

## **VERBAL-AND-CREATIVE TENDENCIES OF DENUMERAL FORMATIONS**

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**Abstract.** Denumerals are investigated on the vectors of their structure, meaning, syntactic load, in the part-of-speech evolution and involution. The article proves that derivatives with a numeral morpheme are modified on the deep level. They are liable to dequantification and desemantization, the latter being foregrounded to the full in the functional denumeral words. The attention is focused on the genetic sources of numerals, their paradigmatic and syntagmatic properties. Epidigmatic tendencies of the units under investigation are found out.

**Key words:** denumeral, numeral morpheme, dequantification, desemantization, epidigmatic tendencies.

**Introduction.** The article deals with structural and semantic peculiarities of denumeral formations to which we refer units derived from numerals as ones with a numeral stem that are modified in the surface and deep structures of newly created notional and functional words. Denumeral formations are secondary units motivated by the basic numeral function – to nominate numeric properties of discrete denotates [1].

The last decades in linguistics witnessed fundamental works of such scientists as S.A. Shvachko, I.K. Kobyakova, S.A. Zhabotinskaya, V. H. Taranets who investigated number nominations, structural and semantic peculiarities of the numeral in different European languages [2; 3; 4; 5]. Works of S. V. Baranova, O. A. Shumenko, T. Dantzig, D. A. Cruise, C. T. Onions testify for the fact that it is topical to research denumerals in terms of the part-of-speech theory interpreting, verbal-and-creative word-building tendencies (basic and marginal ones) as secondary constructions of new units, their semantic, syntactic, pragmatic and epidigmatic characteristics [6; 7; 8; 9; 10; 11].

**Methodology.** Relevance of the topic is determined by both modern linguistic tendency to examine system-and-functional parameters of language units, to conceive methodological grounds of conceptualization and categorization [12] and denumeral

paradigm's being little-investigated. The subject area of the research is constituted by denumeral formations, its specific topic is paradigmatic and syntagmatic representation of English denumerals, their structural, semantic and word-building characteristics.

The article is aimed at the analysis of polyaspectedness of quantitative words in general [2; 3]. In accordance with the formulated aim of the article, its tasks are as follows:

1) the research of the numeric and measuring functions of the quantitative words *one, two, three*;

2) the analysis of denumerals as the aftereffect of the lexicalization process;

3) the research of the set expressions with numerals from the point of view of their polyfunctionality.

**Main part.** It is topical to study text characteristics of denumerals in respect to the modern tendency to interpret functional and semantic being of language units, on the one hand, and little-investigatedness of numeral morphemes, on the other.

Lexeme *one* and its denumeral derivatives, lexeme's synergetic characteristics and status of derivatives in the verbal creation on the dia-synchronic level are of special attention.

Lexeme *one* takes a specific place in the language system. According to the explanatory dictionary the lexeme *one* is explicated by allonyms *only, individual, unique, united, specified, certain, indefinite, identical, equal*. The source seme in the lexeme *one* was object's discreteness that underlies the semantization of counting and measuring the denotates.

Redundant singularity is expressed by the combination *one and all*. The lexeme *one* as an intensifier gives a metaphoric hyperbolized nomination of unreal existing measure, e.g. *This vast tapestry of tales is sewn together with the skill of a master storyteller... Roberts has one hell of an imaginative gift* [13, p. 99].

The numeral *one* and the indefinite article *a (an)* are etymological doublets. Both lexemes correlate with discrete referents to designate singularity, exclusiveness and opposition to the things in plural. The genetic images of the lexeme *one* are

traced in the forms of old Indo-European languages. Greek *oinos* etymologizes the meaning “one point”. This form has its own parallels in Lat. *unus*, Goth. *ains*, Germ. *ein*, Slav. *иць* ‘единорог’(unicorn). In Sanskrit *ena* has a pronominal meaning *she*. The researchers into etymological sources of the word under consideration compare the lexeme with somatic sources of the primary forms. V. G. Taranets [5] verifies in two works of his that the double number and its markers were forerunners of singularity: doubleness generated singularity.

Free word groups absorb the numeral *one* in fixed patterns on the syntagmatic level to designate a) living beings and inanimate things; b) artefacts; c) events and phenomena; d) dimensional nominations, e.g. a) *But there is **one sister** sitting down just behind you, who is very pretty and I dare say very agreeable.* b) *Elizabeth looked archly, and turned away saying only **one word**;* c) *But that is **one great difference** between us;* d) *She wished she could do what **one-year-old** will do* [14, p. 79-81].

