four-year reign as England boss.
- 109) At this moment however there was no sound from outside at all. No wind, no sea. **A total silence** enveloped the cottage, broken only by the quiet hum of her computer and the pattering of the keys beneath her fingers.
- 110) There was **an utter silence** as everyone stared at her.

The count/noncount distinction of *silence* applies to *absence*, *illness*, *marriage*, *presence*, *sleep* and *war*. They are noncount when they denote the general state: the state of being absent (111), the state of being ill (117), the state of being married (124), the state of being present (131), the natural state of rest (135–136) and the state of fighting (142–143) respectively. They are count when they refer to a period of the state, being bounded in temporal space: a period of absence (112–116), a period of illness (118–122), a period of marriage (125–130), a period of presence (132–134), a period of sleep (137–141), a period of war (144–148). As Tables B9–B15 show, they occur with *a/an* far more frequently than with \emptyset when they are pre-modified by measurement adjectives, such as *long*, *short*, *20-minute*, *two-hour*, *four-year*, etc. On the other hand, these nouns occur with \emptyset far more frequently than with *a/an* when

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they are modified by classifying adjectives, such as *mental*, *traditional*, *slow-wave* and *total*, which describe types.

Illness and *confusion* behave differently from other nouns in this group. *Illness* is count when it refers to various types of illnesses (123) as well as when it refers to a temporally bounded instance. *Confusion* denotes the state of being confused, but it behaves in the same way as emotion nouns. It is noncount when it denotes the general state of being confused, and it is count when the focus is on a source of confusion, i.e. when it refers to an instance of confusion that is caused by a particular source as in (150–152). It can be speculated that this is because, unlike other nouns in this group, a state of confusion needs a source that causes the state, and it is not important how long it lasts.

ABSENCE

- 111) Then, when the trial finally began, it was found that only 68 of the 135 commissioners were present. **Absence** was a form of mute protest.
- 112) Indeed, Rivaldo will miss tonight's game through injury, **an absence** that will not be as calamitous as it might have been 12 months ago.
- 113) After **a five-year absence** from swimming, I am thinking of taking it up again.
- 114) After **a long absence** from the stage, John Arden's *Sgt Musgrave's Dance* was staged last year by the Oxford Theatre Company.
- 115) They have had to arrange lives of their own which are scheduled around their husbands' **long absences** from home.
- 116) Codey has called Martinez to Trenton to explain her **15 absences**.

ILLNESS

- 117) I have had two weeks off work due to **illness** in my entire professional life.
- 118) Her parents Peter and Julie claim her weight problem is due to **an illness**.
- 119) Secondary school students were absent from school the most, although a survey released today found absences due to **illnesses** and truancy were slightly down on 1996 rates.
- 120) He died after **a six-month illness**.
- 121) On January 7th, 1989, Emperor Hirohito of Japan died after **a long illness**.
- 122) On my mother's block of 18 houses, four young people had been buried in the past six months. They all died after **long illnesses**.
- 123) WHO listed **17 illnesses**, ranging from Alzheimer's to tuberculosis to alcoholic liver disease, which need urgent attention.

MARRIAGE

- 124) Kidman divorced Tom Cruise, after 10 years of **marriage**, in 2001.
- 125) She was about to get divorced herself after **a marriage** of 25 years.
- 126) Look how he ended **a twenty-five-year marriage**.
- 127) Peter and Kay Russell met as teenagers and have enjoyed **a long marriage**.
- 128) Studies show that **long marriages** generally occur among couples who share interests and a deep sense of commitment.
- 129) She has two children from **a previous marriage**.
- 130) John Paul also has three children from **two previous marriages**.

PRESENCE

- 131) **Presence** of the virus was strongly associated with female sex and younger age.
- 132) Although there were remarkably few incidents of picket-line violence, the strikers maintained **a 24-hour presence** outside the old Sun and Times buildings as well as at the new plant in Wapping.
- 133) There is also **a strong presence** of the five-nation West African peace-keeping force.
- 134) I become aware of the souls of those I slayed, **their presences**; all equally strong because all equally important.

SLEEP

- 135) This research confirms other studies of children and adolescents that show the same relationship between **sleep** and obesity.
- 136) You're under a lot of stress. You need **sleep**, that's all.
- 137) Pausing before getting the boys dressed. They had **a long sleep** and I made good progress with the ironing.
- 138) The next day, I left reluctantly, nipping home for a shower and **a short sleep**.
- 139) "In some companies taking a quick nap would be considered a sacking offence, even though **a 20-minute sleep** is more effective in combating tiredness than two cups of strong black coffee," says Stanley.
- 140) **Four two-hour sleeps** is not equal to **one eight-hour sleep**.
- 141) Her nine-year-old daughter, Jennifer, is aware of what happened on September 11. "She doesn't want me to go on a plane, or to the USA," says Rhona, "but Andrew, who is six, is only interested in **how many sleeps** I am going to be away."

