THE PARTITIVE IN FRENCH:

A COMPARISON OF FOUR ANALYSES

by

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Abstract

Four analyses of the forms du, de la, de l', des and
de were compared in order to evaluate the insights they were
able to provide into the so-called partitive forms.

Grevisse's Le Bon Usage was chosen as an example of a
traditional analysis which uses multiple criteria of classi-
fication, meaning, structure and function. The first full
structural analysis of the noun system in French, Grammaire
structurale du français by Jean Dubois, was chosen as an
analysis in which only the syntagmatic relationships of the
speech chain are taken into account in setting up the various
systems in the language. The treatment of the partitive arti-
cle by Gustave Guillaume was chosen as an analysis which claims
to show the operation of the mental processes which underlie
the observable phenomena in the speech chain. Finally an
article by Maurice Gross, "Sur une règle de 'cacophonie' ",
which develops a suggestion made by Chomsky for a T-rule rela-
ting to the partitive, was chosen as an analysis claiming to
show the operation of processes which relate the underlying and
the superficial structures of the language.

Comparison of the four analyses revealed that it was
the idea of language process as it is embodied in T-rules that
gave the neatest account of the distribution of 'partitive'
de in relation to du, de la, de l', and des. It was the

requirement of generality of application of T-rules that

gave the only motivated description of the formation of the

partitive as a combination of preposition <u>de</u> and the generic

article <u>le</u>. It was the application of one or both of two de-

letion rules that linked a wider range of phenomena than could

be related by the other types of analyses.

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Introduction

The 'problem' of the partitive as it keeps cropping up in journals has been seen mainly as a classificatory one. Is it, as it has been traditionally described, an article? If so, is there something in its internal structure that distinguishes it from the contracted definite article whose forms are the same? If it is composed, as again in the traditional definition, of an amalgam of de and the definite article, is it the nature of the de that distinguishes it from the contracted definite article, or the nature of the le, or neither? The answers have been various: the de formative element has been described as itself an article, as ordinary preposition de, as preposition de with a special function, as link word de with exactly the same function as the de in the contracted definite article. The le has been pinpointed as being the definite article only in its generic use by some grammarians, but not by others. A recent structural analysis of the noun in French has dismissed all these questions as meaningless and has grouped all occurrences of de, du and des in a single system in which they are distinguished only by their distribution with following nouns. A final question is whether there is a single 'meaning' for all occurrences of the partitive and how it is best stated. By defining its function, in contrast to the other determiners, or by co-occurrence possibilities?

The partitive was chosen as a subject of study, not in order to throw more light on its 'real nature' but to compare the success of different methods of analyses in asking and answering revealing questions about its place in the language. How important is it to make distinctions about its internal structure? How much more do we know about the language once we have decided that the de component is or is not a preposition, that the le component is or is not the generic article? Or, indeed, is it useful to speak about components at all? Or about meaning at all? Of course one cannot make categorical statements about types of grammatical analyses from such a restricted field of comparison, but just because the points have been so debated, the findings may be suggestive of the potentialities and the limitations of the approaches examined.

The studies were chosen because they were fundamentally different from each other and an attempt has been made to evaluate each in terms of its own premises as well as of the light it throws on the distribution and the operation of the partitive forms. Grevisse's Le Bon Usage is, of course, practically a household word among French students and writers; it illustrates a traditional approach to the problem, using mixed criteria for classification. In complete contrast is the distributional analysis which attempts to sweep away the jumble of structural, functional and semantic criteria which are the hallmark of traditional analyses; it attempts, on the contrary, by analysing only the linear relationships in the

speech chain, to snow the operation of larger systems in the language than can be set up on the basis of function or meaning.

The studies by Gustave Guillaume were chosen because his type of semantic analysis has influenced many authors of French grammars and because it is currently enjoying a revival, particularly in Canada. He is also of interest because there have recently been attempts to link his 'psychomécanique du langage' to Chomsky's transformational analysis, on the grounds that both are aiming at not observational but descriptive adequacy. As a contrast with Guillaume's analysis, one of the few published treatments of a syntactic problem in French in transformational terms was chosen, an article which expands upon a suggestion made by Chomsky in Cartesian Linguistics for a T-rule involving the partitive.

In all four cases the initial presentation is mainly a summary of the views of the particular author. Criticisms made during the presentation are reviewed briefly in the summary that concludes each of these sections.

Maurice Grevisse

Le Bon Usage,[1] first published in 1936, deals with the
written language, is normative in intention and traditional
in organization. It contains references to many of the major
grammars and the examples of usage are taken both from the
classics and from contemporary writers.

Method

The study of syntax is built around the parts of speech.
Explanations may be in terms of structure, function, or
meaning, or any combination of these, but to judge from mar-
ginal cases it is meaning which is given the preference in
classifying forms; where a conflict arises between meaning and
parts of speech, however, the decision may well be made in favour
of the parts of speech.

Grevisse's description of the articles is characteris-
tic of his method. He first defines the articles in terms of
a characteristic meaning, then in their function as carrier
of gender and number. Next he gives the sub-species, which
are definite and indefinite, and defines each of these in
terms of its general meaning. Next he gives the forms, and
finally the uses of the forms.

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[1] Maurice Grevisse, Le Bon Usage, 8th ed. (Paris, 1964).
References will be given in the text by paragraph numbers.

Relation of the articles to each other

For Grevisse, then, there are two types of article,
the definite and the indefinite. The so-called partitive may
be related by its form to the definite and by its meaning to
the indefinite: Grevisse therefore considers it a type of
indefinite article. The partitive occurs before mass nouns
to indicate that only a 'part of the species designated' is
being considered. Its forms are de, du, de la, de l' and des.
Essentially it is the preposition de, but not with its full
prepositional value of marking relationship. When it is
combined with the forms of the definite article and functions
as the partitive article, the form de is not to be analysed
separately as a preposition, but simply as a formative element
of the partitive. On the other hand the homophonous forms
which occur in indirect objects, complements of circumstance
and determinative complements are to be analysed separately as
preposition de plus the definite article. He points out that
it is when the noun is taken in the general sense that de forms
the partitive article; when the noun is particularized and the
article marks 'special determination', the de has full pre-
positional value.(307, 326, 327)

The most usual meanings of the form des are its par-
ticularizing meaning with preposition de, (de + les), and its
plural indefinite meaning in which it serves as the plural of
un. Rarely does it have partitive meaning. Grevisse quotes,
in this connection, Brunot and Bruneau to the effect that the
only true occurrence of the partitive in the plural is with mass

nouns which have only a plural form e.g. les confitures.
However, in view of the relation in meaning between partitive
and indefinite, he decides to add the plural indefinite use
to his discussion of the partitive forms, with the result that
the value of his definition in terms of mass nouns immediately
disappears, since the plural indefinite only occurs with count
nouns (327, Rem.1).

Uses of the partitive

The first use is said to be before mass nouns to in-
dicate indefinite quantity. Examples are: boire de la bière,
manger des épinards. However, there is also a figurative use
with count nouns. Dans tout ancien professeur de philosophie,
il y a de l'apôtre.

The second use is with the adverb of quantity bien.
Except before autres it is followed by du, de la, de l' or des.
The 'simple' form de (as contrasted with the 'full' forms
just mentioned) occurs with other adverbs of quantity such as
assez, beaucoup, moins, peu etc. unless the noun is itself
determined by a complement (beaucoup des pensées de Valéry),
or by a relative clause (trop du vin que vous m'avez envoyé)
or, 'more generally, if what is really being expressed is
the partitive idea' (329, Rem. 1).[2] Examples of 'the partitive
idea' are: Beaucoup des auditeurs étaient cyniques et aigres
or Elle constata ... que beaucoup des boutons manquaient.
Now clearly these last four examples are all cases in which the

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    "ou, plus généralement, si l'on exprime vraiment l'idée
partitive."

noun is completely determined, if not by a following complement or relative clause, at least by reference to a context of some kind. Beaucoup des auditeurs must necessarily have a context of 'lecture', 'concert' etc. to be comprehensible, beaucoup des boutons a context of jacket or waistcoat etc. But in his definition of the partitive article Grevisse specifically stated that it occurred only when the noun was taken in the general sense. Beaucoup d'auditeurs and beaucoup de boutons are interpretable in terms of 'auditors' or 'buttons' in general, but the nouns in the examples which he describes as 'really expressing the partitive idea' are not so interpretable. Consequently, by his own definitions, they are not examples of occurrences of the partitive. This embarrassing conclusion follows from Grevisse's attempt to combine functional and semantic criteria.

The third and fourth cases of the occurrence of the partitive that Grevisse describes (330, 331, 332) are ones in which he gives a set of indications, sometimes structural, sometimes semantic, for the occurrence of the full forms of the partitive on the one hand and the simple form de on the other. The first of these is the occurrence before prenominal adjectives and the second is the choice of forms with negatives, which depends on the scope of the negative, absolute or restricted. The only points to notice here are the equivalences stated between de and the full partitive and the mixture of structural and semantic clues for good usage.

Preposition 'de' and 'the partitive idea'

In his discussion of determinative complements of
nouns, Grevisse lists several which are joined by preposition
de. The function of the complement is 'to limit the extension'
of the preceding noun and the complements are grouped according
to the type of relationship said to be indicated by the pre-
position. One of these is the relationship of the whole to
the part (la lame d'une épée, le pire de tous). Under another
label, but with an apparently similar relationship, we find
personne de vous and personne des siens which are 'partitive
complements' or 'complements of the totality', the choice of
labels apparently applying to both phrases. Similarly
J'ai lu quelques-uns de ses livres is described as a 'parti-
tive complement'.

All these examples apparently contain preposition de
but the semantic relationship which it is said to carry is
indistinguishable from the partitive relation. One may ask
why Grevisse, since he uses semantic criteria to make his
groupings, insists on distinguishing between prepositional de
and partitive de.

Influence of the parts of speech orientation

Among the determinative noun complements we find a set
in which the relationship indicated by de is said to be that
of content. Examples are une bouteille de vin, un panier de
fraises. From the point of view of meaning these expressions
might as well be grouped with beaucoup de vin as expressions

indicating a certain quantity. However since, in the first
two, the quantity expression is a noun and in the third it is
described as an adverb of quantity, they are differently
analysed, the de in beaucoup de vin being described as one of
the occurrences of the partitive in its simple form, and in
the others as prepositional de indicating a special kind of
relationship, content.

An example of the relative importance accorded to
structural relations on the one hand and semantic and func-
tional groupings on the other may be seen in Grevisse's treat-
ment of dont. An initial statement that dont serves as the
equivalent of a complement introduced by de is followed by
seven pages of sections and subsections indicating the meanings
dont may carry, the parts of speech to which it may serve as
complement, the grammatical functions to which it may serve
as complement, its equivalences with de qui, duquel etc., all
of which are covered by the initial statement. Once stated,
the structural relationship is then ignored as illuminating
the range of occurrence of dont.

Another example in which are displayed the importance
of labels and the unimportance of structural relations between
forms may be seen in Grevisse's treatment of the phrase avoir
de l'argent plein ses poches (393). For Grevisse, what needs
to be explained in this construction is the lack of agreement
between plein and poches. His instant solution is that in
this construction plein is a preposition and therefore inva-
riable. Now this example, and the other two of the same type

of construction, are examples of affective word order, the normal order being avoir ses poches pleines d'argent. It is true that there is a difference of agreement pattern in the two constructions, but this is by no means a unique occurrence in cases of alternative word order. For example there is the same lack of parallelism between feu la reine and la feue reine, and for Grevisse these are both adjectives (389). What is of more interest for the functioning of the language is the occurrence in neutral word order of the mass noun argent, of which an unspecified quantity is said to be filling someone's pockets — the archetypal situation for the partitive according to Grevisse — with the simple form of the partitive d'. In the stylistic reordering we have the full partitive. From Grevisse no comment.

