Chapter VIII

Number
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Number

This chapter discusses the similarities and differences on number of the two languages – English and Manipuri. It shows that the nouns are inflected for number in English but not in Manipuri. It also shows the varieties of ways in which the plurals are formed in both the languages.

8.1 Introduction

Number, in linguistics, is a grammatical category relevant to certain lexemes such as nouns, adjectives, pronouns and verbs. For nouns and pronouns, number specifies the quantity of instances of the referent (e.g., one instance cat; many instances cats). For verbs the number usually refers to the quantity of the linked noun or pronoun (usually the subject of the verb). For some such instances of numerical agreement, the linked word need not be given explicitly but can be implied e.g., in languages where the number of the pronomial subject can be implied by the number of the verb and need not be stated, for example: Latin: amat “(he) loves”; amant “they
love". Occasionally, the concept of number is extended to include those aspectual categories that indicate the number of times an event occurs.

8.2 Types of number

Grammatical number is distinct from the use of numerals to specify the exact quantify of a noun; grammatical number is usually much vaguer. In many languages currently spoken, number is limited to two categories: 1) distinguishing between one referent (singular number), and 2) more than one referent (plural number). However, other instances of number exist, including:

— **dual number**, for two instances of the referent (e.g., in Hopi (Whorf, 1946), Languages of Melanesia (Crystal, 1996))

— **trial number**, for three instances of the referent (e.g., Fijian (Churchward, 1941) Languages of Melanesia (Crystal, 1996))

— **paucal number**, for a few (as opposed to many) instances of the referent (e.g., in Hopi (Whorf, 1946) and in Arabic for some nouns (Cowell, 1964))

— **collective number**, for many referents viewed as a single collection (e.g., in Coptic (Mallon, 1956)) etc.
8.3 Effect of number on verbs and other parts of speech

Not only nouns can be declined by number, in many languages, adjectives are declined according to the number of the noun they modify. For example, in French, one may say *un arbre vert* "a green tree", and *des arbres verts* "[some] green trees". The word *vert* "green", in the singular, becomes *verts* for the plural (unlike English *green*, which remains *green*).

In many languages, verbs are conjugated by number as well. Using French as an example again, one says *je vois* "I see", but *nous voyons* "we see". The verb *voir* "to see" in the first person changes from *vois* in singular, to *voyons* in plural. In English this occurs in the third person (she runs, they run) but not first or second.

Normally verbs agree with their subject noun in number. But in Ancient Greek and Sanskrit neuter plurals took a singular verb. In English, or at least British English, singular nouns collectively referring to people may take plural verbs, as *the committee are meeting*; use of this varies by dialect and level of formality.

Other qualifiers may also agree in number. The English article *the* does not, the demonstratives *this, that* do, becoming *these, those*, and the article *a, an* is omitted or changed to *some* in the plural. In
French and German, the definite articles have gender distinctions in the singular but not the plural. In other Romance languages, including, Portuguese, the indefinite article (*um, uma*) has plural forms (*uns, umas*).

The correspondence relation between agreeing and agreed with constituent is not always this simple. There also exist both instances where a plurally marked nominal is agreed with a singularly marked constituent and where singularly marked nominal is agreed with a plural-marked constituent.

8.4 Number in English

The English number system consists of singular which denotes 'one' and plural which denotes 'more than one'. Number in English is a property of nouns, but it also affects subject-verb agreement. *(Note: The pronouns *both, either* and *neither* denote dual number. But has plural concord. e.g., *Both were away*. *Either* and *neither* have singular concord e.g. *He made two statements*. *Neither* is accurate).*

8.4.1 Classes according to number

We can classify English nouns into the followings:
I Singular invariable nouns

This category includes non-count common nouns (concrete and abstract) and proper nouns. These nouns occur generally in the singular.

gold, furniture, music, homework, oxygen, water air, sand, information, etc.

We can also include noun phrase with an abstract adjectival head:

the beautiful, the supernatural, etc.

