THE REANALYSIS AND GRAMMATICALIZATION OF NOMINAL CONSTRUCTIONS WITH KIND/SORT OF: CHRONOLOGY AND PATHS OF CHANGE

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Abstract
Denison (2002) distinguishes three main NP constructions with type nouns such as sort/kind/type, viz. the binominal, postdeterminer and qualifier constructions. The latter two developed via grammaticalization from the binominal construction in which the lexically full type noun head is followed by a second noun designating a superordinate class. The chronology he posits for these grammaticalized uses sees the postdeterminer use as an early reanalysis of the binominal construction (c1390 for all kind of and c1550 for kind and sort of), whereas the qualifying use developed from the binominal construction c1580 for kind of and c1710 for sort of, via the mediation of the postdeterminer construction. However, the synchronic corpus study by Davidse, Brems and De Smedt (2008) distinguishes two additional NP constructions with type nouns, viz. quantifier and descriptive modifier, on the basis of syntactic, semantic and collocational features. In the present article we consider the diachronic import of these newly distinguished constructions and argue that they are key pivots in the developmental paths that have led from the head construction to constructions in which the type noun is not the head. By thus refining Denison’s proposed chronology, we argue that new constructions emerge as the result of complex interlocking paths in which the quantifier and descriptive modifier constructions predated, and helped facilitate and entrench, the postdeterminer and qualifying constructions.

Keywords: English NP, type nouns, reanalysis, grammaticalization, chronology, paths of change

1. Introduction
English type noun expressions with kind/sort of have been identified as locus of grammaticalization and subjectification in a number of recent studies (e.g. Tabor 1993, Aijmer 2002, Denison 2002, Margerie forthc.). Most of these have focused on the synchronic layering of type noun constructions. A notable exception is Denison (2002), who attempts to reconstruct the chronology and the paths of change linking the main constructions. Denison distinguishes three nominal constructions: the binominal construction, which is the source of two grammaticalized uses, the postdeterminer and qualifier constructions.

In the binominal construction, the type noun is used as head and is followed by of + a second noun (henceforth N2) designating a superordinate class. It always refers to a specific subclass.

(1) I have a brewery that produces a special kind of beer. (CB-UK ephemera)

The postdeterminer construction is the result of reanalysis of the binominal construction (Denison 2002: 2). The type noun is demoted from head status, and the string sort/kind of forms together with the primary determiner a complex determiner, as in (2), in which this reanalysis is overtly reflected by the lack of concord between these and kind.

1 The examples marked with (CB) were extracted from the COBUILD corpus via remote login and are reproduced with the permission of HarperCollins. They are followed by the name of the subcorpus.
(2) “Our very pride, methinks, should be a sufficient guard, and turn whatever favourable thoughts we might have of such a one, unknow ing his design, into aversion, when once convinced he presumed upon our weakness”. In these kind of reasonings did she continue some time (CLMETEV, Haywood 1744)

In (2) kind no longer refers to a subclass that is part of the structure of the world, but functions within a unit expressing the textual relation of anaphora. The qualifying construction also involves reanalysis with demotion from head noun status of the type noun; the string sort/kind of ‘qualifies’ the categorization expressed by N2, which is the head of the construction, e.g.

(3) She started off as a kind of supergroupie, but then he couldn't be without her. (CB-Times)

A kind of supergroupie in (3) does not refer to a particular subtype of supergroupie, but tones down this possibly offensive classification which is applied to a specific individual.

Denison (2002: 9) posits the following chronology for these reanalyses. The postdeterminer construction was the first to derive from the binominal construction: for kind it appeared about 40 years (c1380) after its source construction, for sort it was over a century later (c1560). The qualifying construction of sort and kind developed from the binominal construction at a later stage, at the end of the 16th century, and was also influenced by the postdeterminer construction.

However, Davidse, Brems and De Smedt (2008) have argued that two additional nominal constructions have to be distinguished, viz. quantifier (4) and descriptive modifier (5).

(4) ... the pearly lights. They come in all kinds of colours. (CB–Times)

(5) This was very much planned parenthood. Planned not only because he has always been a paternalistic sort of chap ... (CB–Times)

All sorts/kinds of, which is subsumed under the postdeterminer construction by Denison, is a lexicalized chunk with a quantifier meaning that is not derived compositionally: the expression contains a universal quantifier but its meaning has shifted to ‘many’. A paternalistic sort of in (5) attributes a quality to an individual, not a subclass. As in the other reanalysed constructions, sort is not the head of the NP, but N2 is.

In this article we will investigate the role played by these newly distinguished constructions in Denison’s chronology. We will approach the diachronic development of sort and kind not only in terms of first occurrences of new constructions, but we will also consider the proportions of all constructions in each time slice. Type, a third important member of the type noun set in present-day English, will be left out of the discussion. As a later addition to that set it developed at a different rate than sort and kind; qualifying uses with type, for instance, are only just starting to be attested.

