

Morphology

Noun

#32. The singular form of a noun represents a pure stem and can imply a single object or a gender notion.

#33. The plural form of a noun is formed by means of addition to the stem of a suffix *-t* or *-d* if the first consonant of the following word in syntagma is voiced: *is katt xoli avor* – ‘these homes became desolate’; *yaykt aryust sawost* – ‘the girls are dancing’; *asanim anid naxsirt dawun akun* – ‘we got up and chased those ibexes’; *hamma aniz dirodd man anosim* – ‘I took all these reaping-hooks’.

The variant *-it* that was mentioned by M.N. Bogolyubov for stems with *-t* ending (46) is not found in our materials.

#34. In the formation of plural form of nouns with *-a* vowel at the end, the vowel gradation with *-o* (see #7) takes place: *cuja* ‘nestling’ – *cujot* ‘nestlings’; *tuyma* ‘button’ – *tuymot* ‘buttons’; *poda* ‘foot’ – *podot* ‘feet’; *zuta* ‘son’ – *zutot* ‘sons’; *pulla* ‘child’ – *pullot* ‘children’.

The variant *-aot* recorded in the texts of M.S. Andreyev and E.M. Peshyereva (47) is not found in our materials.

#35. The plural form suffix *-t* can connect also to some nouns that denote substances (48): *pagoyi ajaxim yoton-mox anos, umoc waxt oy, meni asanim* – ‘we got up in the morning, took the meat chunks, it was a lunch-time /when/ we went up to the village’; *yaut tim qarib arasor* – ‘the barley crop almost ripened too’; *is xysnykt kad puxsost?* – ‘when will the /fruits/ on these barberry plants ripen?’; *pasmt tunuk kunim, qoy vant* – ‘let’s spread the wool in small piles to let it dry’; *opt siragarm vitor* – ‘the water in brooks became tepid’; *is yantumt kad rasant?* – ‘when will the wheat ripen in these fields?’; *yurusqo(t) tim durust* – ‘the clover plots are good too’.

At first it may seem that the plural form suffix here gives an extra tint to the lexical meaning of a noun, which is not peculiar to the initial form (49). It appears false. The fact is that a noun that signifies substance may have a general abstract meaning as well as a specific meaning for the given situation. This specific meaning can be apparent if we consider that the noun signifies a certain amount of a given substance, for instance: *yota* – ‘meat’ and ‘a chunk of meat’, *yaw* – ‘barley’ and ‘the barley crop field or ‘a sack of barley’ etc.; *pasm* – ‘wool’ and ‘an amount of wool’ (pile, sack etc.). Hence, in the given examples we actually deal with count nouns.

#36. The category of case. There are two cases: direct and oblique. The direct case form is a pure stem with no ending. An oblique case is formed by means of addition to the stem of suffixes *-i* (after consonants) and *-y* (after vowels): *kat* – ‘home’, the oblique case *kati*; *mayn* – ‘village’, the oblique case *mayni*; *odamt* – ‘people’ (plural form), the oblique case *odanti*; *zirect* – ‘partridges’, the oblique case *zirecti*; *maksa* – ‘calf’, the oblique case *maksay*; *namta* – ‘felt’, the oblique case *namtay*; *zuta* – ‘son’, the oblique case *zutay*.

In the eastern dialect when the oblique case suffix is added to the stems with *-a*, the following takes place: *-a* of a stem + suffix *-y* > *e* (*makse*, *namte*, *zute*, etc.)

#37. The indefinite category (singleness) is often expressed through the combination of a noun and a numeral *i* that serves as an indefinite article: *asaym*, *tik i co ayori* *i you* – ‘we went because we saw /some/ cow’; *nahwad i mayda kat axirin* – ‘he bought a small house there’; *i odam awow acukayrun* – ‘a person came /and/ scared’; *Sobir guftagi i hamramox oy* – ‘there was a fellow-traveler with us whose name was Sobir’; *i auqot naxke xoarim* – ‘let’s now eat something’; *dodo-mox i korgar xoy* – ‘our father was a worker’.

If a noun is adopted from Tajik, apart from *i* it can sometimes have a Tajik unstressed suffix *-e*. Usually those are settled adverbial phrases or calques.

Examples: *i waxte avu*, *atratt asanor Dehbaland...* – ‘once it happened that the troops went up to Dehbaland...’; *atirim i jogahi aves*, *i gardake anid* – ‘went down to some place, had some rest’; *man-xotir Halim i dame rupot* – ‘have Halim reap for me a little’; *man jaxom i yubore ways vantom* – ‘now then, I will go and sheaf some grass’.

#38. The definite category can be expressed through the combination of a noun and the emphatic particle *na(h)*, the usage of which, however, is sporadic.

Examples: *bisyortar na xoni usci* – ‘most often he goes to ...’; *panc iyot*, *panc odami*, *nah panc odami asawom nawat* – ‘there were five of us, five people, the five of us went there together’; *xarbuza apuxs na xunay-cintir* – ‘the melon ripened in the room’ (from the story); *tobistuni Quli Worsout sawimist*, *zimestuni hah kat voimist* – ‘we depart for Kuli Vorsovut in summer, and come back home in winter’; *wesi rupak-s ast nah bobi-m* – ‘my grandfather mows the grass’; *ajaxim osta-ostay asan nah yagnobiti kat* – ‘I got up and slowly-slowly went up into the house of the Yaghnobis’.

The particle *nah* is sometimes used with proper nouns as well (50): *nah Hotam zur ustost* – ‘Hotam is a skilled workman’; *bisyortar odamt nah Dusambe or* – ‘most of the people are in Dushanbe’; *agardor aves Piskon*, *nah Piskon au viyora anidor* – ‘they returned to Piskon, that night they stayed in Piskon’.

#39. There is no category of grammatical gender in Yaghnobi language.