There are a number of phenomena treated by Grevisse under different headings but connected by some grammarians with the partitive. It is no reproach to Grevisse that he does not make this connection but neither does he explicate in any of these occurrences the appearance of nouns without determiners. His treatment of the absence of the article likewise ignores them. One may criticize this deficiency without insisting that he align himself with any particular explanation connected with the partitive.

The first of these is his curious analysis — or rather analyses — of the complement of parler. Parler de la guerre is described as containing an indirect object complement, and is given as an example of the need to analyse

separately the function of the definite article and the prepo-
sition de, here with its full prepositional value. Parler de
nouilles, on the other hand, is said to contain a complement
of circumstance; no explanation is offered of what is presuma-
bly an occurrence of preposition de followed by a noun without
a determiner. One can only suppose that it is somehow the ab-
sence of article in the second that accounts for the different
label but no explanation is offered of the lack of parallelism
in the analysis.

   Similarly, in a listing of the different word classes
which can serve as complements of circumstance, pleurer de
rage is cited without comment on the absence of determiner.
Again rouge de honte is labelled as a determinative complement
of a qualifying adjective, and désireux de gloire as an exam-
ple of adjective which cannot stand without a complement. No
comment is made about the absence of determiner.

   In discussing the complement of the agent in passive
constructions Grevisse makes four points about the choice between
de and par to introduce the agent. Three of these are based
on the lexical force of the verb and the fourth on whether the
noun involved is a determiner or not. 'De is often used before
a complement which is not accompanied by a determiner. Par is
often used before a complement accompanied by the definite
article or by a determiner.' (205, Rem. 4). These examples are
given: La place était encombrée de curieux, or, encombrée par
les curieux du voisinage; Le peuple était accablé d'impôts,
or, par ces impôts.

It is clearly the normative intent of the grammar that make s
the only question worth considering whether one should use de
or par. No indication is given of the cases in which the
nouns serving as complements of agent are or are not accom-
panied by determiners. No connection is made — here or else-
where — between the degree of determination of the noun in the
differing de and par constructions. No comment is made on the
difference in form between détesté des Parisiens and accablé
de honte (205, Rem. 1, 2).

Such examples indicate how little light is thrown on
basic structural features in the language by an approach in
which labels are more important than relationships.

Summary

We have seen that Grevisse's use of meaning to
define the functions of the partitive does not lead to a
clear analysis. First Grevisse attaches the partitive to the
indefinite article because of its meaning, then on the same
grounds attaches the analysis of the plural indefinite to the
partitive. His first definition of the general meaning of the
partitive was accompanied by a restriction of its occurrence
to mass nouns but the addition of the plural indefinite to
the discussion of the partitive makes this restriction
meaningless. The fact that the general meaning of the parti-
tive is frequently carried, not by totally unrelated forms,
which is normal enough in language, but by the preposition de
which Grevisse was at pains to distinguish from the similar

formative element in the partitive, makes it difficult to
see why he insists on this distinction. Again, his definition
of the second formative element of the partitive as being the
definite article in its general sense and his inclusion of
what appear to be determined nouns under the heading of parti-
tive occurrences are incompatible.

If you wish to claim, like Grevisse, that a function
word like _de_ has a lexical value not deriving from its context,
then it is difficult to see how that value could be different
in e.g. _une bouteille de vin_ and _beaucoup de vin_. The irre-
levance of his semantic groupings is made clear by his differ-
ing analyses of these two constructions. Further his prefer-
ence for labelling forms rather than indicating relationships,
as, for example, between normal and affective word order, is
a throwback to a system of parsing, which says very little
about language structure or operation. Most of all Grevisse's
failure to comment on the lack of parallelism between occurr-
ences of the form _de_ plus determiner plus noun and the same
form plus unmarked noun is a failure to clarify a fundamental
structural relationship in the language, namely a part of
the relation of the noun and determiner systems.

It seems fair to suggest, then, that Grevisse's treat-
ment fails to demonstrate how the set of forms he calls part-
itives function in the language and that this failure is due
to fundamental weaknesses in his method.

<u>Gustave Guillaume</u>

<u>Method</u>

The title of Guillaume's first published work, <u>Le
Problème de l'article et sa solution dans la langue française</u>,[3]
is perhaps the best introduction to his method. The problem
he sets out to describe is not, he claims, a problem peculiar
to the French language, but one shared by all languages. It
is a problem posed by the pressure of man's thought processes
to find expression in language. Specifically it is the problem
of making the transition from the noun as it arises in the mind
to the noun as it is used in speech. The more sophisticated
a language, the greater the gap between the reality of the
thing signified by a noun and the idea of that thing held more
and more independently of the reality in the mind of the speaker.
The noun in its potential state in the mind is at a greater
remove from the word in its use.

The solution arrived at in French is the system of
articles, the two simple articles <u>le</u> and <u>un</u> and the compound
articles <u>du,</u> <u>de la</u> and <u>des</u>. Since the forms of language[4] are
affected only by its own internal laws, the thought processes

[3] Gustave Guillaume, <u>Le Problème de l'Article et sa solution
dans la langue française</u>, (Paris, 1919). This will be referred
to in the text as "Le Problème"

[4] "Forms of language" and "surface of language" represent
Guillaume's use of "langage", as distinct from "langue".

took over signs which appeared more or less fortuitously in the surface of the language and adapted them to fill the need. Guillaume points out that a study of the origins of the articles is less revealing than a study of the developed system in identifying these needs.

Words like "problem" and "solution" indicate the extent of Guillaume's mentalism: we have here a picture of a group of speakers shaping language to fit their needs. This is a far departure from historical linguistics where forms like le and un are identified by their origins and described diachronically in terms of their formal and functional modifications. It represents a more resolute synchronism than even a recent structural analysis[5] in which un is described as "really" a numeral, "really" betraying a certain satisfaction at having stripped away traditional notions about articles and pinned the form down to its essence, which is also its origin. Guillaume's analysis also represents a departure from traditional analysis since he claims to show the values not in discourse but in the structure of the language.[6]

Discourse and structure

The system Guillaume sets out to describe is a fact of

[5] Jean Dubois, Grammaire structurale du français (Paris, 1965)

[6] "Structure of the language" and "structure" alone are used to represent Guillaume's use of "langue".

"langue", or the structure of the language, as distinct from a fact of discourse. The structure is what is possessed by speaker and hearer, discourse the realization of that structure. To arrive at the system one must start by studying all the varying shades of meaning capable of being expressed in discourse by the articles. This must in turn be preceded by a study of the categories of nouns, both alone and as they are affected by various contexts, and in particular of their natural leaning to one or other of the articles.

Role of meaning

Clearly meaning is central in this analysis. Guillaume calls his method a "sémantique de langue" but its basis is, of course, the study of meaning in discourse. Since values in discourse can only proceed from a preexisting value in the structure of the language, this latter value is in some sense the "meaning" of the articles. However articles and prepositions are not, for Guillaume, linked to a particular signifié but rather possess a kind of dynamism which represents a movement of thought.

The value of the articles in the structure of the language is not a kind of metaphysical reality, although it is an abstraction: its basis in discourse should make this clear. Nor is it the sum or the average of their uses in discourse. A simple demonstration of this point may be made by comparing the relationships of meaning between the articles

in the following examples:

1. (a) Un enfant est toujours l'ouvrage de sa mère.

   (b) L'enfant "   "   "   " "   "

These two uses represent the most extreme generalization
possible to the articles.

2. (a) Un homme entra, qui avait l'air hagard

   (b) L'homme était entré et s'était assis au coin.[7]

Here, the articles particularize the noun they appear with.
There is a closer relationship between 1 (a) and 1 (b) than
between 1 (a) and 2 (a) or between 1 (b) and 2 (b)

It is clearly a mistake then, according to Guillaume,
for traditional grammarians to speak of the 'meaning' of the
individual articles, since they deal only with the level of
discourse where an article does not have 'a meaning'. On the
contrary the value of the articles has to be abstracted from
a complicated interplay of forces some of which are inherent
in nouns themselves, while others derive from such contexts
as adjectives, relative clauses, certain verbs or the force
of a negation.

[7] Guillaume, "L'Article français: particularization et
généralization," Langage et Science du Langage (Paris, 1964)
pp. 147-8. Henceforth referred to as "L'article français".

Categories of nouns taken out of context.

Nouns in their potential state have a natural incli-
nation towards a certain article, matched by a resistance to
the other articles. It is the strength or weakness of these
natural inclinations that explains variations in the article
between such phrases as avoir un rhume but avoir la fièvre.
By their own nature nouns belong to two exhaustive sets of
categories: they are either continuous or discontinuous and
either extrinsic or intrinsic. The first opposition refers
to whether the noun is conceived of by the mind as a point
in space, as for example table or as something with continuous
extension, as for example justice. Some nouns, as for example
vérité may be alternately continuous or discontinuous.
Guillaume lists six groups of nouns — abstract nouns, nouns
of material etc. — arranged according to their resistance to
or acceptance of the natural inclination of continuous nouns
for article un. The extrinsic/intrinsic constrast refers
to whether a noun contains enough meaning to stand alone, as
for example intelligence, or whether it needs completion by
another idea, as for example aptitude (à la musique) or
groupe (d'enfants).

Nouns in context

Taken in context, nouns will necessarily refer to
some point on an axis stretching from inactuality, whose
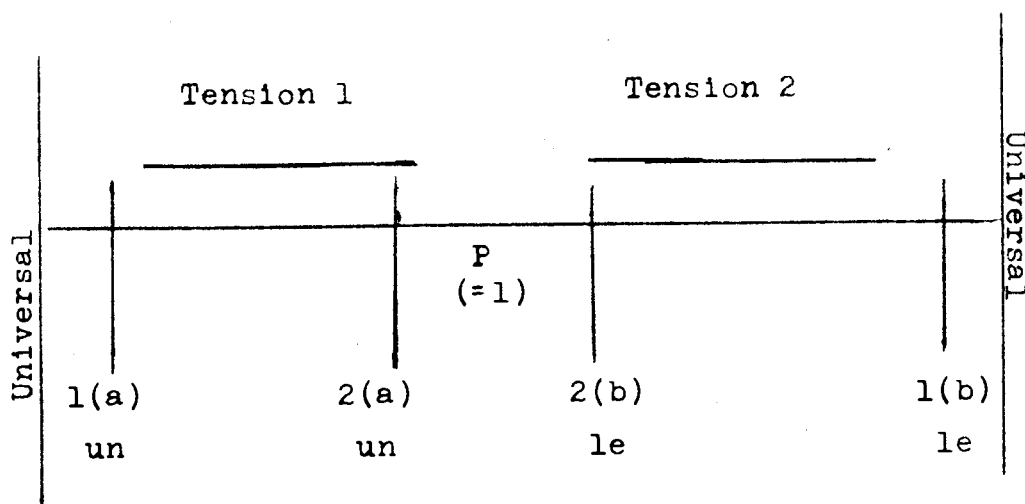natural article is le, to actuality, whose natural article

is un. Concepts, for example, are by definition inactual and tend to be marked by le. An immediate momentary impression, on the other hand, will be fully actual and tend to be marked by un. As soon as memory takes over the instantaneous impression and mingles it with others already in the mind, the tendency is towards le.