WAR

- 142) No American President ever wants to go to **war**.
- 143) Hitler declared **war** against the United States.
- 144) Powell said attacking Iraq could cause "some difficulties" for the United States in other areas in the Middle East during the conflict and in the months immediately **after a war**.
- 145) Congo is currently trying to end **a four-year war** that has killed at least two million people.
- 146) Regardless of whether people support or oppose war in Iraq, everyone should hope it's over quickly, because **a short war** means fewer lives lost — and less damage to the environment.
- 147) There were **several short wars** on the continent between 1854 and 1871, and then, from 1871 until 1914, another period of near-total peace within Europe that was even longer than the first.
- 148) Keeping the army well-armed, paid and fed through **these long wars** was an extremely expensive business.

CONFUSION

- 149) There was **great confusion**, the trip was unscheduled, nobody knew what was going on and the French Commanding Officer was doing his best to sort out the situation.
- 150) There is at the moment **a great confusion** between the two issues — the European issue and internal politics.
- 151) Incidentally, to clarify **a common confusion**, a pretest is not the same as a pilot study.
- 152) **Other common confusions** include *pedal* and *peddle*, *draw* and *drawer*, *compliment* and

complement and *their, there* and *they're*.

4. Concluding remarks

Emotion nouns and state nouns behave differently in terms of countability. The basic difference is that emotion nouns are count when the focus is on the source of a feeling or when they refer to various types of feelings, whereas state nouns are count when a referent is recognized as bounded in temporal space.

Emotion nouns may behave as count or noncount nouns depending on the focus: whether the focus is on the feeling or on a source of the feeling. They behave as count nouns when they refer to a source of the feeling, although some nouns (e.g. *anger, hatred, sympathy*) do not refer to a source. Emotion nouns may behave as count or noncount nouns when they refer to the feeling. They are count when the focus is on a source or when a referent is recognized as bounded in type space. Some nouns are noncount (*love, sadness, sorrow, surprise, sympathy*), although they admit *a/an* when the individual, particular nature of a feeling is emphasized.

State nouns can be placed in two groups: Nouns in Group 1 are basically noncount, and they may admit *a/an* when the individual, particular nature of a referent is emphasized, often with a post-modifying relative clause. Nouns in Group 2 can be both count and noncount. They are noncount when they denote the general state, while they are count when they refer to an instance that is bounded in temporal space. State nouns are generally not conceptualized in type space, but *illness* is count when it refers to various types of illnesses. *Confusion* is different from the other state nouns in that it is count when the focus is on a source.

Pre-modifying adjectives may have some influence on the use of *a/an* and \emptyset . Adjectives that emphasize the quality of a referent (e.g. *absolute silence, total silence*) motivate the use of \emptyset , while those that emphasize temporal boundedness (e.g. *long silence, short silence*) motivate the use of *a/an*.

Appendix

Appendix A

Tables A1 and A2 show the numbers and the percentages of occurrences of emotion nouns with various determiners in the [to express/feel+emotion noun (as a direct object)] construction: the singular form with an indefinite article (*a/an*), zero determiner (\emptyset), a definite article, possessives (Poss.) and all other determiners (abbreviated as 'Det.') and the plural form with all determiners (All Det.). Determiners include *that, some, any, no, (a) little, lots of, a lot of, much, more, most* (without *the*), *less, least* (without *the*), *enough, all, such* (without *a*), *another, each, every, one, both, half, either, neither* (without *a/an, the*), *what, whatever, which, whichever*. Nouns are arranged in the order of the percentages of their occurrences with \emptyset against their total occurrences with \emptyset and *a/an* in the singular form and in the plural form with all determiners and possessives.

