CHAPTER EIGHT

THE MORPHOLOGY OF NUMERALS AND CLASSIFIERS IN JAPHUG

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8.1 Introduction

In many Burmo-Qiangic languages, including Burmic (Bradley 2005) and Naish (Michaud 2011, 2013), the combination of numerals with classifiers is an area of grammar (indeed, in some languages, the only area of grammar) where morphological irregularities and complex alternations are attested.1

Somewhat paradoxically, in Gyalrong languages, otherwise known for their polysynthetic and irregular verbal morphology (Sun 2014; Jacques 2012b), numerals and classifiers present relatively simple and predictable alternations.

In this paper, I first present a description of the morphology and morphosyntax of numerals and classifiers in Japhug and other Gyalrongic languages (going beyond the account in Jacques 2008) based on both corpus data and elicitation for some paradigms.

Then, I evaluate several competing analyses to account for the observed data. First, Japhug may never have developed these irregular systems: as shown by Bradley (2005), most alternations in Burmic and other languages are the indirect effects of lost final obstruents. Since Japhug preserved all final obstruents as distinct segments, the basic conditions for the alternations to develop might not have been present in the first place. Second, the system found in Japhug could have recently been completely innovated. Third, it could be cognate with the numeral +

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1 In the interest of space, I do not present here data on languages other than Japhug and Stau; the reader is invited to consult the cited sources for comparison. The Tibetan transcription in this chapter is based on Jacques (2012a).
classifier paradigms in Burmic and Naish but have been thoroughly simplified by analogical leveling.

After a detailed examination of the evidence, I conclude that although thoroughly renewed by analogical leveling, the classifier system found in Japhug is partly inherited from the common ancestor of Gyalrongic languages and Pumi.

8.2 Numerals and classifiers in Japhug

In this section, I present a synchronic description of the syntax and morphology of numerals and classifiers in Japhug, with some additional data on Stau, another Gyalrongic language, for comparison.

First, I describe the structure of the noun phrase and the place of numerals and classifiers in it. Second, I provide an account of the morphology of numerals up to one hundred. Third, I compare the plain numerals with the numeral prefixes used on classifiers. Fourth, I discuss the numerals above one hundred. Fifth, I briefly mention the approximate numerals, which appear to be specific to Gyalrong languages.

8.2.1 Word order

The noun phrase in Japhug presents the following word order:\(^2\)

\[(1) \quad \text{DEM-NOUN}^\text{modifier} \quad \text{-NOUN}^\text{head} \quad -\text{ADJ-NUM-CLS}\]

Numerals and classifiers appear after nouns and adjectives as in examples (2) and (4).

\[(2) \quad \text{tvpvtso} \quad \text{xsum, rgargum} \quad \text{unwz, nu} \quad \text{ra} \quad \text{kv-fstwn}\]
\[\text{child} \quad \text{three} \quad \text{old.people} \quad \text{two} \quad \text{DEM} \quad \text{PL} \quad \text{INF-serve}\]
\[\text{pu-ra}\]
\[\text{PST.IPfv-have.to}\]
\[\text{‘She had to take care of three children and two old people (on her own.’) (14-tApitaRi, 27)}\]

\[(3) \quad \text{tce} \quad \text{w-mat} \quad \text{tuv-rdow} \quad \text{w-ngw} \quad \text{w-ryi}\]
\[\text{LNK 3SG.POSS-fruit one-piece 3SG-inside textsc3sg.poss-see}\]
\[\text{tuv-rdow} \quad \text{ma}\]
\[\text{me.}\]
\[\text{one-piece apart.from not.exist:FACT}\]
\[\text{‘There is only one seed in (each one) of its fruit.’ (11-qarGW, 89)}\]

\(^2\) Note that attributive adjectives are all participial relative clauses; prenominal attributive adjectives are rare, but not completely unattested (Jacques 2016).