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WHEN EVALUATION IS NOT DEVIATION: A CLOSER LOOK AT PROTOTYPICALITY AS AN EVALUATIVE FUNCTION

FRANCESCA MASINI

ABSTRACT: Although evaluative morphology is normally conceptualized as deviation from a central case, languages sometimes express the opposite function, namely centrality or prototypicality with respect to the category core. This paper discusses the role of this function within the paradigm of evaluative morphology to gain a better grasp of its nature and linguistic expression. Two relevant Italian constructions are analyzed through a corpus investigation based on CORIS: NN reduplication (e.g., *caffè-caffè* ‘coffee-coffee’) and N-*tipo* (e.g., *giornata tipo* lit. day type ‘typical day’). The analysis reveals that the two constructions share some properties but also display distributional and semantic specificities: whereas NN reduplication conveys values like prototypicality, authenticity, exclusivity and spatial accuracy, N-*tipo* expresses a value of canonicity (or stereotypicality). The paper claims that these specific values are better pictured as different yet related realizations of a complex functional domain of ‘non-deviation’. Although the anatomy of this domain still needs to be fully unveiled and mapped, its recognition suggests to reshape the current model of evaluative functions.

KEYWORDS: categorization, evaluative morphology, canonicity, prototypicality, reduplication.

1. INTRODUCTION¹

Evaluative morphology is normally conceptualized as a deviation from a central or typical case – be it a ‘prototype’, a ‘norm’, a ‘standard’ or a ‘default’. Emblematic deviation types are diminution, augmentation and intensification, widely explored in the literature (e.g., Dressler & Merlini Barbaresi 1994; Jurafsky 1996; Grandi 2002; Bakema & Geeraerts 2004; Körtvélyessy &

¹ I wish to thank two anonymous reviewers for their valuable suggestions and the audience at the *Nuovi fenomeni semantico-valutativi nello spazio linguistico italiano* workshop (LVII Congresso internazionale della SLI, Catania, 19-21 September 2024) for their comments. Portions of this paper were also presented at the *Word-Formation Theories VII / Typology and Universals in Word-Formation VI* conference at the University of Košice in June 2025 and at the *CLUB Day* at the University of Bologna in June 2023. I am indebted to several colleagues for sharing their insight on the topic. Of course, I am solely responsible for any errors or omissions.

Štekauer eds. 2011; Rainer 2015; Napoli & Ravetto eds. 2017), as well as approximation, which has been gaining more and more attention in recent years (e.g., Masini et al. 2023). Within this paradigm, the central or typical category member used as a ‘benchmark’ for the deviation is typically left in the background and taken for granted. Sometimes, however, the centrality or prototypicality of an entity with respect to the category it belongs to is explicitly codified at the linguistic level. Take for instance the following examples:² *carta-carta* ‘paper-paper’ in (1) refers to the (proto)typical paper material rather than more innovative types, whereas *francese-tipo* (lit. Frenchman-type) ‘typical Frenchman’ in (2) identifies the typical, average French person, defined through a series of properties.

- (1) *Si procurava la carta ordinandola contrassegno, o attraverso Tota. A volte era Maddalena a portargliene un pacco e a raccontargli le novità che stavano trasformando la carta in qualcosa di diverso, quasi un tessuto perfino lavabile. Ma se anche non rifiutava nessun esperimento, Genio preferiva la **carta-carta**, quella che frusciava e cantava.*

‘He would get the paper by ordering it COD, or through Tota. Sometimes it was Maddalena who brought him a package and told him about the innovations that were turning paper into something different, almost a fabric that could even be washed. But even if he did not refuse any experiment, Genio preferred **paper-paper**, the kind that rustled and sang.’

- (2) *Affrontando il tema scottante della riforma delle pensioni, che in Francia ha provocato scioperi e proteste, Bruckner disegna un profilo inatteso del **francese-tipo**: legato al posto fisso, tutto proteso sin dalla giovinezza verso l’età della pensione in cui potersi dedicare finalmente all’ozio (retribuito), tendente alla lacrima, alla lamentazione vittimistica e infine alla tragedia.*

‘Dealing with the burning issue of pension reform, which provoked strikes and protests in France, Bruckner draws an unexpected profile of the **typical Frenchman** [lit. Frenchmen-type]: bound to the fixed job, all bent from youth toward the age of retirement when he can finally devote himself to (paid) idleness, prone to tears, victimistic lamentation and finally tragedy.’

However, this function – which I provisionally name ‘prototypicality’ function for simplicity – is still poorly understood and little investigated in the literature, especially if compared with other widely explored evaluative functions like diminution, augmentation, intensification and approximation. The main goal of this article is to discuss the role of ‘prototypicality’ within the wider range of functions proposed in the evaluative morphology literature

² Examples are from CORIS (<https://corpora.ficlit.unibo.it/TCORIS/>): see more details on this resource in Section 3.

(Section 2), with a view to gaining a better grasp of its linguistic expression and to testing its unitary vs. multifaceted nature. To this end, I will present two case-studies devoted to two Italian constructions that, in the literature, are claimed to have the function of expressing some sort of ‘prototypicality’, namely NN reduplication (1) and N-*tipo* (2). A corpus-based investigation of both constructions is carried out in Sections 3 and 4, respectively, with the results being compared to let similarities and differences emerge. The findings show that the two constructions share some properties but also display distributional and semantic specificities, suggesting that ‘prototypicality’ is actually better pictured as one possible value of a wider multifarious functional domain that will be named ‘non-deviation’ (Section 5). Although the anatomy of this ‘non-deviation’ macro-function still needs to be fully unveiled, its recognition suggests that the current model of evaluative functions proposed by Grandi & Körtvélyessy (2015: 12) might need to be revised.

2. THE PLACE OF PROTOTYPICALITY WITHIN EVALUATIVE FUNCTIONS

In their handbook of evaluative morphology, Grandi & Körtvélyessy (2015: 10) explicitly include a function named ‘authenticity / prototypicality’ in their model of evaluative functions. Their model (illustrated in Table 1, next page) is a four-section scheme that stems from the intersection of two dimensions: descriptive vs. qualitative perspective on the one hand; shift toward the positive end vs. shift toward the negative end on the other. According to the authors, ‘authenticity / prototypicality’ is a function that belongs to the qualitative level of evaluation (like ‘intensification’ and ‘approximation / reduction / attenuation’) and takes the form of a shift toward the positive end (like ‘intensification’ and opposite to ‘approximation / reduction / attenuation’).

As the authors note, authenticity / prototypicality can be conveyed, morphologically, by nominal reduplication: see the well-known Italian example *caffè caffè* (lit. coffee coffee) ‘real, authentic coffee’, originally noticed by Medici (1959) and later discussed in many other works (e.g., Lepschy & Lepschy 1984; Wierzbicka 1986; Stolz 2003; Rossi 2011; Grandi 2017; Ramat 2019; Mauri & Masini 2022; Thornton 2023; Masini 2025; cf. Horn 1993 and Gomesi et al. 2004 for English, and Urbaniak 2023 for Spanish). According to Lepschy & Lepschy (1984: 103), noun reduplications like *caffè caffè* express the “identification of the authentic quality”³ of the noun, whereas Grandi (2017: 60) claims that they “indicate the full realization of a prototype”. Whereas distinguishing

³ My translation of “*identificazione della qualità autentica*”.

	DESCRIPTIVE PERSPECTIVE	QUALITATIVE PERSPECTIVE
SHIFT TOWARDS THE POSITIVE END	augmentation age variation	intensification endearment authenticity/prototypicality expression of social position
SHIFT TOWARDS THE NEGATIVE END	diminution age variation	approximation/reduction/ attenuation contempt hypocorism expression of social position

TABLE 1: CLASSIFICATION OF EVALUATIVE MORPHOLOGY FUNCTIONS
(ADAPTED FROM GRANDI & KÖRTVÉLYESSY 2015: 12).

authenticity / prototypicality and approximation / reduction / attenuation is rather simple, since they express opposite values in terms of shift towards a positive / negative end, demarcation from intensification⁴ is less straightforward. Indeed, prototypicality is often equated with intensification. However, as Grandi (2017: 72–73) observes in relation to Italian NN reduplications:

If evaluative morphology [...] encodes a deviation from a standard or from a default meaning [...], reduplication primarily expresses a full identification of an item with its standard image. It identifies the best exemplar of a class, the instantiation of its prototype or what more closely resembles it. [...] Of course, it cannot be denied that the identification of an item with the prototype of its class is usually perceived as positive by speakers, so it can be interpreted as a secondary intensification. But it is not inherently an intensification.

The handbook edited by Grandi & Körtvélyessy (2015) documents other linguistic strategies for expressing prototypicality in other languages of the world, although the number of examples that I could retrieve is rather limited compared to other evaluative functions.⁵

A first example comes from Cabécar (a Chibchan language spoken in Costa Rica), which displays two clitics with an intensifying function: *rama* / *rrama*, which can only modify adjectives, and *sí*, which (unlike *rama* / *rrama*) can be applied to noun stems. When *sí* is applied to nouns (cfr. (3a-b)), “it adds a sense

⁴ Contrary to Rainer (2015), here the term intensification is used to refer to high degree only (excluding approximation), and not to all degrees of intensity.