The structure of this article will be as follows. In Section 2 we will discuss the data sets and data analysis. In Section 3 we will define the different nominal constructions with type nouns. In Section 4 we will reconstruct the development of constructions with kind and sort, adding the quantifier and descriptive modifier constructions to the whole picture. We will argue that these constructions are important missing links in the complex paths of development of sort and kind.
2. Data and data analysis

The aim of this study is to reconstruct, on the basis of qualitative and quantitative corpus study, the chronology and development of the nominal constructions with \textit{sort} and \textit{kind} that came into existence by reanalysis of the binominal construction. As exhaustive extractions on \textit{sort} and \textit{kind} from the \textit{Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English, Second Edition} (PPCME) (1150–1500) revealed, they hardly occurred in the syntagm NP + \textit{of} + NP in that early period. However, from 1500 on \textit{sort} and \textit{kind} started to be followed commonly by \textit{of} + NP. From that time period on extractions were therefore made on the keywords \textit{sort of/kind of}, as these queries netted in all the uses we were concerned with. The successive diachronic slices were compiled as follows. Diachronic data were extracted from the \textit{Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Early Modern English} (PPCEME) (1500–1640) and the extended version of the \textit{Corpus of Late Modern English Texts} (CLMETEV) (1640-1920) (see De Smet 2005). The extractions from PPCME and PPCEME were analysed exhaustively. They consist of 31 tokens for \textit{kind of} and 23 for \textit{sort of} for the period 1500-1570, of 41 tokens for \textit{kind of} and 44 for \textit{sort of} for 1570-1640. The data sets from CLMETEV consist of 239 tokens for \textit{kind of} and 73 tokens for \textit{sort of} for the period 1640-1710. Data for the periods 1710-1780, 1780-1850 and 1850-1920 consist of random samples of 250 instances for \textit{sort of} and \textit{kind of}. For Present-day English, all occurrences of \textit{sort of/sorta/kind of/kinda} in the Times subcorpus of the COBUILD corpus were extracted and analysed. All the quantitative findings discussed in this article result from the systematic classification and quantification of these samples in terms of the five NP constructions introduced in Section 1 and further defined in Section 3. For illustrative purposes, however, we also quote examples from the \textit{Middle English Dictionary} (MED), the \textit{Oxford English Dictionary} (OED), and other subcorpora of the COBUILD corpus, indicating the source.

3. Nominal constructions with type nouns

3.1. Type nouns as head nouns of the binominal construction

The binominal construction with type noun as head is the source construction of the reanalyzed uses that will be discussed in Sections 3.2-3.5. In it, we find the lexically full use of \textit{sort} and \textit{kind} meaning ‘(sub)kind’. As observed by Denison (2002: 7), \textit{sort} and \textit{kind} had more specific lexical senses earlier on. For instance, in Old English \textit{kind} meant ‘birth, descent, nature’. The binominal construction in which \textit{sort} and \textit{kind} feature their abstract ‘subtype’ sense, e.g. (6)-(7), emerges according to Denison c1340 for \textit{kind} and c1440 for \textit{sort}.

(6) These two sortes of the chyldren of Israel. (OED, Pilgr. Perf. 1526)
(7) ... of whiche course sorte of kerseyes ... (PPCEME, Statutes 1540-1570)

As noted in Section 1, these NPs refer to (whole) subclasses of the superordinate classes expressed by N2. The type nouns in this construction may be singular or plural and can be premodified by quantifiers, indefinite and definite determiners as well as descriptive modifiers. This is because they are used in contexts building up generic and taxonomic interpretations of the world, often quantifying subtypes (6) and ascribing properties to them (7). Syntactically, this construction is parsed as [determination: \textit{which}] + [(adjective: \textit{course}) + head: \textit{sorte [of + NP: kerseyes]}].

3.2. Type nouns as postdeterminers
The first non-head use of type nouns we will discuss is the postdeterminer construction. As the postdeterminer function in general has been neglected, we will first describe it synchronically by means of its most established members, the adjectives other and same (Breban and Davidse 2003), and then extend this characterization to type nouns.

According to Halliday (1994), a postdeterminer has a secondary deictic function in the NP and typically follows the primary determiner immediately. Together with the primary determiner it forms a complex determiner that can express more intricate identifying and phoric relations than a simple determiner can (Breban and Davidse 2003). This can be illustrated by another (8), whose functional unity is also reflected in the orthography:

(8) It is not much different from the pattern we see in this country of early immigrants who came and worked for people in takeaways with the ambition ultimately to set up their own and then a restaurant and then another restaurant in a bigger town and eventually in London. (CB-UKspoken)

Like the simple indefinite article a, another signals that its referent is non-identifiable or new to the discourse. In addition to this, however, it also refers back to previous instances of the type restaurant in the discourse. Likewise, in (9) the marks the identifiability of the referent, but postdeterminer same helps express the generalization about attitude which includes the match against the Brazilians previously mentioned as well as all the other games still to be played.

