TAIKOMOJI KALBOTYRA/ APPLIED LINGUISTICS

Lexicalisation of the Plural

Ramunė Kaperavičienė

Abstract. The lexicalisation process of nouns in the plural form is a universal phenomenon in the languages where nouns are variable regarding number. Both Lithuanian and English possess a number of nouns that show difference of lexical meaning between the singular and the plural. This way the plural form of a word with a distinct meaning from the singular becomes a separate lexical item. However, the overall number and the cases of the nouns that acquire a new lexicalised meaning in the plural are different in the two languages. Lithuanian and English lexicographers also treat such nouns in a different way. Moreover, unlike Lithuanian, English dictionaries show no uniform method of rendering these nouns. This paper focuses on all possible cases of the lexicalised plural and comparison of such nouns in Lithuanian and English. Although the occurrence of lexicalised plural meanings in any of the languages under analysis is not very frequent, translation of such nouns is somewhat complicated since often the number form of the noun with a particular meaning in the plural is not the same in the target language.

Key words: *number; singular; plural; lexicalisation.*

Introduction

Inflection is the use of different forms of the same word. That is, every word possesses a paradigm of several distinct forms with unaltered lexical meaning. However, sometimes there are differences between the singular and the plural in the languages where nouns are inflected for number and those differences are not typical of the inflection process. There are a number of cases where the change of number form results in a new lexical meaning. However, it is not surprising that lexicalised plural nouns are non-coincident across languages.

This paper principally aims at determining the cases of different lexical meaning between the singular and the plural of Lithuanian and English nouns. Therefore, the focus of the research is on the nouns that acquire a new meaning in the plural**.** The two Lithuanian dictionaries (*Lietuvių kalbos žodynas* and *Dabartinės lietuvių kalbos žodynas*) and 12 English dictionaries (both British and American) will be taken to determine and illustrate possible coincident and non-coincident cases of lexicalised plural meanings of Lithuanian and English nouns. All the dictionaries in the paper are abbreviated. A list of what each abbreviation represents is given in a separate list at the end. Because of differences in lexicalized plural meanings of Lithuanian and English nouns, their translation often causes problems. Therefore, another question to be discussed in the paper is the possibility of appropriate translation of such nouns from English to Lithuanian and vice versa.

The process of lexicalisation in Lithuanian

There have been just a few studies of lexicalisation of Lithuanian nouns mainly carried out by Paulauskienė who distinguished the basic groups of lexicalised meanings in the plural (1976: pp38-39; 1983: p169; 1989: pp160-161; 1994: pp147-148; 2006: pp75-76). Furthermore, academic grammars of Lithuanian provide only a very general comment of this process focusing more on the mere existence of lexicalised meanings rather than on the causes or classification of such nouns (Ulvydas 1965: pp173-174; Ambrazas 2005: pp66-67).

However, the dependence of the meaning of Lithuanian nouns upon their number was already noticed by writers of the Lithuanian grammars several hundred years ago (Sapūnas and Schultz 1997: 125, Jaunius 1908-1916: 49-50).

A number of world-famous linguists (Beard, Blokh, Frawley, Nabatova, Rosental, and others) have also noted the lexical aspect of the category of number. The feature of certain nouns to acquire a new meaning in the plural allows to prove that number is a lexical-grammatical category rather than just grammatical which has been traditionally stated by a number of linguists and grammarians (Wickens 1992: p5).

On top of all that, the process of lexicalisation of the plural is characteristic of many languages; except that the lexicalised nouns are different. Therefore, in such cases a translator has to use one word for the singular and another for the plural since the meanings of the forms of the same lexical item are at variance. For instance, the Russian word *час* stands for *valanda ('hour')* in Lithuanian meanwhile *часы* stands for *laikrodis ('clock').* The Lithuanian noun *ratas* is translated as *колесо* into Russian or as *wheel* into English. On the other hand, the plural *ratai ('vežimas')* is translated as *воз* and *cart* respectively. There is no lexical difference between the Russian word *дом* and its plural form *дома* whereas the Lithuanian noun *namas/ namai* shows a difference in the meaning. The Lithuanian dictionary (LKŽ[1] 2005) presents six

---

[1] For abbreviations see Data Sources.

possible meanings of the singular form *namas:*

1. the living house or any building, e.g. *Povilas išėjo iš kambarėlio ir atsisėdo and suoliuko prie **namo**.* (LKŽ) *(=Povilas went out of his room and sat on the bench by the **house**[2]).*

2. a farm or homestead, e.g. ***Namas** kaip dvaras ir vyras labia geras.* (LKŽ) *(=There is a **house** like a mansion and a very good husband).*

3. family, people living together, e.g. *Visas mūsų **namas** sveikas, ačiū Dievui, dar nė vienas nesirgo.* (LKŽ) *(=All our **family** are well, thanks God, no one has been ill yet).*

4. a stall, a cow-house, e.g. *Dabar jau karvės **name** stovi, tai ir darbo daugiau.* (LKŽ) *(=With the cows in the **cow-house** there is more work to be done).*

5. a small cabin with a kitchen built for summer time, e.g. *Už šeimyninio pliažo po pušim medinis vieno kambario **namelis** su stiklo veranda.* (LKT) *(=Behind the beach under the pine there was a small wooden one-room house with a glass verandah).*

6. a porch, e.g. ***Namas**, kur verda valgyt.* (LKŽ) *(=A **porch** where meal is prepared).*

The dictionary introduces the plural word *namai* as a new lexical entry and presents seven possible meanings with only some of them showing immediate semantic association with the countable noun *namas*, e.g.