Schematization of the article

It is the interplay of contextual forces and inherent tendencies that determines, according not to logical but to psychological principles, which article will be chosen in any given situation. The organizing principle that he arrived at is, he claims, a fundamental condition of man's thought processes, namely that they move between two poles, the universal and the particular. The kinetics of the article is represented by an initial movement from universal to particular, culminating in numeral one. This movement is described as anti-extensive and christened Tension 1: the article proper to it is un and the movement of un is therefore from the universal to a point just before numeral one. Tension 2, extensive in direction starts from numeral one and extends to the universal. Its characteristic article is le. Into this schema all the shades of meaning discovered at the level of discourse must be capable of fitting if his hypothesis is to be justified.

The shades of meaning in discourse do not derive simply

from the particular cut-off point in the tension of the article selected by the speaker as most appropriate for what he wants to say: the meaning obtained depends also on the direction of the movement cut into by the actualization of discourse. To illustrate his schema let us situate on it the examples quoted above.

```
                Tension 1                    Tension 2

            ┌──────────────┐           ┌──────────────┐

        ↑                  ↑       ↓                  ↓
  U ─────┼──────────────────┼───────┼──────────────────┼───── U
  n                        P                            n
  i                       (=1)                          i
  v                                                     v
  e                                                     e
  r                                                     r
  s       1(a)             2(a)      2(b)             1(b)    s
  a                                                           a
  l        un               un        le               le    l
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P = point of particularization

1 (a) Un enfant est toujours l'ouvrage de sa mère
1 (b) L'enfant   "   "   "   "   "   "

2 (a) Un homme entra, qui avait l'air hagard
2 (b) L'homme était entré et s'était assis au coin.

The article of 1 (a) is situated at the furthest point on T 1 from the point of particularization represented by the numeral one. The article of 1 (b) is situated at the same distance from P on T 2. This similarity of position with reference to P 'explains' the similarity of the nuances in the two examples; however the direction of the movement intercepted at these

points 'explains' the difference in the two nuances. All
points on T 1 approach the point of particularization without
achieving it. Similarly, examples 2 (a) and (b) are situated
close to P but 2 (a) is intercepted at the end of the move-
ment towards particularization and 2 (b) at the beginning
of the movement away from the point of particularization.
All points on T 2 have behind them the point of reference of
immediate instantaneous experience and are therefore to that
extent memorial.

Noun number and noun extension

The articles, it is often said, have taken over the
role of marking number in French. Guillaume would not put
it that way. He would say, on the contrary, that the articles
have exactly the same mechanism as the category of number but
that the unique contribution of the article is to give ex-
pression to noun extension without immediately involving the
category of number. Where languages without articles have
only the two devices of noun number and noun context to si-
tuate the noun in discourse, French has three: number,
inherent in the noun and expressed also in the article as an
agreement form, context, and the system of articles.

Noun extension, therefore, is a much wider concept
than noun number, involving as it does such sets of categories
as continuity or discontinuity, extrinsic or intrinsic value
and actuality or inactuality. To take a simple example, one

can observe the two forms _les_ and _des_ both expressing agree-
ment plurals with their nouns but having quite different
effects on the extension of their nouns.

Guillaume's discussion of the uses and value of the
combination articles _du_, _de la_, _des_ can only be understood
in terms of the system of articles summarily described above.

The genesis of combination article 'des'

Guillaume's schema of the system of articles shows
two tensions one of which moves from universal to particular
and is the field of extension of the article _un_. The direc-
tion of the movement is a restrictive one, its terminus being
theoretically the point before which the article _un_ becomes
the numeral _un_. This tension and the article which it
symbolizes are both described as anti-extensive. By the
same reasoning, tension 2 which takes the numeral _un_ as its
point of departure and moves towards the universal, and its
article _le_, are described as extensive.

Plurality, clearly, is a form of extension and
therefore belongs in T. 2. What a form such as _les_ adds to
the extension provided by the article _le_ is simply a confirm-
ation, by means of the agreement plural, of the movement of
extension inherent in _le_. The fact that the plural form of

the article is no more than an agreement form is demonstrated
by the exact equivalence in meaning of l'homme and les
hommes when both are allowed to develop to the limits of the
universal.

However, there is a basic incongruity between plur-
ality and the anti-extensive T 1. The striking demonstra-
tion of this fact in French is the lack of a plural formed
on un. The fact that the language tried out a plural form
uns patterned on the plural le but that this form did not
survive confirms for Guillaume this basic incongruity. The
form des, situated in T 2 but serving as a plural for the
anti-extensive un, was created by importing into the system
of articles the form de which, in the system of prepositions,
has a dynamic of inversion, serving to reverse the movement
of preposition à. In contradistinction to les, therefore,
des indicates plurality not capable of infinite extension,
that is, the idea of restricted finite quantity.

The genesis of 'du', 'de la'

As we have seen T 1 is the anti-extensive tension,
the movement from universality passing through decreasing
quantities to singularity; it is the natural tension of
count nouns. T 2 is the natural tension of continuous nouns,
such as those of matter or abstract qualities, which refer
to amorphous things not having a finite extension. But con-
tinuous nouns need not only an extensive but an anti-extensive
article; here again the gap in the system is filled by the

forms du, de la. These forms translate a partial extension in relation to the total field of extension to which they belong. The difference, therefore, between l'eau, signifying everything to which the word eau can apply, and de l'eau, is that the latter indicates a restricted extension of the noun. But just as the notion of extension is not purely quantitative, so other nuances can be expressed by the partitive, for example the restriction to a particular case of possessing or using an abstract quality. This is the nuance in avoir de la bonté.

Relationship of 'du, de la' and 'des'

Guillaume, like Grevisse, distinguishes a set of contracted definite articles from the partitives but does not distinguish a plural indefinite. The forms du, de la, de l' and des belong together because they represent the same movement of thought.

Preposition 'de' and inverter 'de'

Like the articles, de is not linked to a fixed signifié but has its own dynamism. It has indeed a double movement, not only in terms of meaning, but formally, in its movement from the category of preposition to the category of article. Guillaume pictures this movement as a cline starting from the point where the meaning is fully prepositional. As the prepositional force decreases the inverter force increases, until the form is wholly inverter. Only where the prepositional force has completely disappeared can the partitive be

formed; any residue of prepositional force will prevent the formation of the partitive.

Of course preposition _de_ is free to combine with the extensive _le_ into the contracted definite articles. In _la plupart des philosophes_ or _Ils ont vécu huit jours des provisions que nous leur avions laissées_ the form _des_ is not a partitive at all but a combination of _de_ and _les_.

However, at the end of its movement from preposition _de_ to full inverter _de_, the full partitive occurs. At the beginning of the movement, _de_ is fully prepositional and prevents the formation of the partitive. This is the case in _vivre de pain_ as against _manger du pain_. _Manger_ is said to act directly upon the object, _vivre_ only through the intermediary of preposition _de_.

Half-way between preposition _de_ and inverter _de_ lies the point where _de_ has both prepositional and inversive force. Here are situated forms like _beaucoup de_, _peu de_, _remplir de_, _couvrir de_ [8] followed directly by a noun. In _Le Problème_ Guillaume's explanation was that, after a verb or adverb of quantity, _de_ 'made the noun concrete' and did away with the

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[8] These examples are taken from _Le Problème_, (1919) p. 263; only the adverbs are mentioned in "Logique Constructive du système de l'article," (henceforth referred to as "Logique Constructive") _Langage et Science du Langage_ (Paris, 1964) p. 178. It is possible that in his later thinking _remplir de_ and _couvrir de_ might have been given the same analysis as _vivre de_ (above).

need for a quantitative article. In "Logique Constructive",
first published in 1945, the explanation is similar but is
given in terms of the cline, namely that _de_ represents an in-
complete inversion which is all that can occur when the idea
of restricted quantity is indicated in some way by the context
apart from the article.

Examples of this situation are negation of the idea of
the noun, as in _ne pas manger de pain_ where the negation limits
the extension of the noun, and the presence of a prenominal
adjective, as in _d'excellent pain_, where the prenominal position
allows _excellent_ to limit the extension of _pain_.[9]

Guillaume is thus giving a different analysis of the
function of _de_ in _beaucoup de pain_ and in _vivre de pain_ (and
perhaps even in _remplir_ or _couvrir de pain_ and _vivre de pain_).
At the level of discourse there is no evidence to warrant this
distinction, which is apparently motivated by the presence of
the ideaof quantity in negation, in the limiting force of a
pronominal adjective, and in the meaning of adverbs of quantity.
The partitive is analysed as indicating an idea of restricted
quantity and the overlap between it and the context explains
the occurrences of _de_ situated at the half-way mark. In the
case of _vivre de pain_, _de_ is fully prepositional and part of
the structure of the verb-object relation.

[9]
"Logique Constructive", p. 177: "... l'idée d'excellence
qu'il [l'adjectif _excellent_] exprime ne se rapporte pas au pain
en général mais à une certaine quantité de pain seulement..."

Some occurrences of 'de' plus noun related to non-formation of
the partitive.

In discussing noun groups linked by prepositional de
Guillaume explains the difference in article between amour de
la gloire and désir de gloire by tracing the nominalizations
back to Quelqu'un aime la gloire and Quelqu'un désire de la
gloire. This verbal relationship is described as functional
dependence. Nominalization occurs by means of preposition de
giving:

<div align="center">

L'amour /de/ la gloire

Le désir /de/ de la gloire

</div>

Non-formation of the partitive after preposition de produces
Le désir de gloire and explains the difference in the final
forms. There are other examples of functional dependence in
which noun one implies an idea of possession relative to noun
two and non-formation of the partitive explains the final form.
Thus les possesseurs de terres is traced back to les posses-
seurs ayant des terres and les mères de célibataires to les
mères ayant pour fils des célibataires.[10]

One of the relationships said to be indicated by de
in a noun group is that of form to matter. Where noun one is
a collective like classe or foule the clue to the presence or
absence of the article is to omit the collective and see what

[10]
    Guillaume frequently calls on this kind of underlying
structure in a way that would delight transformationalists
although their methods are otherwise totally opposed.

article would naturally occur with noun two standing alone.
Thus, if one thinks les bourgeois, the noun group la classe
des bourgeois is the desired form, that is the article chosen
for bourgeois alone remains, the same one is put before the
collective and the group is joined by preposition de. However
if one thinks des gens, the partitive is suppressed in the
nominalization and noun one tends to be preceded by un. Thus
une foule de gens.

Some occurrences of 'de' plus noun not related to non-formation
of the partitive.

Among the noun groups linked by de which are said to
indicate the relationship of form and matter are une goutte
d'eau and un morceau de sucre. A sub-group includes quantité,
masse, nombre, dizaine etc. in which the idea of form in this
first noun is said to have given way to the idea of quantity.
Since the groupings are semantic in any case, it is hard to
see why beaucoup de sucre should have a different analysis
from un morceau de sucre. Yet the de with beaucoup is semi-
inverter, semi preposition and the de with morceau is preposition
de.

This same group showing the relationship between form
and matter stretches somewhat elastically to include attenuative,
privative and finally inchoative nuances until the organizing
principle disappears. Among the privative noun groups are

nominalizations such as manque d'argent. Now Guillaume has
already offered a semantic explanation of the absence of arti-
cle in Il manque de force which would presumably apply to
the nominalization. The explanation is that the object of a
verb of privation is incompatible with le if the lack indicated