(9) We ran the Brazilians so close and didn't deserve to lose. I just hope we show the same attitude in the other games. (CB-Sunnow)

The postdeterminer construction was first described in Denison (2002), where it is restricted to examples with a singular type noun preceded by a plural determiner and a plural noun following of, as in (10).

(10) “Our very pride, methinks, should be a sufficient guard, and turn whatever favourable thoughts we might have of such a one, unknowing his design, into aversion, when once convinced he presumed upon our weakness”. In these kind of reasonings did she continue some time (CLMETEV, Haywood 1744)

This number incongruence is the strongest argument for positing a reanalysis of the binominal construction, by which the type noun lost its head status and N2 became head. Postdeterminer type nouns are further characterized as being phonologically reduced and expressing an anaphoric discourse function.

Davidse et al. (2008) propose a broader functional definition, according to which it is the functioning of the type noun, rather than overt formal features such as number incongruence in plural NPs, that are criterial to its postdeterminer status. Type nouns functioning within a complex determiner no longer refer to a generic subclass, but help express more abstract, textual relations such as anaphora. This can be illustrated by comparing the postdeterminer use in (10) with the head use preceded by an anaphorical determiner in (11):

(11) [about peppermint] The Bed, where it grows, must ... be pricked up ... with a small Fork, or the Earth made fine with a Trowel; because the Runners of this sort of Mint shoot along
upon the Surface of the Ground, (…), which is contrary to other Sorts of Mint (CLMETEV, Bradley 1732)

In (11) this sort of Mint realizes generic reference to the whole subclass of peppermint. The determiner this simply points back into the text to identify the species ‘peppermint’ as the antecedent. The structural parsing of this example is [determiner: this] + [head: sort [postmodifier: of + mint]]. In (10), on the other hand, these kind of functions as the complex determiner of reasonings and as a whole points back into the discourse to the specific instances of reasoning quoted; it abstracts properties such as ‘proud’ from them, adding these to the determination of reasonings. The pointing relation expressed by these kind of thus involves a local generalization of instances into an ‘ad hoc’ type, which aids identification of the specific instances referred to. The structural parsing of these kind of reasonings is [determiner: these kind of] [head: reasonings], with these sort of conveying the meaning ‘such’. From a functional point of view, there is no reason why the expression of abstract textual relations such as anaphora should be restricted to plural NPs. This kind of discourse in (12) is an example analogous to (10) except that its head noun is non-plural discourse. This kind of points back to the questions asked by Faithful, and includes their property of ‘unexpected seriousness’ into the reference to the discourse in question.

(12) [following a series of questions from Faithful] Then Talkative at first began to blush; but, recovering himself, thus he replied: “You come now to experience, to conscience, and God; and to appeal to him for justification of what is spoken. This kind of discourse I did not expect”. (CLMETEV, Bunyan 1678)

The first postdeterminer uses with sort in or data date from c1553 and those with kind from c1563. Fairly soon, by c1672 for sort and c1605 for kind, the postdeterminer constructions had established different subtypes expressing anaphoric, cataphoric or non-phoric relations. Examples (10) and (12) illustrate anaphoric uses referring back to specific antecedents for which the head noun provides an appropriate categorization. The primary determiner in such complexes is typically a demonstrative. Cataphoric complex determiners are mostly introduced by the; they point forward to a postcedent described in the following relative clause, which forms the basis of the local generalization construed by the + type noun of, as in (13):

(13) It is impossible for a poet to read this without being filled with that sort of enthusiasm which is peculiar to the inspired tribe, and which Dryden largely felt when he composed it. (CLMETEV, Cibber 1753)

Non-phoric uses form the smallest portion and are mostly introduced by some or what. In these complex determiners too the addition of the type noun string invokes a generalizing relation (14), even though no antecedent or postcedent is referred to.

(14) You see what a kind of Shuffling there has been to stifle the Truth. (PPCEME, 1685)

Complex determiners with type nouns are rather commonly intensifying, as illustrated by (13)-(15). If N2 is a gradable noun (Bolinger 1972: 60), it may be intensified qualitatively, as in (15), in which implied qualities of heretics such as ‘blasphemous’ are heightened by suche a sorte of. If N2 has size implications, it may be intensified quantitatively (Bolinger
1972: 58), as in (13), in which the amount of ‘enthusiasm’ is enlarged by cataphoric that sort of.

