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teacher, NTUU «KPI»THE SEMANTIC FEATURES OF QUANTITATIVE  
VOCABULARY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

*The article deals with the means of expressing the concept of number in English, studies the use of different parts of speech for the implementation of the concept of number, analyzes their characteristics and semantic aspects. Category of number in the English language can be expressed by all the independent parts of speech, as well as specific units of structural parts of speech.*

**Key words:** number, amount, category, English system, seme, unit, collective, numerical words, semantic category.

**Коришук Т. Л. Семантические характеристики квантитативных лексических единиц английского языка.** Статья рассматривает средства выражения понятия «количество» в английском языке. Исследованы применение различных частей речи для реализации понятия количества, проанализированы их особенности и семантические аспекты. Категория количества в английском языке может быть выражена всеми самостоятельными частями речи, а также определенными единицами служебных частей речи.

**Ключевые слова:** число, количество, категория, английский язык, система, сема, единица, коллективное, численные слова, семантическая категория.

**Коришук Т. Л. Семантичні характеристики квантитативних одиниць англійської мови.** У статті розглянуто засоби вираження поняття «кількість» в англійській мові, досліджено вживання різних частин мови для реалізації поняття кількості, проаналізовано їх особливості та семантичні аспекти. Категорія кількості в англійській мові може бути виражена усіма самостійними частинами мови, а також певними одиницями службових частин мови.

**Ключові слова:** число, кількість, категорія, англійська мова, система, сема, одиниця, колективне, чисельні слова, семантична категорія.

Number is a philosophical category expressing certainty of an object, its size, date, volume, degree of properties development and more. This category is universal and necessary in terms of understanding reality. Category of quantity, as any logical category, finds its reflection in language on the morphemic, grammatical, lexical, phraseological and other levels and sublevels. Each language level generates a categorial system and each in its own way correlates with the number of categories [9, 121].

We should note also that some linguists include in the category of number of categories countability, fractionality and frequency, size and intensity (concentration, intensity, degree, etc.) According to another theory, universal category covers a number of the lower three categories: numbers, measures and chronicle order [9, 123].

Most linguists consider the number as a broad concept, which form different elements, including the most relevant ones. These are the number, size and multiplicity. Recognition of the number, size and multiplicity of components of the category number is not random [1, 12].

Semantic continuum of quantity language field is represented by background semes of number and extent [7, 198]. The basic means of expression of a discrete number at the lexical level is introduced by numeral, dominant word of counting system, each element of which describes a discrete set.

Language displays the number by means of which quantitative seme has a different way of expression and various representations. Each language system singles out a group of lexemes that relate to different parts of speech actualizing category of number [7, 26]. Primary quantitative actualization is expressed through forms of grammatical category of number, secondary – using different lexical items of different lexical and grammatical categories [6, 28].

Quantitative unit is a lexical unit that indicates or transmits seme of amount. It can be a word or phrase that refers to the lexical-semantic field of quantity.

The structure of lexical-semantic field of quantity, as noted by Shvachko S.A. [8, 16], is organized as follows: in the center are direct specific values of quantitatively-defined, self-quantitative, fractional and collective numerals; then go lexemes of indefinite-quantitative meaning; outside - quantitative nouns and noun equivalents of fractional numerals; and apart are numerals that in result of transfer of stylistic and functional characteristics of a load of one part on speech on the characteristics of the other parts of speech lose their semantic function and may be taken as an adjective, pronoun, noun. Peripheral circle contains words of portable quantitative value; there are still derivatives, consisting of adverbs of numerical origin; and the last group consists of phraseological units and components which are devoid of quantitative meaning, but their complete semantics is quantitative [8, 37].

Quantitative vocabulary may be expressed by different parts of speech. On this occasion Shvachko S.A. said that numerals are central to the lexical-semantic field of quantity. This is due to their regular correlation with the range of natural numbers, their replacement of countable items (words), their massive use, involvement in direct and indirect counting, ability to nominate exact, approximate and indefinite quantitative characteristics [8, 42].