7. the first meaning is semantically related to *namas* and refers to buildings or a living place, e.g. *Vyresnysis brolis paėmė **namus**, antrasis – klėtį, o kvailiui davė gurbelį su veršeliu.* (LKŽ) *(=The elder brother took the house, the younger took the barn and the third stupid one was given the cart and the calf).*

8. permanent dwelling-place, e.g. *Vai eisiu, eisiu, aš čia nebūsiu, čia ne mano **nameliai**.* (LKŽ) *(=Dear me, I'll go, I'll go, I will not stay, this is not my sweet **home**).*

9. the third meaning again shows clear semantic relation to the second meaning of *namas* and refers to a farm or homestead, e.g. *Antroji pati iš pradžių buvo nieko sau: ir **namų** žiūrėjo, ir posūnį mylėjo.* (LKŽ) *(=The second wife at first was not too bad: she took care of the **house** and loved the stepchild).*

10. the fourth meaning is semantically related to the third meaning of *namas* and refers to family living together, e.g. *Broliui siuntinius siunčiu aš, siunčia sesuo, **namai** siunčia.* (LKŽ) *(=I, my sister and all the **family** send packages for our brother).*

11. a certain public institution; the building of such institution, e.g. *Liaudies kūrybos **namai*** (LKŽ) *(=folk **house**).*

12. the shell of some animals, e.g. *Prisirinkau varlių geldelių ir dėlių **namų**.* (LKŽ) *(=I have picked some frog and leech **shells**).*

13. placenta, e.g. *Avies **namuos** radau keturis aviukus.* (LKŽ) *(=I have found four unborn lambs in the **placenta** of a sheep).*

The given lexical meanings of the countable noun *namas* and the uncountable plural noun *namai* show only partial semantic relation. That is, only three meanings of *namai* are semantically closely related to the meanings of the word *namas* which means that it is possible to use both the singular and plural form referring to a living place, a homestead and a family living in one house. Different meanings of the countable noun *namas* (6) and the uncountable plural *namai* (7) demonstrate that the two items are separate words rather than different forms of the same word. Therefore, Lithuanian lexicographers present *namas* and *namai* as separate entries in the dictionaries (compare LKŽ 2005; DLKŽ 2000). The same applies to nouns like ***metas** (time)/ **metai** (year), **rūmas** (house)/ **rūmai** (palace),* etc. The singular form of such nouns shows certain semantic relation to at least one of the meanings in the plural and this relation is indicated in the Lithuanian dictionaries. It is, however, essential to note that here the meaning of the noun in the singular form is semantically directly related to the plural.

On the other hand, the question rises whether there are any items whose plural would show a complete breakaway from the meanings. LKŽ presents eleven meanings of the countable noun *ratas*, e.g.

1. a circle with spokes put on an axis of a cart or another mechanism, e.g. *Atokiau gulėjo vežimas **ratais** aukštyn.* (LKŽ) *(=Further away there was a cart with the **wheels** up).*

2. a bicycle, e.g. *Į pakalnę i senas **ratas** gerai bėga.* (LKŽ) *(=An old **bicycle** too can ride well down the hill).*

3. a spinning-wheel, e.g. *Kad aš suverpiau baltus linelius be špūlės, be **rato**, be kuodelėlio.* (LKŽ) *(=I have spun white flax with no spool, no **wheel**, no tow).*

4. a circular plane, a circle, e.g. *Po berželiu, po žaliu, sėdi mergos **rateliu**.* (LKŽ) *(=Below a birch, the green one, girls are sitting in a **circle**).*

5. a certain closed circular route, e.g. *Paukščiai suko ore didelius **ratus**.* (LKŽ) *(=Birds have been spinning high in **circles**).*

6. a circular thing, e.g. *Gelbėjimo **ratas*** (LKŽ) *(=a **lifebuoy**)*

7. a detour, e.g. *Nereikėtų daryti tokio **rato**: būtų daug tiesiau, lengviau ir pigiau.* (LKŽ) *(=You shoudn't make the **round**: it would be a lot nearer, easier and cheaper).*

8. plenty of something, e.g. *Ein berniukai turgun **ratais**.* (LKŽ) *(=Boys go to the market in **force**).*

9. a party, a team of people unified by some purpose, e.g. *Šiam darbui jau subūrė bičiulių **ratą**.* (LKŽ) *(=A **party** of friends has been organized for this task).*

10. a scope, a sphere, a field, e.g. *Pašnekesių metu buvo taip pat apsvarstytas platus **ratas** aktualių tarptautinių*

---

klausimų. (LKŽ) (=***A number of*** *topical international dilemmas were considered during the discourse).*

11. a round of some championship, contest, election, etc., e.g. *Ką parodys pirmasis rinkimų **ratas**?*(LKŽ) *(=What will the first **round** of the election show?)*

However, a separate lexical entry of the plural noun *ratai* is also presented in LKŽ with no reference made to the lexical entry *ratas*. This suggests that a semantic relation of the plural form *ratai* to any of the meanings of the countable noun *ratas* is unlikely. In this case *ratai* refers to the cart pulled by horses, e.g.

> *Žmonių prisėdo pilni **ratai**.* (LKŽ) *(=The **cart** was full of people).*

> *Karieta – puošnūs kelioniniai **ratai**, vartoti turtingųjų. (LKŽ) (=The **carriage** is a gorgeous traveling cart which was used by the rich).*

> *Ne mano **ratai**, ne mano kumelė, nei aš važiuoju.* (LKŽ) *(=It is not my **cart** and not my horse and it is not me who is ridden).*

Therefore, it can be stated either that, when there is no reference to the countable noun in the dictionary, the plural form of the same noun does not possess any immediate semantic link to the singular form or, at least, that this link is rather vague and insubstantial.

The same phenomenon of indirect semantic relation between the singular and the plural which is not indicated in the Lithuanian dictionaries can be observed with other nouns as well, e.g. ***rytas*** *(morning)/* ***rytai*** *(East),* ***vidurys*** *(centre)/* ***viduriai*** *(insides),* ***ledas*** *(ice)/* ***ledai*** *(ice cream),* ***slėpynė*** *(hiding place)/* ***slėpynės*** *(hide-and-seek),* ***šarvas*** *(shell)/* ***šarvai*** *(armour),* ***sunkumas*** *(heaviness)/* ***sunkumai*** *(difficulties),* ***ryšys*** *(connection)/* ***ryšiai*** *(communication),* ***skiepas*** *(graft)/* ***skiepai*** *(vaccine),* ***sąlyga*** *(condition)/* ***sąlygos*** *(circumstances),* etc. There are a number of nouns that show no semantic relation between the singular and the plural whatsoever, e.g. ***rietena*** *(whitlow)/* ***rietenos*** *(quarrels),* ***sąvalka*** *(something that is dragged into a row)/* ***sąvalkos*** *(the undesirables),* ***skyryba*** *(punctuation)/* ***skyrybos*** *(divorce),* etc.

