Grace Theological Journal 4.1 (1983) 59-84.

[Copyright © 1983 Grace Theological Seminary; cited with permission;

digitally prepared for use at Gordon College for biblicalearning.org]

**THE SEMANTIC RANGE OF**

**THE ARTICLE-NOUN-KAI'-NOUN**

**PLURAL CONSTRUCTION**

**IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

DANIEL B. WALLACE

*In this article the author seeks to demonstrate that the syntax of*

*the article-noun-καί-noun plural construction has been largely mis-*

*understood. It does not fit the Granville Sharp rule because the nouns*

*are plural. Nor is its semantic range shut up to absolute distinction or*

*absolute identity. After an exhaustive treatment of the construction in*

*the NT, it is affirmed that there are three other semantic possibilities.*

*A proper semantic grid helps in seeing possibilities in certain passages*

*which have hitherto gone unnoticed and in omitting certain options*

*(e.g., that 'pastors"= "teachers" in Eph 4:11) which have been assumed*

*true.*

\* \* \*

IN Eph 4:11 the apostle Paul tells his audience that the glorified

Messiah has bestowed on the church gifted men. These men are

described as "apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers."

The construction in Greek is τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, τοῦς δὲ προφήτας,

τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους. Expositors

have long noted that there is no article preceding διδασκάλους, which

has raised the question: are the teachers to be identified with the

pastors or are pastors and teachers two distinct groups? Grammatically

speaking the question is: does the article before ποιμένας govern both

ποιμένας and διδασκάλους and if so, in what way (i.e., does it unite

them loosely, make them identical, etc.)? Expositors have come down

on both sides of the fence, though few have seriously investigated the

syntax of the construction as a major key to the solution.1 This

1 Among the modern commentators, almost all are agreed that one group is seen in

this construction (but cf. G. H. P. Thompson, *The Letters of Paul to the Ephesians. to*

*the Colossians and to Philemon* [CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1969], 69;

and C. J. Ellicott, *A Critical and Grammatical Commentary on St. Paul’s Epistle to*

*the Ephesians* [Andover: Warren F. Draper, 1885], 94. Thompson simply asserts that

60 GRACE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

passage is perhaps the best known text in the NT which involves the

article-noun-καί-noun plural construction. A proper understanding of

the grammar involved may help to solve this exegetical and ec-

clesiological problem.

But Eph 4:11 is not the only debatable passage involving this

construction. Just within Ephesians we may also note 1:1, which uses

substantival adjectives (τοῖς ἁγίοις . . . καὶ πιστοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ

Ἰησοῦ). The question here would be: are the saints to be identified

with the faithful in Christ Jesus? Although we would want to argue

this theologically, is there in fact grammatical evidence on our side?

In 2:20 and 3:5 this construction is used of the apostles and prophets

(τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν in 2:20 and τοῖς ἁγίοις ἀποστόλοις  
αὐτοπυ καὶ προφήταις in 3:5). Are these two groups identical? Or, if

not, is the foundation of the church built upon the NT apostles and

OT prophets (2:20)? Has the mystery of Christ been revealed to OT

prophets (3:5)? These are pertinent questions theologically which the

syntax of this construction may help to resolve.

"teachers were holders of another office" without giving any evidence. Ellicott argues

solely from scanty lexical evidence). Yet those who affirm that one group is identified

by the phrase have little syntactical evidence on their side as well. H. Alford (*The*

*Greek Testament, vol. 3: Galatians-Philemon*, rev. by E. F. Harrison [Chicago: Moody

1958]) argues that "from these latter not being distinguished from the pastors by

the tou>j de<, it would seem that the two offices were held by the same persons" (p. 117).

But he gives no cross-references nor does he demonstrate that this is the normal usage

of the plural construction. B. F. Westcott (*Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians* [New

York: Macmillan, 1906]) argues for one class "not from a necessary combination of the

two functions but from their connexion with a congregation" (p. 62). C. Hodge (*A*

*Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians* [New York: Robert Carter and Brothers,

1856]) boldly states that "The absence of the article before διδασκάλους *proves* that

the apostle intended to designate the same persons as at once pastors and teachers

[italics added]" (p. 226). But then he curiously backs off from such grammatical dogma

by adding that "It is true the article is at times omitted between two substantives

referring to different classes. . ." (p. 227), citing Mark 15:1 as evidence. Finally, he

reverts to his initial certitude by concluding, "But in such an enumeration as that

contained in this verse. . . the laws of language require τοὺς δὲ διδασκάλους, had the

apostle intended to distinguish the διδάκαλοι from the ποιμένες [italics added]"

(ibid.). No evidence is given to support this contention. It is significant, in fact, that of

the commentaries surveyed, only Hodge mentioned any other text in which the plural

construction occurred--a text which would not support his conclusions! Eadie, Abbott,

Salmond, Lenski, Hendriksen, Erdman, Barclay, Wuest, and Barth also see the two

terms referring to one group, though their arguments are either not based on syntax or

make unwarranted and faulty assumptions about the syntax. Some would insist that

the article-noun-καί-noun plural construction *requires* that the second group is to be

identified with the first, but such a dogmatic position must be abandoned in light of

such passages as Matt 16:1 ("the Pharisees and Sadducees") and Acts 17:12 ("the. . .

women. . . and men")! A careful and exhaustive investigation of this phenomenon is

therefore necessary if we wish to understand clearly the relation of pastors and teachers

in Eph 4:11.

THE ARTICLE-NOUN-KAI'-NOUN PLURAL CONSTRUCTION 61

Outside of Ephesians there are several debatable passages which

involve this construction as well. For example, we read of "the tax-

collectors and sinners" in Matt 9:11, "the lawyers and Pharisees" in

Luke 14:3, and "the apostles and elders" in Acts 15:2. These are but a

handful of the plural constructions in the NT, though they are

certainly among the more significant. The exegetical and theological

significance of this construction is difficult to overestimate.

The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to investigate the

semantic range (and, consequently, the exegetical significance) of the

article-noun- kai<-noun plural construction in the NT. I will restrict the

discussion to constructions in which the plurals refer to persons and,

at the same time, expand the discussion to include all substantives

under the title "noun." In order to establish a proper framework for

the semantics of this construction in the NT, we must first look at the

work of Granville Sharp, then discuss the misunderstanding of his

first rule with reference to the plural, and finally suggest a proper

semantic grid for the construction.

THE WORK OF GRANVILLE SHARP

Granville Sharp (1735-1813) was an English philanthropist and

abolitionist. He was a student of the Scriptures, although he was not

a clergyman. He believed strongly in the verbal inspiration of the

Bible and in the deity of Jesus Christ. His strong belief in Christ's

deity led him to study the Scriptures in the original in order to defend

more ably that precious truth. Through this motivation he became a

good linguist, able to handle accurately both the Greek and Hebrew

texts of Scripture. One of his publications, written before he dis-

covered his "rule," was a defense of the view that "Jehovah" (YHWH)

of the OT referred, at times, to each person of the Trinity. As he

studied the Scriptures in the original, he noticed a certain pattern,

namely, when the construction article-noun- kai<-noun involved per-

sonal nouns which were singular and not proper names, they always

referred to the same person. He noticed further that this rule applied

in several texts to the deity of Jesus Christ. So in 1798 he published a

lengthy volume entitled, *Remarks on the Definitive Article in the*

*Greek Text of the New Testament: Containing Many New Proofs of*

*the Divinity of Christ, from Passages Which Are Wrongly Translated*

*in the Common English Version* [KJV]. The volume went through

four editions (three British and one American).2

2 The contents of this paragraph are from C. Kuehne, "The Greek Article and the

Doctrine of Christ's Deity," *Journal of Theology* 13 (September, 1973) 15-18.

62 GRACE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

In this work Sharp articulated *six* rules, though what has com-

monly become known as "Sharp's Rule" is the first of these. Sharp

articulated this rule as follows:

*When the copulative και connects two nouns of the same case, [viz.*

*nouns (either substantive or adjective, or participles) of personal*

*description, respecting office, dignity, affinity, or connexion, and attri-*

*butes, properties, or qualities, good or ill,] if the article o[, or any of its*

*cases, precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and is not*

*repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates*

*to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or*

*participle: i.e. it denotes a farther description of the first-named*

*person. . .3*

To put this simply, in the construction article-noun- καί-noun,

four requirements must be met if the two nouns refer to the same

person: (1) both nouns must, of course, be personal; (2) both nouns

must be common nouns, i.e., not proper names; (3) both nouns must

be in the same case; and (4) both nouns must be singular in number.

Although many today have argued against the validity of this rule, no

one has demonstrated its invalidity in the NT.4 The implications of

3 Granville Sharp, *Remarks on the Definitive Article in the Greek Text of the New*

*Testament: Containing Many New Proofs of the Divinity of Christ, from Passages*

*Which Are Wrongly Translated in the Common English Version*, 1st American edition

(Philadelphia: B. B. Hopkins, 1807), 3.