Table A1. To express+ Emotion Nouns

to express	Plural, <i>a/an</i> Singular, \emptyset Singular				Plural	Singular					TOTAL
NOUN	Plural %	<i>a/an</i> %	\emptyset %	Total	All Det.	<i>a/an</i>	\emptyset	<i>the</i>	Det.	Poss.	
<i>surprise</i>	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	424	0	0	424	2	36	52	514
<i>sorrow</i>	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	72	0	0	72	12	1	74	159
<i>anger</i>	0.30%	0.59%	99.11%	338	1	2	335	16	12	228	594
<i>sadness</i>	0.00%	1.85%	98.15%	54	0	1	53	2	0	40	96
<i>pleasure</i>	5.41%	0.00%	94.59%	37	2	0	35	3	5	41	86
<i>love</i>	0.00%	7.41%	92.59%	81	0	6	75	12	9	122	224
<i>sympathy</i>	13.01%	0.37%	86.62%	269	35	1	233	3	23	134	429
<i>hope</i>	18.84%	7.73%	73.43%	414	78	32	304	325	18	59	816
<i>anxiety</i>	24.19%	4.84%	70.97%	62	15	3	44	4	10	17	93
<i>worry</i>	59.81%	2.80%	37.38%	107	64	3	40	6	3	3	119
<i>fear</i>	76.94%	3.76%	19.29%	425	327	16	82	33	10	30	498

Table A2. To feel+Emotion Nouns

to feel	Plural, <i>a/an</i> , \emptyset Singular				Plural	Singular					TOTAL
NOUN	Plural %	<i>a/an</i> %	\emptyset %	Total	All Det.	<i>a/an</i>	\emptyset	<i>the</i>	Det.	Poss.	
<i>anger</i>	0.00%	8.05%	91.95%	174	0	14	160	47	34	58	313
<i>sorrow</i>	0.00%	13.11%	86.89%	61	0	8	53	5	11	4	81
<i>love</i>	0.00%	13.22%	86.78%	121	0	16	105	56	31	43	251
<i>hatred</i>	0.00%	13.33%	86.67%	30	0	4	26	4	14	7	55
<i>sympathy</i>	0.00%	13.89%	86.11%	252	0	35	217	7	3	119	381
<i>pleasure</i>	4.11%	12.33%	83.56%	73	3	9	61	18	15	10	116
<i>anxiety</i>	4.88%	14.63%	80.49%	41	2	6	33	14	26	14	95
<i>fear</i>	11.61%	12.90%	75.48%	155	18	20	117	41	64	19	279
<i>joy</i>	3.70%	24.07%	72.22%	54	2	13	39	29	29	2	114
<i>sadness</i>	0.00%	35.71%	64.29%	98	0	35	63	15	6	3	122
<i>hope</i>	25.81%	16.13%	58.06%	31	8	5	18	5	5	2	43

Appendix B

Tables B1 to B15 show the numbers and the percentages of occurrences of NPs (adjective+noun) in the singular form with zero determiner (\emptyset) and an indefinite article (*a/an*) and NPs in the plural form with all determiners and possessives (All Det.). NPs are arranged in the order of the percentages of their occurrences with \emptyset against their total occurrences with \emptyset , *a/an* and in the plural form. Highlighted are those NPs that occur with \emptyset or *a/an* in 80% or over of all the occurrences.

Table B1. *Dependence*

Adj.+dependence	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			TOTAL
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	
	\emptyset	<i>a/an</i> +pl.	\emptyset	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>mutual dependence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	20	0	0	20

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<i>economic dependence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	19	0	0	19
<i>total dependence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	6	0	0	6
<i>financial dependence</i>	93.8%	6.3%	15	1	0	16
<i>physical dependence</i>	87.1%	12.9%	27	4	0	31
<i>psychological dependence</i>	84.0%	16.0%	21	4	0	25
<i>increasing dependence</i>	69.2%	30.8%	9	4	0	13
<i>emotional dependence</i>	60.0%	40.0%	3	2	0	5
<i>heavy dependence</i>	57.1%	42.9%	8	6	0	14
<i>growing dependence</i>	37.5%	62.5%	3	5	0	8