(15) Suche a sorte of heretykes ho I ever sawe, that wyll nother reverence the croose of Chryste (PPCEME, Mowntayne c1553)

3.3. Type nouns as part of descriptive modifiers

The descriptive modifier construction subsumes two subtypes, the attributive modifier and the semi-suffix use. In both uses the type noun is preceded by lexical material -- qualitative adjectives in the attributive modifier use (16-17), and classifying adjectives or nouns, or longer expressions in the semi-suffix use (18-19).

(16) This is but a scandalous sort of an Office. (PPCEME, Farquhar 1707)
(17) He let his mind have its full flight, and shewed by a generous kind of negligence, that he did not write for praise. (CLMETEV, Cibber 1753)
(18) David knew nothing about this mincing, half-and-half, milk-and-water Sort of religion. (CLMETEV, Booth 1880)
(19) But that, of course, for himself--well, he preferred, as a general rule, the Pension Frensham sort of Thing. (CLMETEV, Bennett 1908)

The qualitative adjective in attributive modifier uses does not apply to sort or kind but to N2, and the NPs in (16)-(17) do not refer to subtypes of ‘Office’ or ‘negligence’, but to instances of them. As observed by Kruisinga (1932: 396), the fact that an individual of the type designated by N2 is referred to, is reflected by the indefinite article in front of N2, as in (16), or by the possibility of inserting a in front of a singular count N2. Hence, the structural parsing of attributive modifier uses is: [determiner: a] [modifier: scandalous + sort of] [[determiner: an + [head/N2: office]]. Examples of the attributive modifier use appear in our datasets from 1500 onwards, both for sort and kind of. A stable feature of this use is that the prenominal adjectives are carefully chosen and often rather infrequent adjectives.

In the semi-suffix uses, the element preceding the type noun can be a classifying adjective, proper name (19), fixed or nonce expression (18-19). The earliest attestations in our datasets are c1850. The semi-suffix use pushes certain features of the attributive modifier use further. The often considerable length of the lexical material preceding the type noun stimulates further demotion and phonetic attrition of the type noun. The type noun string functions more or less as a clitic to the preceding material, which is why Denison (2002) proposed the term semi-suffix use for it. It serves the metalinguistic purpose of signalling that the lexical items preceding it have to be interpreted as an ad hoc, often very creative, classifier. In addition, it may express some hedging meaning, indicating that the description is only approximative.

3.4. Type nouns as part of quantifiers

Type nouns may also be part of quantifiers. In the most common subtype, which is still used in Present-day English, plural kinds and sorts combine with all. This quantifier use is an early reanalysis of the binominal construction, appearing c1380 for kind and c1550 for sort. The argumentation for this reanalysis claim hinges on the shift from the universal quantifier sense of all in the binominal construction to the ‘many’ sense of the quantifier construction. An example such as (20) illustrates how such a reanalysis may have come about.
(20) I Answered, That Religion being a design to recover and save Mankind, was to be so opened as to awaken and work upon all sorts of people, and generally men of a simplicity of Mind, were those that were the fittest Objects. (PPCEME, Burnet 1680).

In (20) all can be read as quantifying over all subsets of people in view of a number of contextual clues: it is stressed that religion should be so opened as to save (all) Mankind, and the explicit description of one subset, men of a simplicity of Mind, supports the subclass-reading of sorts. This example also illustrates how a NP with universal quantifier all may invite an inference of a great quantity in an absolute sense: work upon all sorts of people implies ‘on very many people’. In examples (21)-(22), by contrast, reference is not to the exhaustive subtypes of ‘exception’ or ‘passion’, but to very many instances of them. In other words, what was an invited implicature of ‘large quantity’ in the head use (20) has semanticized (Traugott 1995) and has become the conventionalized meaning of the uses in (21)-(22). Syntactically these quantifier uses need to be parsed as: [quantifier: all sorts of] [head: people].

(21) The present condition of humane nature doth not admit of any constitution of things, whether in religion or civil matters which is free from all kind of exception or inconvenience. (PPCEME, Tillotson c1679)
(22) …to extirpate all sort of passion or concern for anything. (PPCEME, Burnet 1680)

In addition to ‘large quantity’, these uses do add the notion of ‘variety’, making it similar in meaning to the quantifier various. The clearest instances of quantifier uses occur in negative contexts, in the sense that the absence of a great quantity is referred to: free from (21), extirpate (22). However, the boundaries between the head noun and quantifier use are both synchronically and diachronically rather fuzzy and the quantifier use itself remains internally graded. Quantifier meaning ranges from (more) pragmatic to (more) semantic. In examples like (23), for instance, both the categorization and the quantity meaning are present. All sorts of pepull refers to people of different ranks and backgrounds as well as to many people as such.

