**Contents:**

* 1. Introduction

1.1. General characteristics of the work

1.2. General Characteristics of English Nouns

The Main Part

2.1. Main Features of English Nouns

2.1.1. The Category of Case

2.1.2. The Category of Number of English Nouns

2.2. Structural Semantic Characteristics of English Nouns

2.2.1. Morphological Characteristics of Nouns

2.2.2. Syntactical Characteristics of Nouns

2.2.3. Characteristics of nouns due the way of their composition

2.2.4. Semantical Characteristics of Nouns

2.3. English Nouns in Speech

2.3.1. Noun Grammemes in Speech

2.3.2. The Use of Articles with Nouns in Some Set Expsessions

2.3.3. Test Exercises

2.4. Comparison of English and Russian nouns

* 1. Conclusion
  2. Bibliography
  3. Appendix

**I. Introduction**

**1.1 General characteristics of the work**

The theme of my qualification work sounds as following: “English Nouns and Their Structural Semantic Characteristics”. This qualification work can be characterized by the following:

2. Actuality of the theme.

The noun is a word expressing substance in the widest sense of the word. In the concept of substance we include not only names of living beings (e.g. boy, girl, bird) and lifeless things (e.g. table, chair, book), but also names of abstract notions, i.e. qualities, slates, actions (kindness, strength, sleep, fear, conversation, fight), abstracted from their bearers. In speech these types of nouns are treated in different ways, so one, who does not know ways of treatment, can make mistakes in his speech. Standing on such ground, we considered the theme of the work actual enough to make investigation.

3. The tasks and aims of the work.

1. The first aim of my work is to give definition to the term “noun”.

2. Second task is to describe main features of English nouns.

3. Third task of my work is to give structural semantics characteristics to English nouns.

4. The novelty of the work.

Our work possesses novelty concluded in the fact that I worked out my own test exercises dealt with the composition of nouns and right usage of them.[[1]](#footnote-1)

5. Practical significance of the work.

In our opinion the practical significance of our work is hard to be overvalued. This work reflects modern trends in linguistics and we hope it would serve as a good manual for those who wants to master modern English language.

6. Ways of scientific investigation used within the work.

The main method for compiling our work is the method of comparative analysis, translation method and the method of statistical research.

7. Fields of amplification.

The present work might find a good way of implying in the following spheres:

1. In High Schools and scientific circles of linguistic kind it can be successfully used by teachers and philologists as modern material for writing research works dealing with English nouns.

2. It can be used by teachers of schools, lyceums and colleges by teachers of English as a practical manual for teaching English grammar.

3. It can be useful for everyone who wants to enlarge his/her knowledge in English.

8. Linguists worked with the theme.

As the base for our qualification work we used the works of Russian linguists B.I.Rogovskaya, V. Kaushanskaya, M. Blokh and others [[2]](#footnote-2).

8. Content of the work.

The present qualification work consists of four parts: introduction, the main part, conclusion and bibliography. It also includes the appendix where some interesting tables, schemes and illustrative thematic materials were gathered. Within the introduction part, which includes two items we gave the brief description of our qualification work (the first item) and gave general notion of the word “noun”. The main part of our qualification work includes several items. There we discussed such problems as main features of English nouns, structural-semantic characteristics of them, and described ways of treatment of English nouns in speech. We also compared nouns of English and Russian languages. In the conclusion to our qualification work we tried to draw some results from the scientific investigations made within the main part of our qualification work. In bibliography part we mentioned more than 20 sources of which were used while compiling the present work. It includes linguistic books and articles dealing with the theme, a number of used dictionaries and encyclopedias and also some internet sources.

**1.2 General Characteristics of English Nouns**

The word "noun" comes from the Latin nomen meaning "name." Word classes like nouns were first described by Sanskrit grammarian Painini and ancient Greeks like Dionysios Thrax, and defined in terms of their morphological properties. For example, in Ancient Greece, nouns can be inflected for grammatical case, such as dative or accusative. Verbs, on the other hand, can be inflected for tenses, such as past, present or future, while nouns cannot. Aristotle also had a notion of onomata (nouns) and rhemata (verbs) which, however, does not exactly correspond our notions of verbs and nouns. In her dissertation, Vinokurova has a more detailed discussion of the historical origin of the notion of a noun.

## Expressions of natural language will have properties at different levels. They have formal properties, like what kinds of morphological prefixes or suffixes they can take, and what kinds of other expressions they can combine with. but they also have semantic properties, i.e. properties pertaining to their meaning. The definition of nouns on the top of this page is thus a formal definition. That definition is uncontroversial, and has the advantage that it allows us to effectively distinguish nouns from non-nouns. However, it has the disadvandage that it does not apply to nouns in all languages. For example in Russian, there are no definite articles, so one cannot define nouns by means of those. There are also several attempts of defining nouns in terms of their semantic properties. Many of these are controversial, but some are discussed below.

In traditional school grammars, one often encounters the definition of nouns that they are all and only those expressions that refer to a person, place, thing, event, substance, quality, or idea, etc. This is a semantic definition. It has been criticized by contemporary linguists as being quite uninformative. Part of the problem is that the definition makes use of relatively general nouns ("thing," "phenomenon," "event") to define what nouns are. The existence of such general nouns shows us that nouns are organized in taxonomic hierarchies. But other kinds of expressions are also organized in hierarchies. For example all of the verbs "stroll," "saunter," "stride," and "tread" are more specific words than the more general "walk." The latter is more specific than the verb "move." But it is unlikely that such hierarchies can be used to define nouns and verbs. Furthermore, an influential theory has it that verbs like "kill" or "die" refer to events, and so they fall under the definition. Similarly, adjectives like "yellow" or "difficult" might be thought to refer to qualities, and adverbs like "outside" or "upstairs" seem to refer to places. Worse still, a trip into the woods can be referred to by the verbs "stroll" or "walk." But verbs, adjectives and adverbs are not nouns, and nouns aren't verbs. So the definition is not particularly helpful in distinguishing nouns from other parts of speech.

Another semantic definition of nouns is that they are prototypically referential. That definition is also not very helpful in distinguishing actual nouns from verbs. But it may still correctly identify a core property of nounhood. For example, we will tend to use nouns like "fool" and "car" when we wish to refer to fools and cars, respectively. The notion that this is prototypocal reflects the fact that such nouns can be used, even though nothing with the corresponding property is referred to:

John is no fool.

If I had a car, I'd go to Marakech.

The first sentence above doesn't refer to any fools, nor does the second one refer to any particular car.

In most cases in treating English nouns we shall keep to the conception of scientists that we refer to post-structural tendency It's because they combine the ideas of traditional and structural grammarians. The noun is classified into a separate word- group because:

1 .they all have the same lexical - grammatical meaning :

substance / thing

2.according to their form - they've two grammatical categories:

number and case

3.they all have typical stem-building elements :

- er, - ist, - ship, - ment, -hood ....

4.typical combinability with other words:

most often left-hand combinability.

5.function - the most characteristic feature of nouns is - they can be observed in all syntactic functions but predicate.

From the grammatical point of view most important is the division of nouns into countables and un-countables with regard to the category of number and into declinables and indeclinables with regard to the category of case[[3]](#footnote-3). So after describing grammatical categories of English nouns we will try to classify them from different points of view.

**II. The Main Part**

**2.1 Main Features of English Nouns.**

**2.1.1 The Category of Case**

The category of case of nouns is the system of opposemes (such as girl—girl's in English, дом — дома — дому — дом — домом — (о) доме in Russian) showing the relations of the noun to other words in speech. Case relations reflect the relations of the substances the nouns name to other substances, actions, states, etc. in the world of reality [[4]](#footnote-4). In the sentence ‘I took John's hat by mistake’ the case of the noun ‘John's’ shows its relation to the noun hat, which is some reflection of the relations between John and his hat in reality.

Case is one of those categories which show the close connection:

(a) between language and speech,

(b) between morphology and syntax.