It follows that each of the numerals realizing these things total numbers, which gives him reason to be correlated with the total number of words, the value of, and the specific number of these things that separates one numeral from another [3, 20].

English numerals are multifunctional. Therefore the following functions are distinguished: nominative-quantitative function, by which results are expressed knowledge of the quantitative relations of the objective world; cognitive function that summarizes and analyzes the complex, stepwise quantitative way of exploring the reality; a pragmatic function that provides emotional and volitional influence on the recipient in terms of idiomatic context; derivational function of numeratives.

Another group of quantitative units is nouns. Noun in the English language has the ability to not only be determined quantitatively, but also serve the function of quantitative determinant. Among nouns there are some that on the one hand relate to counting and on the other hand with measuring. The functioning of these two groups of words is due to the nature of quantified objects.

In linguistic studies, quantitative nouns have different terminology: «countable nouns», «quantitative words», «countable words», «defined quantitative word», «word of weights and measures», «substantival quantifiers», «words of number and amount», «quasi nouns».

Among nouns in English are such numerical word groups:

words of collective type: *crowd, class, band*;

words related to counting: *dozen, score*;

words of measure and weight: *foot, yard, fathom, pound*.

On the paradigmatic level, the first group actualizes the meaning of unidentified quantity, while the second two are numerical constants. The first group of words adjacent units that realize the value specified is dangerous quantities. For more detailed analysis, among quantitative semantics groups of nouns in the English language are distinguished collective nouns (1), numerical words (2), the words of measure and weight (3). The first group differs from others in that they are undefined number actualizations (minority, majority, and multitude).

Particular attention is drawn to composite nouns. Quantifying objects and phenomena of the surrounding world is closely related to extralinguistic factors in terms of the ability of sense-data objects to quantitative doubling, tripling and even their existence in an infinite number as opposed to a single object of a given class. This includes names of specific discrete entities that are unmarked form for singular and opposition to it labeled plural form.

The task of expressing singularity is in the form of unmarked noun. The set significantly expands the spatial volume, a picture of a large amount of space, the vague plurality. Here intersect quantitative value of the marked and unmarked specific forms of collective nouns – the most mysterious level of English nouns [6, 94].

The analysis of the papers [3, 4; 9] concerning the analysis of collective nouns confirms the absence of unanimity in the views of scientists at the category of nouns. Collective nouns are believed to be ones that in their unmarked form express a set of unspecified number of separate homogeneous objects found in the syntactic structure of singularity or plurality through a number of forms that are syntactically dependent and correlated words [1, 225–230].

Linguists refer to this group of English nouns that in unmarked form of represent indefinite number of identical (at the agreed basis) individual units combined on the basis of genus-species feature, which is conceived as a whole [3, 30; 4, 191].

The idea of «collectivity» occurs:

a) in the category of people united by one goal or purpose, such as: *crew, congregation, nation, jury, team, senate, horde, etc*;

b) when naming objects species: *a flock (of sheep), a brood (of young pigs), a farrow (of young pigs)*;

c) when marking groups of living beings or inanimate objects: *a galaxy (of stars), a crowd (of daffodils)*;

d) on semantization the multiplicity of diverse elements: *finery, furniture, cutlery*.

Collective and concrete nouns have certain distinctive features: a concrete noun gives the name of one object, a collective - to the group of objects [4, 27; 5, 75].

On the syntagmatic level numerical words (2) and words of measure and weight (3) are capable of implementing a rough and uncertain quantity. These words express the approximate number when:

1) some numerals used in front of them: *two-three acres*;

2) nouns take prepositive position: *a bushel or two*.

Nouns implement an undefined quantity when:

a) words, combined with nouns, are deprived of numerical content: *some meters, several liters*;

b) a phrase includes convertible numerals: *thousands of gallons, tens of kilometers*;

c) quantitative words that were changed due to desamentization: *pounds of pardon*;

d) negative words related to numerical phrases: *not eight bushels*.