In the phraseologisms the lexeme *one* is used in the virtual space like the lexeme that is determined by the idiomatic distribution, e.g. *one too many*, *one of these days*, *one and all*, *one-horse*. Denumerals derived from *one* preserve their quantitative charm and acquire new qualitative properties. There are cases when they lose their primary quantitative meaning completely (dequantification), become semantically empty (desemantization) that is inherent in set expressions.

The lexeme *one* is postpositive in the built derivative pronouns like *someone*, *anyone*, *noone*, *none*, *everyone* that materialize the semes of numerality and substantivity syncretically. Alongside the pronoun in the form of *no-one* is coming forth, e.g. *Listen... take it easy on the street, huh?" I mean, you can trust **no-one*** [15, p. 182]. The canonized parallel is also *none*, e.g. *They have **none** of them much to recommend them', he replied ...* [14, p. 74]. *One* as a suffix is a part of chemical compounds, for example: *lactone*, *quinone*. The units parallel to *one* that nominate singularity and monolithic character are morphemes *mono-*, *uni-*, *single*.

Structural and semantic existence of denumeral words *only* and *alone* is of great interest [6]. *Only* is a secondary denumeral construct which is derived from the Old English *anlic* (*ONE+lic* → *LY*). In Slavonic languages the lexeme “один” is a

contracted form to nominate “*только один*” (*only one*). The seme “one” is echoed in the adjectives with the meaning of “single”, “unique”, e.g. *an only child, the only answer, my one and only way*. The last example verbalizes the singularity meaning by words *one* and *only* excessively: *one* semantizes “single” and “only” that preserves this seme foregrounds additionally the meaning of uniqueness, exclusiveness. The lexeme *only* (*adj*) is a derivative of the numeral *one* built by means of compounding where the second stem was converted into the suffix *-ly* on the analogy of *friendlike* → *friendly* (*N* → *Adj.*).

The adjective *only* is built by affixation. Cf.: *The only surprise she got was then she went to the doctor* [13, p. 65]. *My six-year-old granddaughter is the only person I know who looks comfortable here* [16, p. 54]. *The only thing in his whole life he'd ever really wanted* [17, p. 90]. *The economist from the University of London grinned pointedly the only American in their group* [18, p. 65]. *It was a golden life, the only one Alexandra had ever know* [15, p. 12].

Part-of-speech discrimination of the derivative *only* (*Adj.* → *Adv.* → *Particle*) is contextually bound. *Only* (*Adv.*) is a secondary nomination with respect to *only* (*Adj.*). *Only* (*Adv.*) specifies, intensifies the quality of a thing, action or another quality. Semantic variability of the lexeme *only* is verified by the syntactic criterion and combinability with the correlating word. The functional word character is objectified by its ability of being omitted and its foregrounding as a conjunction. Both the adverb *only* and the particle *only* are derived by conversion, e.g.: *There was only one solution to the problem* [19, p. 152].

Polyaspectedness (polymodusness) is inherent in the English denumerals that join different paradigmatic groups as an aftereffect of surface and deep modifications [11]. The categorical homonymy of the units *only* (*Adj.*) and *only* (*Adv.*) is dissolved in the context (on the syntagmatic, combinability level). *Only* (*Adj.*) and *only* (*Adv.*) have different syntactic properties, divergent syntactic paradigms in terms of semantic, derivational, morphological and combinability aspects. The denumerals objectify their secondary constructing in the surface structure that is stable to include a numeral morpheme. On the semantic level denumerals replicate the destiny of their

initial forms. The denumeral formations are syncretic units that participate in evolution and involution manipulating the representation of substantivity and numerality semes.

Among denumerals with the stem morpheme *one* lexeme *alone* is singled out that derives from the polylexeme unit *all but one*. *Alone* as an adjective points at the feature and as a converted homonymous form (adverb) – at the mark of the feature. Lexeme *alone* semantizes adjective and adverbial meanings respectively: a) *solitary, only, unique*, b) *exclusively; only*. For example: a) *He didn't want to be **alone** forever* [17, p. 45]. *It was terrible to think about her angry and **alone**, and then he realized that there might be a lot more to her current life than he knew* [17, p. 95]; б) *Why does Daddy go out **alone**? Their long conversations as they sat cosily **alone** to drink tea* [17, p. 52]. In such constructions as *Let me alone* and *He alone can do it* lexeme *alone* doesn't foreground its numeric meaning but correlates with the markers of exclusiveness, distinction and semantizes the meaning of an empty number. Hypostatic function of the lexeme *alone* is limited by the sequence *alone* (Adj.) → *alone* (Adv.) → *alone* (Part.). As a particle this lexeme singles out the reference and can be substituted by other words or constructions. For example: *He alone can do it :: It's he who can do it*. In communicative units *alone* (Part.) correlates with different blocks, sentence parts and its position is determined by parts of speech status of studied units. The differences of correlated words (numerals and denumerals) are objectivized by their functioning and references semantisation that causes grammatical homonymy which is eliminated by means of micro context.