4 The best modern defense of the validity of Sharp's rule that I have seen is a seven-

part series in the *Journal of Theology* by C. Kuehne ("The Greek Article and the

Doctrine of Christ's Deity" in *JT* 13 [September, 1973] 12-28; 13 [December 1973]

14-30; 14 [March 1974] 11-20; 14 [June, 1974] 16-25; 14 [September, 1974] 21-33; 14

[December, 1974] 8-19; 15 [March, 1975] 8-22). Unfortunately, this journal apparently

has such a limited circulation that this superb series has hardly been noticed. It may be

added here that the primary reason evangelicals have been hesitant to adopt the

validity of this rule is the anti-Trinitarian bias of last century's greatest grammarian of

NT Greek, G. B. Winer. A. T. Robertson vividly points out Winer's influence:

A strange timidity seized some of the translators in the Jerusalem Chamber that

is reproduced by the American Committee. There is no hesitation in translating

John i.l as the text has it. Why boggle over 2 Peter i.1?

The explanation is to be found in Winer's Grammar (Thayer's Edition,

p. 130; W. F. Moulton's (p. 162), where the author seeks by indirection to break

the force of Granville Sharp's rule by saying that in 2 Peter i. 1 "there is not

even a pronoun with σωτῆρος." That is true, but it is quite beside the point.

There is no pronoun with σωτῆρος in 2 Peter i. 11, precisely the same idiom,

where no one doubts the identity of "Lord and Saviour." Why refuse to apply

the same rule to 2 Peter i. 1, that all admit, Winer included, to be true of 2 Peter

i. 11? . . . The simple truth is that Winer's anti-Trinitarian prejudice overruled

his grammatical rectitude in his remark about 2 Peter i. 1.

. . . It is plain, therefore, that Winer has exerted a pernicious influence, from the

grammatical standpoint, on the interpretation of 2 Peter i. 1, and Titus ii. 13.

THE ARTICLE-NOUN-KAI'-NOUN PLURAL CONSTRUCTION 63

this rule for the deity of Christ in passages such as Titus 2: 13 (τοῦ

μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ) and 2 Pet 1:1

(τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) are, to say the least,

rather significant.

THE MISUNDERSTANDING OF SHARP'S RULE

WITH REFERENCE TO THE PLURAL

*Considered to be Legitimately Applied to the Plural by Some*

As we have already seen by surveying some commentaries on

Eph 4:11, several commentators assumed that the article-noun- kai<-

noun plural construction identified the second noun with the first just

as the singular construction did.5 Wuest articulates this assumption

most clearly: "The words 'pastors' and 'teachers' are in a construction

called Granvill [*sic*] Sharp's rule which indicates that they refer to one

individual.”6

How has such an assumption arisen? On this we can only

conjecture, but it is possibly due to (1) the lack of clarity by Sharp

himself in stating his first rule and (2) a continued ambiguity in the

grammars. As we saw earlier, Sharp does not clearly state that his

rule is applicable only in the singular. Such a conclusion may be at

best only inferred via an argument from silence (i.e., in stating that

"the latter always relates to the same person. . . i.e. it denotes a

farther description of the first-named person,”17 Sharp only refers to

the singular). However, a perusal of his monograph reveals that he

insisted on the singular in order for the rule to apply absolutely.8 The

grammars have perpetuated this ambiguity. Some, of course, have

dogmatically stated (and without sufficient evidence) that the rule

Scholars who believed in the Deity of Christ have not wished to claim too much

and to fly in the face of Winer, the great grammarian, for three generations. But

Winer did not make out a sound case against Sharp's principle as applied to

2 Peter i. 1 and Titus ii. 13. Sharp stands vindicated after all the dust has

settled.

(A. T. Robertson, "The Greek Article and the Deity of Christ," *The Expositor*, 8th

Series, vol. 21 [1921] 185, 187.)

5 See n. 1 for a survey of these commentaries.

6 K. Wuest, Wuest’s *Word Studies from the Greek New Testament Ephesians and*

*Colossians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), 101.

7 G. Sharp, *Remarks*, 3.

8 On pp. 5-6 Sharp points out that

. . . there is no exception or instance of the like mode of expression, that I know

of, which necessarily requires a construction different from what is here laid

down, EXCEPT the nouns be *proper names, or in the plural number*; in which

cases there are many exceptions. . . .

64 GRACE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

does not even apply in the singular.9 Others have sided with Sharp,

but apparently have neglected his requirement that the construction

be in the singular, or else their discussion is vague enough to be

misleading.10 Robertson stands apart as having the most lengthy

9 E.g., W. H. Simcox (*The Language of the New Testament* [London: Hodder and

Stoughton, 1890]) declares: ". . . in Tit. ii. 13, 2 Peter i. 1, we regard θεοῦ and σωτῆρος

as indicating two Persons, though only the former word has the article" (p. 50). G. B.

Winer (*A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek*, trans. and rev. by W. F.

Moulton, 3rd ed., rev. [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1882]), as was mentioned in n. 4,

allowed his theological bias to override the plain evidence from the syntax governed by

Sharp's Rule:

In Tit. ii. 13. . . considerations derived from Paul's system of doctrine lead

me to believe that σωτῆρος is not a second predicate, co-ordinate with θεοῦ . . .

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

[In n. 2 at the bottom of the same page:] In the above remarks it was not

my intention to deny that, in point of grammar, σωτῆρος ἡμῶν may be

regarded as a second predicate, jointly depending on the article τοῦ; but the

dogmatic conviction derived from Paul's writings that this apostle cannot have

called Christ *the great God* induced me to show that there is no grammatical

obstacle to our taking the clause καὶ σωτ . . . . Χριστοῦ by itself, as referring to a

second subject (p. 162).

J. H. Moulton (*A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 1: Prolegomena, 3rd ed.

[Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908]) is strongly influenced by Winer's comment on Titus

2:13, reading it as though borne from a sober grammatical judgment: "We cannot

discuss here the problem of Tit 213, for we must as grammarians, leave the matter open:

see WM 162, 156n [italics added]" (p. 84). But his own Trinitarian persuasion comes

through as he cites evidence from the papyri that the phrase found in Titus 2:13 and

2 Pet 1:1 was used of one person, the emperor (ibid.). Finally, M. Zerwick (*Biblical*

*Greek Illustrated by Examples* [Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963]) states that

the rule is only suggestive, "since the unity of article would be sufficiently accounted

for by any conjunction, in the writer's mind, of the notions expressed" (p. 60).

10 E.g., L. Radermacher (*Neutestamentliche Grammatik*, 2nd ed. [Tubingen: J. C.

B. Mohr, 1925]) makes an ambiguous statement: "Wenn mehrere Substantiva in der

Auflahlung miteinander verbunden werden, gentigt oft der Artikel beim ersten Wort

und zwar nicht allein bei gleichem Genus" (p. 115), citing τὰ ἐντάλματα καὶ   
διδασκαλίας (Col 2:22) as evidence. He goes on to say that the same phenomenon

occurs in hellenistic Greek, citing ὁ ἥλιος καὶ σελήνη as an example (ibid.). His two

examples are both impersonal, one being singular and the other plural. A case could be

made for the first example expressing identity, but certainly not the second. W. D.

Chamberlain (*An Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament* [New York:

Macmillan, 1941]) seems to have a clear understanding as to when the rule applies and

when it does not, but he does not clearly articulate this to the reader (p. 55). F. Blass

and A. Debrunner (*A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early*

*Christian literature*, trans. and rev. by R. W. Funk [Chicago: University of Chicago,

1961]) seem to support the rule in Titus 2:13 and 2 Pet 1:1, but also apply it to proper,

impersonal names (p. 145)! They make no comment about the plural. C. F. D. Moule

(*An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek*, 2nd ed. [Cambridge: Cambridge University,

1959]) has a sober treatment of the rule, seeing its application in the singular and

questioning it in the plural (pp. 109-10). But he sides with Radermacher by allowing it

THE ARTICLE-NOUN-KAI'-NOUN PLURAL CONSTRUCTION 65

discussion of the article-noun-καί-noun construction though he con-

siders the impersonal construction to fit the rule and the plural

construction to specify two distinct groups.11

*Improper Semantic Approach by Others*

More recently, a few have recognized that the rule applies

absolutely only to singular nouns.12 Their articulations as to when the

with impersonal nouns. N. Turner (*A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 3:

*Syntax*, by N. Turner [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963] and *Grammatical Insights into*

*the New Testament* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1965]) seems to vacillate in his.

discussion, for he apparently allows the rule to stand with the singular nouns (*Syntax*,

181; *Insights*, 15-16), but also applies it to the plural at his discretion (*Syntax*, 181).

Thus he speaks of a "unified whole" with reference to Eph 2:20, Luke 22:4, and Acts

15:2, but then declares that this same construction may "indeed indicate that two

distinct subjects are involved [italics mine]" (ibid.), citing the common phrase οἱ  
Φαρισαῖοι καὶ Σαδδουκαῖοι as an illustration. It is doubtful that the construction

indicates two antithetical ideas; it is rather better to say that it allows for this. J. H.

Greenlee (*A Concise Exegetical Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 3rd ed. [Grand

Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963]) is very unclear when he applies the rule to impersonal

constructions (Eph 3:18) and plurals (John 7:45) (p. 50). C. Vaughan and V. E. Gideon

(*A Greek Grammar of the New Testament* [Nashville: Broadman, 1979]) apply the rule

to both impersonal and personal constructions, making no comment about the plurals

(p. 83). They do note, however, that there are exceptions with the impersonal

constructions (ibid., n. 8). Finally, J. A. Brooks and C. L. Winberry (*Syntax of New*

*Testament Greek* [Washington: University Press of America, 1979]) apply the rule to

personal, impersonal, and plural constructions explicitly (pp. 70-71). It is no wonder,

therefore, that the exegetes have misread the semantic range of the plural construction

since the grammarians have almost universally failed to restrict the application of the

rule to the singular or have been so vague as to speak only of some kind of unity

(whether a loose tie or apposition) with reference to the plural.