Lexicalisation of Nouns in English

The process of the lexicalised meaning of the plural is observed in English as well. WEUD lists four possible meanings of the noun *compliment*, e.g.

1. 'an expression of praise, commendation, or admiration', e.g. *A sincere **compliment** boosts one's morale* (1996: p301);

2. 'a formal act or expression of civility, respect, or regard', e.g. *He paid her the **compliment** of escorting her* (1996: p301);

3. *pl.* 'a courteous greeting; good wishes; regards', e.g. *He sends you his **compliments*** (1996: p301);

4. 'a gift, present' (1996: p301).

The third meaning of *compliment* is the one in the plural form but it shows some kind of semantic relation with other meanings. That is, all the meanings refer to the expression of some kind of generous act. The same applies to other nouns whose lexicalised plurals are semantically related to the meaning or meanings in the singular even though this link can be minor or indirect, e.g. ***block*** *(a solid piece of hard material[3])/* ***blocks*** *(any of a set of solid cubes used as a child's toy),* ***cover*** *(something that covers or protects)/* ***covers*** *(bedclothes),* ***depth*** *(deepness)/* ***depths*** *(deep water),* ***force*** *(power)/* ***forces*** *(troops; fighting resources),* ***glass*** *(a hard, brittle, usu. transparent, translucent, or shiny substance)/* ***glasses*** *(spectacles),* ***honour*** *(high respect; glory; reputation, good name)/* ***honours*** *(special distinction for proficiency in an examination),* ***tropic*** *(the parallel of latitude)/* ***tropics*** *(the regions between the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn),* etc.

However, sometimes there is no semantic relation between the singular and the plural meanings of the same noun in English. For example, WEUD lists three possible meanings of the noun *premise:*

1. 'a proposition supporting or helping to support a conclusion' (WEUD 1996: p1136), e.g. *His reasoning is based on the **premise** that all people are equally capable of good and evil* (OALD);

2. *pl.* a. 'a tract of land including its buildings'; b. 'a building together with its grounds or other appurtenances'; c. 'the property forming the subject of a conveyance or bequest' (WEUD 1996: p1136), e.g. *The company is looking for larger **premises*** (OALD);

3. *in law:* a. 'a basis, stated or assumed, on which reasoning proceeds'; b. 'an earlier statement in a document'; c. 'the statement of facts upon which the complaint is based' (WEUD 1996: p1136), e.g. *Indeed, one of the justifications of private property takes as its **premise** the idea that property ownership confers power* (BNC).

The second meaning rendered in WEUD refers to the noun in the plural *premises* which is completely different from and shows no semantic relation to any other meanings of the countable noun *premise*. There are a number of nouns with lexicalised plural meanings which do not show any direct, unequivocal semantic relation to the meanings of the nouns as countable, e.g. ***auspice*** *(a forecast)/* ***auspices*** *(patronage),* ***fatigue*** *(extreme tiredness)/* ***fatigues*** *(clothing of various types worn by military personnel),* ***ground*** *(the surface of the earth/* ***grounds*** *(solid particles, esp. of coffee, forming a residue),* ***hostility*** *(being hostile, enmity)/* ***hostilities*** *(acts of warfare),* ***link*** *(one loop or ring of a chain)/* ***links*** *(a golf course),* ***security*** *(a secure condition or feeling)/* ***securities*** *(a certificate attesting credit or the ownership of stock, bonds, etc.),* etc.

It is, however, essential to note that English dictionaries treat such polysemantic nouns with distinct meanings in the singular and the plural differently than do Lithuanian dictionaries. That is, all the meanings of such nouns (with

---

[3] Here and further on where examples are given the first or the most characteristic meanings of the countable nouns have been taken either from The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English (1995) or from Heinle's Newbury House Dictionary of American English (2003) for illustrations of presence or absence of any semantic relation between the meanings in the singular and the plural.

rare exceptions) are included under one entry with the plural form usually taking the second, the third, etc. meanings (compare OSD 1984; PED 1992; COD 1995; ChED 1996; WEUD 1996; LDCE 1999-2006; CALD 2006; MWOD 2006; OALD 2006, etc.). Occasionally, some dictionaries introduce certain nouns with the difference of meaning in the singular and the plural as separate entries, e.g. *premise/ premises* (compare CIDE 1995; NPED 2000; DAE 2003; CALD 2006; OALD 2006, etc.). It has been noticed that nouns with different meanings between the singular and the plural showing no semantic relation to each other are presented (though inconsistently) as separate entries in English dictionaries.

Correspondence of lexicalised nouns in Lithuanian and English

Evidently, the plural form acquires a new meaning in inflectional languages such as Lithuanian more frequently than in analytic languages such as English. Thus, the change of inflection is the implication of affixes typical of the composition of new words. Affixation implies that the compositional meaning is the structural meaning of a composed word which combines the underlying meaning of a word and the meaning of a compositional formative. After all, in Lithuanian close semantic relation between the meanings of the same word, whose singular and plural are considered as separate lexical items like *namas (any building)/ namai (the house or flat that one lives in, especially with family), patalas (bed)/ patalai (feather-bed or bedcloting), ausinė (a cap with earpieces covering ears)/ ausinės (earmuffs or earphones),* etc. can be demonstrated by the examples given below.

> Pasistačiau gražų **namą**. Jame bus patogu gyventi. Tai bus mano, mano vaikų ir vaikaičių jaukūs **namai**[4]. (=I have built a nice **house** and it will be very comfortable. It will be **home** for me, my children and my grandchildren).

> Mano **patalas** toks patogus, o **patalai** minkšti, švelnūs, kvepiantys. (=My **bed** is so comfortable and the **bedclothes** are so soft and scented.)