is treated as a quantity. De is said to be the sign that
indicates that the idea is quantitative. In Il lui manque la
force what is lacking is not a quantity of anything but a
quality and this explains the presence of article le. Here,
as so often in his work, Guillaume is ignoring the structural
difference between the two phrases. Il lui manque la force
is the reordering in impersonal form of La force lui manque
and Guillaume pointed out himself that there is rarely resis-
tance to the article by nouns in subject position for the reason
that, in languages which have lost their case system, the
function of subject is rarely indicated as such, and it is
clear function marking that resists the article. Function in
object position is more clearly indicated because of the in-
fluence of the verb.[11]   Thus, rather than distinguish seman-
tically between the idea of quantity and the idea of quality
— a delicate nuance, to say the least, in these expressions —
Guillaume might have made a distinction, even in his own terms,
between subject and object position in the noun.

     [11] Le Problème, p. 18. "Une certaine résistance à l'article
vient de ce que le nom reçoit dans la phrase une fonction déter-
minée, particulière ... La résistance provient surtout des
fonctions régime, très peu de la fonction sujet. La raison en
est que le sujet dans les langues qui ont perdu leur déclinai-
son n'est pas matériellement indiqué comme tel; qu'au surplus,
il se présente, à l'ordinaire, en tête de phrase, c'est-à-dire
avant qu'ait paru le verbe, qui est le véritable déterminant de la fonc

In discussing the relationship of functional dependence between two nouns we saw that Guillaume used the non-formation of the partitive after _de_ to explain a group like _désir de gloire_. But under the same heading he gives a different explanation for _goût d'exactitude_ and _goût de l'exactitude_. The noun, _l'exactitude_, in the second is said to stand for 'exactness itself' and is marked by _le_; the noun _exactitude_ in the first stands for a more concrete value of the noun defined as 'more or less the mark of exactness in things'. This degree of concreteness cannot be marked by _le_, he says, nor can _un_ be used with a continuous abstract noun since it translates the actual and concrete. In view of his definition of the function of the partitive as providing a non-extensive article for continuous nouns, one would expect that this nuance would be marked by the partitive. Compare, for example, the description of _de la vraie bonté_ as representing 'the marks of goodness (perceptible by the senses) in persons or things.' But Guillaume continues, on the contrary, that the only possibility of translating the desired nuance of exactitude is zero article. Thus there is a different explanation for the absence of article in _goût d'exactitude_ and _désir de gloire_, a difference which even in Guillaume's own terms seems to have a rather shaky justification.

Zero article

In some cases, rather than explain absence of the article after preposition _de_ by non-formation of the partitive,

Guillaume offers an explanation in terms of the particular value brought to a noun by zero article. Of course the net result is the same, but the distinction makes a difference to the theory. In cases of non-formation of the partitive it is assumed that, were it not for particular contextual influences, the noun would have had a partitive article. Such is the case in _désir de gloire_, in _ne pas manger de pain_, _beaucoup de pain_ etc. In cases of zero article, like _goût d'exactitude_, the nuance desired from the noun independent of its context can only be obtained by zero article. If this analysis is to stand up, it must be possible to distinguish between the nuance supplied by the partitive and suppressed by the context, and that supplied by zero article.

Guillaume sketched his theory of zero article in _Le Problème_ and later added it to the schema of the first three articles. He regards zero as the most recent addition to the system of articles and claims that there are survivals of zero article from an earlier stage of the language only because they correspond to a live psychic mechanism in the speakers. It is not enough to say of _avoir faim_ or _avoir soif_ that they are 'fixed expressions'.

Zero article belongs in a third tension, T 3, which takes its point of departure at the limit of T 2, the point at which the article _le_ expresses the widest possible universality and abstraction. The value of zero is said to be the 'trans-abstract concretion' of the noun, 'trans-abstract'

because it has taken its point of departure from the limit of
T 2. An example is to be seen in <u>parler d'amour</u> as against
<u>parler de l'amour.</u> The zero article form is said to represent
something experienced personally as against something thought
of impersonally. Or again in <u>la voix de l'amitié</u> as against
<u>une voix d'amitié</u>, <u>amitié</u> in the second is said to 'keep the
elevated tone of the abstract meaning while expressing at the
same time the personal feeling being displayed'. This pre-
servation of the elevated tone of the preceding tension in a
more concrete aspect is said to be an effect of zero article.

Is it possible to distinguish in Guillaume's own terms
between 'concretion' of a noun and 'trans-abstract concretion' ?
The partitive, which is situated not on T 3 but T 2, represents
a movement away from universality and abstraction to singula-
rity and concretion. Like <u>un</u>, the partitive is 'actual'
(in the sense of being related to immediate experience), as
against <u>le</u> which is inactual. The partitive is more concrete
than <u>le</u> at the end of its movement. <u>De l'amour</u>, as against the
universal and abstract <u>l'amour</u>, may indicate a restricted
quantity of love or a particular instance of a display of the
sentiment. But it is in exactly the latter terms that Guillaume
characterizes the nuance of zero article in <u>parler d'amour.</u>
What is indicated by the zero article he says, is 'the sentiment
of love expressed by words of love intended in the concrete and
the immediate (which are the same thing) for the person to whom
they are addressed'. What makes this 'trans-abstract' is that

it is said to 'go beyond the abstract representation of the sentiment'.[12] Other examples of this nuance are said to be mourir de soif, crier de douleur. Again in parler de politique the zero nuance is said to suggest conversation, not about the abstract idea of politics, but about 'certain political questions'. Again Guillaume adds that the zero value goes beyond the abstract ideal representation la politique. It would seem equally justifiable to situate 'certain political questions' on this side of the abstract ideal representation rather than beyond it. That is to say, there is no particular justification, even semantically, for Guillaume's statements that these nuances are 'trans-abstract' and consequently no particular justification for analysing vivre de pain in terms of non-formation of the partitive after preposition de and mourir de soif in terms of the positive choice of zero article as the only way of giving the noun the desired nuance.

Summary

An attempt has been made to deal with Guillaume's analysis of the partitive articles in his own terms, that is to say, accepting his claim that it is possible to make verifiable statements about thought processes, and the objections that

12
    "Logique Constructive", p. 182: "Alors que le premier exemple [parler de l'amour] suggère l'idée d'un discours dont le sentiment de l'amour, abstraitement conçu, fait le sujet, le second [parler d'amour], transgressant la representation abstraite du sentiment lui-même, nous le montre exprimé par des paroles amoureuses dont l'intention vise, dans le concret et le momentané (qui ne font qu'un), une personne à qui elles sont adressées."

have been raised have been kept as much as possible within the framework of his postulates. This is not the place to discuss such fundamental questions as whether meaning is to be found in words or only in larger utterances or whether the whole analysis of the problem of the article is meaningful outside the Indo-European language group. However, even in his own terms, it is clear that he is open to the charge of completely subjective methods. He says himself that no two nouns have the same qualities and that only approximate groupings of them can be made. His definitions, like that of the nuance of zero article, are open to question. His interpretation of diachronic facts, such as the disappearance of plural uns, needs to be qualified in the light of facts of other languages, such as the persistance of just this form in Spanish. His semantic groupings disguise structural differences and lead to dissimilar analyses of apparently similar phenomena. The fact that all occurrences of prepositional de can be arranged somewhere on his cline only disguises the fact that the assignment of a particular place on the cline is finally arbitrary. Finally, his schema of the articles, especially before it was thrown out of balance by the addition of zero article, is elegant but not explanatory: it is at best a metaphor which like all good metaphors embraces many separate relationships in a single image.

Jean Dubois

Method

Dubois' analysis of the French nominal system [13] is a
distributional one, based on Z. Harris' methods of determining
co-occurrence possibilities by the principle of commutation.
He claims to have based his study on a finite corpus made up
of actual communications taken to be representative of the
system. He has adopted the Bloomfieldian view that the meaning
of a linguistic form is the situation in which it is uttered
and understood; from this it follows that the role of meaning
in his analysis is simply as a check on the commutations: he
will not analyse meaning, interpret it or use it as a measuring
device. Finally, he proposes to describe the segments of the
language by their relative position in the speech chain.

Language as code

Dubois suggests that a distributional analysis is
incomplete without a description of the system of redundant
markings which are inherent in the code of the language. He
does not deal with redundancy in the expression of meaning, by
repetition etc., which is not part of the code of the language.

[13] Jean Dubois, Grammaire structurale du français: nom et
pronon, (Paris, 1965).

Indeed he goes so far as to say that this system is the
[14] phenomenon in the structure of the utterance. Since
the system of redundancy is not voluntary but inherent, it
can be studied as part of the code. He proposes, therefore
to examine the distribution of the marks of number and gender
in the noun system, not from the point of view of the signifié,
but from the point of view of the needs of communication.

Position

Relative position is said to be the 'essential' indica-
tor of the beginning of syntagms and their expansions and of
their function. Indeed in several places Dubois equates
'position' and 'function'.[15] A noun syntagm followed by a
verb syntagm will be in the relation of subject to verb in a
declarative sentence for example; the same syntagms inverted
will indicate the verb-subject relationship in interrogation.

In the examples: Il m'a envoyé à Paris and Il m'a
envoyé un paquet, the functions of me are determined by the
different types of expansions of the verbs. The addition of
a segment such as le, la or les will 'modify' the function of
me or te, for example in: Où t'envoie-t-il? and Il me l'a
envoyé. However, in the case of a pair like: Il me parle
and Il me voit, the function of me cannot be said to be

[14] Dubois has a habit of scattering superlatives like
"essential" "principal" throughout his text without indicating
the grounds on which he determines the ranking.

[15] E.g. p. 174: "La position (ou fonction) est plus impor-
tante que la notion d'animé/inanimé..."

different although parler and voir do have different types of
expansion. Me and te are not said to amalgamate two functions;
the two types of verbs are said to make use of the same form
me. Similarly, in the unstressed third person pronouns le,
lui, in which formal and functional differences coincide, fun-
ction is related not to form but to the different positional
possibilities of the forms such as me le but le lui. The
examples of the unstressed pronouns indicate how much more im-
portance is accorded in this analysis to position than to pa-
radigm or form.

Redundant markings

Where normal position indicates relationships, the
system of markings is supplementary only, merely confirming
the indications of position. Where positional indications are
suspended, the system of marks may take over their role. For
example, in the sentences: Oui, dit l'enfant, and Oui, disent
les enfants, the absence of plural markings in verb and noun
in the first, and their presence in the second allows the
modification in order while conserving cohesion. Agreement, or
redundancy of marks, may also play a part in marking the limits
of syntagms or expansions. For example in Le fils des voisins
est rentré de l'école, the absence of plural marking on Le fils
and est rentré marks off the limits and the function of the
noun expansion des voisins. Of course, in the case of Les
fils des voisins sont rentrés de l'école, other indicators must
take over.

Link words

Besides the factors of position and the distribution of marks in determining sentence structure, there may also be formal indicators of the beginning of syntagms. These are "demarcatifs" or link words[16]. Examples are _et_, _ou_, _que_ and _de_. In the example above: _Le fils des voisins_, the status of _des voisins_ as a noun expansion of _Le fils_, called the base syntagm, is indicated by its position, by the unmarked singulars on either side of it, by the fact that like _le fils_ it is a noun syntagm but 'especially' because it begins with the link word _des_.

Cohesion

Cohesion, sometimes called concatenation, is a rather vaguely defined notion. Position, redundant markings and link words may all contribute to it. In the example above, Dubois speaks of the 'concatenation' of _le fils_ and _est rentré_, but in the example: _Oui, dit l'enfant_, the absence of normal word order is called the absence of a mark of cohesion. Dubois then continues: "Dans une suite de syntagmes **A, B, C, D, E, F**, la cohésion, c'est-à-dire la concatenation AB, puis BC, puis CD, DE, EF, est assurée par la position de B après A etc."[17] Even vaguer is the conception of 'maximal' cohesion. This term is