(a) A case opposeme is, like any other opposeme, a unit of the language system, but the essential difference between the members of a case opposeme is in their combinability in speech. This is particularly clear in a language like Russian with a developed case system. Compare, for instance, the combinability of the nominative case and that of the oblique cases. See also the difference in the combinability of each oblique case: одобрять поступок, .не одобрять поступка, удивляться поступку, восхищаться поступком, etc.

We can see here that the difference between the cases is not so much a matter of meaning as a matter of combinability. It can be said that поступок — поступка — поступку, etc. are united paradigmatically in the Russian language on the basis of their syntagmatic differences in speech. Similarly, the members of the case opposeme John — John's are united paradigmatically on the basis of their syntagmatic differences.

Naturally, both members of an English noun case opposeme have the features of English nouns, including their combinability. Thus, they may be preceded by an article, an adjective, a numeral, a pronoun, etc.

a student .... a student's ...

the student..., the student's ...

a good student ..., a good student's ...

his brother ..., his brother's ...

the two brothers ..., the two brothers' ...

Yet, the common case grammemes are used in a variety of combinations where the possessive case grammemes do not, as a rule, occur. In the following examples, for instance, John's or boys' can hardly be substituted for John or boys: John saw the boys, The boys were seen by John, It was owing to the boys that ..., The boys and he ..., etc.

(b) Though case is a morphological category it has a distinct syntactical significance. The common case grammemes fulfil a number of syntactical functions not typical of possessive case grammemes, among them the functions of subject and object. The possessive case noun is for the most part employed as an attribute.

All case opposemes are identical in content: they contain two particular meanings, of 'common' case and 'possessive' case, united by the general meaning of the category, that of 'case'. There is not much variety in the form of case opposemes either, which distinguishes English from Russian.

An English noun lexeme may contain two case opposemes at most (man —man's, men —men's). Some lexemes have but one opposeme (England — England's, cattle — cattle's). Many lexemes have no case opposemes at all (book, news, foliage),

In the opposeme dog — dog's, men — men's, the 'common' case is not marked, i.e. dog and men have zero morphemes of 'common case'. The 'possessive' case is marked by the suffix -'s /-s, -z, -iz/. In the opposeme dogs — dogs.' the difference between the opposites is marked only in writing. Otherwise the two opposites do not differ in form. So with regard to each other they are-not marked.

Thus, -'s is the only positive case morpheme of English nouns. It would be no exaggeration to say that the whole category' depends on this morpheme.

As already mentioned, with regard to the category of case English nouns fall under two lexico-grammatical subclasses: declinables, having case opposites, and indeclinables, having no case opposites.

The subclass of declinables is comparatively limited, including mostly nouns denoting living beings, also time and distance [[5]](#footnote-5).

Indeclinables like book, iron, care have, as a norm, only the potential (or oblique, or lexico-grammatical) meaning of the common case. But it is sometimes actualized when a case opposite of these words is formed in speech, as in ‘The book's philosophy is old-fashioned’. (The Tribune, Canada).

As usual, variants of one lexeme may belong to different subclasses. Youth meaning 'the state of being young' belongs to the indeclinables. Its variant youth meaning 'a young man' has a case opposite (The youth's candid smile disarmed her. Black and belongs to the declinables.

Since both cases and prepositions show 'relations of substances', some linguists speak of analytical cases in Modern English. To the student is said to be an analytical dative case (equivalent, for instance, to the Russian студенту), of the student is understood as an analytical genitive case (equivalent to студента), by the student as an analytical instrumental case (cf. студентом), etc.

The theory of analytical cases seems to be inconvincing for a number of reasons.

1. In order to treat the combinations of the student, to the student, by the student as analytical words (like shall come or has come) we must regard of, to, with as grammatical word-morphemes [[6]](#footnote-6). But then they are to be devoid of lexical meaning, which they are not. Like most words a preposition is usually polysemantic and each meaning is singled out in speech, in a sentence or a word-combination. Cf. to speak of the student, the speech of the student, news of the student, it was kind of the student, what became of the student, etc.

In each case of shows one of its lexical meanings. Therefore it cannot be regarded as a grammatical word-morpheme and the combination of the student cannot be treated as an analytical word.

2. A grammatical category, as known, is represented in opposemes comprising a definite number of members. Combinations with different prepositions are too numerous to be interpreted as opposemes representing the category of case[[7]](#footnote-7).

The number of cases in English becomes practically unlimited .

3. Analytical words usually form opposemes with synthetic ones[[8]](#footnote-8) (comes — came — will come). With prepositional constructions it is different. They are often synonymous with synthetic words.

E. g. the son of my friend == my friend's son; the wall of the garden == the. garden wall.

On the other hand, prepositional constructions can be used side by side with synthetic cases, as in that doll of Mary's, a friend of John's. If we accepted the theory of analytical cases, we should see in of John's a double-case word[[9]](#footnote-9) , which would be some rarity in English, there being •'no double-tense words nor double-aspect words and the like [[10]](#footnote-10).

4. There is much subjectivity in the choice of prepositions supposed to form analytical cases[[11]](#footnote-11) . Grammarians usually point out those prepositions whose meanings approximate to the meanings of some cases in other languages or in Old English. But the analogy with other languages or with an older stage of the same language does not prove the existence of a given category in a modern language.

Therefore we think it unjustified to speak of units like to the student, of the student, etc. as of analytical cases. They are combinations of nouns in the common case with prepositions.

The morpheme -'s, on which the category of case of English nouns depends (§ 83), differs in some respects from other grammatical morphemes of the English language and from the case morphemes of other languages.

As emphasized by B. A. Ilyish [[12]](#footnote-12), -'s is no longer a case inflexion in the classical sense of the word. Unlike such classical inflexions, -'s may be attached

a) to adverbs (of substantival origin), as in yesterday's events,

b) to word-groups, as in Mary and John's apartment, our professor of literature's unexpected departure,

c) even to whole clauses, as in the well-worn example the man I saw yesterday's son.

В. A. Ilyish comes to-the conclusion that the -'s morpheme gradually develops into a "form-word"[[13]](#footnote-13), a kind of particle serving to convey the meaning of belonging, possession[[14]](#footnote-14).

G. N. Vorontsova does not recognize –‘s as a case morpheme at all[[15]](#footnote-15). The reasons she puts forward to substantiate her point of view are as follows:

1) The use of -'s is optional (her brother's, of her brother).

2) It is used with a limited group of nouns outside which it occurs very seldom.

3) -'s is used both in the singular and in the plural (child's, children's), which is not incident- to case morphemes (cf. мальчик-а, мальчик-ов).

4) It occurs in very few plurals, only those with the irregular formation of the plural member (oxen's but cows').

5) -'s does not make an inseparable part of the structure of the word. It may be placed at some distance from the head-noun of an attributive group.

"Been reading that fellow what's his name's attacks in the 'Sunday Times'?" (Bennett).

Proceeding from these facts G. N. Vorontsova treats -'s as a 'postposition', a 'purely syntactical form-word resembling a preposition', used as a sign of syntactical dependence[[16]](#footnote-16).

In keeping with this interpretation of the -'s morpheme the author denies the existence of cases in Modern English.

At present, however, this extreme point of view can hardly be accepted [[17]](#footnote-17). The following arguments tend to show that -'s does function as a case morpheme.

1. The -'s morpheme is mostly attached to individual nouns e, not noun groups. According to our statistics this is observed in 96 per cent of examples with this morpheme. Instances like The man I saw yesterday's son are very rare and may be interpreted in more ways than one. As already mentioned, the demarcation line between words and combinations of words is very vague in English. A word-combination can easily be made to function as one word.

Cf. a hats-cleaned-by-electricity-while-you-wait establishment (O. Henry), the eighty-year-olds (D. W.).

In the last example the plural morpheme -s is in fact attached to an adjective word-combination, turning it into a noun. It can be maintained that the same morpheme –‘s likewise substantivizes the group of words to which it is attached, and we get something like the man-1-saw-yesterday's son.

2. Its general meaning — "the relation of a noun to an other word" — is a typical case meaning.

3. The fact that -'s occurs, as a rule, with a more or less limited group of words bears testimony to its not being a "preposition-like form word". The use of the preposition is determined, chiefly, by the meaning of the preposition itself and not by the meaning of the noun it introduces (Cf. оn the table, in the table, under the table, over the table etc.)