11 A. T. Robertson, A *Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of*

*Historical Research*, 4th ed. (Nashville: Broad man, 1934), 785-89.

12 E. A. Blum ("Studies in Problem Areas of the Greek Article" [Th.M. thesis,

Dallas Theological Seminary, 1961]) declares with reference to Sharp's first rule

(p. 29):

Since he is talking about nouns of personal description, Wuest was wrong in

applying the rule to Acts 2:23 [τῇ . . . βουλῇ καὶ προγνώσει]. Since he limits his

rule to the singular, it is wrong to apply the rule to the "pastors and teachers" of

Ephesians 4:11.

Kuehne is in full agreement, observing that Sharp "specifically excluded plural

personal nouns and proper names from the rule" (*JT* 13 [December, 1973] 17). A. M.

Malphurs ("The Relationship of Pastors and Teachers in Ephesians 4:11" [Th.M.

thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1978]) concurs: "Therefore, Sharp states that

plural nouns as well as proper names are an exception to his rule because some

examples in the Scriptures seem to agree with the rule while others contradict it"

(p. 23). R. D. Durham ("Granville Sharp's Rule" [unpublished paper, Grace Theo-

logical Seminary, 1972]) acknowledges the exceptions to the rule of the plural and

proper names, but thinks that Sharp meant to include impersonal nouns as meeting the

66 GRACE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

rule does and does not apply are, therefore, among the clearest

presentations I have seen. However, when they examine the plural

construction, their semantic approach is inadequate in that the only

question they raise is: are the two groups identical or distinct?13 Such

a question for the singular, personal construction is entirely adequate:

either the first-named person is identical with the second-named

person or he is distinct. But the very nature of a plural construction

demands that several other questions be asked if we are to see with

precision its semantic range (i.e., since the plural construction deals

with groups, there may be other possibilities besides absolute distinc-

tion and absolute identity). Thus, although the most recent treatments

of the article-noun- καί-noun plural construction are accurate in

absolutely applying Sharp's rule only to the singular, they are never-

theless inadequate in only raising the same question they asked of the

singular construction.14

requirements of his first rule (p. 7). Finally, G. W. Rider ("An Investigation of the

Granville Sharp Phenomenon and Plurals" [Th.M. thesis, Grace Theological Seminary,

1980]) sides with Durham in treating plurals and proper names as exceptions, but

impersonal nouns as fitting the rule (pp. 23-25). Thus all five of the most recent

treatments on the article-noun- καί-noun construction acknowledge that Sharp in-

tended to exclude plurals and proper names from consideration. However, Durham

and Rider believe that Sharp did not exclude impersonal constructions. Although this

point is ancillary to the subject of this paper, I believe that Durham and Rider have

misread Sharp, for Sharp explicitly states that he accepts the impersonal constructions

as fitting the second, third, fifth, and sixth rules, but not the first or fourth (Remarks,

120; cf. also pp. 140-42 in which Sharp refutes a certain Mr. Blunt for bringing in

impersonal constructions as exceptions to the rule). It may be added here that there has

been quite a bit of confusion and misunderstanding by some over the application of the

impersonal construction to Sharp's first rule. For example, some see the rule applying

in Eph 3:18 (τὸ πλάτος καὶ μῆκος καὶ ὕψος καὶ βάθος) because the four terms of

measurement all refer to God's love. Although this is true, the four terms are not

identical with each other. Such would have to be the case if Sharp's rule were to apply

here. Cf. also Rev 1:9 and 5:12 for very clear references where the impersonal

construction does not fit the rule.

13 Blum, "Problem Areas," pp. 26-27 (Blum is not to be faulted, however, since the

plural construction is entirely ancillary to the point of his thesis); Kuehne (*JT* 13

[December, 1973]) has a lengthy discussion on the plural construction, though he deals

with it under only two semantic grids: identical vs. distinct groups (pp. 18-21);

Malphurs ("Pastors and Teachers") follows the same scheme as Kuehne (pp. 24-29),

neglecting any semantic nuances besides distinction and identity; Durham ("Sharp's

Rule") attempts to make all plural constructions fit the rule, even though he recognizes

that Sharp considered the plurals as a clear exception (pp. 31-34). It seems to me that

Durham's error is that he does not distinguish unity from identity (cf. the comments in

n. 12 with reference to impersonal constructions); finally, Rider ("The Granville Sharp

Phenomenon and Plurals") deals only with the question of distinction vs. identity, even

though his thesis is specifically on the plural phenomenon (pp. 41-78, 79-96).

14 This is completely understandable because (1) when those who have studied

Sharp's rule finally turn to the plural construction, the question foremost in their

minds most naturally is: does the plural construction fit the rule or not? Thus by their

THE ARTICLE-NOUN-KAI'-NOUN PLURAL CONSTRUCTION 67

A PROPER SEMANTIC GRID

As was mentioned in the preceding section, the only question

that has been raised with reference to the semantics of the article-

noun-καί-noun plural construction is: are the two groups identical or

distinct? A proper semantic grid should see this question as ad-

dressing the outer limits, the black and white of the semantics of the

plural construction. However, there are various shades of gray which

also need to be explored. The approach in this section is to layout in

chart form the antecedently possible semantic range of the plural

construction. Then, in the final section, the plural construction in the

NT will be investigated briefly to see what the actual semantic

range is.

*Two Entirely Distinct Groups, Though United*

The grammars are agreed that even when two entirely distinct

groups are in view, the fact that the article precedes only the first-

named group indicates that they are united somehow. Thus, by way

of illustration,15 in the clause, "The Democrats and Republicans

approved the bill unanimously," the two political parties, though

distinct, are united on a particular issue. Illustrations of this kind are

numerous, e.g., "the mothers and children," "the fathers and daugh-

ters," "the coaches and athletes," etc. This particular semantic nuance

is diagrammed in Chart 1.16

*Two Overlapping Groups*

It is theoretically possible that the plural construction in the NT

could refer to two overlapping groups. That is, some members of the

first-named group could belong to the second-named group and vice-

versa. The idea of this nuance would probably be expressed in

modem English by "The X and/or Y" and vice-versa. We could

preoccupation with this very question, they lock themselves into a binary system which

does not allow them to see other alternatives; and (2) as James Barr laments in his *The*

*Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1961), most theological

students (myself included) rarely have any substantial training in modem linguistics

(pp. 288-96). Since this is the case, we should not necessarily expect that those who

have been trained in theology as a prior discipline should be able to ask all the right

linguistic questions of the article-noun-καί-noun plural construction.

15 In this and the following sections, *English* illustrations will be used only to

demonstrate, via analogy, that a particular semantic nuance is possible. I am not

implying by such illustrations that the English idiom is identical with the Greek.

16 In this and the following charts, the definite article before the first noun and the

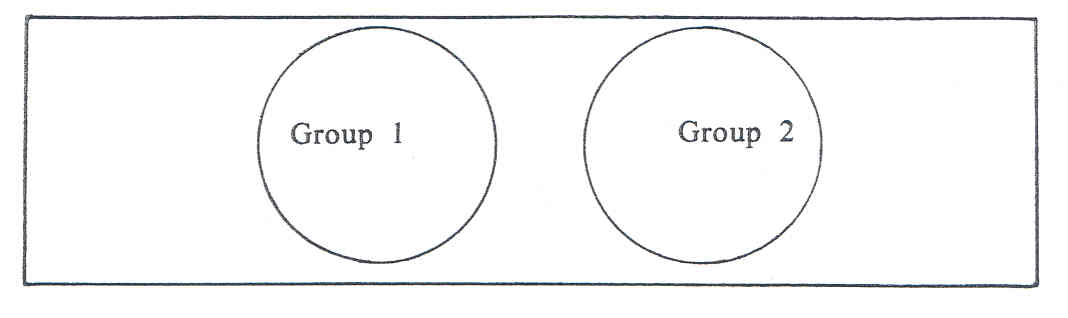
καί between the two nouns are omitted because these charts are intended to depict the

semantics, not the structure, of the article-noun-καί-noun plural construction. It is

assumed that the reader is well acquainted with the structure under consideration.

68 GRACE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

Chart I



illustrate this with such phrases as "the student council members and

football players," "the blind and elderly," "the scientists and Chris-

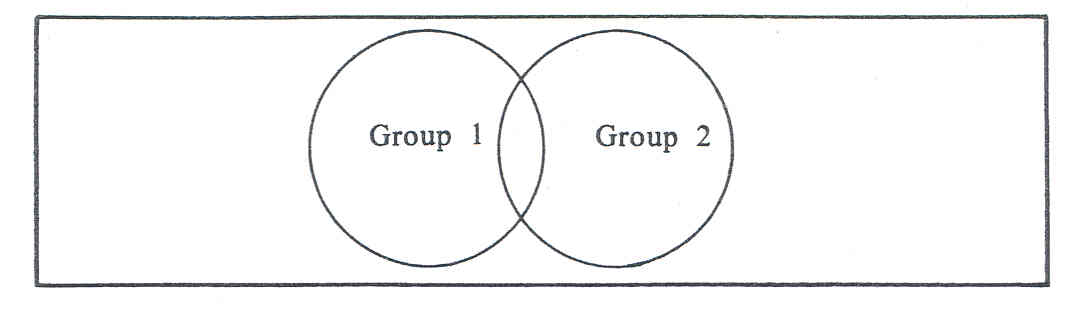
tians," "the healthy and wealthy and wise," "the poor and miserable."