16
The translation "link words" was chosen in preference to something like "boundary markers" as there are so many other indicators of boundaries.

17
Dubois, p. 26.

called upon to describe the function of link word _de_ in _une foule de généraux_. Expressions such as _une foule de_, _un grand nombre de_, _un petit nombre de_ are said to be 'characterized by the absence of the variant _des_' thus implying a distinction in the amount of cohesion afforded by the variants.

The system of agreement markings is related to the amount of cohesion and to the choice of link words. In the case of: _A Paris, la circulation des voitures est difficile vers 18 heures_, the base syntagm of the subject is _circulation_; its expansion _des voitures_ does not modify the distribution of marks in the verb syntagm. In _Une foule de généraux l'attendent dans la cour d'honneur_, the base syntagm of the subject is _généraux_ and the verb is marked with its mark. This is said to be the case for adverbs of quantity and the expressions such _une foule de_ mentioned above.

The unity of systems

Forms in complementary distribution such as _je_, _me_ _moi_, _mien_ in spite of their formal and functional differences are described as a single system. The object pronouns _le_, _la_ _les_ which function as syntagms of the sentence, and the article _le_, _la_, _les_ which functions as a member of a noun syntagm belong to the same system. As we saw, it is not their functional differences but their different co-occurrence possibilities which distinguish unstressed _le_ and _lui_; unstressed _me_ and _te_ do not represent an amalgam of forms, but are single

forms which two types of verbs make use of — those like voir whose expansion is not introduced by a link word, and those like parler whose expansion is introduced by a link word. Again interrogative qui/que and relative qui/que are a single system, their functions being distinguished not by intonation or position, but by their different systems of reference, the interrogative referring forward to the segments in the anticipated response, the relative referring backwards to specific earlier noun syntagms.

It is clear from these examples that in an attempt to see the functioning of the code by eliminating multiple semantic and functional subdivisions, Dubois is deliberately de-emphasizing the paradigmatic aspects of the language in favour of the syntagmatic. Some of the difficulties that remain in his analysis of the de forms stem from this choice.

Substitutes

In the final section of his book, Dubois proposes to examine the correspondences between the systems he has established without reference to the meaning of the forms involved on the one hand, and their semantic utilization in the language on the other.

This section is devoted to the study of the system of substitutes, in particular to pronoun and pronominal adjective substitutes. Substitutes are forms which repeat a part of the previous utterance while becoming an integral part of the

following utterance. They are said to reduce the cost of
the message by replacing syntagms, although how much economy
is obtained by some of the forms said to have anticipatory
reference or reference forward to a coming syntagm is not
always clear. The system of reference may apply extra-lin-
guistically, to an element in the situation, the speaker and
so on.

An example of reference backwards to a preceding syn-
tagm is: Une lettre de Pierre est arrivée ce matin: je n'ai
fait que LA parcourir. LA substitutes for une lettre de
Pierre and is itself a syntagm of the sentence. In Une
lettre de Georges est arrivée; SA santé est bonne, SA subs-
titutes for only a part of the noun syntagm and is itself a
member of a noun syntagm. In LA pendule de la gare the first
article LA is said to anticipate de la gare and in QUI est
venu?, QUI is said to anticipate the animate noun Georges.

Substitutes show certain structural analogies with the
syntagms they replace, in the case of noun syntagms the most
important being the marks of number and gender. There are
also structural similarities between classesof substitutes in
the same system, for example between the object pronouns le,
la, les and the article with the same form. We saw that the
first of these functioned as a syntagm of the sentence and
the second as a member of a noun syntagm. When Dubois says
therefore of these two classes that 'the identity of the

function they perform is assured and confirmed by the identity
of structure and form'[18] we must understand that the identity
of function he is referring to is their substitutive function,
and see the apparent contradiction as part of his constant
attempt to relate the smaller systems of the language into
larger wholes.

The functioning of the system of substitutes cannot be
described entirely morphologically, of course, since the subs-
titutive role can only be checked by consulting the meaning.
Meaning, here, then has a slightly larger role than before
but none at all in determining the membership of the systems.

The treatment of the so-called partitive articles falls
entirely within this section since the partitive nuance for
Dubois is simply a particular semantic application in the
language of a set of forms whose basic unity and functions
have been arrived at by distributional analysis.

The basic function of the 'de' forms

Dubois analyses de as a preposition with 'combinatory
variants' du, des and dont. His treatment includes all
occurrences of these forms, whether traditionally prepositions,
articles or relative pronouns. Like all the other systems he
describes, this one has a basic function, that of linking

[18] Dubois, p. 99.

together syntagms and expansions, both verbal and nominal. Examples of verb expansions would be: manger de la salade or Il m'empêche de partir and of noun expansions: le livre de l'enfant or un lit de fer.

Like the article/third person object pronoun system there are a variety of functions in the system. As members of the determiner system, du and des are members of noun syntagms. The status of de plus noun in this respect is not altogether clear: there are examples in which it is not a member of the noun syntagm and has only linking function and others in which it has both functions. Dont is never a member of a syntagm but is itself one. Unlike the other de forms it has a secondary substitutive function, standing for a combination of de followed by a noun syntagm. An example is: La pierre DONT il le frappa in which DONT is said to stand for d'une pierre in Il le frappa d'une pierre.

One of the unresolved problems is the extent of the functional parallelism between the de forms as determiners on the one hand, and article le and numeral un on the other. As we shall see, the basic function of the article is anaphora[19] or reference either backwards or forwards to elements in the speech chain, reference outside the speech chain to the situation of speaker or hearer etc., or finally, reference to all

[19] "Anaphora" will be used in Dubois' sense to mean the four types of linguistic and extra-linguistic reference here defined.

previous occurrences in the language of the form introduced
by the article. The basic function of numeral <u>un</u> is the
opposite — non-anaphora — that is, numeral <u>un</u> has the ability
to form a noun syntagm while avoiding any of the kinds of
anaphora indicated for <u>le</u>. Dubois does not spell out the
implications for the <u>de</u> forms of these opposing functions:
we must assume, however, that to the extent that the <u>de</u> forms
can be shown to be distributionally parallel to the article,
they must be anaphoric, and elsewhere non-anaphoric.

Given the variety of functions of the <u>de</u> forms and the
nebulous status of <u>de</u>, Dubois' success in establishing the
unity of the system will depend in the final analysis on his
demonstration of the basic function of linking in all the forms.

The 'de' forms as determiners.

The distribution of the variants <u>de</u>, <u>du</u>, <u>des</u> as deter-
miners is defined by the possible following segments in this
way:

Form	Exclusions	Possibilities
<u>de</u>	<u>le</u>, <u>les</u>	<u>la</u>, <u>l'</u>, numeral, <u>tout</u>, <u>même</u>, <u>etc.</u>
<u>du</u>	any article, numeral etc.	singular adj. or substantive
<u>des</u>	<u>un</u>, <u>le</u>, <u>l'</u>, <u>la</u>, <u>les</u>	other numerals, pl. adj. or subst.

This alignment is a classic example of syntagmatic analysis
since, in effect, it abolishes the paradigm <u>du</u>, <u>de la</u>, <u>de l'</u>,
<u>des</u>. It represents a great simplification of the traditional

analysis of these forms in which a form such as des might appear in up to four different systems. In order to see whether the unification of the system facilitatesor obscures the discussion of the forms, we should first consider Dubois' analysis of article le, numeral un and the distributional similarities between them and the de forms.

Article 'le'

In his desire to underline the similarities between the third person unstressed object pronouns and the article le, Dubois has, typically, rather overstated the case for the substitutive function of the article. The object pronouns have a clear substitutive function, and do carry the marks of number and gender of the syntagm they represent. Thus: Je vois Pierre. Je le vois. Dubois describes four types of anaphora in the article and attempts to establish a substitutive function for the article in each case.

The first type of anaphora — backwards to a preceding noun syntagm — is said to be seen in Pierre jouait avec ses frères et soeurs; LE garçon traversa brusquement la route. LE is said to be substitutive for Pierre and to carry the singular mark from Pierre. But it is not the article alone that refers to Pierre; LE bureau could not do so. Neither can garçon alone refer to Pierre since un garçon would automatically refer to another boy. The reference is made by the whole noun syntagm. Nor can the singular marking of LE be accounted for by the singular Pierre. LA foule may refer backwards to

Cinq cents Parisiens without carrying its number marking.

The second type of anaphora is what Dubois calls anti-
cipatory, or reference forwards to a syntagm. His example
is LA pendule de la gare est arrêtée, in which LA is said to
refer to de la gare. Not even Dubois would claim a redundancy
of the mark here, but one is left wondering how much of an
economy is provided by this kind of anaphora, the function of
substitutes having been described as reducing the cost of
the message.

The third type of anaphora is found in LA pendule ne
marche pas, in which LA is said to refer to 'the situation'.
The parallelism here is to the third person subject pronoun
il which can refer both to a noun syntagm contained in the
text and to a third party or thing not involved with the first
and second person speakers.

If one does not press too far the question of redun-
dancy of markings on the substitute or reduction of the cost
of the message as necessary characteristics of substitutes,
the three kinds of anaphora described above do not pose a
problem. But the fourth type is less amenable. In an attempt
to have anaphora apply as much as possible to linguistic
events, Dubois defines the use of the article usually called
"generic" as containing reference to all previous occurrences
of the segment. An example would be: La neige est blanche.[20]

[20] Dubois' example (p. 149): La neige tombe à gros flocons
is unfortunately not capable of interpretation in the 'generic'
sense, although that is what it is clearly meant to demonstrate.

This definition has the virtue of applying to words rather
to concepts, classes, universal ideas etc. but the substitu-
tive value of the article is not much better established than
it is in   LE garçon; rather the whole noun syntagm is sub-
stitutive in this fourth type of anaphora.

Anaphora in the 'de' forms

Beyond indicating that the de forms belong in the system
of determiners, that is to say are members of noun syntagms,
and also serve as link words for expansions of noun and verb
syntagms, Dubois does not attempt to use distributional criteria
to define their functions more closely. On the contrary he
suggests that it is only semantic considerations that have
caused traditional analyses to set up three forms of des and
two of de. It is simple, however, to use Dubois' own analysis
of anaphora in the article to distinguish anaphoric and non-
anaphoric functions in expansions. The de forms may occur
in expansions in all the same contexts as define anaphora in
the article. An example of type one would be: Le général
De Gaulle parla hier.   The anaphora in LE président must be
present in Les paroles du président; similarly anticipatory
reference such as LES enfants à la porte must reappear in
Le plus âgé DES enfants à la porte. Perhaps one reason for
Dubois not dealing with the question of anaphora in the de
forms is that the abolition of the paradigm leaves him with
occurrences like Les aiguilles de LA pendule ne marchent pas
or La blancheur de LA neige in which the LA's are anaphoric

and the de's are link words but also with examples like les paroles DU président in which linking and anaphora are combined in DU.

On the other hand the de forms occur in contexts in which anaphora is impossible because the article is impossible. Thus Il s'est passé des choses étranges but not Il s'est passé les choses étranges or Il n'y a pas de livre sur la table but not Il n'y a pas le livre sur la table. It is possible to establish then, without reference to meaning, anaphoric and non-anaphoric functions in the system by distribution alone. The traditional relationship between the de forms and the definite article on the one hand and with the indefinite article on the other is not, as Dubois suggests, a purely semantic distinction.

'De/des' in noun expansions.