(23) And at ys bereing was the gretest mone mad for hym of ys deth as ever was hard or sene, boyth of all sorts of pepull. (PPCEME, Machyn 1553-1559)

The diachronic and synchronic data contain many such blended examples, e.g. all kinde of pastimes, all sorts of fruits. Technically, we speak of blending when properties of different constructions are present in one utterance, allowing the speaker to imply all their meanings at the same time (Aarts 2007: 198-283). According to Aarts (2007: 188), blending probably plays “an extremely important role in language change”.

In addition to quantifying uses with all, the diachronic data also contain quantifiers with negative totality quantifiers no or (not) any, as in (24)-(25).

(24) He had no sort of virtue. (PPCEME, Burnet 1683)
(25) That was saied without any kind of compulsion. (PPCEME, Edward 1550-1552)

Again, reference is not to the zero-attestation of certain subtypes of ‘virtue’ or ‘compulsion’, but to the absence of any degree or amount of virtue or compulsion as such. No sort/kind of
was common as a quantifier in Modern English – and as such got a separate entry in the OED (1933) – but has virtually disappeared now.

In addition, another quantifying use found only with sort, viz. *a (good/great, etc.) sort of*, was very common in the period 1500-1640, and is attested even earlier in examples such as (26). It disappeared in Late Modern English:

(26) We shall cum everychon Mo then a good sorte. (PPCEME, Mankind c1475)
(27) ... he cute downe a greate sorte of brakes [i.e. fern]. (PPCEME, Mowntayne c1553)

As suggested by the gloss provided by the OED (Vol. 9/1: 452) “a (great, good, etc.) number or lot of persons or things; a considerable body or quantity; a multitude”, this expression features a quantifying use of sort, analogous to *a (whole) lot of*. Less commonly *a sort of* was also used without intensifier, as in

(28) If the world shal turn, A sort of you shal burn. (OED, Strype 1548)

‘Size’ nouns such as *lot* and *sort* have shifted from head to quantifier status, delexicalizing in the process (Brems 2003). *A lot of* is generally recognized as a full-fledged quantifier. The fact that *a (good/great) sort of* was used with a variety of animate and inanimate collocates shows that it had also delexicalized to a great extent.

We thus find at a very early stage, preceding all other reanalyses, two different quantifying uses resulting both via reanalysis from head uses of type nouns. Strikingly, with both, their meaning of large absolute quantity is mostly intensified.

3.5. Type nouns as nominal qualifiers

The last reanalysed intra-NP use to be discussed is the nominal qualifying use, which appeared in the period 1570-1640 for *kind* and in 1640-1710 for *sort*. It is commonly accepted that this reanalysis was enabled by bleaching of the lexical ‘subtype’ meaning into the pragmatic sense of ‘peripheral membership’ (Bolinger 1972, Denison 2005, Aijmer 2002). As argued by Margerie (forthc.) for qualifying constructions with *some*, the idea that *some* is the determiner of the whole NP is hard to maintain for examples such as *Is it really some kind of sex test Driven to Distraction* (CB–Times), which become very awkward with the type noun string removed: *Is it really some sex test Driven to Distraction?.* With Margerie, we therefore parse the qualifying construction as: [qualifying complex determiner: *some kind of*] + [head: *sex test*].

In this use the nominal description offered by N2 is qualified, i.e. hedged, toned down or otherwise nuanced, e.g.

(29) we chafed very well one of the blunt edges of it upon a kind of large Pin-cushion cover'd with a course and black woollen stuff. (PPCEME, Boyle 1675-1676)
(30) The Trees we saw were a small kind of Cabbage Palms. (CLMETEV, Cook 1768-1771)
(31) ... which is the Palace of the King's Women, a sort of seraglio (PPCEME, Behn 1688)

Nominal qualifiers are speaker-related, i.e. subjective, when they signal that the speaker is unsure, humorous or ironic about the categorization of some referent (e.g. 29). Qualifier uses can also be intersubjective in that their approximator meaning may show the speaker’s
concern for the face of the hearer or his or her effort to explain a less familiar item by classifying it as a non-prototypical member of some category (e.g. 30).