⁵ Impressionistically speaking, the expression of authenticity / prototypicality seems to be less frequent and less grammaticalized (morphologized) in the world’s languages, compared with approximation and intensification. However, further empirical research is needed to confirm (or not) these impressions.

of ‘authenticity’ or ‘prototypicality’ to the noun that it modifies” (González Campos 2015: 526).

(3) CABÉCAR

- a. *chíchi=sí*
dog=INT
‘an authentic dog’
- b. *ju=sí*
house=INT
‘an authentic house (a traditional Cabécar house)’

(González Campos 2015: 526)

A second example comes from Rembarrnga (a Non-Pama-Nyungan language spoken in Australia). According to Saulwick (2015: 433), in this language “[p]rototypicality can be expressed with a bound morpheme *-jininy*, glossed ‘real’” (see (4a)) and also with “the incorporated adverbial *gakku-*, glossed ‘properly’ or ‘completely’” (see (4b)), neither of which occurs as an independent word.

(4) REMBARRNGA

- a. *Len* *yarr-ritj-ø* *len-jininy* *gurbæt-gah*
ground.sugarbag 1a>3-look-NPST gnd.sugarbag-real antbed-ALL
bamurru-hgah.
rotten.log-ALL
‘We look around for real ground honey in an antbed in a rotten log.’
- b. *Bænda ga-du-ru,* *wurru mælak*
there NPST3-stand.INTR-NPST but NEG
ge-gakku-yarrart-rta *many*.
SBJV.NPST3-properly-grow.up-FUT not.yet
‘It is there but it has not yet properly grown up.’

(Saulwick 2015: 433)

In Kwaza (an isolate language spoken in Brazil), the “intensifying suffix *-tete*, or its rarer non-repeated allomorph *-te*, is applied to verbs, nouns and adverbs, with different connotations. [...] When applied to nouns, it expresses authenticity” (van der Voort 2015: 608), as illustrated by (5).

(5) KWAZA

kanwa-tete
canoe-INT
‘real canoe’

(van der Voort 2015: 608)

According to van der Voort (2015: 608), *-tete* “is doubtlessly related to similar morphemes meaning ‘very, really, truly’ etc. in many Tupi languages, for example *-te(te)* in Mekens (Galucio 2001)”.

Finally, Warlpiri (a Pama-Nyungan language spoken in Australia) has an augmentative morpheme *-nyayirni*, which, when attached to a common noun, refers to a prototypical (‘real’, ‘true’) form of the base noun, as exemplified in (6a,b) (Bowler 2015: 439). For instance, poisonous snakes are the most common kind of snakes in Central Australia, hence the prototypicality reading in (6b). Interestingly, when it combines with numerals, *-nyayirni* expresses ‘exactness’ (6c), “another realisation of the ‘prototypical’ readings given above”, according to Bowler (2015: 439).

(6) WARLPIRI

- a. *ngapa-nyayirni*
water-AUG
‘fresh water’
- b. *warna-nyayirni*
snake-AUG
‘poisonous snake’
- c. *rdakapala-nyayirni*
five-AUG
‘exactly five’

(Bowler 2015: 439–440)

As we can see from this small but revealing set of examples, prototypicality can be expressed by markers that are primarily used for other evaluative functions – namely intensification (Cabécar, Kwaza) and augmentation (Warlpiri) – hence not specifically designed for prototypicality. Of course, a broader sample of languages and a more thorough typological investigation of the sources of ‘prototypicality’ is needed to draw relevant generalizations. In this paper, however, I will focus on Italian data to further investigate this function. Indeed, although ‘authenticity / prototypicality’ is listed as an evaluative function in its own right by Grandi & Körtvélyessy (2015), its nature is still largely underinvestigated. More specifically, my research goal is twofold.

My general goal is to start disentangling the concept of ‘authenticity / prototypicality’. In Section 1, I mentioned that evaluation is described as a deviation from a central or typical case – be it a ‘prototype’, a ‘norm’, a ‘standard’ or a ‘default’ (all terms found in the evaluative morphology literature). But are these terms equivalent, or do they conceal a more complex picture? It seems fair to hypothesize that they describe different (yet related) ways of pointing to the ‘core’ of categories, to some unmarked entity. For instance, ‘prototype’ clearly

refers to Rosch's (1975) theory of categorization whereby some members are cognitively more central than others ('best examples'), whereas 'norm' seems to point to a more sociocultural dimension of meaning that might have to do more with stereotypes (reflecting socially shared expectations) than prototypes (Geeraerts 2008); further, 'default' is a key term in Štekauer & Körtvélyessy's onomasiological approach to evaluation (e.g., Körtvélyessy 2015), identifying the unmarked, neutral meaning of a base lexeme. The exact relationship between these terms is still unclear. Findings about approximation (Masini et al. 2023) suggest that, behind the 'authenticity / prototypicality' label, there may be a variety of strictly related – yet different – values that still waits to be unveiled and described.

My more specific goal is to provide a closer analysis of linguistic strategies that can be traced back to the 'authenticity / prototypicality' function based on naturally occurring data from corpora.⁶ Indeed, as the typological examples above show, 'authenticity / prototypicality' can be conveyed by different linguistic means, which are however still to be fully identified, classified and studied from a semantic perspective. With a view to taking a step forward in this direction, in the following sections I analyze two Italian constructions that convey a lack of deviation from the central or typical case, namely the already mentioned NN reduplication (e.g., *caffè caffè* 'coffee coffee') (Section 3) and *N-tipo* (e.g., *giornata-tipo* 'standard day') (Section 4).

3. CASE STUDY 1: NN REDUPLICATION

As mentioned in Section 2, NN reduplication is well-known in Italian studies and has been attracted the attention of many scholars, also due to its expressivity. Nigel Vincent (2024, p.c.) provided the following memory: "I remember a nice case many years ago in an Italian restaurant in London with an Italian colleague - the menu offered pasta con sugo di lepre 'pasta with hare sauce'. My colleague asked the waiter whether it was really 'lepre lepre' (hare hare) to which the waiter replied to be honest it's 'lepre coniglio' (hare rabbit)!".

But what is the actual use of this construction in naturally occurring data? At first glance, NN reduplication seems to be little frequent in language use. Indeed, I could retrieve few examples from corpora of spoken Italian. In the RadioCast corpus (Masini & Combei 2024), I found only one example, shown in (7):⁷

⁶ Data that support the findings of this study are openly available in AMS Acta, the institutional open access repository of the Alma Mater Studiorum – University of Bologna, at <https://doi.org/10.6092/unibo/amsacta/9007>.

⁷ The RadioCast corpus (which includes approximately 1M words of radiophonic speech) is,

- (7) *parliamo di serie tv adesso [...] oggi da amazon abbiamo scelto homecoming non è un'assoluta novità è sulla piattaforma di jeff bezos da più di un anno però con julia roberts protagonista e produttrice esecutiva le stigmati del **cinema cinema** ci sono tutte [...]*

'let's talk about tv series now [...] today from amazon we chose homecoming it is not an absolute novelty it has been on jeff bezos' platform for more than a year however with julia roberts as protagonist and executive producer the stigmata of **cinema cinema** are all there [...]

[RadioCast, orthographic version]

The KiParla corpus (Mauri et al. 2019), which is bigger in size (almost 2M words at the time of consulting in 2024) and more varied in terms of speech situations, displays a dozen cases, like for instance (8), where *casa-casa* refers to a fully-fledged house rather than a house patched together for hosting students temporarily.

- (8) Kiparla (KIP, TOD2014), talking about cohabitation experiences as students

- TO071 *quindi eravate in quattro là*
'so there were four of you there'
- TO059 *eravamo in quattro sì*
'there were four of us yes'
- TO059 *e vabbe' un bagno e una cucina molto molto piccola però*
'and well one bathroom and a kitchen, a very very small one however'
- TO059 *in realta' era bello perche' c' era un un terrazzo tutto intorno alla casa*
'actually it was nice because there was a terrace all around the house'
- TO071 *mhm ah*
'mhm ah'
- TO059 *quindi era molto*
'so it was very'
- TO059 *proprio diciamo **casa casa** sen te la sentivi proprio come casa mentre l' altra si vedeva che era stata adibita*
'really let's say **house house** you really felt it like a house whereas the other one you could tell it was thought'
- TO059 *piu' per gli studenti era un po' messa la' cosi'*
'more for students it was a little bit patched together'

From this small dataset, a preference for reduplication of place nouns clearly emerges (see, e.g., (9)-(11)), but also of ethnic nouns like *torinese* 'Turinese' (12) and ethnic adjectives like *piemontese* 'Piedmontese' (13), also referring to geographical entities.

however, still under construction (<https://site.unibo.it/radiocast/it>), so this result should be taken as preliminary.