Nouns express quantitative relations more variably than numerals. Nouns can be determined both quantitatively and perform quantitative nominations of indiscrete and discrete items. The choice of words is due to the quantity of their belonging to a specific language structures. For example, the concepts of «group» or «piece» in English refers a number of word-classifiers: *a school of fish, a slice of cheese, a flight of doves, a colony of bees, a lump of sugar, a pride of lions*.

The third group consists of pronouns. Among pronouns a group of quantitative function is singled out that implements quantitative determinants that are important for precision specified is dangerous and quantity. For example a group of pronouns showing «singularity» forms the semantic opposition definite – indefinite (each: every).

The value of many / few in English is presented by a number of lexical, forming the opposition much – little, many – few. Among pronouns that indicate indefinite quantity, following units are distinguished: *all, some, whole, expressing the idea of the total number, partially et al.* [5, 251].

Quantitative adjectives form the fourth group of quantitative units. Among them there are two groups of words related to the notion of computation and measurement. The first group of words realizes these things among both explicitly and implicitly. For example: decimal, dipterous, tripartite and others. A group of adjectives realizes the meaning of identified quantity. For example: *distant, great, high, long, old, tall, wide, young and others*. Some adjectives can take gradual signs: *deep knowledge, wide erudition*.

Grammatical forms of adjectives significantly affect the combination of adjective adverb. For example, adverbs with the meaning of incomplete features combined with the highest degree of adjectives (*a bit redder, partially greyer*), adverbs with the meaning of full feature are combined with the usual degree of adjectives (*quite low, genuinely blue*). Parametric adjectives are adjacent postpositively to numerical phrases: *three miles long, two fathom deep, 3 in. deep*.

Fifth group is not numerous. It includes the verbs, the semantics of which are quantitative. The verb because of its semantics rarely expresses quantity. Grammatical characteristics of verbs are of indirect nature, lexical expression of number in the verb is able to differentiate the dynamics of quantitative relations based on the categorical meaning of procedure, which is characteristic of the verb.

So, in the semantic structure of verbs in English that correlate with the number of lexical means of expression quantity, along with semes of action quantitative features of action are distinguished. For example, *to increase, to decrease, to lower*. These verbs reveal indefinite quantity, which is characteristic of English verbs. Unlike nouns and adjectives, verbs do not show definite number. The exceptions are only conversives *to double, to quarter et al.* [2, 93].

At the same time, the verb can transmit the concept of quantity more specifically. The category of number realizes through the verb-forms in opposition «boundedness – unboundedness» or through generic forms. In this case, the verb does not nominate the quantity but reflects the dynamic of the quantitative relations in the direction of their increase or decrease:

a) *reduce (to decrease, to decline, to fall, to drop)*.

b) *increase (to add, to reach, to climb, to jump)*.

Verbs «to multiply, to expand, to rise, to increase» express quantitative feature and action simultaneously. Semantic implicit meaning finds its expression in the grammatical form: to people, to troop do not combine with the subject in the singular [5, 39].

The sixth group of typological lexical-grammatical means of expression quantity is adverbs. Adverbs in English are also used to express large, small, excessive, insufficient, full or partial degree or extent of some characteristic or feature, which by means of words is combined with adverbs. For example, in combination with adjectives or numerals adverbs perform emphasizing or weakening function; they neutralize or stress features marked with an adjective or numerals. For example: *just four hours, nearly eight o'clock*.

Adverb indicates the extent of the number both independently and in combination with other words: *lately, not far from here, more than two hours*.

Adverbs in English are able to express the meaning of the degree and extent, for example: *very, enough, nearly, almost, hardly, rather, etc.* Expressing the degree or extent of a quantitative characteristic, adverbs realize the inexact quantity both independently and in combination with other words: *time and again, not far from here, soon*. Number of items can be expressed in different ways: *many books, much rice, little hail, few cats*. *Much, many, few, little* are used to indicate indefinite quantity.

In English, the number can be expressed through some structural parts of speech, namely, functional words, for example, *among, between*. The first one indicates the presence of more than two persons and objects, the latter – only two.

With all the above mentioned and the analysis conducted it can be said that quantity and number in English language is a category that can be realized through different units of speech and language.

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