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How Different is Numeral “ONE”???

Abstract

Numerals are a very important part of the lexicon. This paper is an attempt to distinguish numeral “one” from other numerals. The properties that will be presented in this paper are specific to numeral one, for example, Kurukh have three allomorphs for numeral one depending on the function whether the form is counting or attributive, and carries what features. In many languages of India, one has two different forms; counting (cardinal form) and attributive form (as a modifier). Another interesting aspect we can see in ordinals and multiplicatives formation which is generally derivatives of respective cardinals, but with ONE the same is not true instead in many languages they are in suppletive form. Along with this the numeral classifier language and their unique relation with cardinal one will also be presented.

Key words: Numeral system, ONE, Suppletion, Numeral Classifier language

Introduction

“Numeracy is a very important aspect of any linguistics system. Counting or numbering is an integral and inseparable part of the grammar of any language because

there is hardly any meaningful linguistic discourse in a language that does not make reference to quantity, size, time, distance and weight in definite numbers”, Omachonu, 2011:84. The number should be described as all other parts of the lexicon from the point of view of its syntactic construction and its internal morphology. Crosslinguistically, 1 to 3 (or 4) have linguistic properties that are different from those of the higher numbers (Hurford 1987): (i) no language has grammatical trial number unless it has dual number, and languages that distinguish a grammatical number higher than 3 are rare or non-existent (Greenberg 1963); (ii) ordinal suppletion (*first* instead of regular *one-th*, *second* instead of *two-th*) is cross-linguistically common but largely restricted to ordinals below *fourth* (Veselinova 1998; Stolz & Veselinova 2011); (iii) cross-linguistically, the words for 1 to 3 agree in gender and case with the noun, unlike numerals higher than 3.

There was a time when some languages even did not have a number system as they were spoken by hunter and gatherers and who were not involved in any kind of commerce, therefore, they never had a need of numeration. But now, every language or we can say all known languages have at least a few numbers. Some languages have only ONE and some are having more than TWO and maximum up to FOUR, for example, Amazon languages do not have more than ONE like Mocovi, Culina and some languages of Australia like Warlpiri, do not have words for quantities more than two. We can say that every adult has the comprehension to the numeral system as this notion of numbering seems to be universal now. This, concept of numbers is combined with each other by some arithmetic operations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

There are some tribes which only have number names for quantities one and two or may be just counting of body parts. In some languages, there are no numbers at all and no bases. For example, there is no grammatical number in Pirāha (Everett 1983).

A small set of numerals does not mean there is a limit on the number sense.
Harrison

mentions in his book that as per anthropologist Hans Belcher, even though, the Yanoama people don't have numbers higher than three, they can nevertheless detect small differences in quantities. Example "if twenty arrows are standing together and one increases or reduces the bundle by only one during the owner's absence, he will notice it at once upon his return", showing that they have a keen 'number sense' even though they don't have a numeral system above three. The Damara of South Africa (56,000 speakers) also don't have numerals above three yet they seldom lose oxen. And the way they discover that they have lost one is not by counting but by the missing face they remember! (Harrison, 2007)

Thousands of the world's languages and some of them are endangered, use a variety of different numeral systems in terms of the different bases they use: duodecimal system, decimal system, senary system, quinary system, quaternary system, ternary system, binary system, incomplete decimal system, mixed system, body part tally system and so on. There also exist indigenous languages of South America that are languages that only distinguish the numbers "one" and "many".

Let us start by looking at some languages that have very few basic numerals, or do not even have a numeral system like Pirãha. In some languages, the body part system is still prevails.

The language Mangarayi and Yidiny has only numerals upto 3 and 5, respectively. Hixkaryana has upto 10, the latter being based on body parts (10 fingers). In an article in the Guardian Weekly (16.04.2014) entitle, "The Amazonian tribe that can only count up to five", Alex Bellos cites the five numbers in Munduruku of Brazil, suggesting that the word for 5 "*pug pogbi*" might mean "one hand".

Barbiers (2006) talks about the similarities and differences between the ‘one’ and ‘many’ in brief. Mainly he studied Dutch numerals. In Dutch, there are two suffixes for Ordinals: -de for 2 to 12 except 8 and -ste for rests. First (-stem) is a superlative suffix. “Many languages have a suppletive instead of a regular derivational form for the ordinal FIRST.” (Hurford 1987; Veselinonva 1998). English, Dutch, German, French all have the obligatory suppletion for FIRST, e.g, 14. *one-th First.