There are some others that end in -s and take singular verb in their normal occurrence. These include:

A News:

(1) The news is good today.

Diseases: measles rickets

mumps shingles

(2) Measles is characterized by small red dots appearing on the surface of the skin, irritation of the eyes, coughing, and a runny nose.

B Some games: billiards, bowls, darts, dominoes draughts, checkers, ninepins.

(3) Checkers is known in Britain as draughts.
Some proper nouns: Algiers, Athens, Brussels, Naples, Wales, the United States, the Philippines, the Bahamas, the United Nations have a singular verb when considered as units.

These are treated as singular when considered as political unit, which they commonly are in a political context, or when the complement is singular.

(4) The Philippines is divided into 75 provinces, each headed by a governor, plus the National Capital Region.

The Bahamas and the Philippines are also the geographical names of the group of islands that the two nations comprise, and therefore they can be treated as plurals.

(5a) The Bahamas were settled by British subjects.

(5b) The Philippines are separated from Taiwan on the north by the Bashi Channel.

II Plural invariable nouns

These nouns occur only in the plural.

(i) It includes summation nouns such as:

- scissors
- binoculars
- trousers
- spectacles
- pliers
- tweezer
- shorts
- pants
- tongs
- suspenders
- knikers
- tights
This category also includes some proper nouns:

the Himalayas, the alps, the midlands, the Andes, etc.

And also noun phrase with adjective heads:

the rich, the downtrodden, the better off, etc.

(ii) Unmarked plurals: Quirk has given a list of unmarked plurals in English.

Cattle people (but regular when ‘nation’)

Clergy (but also singular) police

Folk (but also informal folks) gentry

(6) Cattle are of great importance to humans because of the meat, milk, leather, gelatin, and other items of commerce they yield

Cattle, people, police and clothes (things we wear) are plurals with no singular.

III Variable nouns

These are nouns which occur with either singular or plural number.

The village....

The villages are....
8.4.2 Animal names

Names of animals often have two plurals. Unmarked / zero and regular plurals. Unmarked plural is more common in the context of hunting, and to describe multiple individual animals etc.

(7a) Most fish have fins for swimming, scales for protection, and a streamlined body for moving easily through the water.

(7b) There are five fish in the aquarium.

Regular plurals refer to several species or kinds of animals.

The order (classification) of fishes....

(8) Fishes may be divided into two distinct groups for instance, jawless fish and jawed fish.

8.4.3 Other singular and plural

Anybody, anyone, somebody, someone, nobody, no-one, everybody and everyone are used as singular.

(9) Is everybody ready?

However, we often use they, them and their to refer to these words, specially in an informal style.

(10a) If anybody calls, tell them I'm out, but take their name and address.
(10b) Nobody phoned, did they?

(10c) Everyone thinks they're different from everybody else.

8.4.4 Agreement

A  Subject-verb agreement.

The number in English affects subject-verb agreement.

(11a) A boy is playing

(11b) Some boys are playing.

Here, singular boy agrees with "is" and plural boys agree with "are".

B  Qualifiers /Quantifiers and noun agreement.

(i) Qualifiers in English agree with the noun. The demonstrative this and that become these, those, and the article a, an is omitted or changed to some in the plural.

(12a) This boy is dirty

(12b) These boys are dirty.

Here, this agrees with singular boy and those agrees with the plural boys.

(13a) A boy is playing.

(13b) Some boys are playing.
Article *a/an* agrees with singular count-nouns. Some agrees with plural noun. Numerical one when used with animate and inanimate singular count nouns is a stressed variant of the indefinite article *a(n)* (Quirk and Greenbaum 1973:111).

(ii) The quantifiers *many, few, several* agree with plural count nouns.

(14a) The few words he spoke were well chosen.

(14b) Many ambitious students...

C Number of phrases

(i) *A number of* and *a group of* are treated as plurals with plural nouns, pronouns and verbs.

(15) A number of my friends feel that they are not properly paid for the work they do.