Table B2. *Freedom*

Adj. + <i>freedom</i>	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	TOTAL
	Ø	<i>a/an+Pl</i>	Ø	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>true freedom</i>	100.0%	0.0%	33	0	0	33
<i>artistic freedom</i>	98.7%	1.3%	77	1	0	78
<i>complete freedom</i>	98.6%	1.4%	146	2	0	148
<i>intellectual freedom</i>	98.4%	1.6%	61	1	0	62
<i>academic freedom</i>	98.0%	2.0%	199	0	4	203
<i>total freedom</i>	97.4%	2.6%	74	2	0	76
<i>considerable freedom</i>	96.8%	3.2%	30	1	0	31
<i>creative freedom</i>	96.4%	3.6%	53	2	0	55
<i>financial freedom</i>	94.6%	5.4%	35	0	2	37
<i>absolute freedom</i>	94.4%	5.6%	51	3	0	54
<i>reproductive freedom</i>	93.1%	6.9%	67	0	5	72
<i>full freedom</i>	90.7%	9.3%	39	0	4	43
<i>relative freedom</i>	90.6%	9.4%	29	2	1	32
<i>religious freedom</i>	90.5%	9.5%	545	0	57	602
<i>sexual freedom</i>	90.5%	9.5%	114	2	10	126
<i>human freedom</i>	88.7%	11.3%	125	1	15	141
<i>greater freedom</i>	87.3%	12.7%	281	13	28	322
<i>economic freedom</i>	87.2%	12.8%	156	1	22	179
<i>real freedom</i>	83.9%	16.1%	47	6	3	56
<i>American freedom</i>	76.9%	23.1%	40	0	12	52
<i>individual freedom</i>	75.3%	24.7%	204	1	66	271
<i>political freedom</i>	73.0%	27.0%	203	2	73	278
<i>personal freedom</i>	72.1%	27.9%	196	2	74	272
<i>great freedom</i>	68.9%	31.1%	31	7	7	45
<i>new freedom</i>	20.3%	79.7%	30	40	78	148

Table B3. *Health*

Adj. + <i>health</i>	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	TOTAL
	Ø	<i>a/an+Pl</i>	Ø	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>mental health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	1021	0	0	1021
<i>ill health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	917	0	0	917
<i>human health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	732	0	0	732
<i>poor health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	562	0	0	562
<i>better health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	293	0	0	293
<i>physical health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	241	0	0	241
<i>sexual health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	177	0	0	177
<i>excellent health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	128	0	0	128
<i>occupational health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	114	0	0	114
<i>perfect health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	114	0	0	114
<i>general health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	110	0	0	110
<i>environmental health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	96	0	0	96
<i>failing health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	94	0	0	94
<i>reproductive health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	92	0	0	92
<i>full health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	80	0	0	80
<i>bad health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	79	0	0	79
<i>economic health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	73	0	0	73
<i>rude health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	73	0	0	73
<i>oral health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	69	0	0	69
<i>declining health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	68	0	0	68
<i>overall health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	61	0	0	61
<i>improved health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	58	0	0	58
<i>aboriginal health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	57	0	0	57
<i>dental health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	56	0	0	56
<i>personal health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	50	0	0	50
<i>improving health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	50	0	0	50
<i>emotional health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	43	0	0	43
<i>psychological health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	40	0	0	40
<i>frail health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	37	0	0	37
<i>poorer health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	36	0	0	36
<i>private health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	31	0	0	31
<i>public health</i>	100.0%	0.0%	2078	1	0	2079
<i>good health</i>	99.9%	0.1%	1920	1	0	1921
<i>robust health</i>	96.9%	3.1%	31	1	0	32

Table B4. *Independence*

Adj. + <i>independence</i>	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	TOTAL
	Ø	<i>a/an</i> +Pl	Ø	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>American independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	59	0	0	59
<i>Baltic independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	37	0	0	37
<i>complete independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	92	0	0	92
<i>de facto independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	45	0	0	45
<i>editorial independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	32	0	0	32
<i>financial independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	124	0	0	124
<i>full independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	211	0	0	211
<i>Indian independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	30	0	0	30
<i>judicial independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	185	0	0	185
<i>national independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	91	0	0	91
<i>outright independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	43	0	0	43
<i>personal independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	37	0	0	37
<i>political independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	88	0	0	88
<i>Scottish independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	46	0	0	46
<i>Taiwanese independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	32	0	0	32
<i>total independence</i>	100.0%	0.0%	41	0	0	41
<i>greater independence</i>	99.2%	0.8%	124	1	0	125
<i>economic independence</i>	98.4%	1.6%	126	2	0	128
<i>formal independence</i>	98.2%	1.8%	112	2	0	114

Table B5. *Peace*

Adj. + <i>peace</i>	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	TOTAL
	Ø	<i>a/an</i> +Pl	Ø	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>international peace</i>	99.5%	0.5%	220	1	0	221
<i>relative peace</i>	97.6%	2.4%	81	2	0	83
<i>global peace</i>	96.2%	3.8%	51	2	0	53
<i>greater peace</i>	95.8%	4.2%	46	2	0	48
<i>true peace</i>	95.8%	4.2%	46	2	0	48
<i>perfect peace</i>	92.5%	7.5%	37	3	0	40
<i>regional peace</i>	90.7%	9.3%	39	4	0	43
<i>inner peace</i>	84.9%	15.1%	141	25	0	166
<i>real peace</i>	76.1%	23.9%	70	22	0	92
<i>permanent peace</i>	57.9%	42.1%	44	32	0	76
<i>lasting peace</i>	43.2%	56.8%	193	254	0	447
<i>durable peace</i>	32.6%	67.4%	15	31	0	46
<i>comprehensive peace</i>	13.8%	86.2%	8	50	0	58
<i>negotiated peace</i>	5.5%	94.5%	3	52	0	55