Barbiers (2007) in his article, “Indefinite Numerals One and Many and the Cause of Ordinal Suppletion” gives these points of similarities between ONE and MANY and in what respects ordinals are different from cardinals:

- Many also has a suppletive ordinal.
- Both combine with suffix ‘-ness’, unlike Cardinals
- Suffix ‘-some’ can’t be added to them, but possible with cardinal numbers.
- They show obligatory agreement with definite determiners, but not so with cardinals.
- ‘one’ and ‘many’ can be used predicatively.
- They allow modification by ‘so’, but cardinals cannot.
- Both are incompatible with each and every, cardinal numerals are not.

In the same article Barbiers (2007) has given the following properties which shows that ONE and MANY are numerals, not adjectives:

- Obligatoriness of quantitative –er with N-ellipsis.
- Occurrence as the head of a partitive.
- No comparative or superlative
- Absence of determiner in singular [+count] noun phrase
- Absence of gender agreement
- Ordinal formation (if [definite])

ONE in CARDINALS

According to the Mengden (2009), “Cardinal numerals again are the part of a larger class of expressions which all specify the size of a set.” Numeral ONE has different forms for counting and the attributive. In Tamil, as a noun, the form of one is /ondrʊ/ and as a modifier its /orʊ/. No other numerals except for ONE is used in two different forms like this.

E.g. 1. orʊ payən	*ondrʊ payən	One boy
2. orʊ a:du	*ondrʊ a:du	One Sheep

Interestingly in Telugu, numerals 1,2 and 3, all have other variants when they are used in sentences. These forms occur only with nouns, and not with inanimate ones. The table below gives the variation in the forms.

Numeral	As a noun	As a modifier
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One	okətti	oka
Two	rendu	iddəru
Three	muḍu	mugur

Table1. Forms of first three numerals of Telugu

Some examples:

3. oka əmmai *okətti əmmai

One girl

“One girl”

4. iddəru əmmai-lu two girl.Pl “Two girls”

5. mugur əmmai-lu three girl.Pl

“Three girls”

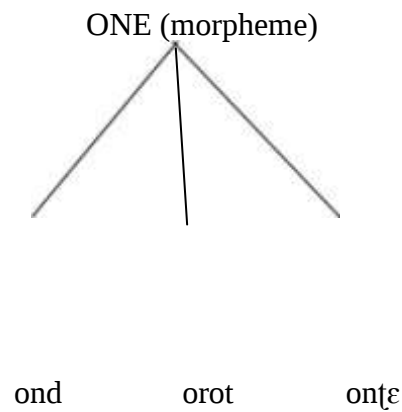
6. naḷugu əmmai-lu Four girl.Pl “Four girls”

As this paper is all about the uniqueness of numeral one, will see this is many languages belonging to different language families how different it is in its form. The amazingly amazing fact of Kurukh is that it has three allomorphs for ONE.

-ond- cardinal number

-orot - used when ONE modifies the noun in a phrase [+human]

-onɕ- used when ONE modifies the noun in a phrase [-human]



Examples:

7. orot kukkos one boy “One boy”

8. dui/ẽd kukko-r Two boy.PL “Two boys”

9. orot kukvei one girl

“One girl”

10. dui/ẽd kukvei-r Two girl.PL

“Two girls”

11. ond meɖʰo one sheep “One sheep”

12. ẽd med^ho (no need of plural marker)

two sheep

“Two sheep”

13. onʔe əlmırɑ one almirah

“One almirah”

ONE in ORDINALS

The morphologically derived form of corresponding cardinal numerals is called Ordinals. But “many languages have a suppletive instead of a regular derivational form for the ordinal FIRST” (Hurford 1987; Veselinova 1998). For example, in English ordinal for one is first, in Hindi ordinal for ‘ek’ is ‘pehla’ (First). It can be seen cross-linguistically in the languages of India. According to Barbiers (2007), “cardinal ONE is inherently indefinite and ordinal suffixes require inherently definite numerals in a sense to be made precise.”

Following are the examples from the languages of the Austro-Asiatic family:

Predicted forms of FIRST Existing forms of FIRST

Khasi	bavəi	nɪkɔŋ
Pnar	vəvəi	nɪkɔŋ

Santali mita:k pəhɪl

Table 2. A suppletive form of FIRST in Khasi, Pnar, and Santali

Differences can be seen in the formation of Ordinal of One in the Dravidian language family also, where ordinal one is not a derivative of respective cardinal.

