

3. Plural Formation of Nouns in English

(1) Most nouns in English form plurals by taking –s or –es.

A book some books

A house a few houses

(2) A noun ending in –y and preceded by a consonant makes the plural with –ies.

A cry cries of helpless people

A city some cities of attraction.

(3) There are some irregular forms of plural.

Woman women

Child children

Tooth teeth

Leaf leaves

Fungus fungi

(4) Same form for both singular and plural.

Sheep sheep

Fish fish

Species species

(5) Some nouns have plural forms but they take singular verbs.

News this is a concocted news

Mathematics Mathematics is an interesting subject.

Billiards billiards is a popular game.

(6) Some nouns in English have plural forms and they take plural verbs. Trousers, jeans and glasses (spectacles) are such words. The rules of pluralisation of English nouns can be summarized as follows:

[Affixation(adding –s/-es/-ies)/internal changes /zero morpheme]

4. Comparison and Contrast

Affixation for plural formation is found both in Arabic and English e.g. طالب: طالبون ، طالبين /Taalib: Taalibuuna , Taalibiina / student: students.

Internal changes as in tooth and teeth are also found in both e.g. كريم: كرام / kariim : kiraam/ gentle.

Zero morpheme as sheep : sheep is found only in English not in Arabic. There are only two numbers in English: singular and plural. For dual two plus plural form (e.g. two tribes) is used in English. But in Arabic there are three numbers: singular, dual and plural. In Arabic affixation differs in accordance with difference in cases e.g. for nominative case ‘uana’ is added to the singular whereas in accusative/ genitive case ‘ iian’ is added. In English there is no case difference.

References

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