4. Diachronic paths of change and chronology

4.1. Denison’s chronology

As we saw in Section 1, Denison (2002) posits a twofold path of change, allowing for multiple inheritance links between the various type noun constructions. One path leads from binominal to postdeterminer construction and the other from binominal to nominal qualifying construction via the mediation of the postdeterminer construction. This is visualized in Figure 1:

![Figure 1: Denison’s chronology](image)

Figure 1 suggests that the postdeterminer use, restricted to patterns with incongruous concord as in these kind of reasonings (10), is an early reanalysis of the head noun use and “is at least as old as the qualifying use, probably much older” (Denison 2002: 9). The reanalysis may then have started in head use patterns with a singular type noun and plural N2 in which the type noun was not premodified except for a determiner not marked for number, as in (32):

(32) as giving him some kind of hopes that…(1627, quoted in Denison 2002: 11)

Qualifying uses such as a kind of large Pin-cushion in (32) arise in contexts where the type noun has low information status and instead the NP following of receives focus. In such contexts a conversational implicature could arise from “a normal member of the class of N2” to “a possible member” (Denison 2002: 11). The semanticization of this inference affected the structural status of the type noun and gave rise to the qualifying construction as a new distinct use. As the postdeterminer use of type nouns is very early, preceding the qualifying uses, Denison (2002: 11) “provisionally assume[s]” that it also contributed to the formation of the qualifying use, but he does not expand on this.

4.2. Chronology and pathways of change revisited

In Section 3 we argued that diachronic corpus analysis confirms that the descriptive modifier uses, the functionally redefined postdeterminer category and the quantifier uses form constructions not considered by Denison. In this section we will assess how they fit into the semantico-syntactic pathways proposed by Denison. We will argue that particularly the two non-considered constructions provide crucial missing links in the interlocking paths of
development starting around 1500: they have played key roles in the emergence and entrenchment of the other reanalysed uses. In Section 4.2.1 we will discuss how the quantifier uses impacted on the development of other uses, and in Section 4.2.2 what role was played by the descriptive modifier use.

Table 1 charts the relative frequencies of the five nominal constructions for *sort of* (S) and *kind of* (K) from 1150 to the present. It thus represents the relative quantitative importance and development (rise or decline) of these constructions vis-à-vis each other.
4.3. The role of the quantifier construction in the emergent constructional network

Figure 2 visualizes the relative frequencies of quantifier uses with sort(s) of/kind(s) of from 1500 to Present-day English.

Overall, quantifier uses of type nouns have been present in a fairly stable proportion from 1500 onwards, hovering around a relative proportion of 10% of all the uses with sort/kind. The peak of quantifier uses (30%) manifested by sort in 1570-1640 is due to the then common size noun uses a (good/great) sort of.

Table 1: Relative frequencies of sort(s)/kind(s) of from 1150-PDE

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<td>56 S K</td>
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<td>34 1</td>
<td>22 8</td>
<td>9 14</td>
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<td>7 1 9</td>
<td>2 4 19</td>
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<td>1 9</td>
<td>34 46</td>
<td>49 44</td>
<td>37 21</td>
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Figure 2: relative frequencies of quantifier uses from 1500-PDE

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² We use the double label head/binominal because our ME-data contain head uses, but not binominal constructions. In the ModE data, by contrast, binominal constructions are common and from this period on extractions were restricted to the NP + of + NP syntagm, which defines the locus of reanalysis.

³ ME data with sort/kind followed by of + N2, which are extremely rare, have not been included in this overview as they would deform the overall picture.
As noted in Section 3.4, the quantifier uses were the earliest reanalyses of the binominal construction to emerge at the end of the 14th century for *kind* and at the end of the 15th century for *sort*. These grammaticalized quantifier uses can be traced back to source head uses in Middle English in which the type noun was preceded by quantifiers, e.g.

(33) Þe moder in ðe femelle fongeþ semen, and þis is general in *all kynde of bestes* in þe whiche is male and female. (*Middle English Dictionary*, Trevisa c1398)

In the diachronic data type head nouns are preceded by other quantifiers than *all* and *no*, e.g. *There be divers sorts of loves* (PPCEME, Deloney 1619), *several sortes of witches* (PPCEME, Gifford 1593), etc. However, it is only the ‘totality’ quantifiers *no* and especially *all* that triggered an ambiguity between generic taxonomic meaning and pure quantifying meaning (Section 3.4). Non-totality quantifiers such as *many*, *several* and *diverse* did not invite pragmatic inferences leading to a quantifying reinterpretation. The quantifying expression *a sort of*, which is typically intensified by scalar adjectives *good/great* also resulted from reanalysis of head uses, in which *sort* was used in the sense of ‘band, company’, e.g. *Paris now with his unmanly sorte* (OED, Surrey 1547).

Interestingly, the emphatic quantifier uses with *kind/sort* seem to have enabled the entrenchment of the more neutral, purely identifying, postdeterminer uses. In Early Modern English postdeterminer uses were less frequent than quantifier uses, but they overtook the latter in Late Modern English. Diachronic corpus analysis of *sort* shows clearly that its quantifying and intensifying uses predated the general system of identifying and phoric postdeterminers. Cataphoric and anaphoric uses of determiner + *sort* + *of*, for instance, were first established by intensifying uses such as (34) and (35) respectively, before they were used to express non-intensifying phoric relations.