On the other hand, there are certain nouns whose number form and meaning do correspond in the two languages under analysis, for instance, Lithuanian *vidurys (the inner part, side or surface of something)/ viduriai (a person's stomach and bowels)* or *grybas (mushroom)/ grybai (a dish made of mushrooms)* may have corresponding nouns in English *inside/ insides* and *mushroom/ mushrooms* respectively, e.g.

> Ak tai graži mergužytė, kaip kvietkelės **vidurys**. (LKŽ) (=What a pretty little girlie like the **inside** of a bloom).

> Trūko **viduriai**, ir mirė moteriškė. (LKŽ) (=There was some problem with the **insides** and the woman died).

> Šiemet lietinga vasara ir miške daug **grybų**. Todėl draugę vaišino **grybais** su virtomis bulvėmis. (=This year summer is rainy and there are lots of **mushrooms** in the forest. So my friend served me with **mushrooms** and potatoes).

---

[4] The examples with no references following have been created by the author to illustrate a particular point in the text.

Undoubtedly, it can be stated that the incongruity of lexicalised meanings of certain nouns in the plural across languages in general suggests that there are individual reasons for the lexicalization process of the plural. Apparently, the number of lexicalised nouns is also different across languages. Sirtautaitė found that only 2% of Lithuanian nouns showed a new lexical meaning in the plural different from the one in the singular (1983: p12). English evidently possesses fewer nouns with the difference of meaning between the singular and the plural. For example, the number of lexicalised plural meanings of English nouns in CALD and DAE are less than 1%.

The main cases of lexicalised nouns in Lithuanian and their correspondence in English

In Lithuanian, the nouns with a difference in meaning between the singular and the plural fall into four broad groups:

I. In cases when nouns refer to countable things which are actually hard to count or their countability is irrelevant, the meaning of the plural form is more alienated from the meanings of the noun in the singular. That is, such forms appear to be independent (*pluralia tantum*), e.g. *miltai, sėlenos, kruopos, dulkės, pelenai, kviečiai, avižos, miežiai, dribsniai,* etc. (Paulauskienė 1994: pp147-148). Naturally, there are differences across languages and, as it has already been mentioned, plural words do not always correspond in Lithuanian and English. Lithuanian plural nouns whose countability is irrelevant usually are equivalent to nouns which are also considered uncountable but take the singular verb in English, e.g. *barley, bran, cereal, corn, dust, flour, hair, popcorn, rice, rye, wheat, etc.* Only a few such nouns where countability is possible but irrelevant are considered plural, e.g. *ashes, dregs, grits, oats, rapids, sideburns,* etc. On the other hand, under certain conditions the singular of such nouns is also possible in Lithuanian as shown by the examples given below.

   a. Iš jo išaugs varpa, iš to mažo **grūdelio** – duonos kąsnis. (Avyžius) (=A spike, a bite of bread, will grow from this small **grain**.)

   b. Vei, kasdien daugiaus ji mums savo **spindulį** slepia, O šešėliai vis ilgyn kasdien išsitiesia. (Donelaitis) (=Each day shows less and less of its majestic **rays**, Stretches out more and more the shadows of all things (tanslated by N. Rastenis)).

   c. Saulė pavargus, blyškiai sušvitus, – merkia **blakstieną**. (Nėris) (=The tired sun, shining faintly, is winking its **eaves**).

   d. O **pinigas** mūsų žmonėms vai reikalingas (Krėvė). (=And **money** is so urgent for our people).

Often the use of the singular form instead of the more usual plural one is a stylistic device. The Lithuanian noun *grūdai* is rarely used in the singular, most often for the sake of expression. In English it is considered as a countable *grain/ grains* or a collective *grain.* Where the nouns that are not normally counted but possess a possible singular form in Lithuanian are concerned, translators avoid using the unusual plural form (Examples **b** and **c**). In Lithuanian *pinigai* (Example **d**)

is a plural noun, but the singular form here is used for stylistic reasons. In English *money* is uncountable, too. Yet, there is no other number form possible for this noun even for stylistic purposes.

Even so, languages are free to choose in this case. In Lithuanian the plural form is usual when the counting of certain things is irrelevant. Yet, this is not necessarily the same with other languages. For example, in Russian the singular form is typically chosen when counting of certain things is irrelevant, e.g. *крупа* (compare *kruopos* and *grits*), *ячъменъ* (compare *miežiai* and *barley*), *рожъ* (compare *rugiai* and *rye*), *пшеница* (compare *kviečiai* and *wheat*), *пылъ* (compare *dulkės* and *dust*), etc. Nevertheless, the singular is never lexicalised. That is, nouns with a special meaning in the singular are the so called *singularia tantum* and refer to uncountable things like *auksas (gold), arbata (tea), molis (clay), purvas (mud), cukrus (sugar), pienas (milk), duona (bread), varis (copper), etc.* Of course, there are other cases of lexicalised items, that is, when the totality of certain things matters, e.g. *plaukas/ plaukai (hair).* In this case, the plural does not denote a lot, but refers to all things as a whole. The singular meaning of such nouns may be distinct from the plural both on the semantic and stylistic level. For example, the noun *plaukas/ plaukai* has several meanings:

1. the plural refers to the whole, e.g. *Tie gelsvi **plaukai** jam kadaise kvepėjo saulėgrąža ir tiek daug reiškė.* (DLKT) *(=Her blonde **hair** once smelled of a sunflower and meant so much).*

2. the singular refers to the fur of a hairy animal, e.g. *Vilkas **plauką** maino, būdo nemaino.* (folklore) *(=A wolf can change its **fur** but never its temper).*

3. occasionally, it is possible to count hairs, e.g. *O po kėdė draikosi vienas kitas iššukuotas motinos **plaukas**.* (DLKT) *(=And below a chair one **hair** combed by mom was hovering).*

4. the singular carries the stylistic shade of meaning, e.g. *Todėl puikiausiai žinąs, kad anksčiau laiko nė **plaukas** nuo jo galvos nenukrisiąs ...* (DLKT) *(=Therefore he knows well that nobody will touch a **hair** on his head beforehand).*

In this case, when a certain noun refers to the whole of something, Lithuanian dictionaries are not uniform. For example, LKŽ (Vol. X 1976: pp90-92,) treats the plural *plaukai* as one of the meanings of *plaukas* meanwhile DLKŽ (2000 p564) introduces the singular and the plural forms as separate headwords. On the other hand, nouns referring to plenty of something in the plural are always introduced under the same entry in Lithuanian dictionaries.