4. The fact that the possessive case is expressed in oxen — oxen's by -'s and in cows — cows' by zero cannot serve as an argument against the existence of cases in English nouns because -'s and zero are here forms of the same morpheme

a) Their meanings are identical.

b) Their distribution is complementary.

5. As a minor argument against the view that -'s is "a preposition-like word", it is pointed out[[18]](#footnote-18) that -'s differs phonetically from all English prepositions in not having a vowel, a circumstance limiting its independence.

Yet, it cannot be denied that the peculiarities of the -'s morpheme are such as to admit no doubt of its being essentially different from the case morphemes of other languages. It is evident that the case system of Modern English is undergoing serious changes.

2.1.2. The Category of Number of English Nouns.

The category of number of English nouns is the system of opposemes (such as girl — girls, foot — feet, etc.) showing whether the noun stands for one object or more than one, in other words, whether its grammatical meaning is 'oneness' or 'more-than-oneness' of objects.

The connection of the category with the world of material reality, though indirect, is quite transparent. Its meanings reflect the existence of individual objects and groups of objects in the material world.

All number opposemes are identical in content: they contain two particular meanings of 'singular' and 'plural' united by the general meaning of the category, that of 'number'. But there is a considerable variety of form in number opposemes, though it is not so great as in the Russian language.

An English noun lexeme can contain two number opposemes at most (toy — boys, boy's — boys'). Many lexemes have but one opposeme (table — tables) and many others have no opposemes at all (ink, news).

In the opposeme boy — boys 'singularity' is expressed by a zero morpheme and 'plurality' is marked by the positive morpheme /-z/, in spelling -.s. In other words, the 'singular' member of the opposeme is not marked, and the 'plural' member is marked.

In the opposeme boy's — boys' both members have positive morphemes –‘s, -s’, but these morphemes can be distinguished only in writing. In the spoken language their forms do not differ, so with regard to each other they are unmarked. They can be distinguished only by their combinability (cf. a boy's head, boys' heads).

In a few noun lexemes of foreign origin both members of a number opposeme are marked, e.g. symposium — symposia, genus — genera, phenomenon—phenomena, etc. But in the process of assimilation this peculiarity of foreign nouns gets gradually lost, and instead of medium — media a new opposeme develops, medium — mediums; instead of formula — formulae, the usual form now is formula — formulas. In this process, as we see, the foreign grammatical morphemes are neglected as such. The ‘plural’ morpheme is dropped altogether. The 'singular' morpheme becomes part of the stem. Finally, the regular -s ending is added to form the 'plural' opposite. As a result the 'singular' becomes unmarked, as typical of English, and the 'plural' gets its usual mark, the suffix -s.

Since the 'singular' member of a number opposeme is not marked, the form of the opposeme is, as a rule, determined by the form of the 'plural' morpheme, which, in its turn, depends upon the stem of the lexeme.

In the overwhelming majority of cases the form of the 'plural' morpheme is /-s/, /-z/, or /-z/, in spelling -(e)s, e. g, books, boys, matches.

With the stem ox- the form of the 'plural' morpheme is -en /-n/.

In the opposeme man—men the form of the 'plural' morpheme is the vowel change /æ > e/. In woman — women ii is /u > i/, in foot — feet it is /u — i:/, etc.

In child — children the form of the 'plural' morpheme is complicated. It consists of the vowel change /ai > i/ and the suffix -ren.

In sheep — sheep the 'plural' is not marked, thus coinciding in form with the 'singular'. They can be distinguished only by their combinability: ‘one sheep’, ‘five sheep’, ‘a sheep was ...’, ‘sheep were ...’, ‘this sheep’, ‘these sheep’. The 'plural' coincides in form with the 'singular' also in ‘deer, fish, carp, perch, trout, cod, salmon’, etc.[[19]](#footnote-19)

All the 'plural' forms enumerated here are forms of the same morpheme. This can be proved, as we know , by the identity of the 'plural' meaning, and the complementary distribution of these forms, i.e. the fact that different forms are used with different stems.

As already mentioned [[20]](#footnote-20) , with regard to the category of number English nouns fall into two subclasses: countables and uncountables. The former have number opposites, the latter have not. Uncountable nouns are again subdivided into those having no plural opposites and those having no singular opposites.

Nouns like milk, geometry, self-possession having no plural opposites are usually called by a Latin name — singularia tantum. Nouns like outskirts, clothes, goods having no singular opposites are known as pluralia tantum.

As a matter of fact, those nouns which have no number opposites are outside the grammatical category of number. But on the analogy of the bulk of English nouns they acquire oblique (or lexico-grammatical) meanings of number. Therefore singularia tantum are often treated as singulars and pluralia tantum as plurals.

This is justified both by their forms and by their combinability.

Cf. This (table, book, milk, love) is ...

These (tables, books, clothes, goods) are ...

When combinability and form contradict each other, combinability is decisive, which accounts for the fact that ‘police’ or ‘cattle’ are regarded as plurals, and ‘measles’, ‘mathematics as singulars.

The lexico-grammatical meaning of a class (or of a subclass) of words is, as we know, an abstraction from the lexical meanings of the words of the class, and depends to a certain extent on those lexical meanings. Therefore singularia tantum usually include nouns of certain lexical meanings. They are mostly material, abstract and collective nouns, such as sugar, gold, butter, brilliance, constancy, selfishness, humanity, soldiery, peasantry.

Yet it is not every material, abstract or collective noun that belongs to the group of singularia tantum (e. g. a plastic, a feeling, a crowd) and, what is more important, not in all of its meanings does a noun belong to this group.

As we have already seen[[21]](#footnote-21), variants of the same lexeme may belong to different subclasses of a part of speech. In most of their meanings the words joy and sorrow as abstract nouns are singularia tantum.

E.g. He has been a good friend both in joy and in sоггоw. (Hornby).

But when concrete manifestations are meant, these nouns are countables and have plural opposites, e. g. the joys and sorrows of life.

Likewise, the words copper, tin, hair as material nouns are usually singularia tantum, but when they denote concrete objects, they become countables and get plural opposites: a copper — coppers, a tin — tins, a hair — hairs.

Similarly, when the nouns wine, steel, salt denote some sort or variety of the substance, they become countables.

E. g. an expensive wine — expensive wines.

All such cases are not a peculiarity of the English language alone. They are found in other languages as well. Cf. дерево — деревья and дерево .is a material noun, платье — платья and платье as a collective noun.

‘Joy’ and ‘a joy’, ‘beauty’ and ‘a beauty’, ‘copper’ and ‘a copper’, ‘hair’ and ‘a hair’ and many other pairs of this kind are not homonyms, as suggested by some grammarians[[22]](#footnote-22) , but variants of lexemes related by internal conversion.

If all such cases were regarded as homonyms, the number of homonyms in the English language would be practically limitless. If only some of them were treated as homonyms, that would give rise to uncontrolled subjectivity.

The group of pluralia tantum is mostly composed of nouns denoting objects consisting of two or more parts, complex phenomena or ceremonies, e. g. tongs, pincers, trousers, nuptials, obsequies. Here also belong some nouns with a distinct collective or material meaning, e.g. clothes, eaves, sweets.

Since in these words the -s suffix does not function as a grammatical morpheme, it gets lexicalized and develops into an inseparable part of the stem [[23]](#footnote-23). This, probably, underlies the fact that such nouns as mathematics, optics, linguistics, mumps, measles are treated as singularia tantum.

Nouns like police, militia, cattle, poultry are pluralia tantum, judging by their combinability, though not by form [[24]](#footnote-24).

People in the meaning of 'народ' is a countable noun. In the meaning of 'люди' it belongs to the pluralia tantum. Family in the sense of "a group of people who are related" is a countable noun. In the meaning of "individual members of this group" it belongs to the pluralia tantum. Thus, the lexeme family has two variants:

Sg. PL

1) family families

2) — family

E. g. Almost every family in the village has sent a man to the army. (Hornby).

Those were the oldest families in Jorkshire. (Black).

Her family were of a delicate constitution. (Bronte).