- (9) Kiparla (KIP, BOA3004), talking about the cost of fruit juices

BO047 *alla coop costa uno e cinquanta?*
 ‘at the coop it’s one fifty?’
 BO046 *solo con il buono che davano un po’ di tempo fa e che io ancora ne ho uno*
 ‘just with the coupon they used to give a while ago and I still have one’
 BO047 *tipo non lo so alla pam?*
 ‘like I don’t know at the pam?’
 BO046 *normalmente*
 ‘normally’
 BO046 *normalmente [sic] penso che costino tre euro*
 ‘normally I think they cost three euros’
 BO046 *aspetta ti parlo del bar della coop*
 ‘wait I’m talking about the bar at the coop’
 BO046 *non alla **coop coop***
 ‘not at the **coop coop**’
 BO047 *ah okay*
 ‘ah okay’

- (10) Kiparla (PTA006), talking about the Italian singer Paolo Conte

TOI006 *paolo conte*
 ‘Paolo Conte’
 TOR001 *era di **torino torino**?*
 ‘was he from **Turin-Turin**?’
 TOI006 *no di asti*
 ‘no from Asti’

- (11) Kiparla (TOD2007), talking about Turin’s (best) districts

TO055 *la zona di torino che ti piace piu’ di tutte*
 ‘your favourite district in Turin’
 TO043 *allora la zona di torino*
 ‘well, favourite district in Turin’
 TO043 *allora quella dove vivo*
 ‘ok, the one I live in’
 TO043 *che e’ pratically [sic] precrocetta*
 ‘which is basically pre-Crocetta’
 ...
 TO043 *se no proprio **crocetta crocetta** lì deve essere bello vivere*
 ‘otherwise **Crocetta Crocetta** itself, it must be nice to live there’
 TO043 *ero andata una volta e vedi proprio il lusso la tranquillità*
 ‘I went there once and you see really the luxury the quietness’

- (12) Kiparla (PTB001), talking about football teams

- TOR005 *io qui questa cosa volevo un po' capire cioè il*
'I wanted to understand this thing namely the'
 TOR005 *torinese è*
'Turinese is'
 TOR005 *piu' juventino o t*
'more a Juventus supporter or'
 TOR005 *torista*
'Toro supporter'
 TOI022 *beh il **torinese torinese** tendenzialmente e' piu' del toro*
'well the **Turinese Turinese** tendentially is more a supporter of Toro'

(13) Kiparla (PTB015), talking about place of origin

- TOR007 *ma lei è nata qua*
'but she was born here'
 TOI051 *sì sì sì sì*
'yes yes yes yes'
 TOI006 *proprio **piemontese piemontese***
'really **Piedmontese Piedmontese**'

3.1 Methods

In order to verify if the same characteristics (low frequency, preference for place-denoting bases) are found in written language as well, a thorough corpus-based investigation was carried out on CORIS (Rossini Favretti et al. 2002), a 165Mw reference corpus of contemporary written Italian (<https://corpora.ficlit.unibo.it/TCORIS/>). First, I extracted from CORIS all sequences of two identical nouns (both common nouns and proper nouns), with and without an intervening hyphen (over 8000 hits). Second, I filtered the results to exclude obvious POS-tagging mistakes (e.g., double punctuation marks) and then I checked manually all remaining occurrences. Third, I annotated the dataset with the following information: lemma, hyphen (yes/no), POS tag (NN for common nouns, NN_P for proper nouns), number (sg/pl), ontological class. For the latter property, due to the partiality of resources for the Italian language and the feasible size of the final dataset, I decided to let the classes emerge from the examples via clustering during manual annotation. Eventually, the following values were identified: HUMAN (e.g., *amico* 'friend'), ART & COMMUNICATION (e.g., *critica* 'critics'), CONCRETE INANIMATE (e.g., *ragù* 'ragù'), ORGANIZATION (e.g., *sinistra* 'left-wing party/parties'), ABSTRACT⁸ (e.g., *verità* 'truth'), PLACE (e.g., *Serbia* 'friend'), EVENT (e.g., *morte* 'death'). During the manual checking, many examples were found of irrelevant cases,

⁸ This is a heterogeneous class subsuming sparse instances of abstract concepts that could not be accommodated in other classes.

including cases not corresponding to a reduplication (14a)⁹ but also many cases of reduplications / repetitions other than the one under investigation: *casa-casa* in (14b) is a reduplication type typical of Southern Italo-Romance varieties, expressing a movement within / along the entity denoted by the reduplicated N (cf. Amenta 2010); *rumore rumore* in (14c) expresses plurality or increased quantity. Other irrelevant (therefore excluded) cases include: compounds (like *aria-aria* (14d), referring to missiles that can be launched from a flying aircraft to shoot down other flying aircrafts, or *cane-cane* in (14e), referring to a specific breed of dog); lexicalized expressions (like *cous-cous* ‘couscous’ in (14f)); onomatopoeias (like *flop-flop* ‘flop-flop’ in (14g)); triplications and beyond (like 14h,i).

- (14) a. *l’ordinanza di rimessione sembra implicitamente pervasa dal **dubbio** – **dubbio** che tuttavia non viene sviluppato [...]*
 ‘the order of remittal seems implicitly pervaded by **doubt** – **doubt** that, however, is not developed [...]
- b. *Che è quando ti alzi la mattina [...] e cammini **casa-casa** con la barba non fatta, occupandoti di cose di estremo impegno [...]*
 ‘Which is when you get up in the morning [...] and walk **from house to house** (lit. house-house) with an unkempt beard, taking care of extremely committing things [...]
- c. *Poco, come la storia della montagna e del topolino o come Shakespeare: **rumore rumore** e poi nulla.*
 ‘Little, like the story of the mountain and the mouse or like Shakespeare: **noise noise** and then nothing.’
- d. *Il Boeing portava materiale militare, compresi alcuni missili **aria-aria**.*
 ‘The Boeing was carrying military equipment, including some **air-to-air** (lit. air-air) missiles.’
- e. *Nel corso di svariate generazioni si scelsero gli animali più arrendevoli e utili, e ciascuno diede origine a una razza: qui un cane-lupo nordico, là un cane-lupo asiatico, altrove un cane-sciacallo, altrove ancora un cane-dingo, o un **cane-cane** selvatico africano, o un cane-coyote. . .*
 ‘Over the course of several generations, the most docile and useful animals were selected, and each gave rise to a breed: here a Nordic wolf-dog, there an Asian wolf-dog, elsewhere a jackal-dog, or again a dingo-dog, or a wild African **dog-dog**, or a dog-coyote...’
- f. *Là si mangiano malloreddus e porceddu. Qui farinata di ceci e **cous-cous**.*

⁹ Since dashes and hyphens are tokenized in CORIS and correspond to the same lemma, it is impossible to distinguish automatically between dash cases, like (14a), and hyphen cases like (14b,d-g).

- ‘There they eat malloreddus and porceddu. Here chickpea porridge and **couscous**.’
- g. *Il **flop-flop** di un elicottero scompiglia il cielo sopra le nostre teste.*
 ‘An helicopter’s **flop-flop** disrupts the sky above our heads.’
- h. *lo faceva sentire davvero un pino che sputa pigne e con le pigne **semi semi semi**.*
 ‘it really made him feel like a pine tree spitting out pine cones and with the pine cones **seeds seeds seeds**.’
- i. *Ma non voglio scriverti **parole parole parole parole**. Devo vederti e sentirti [...]*
 ‘But I don’t want to write you **words words words words**. I need to see you and hear you [...]

The final dataset is made of 95 examples of NN reduplication with a seemingly ‘prototypicality’ function.

3.2 Results

Figure 1 illustrates the lexical distribution of the dataset, with 61 types and 45 hapaxes (namely 73,7%). There is a limited number of nouns recurring a few times, namely: *marito* ‘husband’ (7 times), *uomo* ‘man’ (6 times), *sinistra* ‘left-wing (party)’ (6 times), *donna* ‘woman’ (4 times), *storia* ‘history’ (3 times), *cinema* ‘cinema’ (3 times), *giornalista* ‘journalist’ (3 times). The vast majority of examples are hyphenated (87, namely 91,6%) and in the singular (75, namely 78,9%).

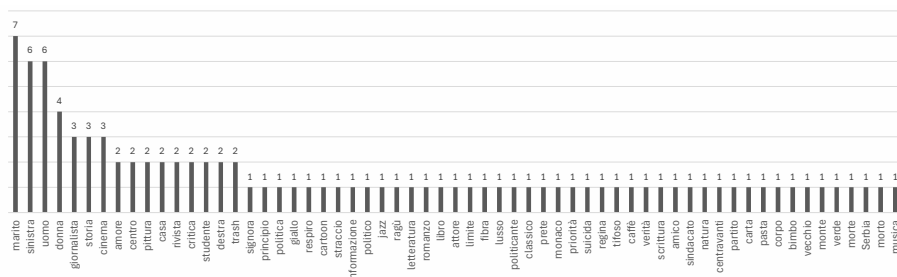


FIGURE 1: LEXICAL DISTRIBUTION OF N IN THE NN REDUPLICATION DATASET (FULL LIST).

As for subcorpora, most examples appear in subcorpora with Press (43, namely 44,8%) and Fiction (31, namely 32,3%) texts, as also illustrated in Figure 2.

As for the kinds of nouns, all examples contain common nouns except for one case that displays the proper noun *Serbia* (15).

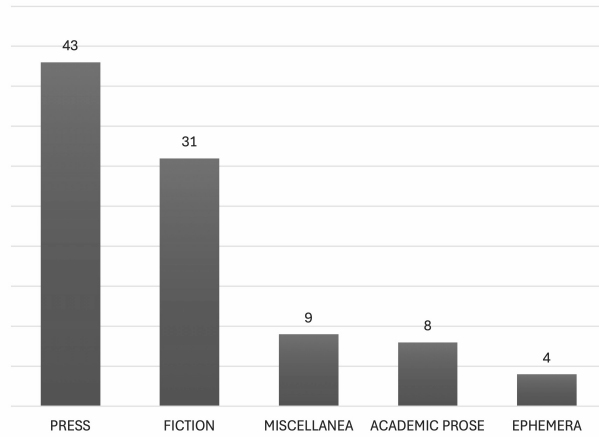


FIGURE 2: DISTRIBUTION OF OCCURRENCES IN CORIS SUBCORPORA FOR THE NN REDUPLICATION DATASET.