Among the group of nouns whose plurals are usually more important than the singulars and refer to the mass of something, there is a special group of nouns that may refer to a dish in the plural, too. Such nouns are first considered countable and refer to one thing in the singular and to more than one thing in the

plural but also refer to a dish, e.g. **grybas** *(mushroom)/* **grybai** *(mushrooms),* **makaronas** *(noodle)/* **makaronai** *(noodles),* **salota** *(lettuce)/* **salotos** *(salad),* **šprotas** *(sprat)/* **šprotai** *(canned sprat as a dish),* **ramunėlė** *(chamomile)/* **ramunėlės** *(chamomile tea), etc.*

    e. **Salotos** užauga anksti, tai pirmosios pavasarinės daržovės. (LKŽ) (=**Lettuce** grows early and is the first vegetable in spring).

    f. Burokėlių **salotos** bus skanesnės, jei į jas įpilsite obuolių, citrinų ar spanguolių sulčių. (DLKT) (=Beetroot **salad** will be more delicious if you add apple, lemon or cranberry juice).

The coincidence of such nouns or their number forms in Lithuanian and English is rare. However, nouns like *mushroom/ mushrooms, noodle/ noodles* are countable in English and they may acquire the meaning of a dish in the plural as well. Naturally, there are more differences than similarities between the two languages under consideration; therefore, it is most likely that in English such nouns would be substituted with other lexical items as the examples given above demonstrate.

II. Lithuanian nouns referring to a person of a particular nationality in the singular may acquire the meaning of a whole nation in the plural, e.g. *lietuvis/ lietuviai (a Lithuanian/ Lithuanians), latvis/ latviai (a Latvian/ Latvians), prancūzas/ prancūzai (French/ the French).* Their singular and plural do not exhibit opposition with regard to this particular meaning.

    a. **Anglai** geria daug arbatos. (=**The English** drink a lot of tea).

    b. **Lietuviai** yra viena aukščiausių tautų pasaulyje. (=**Lithuanians** are one of the tallest peoples in the world).

However, the plural in Lithuanian does not only refer to the people of one nation in general. It may also refer to more than one person of a particular nationality (Paulauskienė 1989: p161).

    c. Staiga girdžiu – vienas **anglas** draugų būryje groja lūpine armonikėle. (DLKT) (=Suddenly I hear one **Englishman** playing a mouth organ in the circle of friends).

    d. Penki amerikiečiai, du **anglai** ir vienas belgas dvejus metus išgyveno izoliuoti. (DLKT) (=Five Americans, two **Englishmen** and a Belgian lived in isolation for two years).

The given examples already show that in English such lexical items may be twofold. First, the identical situation as in Lithuanian may be observed. A noun in the singular may have the meaning of one person of a certain nationality whereas in the plural it may possess a different meaning: of a whole nation. Some of these nationality words have a plural ending – s (*a German – Germans, an Italian – Italians, an American – Americans, etc.*) while others do not (*a Chinese – Chinese, a Swiss – Swiss, a Portuguese – Portuguese, etc.*). Second, there can be different lexical items in English to refer to a

single person and to people of one nation in general (*an Englishman – the English, a Frenchman – the French, a Dutchman – the Dutch, etc.*). Such nouns require a definite article in the plural.

It is essential to note that English dictionaries treat nouns in the plural forms referring to a nation in general in a different way. The plural form of only those nouns that refer to a nation and whose singular does not refer to one single person of that nation (that is where there is a separate lexical item to refer to one person) is distinguished as a separate meaning. For instance, the meanings of the noun *English* are the following:

1. 'the language of England, now used in many varieties in the British Isles, the United States, and most Commonwealth or ex-Commonwealth countries, and often internationally' (COD 1995: p448), e.g. *The existence of two versions of the infinitive poses the problem of their status in the linguistic system of* **English** (BNC);

2. '(prec. by *the;* treated as *pl.*) the people of England' (COD 1995: p448), e.g. ***The English** are proud of their history* (DAE).

Dictionaries do not distinguish the plural meaning of other nouns that refer to a nation in general whether with the plural ending –s or without it as a separate meaning. The meanings of the noun *Lithuanian* are the following:

1. 'a native of Lithuanian, a Baltic republic'; 'a person of Lithuanian descent' (COD 1995: p796); *Early on the following day a **Lithuanian** who had been on duty alone at a nearby post was found shot dead ...* (BNC);

2. 'the language of Lithuania' (COD 1995: p796). *... legislation was initiated with a view to establishing **Lithuanian** and Estonian as official languages in their respective republics* (BNC).

It is possible that such a pattern of presenting the words in dictionaries is a traditional method of foreign lexicographers to render the meanings of the nouns referring to a nation. Lithuanian dictionaries treat all such nouns as plural and introduce them as separate headwords.

III. Absolutely rare is the grammatical opposition of the nouns that refer to a pair of things for one seldom needs to talk about one thing of a pair. Reality determines more frequent use of such nouns in the plural rather than in the singular (Paulauskienė 1994: p148), e.g. ***pirštinė** (glove)/ **pirštinės** (gloves), **batas** (shoe)/ **batai** (shoes), **kojinė** (sock/ **kojinės** (socks),* etc. On the other hand, occasionally, it is necessary to refer to one thing of a pair and even to count such items.

a. Traukiu ranką iš **pirštinių** ir plėšiu ledą nuo akių. (DLKT) (=I am pulling my hand from the **gloves** and rubbing ice from my face).

b. Moteris, kitados vadinta Meksika, užsnūdo, ir antroji jos mezgama **pirštinė** nuslydo ant balto marmuro grindų. (DLKT) (=The woman, once called Mexico, fell asleep, and the second **glove** which she had been knitting slipped on the white marble floor).

c. Ir kokie mano **batai** atrodys po tokios ilgos kelionės. (DLKT) (=And what my **shoes** will look like after such a long journey).

d. Krikštamote fėja, kur mano stiklinis **batukas** ir karalaitis išgelbėtojas? (DLKT) (=Godmother fairy, where is my glass **shoe** and my prince the saviour?)

e. Ir nuo lietaus
Iki liūties
Keturi batai girgždina
Tą patį sniegą.
(Dambrauskaitė)
(=And from the rain
Until the rainstorm
The **four shoes** scrape
The same old snow.)