Having restricted himself to a discussion of syntagmatic relationships, Dubois was only able to offer the notion of 'maximal cohesion', buttressed by the evidence of redundant markings, to distinguish the functions of de and des in expansions. The expansion des voitures in La circulation des voitures was said to be subordinate to the base syntagm La circulation and as such did not affect the number marking of the following verb. Phrases like une foule de, un grand nombre de, peu de were said to be characterized by the presence of de which provided maximal cohesion. The substantive

following was said to be the base and to affect the verb with its number marking, as for example in Une foule de généraux l'attendent.

Even if the notion of maximal cohesion were clearer than it is, contrary examples remain to be explained. Un grand nombre des candidats ... ont été refusés has the same type of base and number markings as Une foule de généraux but the 'cohesion' is less than maximal. Clearly cohesion and redundancy of the mark cannot distinguish de and des in noun expansions: what is needed is the notion of anaphoric or non-anaphoric reference.

The linking function of the 'de' forms

Identifying functional sub-groupings in the de forms does not of course invalidate the system Dubois has set up. He claims only that the unity of the system depends on a basic shared function, in this case the linking function. What we should consider now is whether there are occurrences of these forms which do not seem to have this function.

Except in the case of compound prepositions like près de, de chez, etc. two prepositions do not occur together in French. Yet the de forms may be preceded by a wide range of prepositions, for example, sur du pain, avec du beurre etc. If anaphora were involved, the article le would occur, sur le pain, etc. The fact that a wide range of prepositions is involved indicates that we are not dealing with lexical

co-occurrence restrictions, which is the explanation Dubois
would offer for the difference between manger de la salade
and adorer la salade. Manger would be described as a verb
capable of being expanded by means of a link word. But in
the prepositional occurrences above one may ask how much of
a linking function remains in a de which co-occurs freely with
a number of prepositions, themselves link words.

The restoration of the paradigm

The abolition of the paradigm du, de la, de l', des in
favour of DU, DE/la, DE/l', DES does reveal the parallelism
that Dubois is concerned to show, but in practice it is hard to
do without it. In fact right at the beginning of his second
volume [21] — a quasi-transformational description of the verb —
Dubois restores it in his description of the nominalization
process. L'eau est transparente is transformed into La trans-
parence de l'eau by the addition of the segment de before the
noun syntagm. Similarly La blancheur du linge comes from
the addition of the segment de to le linge. The internal
structure of the de forms which, as a good distributionalist
for whom each function is identifiably marked in the speech
chain, Dubois would not pull out of the air, reappears the
moment he begins to treat language processes rather than dis-
tribution in the speech chain.

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[21]
    Jean Dubois, Grammaire structurale du français: le
verbe, (Paris, 1967).

Substitutive function of 'dont'

At one point Dubois does depart from his principle
that the determination of systems be based strictly on seg-
ments in the speech chain, plus, in the case of substitutes,
certain reference to the extra-linguistic situation. In his
analysis of the substitutive function of dont the correspon-
dence is said to be to 'all occurrences in which the noun
syntagm would be preceded by preposition de'. This is, of
course, the traditional treatment, but it does refer, not to
a real, but to an imaginary speech chain. The sentence Il
souffre d'un mal imaginaire need never have occurred for the
corresponding Le mal dont il souffre to occur. The basic
sentence represents of course for a transformational analysis
the underlying structure, but it is somewhat out of place in
a distributional analysis in which the analysis of du as a
contracted form of de and the definite article is discarded
on the grounds that there is only semantic and not distribu-
tional evidence for it.

Summary

Dubois' attempt to show the fundamental unity of the
de forms is most successful in its opposition to semantic type
groupings which disguise the operation of the systems of the
language, but although he claims to show the operation of the
code of the language from an analysis of the elements in the
speech chain alone, he leaves a number of questions unanswered

about the functioning of the de forms and their interrelation

In the first place, his insistence on the parallelism of de, du, des, whatever their functions, prevents him from showing the patterned relationships between de on the one hand and du, de la, des on the other.

Secondly Dubois' explanations by cohesion and distribution of agreement markings cannot account for the distribution of de and des in noun expansions. However, if we accept his third type of anaphora (La pendule ne marche plus) as reference to 'the situation' we can explicate the des in Grevisse's example: Il constata ... que beaucoup des boutons manquaient as having the same kind of anaphora and differenciate it from the non-anaphoric beaucoup de boutons, without departing from Dubois' principles.

Finally, although linking as a basic function of the de forms is useful for analysing the speech chain into segments and avoids the pitfalls of semantic analysis, it is precisely in those occurrences usually described as partitive that the linking function is the least apparent.

Maurice Gross

Method

Gross' discussion of certain phenomena connected with
the partitive articles is set in a transformational framework.
He begins by defining as determiners the definite article
(later seen to have two distinct functions, one 'referential'
and one generic), demonstratives, possessive adjectives, car-
dinal numerals and indefinites. Among the indefinites are
du, de la, de l' and des. De is not a member of the basic
system. He considers plural indefinite des and the singular
partitives to be identical because their internal structure
is identical. They are described as being a compound of pre-
position de and the generic definite article and the justifi-
cation for this analysis is to be found in the generality of
application of the rules which generate noun phrases containing
these particular indefinites, as well as noun phrases with zero
article like Jean parle de sable.

He first considers noun phrases serving as direct and
indirect object complements and shows that all the determiners
can occur after preposition à. Jean pense à une voisine, à
des gâteaux, à de l'eau. After preposition de, however, the

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Maurice Gross, "Sur une règle de 'cacophonie'," Langages, 7 (Septembre, 1967).

parallelism disappears. Jean parle de la femme, de plusieurs femmes, but Jean parle de sable. In order to write a rule which expands the formula 'Noun phrase' into 'Determiner plus Noun' one must choose either to treat noun phrases after preposition de as exceptional in structure and write a rule just for them, or write a single rule for all the determiners and correct the noun phrases containing the partitive determiner preceded by preposition de. That is to say the rule which correctly generates Jean pense à de la soupe will also generate *Jean parle de de la soupe.[23] As the aim is always to write rules of the greatest possible generality, the second is the approach chosen. The first transformational rule suggested to correct *Jean parle de de la soupe is simply a restatement of the observation made in the Port-Royal Grammar that de and de or de and des do not occur together. In T-rule form this would be stated as De + de + generic article → de. The explanation of the Port-Royal grammarians was that the juxtaposition was unpleasant to the ear; hence the title of the article "Sur une règle de 'cacophonie'". Gross does not share their view of the cause of the phenomenon but this kind of 'cause' is irrelevant in any case.

[23] The asterisk is used to mark an ungrammatical form.

The rule in this form is shown to apply not only to indirect object complements introduced by <u>de</u> but to all functions in which a noun phrase is preceded by <u>de</u>. Thus <u>au lieu de sable</u>, <u>un morceau de sucre</u>, <u>au moyen d'armes</u>, <u>en fonction de maire</u>. If the same rule is applied it is possible to write a single rule for a passive transformation of verbs whose complement of agent is introduced by <u>de</u>. Thus the rule which transforms <u>Tout le monde aime Marie</u> into <u>Marie est aimée de tout le monde</u> will generate from <u>Des personnes que nous connaissons bien aiment Marie</u> the incorrect *<u>Marie est aimée de des personnes que nous connaissons bien</u>, which is corrected by the T-rule. Similarly certain nominalizations of the kind which derive <u>Ton achat de pain</u> from <u>Tu achètes du pain</u> or <u>l'arrivée de Jean</u> from <u>Jean arrive</u> by means of preposition <u>de</u> require the same correction for partitive noun phrases.

Modification of the rule

It would be possible to apply the original rule to the result of a negative transformation *<u>Jean n'a pas de du vin</u> and end up with a correct form but this would entail writing another T-rule to correct *<u>Jean n'aime pas de sa maison</u> if a single rule for negativization is used. Since this only creates the need for a new and unmotivated T-rule, Gross prefers to apply a rule Generic article→ Ø where what is desired is a true negation of a noun with partitive determiner.

Thus <u>Jean n'a pas de l'argent</u> will become <u>Jean n'a pas</u>
<u>d'argent</u>.[24] It begins to appear here how important is the
distinction between the 'referential' and the generic functions
of the article. Gross defines the 'referential' article as
having the function of attaching nouns to the context of the
sentence. A rule which applied generally to the definite
article in the context of a negative verb would produce
* <u>Jean n'est pas rentré de cinéma</u> from <u>Jean n'est pas rentré</u>
<u>du cinéma</u>. The rule deleting the generic article is shown to
apply to a more general class of predeterminers than just the
negative. It applies to <u>beaucoup</u>, <u>peu</u> etc. which Gross des-
cribes as positive predeterminers, to <u>autant</u>, <u>tant</u> etc. which
he calls comparative predeterminers, as well as to all the
negatives.

If this rule is valid, the question arises whether the
original <u>De</u> + <u>de</u> + generic article ⟶ <u>de</u> should not be broken
down into two rules, each of which might have wider appli-
cation. Faced with two <u>de</u>'s, one of which must be deleted,
it is necessary to determine whether it is the first or second
that undergoes deletion. It is in attempting to make this
point precise, as indeed he must, since the rule must specify

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    Gross omits from his discussion both the affective
negative (<u>Je n'ai pas DE L'argent pour le gaspiller</u>, Grevisse,
332) and the contrastive negative (<u>Je n'ai pas DE LA bière</u>,
<u>j'ai du vin</u>, Gross, p. 110). The latter case includes the
uses with être in the negative which are sometimes called
'identificational'. Here the contrast may only be implied,
not stated (<u>Ce n'est pas DU vin, ni DE L'eau</u>, Grevisse, 332,
Rem. 2). In these cases Gross' rule would not apply and the
full partitive would remain after the negative.

exactly the context of the deletion, that Gross links what he eventually identifies as partitive deletion to a range of article and preposition deletions occurring in different grammatical processes. Analyses such as those of Grevisse or Guillaume in which the method not only does not demand but does not even permit this degree of specificity do not throw light on phenomena which are unrelated to the cases in point.

Diverse applications of the separate deletions.

The case for breaking down the original T-rule is first shown by an example in which prepositional de followed by the generic article appears to be deleted. If this can be shown to be valid, than a rule which deletes the whole partitive, composed as it is of preposition de plus the generic article, is clearly undesirable. Gross suggests that the rule deleting preposition de before the generic article might be used to derive noun phrases with the generic article from noun phrases with the partitive article. The distribution of the partitive depends on the nature of the verb; but if certain tense restrictions are placed on those verbs which can be accompanied by the partitive, only the generic article can occur, and vice versa. Thus Je veux du pain but not Je veux le pain. In the second example the referential article is possible but not the generic. Equally J'aime le pain is possible but not *J'aime du pain. However with a restriction to the conditional the partitive may occur. J'aimerais du pain. Or again, De l'argent intéresserait Pierre but not *De l'argent intéresse Pierre. Gross suggests that the partitive be generated for

all these cases and <u>de</u>⟶ ∅ be used to produce the generic article where the partitive cannot occur.

A further application of the rule <u>De</u>⟶ ∅ is found in the substitutive possibilities of <u>en.</u>   Normally <u>en</u> substitutes for <u>de</u> plus a noun (<u>J'ai parlé de cela. J'en ai parlé</u>). However in the case of <u>J'ai vu un film</u> the substitution is <u>J'en ai vu un</u>: <u>en</u> could only be said to substitute for <u>de</u> plus noun in this example if <u>J'ai vu un film</u> is derived from <u>J'ai vu un de film</u>, a construction which, according to Gross, occurs with emphatic intonation and a pause after <u>un.</u>

The structural identity of two sentences like <u>Il lui arrive souvent de faire ceci</u> and <u>De faire ceci lui arrive souvent</u> has been codified by transformational rules for English which apply as well to French. But the second example is less common in French than the truncated <u>Faire ceci lui arrive souvent.</u> Here again Gross would apply the rule <u>De</u>⟶∅ to obtain the shorter optional form.