(ii) *A lot of* and *lots of* are treated as plurals with a plural subject, and the verb is plural, and treated as singular with a singular subject, and the verb is singular.

*A lot of/lots of* + singular subject (uncountable) and verb

(16a) A lot of time is needed to learn a language.

(16b) There is lots of coffee in the pot.
A lot of /lots of + plural subject and verb

(17a) A lot of my friends think there's going to be a war.
(17b) Lots of people live in the city.

8.4.5 Plural formations

I Regular plurals

(i) The plural morpheme in English is suffixed to the end of most nouns. The plural form is usually represented orthographically by adding -s to the singular form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>boy</td>
<td>boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>girl</td>
<td>girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chair</td>
<td>chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cat</td>
<td>cats</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) Where a noun ends in a sibilant sound -one of [s], [ʃ], [z] etc— the plural is formed by adding -es if the singular form does not end with -e:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>glass</td>
<td>glasses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dish</td>
<td>dishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>witch</td>
<td>witches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
phase phases
judge judges

(iii) The -oes rule: most nouns ending in o preceded by a consonant also form their plurals by adding -es:

hero heroes
potato potatoes
volcano volcanoes

(iv) The -ies rule: nouns ending in a y preceded by a consonant drop the y and add -ies:

cherry cherries
lady ladies

Note, however, those proper nouns (particularly those for people or places) ending in a y preceded by a consonant form their plurals regularly, Harry and Harrys as in (18), Germany and Germanys as in (19):

(18) There are three Harrys in our office
(19) The two Germanys were unified in 1990.

But words ending in a vowel followed by y form their plurals regularly:
monkey    monkeys

day        days

(v) A compound that has a head at the beginning, particularly a legal term from French, commonly pluralizes its head:

attorney general    attorneys general
son-in-law        sons-in-law
court-martial      courts-martial
armful           armsful / armfuls

On the other hand, if a compound can be thought to have two heads, both of them are sometimes pluralized, especially when the first head has an irregular plural form:

Knight Hospitaler    Knights Hospitalers
manservant          menservants
agent provocateur    agents provocateurs

II Irregular plurals
(i) Voicing and -s plural

thief-thieves

belief-beliefs
(ii) Mutation plural (i.e. plurals with a change in the vowel)

foot-feet
man-men
tooth-teeth
goose-geese
mouse-mice
louse-lice

(iii) -en plural

ox-oxen
child-children

(iv) Zero plural

sheep-sheep
deer-deer
grouse-grouse

(v) Foreign plurals

Because English includes words from so many ancestral languages, as well as many loanwords from Latin, Classical Greek and modern languages, there are many other forms of
plurals. Such nouns (particularly ones from Latin) often retain their original plurals.

Correctly formed Latin plurals are the most acceptable, and indeed are often required, in academic and scientific contexts. In common usage, plurals with -s is sometimes preferred.

Final a becomes ae (also æ) — or just adds s:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural 1</th>
<th>plural 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>formula</td>
<td>formulae/formulas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alumna</td>
<td>alumnae</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final ex or ix becomes ices— or just adds es:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural 1</th>
<th>plural 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vertex</td>
<td>vertices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matrix</td>
<td>matrices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>index</td>
<td>indices or indexes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appendix</td>
<td>appendixes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some people treat process as if it belongs to this class, pronouncing processes.

Final is becomes es:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>axis</td>
<td>axes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>testis</td>
<td>testes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crisis</td>
<td>crises</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note that *axes* the plural of *axis* is pronounced differently from *axes* the plural of *axe*.