It is possible in each of these constructions that some overlap could

take place, given a particular context. This particular semantic

nuance is diagrammed in Chart 2.

Chart 2



*First Group Sub-Set of Second*

The third possibility is that the first-named group is a sub-set of

the second, i.e., it is entirely included with the second-named group.

The idea then would be "The X and [ other] Y. " Thus, by way of

illustration, one could speak of "the angels and created beings, " "the

southern Baptists and evangelicals," "the deaf and handicapped," "the

saints and sinners." This particular semantic nuance is diagrammed in

Chart 3.

*Second Group Sub-Set of First*

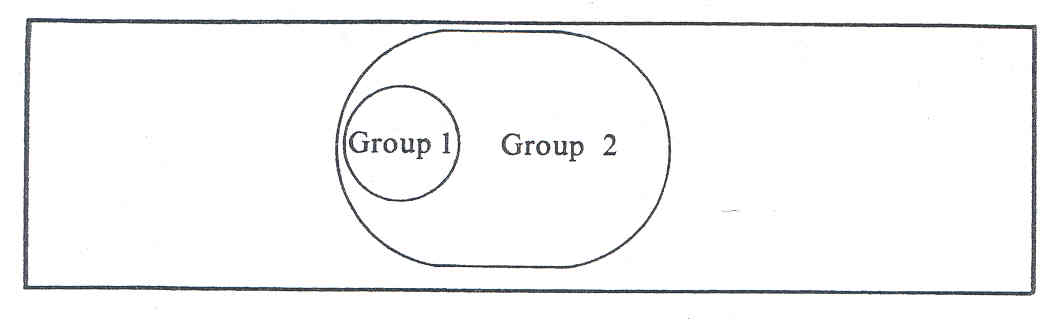
The fourth possibility is that the second-named group is a sub-set

of the first. The idea then would be "The X and [in particular] Y."

This could be illustrated with such phrases as "the created beings and

THE ARTICLE-NOUN-KAI'-NOUN PLURAL CONSTRUCTION 69

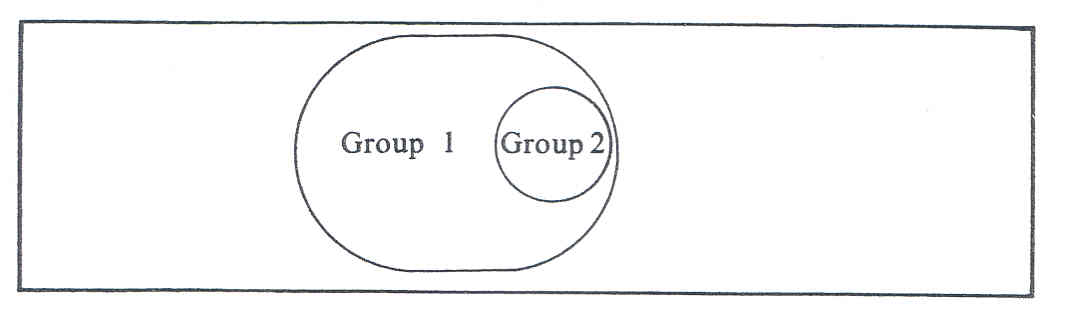
Chart 3



angels," "the handicapped and deaf," "the teachers and professors,"

etc. This particular semantic nuance is diagrammed in Chart 4.

Chart 4



*Two Groups Identical*

Finally, the groups may be entirely identical. The idea may be

expressed, "The X who are Y ," or "The X even Y." Thus, by way of

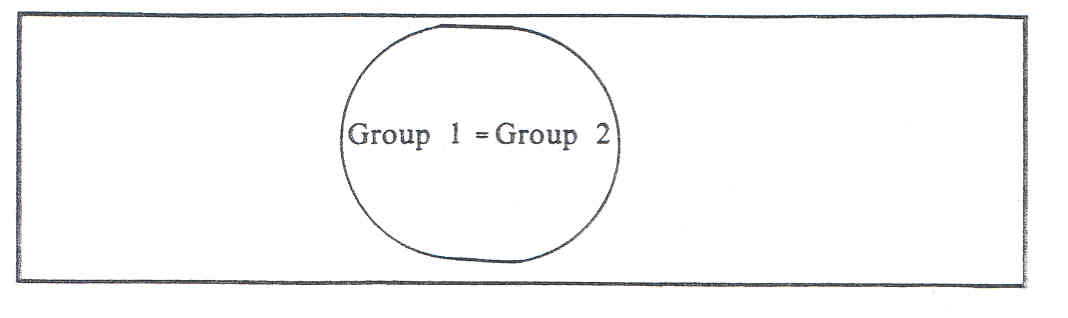
illustration, one could speak of "The Los Angeles Dodgers and world

champions of baseball," "the evil and wicked," "the Gentiles and

outsiders," "the powerful and mighty," etc. This particular semantic

nuance is diagrammed in Chart 5.

Chart 5

70 GRACE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

As far as I can tell, these five nuances comprise the antecedently

possible semantic range of the article-noun-καί-noun plural con-struction. It remains to be seen whether this is the actual semantic

range in the NT.

THE PHENOMENON IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

I have discovered 70 plural constructions in the NT which fit the

pattern article-noun-καί-noun17 and 7 other plural constructions which

*perhaps* fit this pattern.18 Of these seven questionable instances, I

consider one to be legitimate,19 bringing the total to 71 constructions

17 As noted earlier in the paper, I am restricting my discussion to *personal*

constructions. These constructions are found in the following texts: Matt 2:4; 3:7; 5:6,

20; 9:11; 11:28; 12:38; 16:1,6, 11,12,21; 20:18; 21:12, 15; 26:47; 27:3,12,41; Mark 2:16

(twice); 12:40; 15:1; Luke 5:30. 6:35. 7:32- 8:21; 9:22; 11:28; 12.4; 14:3, 21, 15:9, 18.9.

20:46; 22:4, 52; John 1:40; 7:45; 11:31, 45; 20:29; Acts 15:2; 16:4; 17:12; 23:7; Rom 16:7;

I Cor 5:10; 2 Cor 12:21; Gal 1:7; Eph 1:1; 2:20; 3:5; 4:11; Phil 3:3; I Thess 5:12; I Tim

4:3; 5:8; 2 Tim 3:6; Titus 1:15; Heb 5:2; I Pet 2:18; 2 Pet 2:10; 3:16; 3 John 5; Rev 1:3;

11:9; 12:17; 18:9; 21:8.

18 See Luke 1:2; 10:30; Acts 8:25; 9:15; 17:18; Col 1:2; Heb 6:4-6.

19 The one legitimate construction, as I see it, is in Col 1:2 (τοῖς . . . ἁγίοις κα  
]πιστοῖς ἀδελφοῖς). Here it is possible to construe ἁγίοις as an attributive adjective

modifying ἀδελφοῖς (with πιστοῖς being the second attributive) rather than as a

substantival adjective. However, in light of the well worn substantival use of ἅγιος in

the NT generally (cf., e.g., Acts 9:13, 32; Rom 8:27; 12:13; I Cor 6:1-2; Eph 2:19; 3:8;

Phil 4:22; I Tim 5:10; Heb 6:10), in the Pauline salutations more particularly (cf., e.g.,

Rom 1:7; I Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1; Phil 1:1), and in the parallel in Ephesians especially

(1:1), ἁγίοις here is probably substantival and, consequently, fitting the article-noun-

kai<-noun plural construction.

The other constructions, which I do not consider to be legitimate, are: (I) Luke 1:2

(οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται γενόμενοι) involves a definite article which

functions as a substantiver of the prepositional phrase, though independently of the

following nouns; (2) Luke 10:30, cited by Durham ("Sharp's Rule," p. 34), does not use

the article but the personal pronoun οἵ; (3) Acts 8:25, cited by Durham (ibid.) and

Rider ("The Granville Sharp Phenomenon and Plurals," pp. 71-72), employs the

article in the place of a personal pronoun with circumstantial participles (Oi[ me>n . . .

διαμαρτυράμενοι καὶ λαλήσαντες); (4) in Acts 9:15, manuscripts B and C\* add the

article (τῶν ἐθνῶν τε καὶ βασιλέων υἱων τε Ἰσραήλ), but the construction employs

as well as kai< for its conjunctions; (5) Acts 17:18, cited by Rider ("The Granville Sharp

Phenomenon and Plurals," pp. 51-52), involves two adjectives which are not sub-

stantival, but attributive (τῶν Ἐπικουρείων καὶ Στωϊκπων φιλοσόφων); (6) Heb 6:4-6

involves five substantival participles, but the second member of the group uses τε

instead of καί for its conjunction (τοὺς. . . . φωτισθέντας, γευσαμένους τε . . . καὶ  
γενηθέντας . . . καὶ . . . γευσαμένους . . . καὰι παραπεσόντας). It should be noted that

although this construction does not fit the precise construction discussed in this paper,

it is still clearly analogous to it. That is to say, all of the participles must be governed

by the article and, consequently, must be substantival Thus the view held by some that

the last participle (παραπεσόντας) is conditional (and therefore circumstantial) flies in

the face of clear syntactical usage (cf. J. A. Sproule, "Παραπεσόντας in Hebrews 6:6,"

*GTJ* 2 [1981] 327-32).