- (15) *Quanto alla Bosnia, comincia sul serio la caccia ai criminali di guerra, approfittando della profonda frattura apertasi in seno alla dirigenza serbo-bosniaca, non senza messaggi precisi al leader della **Serbia-Serbia**, il corteggiato ma infausto Milosevic.*

‘As for Bosnia, the hunt for war criminals begins for good, taking advantage of the deep rift that has opened within the Bosnian-Serb leadership, not without precise messages to the leader of **Serbia-Serbia**, the courted but ominous Milosevic.’

Figure 3 illustrates the ontological classes of nouns found in the dataset, per token and per type.

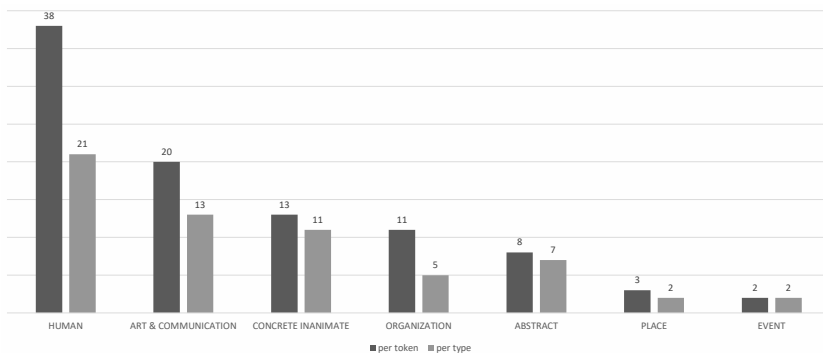


FIGURE 3: ONTOLOGICAL CLASS OF N IN THE NN REDUPLICATION DATASET (PER TOKEN AND PER TYPE).

As we can see, the most common class found in NN reduplications is HUMAN (see (16)), as also emerges from Figure 1 above. For instance, the reduplication *donne-donne* in (16a) is used contrastively to stress the difference between fully-fledged women and transgender Luxuria, whereas *signora-signora* in (16b) refers to the quintessential lady that is ‘born to idle, to be worshipped by men’.

- (16) a. *Luxuria si definisce transgender [sic], attraversa i generi, è maschio e donna insieme. Quando la notizia giunge dall'altra parte dell'emiciclo un gruppo di **donne-donne** sobbalza.*
 ‘Luxuria describes herself as transgender, crossing genders, being male and female together. When the news reaches the other side of the hemicycle [of the parliament], a group of **women-women** jolt.’
- b. *Non volevo darle della mantenuta, mi creda - - -. È che sembra proprio una signora-signora, nata per oziare, per farsi venerare dagli uomini.*
 ‘I didn’t mean to say you are a kept woman, believe me - - -. It’s just that you look like a **lady-lady**, born to idle, to be worshipped by men.’

Another well-represented class is ART & COMMUNICATION, where we find examples like (17a,b), referring to the most pure and worthy forms of novel and cinema, respectively.

- (17) a. *ANTONIO Tabucchi ha preso gusto al **romanzo-romanzo**, quello dotato, per intenderci, di personaggi robusti, di una trama facilmente percorribile, di passioni forti espresse senza schermi svianti.*
 ‘ANTONIO Tabucchi has taken a liking to the **novel-novel**, the one endowed, to put it bluntly, with robust characters, an easily traversable plot, and strong passions expressed without deflecting screens.’
- b. *Il grande Gatsby è un film fors'anche kitsch, ma è **cinema-cinema** e, per la passione di Baz Luhrmann, è in tutto fedele al libro di Fitzgerald in ogni ruolo e (anche) eccesso.*
 ‘The Great Gatsby is a perhaps even kitschy film, but it is **cinema-cinema** and, because of Baz Luhrmann’s passion, it is throughout faithful to Fitzgerald’s book in every role and (even) excess.’

The class CONCRETE INANIMATE is also well-attested (see (18)): it features nouns referring to both food (like (18a), where reference is made to the traditional Italian *ragù*) and other kinds of objects (see (18b), referring to a book in its full-fledged form).

- (18) a. *Ma il ragù, quello descritto da Eduardo De Filippo, o quello preparato dalla azdora di Romagna, o dalla signora bolognese, esiste solo nei racconti da osteria o c'è ancora? Oppure il **ragù-ragù** è diventato l'araba*

fenice, mentre imperversa quello "clonato" che parla in bolognese al supermercato?

‘But does *ragù*, the one described by Eduardo De Filippo, or the one prepared by the *azdora* of Romagna, or the Bolognese lady, exist only in tavern tales, or is it still there? Or has the **ragù-ragù** become the phoenix, while the “cloned” one that speaks in Bolognese at the supermarket rages?’

- b. *Leggere un libro in bozze non è la stessa cosa che leggerlo ben rilegato, fornito di copertina e di tutte quelle altre soglie testuali cui Genette ha dedicato un intero lavoro. È un po’ leggere alla cieca: magari il libro-libro avrebbe fatto, o farà, un’altra impressione [...]*

‘Reading a book in proofs is not the same thing as reading it well bound, provided with a cover and all those other textual thresholds to which Genette devoted an entire work. It is a bit like reading blind: maybe the **book-book** would have made, or will make, a different impression [...]

The ORGANIZATION class is basically limited to political entities like parties (19a), whereas the ABSTRACT class is rather heterogeneous, containing both emotion labelling nouns (19b) and other abstract concepts like for instance *lusso*: in (19c) *lusso-lusso* is rephrased as *lusso senza aggettivi* ‘luxury without adjectives’, namely pure luxury. Finally, PLACE (see (15) above) and EVENT (19d) are extremely marginal.

- (19) a. *Un Pd con segretario Zingaretti è un Pd che torna alle sue origini di sinistra-sinistra.*

‘A Pd with Zingaretti as secretary is a Pd that returns to its **left-left** origins.’

- b. *O piuttosto aveva fatto male i suoi calcoli, si aspettava il ripudio, il divorzio immediato, fuori di casa mia sporca mignotta, tornatene in Romania. E invece era amore-amore. Lui se l’era tenuta, la sua dolce Milena.*

‘Or rather he had miscalculated, expected repudiation, immediate divorce, get out of my house you dirty whore, go back to Romania. Instead, it was **love-love**. He had kept her, his sweet Milena.’

- c. *Carlo Tivioli fa sfilare il lusso. Un lusso senza aggettivi, il lusso-lusso. Pellicce preziose che si sono fatte però più sagge e non toccano terra, ma più cautamente sfiorano il ginocchio.*

‘Carlo Tivioli parades luxury. Luxury without adjectives, **luxury-luxury**. Precious furs that have however become wiser and do not touch the ground, but more cautiously touch the knee.’

- d. *Come ai tempi di fascismo e comunismo, l’Italia si è divisa sul coma irreversibile di Giuseppe Mongiello – “è morto non è morto” - e sulle differenze tra morte clinica, morte cerebrale e morte-morte.*

‘As in the days of fascism and communism, Italy is divided over Giuseppe Mongiello’s irreversible coma –“he’s dead he’s not dead” – and the differences between clinical death, brain death and **death-death**.’

The last example clearly illustrates a key feature of many examples in the dataset, namely the contrastive power of NN reduplication, which narrows down the concept expressed by N, which is contrasted to (what are deemed as) more peripheral instances of N: true death is compared with other types of (allegedly less prototypical instances of) death, namely clinical death or brain death. The same mechanism is shown by the following examples: in (20a), old people with health issues and need of assistance (typical exemplars of old people) are contrasted with old people who are still young-like and lively; in (20b), true information in its pure form is kept apart from other forms of information that are deemed less worthy; in (20c), instead, *tifosi-tifosi* ‘supporters-supporters’ and *attori-attori* ‘actors-actors’ refer to people who are only supporters (of Roma football team) and only actors, respectively, compared to other people who have a mixed status (actors who happen to be supporters, supporters who happen to be actors).

- (20) a. *Ricordo diversi gruppi di attività motoria per anziani, sia di vecchi-giovani “pimpanti”, sia di **vecchi-vecchi** ammalati o costretti in carrozzina.*
 ‘I remember several motor activity groups for the elderly, both of “pimply” old-young people and **old people-old people** who are sick or wheelchair-bound.’
- b. *Ci sono tre modi di fare informazione: **informazione-informazione**; informazione per il potere; informazione di servizio per le persone. Anche qui vediamo storcere il naso da parte di quei critici che affollano party, salotti e terrazze: “L’Informazione è l’Informazione! Che noia l’informazione di servizio...”.*
 ‘There are three ways of doing information: **information-information**; information for power; service information for people. Here again we see turning up our noses at those critics who crowd parties, lounges and terraces: “Information is Information! How boring is service information...”’
- c. *Dopo la squadra è il momento degli amici, a dirla come Venditti. È il momento, in cui la passione calcistica si mischia al kitch, con Verdone e Amendola a guidare una pacifica invasione del palco, assieme ad un mix di attori-tifosi, tifosi-attori, tifosi-tifosi e **attori-attori**.*
 ‘After the team it is time for friends, to quote Venditti. It is the moment where football passion mixes with kitch, with Verdone and Amendola leading a peaceful invasion of the stage, along with a mix of actors-supporters, supporters-actors, supporters-supporters and **actors-actors**.’

