

THE CONCEPT OF NUMBER AND ITS ROLE IN THE
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ABSTRACT

Phraseologisms, proverbs, and aphorisms have emerged based on numbers. The number “one” is interpreted as a sign signifying wholeness and unity, “two” as opposition, and “three” as perfection. In the minds of the people, however, numbers become not only abstract logical units but also symbolic concepts formed on the basis of life experience. The article provides insights into the role of numbers with special symbolic meaning in the culture of each nation, as well as the use of the numbers “one,” “three,” “seven,” and “forty” within phraseological units, and their place in the worldview of the people.

The concept of number is not only a logical unit denoting quantity, but also a complex concept closely related to the way people perceive the world, their cultural values, and symbolic thinking. In the cultures of various peoples, numbers, being a simple means of calculation, have also conveyed certain symbolic, religious, mythological, and philosophical meanings. Therefore, the concept of number appears as an important scientific problem at the intersection of language, culture, and thought. Numbers represent the quantitative characteristics of objects and phenomena, ensuring clarity and logic in speech. It has deep roots in the semantic system of language, laying the foundation for the formation of symbolic meanings.

Numerals have a number of unique lexical and grammatical features compared to other parts of speech. These characteristics indicate that it is a separate, distinct branch of speech. Therefore, in Turkological literature, it is studied as one of the branches of nominal speech. Numerals in the Karakalpak literary language, like in other Turkic languages, consist of 20 basic words. They are: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety, hundred, thousand. Although the concept of number can continue indefinitely, it is expressed only through the repetition of these words and their combination with each other. These words are generally common to all Turkic languages, and they have not undergone significant changes in historical development. Therefore, there are no significant differences between their forms in ancient and modern languages.

A numeral is a part of speech that expresses the general numerical meaning or the number, magnitude, or order of an object or phenomenon. Numerals are primarily unambiguous words, lacking modal, emotional, and expressive connotations, and no

attributive word is used before them. In some contexts, numerals are used in other meanings besides their numerical value. For example, the numerals “forty,” “hundred,” and “thousand” often denote an unknown quantity and serve as an intensifying word.

Number is a concept essential in various fields of human knowledge and experience and has been the object of study in the works of philosophers (Pythagoras, Plotinus, Plato, Augustine, A. Losev, and others) and cultural scholars (J. Lotman, O. Spengler, and others). They expressed their opinion that numbers express not only numerical properties but also other meanings. In their works, they mention that numbers served as measures of time and quantity in ancient times.

In world linguistics, research has been conducted on numbers and their role in linguistics. S.A. Jabotinskaya (1992) described the cognitive and nominative aspects of the number class in modern English. V.V. Shevchenko (2001) studied the symbolism and meaning of numerical components in English phraseological units. Cherneva N.P. (2003) semantics and symbolism of numbers in Russian and Bulgarian; E.V. Golubeva (2006) demonstrated the national-cultural characteristics of the worldview in the Kalmyk language using the example of cultural concepts. M.M. Kumikova (2006) studied phraseologisms with the meanings of quantity and time in the Kabardian language. Shondug Bayasgalan (2006) studied the semantics of numbers in Mongolian, Russian, and English phraseology;

A.A. Osipova (2007) compared the semantics and symbolism of lexemes with numerical meaning in Russian, English, and French worldviews. A.A. Chelnokova (2009) studied the numerical term as the motivational basis of secondary nomination in German. Shao Nanxi (2009) - Russian numerative fixed expressions; T.B. Pasechnik (2009) conducted a comparative linguocultural analysis of phraseological units with numerical components in Russian and English. Karasev (2005) identified the cognitive determination of numerical meanings in English and Spanish phraseologisms.

Scholars such as V.A. Gordlevsky, F. Rosenberg, G. Ramstedt, V. Barthold, and V. Radlov conducted historical and comparative research on numbers in Turkic languages. The study of numerals in Turkic languages as separate words and branches of speech in a monographic plan began in the 1950s. As a result, valuable works were published in several languages. A. Khasenov extensively analyzed numerals in the Kazakh language [1], M. Penjiev in the Turkmen language [2], and S. Nizamatinova in the Uzbek language [3]. Later, numerals were also studied in the Kyrgyz language [4]. In 1976, A. Bekbergenov's work "Numbers in the Karakalpak Language" [5] was published in the Karakalpak language.