In English, as in Lithuanian, there are a number of cases when one thing of a pair is meant. However, usually such nouns are used in the plural, e.g. *chopsticks, cufflinks, earmuffs, gloves, knee-highs, mittens, shoes, socks, stilts, stockings, suspenders,* etc.

f. One **glove** blew off and was lost. (Stevenson) (=Vieną **pirštinę** nupūtė ir ji pradingo.)

g. She whispered something in his **ear**. (OALD) (=Ji kažką sušnabždėjo jam **ausin**.)

It is clear from the examples given above that translation of such nouns from Lithuanian into English and vice versa does not cause too many problems since the lexical items and the meanings of the singular and plural number forms coincide in the two languages.

Certain English dictionaries treat some, though not all, of the nouns referring to a pair as plural and introduce them with a plural ending or at least indicate that these are usually used in the plural. For example, *earmuffs* is introduced as a plural noun in DAE, but as a countable noun in COD and WEUD. LKŽ also indicates that some of these nouns are usually used in the plural.

IV. Another possible case of the lexicalised plurals can be occasionally observed with a few Lithuanian nouns that show a difference in lexical meaning between the singular and the plural where the plural acquires a metaphoric meaning, e.g. *pantis (a rope used to tie)/ **pančiai** (shackles, chains)* (Paulauskienė 1994: p148).

a. Prie tako guli gražiai susilenkęs, nesunešiotas, neatspurijęs **pantis.** (DLKT) (=I have found a perfectly bent, barely new, unfrayed **hobble** on the path).

b. Ji varžo meilės **pančiai** ir antrankiai. (DLKT) (=He is bound with the shackles and cuffs of love).

In English, too, there are a few nouns with a new figurative sense in the plural indicated as a separate

meaning in the dictionary, e.g. *bend (a curve in a road)/ bends (decompression sickness), butterfly (any insect of the order Lepidoptera)/ butterflies (a nervous sensation felt in the stomach), star (a celestial body)/ stars (something that decides the future), street (a public road)/ streets (a term for big-city dangers, such as crime),* etc. Not all of these plural nouns with a metaphoric meaning can be translated using the same lexical item as for the singular. Occasionally, it is quite difficult to translate such metaphoric expressions since either the number form of a noun is lost or the noun itself has to be substituted by another lexical item.

c. There are many types of **butterflies**, most of which are very pretty and colorful. (DAE) (=Yra nemažai rūšių **drugelių**, kurių dauguma yra labai gražūs ir spalvingi).

d. Before she sings to an audience, she gets **butterflies** in her stomach. (DAE) (=Prieš išeidama dainuoti į sceną ji labai jaudinasi).

e. There was a big moon and hundreds of **stars** were shining overhead. (OALD) (=Mėnulis buvo didžiulis, o šalia jo švietė tūkstančiai **žvaigždžių**).

f. Whether I have a girl or boy baby is not my decision; it's in the **stars.** (DAE) (=Ne man spręsti, berniukas ar mergaitė gims: tai parašyta **žvaigždėse**).

g. Look both ways before you cross the **street**. (LDCE) (=Pažiūrėk į abi puses prieš eidamas per **gatvę**).

h. Unfortunately, the young boy understands the life of the **streets**. (DAE) (=Deja, šis jaunuolis jau pažįsta **gatvės** gyvenimą).

Examples **e** and **f** reveal that certain Lithuanian and English nouns that acquire a new figurative meaning in the plural may coincide. However, this is not a usual pattern. When translating into Lithuanian, another lexical item may be used as in Example **d** where the noun *butterflies* would probably be changed into another metaphoric expression. The change of number form is also possible because the plural may sound unnatural and strange as in Example **h** where the plural form of the noun *streets* would probably be changed into the singular.

On the other hand, the estimation of such nouns is quite complicated since different dictionaries treat them in a different way. For example, the plural noun *butterflies* referring to nervousness about something is introduced as a separate headword in WEUD, as the second meaning in LDCE, DAE and CALD, as the fourth meaning in COD, and as an idiom *to have butterflies* in OALD. The same concerns the noun *stars*: in the plural it refers to something that decides the future. However, the noun with this particular sense is introduced as the third meaning in DAE, as the sixth meaning in CALD, but is not included into COD and WEUD. Therefore, asserting that a particular

number of English nouns possess new meanings in the plural is not possible since such an assumption has to be based on a specific dictionary and it is quite probable that the number of such nouns varies from dictionary to dictionary.

Other possible cases of lexicalisation of the plural in English

Besides those cases of lexicalisation that are alike in the two languages under consideration three more groups of lexicalised plural meanings can be distinguished in English:

I. There are a number of nouns with a difference of meaning in the singular and the plural where the latter form possesses quite a similar, yet, more generalised meaning, e.g. *armament (military weapons and supplies)/ armaments (the weaponry owned or sold by a nation), movie (a motion picture, film)/ movies (films in general), road (a path or road with a specially prepared surface, used by vehicles, pedestrians, etc.)/ roads (roads, streets, and highways in general),* etc.

a. The unit had insufficient **armament** with which to do battle. (DAE) (=Dalinys neturėjo pakankamai **ginklų** mūšiui.)

b. A small number of nations provide the world with **armaments**. (DAE) (=Nedaug šalių aprūpina pasaulį **ginklais**.)

c. They don't make **movies** like that any more. (LDCE) (=Tokie **filmai** nebekuriami).

d. I've always wanted to work in **the movies**. (OALD) (=Visada norėjau dirbti **kino industrijoje**).

e. Take the first **road** on the left and then follow the signs. (OALD) (=Pasuk kairėn ties pirma **sankryža**, o tada vadovaukis ženklais).

f. The **roads** have been cleared of snow. (DAE) (=Nuo **kelių** buvo nuvalytas sniegas).