**Final on becomes a:**

- phenomenon: phenomena (more below)
- criterion: criteria
- automaton: automata
- polyhedron: polyhedra

**Final um becomes a – or just adds s:**

- addendum: addenda
- datum: data
- memorandum: memoranda/memorandums
- forum: fora / forums
- medium: media (in communications and computers; now often treated as a singular mass noun)/mediums (spiritualists)

**Final us becomes i or era or ora or just adds es:**

- radius: radii
- alumnus: alumni
- viscus: viscera
corpus corpora
corpora

prospectus prospectuses

Final ma in nouns of Greek origin add ta:

Stigma stigmata
stoma stomata
zeugma zeugmata

Though some take s more commonly:

Schema schemata/schemas
dogma dogmata/dogmas
lemma lemmata/lemmas

Final us in nouns of Greek origin add es. These words are also

heard with the Latin —i.

cactus cactuses/cacti
hippopotamus hippopotamuses/hippopotami
octopus octopuses/octopi/octopodes
platypus platypuses
rhinoceros rhinoceroses/rhinoceri
uterus uteruses/uteri
Nouns from languages that have donated few words to English, and that are spoken by relatively few English-speakers, generally form plurals as if they were native English words:

- canoe: canoes
- kayak: kayaks
- igloo: igloos
- kangaroo: kangaroos
- sauna: aunas
- pizza: pizzas
- kindergarten: kindergartens

III Nouns ending in -ics denoting subjects or disciplines are sometimes treated as singular and sometimes as plural.

- apologistics: mechanics
- genetics: politics
- optics: economics
- linguistics: statistics
- phonetics: electronics
- mathematics: obstetrics
- physics: tactics
- dynamics: ethics
When these nouns are treated as the name of a discipline they are considered as singular:

(20a) Linguistics is the scientific study of language.
(20b) Economics is a good subject.

When used to denote a manifestation of qualities, often accompanied by a possessive, they are treated as plural:

(21a) His politics were a mixture of fear, greed, and envy.
(21b) The acoustics in this hall are dreadful.

IV Plurals of numbers

Plurals of numerals differ according to how they are used. Such words include dozen, score, hundred, thousand, million, and so forth. The following examples apply to all of these.

- When words such as hundred, thousand etc are modified by a number, the plural is not inflected, that is, has no -s added. Hence one hundred, two hundred, etc. For vaguer large numbers, one could say several hundred, but many hundreds.

- When words such as dozen, hundred, thousand etc., are used alone, or followed by a prepositional phrase, the plural is inflected: dozens of complaints, scores of people. However,
either complaints by the dozen or complaints by the dozens is acceptable (although differing in meaning).

- The preposition *of* is used when speaking of non-specific items identified by pronouns: *two hundred of these, three dozen of those*. Preposition *of* is not used for a number of specific items: *three hundred oriental rugs*. However, if the pronoun is included with the specific item, the preposition *of* is used: *five million of those dollar bills*.

V  Plurals of standard value and units of measurement

Word that is used as a unit of measurement is kept in the singular when it is used as an adjective. Thus for example, *a twenty-dollar bill* is a bill worth twenty dollars, *a fifteen-car wreck* is a wreck involving fifteen cars, and a *ten-foot pole* is a pole that is ten feet in length except when it is used idiomatically.

VI  Plurals of symbols, abbreviations, acronyms, and initialisms.

Symbols and abbreviations whose plural would be ambiguous if only an *s* is added are pluralized by adding *-'s*. Such as single letter *p* denoting something is pluralized as *p's*. If *p* (penny) is pluralized as *ps*, it may mean police station.
Mind your p's and q's.

Usage is divided on whether to extend this use of the apostrophe to non-ambiguous cases, such as the plurals of numbers (1990's) and words used as terms (his writing contains a lot of but's). Some writers use this form in a desire for consistency, whereas others say it confuses the plural with the possessive -'s. The most consistent approach for pluralizing abbreviations is likely to add a lowercase s as a suffix, e.g., ABCs (American-born Cubans), NGOs (Nongovernmental organizations), and ATMs (automated teller machines).

Acronyms and initialisms are generally used as if they are words. Clearly, one would tend not to pluralize the laser initialism as laser's. Thus the most consistent approach for pluralizing acronyms is likely to simply add a lowercase -s as a suffix. This works well even for acronyms ending with an S, as in CASs, while still making it possible to use the possessive form ('s) for acronyms without confusion. Some adds -s to the acronyms, e.g.,

Laser, acronym for light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation.
Lasers are devices that amplify light and produce coherent light beams, ranging from infrared to ultraviolet.