In some cases the contrast is explicit in the cotext, like in (20) and (19d) above, whereas in other cases it is just evoked, like in (19a-c). Sometimes, we find other contrasting evaluative strategies in the immediate cotext or even applied to the reduplication itself, like in (21), where *monaci-monaci* is prefixed by *non-* ‘non-’ to express approximation, the approximated concept being also rephrased as *semimonaci* ‘semimonks’ and *monaci non-monaci* lit. monks non-monks.¹⁰

- (21) *Si, par proprio che il monachesimo cisterciense si fosse dimostrato una colossale macchina per produrre plusvalenze [...]. Avere a disposizione l'intera rendita del lavoro, perché era affidato ai monaci stessi nonché ai conversi (che [...]) si potrebbero chiamare semimonaci – come gli aldi longobardi erano semiliberi – o non-monaci monaci – che come gli aldi si potrebbero chiamare non-liberi liberi –, o forse piuttosto monaci non-monaci – liberi non-liberi), insomma uomini che erano a lungo tenuti sulla soglia dello stato monastico [...].*

‘Yes, it does indeed seem that Cistercian monasticism had proved to be a colossal machine for producing capital gains [...]. Having the entire income of labor at their disposal, because it was entrusted to the monks themselves as well as to the converts (who [...] could be called semimonks – as the Lombard alders were semi-liberals – or non-**monks monks** – who like the alders could be called non-freemen freemen –, or perhaps rather monks non-monks –freemen non freemen), in short men who were long kept on the threshold of the monastic state [...].’

That NN reduplication is distinctive is also signalled by either orthography, with the use of double quotes (22a), or other lexical markers, like *proprio* ‘really’ (see (13) and (16b) above), *davvero* ‘really’ (22b) or *vero* ‘true’: see for instance (22c), where *caffè caffè* is reformulated as *caffè vero* ‘true coffee’.

- (22) a. *Si tratta, in verità, di una “rivista-rivista”, edita dalla costa & nolan (casa editrice piccola, ma di considerevole presenza sul mercato) e giunta in libreria attraverso i canali di un vero distributore.*

‘It is, in truth, a “**magazine-magazine**”, published by costa & nolan (a small publishing house, but one with considerable market presence) and came to bookstores through the channels of a real distributor.’

- b. *Per fare davvero della critica-critica alla grande maniera bisognerebbe essere fuori dal sistema [...]*

‘To really do **criticism-criticism** in the grand manner one would have to be outside the system [...].’

¹⁰ See Micheli (2023) for an analysis of *semi-* as an approximating prefix, and Masini & Di Donato (2023) for a study on the N-*non*-N discontinuous reduplication.

- c. *E noi? Noi cosa facciamo? Ci prendiamo un **caffè-caffè**?. Quello sicuro. Poi telefoniamo a Tedesco e chiediamo un appuntamento per oggi ... un momento, come fanno ad avere del caffè vero in questo posto?*
 ‘What about us? What do we do? Shall we have a **coffee-coffee**? That’s for sure. Then we call Tedesco and ask for an appointment for today ... wait, how can they possibly have real coffee in this place?’

Another characteristics that is important to highlight about NN reduplication is its context-dependence (cf. also Kallergi 2015a,b): the exact meaning yielded by a reduplicated N is bound to the speech situation and is not necessarily replicated. In other words, the same reduplicated N can express different concepts in different contexts. Take for instance *donne-donne* in (16a) above, which hinted at a biological concept of womanhood, and compare it with (23), where *donne-donne* conveys a more qualitative concept of womanhood.

- (23) *Eppure, nelle società e nelle culture dell’occidente c’è un limite fisico invalicabile, oltre al quale la bellezza del corpo femminile viene considerata irrimediabilmente compromessa, e questo limite divide le donne, anche ai loro stessi occhi, in belle e brutte, desiderabili e non, **donne-donne** oppure solo esseri di sesso femminile.*

‘Yet, in the societies and cultures of the West, there is an insurmountable physical limit, beyond which the beauty of the female body is considered irreparably compromised, and this limit divides women, even in their own eyes, into beautiful and ugly, desirable and undesirable, **women-women** or just female beings.’

Similarly, the pair of examples in (24) shows how narrowing the concept of ‘journalist’ may yield different results depending on the specific aspect of meaning involved: the reduplication in (24a) refers to ‘true’, ‘proper’ journalists, whereas the one in (24b) refers to journalists who are ‘pure’, ‘only’ journalists, professionally speaking.

- (24) a. *L’idea che esistano **giornalisti-giornalisti**, che quando lavorano sono “di parte” solo in quanto stanno dalla parte dei fatti e non di questo o quel partito o schieramento, in Italia non ha più cittadinanza.*
 ‘The idea that there are **journalists-journalists**, who are “biased” when they work only because they are on the side of the facts and not of this or that party or side, no longer has citizenship in Italy.’
- b. *Ma anche la Casa delle libertà ha portato in Parlamento [...] intellettuali-giornalisti [...], **giornalisti-giornalisti** [...], intellettuali-preti [...], intellettuali-registi [...], intellettuali-professori [...], e anche dei grandi tecnici [...].*
 ‘But the House of Freedoms also brought to Parliament [...] intellectual-journalists [...], **journalists-journalists** [...], intellectual-priests [...],

intellectual-directors [...], intellectual-professors [...], and even some great technicians [...].’

Still another interesting property to point out is that sometimes the context includes a description of what is meant by the NN reduplication. One example is (17a) above, where the properties of a *romanzo-romanzo* ‘novel-novel’ are explicitly listed. Another is (25), where the concept conveyed by *gioielli da regina-regina* ‘queen-queen jewelry’ is further elaborated on by clarifying that fake objects are excluded and by stressing the authentic nature of gems and materials (diamonds were diamonds, etc.).

- (25) *E sarebbe tornata a sfoggiare i suoi gioielli da **regina-regina** senza un solo fondo di bicchiere, una perlina da bazar rionale, uno zircone spacciato per altro: i diamanti erano diamanti, gli smeraldi erano smeraldi, gli zaffiri erano zaffiri, e l’oro era a ventiquattro carati [...].*

‘And she would be back to sporting her **queen-queen** jewelry without a single bottom of glass, a (single) bead from a local bazaar, a (single) cubic zircon passed off as something else: diamonds were diamonds, emeralds were emeralds, sapphires were sapphires, and the gold was twenty-four karat [...].’

Finally, it is worth mentioning that, while looking for NN reduplications, some examples emerged with verbal items (specifically infinitives and participles) that also convey ‘prototypicality’, see (26).

- (26) a. *Io ero andato in Tunisia per perdermi nel deserto con Laura, che è dislessica e non si orienta mai per le strade, perché volevo **morire-morire**?*

‘Did I go to Tunisia to get lost in the desert with Laura, who is dyslexic and never gets her bearings, because I wanted to **die-die**?’

- b. *Poté ammettere il sospetto che da dietro, da sotto, sarebbero emerse altre immagini totalmente diverse. Che sarebbe potuta **guarire-guarire**!*

‘She was able to admit the suspicion that other, totally different images would emerge from behind. That she might **heal-heal**!’

- c. *I soldi veri, Teresa li tastò per la prima volta quando si sposò con Gaetano Burrano. Pare, ma questo lo dice mia zia Maricchia, che dalla parte sua **combinato combinato** non fu, ’sto matrimonio.*

‘The real money, Teresa felt it for the first time when she married Gaetano Burrano. Apparently, but this is what my aunt Maricchia says, this marriage was not **really arranged** [lit. arranged arranged] on her side.’

To sum up, NN reduplication in Italian can convey a range of closely related values (mostly already spotted in the literature) that have to do with ‘prototypicality’ in the broad sense, i.e.:

- a) PROTOTYPICALITY IN THE NARROW SENSE, namely centrality with respect to the category denoted by N, or full categorical membership, which yields a positive connotation (e.g., see the *cinema-cinema* and *lusso-lusso* examples);
- b) AUTHENTICITY, namely a value hinting at genuineness / originality that emerges especially (but not exclusively) when N denotes a culturally salient, tradition-related entity (see, e.g., the *caffè-caffè* or *ragù-ragù* examples), also yielding a positive connotation;
- c) EXCLUSIVITY, namely a complete belonging to N and ‘only’ N, without contaminations from other categories, hinting at the purity of the category (e.g., see the *tifosi-tifosi* example);
- d) SPATIAL ACCURACY, namely a value emerging especially when N denotes a place or geographical entity (e.g., see the *coop-coop* and *Turin-Turin* examples).

The expression of these values is not clear-cut nor exclusive. In fact, it is not always easy to distinguish between them (especially between prototypicality and authenticity, both hinting at some form of ‘ultimate’ N), and sometimes more than one could be attributed to a given example (*caffè-caffè*, e.g., may refer to the best possible example of the coffee category, perhaps an espresso coffee, possibly a strong coffee, or to the authentic Italian coffee that you cannot find somewhere else). In addition, contrastive focus (intended as the demarcation of the intended exemplar from other exemplars) is basically always present, although sometimes it is explicit (and thus emphasized) while some other times it is implicit, thus remaining in the background. In all cases, reduplication produces a narrowing of meaning towards the nucleus or heart of the category, hence a narrowing of denotation and of possible referents (cf. also Rossi 2011: 157; Mattioli & Barotto 2023: 161). It is this narrowing mechanism that produces a contrast with other possible, more peripheral category members: the perceived contrastiveness is therefore a consequence of narrowing. The precise meaning acquired by NN reduplications is not always easily predictable. As Rossi (2011: 157) observes, “the pattern of creative reduplication [...] is a marked use of language indicating that some particular inferential processing is needed to interpret the expression”. Indeed, this may also result in specific meanings that meet contingent needs (see the *signora-signora* example in (16b)) and that are not necessarily replicated in other contexts, as we have seen. Rossi (2011) also claims that the speaker’s appraisal of the situation determines an affective evaluation, which is part of the communicated meaning.