THE ARTICLE-NOUN-KAI'-NOUN PLURAL CONSTRUCTION 71

which will form the substance of this portion of the paper. With

regard to the use of participles, adjectives, and nouns as substantives,

the breakdown is as follows: (1) 25 constructions involve participles;20

(2) 6 constructions involve adjectives;21 (3) 17 constructions involve

nouns;22 and (4) 23 constructions are mixed.23

*Semantic Classifications*

A well-established principle of lexical and syntactical investiga-

tion is to define the actual field of meaning by bringing forth clear

instances of a particular word or construction. Then, the ambiguous

and/or exegetically significant passages would be expected to fit into

one of the previously determined categories. The antecedent proba-

bility24 that the ambiguous text will fit into an established category is

determined by the total amount of constructions and the percentage

of those which are clearly identiftable.25 Thus, for example, if we were

unable to find one clear instance in which two nouns in an article-

noun- kai<-noun plural construction were identical, we would be on

rather shaky ground to demand such an interpretation in Eph 4:11--

especially if such an interpretation were based primarily on the

syntax.

Our approach here, therefore, will first be to see which of the five

antecedently possible categories have valid examples in the NT and

second, to discuss some of the ambiguous and exegetically significant

examples.

20 See Matt 5:6; 11:28; 21:12, 15; Mark 12:40; Luke 7:32; 8:21; 11:28; 12:4; 18:9;

20:46; John 1:40; 11:31, 45; 20:29; 2 Cor 12:21; Gal 1:7; Phil 3:3 (three participles);

I Thess 5:12 (three participles); 2 Tim 3:6; Heb 5:2; 2 Pet 2:10; Rev 1:3; 12:17; 18:9.

21 See Luke 6:35; 14:21 (four adjectives); Eph 1:1; I Tim 5:8; I Pet 2:18; 2 Pet 3:16.

22 See Matt 2:4; 3:7; 5:20; 12:38; 16:1,6, 11, 12; 20:18; Luke 22:4; John 7:45; Acts

17:12; 23:7; Eph 2:20; 3:5; 4:11; Rev 11:9.

23 These may be divided into two groups: mixed constructions with participles and

mixed constructions without participles. With participles: I Tim 4:3 (adjective, parti-

ciple); Titus 1:15 (participle, adjective); Rev 21:8 (adjective, adjective, participle, noun,

noun, noun, noun). Without participles: Matt 9:11 (na); 16:21 (ann); 26:47 (na); 27:3

(na), 12 (na), 41 (na); Mark 2:16 (twice--an, na); 15:1 (an); Luke 5:30 (na); 9:22 (ann);

14:3 (an); 15:9 (an); 22:52 (nna); Acts 15:2 (na); 16:4 (na); Rom 16:7 (an); I Cor 5:10

(na); Col 1:2 (an); 3 John 5 (na).

24 By "antecedent probability" I mean the probability which has been established

by grammar alone--before other exegetical considerations enter the picture.

25 Thus, for example, if there are over 80 article-noun-καί-noun personal, singular

constructions in the NT, and all except the few Christologically significant ones are

clear that one person is being identified by the two nouns, then there is an extremely

high antecedent probability that in Titus 2:13; 2 Pet 1:1, *et al*., the biblical author is

referring to one person. Arguments against such a view must be based on other than

syntax, yet it is significant that those who do argue against the view usually attempt to

use syntax as the primary weapon in their arsenal!

72 GRACE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

Validation of the Semantically Possible Categories

*Two Entirely Distinct Groups, though United*. I have discovered

19 clear examples of this semantic group.26 For example, in Matt 3:7

we read τῶν Φαρισαῖων καὶ Σαδδουκαίων. Although the two reli-

gious parties were entirely distinct, the one article unites them in

some way. This is the first mention of either Pharisees or Sadducees

in Matthew's gospel, and it may be significant that he presents these

two parties which were historically opposed to one another27 as

united in their opposition to the Messiah's forerunner. Matthew

mentions the Pharisees and the Sadducees together only four other

times in his gospel and in each instance the construction is article-

noun-καί-noun and the two groups are contrasted with the Messiah.28

In Matt 16:21 we read τῶν πρεσβθτέρων καὶ ἀρχιερέων καὶ γραμ-

ματέων. These were the three distinct parties which comprised the

Sanhedrin.29 (Some have erroneously insisted that this construction

fits the Granville Sharp rule because these three groups all refer to the

Sanhedrin. However, to say that A + B + C = D is not the same as

saying A = B = C, the latter equation being what the Granville Sharp

rule asserts.) This phrase, involving at least two of the three groups,

occurs another eight times in the NT.30 Apart from constructions

involving the religious parties or groups which comprised the San-

hedrin (for at least one of the substantives), there is only one clear

example in which the two nouns are entirely distinct. In Acts 17:12

we see "women. . . and men" in the construction (τῶν . . . γθναικῶν

. . . καὶ ἀνδρῶν). Nevertheless, even though the clear examples almost

exclusively occur in set phrases, in light of such clear examples of

entirely distinct groups united by one article (accounting for 27% of

all plural constructions), the dogmatic insistence of many exegetes

26 See Matt 2:4; 3:7; 16:1, 6, 11, 12, 21; 20:18; 26:47; 27:3, 12, 41; Mark 15:1; Luke

9:22; 22:4, 52; John 7:45; Acts 17:12; 23:7.

27 J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969),265-

67. Cf. also E. Schurer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*

*(175 B.C.-A.D. 135)*, rev. and ed. by G. Vermes, F. Millar, M. Black (Edinburgh:

T. & T. Clark, 1979), 2. 409-11.

28 See Matt 16:1, 6, 11, 12. See also Acts 23:7 for the only other instance of these

two groups in this construction.

29 On ἀρχιερεύς, see Schrenk, "ἀρχιερεύς," *TDNT*, 3. 270-71; Jeremias, *Jerusalem*,

179-80; Schurer, *Jewish People*, 2. 212-13; on γραμματεύς, see Jeremias, *Jerusalem*,

236; Schurer, *Jewish People*, 2. 212-13; on πρεσβύτεροσ, see BAGD, s.v. "πρεσβύτερος,"

2. a. 13.; G. Bomkamm, "πρεσβύτερος," *TDNT*, 6. 659; Schurer, *Jewish People*, 2.212-

13.

30 See Matt 2:4; 20:18; 26:47; 27:3, 12,41; Mark 15:1; Luke 9:22. On three other

occasions, the chief priests are mentioned with another group(s): Luke 22:4 (τοῖς  
ἀρχιερεῦσιν καὶ στρατηγοῖς); Luke 22:52 (τοῦς . . . ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ στρατηγοὺς . . . καὶ   
πρεσβυτέρους); John 7:45 (τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ Φαρισαίους).

THE ARTICLE-NOUN-KAI'-NOUN PLURAL CONSTRUCTION 73

that this construction fits the Granville Sharp rule does not seem to

be borne out of sober reflection.

*Two Overlapping Groups*. I have discovered only two clear

examples of this semantic group, making it the least attested category.

In Luke 14:21 we read τούς πτωχοὺς καὶ ἀναπείρους καὶ τυφλοὺς καὶ   
χωλοὺς. It must be remembered that although these four adjectives

are not synonymous, this does not preclude them from identifying the

same group. (Otherwise it would not be possible for a blind man to

be poor!) However, it is doubtful that in this parable the slave was

told to bring only those who met all four "qualifications"! Rather, the

obvious implication is that the new guest list was neither restricted on

the one hand to those who fit only one category, nor on the other

hand to those who fit all four. Thus an overlap of categories is

obviously the nuance intended by the author. In Rev 21:8, the most

complex article-noun-καί-noun construction in the NT (involving

seven substantives: τοῖς . . . δειλοῖς καὶ ἀπίστοις καὶ ἐβδελυγμένοις  
καὶ φονεῦσιν καὶ πόρνοις καὶ φαρμάκοις καὶ εἰδωλολάτραις), we

have a similar situation. Obviously, one would be committing exe-

getical and theological suicide to insist that the lake of fire is reserved

only for those who meet all of the "qualifications," or for those who

meet only one requirement. These two texts, though comprising less

than 3% of all the plural constructions, demonstrate the inadequacy

of distinguishing only the entirely distinct and the entirely identical

nuances for this structural phenomenon.

*First Group Sub-Set of Second.* I have found seven clear in-

stances of this semantic group.31 In Matt 5:20 (and 12:38) we read

τῶν γραμματέων καὶ Φαρισαίων. Although not all scribes were

Pharisees,32 when the two groups are mentioned together the author

is almost certainly indicating "the scribes and other Pharisees.”33

31 See Matt 5:20; 9:11; 12:38; Mark 2:16; Luke 5:30; 6:35; 14:3.

32 See Jeremias, *Jerusalem*, 233-45, for an excellent argument against the notions

that scribes = Pharisees (i.e., identical) and that all scribes were Pharisees (i.e., sub-

set).