Similar variants are observed in the lexemes committee, government, board, crew, etc.

Colour in the meaning "red, green, blue, etc." is a countable noun. In the meaning "appearance of reality or truth" (e. g. His torn clothes gave colour to his story that lie had been attacked by robbers. A. Hornby.) it has no plural opposite and belongs to the singularia tantum. Colours in the sense of "materials used by painters and artists" has no singular opposite and belongs to the pluralia tantum.

Thus, the lexeme has three variants:

Sg. Pl.

1) colour colours

2) colour —

3) — colours.

When grammarians write that the lexical meanings of some plurals differ from those of their singular opposites [[25]](#footnote-25), they simply compare different variants of a lexeme.

Sometimes variants of a lexeme may belong to the same lexico-grammatical subclass and yet have different forms of number opposemes.

Cf. brother (son of same parents) — brothers

brother (fellow member) — brethren

fish — fish (e.g. I caught five fish yesterday.)

fish — fishes ('different species', e. g. ocean fishes).

A collective noun is a word that designates a group of objects or beings regarded as a whole, such as "flock", "team", or "corporation". Although many languages treat collective nouns as singular, in others they may be interpreted as plural. In British English, phrases such as the committee are meeting are common (the so-called agreement in sensu "in meaning", that is, with the meaning of a noun, rather than with its form). The use of this type of construction varies with dialect and level of formality.

All languages are able to specify the quantity of referents. They may do so by lexical means with words such as English a few, some, one, two, five hundred. However, not every language has a grammatical category of number. Grammatical number is expressed by morphological and/or syntactic means. That is, it is indicated by certain grammatical elements, such as through affixes or number words. Grammatical number may be thought of as the indication of semantic number through grammar.

Languages that express quantity only by lexical means lack a grammatical category of number. For instance, in Khmer, neither nouns nor verbs carry any grammatical information concerning number: such information can only be conveyed by lexical items such as khlah 'some', pii-bey 'a few', and so on.

Most languages of the world have formal means to express differences of number. The most widespread distinction, as found in English and many other languages, involves a simple two-way number contrast between singular and plural (car / cars; child / children, etc.). Other more elaborate systems of number are described below.

**2.2 Structural Semantic Characteristics of English Nouns**

**2.2.1 Morphological Characteristics of Nouns**

Due to the following morphological characteristics nouns can be classified in following ways:

1. Nouns that can be counted have two numbers: singular and plural (e. g. singular: a girl, plural: girls).

2. Nouns denoting living beings (and some nouns denoting lifeless things) have two case forms: the common case and the genitive case.

3. It is doubtful whether the grammatical category of gender exists in Modern English for it is hardly ever expressed by means of grammatical forms.

There is practically only one gender-forming suffix in Modern English, the suffix -es, expressing feminine gender. It is not widely used.

heir —heir-ess

poet — poet-ess

actor — actr-ess

waiter — waitr-ess

host - host-ess

lion — lion-ess

tiger — tigr-ess[[26]](#footnote-26)

**2.2.2 Syntactical Characteristics of Nouns**

Due the syntactical characteristics nouns can be classified in following ways:

The chief syntactical functions of the noun in the sentence are those of the subject and the object. But it may also be used as an attribute or a predicative.

The sun was rising in all his splendid beauty. (Dickens) (subject)

Troy and Yates followed the tourists. (Heym) (object)

He (Bosinney) was an architect ... (Galsworthy) (predicative)

Mary brought in the fruit on a tray and with it a glass bowl, and a blue dish... (Mansfield) (attribute; the noun glass is used in the common case)

The hero and heroine, of course, just arrived from his father's yacht. (Mansfield) (attribute; the noun father is used in the genitive case)

A noun preceded by a preposition (a prepositional phrase) may be used as attribute, prepositional indirect object, and adverbial modifier.

To the left were clean panes of glass. (Ch. Bronte) (attribute)

Bicket did not answer, his throat felt too dry. He had heard of the police. (Galsworthy) (object) She went into the drawing-room and lighted the fire. (Mansfield) (Adverbial modifier).

"Stop everything, Laura!" cried Jose in astonishment. (Mansfield) (Adverbial modifier).

The noun is generally associated with the article. Because of the comparative scarcity of morphological distinctions in English in some cases only articles show that the word is a noun.

A noun can be modified by an adjective, a pronoun, by another noun or by verbals.

**2.2.3 Characteristics of nouns due the way of their composition**

According to their morphological composition we distinguish simple, derivative and compound nouns.

1. Simple nouns are nouns which have neither prefixes no suffixes. They are indecomposable: chair, table, room, map, fish, work.

2. Derivative nouns are nouns which have derivative elements (prefixes or suffixes or both): reader, sailor, blackness, childhood, misconduct, inexperience.

Productive noun-forming suffixes are:

-er: reader, teacher, worker

-ist: communist, telegraphist, dramatist

-ess: heiress, hostess, actress

-ness: carelessness, madness, blackness

-ism: socialism, nationalism, imperialism

Unproductive suffixes are:

-hood: childhood, manhood

-dom: freedom

-ship: friendship, relationship

-meat: development

-ance: importance

-ence: dependence

-ty: cruelty

-ity: generosity

3. Compound nouns are nouns built from two or more stems. Compound nouns often have one stress. The meaning of a compound often differs from the meanings of its elements.

The main types of compound nouns are as follows:

(a) noun-stem+noun-stem: appletree, snowball;

(b) adjective-stem+noun-stem: blackbird, bluebell;

(c) verb-stem+noun-stem: pickpocket; the stem of a gerund or of a participle may be the first component of a compound noun:

dining-room, reading-hall, dancing-girl.

**2.2.4 Semantical Characteristics of Nouns**

Nouns fall under two classes: (A) proper nouns; (B) common nouns[[27]](#footnote-27).

a) Proper nouns are individual, names given to separate persons or things. As regards their meaning proper nouns may be personal names (Mary, Peter, Shakespeare), geographical names (Moscow, London, the Caucasus), the names of the months and of the days of the week (February, Monday), names of ships, hotels, clubs, etc.

A large number of nouns now proper were originally common nouns (Brown, Smith, Mason).

Proper nouns may change their meaning and become common nouns:

"George went over to the table and took a sandwich and a glass of champagne. (Aldington)

b) Common nouns are names that can be applied to any individual of ad ass of .persons or things (e.g. man, dog, book), collections of similar individuals or things regarded as a single unit (e. g. peasantry, family), materials (e. g. snow, iron, cotton) or abstract notions (e.g. kindness, development).

Thus there are different groups of common nouns: class nouns, collective nouns, nouns of material and abstract nouns.

1. Class nouns denote persons or things belonging to a class. They are countables and have two. numbers: singular and plural. They are generally used with an article.

"Well, sir," said Mrs. Parker, "I wasn't in the shop above a great deal." (Mansfield)

He goes to the part of the town where the shops are. (Lessing)

2. Collective nouns denote a number or collection of similar individuals or things as a single unit.

Collective nouns fall under the following groups:

(a) nouns used only in the singular and denoting-a number of things collected together and regarded as a single object: foliage, machinery.

It was not restful, that green foliage. (London)

Machinery new to the industry in Australia was introduced for preparing land. (Agricultural Gazette)

(b) nouns which are singular in form though plural in meaning:

police, poultry, cattle, people, gentry They are usually called nouns of multitude. When the subject of the sentence is a noun of multitude the verb used as predicate is in the plural:

I had no idea the police were so devilishly prudent. (Shaw)

Unless cattle are in good condition in calving, milk production will never reach a high level. (Agricultural Gazette)

The weather was warm and the people were sitting at their doors. (Dickens)

(c) nouns that may be both singular and plural: family, crowd, fleet, nation. We can think of a number of crowds, fleets or different nations as well as of a single crowd, fleet, etc.

A small crowd is lined up to see the guests arrive. (Shaw)

Accordingly they were soon afoot, and walking in the direction of the scene of action, towards which crowds of people were already pouring from a variety of quarters. (Dickens)

3. Nouns of material denote material: iron, gold, paper, tea, water. They are uncountables and are generally used without any article.