Maser, acronym for microwave amplification by stimulated emission of radiation.

Masers are also used as low-noise radio frequency amplifiers in satellite communication and radio astronomy.

VII Plurals of names of peoples

There are several different rules for this.

Several peoples have names that are simple nouns and can be pluralized as in the following table:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dane</td>
<td>Danes</td>
<td>the Danes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>the Danish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finn</td>
<td>Finns</td>
<td>the Finns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>the Finnish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swede</td>
<td>Swedes</td>
<td>the Swedes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>the Swedish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spaniard</td>
<td>Spaniards</td>
<td>the Spaniards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>the Spanish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In discussing peoples whose demonym takes -man or -woman, there are three options: pluralize to -men or -women if referring to individuals, and use the root alone if referring to the whole nation, or add people as in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dutchman</th>
<th>Dutchmen</th>
<th>the Dutch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dutchwoman</td>
<td>Dutchwomen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Englishman</td>
<td>Englishmen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Englishwoman</td>
<td>Englishwomen</td>
<td>the English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frenchman</td>
<td>Frenchmen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frenchwoman</td>
<td>Frenchwomen</td>
<td>the French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irishman</td>
<td>Irishmen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irishwoman</td>
<td>Irishwomen</td>
<td>the Irish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotsman</td>
<td>Scotsmen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotswoman</td>
<td>Scotswomen</td>
<td>the Scots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welshman</td>
<td>Welshmen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welshwoman</td>
<td>Welshwomen</td>
<td>the Welsh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One can say “a Scots(wo)man” or “a Scot”, “Scots(wo)men”, “Scottish people”, or “Scots”, and “the Scottish” or “the Scots” (Scotch is considered old fashioned.)
Names of peoples that end in -ese take no plural:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese people</td>
<td>the Chinese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.5 Number in Manipuri

Manipuri has singular and plural numbers. Singular is not marked overtly while plural is marked by suffix -siŋ or -khoy. There is no grammatical agreement in number.

8.5.1 Classes according to number

I Addition of -siŋ

Plural suffix -siŋ can be added to any noun.

- əŋaŋ "child"  →  əŋaŋ-siŋ "children"
- nupi "woman"  →  nupi-siŋ "women"
- nupa "man"    →  nupa-siŋ "men"
- huy "dog"     →  huy-siŋ "dogs"
- sən "cow or bull" → sən-siŋ "cattle"
(22) Mind your p's and q's.

Usage is divided on whether to extend this use of the apostrophe to non-ambiguous cases, such as the plurals of numbers (1990's) and words used as terms (his writing contains a lot of but's). Some writers use this form in a desire for consistency, whereas others say it confuses the plural with the possessive -'s. The most consistent approach for pluralizing abbreviations is likely to add a lowercase s as a suffix, e.g., ABCs (American-born Cubans), NGOs (Nongovernmental organizations), and ATMs (automated teller machines)

Acronyms and initialisms are generally used as if they are words. Clearly, one would tend not to pluralize the laser initialism as laser's. Thus the most consistent approach for pluralizing acronyms is likely to simply add a lowercase -s as a suffix. This works well even for acronyms ending with an S, as in CASs, while still making it possible to use the possessive form ('s) for acronyms without confusion. Some adds -s to the acronyms, e.g.,

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<th>Plural</th>
<th>The Plural</th>
<th>The Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dane</td>
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<td>the Danes</td>
<td>the Danish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finn</td>
<td>Finns</td>
<td>the Finns</td>
<td>the Finnish</td>
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<td>Swede</td>
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<td>the Swedes</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Englishwoman</td>
<td>Englishwomen</td>
<td>the English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frenchman</td>
<td>Frenchmen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frenchwoman</td>
<td>Frenchwomen</td>
<td>the French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irishman</td>
<td>Irishmen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irishwoman</td>
<td>Irishwomen</td>
<td>the Irish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotsman</td>
<td>Scotsmen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotswoman</td>
<td>Scotswomen</td>
<td>the Scots</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welshman</td>
<td>Welshmen</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welshwoman</td>
<td>Welshwomen</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>people</td>
<td>the Chinese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.5 Number in Manipuri

Manipuri has singular and plural numbers. Singular is not marked overtly while plural is marked by suffix -siŋ or -khoy. There is no grammatical agreement in number.