<i>uneasy peace</i>	5.2%	94.8%	3	55	0	58
<i>fragile peace</i>	4.9%	95.1%	2	39	0	41
<i>separate peace</i>	0.0%	100.0%	0	56	1	57

Table B6. *Poverty*

Adj.+ <i>poverty</i>	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	TOTAL
	Ø	<i>a/an</i> +Pl	Ø	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>urban poverty</i>	100.0%	0.0%	213	0	0	213
<i>extreme poverty</i>	100.0%	0.0%	188	0	0	188
<i>global poverty</i>	100.0%	0.0%	138	0	0	138
<i>dire poverty</i>	100.0%	0.0%	56	0	0	56
<i>grinding poverty</i>	100.0%	0.0%	50	0	0	50
<i>widespread poverty</i>	100.0%	0.0%	47	0	0	47
<i>abject poverty</i>	99.4%	0.6%	153	1	0	154
<i>rural poverty</i>	98.8%	1.2%	84	1	0	85
<i>absolute poverty</i>	98.5%	1.5%	67	1	0	68
<i>relative poverty</i>	97.5%	2.5%	39	1	0	40

Table B7. *Unemployment*

Adj.+ <i>unemployment</i>	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	TOTAL
	Ø	<i>a/an</i> +Pl	Ø	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>low unemployment</i>	100.0%	0.0%	169	0	0	169
<i>mass unemployment</i>	100.0%	0.0%	136	0	0	136
<i>higher unemployment</i>	100.0%	0.0%	88	0	0	88
<i>long-term unemployment</i>	100.0%	0.0%	68	0	0	68
<i>widespread unemployment</i>	100.0%	0.0%	34	0	0	34
<i>growing unemployment</i>	100.0%	0.0%	30	0	0	30
<i>high unemployment</i>	99.2%	0.8%	492	4	0	496
<i>massive unemployment</i>	98.1%	1.9%	53	1	0	54
<i>lower unemployment</i>	97.6%	2.4%	40	1	0	41

Table B8. *Silence*

Adj.+ <i>silence</i>	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	TOTAL
	Ø	<i>a/an</i> +Pl	Ø	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>absolute silence</i>	98.5%	1.5%	64	1	0	65
<i>total silence</i>	95.2%	4.8%	140	7	0	147
<i>utter silence</i>	94.7%	5.3%	54	3	0	57
<i>complete silence</i>	93.9%	6.1%	107	7	0	114
<i>dead silence</i>	79.1%	20.9%	72	19	0	91

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<i>stunned silence</i>	67.2%	32.8%	129	61	2	192
<i>stony silence</i>	66.0%	34.0%	64	28	5	97
<i>companionable silence</i>	62.8%	37.2%	27	13	3	43
<i>respectful silence</i>	51.2%	48.8%	21	20	0	41
<i>shocked silence</i>	50.0%	50.0%	20	20	0	40
<i>tense silence</i>	46.9%	53.1%	15	15	2	32
<i>embarrassed silence</i>	36.4%	63.6%	16	24	4	44
<i>deafening silence</i>	35.1%	64.9%	20	37	0	57
<i>eerie silence</i>	22.2%	77.8%	18	63	0	81
<i>uncomfortable silence</i>	21.1%	78.9%	12	42	3	57
<i>awkward silence</i>	19.9%	80.1%	30	95	26	151
<i>uneasy silence</i>	15.8%	84.2%	6	32	0	38
<i>dignified silence</i>	13.3%	86.7%	6	39	0	45
<i>brief silence</i>	8.2%	91.8%	5	56	0	61
Numeral+ <i>year, minute, etc. +silence</i>	6.1%	93.9%	8	119	4	131
<i>long silence</i>	4.6%	95.4%	18	359	12	389
<i>short silence</i>	5.1%	94.9%	3	56	0	59

Table B9. Absence

Adj.+ <i>absence</i>	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	TOTAL
	Ø	<i>a/an+Pl</i>	Ø	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>total absence</i>	13.5%	86.5%	7	45	0	52
<i>complete absence</i>	4.8%	95.2%	3	60	0	63
<i>long absence</i>	3.8%	96.2%	6	95	56	157
Numeral+ <i>year, month, etc. + absence</i>	1.6%	98.4%	9	562	2	573