There was a scent of honey from the lime-trees in flower. (Galsworthy)

There was coffee still in the urn. (Wells)

Nouns of material are used in the plural to denote different sorts of a given material.

... that his senior counted upon him in this enterprise, and had consigned a quantity of select wines to him... (Thackeray)

Nouns of material may turn into class nouns (thus becoming countables) when they come to express an individual object of definite shape.

Compare:

- To the left were clean panes of glass. (Ch. Bronte)

"He came in here," said the waiter looking at the light through the tumbler, "ordered a glass of this ale." (Dickens)

But the person in the glass made a face at her, and Miss Moss went out. (Mansfield).

4. Abstract nouns denote some quality, state, action or idea: kindness, sadness, fight. They are usually uncountables, though some of them may be countables.

Therefore when the youngsters saw that mother looked neither frightened nor offended, they gathered new courage. (Dodge)

Accustomed to John Reed's abuse — I never had an idea of plying it. (Ch. Bronte)

It's these people with fixed ideas. (Galsworthy)

Abstract nouns may change their meaning and become class nouns. This change is marked by the use of the article and of the plural number:

beauty a beauty beauties

sight a sight sights

He was responsive to beauty and here was cause to respond. (London)

She was a beauty. (Dickens)

... but she isn't one of those horrid regular beauties. (Aldington)

**2.3 English Nouns in Speech.**

**2.3.1 Noun Grammemes in Speech**

An English noun lexeme may contain four words at most (boy, boys, boy's, boys'). Each of these words, as we know, represents not only the lexeme, but a certain grammeme as well. The grammeme represented by the word boy, for instance, includes all the English words having the two actual grammatical meanings of 'common case' and 'singular number' (girl, teacher, mile, etc.). The word book does not belong to this grammeme because it has only one actual grammatical meaning, that of 'singular number'. The meaning of 'common case' is only potential or oblique. So book represents another noun grammeme. The word England represents a different grammeme with the actual grammatical meaning of 'common case' (cf. England's) and the oblique grammatical meaning of 'singular number'.

If we assume that each grammatical meaning can be actual and oblique, there are four grammatical meanings of 'number', and they can be combined with four 'case' meanings each, to constitute 16 grammemes. In reality, however, the 'possessive case' meaning cannot be oblique in English, i. e. there are no words with the form and combinability of a 'possessive case' member of a case opposeme that have no 'common case' opposites. Nouns like St. Paul's, the baker's, denoting places, have certainly no opposites with the same lexical meaning and the 'common case' form, but their distribution resembles rather the distribution of 'common case' nouns (cf. at the baker's, from the baker's and at the shop, from Иге shop). If, however, we regard them as constituting a separate grammeme with the oblique meanings of 'singular number' and 'possessive case', we may speak of 13 noun grammemes in English. In the table1 (appendix) they are represented by one word each.

The frequency of the occurrence of different grammemes in speech[[28]](#footnote-28) is different. We have analysed several texts containing a total of 6,000 nouns and counted the occurrence of each grammeme. In the table 2 (Appendix) we give the results.

When analysing an opposeme of any category, we regard the grammatical meanings of its members as elementary, indivisible and unchangeable, determined only by the contrast with the opposite meanings. But in speech words are contrasted with other words not paradigmatically, in opposemes, but syntagmatically, in word-combinations. Depending on these combinations, grammatical meanings may vary considerably.

We must also take into consideration that single grammatical meanings may occur in speech only in case a word has but one such meaning. Otherwise all the grammatical meanings of a word go in a bunch characteristic of the grammeme to which the word belongs. So if we want to see the different shades a given grammatical meaning may acquire in speech, we are to analyse in a text the words of different grammemes containing that meaning. If, for instance, the variation of the 'singular' meaning is to be investigated we are to study the grammemes represented by the words boy, boy's, England, England's, book, milk, St. Paul's. We shall call them 'singular' grammemes for short.

The representatives of 'singular' grammemes constitute the bulk of nouns found in an English text (more than 70 per cent of the total number). Following is a brief summary of what a 'singular' noun may denote in speech.

1. One object. The plane struck a seagull. (Daily Worker).

2. A unique object. Shakespeare's name will live forever. (Ib.).

3. A whole class of objects. The English gentleman is dead. (Walpole).

In this sense 'singularity' gets very close to 'plurality'. So close indeed, that sometimes 'singular' and 'plural' nouns are actually interchangeable.

Cf. The polar bear lives in thе North.

Polar bears live in the North.

Here as elsewhere extremes meet.

4. A 'singular' collective noun stands for a group of beings or things viewed as an integrated whole, e. g. peasantry, humanity, mankind.

5. A 'singular' abstract or material noun may show some abstract concept or substance which is not associated with any idea of singularity.

I have accepted with tolerance the established conventions of syntax. (Vallins).

Nouns representing 'plural' grammemes may denote:

1. Two or more homogeneous objects.

Molly was very proud to be able to decide such questions. (Steinbeck).

2. A whole class of objects.

The Hindus and the Muslims liked and trusted him. (Maugham).

Foreigners on the whole were very dangerous people. (Ib).

3. A number of objects similar, though not identical (the plural of approximation).

A woman in her late thirties.

4. Individual objects.

His trousers looked shabby.

5. A mass of some substance.

A lion does not live on leavings. (Maxwell).

6. Boundless extension or repetition. The usage is aimed at producing a stylistic effect.

The snоws of the Polar Region. The waters of the Danube.

Nouns representing 'common case' grammemes express a wide range of meanings, the exhaustive examination of which is hardly feasible. Here are some of them.

1. A doer of an action or the carrier of some property.

The young worker challenged the Prime Minister to go and meet Britain's jobless young people. (Daily Worker).

2. A recipient of some action.

He wanted to employ the axiоims of arithmetic. (Whittaker).

3. The person (or thing) for whom something is done.

He gave M a r у по time to change her mind. (Daily Worker).

4. An instrument. When so used, the 'common case' noun is mostly associated with a preposition,

e. g. to cut with a knife.

5. Circumstances of different events. When so used, the 'common case' noun is mostly introduced by a preposition.

Time: Every Saturday night she bought a joint of meat. (Coppard).

Place: I arrived at P a r k Lane. (Wilde).

Manner: Everything went off without a hitсh. (Hornby), etc.

6. A property or characteristic of some substance.

The house committee was ready to act. (Daily Worker).

7. A person or thing as an object of comparison.

That monster of a dog.

As we have seen, 'possessive case' nouns occur a great deal less frequently than their opposites[[29]](#footnote-29).

The range of meaning of the possessive case is incomparably narrower than that of the common case. Yet linguists point out a number of meanings a 'possessive case' noun may express in speech[[30]](#footnote-30).

a) possession, belonging (Peter's bicycle)

b) personal or social relations (Peter's wife)

c) authorship (Peter's poem)

d) origin or source (the sun's rays)

e) kind or species (ladies' hats)

f) the relation of the whole to its part (Peter's hand)

g) subjective relations (Peter's arrival)

h) objective relations (Peter's being sent)

i) characteristic (her mother's care), (rather rare)

j) measure (a night's reflection; a mile's distance).

Sometimes the relations of a 'possessive case' noun are ambiguous. The relation in her daughter's loss may be interpreted either as subjective or as objective. This can be accounted for by the fact that her daughter's loss may be regarded as a transformation (or a transform) of two different sentences.

Her daughter lost == daughter’s loss

Her daughter was lost == daughter’s loss

In other words, having no voice distinctions, the noun loss may correspond to both the active and the passive voice of the verb.

Since both 'possessive case' and 'common case' nouns may have right-hand connections with other nouns, it is interesting to see the difference between the two combinations in speech. This is what W. N. Francis writes on the subject [[31]](#footnote-31): "Nouns make up a considerable number (as many as 25 per sent) of the single-word modifiers of nouns

Possessive Noun-adjunct

child's play child psychology

a dog's life the dog days

a day's work the day shift'

my father's house a father image

that woman's doctor that woman doctor

The last pair illustrates vividly the difference in meaning there may be between these two structures of modification. The formal difference between them may be described as follows: a construction with of may be substituted for the possessive construction, and the determiner [[32]](#footnote-32) (if there is one) will then go with the modifying noun; on the other hand, some other kind of construction must be substituted for the noun-adjunct, and the determiner goes with the head noun. In the following illustrations the symbol > means "transforms into"

My father's house > house of my father

that father image > that image like (a) father

that woman's doctor > doctor of that woman

that woman doctor > that doctor who is a woman.