33 This point can be established in some measure by a comparison of the synoptic

gospels. For example, Mark 2:16 has "the scribes of the Pharisees" (οἱ γραμματεῖς τῶν   
Φαρισαίων) while the parallel passage in Luke 5:30 reads "the Pharisees and their

scribes" (οἱ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς αὐτῶν). Although the article is used with

both nouns in the Lucan account, one could hardly argue that such indicates unity

more strongly than the article-noun-καί-noun construction would. As well, there are

three parallels in which the Pharisees alone are mentioned in one gospel and the scribes

and Pharisees in another (cf. Matt 12:38 with Mark 8:11; Matt 15:1 with Luke 11:37;

and Matt 9:11 with Mark 2:16 and Luke 5:30). Although such evidence does not prove

that the scribes in these passages were Pharisees (due to the selectivity of the

evangelists--cf., e.g., Matt 16:6 with Luke 12:2), it is rather suggestive. Further-

more, even though Jeremias insists that not all scribes were Pharisees and that not all

74 GRACE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

Matt 9:11 speaks of "the tax-collectors and sinners" (τῶν τελωνῶν  
καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν).34 Although some have argued that two distinct

groups are in view (the one Jewish, the other Gentile),35 it is far better

to understand the τελώνης as a Jew36 and ἁμαρτωλός as *any* sinner,

Jew or Gentile.37 The impossibility of maintaining an absolute dis-

tinction between the two is demonstrated in Luke 18:13 in which a

tax-collector (τελώνης) prays, "0 God, be merciful to me, the sinner"

(ὁ θεός, ἱλάσθητί μοι τῷ ἁμαρτωλῷ). In Luke 14:3 we see τοὺς

νομικοῦς καὶ Φαρισαίους.38 The substantival adjective νομικός is

clearly synonymous with γραμματεύς;39 thus the construction has the

same semantic value as τοὺς γραμματεῖς καὶ Φαρισαίους. Finally,

note the substantival adjectives in Luke 6:35 (τοὺς ἀχαρίστους καὶ   
πονηρούς). Quite obviously, ingratitude is a kind of evil; thus the

ungrateful ones are a part of the larger group of evil ones. In

summary, although the clear examples of this semantic category

comprise only 10% of all plural constructions, it is a legitimate and

well-attested category which will demand consideration in at least five

exegetically significant and/or ambiguous passages.

*Second Group Sub-Set of First*. I have discovered four clear

examples of this semantic category. In Mark 2:16 we read of both

"the tax-collectors and sinners" (first sub-set of second) and "the

sinners and tax-collectors" (τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν καὶ τελωνῶν). However,

there is some substantial textual deviation from the word order of

this phrase, with א, A, C, families 1 and 13, and the Byzantine

cursives, et al., reading τῶν τελων[ν καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν. In 1 Cor 5:10

we see τοῖς πλεονέκταις καὶ ἅρπαξιν. Although one could be greedy

(πλεονέκτης) without being branded as a swindler (ἅρπαξ), it is

doubtful that the reverse could be true. What alters the picture,

Pharisees were scribes (*Jerusalem*, 233-45), he nevertheless recognizes that most scribes

were Pharisees (p. 243) and that "This expression ['the scribes and Pharisees'] shows

that besides the leaders who were scribes, the great majority of members had not had a

scribal education" (p. 258). The joining of the two nouns, then (whether with one

article or two), is clearly used to indicate Pharisaic scribes and other Pharisees.

34 Cf. Mark 2: 16 and Luke 5:30 for parallel accounts, both of which have the same

construction as is found in Matt 9:11.

35 See, e.g., G. W. Rider, "The Granville Sharp Phenomenon and Plurals," 42-44.

36 See BAGD, S.v. "τελώνης."

37 See BAGD, S.v. "ἁμαρτωλός" 2. That ἁμαρτωλός was applied both to Jew and

Gentile can be easily substantiated. With reference to Gentiles, cf., e.g., Matt 26:45

with Luke 18:32. With reference to both, cf., e.g., Matt 9: 13. With reference to Jews,

cf., e.g., Luke 7:37 with John 12:3; Luke 13:1.

38 See Mark 2:16 and Luke 5:30 for the other two examples of this particular

phrase.

39 Note the parallels: Matt 22:35 (νομικός) with Mark 12:28 (εἶς τῶν γραμματέων);

Matt 23:13 (γραμματεῖς) with Luke 11:52 (νομικός) and 11:53 (οἱ γραμματεῖς).

Cf. also the comments by Gutbrod, *TDNT*, 4. 1088, and Jeremias, *Jerusalem*, 254-55.

THE ARTICLE-NOUN-KAI'-NOUN PLURAL CONSTRUCTION 75

however, is that ἤ is found instead of καί in P46, א2, D2, Y, and the

Byzantine minuscules, et al., nullifying the construction in a large

portion of the Greek witnesses to this text. In I Tim 5:8 Paul adds an

adverb to clarify the relation between the two substantives (τῶν ἐδίων  
καὶ μάλιστα οἰκείων), though again the MSS are divided with C, D1,

and the Byzantine cursives containing a second article (thus, τῶν  
ἰδίων καὶ μάλιστα τῶν οἰκείων. Finally, in 3 John 5 we read εἰς τοῦς

ἀδελφοῦς καῖ τοῦτο ξένους. Here kai> tou?to functions adverbially,

having a similar force to καὶ μάλιστα in I Tim 5:8.40 But the

construction (as we might have expected!) is altered in some of the

witnesses (in particular, P and the Byzantine cursives which have εἰς

τοῦς instead of τοῦτο). Thus, although there are four clear passages

in this semantic group (comprising almost 6% of all the plural

constructions), their testimony in each instance is rendered somewhat

less certain due to the textual variants. One might wonder, with some

justification, whether the "preferred" readings have created an idiom

which is foreign to the NT while these *variae lectiones* have preserved

the true text.41

*Two Groups Identical*. I have discovered 28 clear examples of

this semantic group.42 In Rev 1:3 we read that "those who hear and

who keep" (οἱ ἀκούοντες . . . καὶ τηροῦντες) the words of the

prophecy are blessed. It would seem obvious that the one who *only*

hears the Scripture read and does not obey it would fall short of the

blessing.43 The two-fold response of hearing *and* keeping is necessary

if one is to be counted among the μακάριοι. In John 1:40 we read of

Andrew who was one of the two men who heard John and who began

to follow the Lord (τῶν ἀκουσάντων . . . καὶ ἀκολουθησάντων). If

only two men are mentioned (du<o) and the participles are in the

plural, then both must have heard and followed. In John 20:29 the

Lord promises a particular blessing to "those who do not see and

[yet] believe" (οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες καῖ πιστεύσαντες). The negative qualifi-

cation of not seeing the risen Lord is, of course, insufficient of itself

40 See BAGD, s.v. "οὗτος," I. b. y. Rom 13:11; l Cor 6:6,8; and Eph 2:8 are cited

as illustrative references.

41 It might be significant that the Byzantine minuscules were the only MSS to deviate

in all instances. The possible significance is certainly worth pursuing, though it is

beyond the scope of this paper.

42 See Matt 5:6; 11:28; 21:15; Mark 12:40; Luke 7:32; 8:21; 11:28; 12:4; 18:9; 20:46;

John 1:40; 11:31, 45; 20:29; Rom 16:7; 2 Cor 12:21; Gal 1:7; Eph 1:1; Phil 3:3; Col l:2;

1 Thess 5:12; 2 Tim 3:6; Titus 1:15; I Pet 2:18; 2 Pet 2:10; Rev 1:3; 12:17; 18:9.

43 Such a conclusion is so obvious in fact that most commentaries on the Apoca-

lypse assume it to be true without any grammatical defense. Furthermore, if John were

to pronounce a blessing on mere hearers, he would be contradicting James' pointed

remark that the man who simply hears is self-deluded (Jas 1:22). Both James and John

are no doubt repeating their Lord's statements to the same effect (cf. Luke 8:21; 11:28).

76 GRACE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

to procure such a blessing. What we have seen thus far are a few

examples of this semantic group which involve only participles.

Altogether, 23 of the 28 constructions belonging to this category

involve only participles.44 The participial constructions are in fact so

transparent in their semantic force that Rider believes that every

exclusively participial construction belongs to this semantic group,45

even though he does not see any clear examples of identity in non-

participial constructions.46 Although some adjustment should be

made to Rider's view, it is an indisputed and rather significant fact

that most (if not all) of the wholly participial constructions do follow

the semantics of the Granville Sharp rule and that this final semantic

category is comprised of an overwhelming majority of participial

constructions.

However, although the participles hold a clear majority in this

group, they are not the only grammatical forms an author could have

selected to indicate identity between the two substantives. I have

discovered five clear instances of non-participial or partially par-

ticipial constructions which belong here as well. In Rom 16:7 Paul

greets Andronicus and Junius, "my kinsmen and my fellow-prisoners"

(τοὺς συγγενεῖς μου καὶ συναιχμαλώτους μου). Here the substantival

adjective συγγενεῖς and noun συναιχμαλώτους must, of course, both

refer to the two men. Two Alexandrian MSS (P46 and B) add an

article to the noun, however. In Eph 1: 1 Paul addresses his letter "to

the saints who are in Ephesus and [who are] faithful in Christ Jesus"

(τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ἐφέσῳ καὶ πιστοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ).

