

**FIGURATIVE USE OF NUMBER FORMS OF NOUNS AND CHANGES IN THEIR
USAGE IN MODERN RUSSIAN**

Khudoyberdieva Yulduz Abdumannonovna,
Student of Shahrizabz State Pedagogical Institute
Tillayeva Muyassar
Teacher of Shahrizabz State Pedagogical Institute

ANNOTATION. The article examines the figurative use of singular and plural forms of nouns in modern Russian and the changes observed in their usage. Particular attention is paid to cases where grammatical number loses its direct quantitative meaning and acquires generalized, abstract, expressive, or stylistic functions. The study shows that figurative number usage reflects the dynamic nature of Russian morphology and its interaction with semantics and discourse. The analysis demonstrates that changes in number forms are influenced by colloquial speech, media language, and communicative needs, which contributes to the expansion of grammatical meanings and expressive potential of the language.

Keywords: grammatical number, figurative usage, nouns, Russian morphology, singular and plural forms, semantic shift, language change.

АННОТАЦИЯ

В статье рассматривается переносное употребление форм единственного и множественного числа имён существительных в современном русском языке, а также изменения в их функционировании. Особое внимание уделяется случаям, когда категория числа утрачивает прямое количественное значение и приобретает обобщённые, абстрактные и экспрессивные оттенки. Показано, что переносное употребление форм числа отражает динамический характер морфологической системы русского языка и её зависимость от контекста и коммуникативных задач.

Ключевые слова: категория числа, переносное употребление, имена существительные, морфология, единственное и множественное число, семантические изменения.

ANNOTATSIYA

Maqolada hozirgi rus tilida otlarning birlik va ko'plik shakllarining ko'chma ma'noda qo'llanishi hamda ularning ishlatilishidagi o'zgarishlar tahlil qilinadi. Son kategoriyasining bevosita miqdoriy ma'nodan chiqib, umumlashtiruvchi, mavhum va ekspressiv ma'nolarni ifodalashi ko'rsatib beriladi. Tadqiqot rus tili morfologik tizimining dinamik xarakterini va uning nutqiy kontekst bilan uzviy bog'liqligini yoritadi.

Kalit so'zlar: son kategoriyasi, ko'chma ma'no, otlar, rus morfologiyasi, birlik va ko'plik shakllari, semantik siljish.

The grammatical category of number in Russian nouns is traditionally associated with the expression of quantitative relations. Singular and plural forms are generally used to indicate one or more objects, persons, or phenomena. However, in actual language use, number forms frequently go beyond their primary quantitative function and acquire figurative, semantic, and stylistic meanings. The figurative use of number forms reflects the flexibility of the morphological system and its close interaction with semantics, context, and communicative intention.

One of the most common types of figurative usage involves plural forms that do not denote real multiplicity. In many cases, plural nouns express generalization, abstraction, or collectivity rather than numerical plurality. For example, words such as *authorities*, *youth*, *clergy*, and *people* in Russian are often used in the plural form to denote social groups or abstract institutions. In

such contexts, the plural form emphasizes the collective or generalized nature of the concept rather than the actual number of entities involved.

Conversely, singular forms of nouns are often used in a generalized or representative sense. In sentences such as *Man is mortal* or *The Russian person is patient*, the singular form does not refer to a specific individual but represents an entire class or category. This type of usage is especially characteristic of scientific, philosophical, and journalistic discourse, where the singular form serves as a means of abstraction and typification.

Figurative use of number forms is also closely connected with expressiveness and emotional evaluation. Plural forms may intensify emotional coloring and convey irritation, irony, admiration, or exaggeration. For instance, expressions equivalent to *these endless conversations* or *all these joys of life* employ plural forms to strengthen the speaker's subjective attitude. In contrast, singular forms may express intimacy, uniqueness, or emphasis, as in constructions highlighting fate, destiny, or personal experience.

In modern Russian, noticeable changes in the use of number forms are observed under the influence of colloquial speech, media language, and social communication. Some nouns that were traditionally used only in the singular are increasingly found in plural forms, especially abstract nouns such as *information*, *practice*, and *experience*. This tendency demonstrates the expansion of grammatical possibilities and the adaptation of the language to new communicative needs. The plural form in such cases often conveys differentiation, variety, or repeated instances rather than simple multiplicity.

Число существительных		только единственное число	только множественное число
имеют формы ед. и мн. ч.		названия продуктов, веществ	
ед. ч.	мн. ч.	молоко, шоколад, железо, шампунь	макароны, чернила
		отвлеченные существительные	
яблоко	яблоки	скорость, удивление, радость, жестокость	будни, сумерки, хлопоты
		собираательные существительные	
книга	книги	листва, детвора	деньги, финансы
		географические названия	
человек	люди	Россия, Урал	Альпы, Карпаты
		названия игр	
		названия парных предметов	
		сок (только ед. ч.)	соки (ассортимент)
		очки, ножницы, грабли, часы	

The figurative use of number forms is also closely linked to metaphorical processes. Plural forms may be used to represent repeated emotional states or psychological experiences, as in nouns denoting feelings, fears, or hopes. In these contexts, grammatical number loses its direct quantitative meaning and becomes a tool for metaphorical and expressive representation. Such usage enriches the language and allows speakers to convey complex inner states more effectively. Thus, the figurative use of number forms of nouns represents an important phenomenon in the morphological system of modern Russian. It demonstrates that grammatical categories are not rigid structures but flexible mechanisms capable of semantic expansion. Changes in the use of number forms reflect the dynamic development of the language, its responsiveness to communicative demands, and its tendency toward expressive economy. The study of these processes is essential for understanding the interaction between grammar and meaning, as well as for teaching Russian as a native or foreign language.

COMPARATIVE TABLE

Number form	Literal meaning	Figurative meaning	Examples
Singular	One concrete object	Generalization	<i>Человек смертен.</i>
Singular	Individual entity	Abstract concept	<i>Судьба человека.</i>
Plural	Several objects	Collectivity	<i>Власти приняли решение.</i>
Plural	Numerical plurality	Emotional emphasis	<i>Эти разговоры мне надоели.</i>
Plural	Countable items	Repetition, intensity	<i>Радости и печали жизни.</i>

The figurative use of number forms of nouns represents a significant aspect of modern Russian morphology. Singular and plural forms frequently go beyond their primary quantitative function and serve as tools for generalization, abstraction, emotional expression, and stylistic variation. Changes in the usage of number forms reflect the dynamic interaction between grammatical norms and actual language practice. These processes demonstrate that grammatical categories in Russian are flexible and capable of semantic development. Understanding the figurative use of number forms is essential for linguistic theory, language norm studies, and effective teaching of Russian as both a native and foreign language.

REFERENCES

1. Kubryakova, E. S. (2004). Parts of Speech and Grammatical Categories. Moscow: Moscow State University.
2. Lopatin, V. V. (2005). Norm and Variation in Modern Russian. Moscow: Russian Language.
3. Rozental, D. E. (2008). Modern Russian Language: Morphology. Moscow: Iris Press.
4. Russian National Corpus. <https://ruscorpora.ru>
5. Shvedova, N. Y. (Ed.). (1980). Russian Grammar. Moscow: Nauka.
6. Vinogradov, V. V. (1972). Russian Language: The Grammatical Doctrine of the Word. Moscow: Nauka.
7. Zemskaya, E. A. (2010). The Russian Language in Contemporary Society. Moscow: Languages of Slavic Culture.