As we see, the relations expressed by a 'possessive case' noun can usually be rendered by its 'common case' opposite preceded by of (the so-called 'of-phrase'). The 'possessive case' noun and the corresponding of-phrase are synonymous, but to a certain extent only.

Unlike the possessive case, the o/-phrase is freely used with all nouns irrespective of their lexical meanings. Its range of meaning is much wider than that of the possessive case. Thus, besides the 'possessive case' relations already mentioned it may show the relations of appraisal (a man of strong will), of material (a table of oak), of composition (a group of children), etc.

The of-phrase is believed to sound more formal than the possessive case. In formal style it is more common than the possessive.

E. g. Head of a girl (in a picture or sculpture exhibition programme), not a girl's head.

In the Russian language a noun in the genitive case may be adnominal and adverbial, i.e. it can be attached to a noun and to a verb.

E.g. дом отца, боюсь грозы.

The possessive case is practically adnominal, as in Tom's departure.

In sentences like The idea is George's, where George's is not followed by a noun, it is sometimes called the 'independent possessive'. But in reality it is not independent, as it refers to some noun, usually mentioned previously (the word idea in the sentence above). Therefore such possessives are called 'anaphorical'. But this term would be misapplied in cases like George's was a brilliant idea, where the noun idea follows the possessive.

Seeing that there is exact parallelism with the use of the so-called absolute possessive pronouns (The idea is mine. Mine was a brilliant idea), we shall call such possessives absolute.

In Modern English there exists a peculiar construction which is a combination of the possessive case and the of-phrase. The construction makes it possible to place an article, a demonstrative pronoun, etc. before the modified noun. Cf. John's friend and a (the, that) friend of John's. The possessive case in the construction is absolute. Cf. a (the, that) friend of yours.

The construction usually has a partitive meaning. A friend of Mary's — one of Mary's friends. It may also be used for stylistic purposes mostly with ironic colouring. That long nose of John's.

In cases like I dined at my aunt's or a garden party at Brown's the possessive case is really independent. It does not refer to any other noun, and does not correspond to an absolute possessive pronoun. The meaning of the independent possessive is that of locality. It denotes the house, shop, cathedral, place of business, etc. of the person denoted by the noun. E. g. the baker's, draper's, watchmaker's, etc., also St. Paul's .

**2.3.2 The use of Articles with Nouns in Some Set Expessions**

a) The use of indefinite article with nouns in some set expressions.[[33]](#footnote-33)

1. in a hurry — второпях

Things done in a hurry are done badly.

1. to have a mind to do some thing (a great mind, a good mind) — иметь желание что-либо сделать, быть склонным что-либо сделать

I have a great mind to have a serious talk with her.

1. to fly into a passion — прийти в бешенство

If you contradict him, he will fly into a passion.

1. to get in a fury (in a rage) — прийти и ярость

If you contradict him, he will get in a fury (in a rage).

1. to take a fancy to (chiefly with names of living beings) — проникнуться симпатией, по чувствовать расположение

I wonder why she took a fancy to the little girl.

1. in a low (loud) voice — тихо (громко)

Don't speak in a low voice.

1. a great many (with countables) — много

I have spoken to him a great many times.

1. a great deal (with uncountables) — много

We can't skate to-day, there is a great deal of snow on the ice.

1. it is a pity —жаль

It is a pity you did not go to the concert last night

1. it is a shame — стыдно

It is a shame not to know these elementary things.

1. it is a pleasure — приятно

It is a pleasure to read beautiful poetry.

1. as a result —в результате

As a result of the inhabitants' strenuous efforts the damaged city

1. to have a good time — хорошо провести время

Last night we went to an evening party and had a very good time.

1. to be at a loss —быть в недоумении

She was at a loss what to say.

1. at a glance — сразу, с первого взгляда

She saw at a glance that something had happened.

b) The use of definite article with nouns in some set expressions.

1. it is out of the question —об этом не может быть и речи

'Will you go to the theatre tonight?" "It's out of the question. I have lots of things to do."

1. to take the trouble to do something — потрудиться

You had a difficult text to translate and you did not take the trouble to consult the dictionary.

1. in the original — в оригинале

You know English well enough to read Dickens in the original.

1. to play the piano (the violin, the harp) — играть на рояле (скрипке, арфе)

She plays the piano very well.

1. to keep the house — сидеть дома

She has a cold and will have to keep the house for a couple of days.

1. to keep the bed — соблюдать постельный режим

She has a bad cold and will have to keep the bed for a couple of days.

1. on the whole — в целом

On the whole Tom is a pleasant fellow, but sometimes he has whims.

1. the other day (refers to the past) — па днях

I met him the other day.

1. on the one hand…on the other hand — с одной стороны...с другой стороны

On the one hand he certainly excites suspicion, but on the other hand we have not enough evidence against him. (Oppenhe'un)

1. to tell (to speak) the truth — говорить правду; to tell the truth — no правде говоря

He always speaks (tells) the truth. To tell the truth, I don't like the girl.

1. to be on the safe side —для верности

I am almost sure of the pronunciation of this name, but to be on the safe side let us consult the pronouncing dictionary.

c) Nouns in some set expressions use without an article.

1. out of doors — на дворе, на улице, вне дома

The children spent most of the time out of doors.

2. to take to heart — принимать близко к сердцу

Don't take things too much to heart.

3. to take offence — обижаться

If he had heard your remark, he would have taken offence.

4. to"1 give (to get, to asft) per mission— дать (получить, просить) разрешение

I asked permission to keep the book a little longer.

5. to lose heart —терять мужество, приходить в уныние

He found the subject very difficult at first, but he did not lose heart.

1. at present — в настоящее время

You may go home, we don't want you at present.

7. from morning till night—с утра до вечера

He worked in his litte garden from morning till night.

8. from head to foot —с головы до ног

She was dressed in furs from liead to foot.

9. from beginning to end — с начала до конца

The whole story is a lie from beginning to end.

10. at first sight — с первого взгляда

He fell in love with her- at first sight.

11. by chance — случайно

They met quite by chance.

12. by mistake — по ошибке

I have brought the wrong book by mistake.

13. for hours —часами

He could read for hours.

14. for ages —целую вечность

I have not seen you for ages.

15. by land, by air, by sea — сушей, по воздуху, морем

I like travelling by sea.

16. to go to sea — стать моряком

My sister wants to be a doctor, and my brother wants to go to sea.

17. on deck — на палубе

We spent hours on deck.

18. to keep house —вести хозяйство

Her sister keeps house for her.

19. at sunrise —на рассвете

We left the town at sunrise.

20. at sunset — на закате

We arrived at the village at sunset.

21. at work —за работой

Whenever I come, he is always at work.

22. at peace — в мире

We want to be at peace with all countries.

2.3.3. Test Exercises

Test 1

Make personal nouns from these words.

