

## A note on संख्या (saṃkhyā) & संख्येय (saṃkhyeya)

We use numbers to count and to order.

The first type of usage is termed as 'cardinal numbers', and the second type as 'ordinal numbers'. For example, in 'five apples', the word 'five' is a cardinal number, while in 'fifth student', the word 'fifth' is ordinal, since it shows the order of the student in a queue/list.

In Sanskrit the cardinal numbers are called संख्येय (saṃkhyeya), and the ordinal numbers are called पूरण (pūraṇa).

In Sanskrit, there is one more category संख्या (saṃkhyā).

संख्या are used for abstract counting such as 1,2,3,4 etc. or in Mathematics, when we use the numbers. These numbers do not refer to the number of objects as in the case of संख्येय, but represent an abstract concept.

With every संख्या (saṃkhyā), a specific gender and number (vacana) is associated.

संख्येय (saṃkhyeya) being an adjective (विशेषण) , it assumes the gender and number of the noun(विशेष्य) it qualifies.

However there are exceptions. We describe below the rules for both संख्या (saṃkhyā) and संख्येय (saṃkhyeya).

### Gender and Number of the संख्या (saṃkhyā):

- 1) The words denoting 20-99 (विंशति-नवनवति) and कोटि are in feminine gender (स्त्रीलिङ्गम्). All others have neuter gender (नपुंसकलिङ्गम्).
- 2) The numbers एक (eka) and द्वि (dvi) are always in singular and dual respectively.
- 3) Numbers from 3-19 are used only in plural.
- 4) The words शत, सहस्र, and कोटि are used only in singular.
- 5) The words 20-99 can be used in all the 3 numbers viz. singular, dual and plural.

### Gender and Number of the संख्येय (saṃkhyeya):

- 1) The gender of संख्येय in the case of the first four numbers (1,2,3 and 4) is the same as that of the things they are used for counting. For example एकः बालकः, द्वौ बालिका, त्रिणी पुस्तकानि etc.
- 2) The forms of संख्येय from 5 to 19 (पञ्चन् - नवदशन्) are same in all the three genders.

- 3) The forms of संख्येय from 20-99 (विंशति - नवनवति) are always in feminine.
  - 4) The words शत, and सहस्र are in neuter gender only.
  - 5) The वचन( number) of एक & द्वि is always singular and dual respectively.
  - 6) The वचन( number) of त्रि - नवदशन् is always plural.
  - 7) All other numbers are always used in एकवचन.
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