**The richness of the ontology of natural language: mind-dependence or selection?**

It is wellknown that natural language displays a particularly rich ontology, in particular in the realm of entities able to act as semantic values of referential noun phrases. These include highly derivative entities such as holes, mistakes, smiles, advantages, options, mistakes, examples, possibilities etc. as well as entities whose unity seems to be due solely to the use of a count noun, such as ‘bodies of water’, ‘amounts of alcohol’, ‘quantities of salt’. I will pursue the question to what extent referents of such referential terms need to be viewed as mind-dependent, thus undermining the standard view of reference being a relation to parts of a mind-independent reality (Chomsky) or whether they can be made sense of as part of a selective ontology against the background of a permissive or maximalist conception of reality.