These last two cases, while they support the case for a rule <u>De</u>⟶ ∅ in certain contexts, do not help to decide which of the <u>de</u>'s in the Port-Royal rule is deleted. Gross now turns to a case in which a preposition following <u>de</u> appears to be deleted. This example hinges upon the substitution possibilities of <u>où.</u> In <u>Jean va à Paris. Où va-t-il?</u>, <u>où</u> substitutes for <u>à Paris.</u> In <u>Jean revient de Paris. D'où revient-il?</u>, <u>où</u> substitutes for <u>Paris</u> alone. A rule for deletion of <u>à</u> following <u>de</u> [25] in certain contexts would derive

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Gross should perhaps have pointed out that in these same

Jean revient de Paris from Jean revient d'à Paris. Again the
latter does occur in certain dialects. This rule would be
restricted to verbs like revenir, arriver etc. and, insofar as
it applied to de, would serve to distinguish in their under-
lying structure the superficially similar Jean revient de
Paris and Jean rêve de Paris since the former would be derived
from d'à Paris. It is necessary to distinguish the two types
of complement because they have different substitutes in the
interrogative transformation. The deletion of preposition à
in certain contexts after preposition de is an additional
reason for supposing that in the original T-rule, De + de + gene-
ric article ⟶ de, it is the second de that is deleted.

Gross makes two rather tentative suggestions about the
application of his deletions in the creation of possessive
nominals. In the first case he uses De ⟶ ∅ to produce
La pyrite de l'Espagne, in which la is the generic article,
from the partitive article in L'Espagne a de la pyrite.
Secondly, in a curious example, La pyrite de l'Espagne
undergoes deletion to become La pyrite d'Espagne by the rule
Generic article ⟶ ∅, curious because the use of the definite article
with names of countries is not usually treated as an occurrence
of the generic article. Apparently Gross' definition of the
referential article as serving to attach substantives to the
context of the sentence does not cover names of countries.

Finally Gross applies the rule Generic article ⟶ ∅

to occurrences of _des_ before plural nouns with preposed
adjectives. This will correct _Il a vu des horribles crimes_
to _Il a vu d'horribles crimes_. Where the corrected noun
phrase occurs after preposition _de_ the second rule _De_ ⟶ ∅
in the context following _de_ will correct *_Il est accusé de_
d'horribles crimes to _Il est accusé d'horribles crimes_. Gross
points out that this example, which is taken from the Port-
Royal grammar, is enough by itself to warrant breaking down
his original T-rule _De_ + _de_ + generic article ⟶ _de_ into two
parts, since the deletion of the generic article in plural
noun phrases with preposed adjectives is independent of the
presence of a preceding preposition _de_.

Summary

Gross' two deletion rules account for the following
phenomena which have all been related at one time or another
to the occurrence of the partitive: comparatives _tant_, _autant_
etc.; adverbs and expressions of quantity _peu_, _beaucoup_, _une_
bouteille etc.; negatives _ne....pas_ etc.; _de_ as complement of
agent with passive verbs; _de_ after such verbs as _parler_; _de_
before prenominal adjectives in plural noun phrases. His rules
are given further credibility by their application to phenomena
not generally connected with the partitive, such as the distri-
bution of the generic article or the form of certain nominaliza-
tions.

It is possible to criticize some of the relationships

he suggests, for example the claim that Il revient de Paris

has an underlying structure with preposition à. Since Il

revient d'à Paris does occur native speakers may not feel this

hypothesis counterintuitive. But the same substitution

possibilities for où exist with vers and par as well as with

de and it was on this point that the hypothesis was based.

Underlying structures such as *Il passe par à Paris or *Il

revient vers à la maison are unlikely to seem acceptable to

the native. However, such objections, like Gross' suggestions,

can only be tentative until more rules have been worked out.

The interest of this analysis lies in the wide array

of material which can be brought in to motivate the analysis

of the partitive as being a compound of preposition de and the

generic article. The distinction made between the 'referential'

and the generic functions of the article succeeds in accounting

unambiguously for phenomena that only Guillaume among the

grammarians discussed was able to account for. That is to say,

in sentences like Il constata que beaucoup des boutons manquaient

and Il constata que beaucoup de boutons manquaient, Gross'

analysis indicates that the second derives from *beaucoup de

des boutons and therefore contains the generic not the 'refe-

rential' article. The first necessarily contains the 'referen-

tial' article, thus distinguishing the two sentences by their

derivations.

Even if some of the suggestions made by Gross cannot be

maintained, the accumulation of examples suggests that his deletions represent phenomena of some importance in the formative processes of the language.

Summary: the problem of the partitive

It is clear from the analyses treated that the 'problem' of the partitive centres on the simple form de. What exactly is the relationship of de to the other de forms? Must du, de la, de l', des be analysed as 'containing' the same form de as can occur alone, and if so should the simple form and the 'contained' form have the same description? What should this description be: article, preposition, link word, or a hybrid like Grevisse's or Guillaume's de's? If it is not described simply as preposition de, is the simple de form related in some special way to preposition de? To what extent and on what principles should occurrences of de plus noun be related to the occurrence of the partitive? Finally, how should occurrences of simple de, once identified, be listed? Simply as a series of unconnected contexts like Grevisse, by semantic groupings, like Guillaume, by possible occurrences in the following segment like Dubois, or, like Gross, as resulting from language processes?

Before taking up the answers offered to these questions we should briefly consider a final choice 'None of the above'. Will the 'problem' of the partitive disappear if the du/de alternation is treated simply as the opposition between a determined and an undetermined noun. This is the position taken

in a number of modern grammars, among them R.L. Wagner and
J. Pinchon's Grammaire du français classique et moderne.[26]
An examination of the occurrences of undetermined nouns they
describe suggests that quantifiers and nominalizations of the
kind that appear in Guillaume and Gross (désir de gloire,
achat de pain) could be attached to the group in which a pre-
position plus substantive serves to give 'a very general
characterization equivalent to that provided by a qualifying
adjective'.[27]   Negation is covered in a group in which the noun
is said to appear without a specific determiner whenever it is
desired to 'evoke the person, think or idea it symbolizes in
its widest extension'.[28]   There is a certain awkwardness in apply-
ing this kind of Guillaumien vocabulary to a description of
discourse, as Wagner and Pinchon do. One wonders, for example,
in what sense there is a 'wider extension' than that indicated
by the generic article. However, assuming there is a definable
difference between the definitions of undetermined nouns and
nouns introduced by the generic article — definable, that is,
in terms of the nuances attributed to determined as against
undetermined nouns — there are a number of cases of de plus noun
which do not fit the categories of undetermined nouns.

[26] (Paris, 1962)

[27] Wagner and Pinchon, p. 102.2: " une caractérisation très
générale équivalent à celle d'un adjectif épithète..."

[28]
    p. 102.3: "... chaque fois qu'on veut évoquer la personne,
la chose, la notion qu'il [le substantif] symbolise dans sa
plus grande extension."

Why make a difference in terms of noun extension between il veut du pain and il vit de pain? Or between avoir besoin de lunettes and vouloir des lunettes? Why should a plural determined noun (des maisons) become undetermined when it occurs with a prenominal adjective in formal, written French (de vieilles maisons)? Why should 'determined' people love Mary (Des personnes que nous connaissons bien aiment Marie) and Mary be loved by the same people, this time 'undetermined' (Marie est aimée de personnes que nous connaissons bien)? Why Les or Des fleurs couvrent la terre but La terre est couverte de fleurs? Clearly there are some cases to which the determined/undetermined contrast is not easily applicable.

It might be objected that this explanation covers the main cases and that it should be accepted as the neatest since it is simple and easy to apply and since few linguistic categories are without marginal cases. Let us leave this question pending for the moment until we have considered the adequacy of the answers provided for the other questions by the four analyses examined.

Grevisse

Grevisse describes the partitive as a compound of de and the generic article le. The de component is 'essentially' preposition de but not with its usual function of marking relationships. We saw how Grevisse's treatment of the 'meaning' of preposition de — indistinguishable from the 'meaning' of

partitive de — made this distinction pointless from the semantic point of view. In fact there is neither semantic nor structural evidence in his analysis that they are different.

In his treatment of omission of the article (336, 337) the only occurrences of de plus noun mentioned are 'determinative complements' like une table de marbre in which the complement is said to 'characterize like an adjective'.[29] In all other occurrences of de plus noun which do not fit this description, the de must be regarded as an article. This hybrid role explains Grevisse's description of the de element in the partitive as 'essentially' — but not quite — preposition de. The result of this analysis is that forms which appear to be similar and which have the same possibilities for alternation contain differently analysed de's. Thus une bouteille de vin (which can alternate with une bouteille du vin que vous m'avez envoyée) contains preposition de and beaucoup de vin (beaucoup du vin que ...) the article de. Far from clarifying usage, Grevisse's distinction between de's only confuses his analysis.

None of the occurrences of nouns preceded directly by preposition de which Guillaume and Gross feel need an explanation either in terms of a disappearing partitive or of zero article are even dealt with by Grevisse, under omission of the

[29]
336, 1: "... on omet l'article devant les compléments déterminatifs quand ils servent à caractériser, comme feraient des adjectifs..."

article or elsewhere. Expressions like parler de houilles, encombré de curieux, pleurer de rage etc.(201, Rem. 1; 205, Rem. 4; 202) are cited to illustrate various points of grammar but their lack of determiner is not commented upon, and they would be difficult to assimilate to the group of complements which 'characterize like an adjective'.

No more does the distinction which Grevisse makes between particularizing le, which can combine with preposition de to give an amalgamated definite article, and generic le which is the second formative element of the partitive serve to illuminate his analysis. We saw (p.7 above) that this distinction is incompatible with his own definition of the partitive. All the statements he makes, then, about the forms that combine to make up the partitive article are unmotivated and unnecessary in terms of his own analysis.

The three main cases in which he shows a relationship between de and the other de forms are with adverbs of quantity, with prenominal adjectives and with a negative verb. He treats adverbs of quantity as exceptions under a main heading, the use of the partitive with bien, and thus implies a non-existent parallelism between bien du and beaucoup de. As can be seen in sentences like Il a bien gagné de l'argent but not *Il a beaucoup gagné de l'argent, bien is an intensifier whose force is still directed towards the verb and not the following noun in spite of a change in order to Il a gagné bien de l'argent. The true parallelism is not between bien du and beaucoup de but between de l'argent and beaucoup d'argent. Of course bien

and beaucoup are both adverbs and both are indicators of quantity;
Grevisse is again a prisoner of parts of speech and meaning.

Grevisse's second and third cases have the same defect.
It would seem as important from the point of view of structure
to indicate that in formal written French the plural of une
vieille maison is de vieilles maisons as that des maisons becomes
de maisons when a prenominal adjective is present. Yet
classification of de under the partitive means that no direct
relationship between un and de can be shown, since un is not
a partitive. Similarly with his treatment of negation. He
analyses together forms like Prenez des confitures which for
many speakers contains a plural uncountable noun, and Achetez
des pommes which in the singular would have une pomme. The pa-
rallelism can easily be shown in the negative. Again it is
the treatment of the partitive as it is affected by negation
rather than negation as it affects determiners generally that
tends to distort the description of the operational forces in
language by fitting them into inadequate classifications like
the parts of speech. Grevisse's contexts for the occurrences
of partitive de are simply an unrelated series of contexts and,
except in the case of negation — and even there the parallel
with un cannot be treated — he shows no systematic relationship
between simple de and the other de forms.

Guillaume

Guillaume makes a distinction between the contracted
definite article on the hand and the partitives, including what

is traditionally called the plural indefinite, on the other.
The distinction is based ultimately on the different thought
processes involved but in the forms of discourse it hinges on
the nature of the _de_ involved. He makes no special comment
about the nature of the article _le_ which is a formative element
in both systems. It is prepositional _de_ that forms the con-