In recent years, research has been conducted on the various functions and properties of numbers in Kazakh linguistics. K. Dusipbayeva studies numbers by dividing them into even and odd numbers [6]. R. Jeldibayeva specifically studied the quantitative use of numbers and the ethnocultural meaning of numbers [7]. The cultural significance of numerical concepts in the names of national measurements was thoroughly researched by K. Kurkebaev [8]. L. Qabildina studied the representation and semantic meaning of numbers in quantitative terms [9]. The numerative function of numerals and semantic similarities in Turkic languages were analyzed by O. Karaga [10]. Numbers in Bashkir linguistics have been extensively studied based on ethnographic, folkloric, and mythological materials. Scholars have focused on the symbolic meanings of numbers within toponyms (Buxarova 2003, Kamalov 1994, 1997,

Usmanova 1994, Hisamitdinova 1991, Shakurov 1986), anthroponyms (Kusimova 1975, Raemgujina 2006), and phraseologisms (Raemgujina 1999).

In contemporary research, linguists are increasingly interested in studying sacred numbers not only as a grammatical category but also as a part of the linguistic picture of the world, their ethnocultural symbolism, the digital model of a particular people's world, and so on. Phraseologisms, proverbs, and aphorisms based on numbers have emerged in many languages. This situation indicates that the concept of number has taken a firm place in public consciousness. For example, the number "one" is interpreted as a sign denoting wholeness and unity, "two" as a sign of opposition, and "three" as a sign of completeness. In the minds of the people, however, numbers, in addition to an abstract logical unit, become symbolic concepts formed on the basis of life experience. These symbolic meanings have been formed over centuries and passed down from generation to generation through oral and written communication.

In the culture of every nation, certain numbers have a special symbolic meaning. For example, "one" is a symbol of unity and wholeness, "three" is a symbol of sanctity and stability, "seven" is a symbol of perfection and completeness, and "forty" represents concepts related to trials and the transitional period.

In the worldview of the Turkic peoples, there are many mythological and cultural concepts associated with the number seven. Words like "seven heavens," "seven climates," and "seven generations" reveal the cosmic and genealogical meaning of numbers. Such examples demonstrate that the concept of number is deeply rooted in the worldview of the population.

In China, it is believed that the earth is quadrangular and has four corners. Also, four even numbers, that is, the sacred human number, were understood. In ancient Chinese culture, the imperial White Horde had four gates facing all four directions. For the Chinese, the quatrain was so sacred that they believed the four rivers would supply the country with water, and the four mountains would protect the country. The symbolic meaning of the number four, which brings success and happiness to the Chinese, stems from the belief in this mythical concept. After this, it appears that when classifying spiritual and material culture, which is considered sacred by the Chinese, it is counted in quatrains. For example, the number of amulets used by the Chinese to protect against supernatural forces is four.

There are four symbolic objects representing Chinese culture: a book, a picture, a guitar, and a chessboard. For the Chinese, all good qualities begin with adherence to four aspects of humanity: stability (non-selling), shame, duty, and maintaining good manners. Four animals lived in the garden of the Chinese emperors: the phoenix, the rhinoceros, the tortoise, and the dragon. In the numerological system of modern Chinese culture, the sacred number 4 transitioned to the concept of ancient Europeans, that is, the number four - a symbol of death. This is because modern Chinese people fear the number four, believing it will lead to failure, disaster, and death.

Numbers play an important poetic and semantic role in folk art. In fairy tales, epics, proverbs, and riddles, numbers define the sequence of events, the characters' trials, and the logical structure of the plot. For example, in fairy tales, motifs such as the hero *undergoing*

three trials or *fighting a seven-headed dragon* are widespread. This situation means that numbers are viewed as a certain stereotype and model in the population's understanding.

Numerical phraseologisms are a clear example of a people's worldview in linguistics. Such phraseologisms often have figurative and evaluative meanings, expressing the life experience of the people. For example, the idiom “bir jaǵadan bas shıǵarıw” (to come to an agreement) indicates unity, “eki ottıń arasında qalıw” (to be caught between two fires) a difficult situation, and “jeti uyqılap túsine kirmew” (not to fall asleep in a dream) unexpectedness.

The concept of number is one of the important factors in the formation of national mentality. The frequent use of certain numbers and their positive or negative connotations depend on the historical experience and social consciousness of the population. For example, the acceptance of certain numbers as sacred or taboo is directly related to religious and mythological beliefs. This demonstrates that the concept of number is not only a linguistic but also a socio-cultural phenomenon. Numbers express the population's understanding of the world and their values.

The linguocultural study of the concept of number has theoretical and practical significance for linguistics, folklore studies, and cultural studies. Research in this area allows for a deeper understanding of the population's worldview.

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