These observations emerging from corpus data seem to confirm the results obtained by Masini (2025), based on elicited data, about the plurality of interpretative paths and the high context-dependence of the NN reduplication

construction, whose semantics appears underspecified (narrowing towards the category core), and about the possible relevance of specific semantic classes (place names like *Turin* vs. ingestible entities like *caffè*). However, corpus data contribute to the picture by also illustrating that NN reduplication to convey prototypicality, authenticity and related notions is very little used after all, especially when compared to strategies to convey other evaluative meanings, like intensification and approximation. In other words, the findings suggest that lack of deviation tends not to be flagged. This leads to a possible asymmetry (to be verified through a broader investigation) between the (common) explicit marking of deviation and the (uncommon) marking of lack of deviation. This asymmetry may be due to a number of reasons. As regards specifically approximation vs. prototypicality in the broad sense, one possible explanation may be linked to the well-known fact that, especially in spoken discourse, vagueness is often more effective and less committing than precision and specificity (e.g., Voghera 2017), unless the communicative situation requires otherwise.

4. CASE STUDY 2: N-*TIPO*

In this second case-study I will look into another construction that expresses a relevant function for the current discussion, namely the already mentioned N-*tipo* construction (Section 1). Italian *tipo* ‘type’ has developed several functions, especially related to intentional vagueness, as observed by Voghera (2013: 290, 295), who however identifies a special case called ‘Tipo as Adjective’: “[i]n these formations *tipo* is a postponed modifier with an adjectival role and means ‘that represents a model, ideal’”, thus displaying a meaning quite opposite to approximation. D’Achille (2012) (mentioned by Voghera 2013: 295) observes that these “formations have become very common in contemporary Italian, but [...] their meaning has shifted from ‘representative of the model / paradigm’ to ‘representative of a class, category’, i.e. ‘standard’”. See for instance example (27) from CORIS, where *napoletano-tipo* refers to the typical Neapolitan man, whose salient characteristics are subsequently listed.

- (27) *Ha già conosciuto il carcere per contrabbando di pesce, è quasi un napoletano-tipo: Spiritoso, faceto, bello, animoso e vivace.*

‘He has already known prison for smuggling fish, he is almost a **typical Neapolitan**: witty, facetious, handsome, courageous and lively.’

According to Voghera (2013), this is one of the “non-nominal uses” of *tipo* in contemporary Italian: *tipo* has therefore undergone a decategorialization process, becoming an invariable modifier with a restricted post-nominal distribution (*un tipo napoletano* is possible but conveys a different meaning,

namely ‘a Neapolitan type’). In what follows I will try to assess how the *N-tipo* construction is actually used in corpora.

4.1 Methods

Like for the reduplication case-study (Section 3.1), I gathered occurrences of this construction from the CORIS corpus (see Section 3.1), restricting the search to cases where an hyphen appears between the noun and *tipo*, in order to maximize retrieval. The initial search produced 205 hits that were manually checked, resulting in 183 valid cases. Subsequently, I annotated the dataset with the following information: lemma, POS tag (NN for common nouns, NN_P for proper nouns), ontological class. For the latter property, I followed the same procedure described in Section 3.1. Eventually, the following values were identified (almost overlapping with the set used for NN reduplication, with few differences): HUMAN (e.g., *docente* ‘teacher’), COMMUNICATION (e.g., *formulario* ‘form’), CONCRETE INANIMATE (e.g., *immobile* ‘building’), ORGANIZATION (e.g., *famiglia* ‘family’), ABSTRACT (e.g., *motivazione* ‘motivation’), TIME (e.g., *giornata* ‘day’), EVENT (e.g., *lezione* ‘class’).

4.2 Results

Figure 4 illustrates the lexical distribution of the dataset (only items with token frequency >1 are displayed), with 100 types and 78 hapaxes. The percentage of hapaxes (78%) is very similar to the one found for NN reduplication (73,3%), whereas the type token ratio (TTR=0.546) is slightly lower than the one for NN reduplication (TTR=0.642).

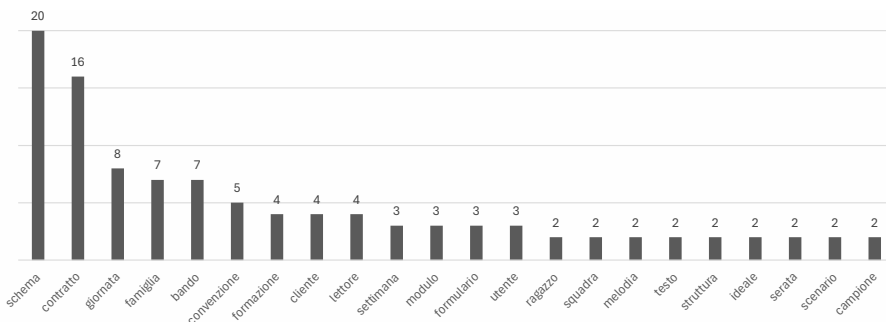


FIGURE 4: LEXICAL DISTRIBUTION OF N IN THE *N-tipo* DATASET (FQ.>1).

Also in this case, there is a small set of Ns recurring more than once, the majority of examples are in the singular (128, namely 69,9%), and basically all

nouns are common nouns. The only proper noun found is *Inghilterra* ‘England’, intended as the national football team (see (28)).

- (28) 30 09 1997 **Inghilterra-tipo** con l’Italia LONDRA. Glenn Hoddle sorride. Per lo scontro decisivo con l’Italia all’Olimpico l’11 ottobre avrà a disposizione tutti i suoi pezzi migliori, eccetto Shearer k.o. fino a novembre.

‘30 09 1997 **Typical England** with Italy LONDON. Glenn Hoddle is smiling. For the decisive match against Italy at the Stadio Olimpico on October 11 he will have all his best players at his disposal, except Shearer k.o. until November.’

However, the top-ranked lexemes for the N slot are different from the ones we found for NN reduplication. Here we find nouns denoting templates and documents (e.g., *schema* ‘schema’, *contratto* ‘contract’), time moments (e.g., *giornata* ‘day’, *settimana* ‘week’), and humans (e.g., *cliente* ‘client’, *lettore* ‘reader’). In general, we can observe that some of the nouns filling the N position (e.g., *cybernauta* ‘cybernaut’, *contribuente* ‘taxpayer’, *collezionista* ‘collector’) display higher specificity than those found in the NN reduplication construction, which overall appear more general and less technical.

As for subcorpora, most examples appear in the Press (71, namely 38,8%) and Legal and Administrative Prose (44, namely 24%) subcorpora, as illustrated in Figure 5. Academic Prose (27, namely 14,7%) and Miscellanea (23, namely 12,6%) are fairly represented, whereas Fiction, which was quite prominent for NN reduplication (32,3%), is more marginal in this case (12, namely 7,1%).

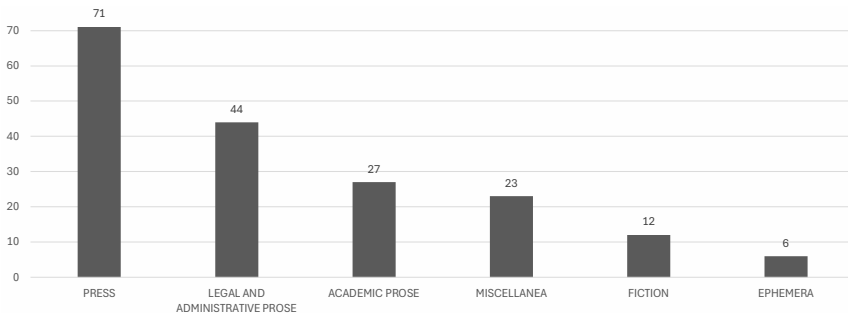


FIGURE 5: DISTRIBUTION OF OCCURRENCES IN CORIS SUBCORPORA FOR THE N-*tipo* DATASET.

Finally, Figure 6 illustrates the ontological classes of nouns found in the N-*tipo* dataset, per token and per type.