When translating, the plural form *ginklai* sounds ordinary in Lithuanian substituting both the singular and the plural forms in the English sentence as in Examples **a** and **b**. However, there may also be other possible versions of translation where a different lexical item than the one for the plural can be used. For instance, *Dalinys neturėjo pakankamai ginkluotės mūšiui* could be appropriate as well. Nonetheless, again there are nouns that would not coincide when translating from English into Lithuanian as in Example **d** where the plural form *filmai* would be inappropriate since the intended meaning is different and refers to cinema as an industry. Substitution of a problem noun with another lexical item as in **e** (as opposed to **f**) perhaps is the best solution. In principle, it is possible to use the corresponding noun in Lithuanian translation. Yet, a sentence *Pasuk kairėn į pirmą kelią ...* would sound unnatural and non-Lithuanian.

Nonetheless, the difference in meaning between the singular and the plural of a noun is insignificant. It is possible to state here that the plural form is a mere generalization of the meaning expressed by the singular

and its inclusion in the dictionary as a separate meaning is doubtful.

II. A number of English nouns possess a lexicalised plural meaning which refers to profusion or intensity of something, e.g. *plain (a broad area of flat land)/ plains (a vast expanse of flat land), prospect (a possibility of success in the future, an expectation)/ prospects (very good chance for a successful future), store (a supply or stock of something)/ stores (supplies, esp. of food, clothing and weapons), etc.*

   a. We drove over a **plain** that lay between two sets of hills. (DAE) (=Mes važiavome per **lygumą** besidriekiančią tarp dviejų kalvų).

   b. In North America, the **plains** stretch for hundreds of miles. (DAE) (=Šiaurės Amerikoje, **lygumos** driekiasi šimtus mylių).

   c. Dad has a **store** of batteries in a drawer. (DAE) (=Stalčiuje tėtis turi **atsarginių** elementų).

   d. ... he had lost his military **stores** as well as the services of the sixty knights and four hundred archers … (BNC) (=... jis neteko visų savo karinių **atsargų**, o taip pat šešiasdešimties riterių ir keturių šimtų lankininkų, kurie buvo paimti nelaisvėn ...)

As for other possible cases of the lexicalised plural certain nouns do coincide in the two languages under analysis as in Examples **a** and **b**. On the other hand, generally the translator has either to change the number form or replace the whole construction with another kind of wording as in Example **c**. By all means, the word for word translation with the singular form of the noun *atsarga* standing for the English *store* is also possible in this case. However, the Lithuanian sentence *Tėtis turi elementų atsargą stalčiuje* sounds unusual and non-Lithuanian.

Translation of sentences where the plural of a noun refers to profusion and is introduced as a separate meaning of the noun in a dictionary shows that the same meaning can be rendered using the plural form of such nouns in Lithuanian. However, Lithuanian dictionaries do not treat reference to profusion of things as a separate sense in such nouns as *lyguma, perspektyva, atsarga, etc.* As it has already been mentioned above, English dictionaries consider these nouns in a different way, some of them introducing the plural sense as one of the meanings of the noun, the others leaving the plural meaning out.

III. A number of nouns acquire a new meaning in the plural in slang or informal speech, e.g. *trot (the action or exercise of trotting)/ trots (slang; an attack of diarrhoea), vibration (quivering, shaking)/ vibra-tions (slang; the feelings given off by a person or event), work (the application of mental or physical effort to a purpose; the use of energy)/ works (slang; preceded by the; everything extra), etc.*

   a. The girl broke into a **trot** and disappeared around the corner. (OALD) (=Mergaitė pradėjo **bėgti** ir dingo už kampo).

   b. Every time I visit Europe, I get **the trots**. (DAE) (=Kiekvieną kartą lankantis Europoje turiu **bėdų su viduriais**).

   c. Decorating that room was hard **work**. (CALD) (=Puošti kambarį buvo sunku).

   d. We went to the chip shop and had **the works**: fish, chips, gherkins, mushy peas. (OALD) (=Nuėjome į parduotuvę ir prisipirkome įvairių **priedų**: žuvies, traškučių, kornišonų, saldžių žirnelių).

As with other cases of meaning difference between the noun referring to countable things and its plural form, translation is usually complicated and the number form or the noun itself has to be substituted with another part of speech as in Examples **a** and **c**. In **a** the whole construction *broke into a trot* would probably be replaced by a verb *bėgti* when translating into Lithuanian. As concerns Example **c** the word for word translation into Lithuanian would be unnatural. However, it is possible to use the adequate lexical item for the English *work* and translate the sentence as *Kambario puošimas – sunkus darbas*. Yet, the English nouns with a new meaning in the plural which is used in slang or informal situations are more complicated because slang is influenced by cultural phenomena. Therefore, Examples **b** and **d** demonstrate substitution of the particular noun by another lexical item or phrase in Lithuanian. For example, the plural noun *trots* would likely be translated into Lithuanian using a less formal expression than the real meaning of *the trots: viduriavimas* (Example **b**).

Conclusions

There are a number of nouns with lexicalised meanings in the plural and a coincidence of both forms and meanings between the two languages is not likely. It may seem that there are more possible cases of lexicalisation of the plural in English than in Lithuanian. However, analysis based only on the information given in the dictionaries cannot reveal the true situation. The research has shown that English dictionaries provide more possible meanings of nouns than Lithuanian dictionaries do. However, in reality the cases of lexicalized nouns in the plural are more or less the same in both languages. Those cases that are included in English dictionaries as separate meanings are also possible in Lithuanian even though they are not presented in Lithuanian dictionaries.

As a result, it is essential to state that translation is a complicated process either way and translation of the lexicalised plural nouns is even more intricate as it is impossible to render the intended meaning and retain the same number form of a noun at the same time. On the other hand, lexicalisation of nouns in the plural is not a recurrent phenomenon in both English and Lithuanian.