8.5.1 Classes according to number

I Addition of -siŋ

Plural suffix -siŋ can be added to any noun.

- ønŋ.runtime “child”
- nupi-siŋ “women”
- nupa “man”
- huy-siŋ “dogs”
- ṣen “cow or bull”
- ønŋ-siŋ “children”
- nupi-siŋ “women”
- nupa-siŋ “men”
- huy-siŋ “dogs”
- ṣen-siŋ “cattle”
Plural suffix -sir is added to foreign singulars to form plurals in Manipuri. For example,

- *eqlismensir* = Englishmen
- *mediyemsir* = media
- *mas mediyasiq* = media
- *phormulasir* = formulae/formulas
- *phicersir* = features

II Addition of -kboy

It is added to personal pronouns and proper nouns.

- eay “I” eaykhoy “we”
- nøy “you” nøykhoy “you”
- møyhak “he” møyhoy “they”

Addition of -kboy to proper nouns

- tombe “Tomba” tombe-khoy “Tomba and his group”

III Other plurals and singulars

In English, there are nouns that do not have singular forms.

They are animal names, cattle, people, police and clothes (things we
wear) and names of binary objects. By contrast, Manipuri has both singular and plural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Manipuri</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>sën</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>pulis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td>mi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cow(s)</td>
<td>sën</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.5.2 Animal names

Animal names in Manipuri have both singular and plural forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>huy “dog”</td>
<td>huy-sën “dogs”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sën “cow”</td>
<td>sën-sën “cow(s)”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>həwdon “cat”</td>
<td>həwdon-sën “cats”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yaw “sheep”</td>
<td>yaw-sën “sheep(s)”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.5.3 Names of binary objects

Tools and articles of dress consisting of two equal parts are plurals in English but not plurals in Manipuri.

scissors  kati
spectacles  ønak
shears  kati
scales  phala
tweezers  paphoy
pants  khoŋgraw
tongs  cegəp

8.5.4 Agreement

A Subject-verb agreement.

It has been indicated that the number in English affects subject verb agreement. By contrast, in Manipuri there is no grammatical agreement in number.

(25a) nupa nɔca ønə sənəri

boy little one playing
A boy is playing.
B Qualifiers /Quantifiers and noun agreement.

(i) It is found that qualifiers in English agree with the noun. The demonstrative this and that become these, those, and the article a, an is omitted or changed to some in the plural.

By contrast, the demonstrative məsi “this” and mədu “that” do not have marked plural forms in Manipuri.

(26a) məsi nupaməcasi motli
this boy-DET. dirty

This boy is dirty.

(26b) məsi nupaməcasiŋsi motli
these boys-PLU.-DET. dirty

These boys are dirty.

Again, Manipuri does not have indefinite article a/an. Instead numerical ema “one” is used to indicate singular while məyam “many” or khəə “some” is used to indicate plurals.
(27a) əŋəŋ əmə sannərī

boy one playing
A boy is playing.

(27b) nupəməca kʰərə /məyəm sannərī

boy some/many playing.
Some/many boys are playing.

(ii) The quantifiers *many, few, several* agree with plural count nouns. Whereas in Manipuri there is no such agreement.

The quantifiers *məyəm “many”, kʰərə “some /few”* take singular nouns.