As we can see, the most common semantic class in terms of tokens (64) is COMMUNICATION, which is however not the top-ranked one in terms of types (only 15). This class hosts nouns denoting mostly written documents that refer to

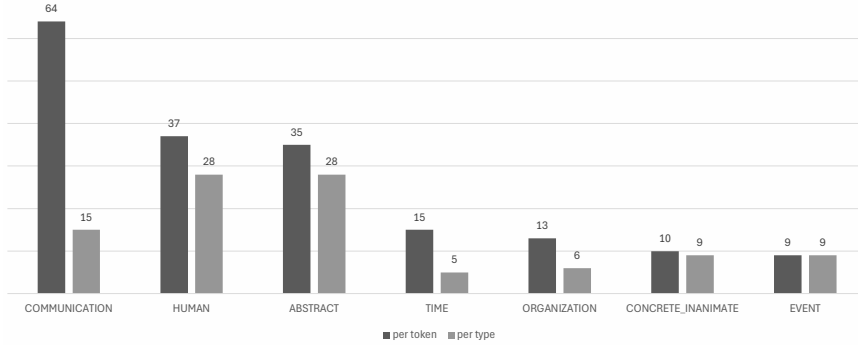


FIGURE 6: ONTOLOGICAL CLASS OF N IN THE N-*tipo* DATASET (PER TOKEN AND PER TYPE).

some sort of template, as we can see in (29). The presence of this type of nouns is linked to the prominent role of the Legal and Administrative Prose subcorpus in the dataset. Indeed, 64% of the occurrences tagged as COMMUNICATION belong to this subcorpus. Note that this class is only partially similar to the ART & COMMUNICATION class used for NN reduplication in Section 3.2 (the second most attested), which contains written documents more related to art (like *critica* ‘critics’ or *giallo* ‘crime’) and other forms of art and communication (like *cinema* ‘cinema’ or *pittura* ‘painting’), which are absent in the N-*tipo* dataset.

- (29) a. *t) attribuzione all’ANAC di più ampie funzioni [...] comprendenti anche poteri di controllo, raccomandazione, intervento cautelare, di deterrenza e sanzionatorio, nonché di adozione di atti di indirizzo quali linee guida, **bandi-tipo, contratti-tipo** ed altri strumenti di regolamentazione flessibile [...].*
 ‘(t) attribution to ANAC of broader functions [...] including powers of oversight, recommendation, precautionary intervention, deterrence and sanctioning, as well as the adoption of policy instruments such as guidelines, **standard calls, standard contracts**, and other flexible regulatory tools [...].’
- b. *Resta comunque nella potestà di detti enti l’adozione di regolamenti in materia di cottimi fiduciari, nel rispetto dei criteri stabiliti nel **regolamento-tipo** emanato dalla Regione.*
 ‘However, it remains within the power of these entities to adopt regulations on trustee subcontracts, in accordance with the criteria set forth in the **standard regulation** issued by the Region.’

The expressions *bandi-tipo*, *contratti-tipo*, *regolamento-tipo* in (29) refer to documents that define a standard with which other instances of the category

are expected to comply. Therefore, they do convey lack of deviation but do not appear to imply a qualitative assessment of the N item (something we expect, instead, with NN reduplication), hence no positive connotation emerges. Crucially, the expression *contratto-tipo* is not equivalent to *contratto-contratto*: the latter would refer to a true / authentic or fully-fledged (member of the category) ‘contract’, whereas the former to a model or blueprint that serves to create compliant instances of (a specific subcategory of) ‘contract’. In other words, N-*tipo* seems to denote more an ideal ‘canon’ or ‘standard’ than a prototype in the narrow sense.

The second most frequent semantic class of Ns, in terms of both tokens and types, is HUMAN, which was the top-ranked one in the NN reduplication case. In (30a) a full ‘profile’ of the *cliente-tipo* ‘typical / standard client’ is provided, with key characteristics (30-year-old, salesman, etc.), whereas in (30b) the concept of *ascoltatori-tipo* is further illustrated by examples (travelers, families, young people). Again, it does not seem possible to substitute these expressions with a NN reduplication with no change of meaning: by reduplicating *ascoltatori* we would refer to a true, possibly faithful listener of the Isoradio radio channel, whereas *ascoltatori-tipo* points to typical, average listeners. Moreover, no contrastiveness emerges in the latter case: whereas *ascoltatori-ascoltatori* would evoke less prototypical examples of the category, *ascoltatori-tipo* is rather neutral and (implicit) reference to atypical listeners is not salient.

- (30) a. *Trent’anni circa venditore a provvigioni non iscritto ad alcuna cassa di categoria; con un reddito annuo di circa 60 milioni; disponibile a risparmiare 300mila lire al mese; non sposato e senza figli. È l’identikit del **cliente-tipo** che in quattro diverse giornate ha visitato gli uffici di banche e promotori finanziari operanti sulla piazza milanese, alla ricerca di solide certezze che lo aiutassero a raccapezzarsi nel mondo della previdenza integrativa.*

‘Thirty years old or so, a commission salesman not registered with any professional association; with an annual income of about 60 million; willing to save 300,000 liras a month; unmarried and without children. This is the sketch of the **typical customer** who visited, on four different days, the offices of banks and financial promoters operating in the Milan area, looking for solid certainties that would help him get his bearings in the world of supplementary retirement planning.’

- b. *Il potenziamento di Isoradio avverrebbe su due fronti: una maggiore collaborazione con gli enti istituzionali [...] e la configurazione di un vero e proprio palinsesto modellato sulle esigenze degli **ascoltatori-tipo**, dai viaggiatori alle famiglie, ai giovani.*

‘Isoradio’s enhancement would take place on two fronts: increased collaboration with institutional bodies [...] and the configuration of a real

programming schedule modeled on the needs of **typical listeners**, from travelers to families to young people.’

The class ABSTRACT is basically equal to HUMAN, in terms of tokens and types, and contains a rather diverse set of lexemes, as exemplified in (31). It is worth noting the use of *standard* ‘standard’ in *imputazioni-standard* ‘standard indictments’ in (31a), which forms a paradigmatic series with *tipo* (*motivazioni-tipo* ‘typical motivations’).

- (31) a. *b) la burocratizzazione dei principali momenti dell’indagine preliminare (imputazioni-standard e **motivazioni-tipo** dei principali atti del pubblico ministero): in questo modo l’indagine si trasforma in catena di montaggio, cioè in un meccanico processo produttivo di imputazioni o di archiviazioni.*

‘(b) the bureaucratization of the main moments of the preliminary investigation (standard indictments and **standard motivations** of the main acts of the prosecutor): in this way, the investigation is transformed into an assembly line, that is, into a mechanical production process of indictments or filings.’

- b. *Oggi basta andare online per non divertirsi affatto; per leggere notizie deprimenti sui **comportamenti-tipo** delle nostre celebrità. Non fanno ridere nessuno.*

‘Today you only have to go online to not be amused at all; to read depressing news about the **typical behaviors** of our celebrities. They don’t make anyone laugh.’

- c. *Il calcio del Duemila non È [sic] soltanto oppio di popoli, **passatempo-tipo** di periferie sudaticce. È anche gioco elegante di salotti metropolitani.*

‘Soccer in the 2000s is not only opium of peoples, **typical pastime** of sweaty suburbs. It is also an elegant game of metropolitan salons.’

The next semantic class, TIME, was not attested in the NN reduplication dataset, it is therefore specific to the N-*tipo* construction (see (32)). Note that, although the types are just 5, *giornata* ‘day’ is the third most frequent lexeme in the dataset (8 occurrences).

- (32) a. *Allora mi sono divertita a pensare alla mia **giornata-tipo** e a quanti ruoli diversi mi trovo a dover ricoprire.*

‘So I had fun thinking about my **typical / average day** and how many different roles I find myself in.’

- b. *Nelle scuole elementari, il 59% degli alunni aveva usato un computer durante una **settimana-tipo** [...]*

‘In elementary schools, 59% of pupils had used a computer during a **typical / average week** [...]

Whereas the ORGANIZATION class is basically limited to political entities in the NN reduplication dataset (cf. Section 3.2), the *N-tipo* dataset displays nouns like *famiglia* ‘family’ (33a) or *squadra* ‘team’ (33b). The latter example refers to soccer, a topic that frequently appears in the dataset (cf. also *difesa-tipo* ‘standard defence line-up’, *formazione-tipo* ‘standard line-up’).

- (33) a. *L’Unione consumatori ha fatto i conti in tasca a una **famiglia-tipo**, con un reddito medio alto (vedi grafico).*
 ‘The Consumers Union has done the math for a **typical / average family**, with a medium-high income (see graph).’
- b. *Cambiai la formazione titolare perché eravamo reduci da un brutto il [sic] derby. E, se avessimo perso usando gli stessi giocatori, avremmo avuto contraccolpi psicologici. Infatti dalla domenica successiva ritornammo alla **squadra-tipo** e riprendemmo a vincere.*
 ‘I changed the main line-up because we were coming off a bad derby. And, if we had lost using the same players, we would have had psychological setbacks. In fact, from the following Sunday we returned to the **standard team** [line-up] and resumed winning.’

Finally, the classes CONCRETE INANIMATE (34a) and EVENT (34b) are marginal and basically contain only hapaxes (the only exception is *campione* ‘sample’, occurring twice but in the same context).

- (34) a. *Le tabelle dei capoluoghi si riferiscono a **immobili-tipo** di 50 e 110 metri quadrati di superficie commerciale e sono validi per contratti di nuova locazione.*
 ‘The tables for chief towns refer to **standard buildings** of 50 and 110 square meters of commercial space and are valid for new leases.’
- b. *È crollata la **vacanza-tipo** della famiglia che prenotava l’albergo al mare per un mese.*
 ‘The **typical vacation** of a family booking a hotel by the sea for a month collapsed.’

As emerges from the examples mentioned in this section, *N-tipo* does not share the inherent contrastiveness of NN reduplication: other, atypical members of the category denoted by N are not evoked by *N-tipo* expressions and are generally absent from the cotext.