Table B10. Confusion

Adj.+ <i>confusion</i>	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	TOTAL
	Ø	<i>a/an+Pl</i>	Ø	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>mass confusion</i>	100.0%	0.0%	32	0	0	32
<i>mental confusion</i>	100.0%	0.0%	39	0	0	39
<i>total confusion</i>	100.0%	0.0%	52	0	0	52
<i>considerable confusion</i>	97.9%	2.1%	47	1	0	48
<i>widespread confusion</i>	97.2%	2.8%	35	1	0	36
<i>utter confusion</i>	96.8%	3.2%	30	1	0	31
<i>further confusion</i>	96.5%	3.5%	55	2	0	57
<i>great confusion</i>	94.0%	6.0%	47	3	0	50

Table B11. *Illness*

Adj. + <i>illness</i>	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	TOTAL
	Ø	<i>a/an+Pl</i>	Ø	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>mental illness</i>	77.5%	22.5%	1899	296	254	2449
<i>human illness</i>	75.0%	25.0%	30	2	8	40
<i>severe illness</i>	58.2%	41.8%	71	27	24	122
<i>critical illness</i>	57.8%	42.2%	26	15	4	45
<i>physical illness</i>	56.8%	43.2%	129	53	45	227
<i>psychiatric illness</i>	54.5%	45.5%	73	23	38	134
<i>psychotic illness</i>	47.8%	52.2%	22	9	15	46
<i>serious illness</i>	47.3%	52.7%	288	192	129	609
<i>mild illness</i>	47.1%	52.9%	16	15	3	34
<i>long-term illness</i>	40.5%	59.5%	30	27	17	74
<i>(food, etc.)-borne illness</i>	39.4%	60.6%	37	13	44	94
<i>prolonged illness</i>	38.5%	61.5%	15	23	1	39
<i>chronic illness</i>	38.4%	61.6%	183	121	172	476
<i>acute illness</i>	36.8%	63.2%	21	15	21	57
<i>respiratory illness</i>	35.9%	64.1%	93	71	95	259
<i>terminal illness</i>	30.5%	69.5%	97	175	46	318
<i>(AIDS, etc.)-related illness</i>	27.9%	72.1%	148	86	296	530
<i>(flu, etc.)-like illness</i>	24.2%	75.8%	30	76	18	124
<i>life-threatening illness</i>	19.8%	80.2%	40	83	79	202
<i>rare illness</i>	18.4%	81.6%	7	26	5	38
<i>debilitating illness</i>	13.3%	86.7%	10	36	29	75
<i>fatal illness</i>	12.9%	87.1%	9	40	21	70
<i>viral illness</i>	8.0%	92.0%	4	27	19	50
<i>mysterious illness</i>	5.6%	94.4%	3	45	6	54
<i>brain-wasting illness</i>	3.3%	96.7%	1	29	0	30
<i>undisclosed illness</i>	2.7%	97.3%	1	36	0	37
<i>long illness</i>	2.5%	97.5%	7	262	7	276
<i>short illness</i>	1.1%	98.9%	1	93	0	94
<i>brief illness</i>	0.0%	100.0%	0	66	0	66
<i>lengthy illness</i>	0.0%	100.0%	0	60	0	60

Table B12. *Marriage*

Adj. + <i>marriage</i>	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	TOTAL
	Ø	<i>a/an+Pl</i>	Ø	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>traditional marriage</i>	81.8%	18.2%	198	16	28	242
<i>gay marriage</i>	80.9%	19.1%	2694	10	626	3330
<i>homosexual marriage</i>	68.0%	32.0%	87	1	40	128

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<i>same-sex marriage</i>	65.3%	34.7%	2249	23	1172	3444
<i>interracial marriage</i>	61.4%	38.6%	51	7	25	83
<i>heterosexual marriage</i>	61.0%	39.0%	72	17	29	118
<i>civil marriage</i>	57.0%	43.0%	94	24	47	165
<i>legal marriage</i>	54.1%	45.9%	20	12	5	37
<i>modern marriage</i>	52.1%	47.9%	25	12	11	48
<i>early marriage</i>	47.1%	52.9%	40	32	13	85
<i>forced marriage</i>	32.8%	67.2%	41	21	63	125
<i>arranged marriage</i>	11.7%	88.3%	46	208	139	393
<i>successful marriage</i>	10.7%	89.3%	9	64	11	84
Numeral + <i>year, month, etc.</i> + <i>marriage</i>	9.4%	90.6%	8	75	2	85
<i>perfect marriage</i>	7.9%	92.1%	3	31	4	38
<i>unhappy marriage</i>	7.9%	92.1%	10	88	29	127
<i>happy marriage</i>	4.5%	95.5%	13	248	30	291
<i>good marriage</i>	3.0%	97.0%	5	134	26	165
<i>loveless marriage</i>	3.0%	97.0%	2	58	7	67
<i>failed marriage</i>	2.4%	97.6%	3	51	71	125
<i>long marriage</i>	2.4%	97.6%	1	35	6	42
<i>broken marriage</i>	2.0%	98.0%	2	39	58	99
<i>previous marriage</i>	1.3%	98.7%	4	244	65	313
<i>bad marriage</i>	1.1%	98.9%	1	63	23	87