14. Tamil- First mudəla:-vədu *ondro-vədu

15. Telugu- First modəɭɪ *okəɭɭɪ-odi

But when we look to the Malayalam, here the word for Ordinal ONE is derivative of cardinal ONE but the form of the same ordinal is different when it modifies the noun, i.e, /a:djatte/.

In Malayalam: One is /onnə/ and First is /onnə-matə/. Therefore, the

16. First man- a:djatte puruʃən * oŋŋa:matə puruʃən

17. First woman- a:djatte strɪ: * oŋŋa:matə strɪ:

When we move towards Tibeto-Burman family, again interestingly we have a unique feature in Thangal, where for the formation of ordinals multiple affixation is used, that is, /ə/ is prefixed and /nə/ is suffixed to the respective cardinal numbers. This kind of construction is called “External Ordinal Marking Circumfixal Type” and in this language, there is no difference in FIRST and behaves like every other ordinal of this

language. But, when the same ordinal FIRST modifies the noun, it changes its form from /ək^hətɒ/ to /əmasa/, using /ək^hətɒ/ is also not ungrammatical, but /əmasa/ is preferred. Other ordinals like second, third etc. do not have any such kind of another forms, however.

18. First man- əmasa napa *ə-k^hət-na napa

19. Second man- ə-nɪ:h-na napa

20. First woman- əmasa nanu

21. Third woman- ə-t^hum-na nanu

ONE in MULTIPLICATIVES

According to Alexander Coupe (2007), “Multiplicatives are used to denote the number of occurrences of the same event. It expresses how many times or how many folds.” Multiplicatives behaves like an adverb in most of the languages and are derived by the cardinal

numerals by attaching the suffix, prefix and in some languages multiple affixes (Pnar) too for the formation of multiplicatives. This is the general phenomena of forming multiplicatives.

But the case of suppletion has been seen in some Dravidian languages like Telugu and Malayalam,

where the cardinal one in Telugu is /oŋŋə/ and instead of some affix or a particle with the meaning of repetition, the actual form for multiplicative (once) is /orikkal/. Similarly, in Malayalam, cardinal one is /okəttɪ/ and the multiplicative form is /okəsari/. This suppletion for multiplicative of cardinal one only occurs in the Dravidian language family. This kind of suppletion is not there in other language families of India.

ONE in NP

In some languages, definiteness is marked with the numerals and in some unmarked. According to Nurit Dekel (2014), “there is no agreement in definiteness between the numerals and their following nouns.” He also says that “Definiteness is irrelevant in the case of numeral ‘one’; it is never definite in the spoken language. Instead, the numeral drops, and a definite demonstrative determiner is attached to the noun”. In Malayalam, definiteness is marked in Malayalam with the demonstrative /ɑ:/, which is optional.

22. (ɑ) orɔ strɪ: (That) one woman “The one woman”

Let us look at the feature of Khasi, which has lexically two distinct number for numeral one, i.e,

/ʃɪ/ and /veɪ/. They occurs in complementary distribution. /ʃɪ/ comes with the mensural classifier and does not take gender agreement.

23. ʃɪ kilo ʊkʰao

One kilo rice

When we look at the quantifiers, what happens in the Thangal and Tangkhul (Tibeto-Burman Languages) that they show quantity in the sense of ‘more than one’. For example, ‘Few’ in Thangal is /tʰemkʰət/ where /tʰem/ means more and /kʰət/ is one. Similarly, in Tangkhul, ‘Some’ is /kʰaɪ-akʰə/, where /kʰaɪ/ is more and /akʰə/ is one.

NUMERAL CLASSIFIER LANGUAGE

Numeral classifiers are used by languages while counting individual things as being integrated and organic wholes. According to Aikhenvald (2000: 96), “numeral classifiers are perhaps the most commonly recognized types of classifier system after noun classes and genders. They do not have to appear on any constituent outside the numeral NP,

thus, ruling out any agreement in numeral classifier between the noun and another constituent. Apart from this, “numeral classifiers have other contingent properties such as: (i) the choice of a numeral is predominantly semantic. (ii) Numeral classifier system differs in the extent to which they are grammaticalized. That is, they can be an open lexical class.”