Although there are textual variants from this text, none affects the

article-noun-καί-noun construction. In light of Pauline theology, it is

rather doubtful that he would be specifying two groups which could

be distinguished in any way. If one were either to see the two groups

as entirely distinct, as overlapping, or the first as a sub-set of the

second, the resultant idea would be that at least some of the faithful

in Christ Jesus were not saints!47 And the second group could hardly

be viewed as a sub-set of the first because (1) syntactically and

textually, this would be the lone NT instance which did not have a

44 See Matt 5:6; 11:28; 21:15; Mark 12:40; Luke 1:32; 8:21; 11:28; 12:4; 18:9; 20:46;

John 1:40; 11:31, 45; 20:29; 2 Cor 12:21; Gal 1:1; Phil 3:3; I Thess 5:12; 2 Tim 3:6;

2 Pet 2:10; Rev 1:3; 12:11; 18:9.

45 G. W. Rider, "The Granville Sharp Phenomenon and Plurals," 66.

46 Ibid., 11-18.

47 Though such a concept might fit the Roman doctrine of sainthood, it is not

Pauline, for even the licentious Corinthians were called saints (1 Cor 1:2). The term can

obviously be used of positional truth, which, if it speaks of merit, speaks only of the

merit of Christ.

THE ARTICLE-NOUN-KAI'-NOUN PLURAL CONSTRUCTION 77

textual variant;48 (2) theologically, such a view would seem to restrict

the Pauline doctrine of perseverance to less than all the elect; and (3)

lexically, the route normally taken by those who deny a perseverance

of all the elect is to read πιστοῖς actively as "believing" and still to see

identity of the two substantives.49 Thus, barring exegetical factors

which may have been overlooked, there seems to be no good reason

not to take the two adjectives as referring to the same group. Since

this is so, with reasonable confidence we can say with Barth that

It is unlikely that Paul wanted to distinguish two classes among the

Christians, i.e. a "faithful" group from another larger or smaller group

that is "holy." Such a distinction would be unparalleled in the Pauline

letters. Even the wild Corinthians are called "sanctified" and "perfect"

(I Cor 1:2; 2:6). While occasionally Paul presupposes a sharp division

between "those outside" and "those inside," between "the unbelieving"

and "the faithful," he has no room for half- or three-quarter Christians.

It is probable that here the Greek conjunction "and" has the meaning

of "namely." It serves the purpose of explication and may therefore

occasionally be omitted in translation if its intent is preserved.50

In Col 1:2 we see almost the same wording as in Eph 1:1 (τοῖς ἐν   
Κολοσσαῖς ἁγίοις καῖ πιστοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ).51 Thus the

arguments which were brought forth for the Ephesian text would be

equally applicable to the construction in this sister epistle. In Titus

1:15 the apostle speaks of “those who are defiled and unbelieving"

(τοῖς δὲ μεμιαμμένοις καὶ ἀπίστοις--a mixed construction of parti-

ciple and adjective). He seems to be clarifying just who the defiled are

with the adjective ἀπίστοις, thus identifying them, in a sense, as

"filthy non-Christians." Paul continues to describe this group in v 16

with epithets which could hardly describe believers (βδελυκτοί,

ἀπειθεῖς, ἀδόκιμοι, κτλ.).52 Finally, Peter declares in his first epistle

that servants should submit themselves to their masters, not only "to

the good and gentle" (τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς καὶ ἐπιεικέσιν) but also to the

harsh (1 Pet 2:18). There is an obvious contrast here between two

48 Admittedly, this is not the strongest argument against such a view, though it

does bear some weight. Furthermore, even ignoring the *variae lectiones*, this category is

not as well attested as all but one of the other groups, rendering it less likely as the

correct view without a strong helping hand from non-grammatical factors.

49 See, e.g., W. Hendriksen, *Exposition of Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1967),

70.

50 M. Barth, *Ephesians* (AB; Garden City: Doubleday, 1974), 1. 68.

51 See n. 19 for a discussion of the legitimacy of this construction.

52 Even if one were to argue that the persons identified in v 15 were believers

(taking ἀπιστοις in the sense of 'unfaithful'), he would still see one group being

specified in the construction.

78 GRACE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

classes of masters (note οὐ μόνον . . . ἀλλὰ καὶ), with the result being

that to posit any semantic nuance other than identity for the article-

noun-καί-noun construction would destroy the clearly intended

antithetic parallel.

To sum up, the identical category has captured almost 40% of all

the plural constructions in the NT. Over 82% of the constructions in

this group involve participles exclusively. And although the identical

category is the largest semantic group, it is weakly attested by non-

participial constructions (only four belonging to this category, none

of which is composed only of nouns).

*Summary*. Overall, 60 of the 71 article-noun-καί-noun construc-

tions could be clearly tagged as to their semantic nuance (thus almost

85% percent were identifiable). With reference to these clear con-

structions, the breakdown is as follows:

Distinct 27% of total; 32% of clearly marked constructionsOverlap roughly 3% of both

First sub-set 10% and 12%

Second sub-set 6% and 7%

Identical 40% and 47%

Although all five semantic groups were represented, certain

patterns emerged which will certainly color our approach to the

remaining eleven texts. We will break these down first by semantic

groups and then by types of substantives.

With reference to the "distinct" category, we noted that although

this is the second largest category, all but one of the instances

occurred in a particular set phrase. As well, not one of the construc-

tions involved participles. Concerning the "overlap" group, we saw

that this is the smallest category (two examples). Furthermore, both

examples were the most complex constructions in the NT (Luke 14:21

has four substantives and Rev 21:8 has seven). With reference to the

"first sub-set of second" category, we found that this was well attested

among adjective and noun constructions, though not at all found in

participial constructions. With respect to the "second sub-set of first"

group, we discovered four clear examples, though each one had fairly

substantial textual deviations, making this nuance of the construction

non-existent among the Byzantine MSS with various other witnesses

departing from the "text" reading on each occasion as well. Finally,

regarding the "identical" group, we observed that this, the largest of

the semantic categories, captured all 23 of the wholly participial

constructions (which could be clearly identified), five constructions

involving at least one adjective, and no constructions made up

exclusively of nouns.

THE ARTICLE-NOUN-KAI'-NOUN PLURAL CONSTRUCTION 79

The types of substantives involved are laid out in Chart 6:

Chart 6

Distinct Overlap 1st Sub- 2nd Sub- Identical Totals

set of 2nd set of 1st

Noun +

Noun 11 2 13

Adjective +

Adjective 1 1 1 2 5

Participle +

Participle 23 23

Mixed: Non-

Participial 8 4 3 2 17

Mixed: With

Participle 1 1 2

Totals 19 2 7 4 28 60

In conclusion, such dead statistics as these, when properly used,

can themselves impart life to the interpretive possibilities one might

see for a given text. The very fact that all five semantic categories

have at least some clear examples clarifies and expands our syntac-

tical options for the ambiguous passages. A word of caution is in

order, however. We have no desire to put the Scriptures into a

straitjacket by telling an author what he *must* mean by a particular

construction. Dead statistics, unfortunately, are too often employed

this way by well-meaning expositors. We must keep in mind that as

interpreters of Holy Writ, the apostles are teaching us--not vice

versa! But in seeking to understand these authors, we attempt to

*discover* the boundaries of what they can mean by investigating the

idioms of their language. (Grammar, then, used correctly, is descrip-

tive rather than prescriptive.) Therefore, with reference to the article-

noun-καί-noun construction, the patterns we have seen certainly give

us initial *direction* as to the proper interpretation of a passage; but

such leanings can be swayed by other exegetical factors. After all, we

are speaking about probabilities and tendencies, not certainties, and

about grammar alone, not the whole of exegesis.

80 GRACE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

Ambiguous and Exegetically Significant Texts

Altogether, there are eleven passages which fit the "ambiguous"

category,53 four of which also have some particular significance

exegetically.54 We will briefly examine the seven ambiguous examples

whose exegetical significance is minimal, then the four more signifi-

cant passages.55

*Ambiguous Passages*. In seven instances I could not make a

positive identification of the semantics involved in the article-noun-

kai<-noun plural construction. In Matt 21:12 we read of our Lord

entering the temple precincts and driving out "those buying and

selling in the temple" (τοὺς πωλούντας καὶ ἀγοράζοντας ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ).

On the surface, we have two distinct groups united by one article.

However, in light of the heretofore unanimous grouping of wholly

participial constructions in the "identical" category, a hearing at least

ought to be given to such a possibility in this text.56 In Luke 15:9 we

read of "friends and neighbors" (τὰς φίλας καῖ γείτονας). There is

some question as to whether γείτονας is feminine or masculine in

form (if the latter, it would still include the female 'neighbors'). More

than likely, it is to be taken as feminine. Nevertheless, due to the field

of meaning of φίλος57 as well as contextual58 and other factors,59 it is

difficult to come down from the fence for any view dogmatically.

Acts 15:2 (= 16:4) speaks of the apostles and elders (τοὺς ἀποστόλους

Καὶ πρεσβυτέρους). Although ἀποστόλους here seems to be used in

its technical sense, it could be argued that all the apostles were elders,

53 See Matt 21:12; Luke 15:9; Acts 15:2; 16:4; Eph 2:20; 3:5; 4:11; I Tim 4:3; Heb

5:2; 2 Pet 3:16; Rev 11:9.

54 See Eph 2:20; 3:5; 4:11; Heb 5:2.

55 Obviously, to decide what is and what is not significant is a most subjective

endeavor. The basic criterion I have followed in this selection is in two directions-

theological and practical. Thus the four passages chosen for the "exegetically signifi-

cant" category deal with dispensationalism (Eph 2:20; 3:5), soteriology and hamar-

tiology (Heb 5:2), and ecclesiology (Eph 4: 11). All of these texts make a significant

contribution to our understanding of such doctrines and each one, therefore, has

practical ramifications as well.