Table B13. *Presence*

Adj. + <i>presence</i>	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	TOTAL
	Ø	<i>a/an+Pl</i>	Ø	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>great presence</i>	66.7%	33.3%	38	19	0	57
<i>human presence</i>	39.7%	60.3%	25	37	1	63
<i>real presence</i>	29.7%	70.3%	11	25	1	37
<i>physical presence</i>	28.0%	72.0%	70	180	0	250
<i>greater presence</i>	15.4%	84.6%	6	33	0	39
<i>military presence</i>	14.5%	85.5%	65	381	2	448
<i>huge presence</i>	12.9%	87.1%	4	27	0	31
<i>online presence</i>	12.5%	87.5%	4	27	1	32
<i>American presence</i>	11.1%	88.9%	8	64	0	72
<i>international presence</i>	10.4%	89.6%	8	69	0	77
<i>big presence</i>	7.9%	92.1%	3	35	0	38
<i>diplomatic presence</i>	6.5%	93.5%	2	28	1	31
<i>significant presence</i>	4.8%	95.2%	4	79	1	84
<i>powerful presence</i>	4.7%	95.3%	2	39	2	43
<i>visible presence</i>	2.9%	97.1%	1	34	0	35

<i>global presence</i>	2.4%	97.6%	1	40	0	41
<i>strong presence</i>	2.3%	97.7%	5	213	1	219
<i>constant presence</i>	2.1%	97.9%	1	47	0	48
<i>major presence</i>	2.0%	98.0%	1	49	0	50
<i>commanding presence</i>	1.9%	98.1%	1	51	0	52
<i>permanent presence</i>	0.0%	100.0%	0	35	0	35
<i>stronger presence</i>	0.0%	100.0%	0	31	0	31
<i>large presence</i>	0.0%	100.0%	0	30	0	30

Table B14. *Sleep*

Adj.+ <i>sleep</i>	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	TOTAL
	Ø	<i>a/an</i> +Pl	Ø	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>poor sleep</i>	100.0%	0.0%	50	0	0	50
<i>slow-wave sleep</i>	100.0%	0.0%	60	0	0	60
<i>disturbed sleep</i>	97.1%	2.9%	33	1	0	34
<i>restful sleep</i>	58.8%	41.2%	20	14	0	34
<i>deep sleep</i>	41.1%	58.9%	127	182	0	309
<i>dreamless sleep</i>	37.7%	62.3%	20	33	0	53
<i>sound sleep</i>	33.3%	66.7%	16	31	1	48
<i>fitful sleep</i>	31.4%	68.6%	11	24	0	35
<i>good sleep</i>	28.0%	72.0%	28	70	2	100
<i>long sleep</i>	9.8%	90.2%	4	37	0	41

Table B15. *War*

Adj.+ <i>war</i>	% of Occurrences		Number of Occurrences			
	NonCount	Count	SINGULAR		PLURAL	TOTAL
	Ø	<i>a/an</i> +Pl	Ø	<i>a/an</i>	All Det.	
<i>total war</i>	84.7%	15.3%	166	28	2	196
<i>impending war</i>	79.5%	20.5%	35	8	1	44
<i>open war</i>	75.9%	24.1%	41	13	0	54
<i>imminent war</i>	61.8%	38.2%	21	13	0	34
<i>nuclear war</i>	61.4%	38.6%	434	268	5	707
<i>all-out war</i>	60.7%	39.3%	184	117	2	303
<i>modern war</i>	58.2%	41.8%	46	14	19	79
<i>general war</i>	57.6%	42.4%	19	14	0	33
<i>preventive war</i>	52.6%	47.4%	30	23	4	57
<i>pre(-)emptive war</i>	52.2%	47.8%	82	58	17	157
<i>economic war</i>	51.4%	48.6%	18	17	0	35
<i>limited war</i>	46.1%	53.9%	41	31	17	89