tracted definite article (la plupart des philosophes) and in-
verter _de_ that forms the partitive. At the midway point in the
movement of _de_ from preposition to partitive article, _de_ is a
semi-preposition, semi-inverter; this is what occurs in
beaucoup de pain. But it is preposition _de_ that occurs in
vivre de pain. It appears that he abandoned the Port-Royal
rule in his later article "Logique Constructive", since the
two _de_'s have a different analysis.

Thus the formal resemblance of the noun phrases in
beaucoup de pain and vivre de pain covers a hidden difference
in the _de_. It is no criticism of Guillaume that he finds
differences under resemblances or vice versa but the detection
of difference here throws absolutely no light on other occurr-
ences of _de_ plus noun, except insofar as they are directly
assimilable to one of the two groups, quantifiers or verbs
followed by preposition _de_.

Moreover for partitive _du_ and semi-inverter _de_, the
explanation is given in terms of meaning, the idea of quantity
present either in the context (beaucoup de) or wholly carried
by the partitive (de l'eau): for preposition _de_ in vivre de

the explanation is given in terms of the verb/object rela-
tionship. That is to say, there is no single criterion for
situating the different de forms on his graded scale. Ulti-
mately the placement is seen to be arbitrary, since there is
no way of saying upon inspection just where a particular
occurrence is situated. The 'real' nature of de, it turns out,
is irrelevant to his analysis since no one can know in which of
its metamorphoses it is appearing.

In Le Problème Guillaume used the Port-Royal rule to
explain various nominalizations like le désir de gloire, les
mères de célibataires, une foule de gens, etc. all of which
were described as containing prepositional de which caused non-
formation of the partitive. However when he developed his theo-
ry of zero article and its particular nuance of 'trans-abstract
concretion', Guillaume apparently abandoned the disappearing
partitive. We saw that his definition of the value of zero
article, apart from his statement that it was 'trans-abstract',
was largely indistinguishable from his definition of the nuance
of the partitive, and that the function of de which is to
'make the noun concrete' is also the function of zero article.
Semantic definitions, as we have seen in Wagner and Pinchon,
are not well adapted to dealing with zero article. Certainly
Guillaume makes it impossible to distinguish between semi-
inverter de followed by a noun, and preposition de followed by
zero article.

The listing of occurrences of the full partitive and
of semi-inverter de, however, is much more successful than
Grevisse's since all are related to the idea of quantity.
Thus normal partitive, negation, quantifiers, prenominal adjec-
tives are all embraced in a single semantic explanation. A
full-fledged semantic analysis is more coherent than a multiple
criteria analysis like Grevisse's in this one aspect of the
problem, but Guillaume does not offer satisfactory answers
to any of the other questions being considered.

Dubois

Dubois' syntagmatic analysis of the de forms organizes
in a single system the traditional contracted definite article,
the partitive, the plural indefinite and preposition de. All
are basically link words and each is a single form, not an
amalgam of forms. Concentration on the syntagmatic relation-
ships at the expense of the paradigmatic allows him to state
the distribution of the de forms in the widest possible form.
The de which appears with a feminine noun in Il veut DE la
bière is not different from that in le jour DE la fête.
Semantic values, secondary functional values, paradigmatic
relationships are all set aside in order to concentrate on the
horizontal relationships in the speech chain.

Since he groups the forms which can introduce noun
syntagms according to possible following segments, he cannot
indicate any special relationship between de and the other de

forms. The relationship, which is that of complementary dis-
tribution, is between de, du and des. This grouping abolishes
the paradigm du, de la, de l', des and makes it impossible to
show a relationship with the article le in which the paradigm
not only remains but is essential for the definition of its
basic function, anaphora. If he retained the paradigm of the
de forms he could have made a distinction on the basis of ana-
phora between the traditional contracted definite article and
the partitive. But even then he could not have dealt with what
he calls the 'unstable case' of the non-complementary distribu-
tion of de and des introducing noun syntagms. As long as he
restricts his analysis so severely, he has no way of distingui-
shing between these occurrences except by reference to the notion
of cohesion. Cohesion, we saw, was not a very clear notion in
the first place and does not serve to explicate the difference
between beaucoup de boutons and beaucoup des boutons.

One must be careful not to reproach Dubois for not doing
what he did not set out to do, that is, describe a system of
partitive forms. The partitive nuance is for him simply a par-
ticular semantic application of a set of forms whose structure
and basic function have been established without reference to
meaning. If he draws no parallels between de and the other
de forms, it is because in terms of the restricted syntagmatic
relationships with which he is concerned, the relationship
between de and du is not more significant than between de and
des. However, if it can be snown that Dubois did not succeed

in describing the distribution and basic function of the <u>de</u>
forms by purely distributional methods, then we may take this
as an indication that the description of horizontal relation-
ships is inadequate for its task of describing structure.

Dubois does not make good his claim to describe the <u>de</u>
forms without recourse to meaning. The basic function of the
system is said to be linking; any number of secondary functions
may be found within a system without destroying its unity, but
it is the basic common function that justifies the system.
Yet we saw (see p. 49 above) that it was precisely some so-
called partitive uses that did not appear to have a linking
function. (<u>Sur du pain, avec du beurre</u>, <u>De l'argent l'inté-
resserait.</u> etc.)

H. Frei points out in an interesting structural analysis
of the relationship between <u>le</u>, <u>un</u> and <u>du</u> [30] that a distribu-
tional analysis cannot do without reference to the <u>signifié</u>.
He uses the auxiliary of verbs which can occur with <u>être</u> or
<u>avoir</u> to show a difference in <u>signifié</u> between preposition <u>de</u>
plus article and partitive <u>du</u>. Examples are <u>Elle a sorti
de la paille</u> and <u>Elle est sortie de la paille</u>. Equally, of
course, he could have used negation to distinguish them, but
there remain occurrences like the ones mentioned above which
cannot be dealt with in either way. We may agree with Frei
that a distributional analysis of the forms is necessarily

[30] H. Frei, "Tranches nomophones", <u>Word</u> XVI (1960), 317-322.

incomplete, but whether reference to a signifié is all that
is required is a question best answered after a consideration
of Gross' analysis.

Gross

Gross makes the same division as Guillaume between the
contracted definite article and a single group of indefinites
but he lays the burden of the distinction upon the second
formative element, not the first. De is a preposition in
both systems, but the le with which it combines to form the
partitive is specifically generic le. Grevisse described
the internal structure of the partitive in the same way but
his description served no purpose in his analysis. Gross, on
the other hand, is motivated in his description by the need to
write rules which apply only to that function of the article;
it enables him to make distinctions Grevisse did not succeed
and Dubois could not succeed in making, for example between
beaucoup de and beaucoup des (see p. 44 above). Not only is
Gross' rule Generic article ⟶∅ motivated in the description
of partitive occurrences but it appears to have wider appli-
cation in the language and to suggest rule-governed relation-
ships not related to the partitive.

Similarly the need to make a precise statement about
which de disappears in the Port-Royal rule not only gives
an unambiguous status to   de that remains but suggests a

rule-governed relationship between partitive and generic articles, between <u>un</u> and <u>du</u>, restores the paradigm of prepositions before place names and suggests a way of relating partitive nouns in object position and non-partitive nouns in subject position.

M. Toussaint in a recent article[31] which attempts to relate Guillaume's method of analysis to Chomsky's tries to claim for Guillaume's system of tensions the same kind of rigour as is imposed by a set of rules. A moment's comparison of Guillaume's analysis of the movement of preposition <u>de</u> to partitive <u>de</u> with Gross' rule for <u>de</u> deletion should be enough to disprove this. Gross starts off with two <u>de</u>'s in the Port-Royal rule, both prepositions, the second a formative element in the partitive. An examination of the possible applications of a <u>de</u> deletion rule elsewhere in the language indicates that it is the partitive <u>de</u> that is deleted. Guillaume starts off with an indefinite number of <u>de</u>'s arranged on a graded scale. At some moment preposition <u>de</u> "becomes" semi-inverter <u>de</u>, but as long as there is no formal correlative of the change we cannot precisely identify the moment. At an identifiable moment semi-inverter <u>de</u> becomes the partitive article but it is identifiable only because it has a formal marking. Guillaume's graded scale, then, is not a more subtle and flexible analysis of the nuances said to be carried by the form <u>de</u>, but a series of binary choices some of which can be located precisely on the scale, others of which cannot be

[31] M. Toussaint, "Gustave Guillaume et l'actualité linguistique" <u>Langages</u>, Sept. 1967,

located but whose existence is irrelevant in any case except
to the construction of the diagram.

In Gross' analysis the form _de_, whose nature and status
caused so much of the 'problem' of the partitive in the other
analyses, is not a member of the basic system of _de_ forms but
is always the product of a T-rule. Its distribution is there-
fore wholly accounted for by the operation of language proces-
ses. The processes discussed are the formation of negatives
and passives, the embedding of adjectives,quantifiers, and
comparatives, and all nominalizations with the final form _de_
plus substantive.

It is now the moment to answer the question left
pending since the beginning of this summary. If an analysis
of the contrast _du/de_ plus noun in terms of determined and un-
determined nouns can account for the most important occurrences
of these forms — and it is certainly simpler than generating
forms and then deleting them — why prefer a more complicated
description? The reason is not just that there are marginal
cases which do not fit well. The reason is rather that what
appears at first sight a more complicated analysis is seen in
a more extended examination of the language to show ordered
relationships between a much wider range of phenomena than
can be accounted for by the description 'determined' or
'undetermined' noun.

Conclusion: meaning and process.

Setting aside for the moment the analyses of Grevisse
and Dubois, the first because his method can show neither the
system of <u>langue</u> **or** of <u>parole</u>, and Dubois because he has
specifically excluded both meaning and process from his ana-
lysis, let us compare the insights of Guillaume's method and
Gross' brief analysis.

We saw that Guillaume's one area of success was in
relating the occurrences of partitive <u>du</u> and semi-inverter
<u>de</u> by an explanation in terms of meaning, the presence of an
idea of quantity. He was able in this way to give a coherent
account of negation, quantifiers and prenominal adjectives.
Guillaume bases his whole analysis on the premise that segments
of language have 'meaning'. Nouns of various kinds have 'a
tendency' toward a certain article, articles have, if not
a <u>signifié</u>. then a 'movement' which has its effect on noun
extension. Meaning is analysed in minimal segments and it
is from the establishment of an infinite number of differences
in meaning at the level of discourse that the symmetry of his
schema of the articles is abstracted.

Now Dubois, Gross and even Grevisse agree that there
are two kinds of statements required for an analysis of the
partitive. One requirement is a statement of lexical co-ocurr-
ence restrictions. Grevisse's statement is oversimplified,
going no further than the following noun, while the others

agree that the significant context is the verb. The other
part of the problem is the structural one we have been con-
sidering. How can the alternations of _de_ and the other _de_
forms best be accounted for? It is clear from a comparison
of these four analyses that it is the notion of language
processes that will most neatly account for this distribution.
When both the lexical co-occurrence statements and the process
statements have been fully worked out, there is nothing left
to say about the 'problem' of the partitive. That is to say,
strictly, the forms have no meaning apart from these relation-
ships. Guillaume's abstraction of the 'movement' of the parti-
tive from an examination of its supposed content in discourse
is in the nature of an illusion. Such isolated forms in
discourse do not offer to a semantic analysis an individual
meaning on which a comprehensive theory can be built.

Gross, on the other hand, who is not concerned with the
analysis of meaning, takes it as given at sentence level and
shows how that meaning is retained and transformed by language
processes which can be set out in a series of rules. The
'problem' of the partitive as it was defined earlier can only
be solved by the application to sets of sentences of the idea
of language process into which the definition of meaning does
not enter.

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