56 Jeremias suggests that this phrase ("those who bought and those who sold ")

"may well have meant cattle dealers (John 2.14)" (*Jerusalem*, 49). It is quite possible

that the 'buyers' were not the pilgrims who came to Jerusalem, but were the same as

the sellers; the tenor of the passage certainly does not seem to indicate that the

common people were among those booted out of the temple area.

57 See Stahlin, "φίλος," *TDNT*, 9. 154.

58 Cf. Luke 14:12; 15:6.

59 The parallels in 3 Macc 3:10 and Josephus, *Ant* 18.376, suggest a set phrase, the

semantics of which are still elusive. As well, the addition of a second article (τὰς) by A,

W, Y, families 1 and 13, and the Byzantine MSS casts doubt on the authenticity of the

construction.

THE ARTICLE-NOUN-KAI'-NOUN PLURAL CONSTRUCTION 81

though not all the elders were apostles.60 Such a suggestion, however,

is based partially on certain ecclesiological beliefs which are beyond

the scope of this paper. In 1 Tim 4:3 the apostle Paul speaks of "those

who believe61 and know the truth" (τοῖς πιστοῖς καὶ ἐπεγνωκόσι τὴν  
ἀλήθειαν). Whatever the truth is here, it would seem impossible to

believe it unless one knows it. Questions concerning whether this text

is speaking about salvation or a specific situation, and the type of

knowledge in view here leave us with two viable options: (1) the first

group is a part of the second, or (2) the two are identical. Without

further investigation into these questions, we cannot be dogmatic for

either position. In 2 Pet 3:16, the apostle gives us his assessment of

those who distort Paul's letters: they are ignorant/untaught and

unstable (οἱ ἀμαθεῖς καὶ ἀστήρικτοι). Apparently both terms refer to

unbelievers,62 though the relation of the two groups is ambiguous due

to insufficient lexical and contextual data in the NT. Finally, in Rev

11:9 John describes those who observe the corpses of the two

witnesses as "from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations"

(ἐκ τῶν λαῶν καὶ φυλῶν καὶ γλωσσῶν καὶ ἐθνῶν). Although it is

apparent that "The multitude is composed of those who are con-

nected racially, those who are connected linguistically and those who

are connected by customs and laws",63 this does not entirely solve the

problem of identification. If λαός could be construed to be lexically a

part of φυλή, then we might have each term being a sub-set of the

term which follows it. But since this is doubtful, it may be best to

view each category as overlapping somewhat with the others, resulting

in one grand hendiadys for 'the world.'

In comparing the plausible semantics of these seven ambiguous

passages with the clearly tagged passages, certain observations can be

made. First, in both clear and ambiguous texts, there were no noun +

noun constructions belonging to the "identical" category. Second,

only in Matt 21:12 did we see a wholly participial construction as

possibly fitting other than the "identical" category. Third, among the

ambiguous texts the "first sub-set of second" category was plausible

in all but two instances. These ambiguous passages, then, tend to

confirm the patterns discovered for the clearly tagged texts and can

60 0n the one hand, in Acts 15:4, 6, 22, and 23 the nouns are separated by an

additional article before 'elders,' suggesting that an exact equation is probably not in

view. On the other hand, John calls himself ὁ περσβύτερος in 2 John I and 3 John I,

though the precise connotation remains in doubt (see BAGD, S.v. "πρεσβύτερος,"

2. b. b.). Cf. also I Pet 5:1.

61 BAGD, S.v. "πιστός," 2.

62 This seems evident from the results predicated of them later in the verse:

ἀπώλειαν.

63 Rider, "The Granville Sharp Phenomenon and Plurals," 52-53.

82 GRACE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

help us in determining, at least antecedently, the meaning of the

remaining four texts.

*Exegetically Significant Passages*. Four ambiguous passages car-

ried particular exegetical significance (Eph 2:20; 3:5; 4:11; Heb 5:2).

In Eph 2:20 Paul declares that the church is built upon the founda-

tion of the apostles and prophets (τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶων). If

these prophets are OT prophets, as some have affirmed,64 Paul may

be saying that the church was prophesied in the OT. Since the

construction is noun + noun, such a possibility has some syntactical

support. However, Paul uses the same construction just a few verses

later, in 3:5 (τοῖς ἁγίοις ἀποστόλοις αὐτοῦ καῖ προφήταις), indi-

cating that the same men are in mind. There he clearly puts the

prophets in the present dispensation.65 On the other hand, to see the

apostles and prophets as identical should also be suspect: (1) this

would be the only noun + noun construction which fits the identical

category, and (2) in 4:11 Paul separates the two groups (notice

especially the μὲν . . . δέ construction). What is the relation of

apostles to prophets, then? In all probability, the first is a part of the

second; that is, we should understand Eph 2:20 and 3:5 to be referring

to the apostles and other NT prophets.66

In Heb 5:2 we are told that the high priest was able to deal gently

with those who were ignorant and were going astray (τοῖς ἀγνοοῦσιν  
καὶ πλανωμένοις). Since two participles are used in the construction,

the antecedent probability is that one group is in mind. Hughes writes

that "The perversity of the human heart is such that, *even if it should*

*be possible* for a person to be free from sins of waywardness, yet no

man can claim to be free from sins of ignorance or inadvertency

[italics added].”67 Although the terms are not identical, they may be

referring to different attributes of the same group. In the least, since

64 See in particular I. J. Habeck, "Who Are the Prophets of Ephesians 2:20?"

*Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 71 (1974) 121-25.

65 This assertion does not have to rest on the view that ὥς; in 3:5 makes a

comparison of kind rather than of degree (though I believe this to be the case; cf. Col

1:26), for the prophets are recipients of the revelation made 'now' (νῦν ἀπεκαλύφθη).

66 There are solid grounds for this view biblico-theologically as well as semanti-

cally. Habeck dismisses this view because the term prophet is not used of any of the

apostles (Habeck, "Ephesians 2:20," 121), but he errs in making a conceptual-lexical

equation. As David Hill ably points out, our concept of NT prophecy must not be

restricted to the προφητ- word-group (David Hill, *New Testament Prophecy* [Atlanta:

John Knox, 1979], 2-3). Certainly we cannot deny that Paul or John or Peter

prophesied!

67 P. E. Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids:

Eerdmans, 1977), 178.

THE ARTICLE-NOUN-KAI'-NOUN PLURAL CONSTRUCTION 83

these sins were forgivable, the deliberate sins of 10:26 do not include

being led astray (πλανώμενος).68

Finally, we turn to the text which occupied us initially: Eph 4:11.

There the apostle enumerates the gifted leadership of the church,

concluding his list with "the pastors and teachers" (τοὺς δὲ μοιμένας  
καὶ διδασακάλους). Although most commentaries consider the two

terms to refer to one group,69 we must emphatically insist that *such a*

*view has no grammatical basis*, even though the writers who maintain

this view almost unanimously rest their case on the supposed semantics

of the article-noun-καί-noun construction.70 Yet, as we have seen,

there are no other examples in the NT of this construction with *nouns*

in the *plural*, either clearly tagged or ambiguous, which allow for

such a possibility. One would, therefore, be on rather shaky ground

to insist on such a nuance here--especially if the main weapon in his

arsenal is syntax! On the other hand, the insistence of some that the

two are entirely distinct is usually based on the same narrow view of

the semantic range of this construction (i.e., only the two categories

of absolute identity and absolute distinction are normally considered).

What is the relation of pastors to teachers, then? It must be readily

admitted that the uniting of these two groups by one article sets them

apart from the other gifted men. Absolute distinction, then, is

probably not in view. In light of the fact that elders and pastors had

similar functions in the NT,71 since elders were to be teachers,72 the

pastors were also to be teachers. Conversely, not all teachers were

said to be pastors.73 This evidence seems to suggest that the ποιμένας

were a part of the διδασκάλους in Eph 4:11. This possibility is in

keeping with the semantics of the construction, for the "first sub-set

of the second" category is well attested in both the clear and

ambiguous texts in the NT. Although one cannot be dogmatic, there

is a high probability that, according to Eph 4:11, all pastors are to be

teachers, though not all teachers are to be pastors.

CONCLUSION

I have sought to demonstrate that the syntax of the article-noun-

kai<-noun plural construction has been largely misunderstood. It does

68 The ramifications of 5:2 and 10:26 for the doctrines of salvation and sanctifi-

cation are manifold. Not only has God forgiven our waywardness, but he forgives it

still.

69 See n. I.

70 See n. I.

71 See Malphurs, "Pastors and Teachers," 46-53.

72 Ibid., 52-53. Of course, that an elder should be able to teach does not necessarily

indicate that he had the *gift* of teaching.

73 Ibid., 41-46.

84 GRACE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

not fit the Granville Sharp rule since the nouns are plural. Nor is its

semantic range shut up to absolute distinction or absolute identity.

By an exhaustive treatment of the construction in the NT, we

discovered that there are three other semantic possibilities, in par-

ticular the first noun could be a part of the second. A proper

semantic grid has helped us in seeing possibilities in certain texts

which have hitherto gone unnoticed and in omitting certain options

on the basis of syntax which have been assumed true. Further

exegetical work still needs to be done in many passages which have

this construction, but it cannot proceed unless the starting point is a

proper understanding of the semantic range of this construction in

the NT.

This material is cited with gracious permission from:

Grace Theological Seminary

200 Seminary Dr.

Winona Lake, IN 46590

www.grace.edu

Please report any errors to Ted Hildebrandt at: ted.hildebrandt@gordon.edu

for biblicalelearning.org.