1. drama (\_\_\_\_ = someone who writes plays)

2. guard (\_\_\_\_ = a person who cares for persons or property)

3. police (\_\_\_\_ = a member of a police force)

4. botany (\_\_\_\_ = a biologist specializing in the study of plants)

5. surgery (\_\_\_\_ = a physician who specializes in surgery)

6. diet (\_\_\_\_ = a specialist in the study of nutrition)

7. idealism (\_\_\_\_ = someone guided more by ideals than by practical considerations)

8. technique (\_\_\_\_ = someone known for high skill in some intellectual or artistic technique)

9. mathematics (\_\_\_\_ = a person skilled in mathematics)

10. accounting (\_\_\_\_ = someone who maintains and audits business accounts)

11. drug (\_\_\_\_ = a health professional trained in the art of preparing and dispensing drugs)

12. essay (\_\_\_\_ = a writer of literary works)

13. shoe (\_\_\_\_ = a person who makes or repairs shoes)

14. satire (\_\_\_\_ = uses ridicule, irony, sarcasm)

15. beauty (\_\_\_\_ = someone who works in a beauty parlour)

16. grammar (\_\_\_\_ = a linguist who specializes in the study of grammar and syntax)

17. dentistry (\_\_\_\_ = a person qualified to practice dentistry)

18. assistance (\_\_\_\_ = a person who helps someone do his job, providing him with practical support)

19. physics (\_\_\_\_ = a licensed medical practitioner)

20. physics (\_\_\_\_ = a scientist trained in physics)

21. technology (\_\_\_\_ = a person who uses scientific knowledge to solve practical problems)

22. simple (\_\_\_\_ = a person lacking intelligence or common sense)

23. serving (\_\_\_\_ = a person working in the service of another)

24. senate (\_\_\_\_ = a member of a senate)

25. realism (\_\_\_\_ = a philosopher who believes that universals are real and exist independently of anyone thinking of them)

26. piano (\_\_\_\_ = a person who plays the piano)

27. philosophy (\_\_\_\_ = a specialist in philosophy, a wise person who is calm and rational)

28. pharmacy (\_\_\_\_ = a health professional trained in the art of preparing and dispensing drugs)

29. novel (\_\_\_\_ = someone who writes novels)

30. nationalism (\_\_\_\_ = one who loves and is prepared to defend his or her country)

31. music (\_\_\_\_ = someone who plays a musical instrument as a profession)

32. industrialism (\_\_\_\_ = someone who manages or has significant financial interest in an industrial enterprise)

33. humanity (\_\_\_\_ = someone devoted to the promotion of human welfare and to social reforms)

34. fire (\_\_\_\_= a person who tends fires, a member of a fire department who tries to extinguish fires)

35. environment (\_\_\_\_ = someone who works to protect the environment from destruction or pollution)

36. electric (\_\_\_\_ = a person who installs or repairs electrical or telephone lines)

37. economy (\_\_\_\_= an expert in the science of economics)

38. cycle (\_\_\_\_ = a person who rides a bicycle)

39. communism (\_\_\_\_ = a member of the communist party, a socialist who advocates communism)

40. biology (\_\_\_\_ = a scientist who studies living organisms)

Right Answers:

1. dramatist
2. guardian
3. policeman
4. botanist
5. surgeon
6. dietician
7. idealist
8. technician
9. mathematician
10. accountant
11. druggist
12. essayist
13. shoemaker
14. satirist
15. beautician
16. grammarian
17. dentist
18. assistant
19. physician
20. Physicist
21. technologist
22. simpleton
23. servant
24. senator
25. realist
26. pianist
27. philosopher
28. pharmacist
29. novelist
30. nationalist
31. musician
32. industrialist
33. humanitarian
34. fire-fighter
35. environmentalist
36. electrician
37. economist
38. cyclist
39. communist
40. biologist

Test 2.

Point out right meaning of each noun

1. n. momentum

(a) a description or report of something as modified by one's character or opinion

(b) an impetus

(c) outward appearance

(d) an image or likeness

2. n. impertinence

(a) the change of endings in nouns and adjectives to express their different relations of gender

(b) set way of saying or doing something

(c) rudeness

(d) particular conduct or administration of affairs

3. n. discord

(a) absence of harmoniousness

(b) a performer of moral and social duties

(c) simultaneousness

(d) something that begins or expresses beginning

4. n. ultimatum

(a) carriage of the body in going

(b) a final statement or proposal, as concerning terms or conditions

(c) a mark for failure or bad conduct

(d) an instrument for recording the phenomena of earthquakes

5. n. auricle

(a) a person raving with madness

(b) one of the two chambers of the heart which receives the blood from the veins

(c) any dialectic pronunciation of English, especially that of the Irish people

(d) a great Hindu prince

6. n. entrails

(a) the galaxy

(b) that which moves the mind or inflames the passions

(c) the junction of two bodies at an equally divided angle

(d) internal parts of an animal

7. n. pentagon

(a) temporary diminution of a disease

(b) conduct directed against public order and the tranquillity of the state

(c) interpretation

(d) a figure, especially, with five angles and five sides

8. n. degradation

(a) diminution, as of strength or magnitude

(b) the setting forth of a subject under the guise of another subject of aptly suggestive likeness

(c) masculinity

(d) a brief treatise or essay, usually on a subject of current interest

9. n. opprobrium

(a) any growth of leaves

(b) a young goose

(c) a probability

(d) the state of being scornfully reproached or accused of evil

10. n. corpuscle

(a) a minute particle of matter

(b) subtle contrivance used to gain a point

(c) something added or to be added

(d) a god, goddess or divine person

Keys:

1. b
2. c
3. a
4. b
5. b
6. d
7. d
8. a
9. d
10. b

**2.4 Comparison of English and Russian nouns**

Let us compare the English noun with its Russian counterpart[[34]](#footnote-34). The five properties we use as criteria for distinguishing parts of speech will serve as the basis of comparison.

1. The lexico-grammatical meanings are similar.

2. The variety of lexico-grammatical morphemes is much greater in the Russian noun. A peculiarity of Russian is the abundance of suffixes of "subjective appraisal", as in братец, билетик, петушок, карманчик, частица, ножка, пылинка, хохотушка, звездочка, дедушка, шалунишка, доченька, платьице, старикашка, дурачина, голосище, etc. (Cf.-let, in booklet, streamlet, etc.).

3. In both languages we find the categories of number and case. But their opposemes, especially those of the category of case, differ greatly in the two languages.

a) A Russian case opposeme contains six members as against the English two-member case opposeme.

b) In English the "singular number, common case" grammeme is as a rule not marked. In Russian any grammeme can be marked.

E. g. рука, окно, etc.

c) The productive positive number and case morphemes are standard in English (-(e)s and -'s) and non-standard in Russian (столы, стулья, книги, столов, стульев, книг, etc.).

d) Number and case are sometimes expressed by separate morphemes in English (e. g. oxen's), while in Russian they are inseparable.

e) The case morpheme -'s has a certain freedom of distribution, not observed in any case morpheme of the Russian language.

f) Though in both languages the meaning of case is "the relation of nouns to other words in. speech", the meaning of the possessive case is in the main narrowed to "the relation to other nouns" only, which distinguishes this case from the other cases of both Russian and English.

g) Owing to the narrowness of the "possessive case", the only other case, the "common case", is exceptionally wide.

In fact, the extent of its meaning almost equals that of all the six cases of Russian nouns. Hence the necessity of specification by prepositions and, consequently, the enormous importance of prepositions as a characteristic feature of English.

h) One of the prepositional phrases, the o/-phrase can practically replace the possessive case. The difference between them is mostly stylistic. There is nothing similar in Russian.

4. Russian nouns fall into three gender subclasses, which is alien to English.

5. In both languages nouns can be divided into countables and uncountables, the latter — into singularia tantum and pluralia tantum. In both languages uncountables have oblique 'number' meanings through the analogy in form and combinability with countables. But in the Russian language there is nearly always correlation between form and combinability (сани едут, часы стали, семья ждет, комитет заседает) which is not the case in English (the cattle are, physics is, the. family is or are).

6. The number of Russian nouns having no case opposites is small. They are comparatively recent borrowings like пальто, депо, такси, кенгуру, etc. In English the majority of nouns have no case opposites.

7. In both languages the functions of different case grammemes are different. In Russian only a nominative case grammeme can be the subject, only an accusative case grammeme can be a direct object, only a nominative or an instrumental case grammeme is used as a predicative.

In English possessive case grammemes are used almost exclusively as attributes. Common case grammemes fulfil the functions of almost any part of the sentence.

**III. Conclusion**

In the present paper we attempted to investigate the noun, the main part of speech in English grammar. We chose the noun as the theme of our qualification work because we interested in it. We used different kind of references to investigate the noun. In other words, we mentioned that we studied the main aspects of English nouns: grammatical categories, grammatical characteristics, semantical characteristics, and rule of correct use of English nouns.

