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CATEGORY OF SUBSTANTIVE NUMBER IN UDMURT

The morphological inflectional category of number is represented in modern Udmurt by contraposition of the singular and the plural.

The singular form is used to express the idea of singleness as opposed to plurality: *корка* 'a house' ~ *коркаос* 'houses', *зым* 'a village' ~ *зымъёс* 'villages'. In the combination with the numeral *одӱз* 'one' or its form marked by the demonstrative suffix *-ез/-эз* the singular may be used to emphasize the singleness of a noun. The principal non-quantative meaning of the singular in Udmurt is the so-called *generic* meaning 'a class of objects called X' as well as collective and collective-generalizing meanings.

The plural, as the opposite of the singular, denotes two or more objects/persons. The forms of the plural may have five semantic subtypes (discrete plurality, collective plurality, distributive plurality, representative plurality and plurality of politeness), all of which are represented in Udmurt.

Despite the fact that some authors insist on presence of singularia and pluralia tantum in Udmurt, facts prove that there are only strategies of them. The latter term seems to be more preferable, because it does not require distributing nouns into different semantic groups on the basis of quantity, which they denote, and allows considering the question from the pragmatic point of view, which deals with the interactions between the carrier of the information and the communicative task. There are data, according to which, the plural is obtained by some nouns in Udmurt not so much because of outer stylistic factors as inner semantic processes based on the realization of the meaning of the word in the context.

The nouns having strategies of singularia tantum are represented in Udmurt by groups of words typical of other languages: the names of unique objects, homogenous substances, concepts of flora, physical qualities of surroundings, psychophysiological states and feelings of a human being. All the nouns belonging to these groups of words are uncountable and may be measured by means of partitives and postpositional constructions.

The plural forms of certain nouns are not *determined by stylistic factors either*. *Most Udmurt nouns having strategies of pluralia tantum are influenced by Russian* (*кезьытъёс* 'colds', *быръёнъёс* 'elections').