(34) *Suche a sorte of herytykes ho I ever sawe, that wyll nother reverence the croose of Chryste* (PPCEME, Mowntayne c1553)
(35) The Rhadars here had apprehended a sturdy Thief, who had set upon a poor Merchant, and drove away his Ass loaded with Indian Cloth. *These sort of Vermin are rare ...* (PPCEME, Fryer 1672-1681)

The grafting of the new postdeterminer meaning on the already established intensifying-quantifying uses helped the postdeterminer use to gain a foothold as a separate constructional use. Having paved the way for the general system of postdeterminer uses that came to form the majority, the quantifying uses receded to forming only a minor but stable proportion. *No sort(s)/kind(s) of* and *a (good/great) sort of* died off, and only *all sorts/kinds of* have persisted into Present-day English. As pointed out by Bolinger (1972: 60), determiners – in the broad sense – can often convey both identifying and quantifying-intensifying meanings, as in *Such a person always frightens me* versus *Such a blunderer always frightens me*. However, the path from intensifying to non-intensifying found here is still a surprising one, as subjectification clines (Bolinger 1972, Traugott 1989) generally predict a unidirectional change from non-intensifying to intensifying.

Postdeterminer uses of type nouns with determiner *some* have, in turn, probably facilitated the emergence of nominal qualifier uses with *some* via a transfer from quantifying meaning to qualitative approximation, illustrated by (36) and (37) respectively.

(36) Taking shelter in a miserable cottage, we remained shivering and shaking till the carriage
was in some sort of order, ... (CLMETEV, Beckford 1783)

(37) Before men are put forward into the great trusts of the State, they ought by their conduct to have obtained such a degree of estimation in their country as may be some sort of pledge and security to the public that they will not abuse those trusts. (CLMETEV, Burke 1770)

Some in (36) asserts a minimal quantity of consolation and also hedges ‘consolation’ qualitatively as perhaps not the most appropriate notion in the circumstances. Both meanings pragmatically involve an element of surprise, as both quantitatively and qualitatively a positive assertion is made that is incongruous with the negative context of ‘loss’.

In this context it can be noted that another subtype of qualifying uses seems to derive directly from the binominal construction via description of a peripheral or unknown hyponymic relation. This use appears for instance in travelogues where explorers seek to describe exotic fauna, flora or rituals in terms of categories or concepts that people in the old world are familiar with. By implication these descriptions are approximations only, as in examples (30) above and (38) below from Captain Cook’s Journal:

(38) These she caused to be carried from her Canoes up to the Fort in a kind of Procession. (CLMETEV, Cook 1768-1771)

In general, a historical shift can be observed within the nominal qualifier uses, which first predominantly involve approximate categorization but come to be used increasingly with other pragmatic values such as irony, hedging and the metalinguistic marking of stylistic changes (often to more literary wording as in (41) below), etc. Thus, in the period in which the qualifying construction emerges, its approximate categorization use predominates, viz. in 12 out of 13 cases with kind and in 16 out of 18 cases with sort. This proportion had already gone down to 14 out of 47 qualifying uses with sort in 1710-1780 and to 12 out of 37 with kind in 1850-1920

4.4. The role of the descriptive modifier construction in the emergent constructional network

The attributive modifier use can be traced back to a Middle English head use of a singular type noun modified by a qualitative adjective:

(39) ... þe gentyl kende (PPCME, 1340)

In the change from premodified type nouns used as heads to attributive modifier uses, the reference shifts from generic to instantial. In head uses such as (39) the adjective pertains to the description of (sub)types. By contrast, in attributive modifier uses such as (40)-(41) the adjective together with the type noun string applies to concrete instances.

(40) He's a good honest kind of a Fellow, and one of us. (CLMETEV, Gay 1728)
(41) He consulted his note-book in a dazed, flustered kind of way. (CLMETEV Blackwood 1915)

Chronologically, the attributive modifier use is also an early reanalysis, appearing at the beginning of the 16th century.

(42) all the worlde woulde saye that wee wer a wyse sorte of coussaylers (PPCEME, More c1513)
Figure 3 represents the relative frequencies of attributive uses from 1500 up until Present-day English.

Quantitatively, the attributive modifier use has not increased greatly in frequency, even though it manifested a minor peak towards the end of Late Modern English. In the early uses a great variety of N2s is found e.g. counsaylers (42), falsehood, fever, meat, compliment, satisfaction, negligence (17), etc. A discourse context associated with this use from 1500 onwards right until the present-day is the attribution of a character trait to a person, e.g. a surly kind of fellow, wicked kind of people, a goody-goody sort of young woman, and example (40). However, from the end of Late Modern English on the attributive modifier use is increasingly restricted to a few discourse ‘topoi’ such as character trait attribution and uses with the semi-lexicalized string kind/sort of way, which is attested from 1850 onwards (e.g. 41).