In addition, the two constructions are not semantically equivalent. Take for instance *vacanza-tipo* in (34b): this expression refers to the canonical vacation that an Italian standard family used to plan (booking a hotel by the sea for a month) before different habits emerged (shorter vacations, not necessarily a hotel). The reduplicated expression *vacanza-vacanza* would refer to something

quite different, namely a true, proper vacation, an event with all salient properties expected from a vacation. Both meanings refer to some central concept of vacation, but in a different way (indeed, *vacanza-vacanza* would sound weird in the context where *vacanza-tipo* appears in (34b)): NN reduplication identifies what is regarded as a ‘best example’ of N (usually perceived as positive); N-*tipo* identifies a ‘standard’ or ‘norm’ (usually perceived as neutral), which constitutes a sort of baseline (possibly based on statistics) for possible members of that category. Therefore, N-*tipo* expressions can identify rather abstract entities, as is suggested by the combination with adjectives like *ipotetico* ‘hypothetical’, like in (35):

- (35) *La voce telefono non è più riferita ad una ipotetica **bolletta-tipo**, ma ai diversi servizi forniti [...].*
 ‘The phone entry no longer refers to a hypothetical **standard bill**, but to the different services provided [...].’

However, the N-*tipo* construction shares context-dependence with NN reduplication, as is evident from the following examples. In (36a,b), the expression *cliente-tipo* refers to radically different classes of people (cfr. also (30a) above).

- (36) a. *Benvenuti al fornitissimo ingrosso per boss e picciotti dove puoi ordinare ciò che vuoi e la merce ti viene consegnata in giornata e a domicilio. Un solo piccolo difetto. è tutta roba rubata. Ma che sarà mai per i **clienti-tipo** dell’efficientissimo emporio del riciclaggio, pregiudicati, ricettatori, capi e gregari, amici degli amici?*
 ‘Welcome to the well-stocked wholesale for bosses and Mafia’s boys where you can order what you want and the goods are delivered same day and to your door. Only one small flaw-it’s all stolen stuff. But what’s the problem for the **standard clients** of this highly efficient recycling emporium, convicted criminals, fences, bosses and hangers-on, friends of friends?’
- b. *Ci stiamo riferendo - spiega Stinca - a quei 3 400mila italiani che hanno una ricchezza finanziaria superiore ai 500 milioni un miliardo: questi sono i **clienti-tipo** dei private bankers [...]*
 ‘We are referring - Stinca explains - to those 3 400,000 Italians whose financial wealth is above 500 million a billion: these are the **typical clients** of private bankers [...].’

The N-*tipo* construction is therefore inherently contextual, since it identifies a ‘canon’ anchored to a given population (and its sociocultural values), which may differ in different contexts.

5. RESHAPING EVALUATIVE FUNCTIONS: FROM ‘PROTOTYPICALITY’ TO ‘NON-DEVIATION’

Taking stock of the findings and observations in Sections 3-4, it is now possible to compare the two constructions under investigation to get a better grasp of the ‘prototypicality’ function we are trying to pinpoint. Table 2 summarizes similarities and differences between the two constructions.

NN REDUPLICATION	N- <i>tipo</i>
Lack of deviation	Lack of deviation
Context dependence	Context dependence
Prototypicality/authenticity /exclusivity/accuracy	Canonicity/stereotypicality (→ standard, norm)
Positive connotation	Neutral connotation
Contrastiveness	No contrastiveness
More qualitative/subjective dimension	More descriptive/objective dimension

TABLE 2: COMPARING THE PROPERTIES OF NN REDUPLICATION AND N-*tipo*.

If, as Grandi (2017: 73) says, evaluation “encodes a deviation from a standard or from a default meaning”, then both constructions express lack of such deviation. However, this ‘non-deviation’ is of a different type in the two cases. First of all, N-*tipo* refers to a standard or norm, expressing what we may call ‘canonicity’ (if not ‘stereotypicality’), whereas NN reduplication conveys mainly prototypicality in the narrow sense and authenticity, more marginally exclusivity and (with place nouns) spatial accuracy. Second, prototypicality in the narrow sense and authenticity are perceived positively by speakers, which is why NN reduplications generally have a positive connotation, whereas N-*tipo* expressions are neutral. Third, whereas contrastiveness is an inherent effect of NN reduplication, it is not evoked by N-*tipo* expressions. Finally, ‘non-deviation’ seems to work on different dimensions in the two cases: the kind of evaluation performed by NN reduplication seems to be more subjective, operating on the qualitative dimension (like intensification and approximation), whereas the one performed by N-*tipo* relies on what appear to be more objective observations (e.g., statistics), thus operating more on the descriptive dimension. One similarity is that both constructions produce expressions whose actual meaning is dependent on contextual factors and speakers’ knowledge: it is therefore expected to find the same expression conveying different meanings in different texts.

In conclusion, rather than using the ambiguous term ‘prototypicality’, I suggest we should speak, more neutrally, of ‘non-deviation’ from the category

baseline. This macro-function encompasses different yet related values, including those identified in this paper, namely prototypicality in the narrow sense, authenticity, exclusivity, and spatial accuracy on the one hand, and canonicity (or stereotypicality) on the other.

Although the full range of ‘non-deviation’ values still needs to be discovered and analysed through more extensive intralinguistic and interlinguistic studies, the recognition of ‘non-deviation’ as a (multifarious) macro-function suggests to reshape the model of evaluative functions originally proposed by Grandi & Körtvélyessy (2015: 12) (cf. Table 1, Section 2). Figure 7 illustrates a first, still partial and sketchy, proposal in this sense: as we can see, the above-mentioned four-section scheme (cf. Table 1) becomes a five-section scheme where ‘non-deviation’ is placed centrally, identifying the ideal category core with respect to the existing dimensions of variation (positive-negative, descriptive-qualitative). Instead of keeping it implicit, this revised model lets ‘non-deviation’ emerge as a separate set of functions in its own right, although boundaries with the other functions may be fuzzy.

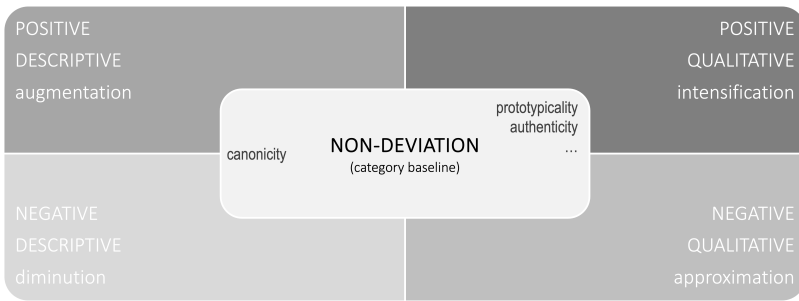


FIGURE 7: REVISED MODEL OF EVALUATIVE FUNCTIONS BASED ON THE ORIGINAL GRANDI & KÖRTVÉLYESSY’S (2015: 12) SCHEME.

The exact anatomy of ‘non-deviation’ as a complex macro-function is still to be defined. For the time being, it can be observed that some values may locate closer to the positive-qualitative section, whereas others may tend towards the descriptive part of the spectrum.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE STEPS

The present article started from the recognition that, although evaluative morphology is normally conceptualized as deviation from a central case, languages sometimes encode the opposite value, namely the centrality or typicality of an entity with respect to the category it belongs to. While this function was initially

named ‘prototypicality’, partially following the literature, the paper shed new light on the matter, showing that we are actually dealing with a multifaceted functional domain, which was dubbed ‘non-deviation’.

The corpus-based analyses of the two Italian constructions presented in Sections 3 and 4 contributed to illustrate this point: whereas *N-tipo* conveys canonicity (or perhaps stereotypicality), pointing to a norm or standard, NN reduplication mainly conveys prototypicality in the narrow sense and authenticity, plus marginally exclusivity and spatial accuracy. Whereas NN reduplication often carries a positive connotation and is inherently contrastive, *N-tipo* is typically neutral and devoid of contrastiveness. Moreover, NN reduplication reflects a subjective, qualitative judgment – selecting a central instance based on the speakers’ perception – while *N-tipo* suggests a more objective, descriptive standard is identified, possibly grounded in social conventions. Despite these differences, both constructions share a strong reliance on context and speakers’ knowledge, often yielding flexible, variable interpretations across texts.

The results, therefore, reveal that ‘non-deviation’ is far from monolithic (as is the case for ‘approximation’, cf. Masini et al. 2023). Under this view, prototypicality in the narrow sense is just one value within a complex functional space encompassing various related but distinct evaluative meanings. While the internal structure of this non-deviation domain is still unfolding, its identification calls for a revision of the evaluative framework proposed by Grandi & Körtvélyessy (2015: 12).

Needless to say, much more empirical work is needed to identify and define other non-deviating values and constructions, as well as to assess their spread in the world’s languages, also compared to other evaluative values and constructions. Moreover, further research is needed to identify possible correlations between different types of strategies (at the level of form and source domain) and specific values conveyed. Finally, future studies will also need to clarify the relationship between ‘non-deviation’ values as defined in this paper and other phenomena that are supposedly related to it, like precision (cf. Lakoff’s 1973 literal meaning hedges like *strictly speaking*; Lasersohn’s 1999 slack regulators like *exactly*; or exactness markers, see, e.g., Hengeveld & Keizer 2011; Gerhalter 2020), as well as exclusive focus (e.g., De Cesare & Sanromán Vilas 2020) and exhaustivity (e.g., Mauri 2023).

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