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.