The attributive modifier use with its syntagmatic structure ‘determiner + adjective + TN + of + N2’ (e.g. a generous kind of negligence) also seems to have played a facilitating role in the emergence of qualifying uses with the structure ‘determiner + TN + of + adjective + N2’ (e.g. a sort of irregular vows). Structurally, the only change involved is transfer of the adjective from pre-type noun to post-type noun position. In quite a few examples it was possible to put the adjective in the alternative position without it causing great pragmatic changes, e.g.

(43) Being asked many years after if he had any remembrance of the Queen, he had a confused but somehow a sort of solemn recollection of a lady in diamonds and a long black hood. (CLMETEV, Carey 1792).

Moreover, there are also structurally blended examples, such as

(44) a finical sort of a tawdry Fellow (PPCEME, Vanbrugh 1696)

The possibilities of word order variation offered by the syntagm noun + of + noun invite a sort of verbal play (Halliday p.c.) that is part of language change, and that can be observed in the ‘transfer’ of the adjective in an example such as a strong cup of tea from a cup of strong tea (Halliday 1994: 195) Chronologically, the attributive modifier use was the first to detach qualitative adjectives from reference to subtypes. In the qualifying use that emerged later (see Table 1), qualitative adjectives were also put to use for the characterization
of instances. Syntactically, both uses have a strong disposition towards occurring as predicative complements and are almost exclusively introduced by indefinite determiners. Apart from all these grammatical similarities, there is also overlap between some of their pragmatic effects. As noted in Section 3.2, descriptive modifier uses veer towards metalinguistic, hedging and approximative meanings, particularly with the more elaborate ‘semi-suffix’ uses. These are precisely core pragmatic values associated with the nominal qualifying constructions. In view of all these similarities, it seems justified to propose that the descriptive modifier construction facilitated the emergence of the qualifier construction, and continued to impact particularly on the subtype containing adjectives.

4. Conclusion

In the course of this article we have shown that Denison’s (2002) chronology of type noun constructions overlooks two early reanalyses of the binominal construction, viz. the quantifier and attributive modifier constructions. The combination of totality quantifiers like *all* and *no* with type nouns triggered off the potential of scalar meaning in type nouns, as did adjectives with scalar meaning like *great* and *good*. In the development of attributive modifier uses the combination of type nouns and adjectives such as *scandalous*, *generous* and *dreamy* triggered off inferences of evaluation from an original categorization meaning. These inferences draw on the type/token implication of type nouns, which involves a meronymic shift.

Diachronic corpus analysis furthermore showed that they are also important links in the paths of development of other type noun constructions. If we add them to Denison’s twofold pathways from binominal to postdeterminer and from binominal to nominal qualifier, we end up with more complex paths of development, which can be schematized as in Figure 4. R indicates relationships involving reanalysis and E indicates entrenchment relationships.

![Figure 4: Main paths of development and multiple inheritance links in the type noun constructional network](image)

The emphatic quantifier uses are early reanalyses (attested for *kind* from c1380 on) of
the binominal construction (a). The purely textual postdeterminer uses appear from c1550 on (b). In Early Modern English the older quantifier use is more frequent than the new postdeterminer use, but by Late Modern English the latter has overtaken the former. We have proposed that the intensive/quantifying uses, with their expressive functionality, enabled entrenchment of the hitherto latent postdeterminer use.

The descriptive modifier construction is an early reanalysis of the premodified head noun use, emerging around 1500 (c). The nominal qualifying use is also a reanalysis of the head noun use, but arises later and is attested from c1600 for kind of and c1700 for sort of (g). It emerges in contexts that describe a peripheral or unknown hyponymic relation and this leads to a different syntactic parsing in which the type noun + of are reanalyzed as a qualifier. The qualifier use is also facilitated by earlier reanalyses of the binominal construction, viz. the postdeterminer and attributive constructions. The postdeterminer use probably facilitated the emergence of qualifier uses via a shift from identifying-quantifying to approximation-of-quality meaning. The combination of some + kind/sort + of + N2 is a concrete bridging context in this respect. The descriptive modifier construction influenced the nominal qualifier construction both structurally and in terms of shared subjectified meaning, involving the evaluation of individuals and a metalinguistic flavour.

It has thus become clear that non-head uses of type nouns have emerged as the result of complex and interlocking paths in which quantifier and attributive modifier patterns play pivotal roles. These paths and developments are remarkably parallel for kind and sort, but with the former generally leading the way.

References