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These kind of words: number agreement in the species noun phrase in international academic English

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Citation

Stenton, A. J. (2024, September 3). *These kind of words: number agreement in the species noun phrase in international academic English*. LOT dissertation series. LOT, Amsterdam. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4039590>

Version: Publisher's Version

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Stellingen, behorende bij het proefschrift

These kind of words

**Number agreement in the species noun phrase
in International Academic English**

Adrian Stenton

1. Number agreement in the species noun phrase is not a usage problem but a usage guide problem.
2. Contrary to the position set out in Peters (2020),¹ the amount of lateral referencing from and between the usage guides is itself sufficient to justify Cameron's (1995)² claim that the usage guide authors have a "rather cosy relationship" that results in a "consensual approach".
3. Paying people to take part in attitude and usage surveys is the only way to ensure a representative sample of respondents.
4. Investigating usage guide coverage of topics and their authorial stance towards them may show that the writers constitute a community of practice.
5. Investigation of usage issues involving an aspect of number variation, e.g. *between* vs. *among*, *each* vs. *either* vs. *both*, *less* vs. *fewer*, or *amount* vs. *number*, will help to establish whether the concept of a cline of acceptability is more generally applicable.
6. Henry Alford (1810–1871) produced three (different) editions of his *The Queen's English* in the space of six years (1864–1870).³ This means that (a) he had no idea what he was talking about, or that (b) he was receptive to constructive criticism and the experience of others.
7. The 'silent' influence of grammar checking in word processing software complicates the notion of what constitutes an unedited text.
8. 'Baseline data' such as the Stenton Corpus is a prerequisite if we are to properly evaluate the role of (copy-)editing as a driver in the standardisation process.
9. In the age of the Internet, printed usage guides will become Christmas stocking fillers.
10. Microsoft Word is yet another example of US hegemony.

1 Peters, Pam (2020) English usage: prescription and description. In Bas Aarts, April McMahon and Lars Hinrichs (eds) *The Handbook of English Linguistics* (pp. 615–635). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

2 Cameron, Deborah (1995) *Verbal Hygiene*. London: Routledge.

3 Henry Alford (1864, 1864 second edition, 1870 third edition) *The Queen's English*. London: Strahan & Co.