As the analysis of empiric material shows the numeral *one* takes a special place in radial verbal creation. Preserving the quantitative seme *one* undergoes semantic shifts in the process of evolution (enrichment of the word with notional semes) and involution (semantic emptiness, grammaticalization, emergence of functional words).

The numeral *two* with the seme “one and one” is of certain interest. The stem *two-* is found both in monolexeme and polylexeme units. In denumeral constructions lexeme *two* takes the preposition mainly and forms nouns, adjectives, verbs. For example: *two-hander, two-dimensionality; two-bit, two-cycle, two-way*. Denumerals-

verbs with the lexeme *two* are represented in the dictionary and literary discourse illusively. For example: *twoc, to two-time. We must two our efforst* [19, p. 32]. As to the way of word formation denumerals with the morpheme *two-* are formed by morphologic (affixation) and morphologic and syntactic (conversion) ways. For example: *twoness, twopence, two-tone; to two.*

In evolution English denumerals undergo involution – the transition from notional to functional words. Studied units are open to the processes of full dequantification and desemantization. In view of this they obtain the status of syntactic formants. An example of the functional denumeral is the lexeme *between* that preserves the seme of the numeral *two* but undergoes semantic modification, the emptiness of source seme. For example: *between the beetle and the block; between the moon and milkman; between me and you and the door* [2]. In the latter example the meaning “*more than two*” is foregrounded. Let’s compare it with the German word *zwischen*.

The numeral *three* is foregrounded both in free phrases and idiomatic expressions. In free phrases the numeral *three* correlates with the discrete units for denotation of numeric quantity. For example: *three birds, three cars, three books.* Derivatives with the stem *three-* semantize both exact amount and vague number. For example: *threesome, threepence, thrice.* Vague number is represented in polylexeme units, for example: *once upon a time.*

Nouns, adjectives and adverbs with the morpheme *three* are formed in English. Nouns and adjectives are formed by means of composition and affixation, adverbs – by means of conversion. For example: *three-card trick, three-decker, threepence; three-colour process, three-cornered, threefold; thrice.* Denumerals-verbs are represented illusively. For example: *to three-peat* derives from the numeral *three* and the shortened form of the verb *repeat*.

Denumeral *thrice* that is the secondary numeral constructing originates from the Old English *thriga* and means “three times” [14]. Denumerals with the morpheme *three* functioning as adjectives (*thrice-told story*) lose their quantitative feature and get qualitative attributes [2].

Denumerals express proximity monolexemely and polylexemely that is verified by the examples: *thirtysome, in his thirties*. While numerals express proximity in word-groups, denumerals foregrounds it by one word. Denumerals modernize approximation, for example: *some thirty years*, where proximity is nominated by the pronoun *some* that is in preposition to the numeral. The morpheme *-some* in postposition semantizes vague number (*thirtysome*).

**Final Part.** The starting corpus for denumerals are numerals, surface and deep structures of which are open to modifications at structural, semantic and paradigmatic levels as of those that facilitate word-building process in linguistic view of the world, emerging of new lexical and grammatical paradigms and functional words. English denumerals are under the tendencies of dequantification and desemantization. Desemantization is viewed in occurring of new adjectival nonquantitative semes: in denumeral nouns there appear nominal semes, in denumeral adjectives there appear qualitative attributes and attributes of discrete units, in denumeral adverbs there appear the characteristic or action attribute. Quantitative semes in denumerals tend to foreground with the semes of newly formed nouns / adjectives/ adverbs syncretically. Denumeral semantic deviation terminates with involution process, emergence of derivative innovations of another syncategorematic being at the syntactic scope of language creation.

**Conclusions.** The tendency of denumeral units creation is objectified by availability of numerals corpus, their valent features, the activity of numeral component in their surface and deep structures. Denumerals are prolonged in comparison with the initial numeric stem and semantic and syncretic units. Derivation phenomenon is objectified in word-formation potency of newly formed units. The group with stems *one, two, three* is valid in this aspect, that is connected with the factor of time and frequency use of above-mentioned numerals.

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