əŋəŋ “child” əŋəŋ məyəm “many children”
mi “man” mi məyəm “many people”
sa “animal” sa məyəm “many animals”
sa “animal” sa kʰərə “some animals”

8.5.5 Plural formations

I In the earlier discussion it has been indicated how plurals are formed in English. By contrast plurals in Manipuri are formed by the
addition of \(-si\) or \(-khoy\). The suffix \(-khoy\) is added to personal pronouns and proper nouns to form plurals while \(-si\) is added to all other nouns.

\begin{align*}
\text{nupa “man”} & \quad \text{nupa-si\( \text{i}\) “men”} \\
\text{nøø “you”} & \quad \text{nøkhoy “you”} \\
\text{tomba “Tomba”} & \quad \text{tomba-khoy “Tomba and his group”}
\end{align*}

\section*{II Plurals of personal pronouns.}

Plurals of personal pronouns in English are irregular whereas plural personal pronouns in Manipuri are regular.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lll}
 & English & Manipuri \\
Singular & plural & plural \\
I & we & øykhouy \\
You & You & nøkhoy \\
She/he & they & møkhoy \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\section*{III The lexical item søøgu “herd”, møøy / cëbun “heap”, møpun “bundle” etc are used to indicate group or collective things.}
A  saŋgu        “herd”
    sən səŋgu əmə “a herd of cow”
    ucək səŋgu əmə “a flock of bird or birds”

B  cəbun        "heap or group”
    əy cəbun əmə “a bunch of flower”

C  məpun        "bundle”
    cu məpun əmə “a bundle of sugarcane”
    səŋ məpun əmə “a bundle of firewood”

IV Manipuri does not have indefinite article a/an. Instead numerical əmə “one” is used to indicate singular while məyam “many” or kərə “some” is used to indicate plurals.

(28a) əŋəŋ əmə sənənə
    boy one playing
    A boy is playing.

(28b) nupaməcə kərə /məyam sənənə
    boy some/many playing.
    Some/many boys are playing.
V The standard value in the monetary systems.

Whereas in Manipuri, the standard values do not have marked plural forms as in the following examples.

lupa əme “one rupee”

lupa təra “ten rupees”

lupa lisiq əme “one thousand rupees”

VI Plurals of symbols, abbreviations, acronyms and initialism

In Manipuri, the plurals of the above categories are formed by the addition of suffix-siŋ.

ABC siŋ, NGO siŋ

VII Plurals of names of peoples

In Manipuri, the plurals of the names of people are formed by the addition of suffix-siŋ.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>əŋlismen “Englishman”</td>
<td>əŋlismensiq “Englishmen”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phrensmen “Frenchman”</td>
<td>phrensmensiq “Frenchmen”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phrenswomen “Frenchwoman”</td>
<td>phrenswomensiq “Frenchwomen”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.6 Conclusion

Unlike English, in Manipuri there is no grammatical agreement in number. The demonstrative *me si* “this” and *medu* “that” do not have marked plural forms in Manipuri. Manipuri does not have indefinite article *a/an*. Instead numerical *me* “one” is used to indicate singular while *me yam* “many” or *khare* “some” is used to indicate plurals.

In contrast to English, plurals in Manipuri are formed by the addition of *-sij* or *-kboy*. The suffix *-kboy* is added to personal pronouns and proper nouns to form plurals while *-sij* is added to all other nouns.

Plurals of personal pronouns in English are irregular whereas plural personal pronouns in Manipuri are regular. Tools and articles of dress consisting of two equal parts are plurals in English. These are not plurals in Manipuri.

Names of animals in English often have two plurals: unmarked / zero and regular plurals. Unmarked plural is more common in the context of hunting, and to describe multiple individual animals etc. Animal names in Manipuri have both singular and plural forms.
In English, the most consistent approach for pluralizing symbols, abbreviations, acronyms and initialisms is likely to simply add a lowercase -s as a suffix. This works well even for ending with an S, as in CASs, while still making it possible to use the possessive form (s') without confusion. In Manipuri, the plurals of the above categories are formed by the addition of suffix-siŋ.

In English these standard values dollar, rupee and pound etc have plural forms. Whereas in Manipuri, the standard values do not have marked plural forms.