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<i>full-scale war</i>	40.9%	59.1%	54	69	9	132
<i>conventional war</i>	38.5%	61.5%	40	50	14	104
<i>sectarian war</i>	37.1%	62.9%	13	20	2	35
<i>ethnic war</i>	31.6%	68.4%	12	18	8	38
<i>real war</i>	28.2%	71.8%	35	82	7	124
<i>major war</i>	22.1%	77.9%	33	53	63	149
<i>undeclared war</i>	20.0%	80.0%	10	39	1	50
<i>potential war</i>	18.3%	81.7%	11	49	0	60
<i>global war</i>	18.2%	81.8%	20	87	3	110
<i>possible war</i>	16.8%	83.2%	59	291	2	352
<i>religious war</i>	16.3%	83.7%	22	53	60	135
<i>phon(e)y war</i>	14.3%	85.7%	5	26	4	35
<i>just war</i>	14.2%	85.8%	22	124	9	155
<i>quick war</i>	11.1%	88.9%	4	32	0	36
<i>ongoing war</i>	9.5%	90.5%	4	33	5	42
<i>prolonged war</i>	9.1%	90.9%	3	30	0	33
<i>protracted war</i>	8.8%	91.2%	3	27	4	34
<i>cultural war</i>	8.5%	91.5%	4	27	16	47
<i>successful war</i>	8.1%	91.9%	3	29	5	37
<i>trade war</i>	7.6%	92.4%	31	375	0	406
<i>bloody war</i>	7.4%	92.6%	10	101	25	136
<i>new war</i>	5.9%	94.1%	11	150	26	187
<i>different war</i>	5.9%	94.1%	3	30	18	51
<i>bitter war</i>	5.7%	94.3%	5	77	5	87
<i>terrible war</i>	5.7%	94.3%	2	28	5	35
<i>illegal war</i>	5.4%	94.6%	5	75	12	92
<i>two(multi)-front war</i>	4.8%	95.2%	2	40	0	42
<i>effective war</i>	4.3%	95.7%	2	44	0	46
<i>good war</i>	3.4%	96.6%	2	53	3	58
<i>wider war</i>	3.0%	97.0%	1	32	0	33
<i>short war</i>	3.0%	97.0%	2	61	3	66
<i>Numeral+year,day, etc. + war</i>	3.0%	97.0%	7	226		233
<i>unnecessary war</i>	3.0%	97.0%	2	52	13	67
<i>unjust war</i>	2.0%	98.0%	1	43	5	49
<i>long war</i>	2.0%	98.0%	3	137	12	152
<i>unpopular war</i>	0.0%	100.0%	0	59	3	62
<i>costly war</i>	0.0%	100.0%	0	30	14	44
<i>great war</i>	0.0%	100.0%	0	36	36	72

NOTES

- 1) See the reference section for the abbreviations of the English learner's dictionaries cited here.
- 2) Zero determiner with a noun in the singular form, excluding nouns in the plural form.
- 3) *Meriam-Webster's Advanced Learner's English Dictionary*.
- 4) *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*.
- 5) *Longman Advanced American Dictionary*, 2nd Ed.
- 6) *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 8th Ed.
- 7) Four nouns (*comfort*, *happiness*, *hatred*, *joy*) are not listed here. Only those nouns that have a total of 30 or over occurrences with *ø* and *a/an* and in the plural form are listed.
- 8) *Sympathy* is not classified as a count noun since *sympathies* in the plural form is the formal expression of sympathy like *condolences*, *congratulations* or *apologies*, and it does not refer to more than one instance of sympathy.
- 9) *Health*, *independence* and *unemployment* have no occurrence in the plural form. *Dependence* has one occurrence in the plural as opposed to 3,099 in the singular. *Poverty* has two plurals against 19,122 singulars, and *peace* has eight plurals against 86,335 singulars. *Health* has seven occurrences in the [to drink+healths] and [healths+copula *be*+drunk] constructions. WordbanksOnline finds one instance of the plural form of *unemployment*: "Things are OK at the moment," he said. "I'm between **unemployments**."

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DICTIONARIES

- LAAD: *Longman Advanced American Dictionary*, 2nd Ed.
LDOCE: *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, 5th Ed.
OALD: *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 8th Ed.
CALD: *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 3rd Ed.
MEDAL: *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*.
COBUILD: *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary*, 5th Ed.
MALED: *Meriam-Webster's Advanced Learner's English Dictionary*.