The problem of definition of noun comes to be one of the main problems for those who study noun. There is a great number of definitions that define nouns from different points of view. Summarizing all of them we can conclude that noun is a word expressing substance in the widest sense of the word. In the concept of substance we include not only names of living beings (e.g. boy, girl, bird) and lifeless things (e.g. table, chair, book), but also names of abstract notions, i.e. qualities, slates, actions (kindness, strength, sleep, fear, conversation, fight), abstracted from their bearers.

The present work proves that nouns must be treated very accurately because some nouns, in case of changing their grammatical form, can receive another lexical meaning. If you say “I love this people”, one will understand that you love the exact group of people, but if you say “I love these peoples” you might be understood as loving group of nations. This is because the word ‘people’ is Pluralia Tantum, i.e. has not singular form at all, and prefix –s won’t bring the meaning of plurality, but the meaning of word ‘nations’.

Nouns can be classified further as count nouns, which name anything that can be counted (four books, two continents, a few dishes, a dozen buildings); mass nouns (or non-count nouns), which name something that can't be counted (water, air, energy, blood); and collective nouns, which can take a singular form but are composed of more than one individual person or items (jury, team, class, committee, herd). We should note that some words can be either a count noun or a non-count noun depending on how they're being used in a sentence. Whether or not a noun is uncountable is determined by its meaning: an uncountable noun represents something which tends to be viewed as a whole or as a single entity, rather than as one of a number of items which can be counted as individual units. Singular verb forms are used with uncountable nouns. Uncountable nouns are substances, concepts etc that we cannot divide into separate elements. We cannot "count" them. For example, we cannot count "milk". We can count "bottles of milk" or "litres of milk", but we cannot count "milk" itself. We usually treat uncountable nouns as singular. We use a singular verb. Countable nouns are easy to recognize. They are things that we can count. For example: "pen". We can count pens. We can have one, two, three or more pens. We can say that it is finished investigation of this theme our diploma work.

The present material can be used at the lessons of grammar, practical course of English language, lexicology, and speech practice in both: universities and English classes at schools. This paper can help to create the teaching aids, textbooks, etc. Teachers and students might use the results of the present work for the further investigations.

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5. Г. Н. Воронцова. Очерки по грамматике английского языка. М., 1960
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23. Internet:http://www.esllessons.edu/mainpage.htm
24. Internet:http://www.freeesays.com/languages/S.Hal

**V. APPENDIX**

Table 1

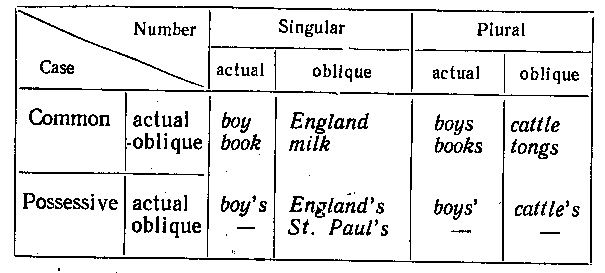


Table 2

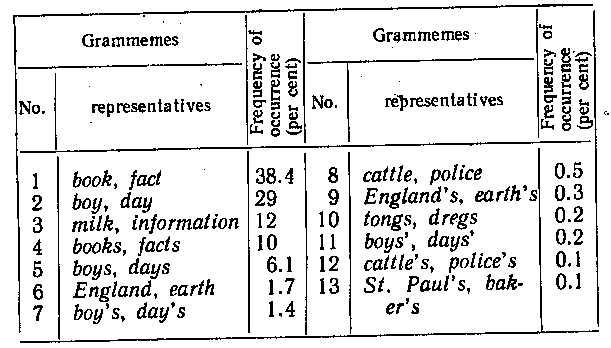


Table 3

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Left-hand connections with | Russian nouns | | | English nouns |
| Prepositions | 1) Not the nominative case  2) Different cases with different prepositions | | | The common case with any preposition |
| Adjectives | Grammatical combinability | | | No grammatical combinability |
| Numerals  a) cardinal  b) ordinal | Mostly the genitive case  Grammatical combinability | | | both cases  No grammatical combinability |
| Verbs | - | | | - |
| a) notional  b) linking | 1) any case  2) different cases with different verbs  mostly the instrumental case, sometimes the nominative or the genitive case | | | the common case with any verb  mostly the common case |
| Left-hand connections with | Russian nouns | | | English nouns |
| Nouns  Articles | mostly the genitive case  --- | | | the common case  both cases (a not before plurals) |
| Right-hand connections with | Russian nouns | | | English nouns |
| Prepositions  Verbs  Nouns | any case  any case, but mostly nomina­tive  any case | | | the common case usually the com­mon case  both cases |

1. Page 40 of present qualification work [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The full list of works and authors is mentioned in bibliography to this qualification paper [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. В.Л. Каушанская и др. Грамматика английского языка (на английском языке). 1973 стр.22 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See В. В. Виноградов, op. cit., p. 167. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See M. Ganshina and N. Vasilevskaya. English Grammar. M., 1953, p. 31—32. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. B.S. Khaimovich, B.I. Rogovskaya. A Course in English Grammar. 1966 p. 14 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See Г. Н. Воронцова. Очерки по грамматике английского языка. М., 1960, р. 180. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. B.S. Khaimovich, B.I. Rogovskaya. A Course in English Grammar. 1966 p. 49 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. "Double-genitive", in the terminology of Kruisinga. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See А. И. Смирницкий, op. cit, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. This among other reasons, accounts for the divergence of views concerning the number of cases in English. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Б. Л. Ильиш, op. cit., p. 99—100 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. What we call a semi-notional word [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Б. А. Ильиш, op. cit., p. 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Г. Н. Воронцова. Об именном форманте -'s в современном английском языке. («Иностранные языки в школе», 1948, № 3, 4); Г. Н. Воронцова. Очерки по грамматике английского языка. М., 1960, pp. 181 — 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. We find a similar interpretation of -'s in Л. С. Бархударов, Д. Д. Штелинг, op. cit., p. 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. А. И. Смирницкий, op. cit., § 60 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. А. И. Смирницкий, op. cit., § 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. G.O. Curme. Syntax. Bost., N.Y., Lnd., Heat., 1931, p. 542;

    O. Jespersen. Essentials of English Grammar. N.Y., 1938, p. 201 [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. B.S. Khaimovich, B.I. Rogovskaya. A Course in English Grammar. 1966 p. 48 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. B.S. Khaimovich, B.I. Rogovskaya. A Course in English Grammar. 1966 p. 49 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Л. С. Бархударов, Д. А. Штелинг. Грамматика английского языка. М., 1960, р. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Л. С. Бархударов, Д. А. Штелинг, ор. cit., р. 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. О. Jespersen. Essentials of English Grammar. Lnd., 1943, p. 208. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. B. Н. Жигадло, И. П. Иванова, Л. Л. Иофик, ор. cit., р. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Gender, i.e. the distinction of nouns into masculine, feminine and neuter, may be expressed lexically by means of different words or word-compounds:

    father —mother man—woman

    boy —girl gentleman —lady

    husband — wife cock-sparrow — hen-sparrow

    boy-friend —girl-friend man-servant — maid-servant

    Very often personal or possessive pronouns indicate the gender the noun. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. The word proper is from Lat. proprius 'one's own'. Hence a proper name means one's own individual name, as distinct from a common name, that can be given to a class of individuals. The name common is from Lat. communis and means that winch is shared by several things or individuals possessing some common characteristic [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. It goes without saying that when speaking about grammemes in speech we mean words representing these grammemes. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Some linguists regard the possessive case as a disappearing case (see, for instance, M. Bryant. A Functional English Grammar. Boston, 1945, p. 36). Others (Ch. Barber. Linguistic change in Present-Day English. Edinburgh, 1964, p. 132) speak of "the spreading of the 's-genitive at the expense of the of-genitive". [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. See Г. Н. Воронцова, op. cit, p. 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. The Structure of American English. New York, 1958. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Article, possessive or demonstrative pronoun, etc. attached to the noun. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. В.Л. Каушанская и др. Грамматика английского языка (на английском языке). 1973 M. Стр. 36 [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. See Appendix Table 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)