Different treatment of the lexicalised plural nouns in English dictionaries is not surprising at all since there are a greater number of English than Lithuanian dictionaries. Besides, the

two Lithuanian dictionaries (LKŽ 1941-2002, 2005; DLKŽ 1954, 1972, 1997, 2000, 2004) were composed by the same team of lexicographers; therefore, they could establish quite reliably a uniform method of introducing such nouns and rendering their meanings. In clear contrast to this, there are a great number of foreign lexicographers preparing dictionaries of English, therefore, a unified method is hardly possible.

References

1. Ambrazas, V. (ed.) (2005) Dabartinės lietuvių kalbos gramatika, Mokslas, Vilnius.

2. Blokh, M. Y. (1983) A Course in Theoretical English Grammar, Vysshaya Shkola, Moscow.

3. Frawley, W. J. (ed.) (2003). International Encyclopedia of Linguistics, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

4. Jakaitienė, E., Laigonaitė, A., Paulauskienė, A. (1976) Lietuvių kalbos morfologija, Mokslas, Vilnius.

5. Явнись, К. (1908-1916) Грамматика литовского языка, Изд АН, Петербург.

6. Sapūnas, K., Šulcas, T. (1997) Compendium Grammaticae Lithvanicae, Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas, Vilnius.

7. Paulauskienė, A. (2006) Lietuvių kalbos morfologijos pagrindai, Technologija, Kaunas.

8. Paulauskienė, A. (1994) Lietuvių kalbos morfologija, Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidykla, Vilnius.

9. Paulauskienė, A. (1989) Gramatinės lietuvių kalbos vardažodžių kategorijos, Mokslas, Vilnius.

10. Розенталь, Д. Э., Теленкова, М. А. (1976) Словарь-справочник лингвистических терминов, Просвещение, Москва.

11. Sirtautaitė, J. (1983) Skaičiaus kategorija. Paskaitų konspektas, Vilnius

12. Ulvydas, K. (ed.) (1965) Lietuvių kalbos gramatika. Vol 1, Mintis, Vilnius.

13. Wickens, M. A. (1992) Grammatical Number in English Nouns: An Empirical and Theoretical Account, John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam/ Philapdelphia.

Data Sources and Abbreviations

14. British National Corpus. (BNC) (2005) University of Oxford, [http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/]

15. Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary Online. (CALD) (2006) Cambridge University Press. [http://dictionary. cambridge.org/]

16. Cambridge International Dictionary of English. (CIDE) (1995) Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

17. Dabartinės lietuvių kalbos tekstynas. (DLKT) (1998-2005) Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas. [http://donelaitis.vdu.lt/]

18. Dabartinės lietuvių kalbos žodynas. (DLKŽ) (1972) Mintis, Vilnius.

19. Heinle's Newbury House Dictionary of American English. (DAE) (2003) Monroe Allen Publishers. [http://nhd.heinle. com/about_nhd.aspx]

20. Hornby, A. S. (1984) Oxford Student's Dictionary of Current English (OSD), Oxford University Press, Oxford.

21. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online. (LDCE) (1999-2006) Pearson Education Limited. [http://www.ldoceonline.com/index.html]

22. Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. (MWOD) (2006) Merriam Webster Incorporated, Springfield. [http://www.m-w.com/]

23. Naktinienė, G. (ed.) (2005) Lietuvių kalbos žodynas (LKŽ) (vol. 1-22, 1941–2002), Internet Version, Lietuvių kalbos institutas, Vilnius. [www.lkz.lt]

24. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary Online. (OALD) (2006) Oxford University Press. [http://www.oup.com/elt/ catalogue/teachersites/oald7/?cc=lt]

25. Schwarz, C. (ed.) (1996) Chambers Giant Paperback English Dictionary (ChED), Chambers Edinburgh.

26. The Penguin English Dictionary. (PED) (1992) Penguin Books Ltd, London.

27. The New Penguin English Dictionary. (NPED) (2000) Penguin Books Ltd, London.

28. Thompson, D. (1995) The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English (COD), Clarendon Press, Oxford.

29. Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language. (WEUD) (1996) Gramercy Books, Avenel, New Jersey.

Ramunė Kasperavičienė

Daugiskaitos leksikalizacija

Santrauka

Kalbose, kuriose daiktavardžiai kaitomi skaičiais, neretai tarp vienaskaitos ir daugiskaitos atsiranda ir leksinės reikšmės skirtumų, visiškai nebūdingų kaitybai. Tokiais atvejais susiduriama su žodžių daryba. Paprastai leksikalizuotą reikšmę įgyja daiktavardžio daugiskaita. Daiktavardžio vienaskaitai toks reiškinys nebūdingas, o tie daiktavardžiai, kurie turi specifinę reikšmę vienaskaitai yra taip vadinami singularia tantum ir reiškia neskaičiuojamus daiktus. Daugiskaitos leksikalizacija taip pat būdinga lietuvių ir anglų kalboms. Tačiau leksikalizacijos mastas ir atvejai analizuojamose kalbose skiriasi. Anglų kalboje daugiskaitos leksikalizacija – retesnis reiškinys nei lietuvių kalboje. Skiriasi ir tokių daiktavardžių pateikimas lietuvių ir anglų kalbų žodynuose. Nors daugiskaitos leksikalizacijos reiškinys nėra labai dažnas nei lietuvių, nei anglų kalboje, tokių daiktavardžių vertimas iš vienos kalbos į kitą išlaikant tą pačią reikšmę ir tą pačią skaičiaus formą dažnai neįmanomas. Todėl verčiant logiška pasitelkti kitą daiktavardžio skaičiaus formą nei originalo tekste.

The author

Ramunė Kasperavičienė, doctoral student, Vilnius University, lecturer, Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania.
Academic interests: linguistic typology, contrastive grammar, translation studies.
Address: Centre of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Humanities, Kaunas University of Technology, Gedimino Str. 43, Kaunas, Lithuania.
E-mail: ramune.kasperaviciene@ktu.lt