In some numeral classifier languages, not every noun can be associated with a numeral classifier. The choice of classifiers in these languages depends on which property of the noun is in focus. Numeral classifiers are always morphologically realized one of the following three forms: (1) They may be independent lexemes (especially with isolating languages) (2) They may be affixes or clitics, attached to or fused with numeral, (3) They may be attached to or fused with the head noun, which is an extremely rare situation. Khasi has 2 Sortal classifiers : /ɲut/ and /tɪllɪ/. /ɲut/ occurs with [+Human] and /tɪllɪ/ with [-Human] feature. These classifiers follow the numerals that are followed by a noun. They are obligatory with numerals used with the noun, their deletion results in an ungrammatical sentence. In terms of the inherent properties of the noun like animacy or shape, these classifiers categorize. They do not have a specific meaning of their own. They are used with quantifiers too. The word order is like: [Numeral-Classifier-Noun].

24. ɑ:r ɲut kɪ-kəntʰəɪ [+Human] *ɑ:r kɪ-kəntʰəɪ

Two Cl Pl.girl

“Two girls”

25. ʃən ɲut kɪ-kʰon [+Human] *ʃən kɪ kʰon

Five CL Pl.child

“Five children”

26. a:r *tɪlɪ* kɪ-bləŋg [-Human] *a:r kɪ-bləŋg

Two CL Pl.sheep

“Two sheep”

27. šən *tɪlɪ* kɪ-dulɪ [-Human] *šən kɪ-dulɪ

Four CL Pl.almirah

“Four almirahs”

28.šao *tɪlɪ* kɪ-kalɪ Four CL Pl.car “Four cars”

Now, what is interesting to see here is that numeral ONE does not take sortal classifiers rather it is accompanied by the respective gender agreement markers that the noun takes.

29. ka-ʋeɪ ka-kəntʰəɪ
F.Sg.-one F.Sg-girl

“One girl”

30. u:-vɛɪ u:-ʃ^hɪnra:ŋg

M.Sg.-one M.Sg.-boy

“One boy”

Similarly, Pnar is also a Numeral Classifier language, having same classifiers as Khasi with the same properties and functions. It also has 2 sortal classifiers: /ŋut/ for [+Human] and /tɪlɪ/ for [-Human] and numeral ONE doesn't take any classifier.

Then, Santali has an unusual system of classifiers that only occur with numerals but do not categorize the inherent properties of the noun. And are as follows:

a) *ten-* used with ONE

31. mɪt-*ten* kuɖɪ

One.CL girl

“One girl”

32. mɪt-*ten* ola

One.CL bag

“One bag”

Bodo is another numeral classifier language but here the scenario gets reversed in the comparison of whatever we saw earlier. This language has lots of numeral classifiers and these classifiers except for /mən/, which is a general classifier get attached with numeral ONE unlike AA languages. /mən/ is the only classifier in this language which does

not get attached with ONE; all the other classifiers, whether sortal or mensural get attached with all the numerals of this language.

E.g. 33. mən-nəi hinžasa-p^hər-ni bəhaɣə-a: ɣele-dəŋ-mən
 Cl.- num2 girl-Pl- Gen. part-NOM play-Aux-Pst
 “A group of two girls played”

Again, in Oriya which is an Indo-Aryan language and numeral classifier too, the classifier /tɪ/, do not attaches with numeral ONE.

34. ɣotɪje ɣəč^hə
 one tree
 “One tree.”

35. pənč-tɪ ɣəč^hə
 five.CL tree
 “Five trees.”

Conclusion

The findings of the present research reveal that the numeral system is a core part of the grammar of any language. There is rich incapsulated morphology and syntax exists in the formation of a numeral system of Indian languages. As in general typology, the most important feature which we saw is that of the property of ONE. ONE is the only numeral which behaves or functions differently in the comparison of other numerals. We saw that while the formation of cardinal and ordinals it does not just derive from the respective cardinals as other numerals do. In most of the Indian languages, ONE has a suppletive form for ordinal and rarely it can be seen in multiplicative forms too. In Dravidian languages, ONE

has a different form as a noun and as a modifier. In numeral classifier languages, the idiosyncratic property has clearly been seen in comparison to the rest numerals. ONE in most of the numeral classifier languages does not take the classifier even the general one. Therefore, it can definitely be stated that numeral one is different from the rest of the pack.

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