1. Introduction

Syntactic manifestation of semantic classificatory systems is a common trait in natural language. Thus, in the familiar languages of the Indo-European family, differences in gender are reflected in concord requirements that exist between ad-nominals and relative pronouns and the nouns. In a three-gender system such as that of Latin and its derivative Romance languages, there is a greater variety of co-occurrence constraints than in a two-gender system such as that of modern Dutch. In the non-Indo-European languages, particularly those in Asia, semantic classification in nominal structures typically takes on a wider domain. The syntactic manifestation may appear either in the nominal structure or in the verbal structure, and the incorrect use of classifiers renders a sentence 'ungrammatical'.

Nominal classifiers are attested among most languages in Asia, including the Sino-Tibetan languages, the Austroasiatic languages, the Malayo-Polynesian languages, even some of the Indo-Aryan languages bordering on these languages, and the Altaic languages. Their use is generally associated with the quantification of objects or nouns and as a rule they usually occur immediately adjacent to the numeral in a measure phrase or in conjunction with demonstratives. Nominal classifiers were also very much
证据中，美国的原住民语言中，特别是在阿塔帕斯卡语中。在这些语言中，名词的语义分类在言语结构中得到了表现，这可能反映了言语综合的一般趋势。梅内表示了一个非常有趣且重要的问题，即分类词的区域扩散。考虑区域语言学在可能的独立的系统演化背景下的发展，作为两种独立的演变和发展，结构上借入由于长期语言接触在相邻的地理区域。更好的理解其结构和发展的这种语义特征将有助于追踪基因关系，特别是对澳大利亚语系，汉藏语系，及马来波利尼西亚语系。这需要对每一语言的更全面的分类描述。需要一个形式的装置，使我们可以比较的内部和外部发展。除此之外，研究名量分类系统提出一个重要的假设，即使用名量分类系统和使用复数词根的使用是互补的自然语言中的分布。更具体地说，这表明要么自然语言要么用名量分类词，要么用复数词根，要么如果自然语言有这两种词根，那么这两种词根的使用就是互补的。
The structure of the ad-nominal classificatory system

Nominal classifiers are the lexical items that usually come between the numeral and the noun in a measure phrase. Under this definition the number of classifiers in a particular language generally ranges from a handful to about two hundred.

The actual range, as we shall show later, is relatively open-ended. I have proposed elsewhere⁴ that a four-way distinction in the kinds of classifiers is justified. They may be characterized by two features: [+ entity] and [+ exactness]. For example, in the case of 'chicken', the Chinese classifiers are (in Mandarin):

(I) \[+ \text{exact} \quad + \text{entity}\] : zhī ('individual', non-human objects)

(II) \[+ \text{exact} \quad - \text{entity}\] : jīn ('cattie', unit of weight)

(III) \[- \text{exact} \quad + \text{entity}\] : qún ('brood')

(IV) \[- \text{exact} \quad - \text{entity}\] : zhōng ('kind/type')

In (I) the measure refers to an exact quantity and involves discrete physical entities. A parallel case in English would be sheet (in two sheets of paper), which characterizes certain physical dimensions of 'paper', the mass noun. In (II) the measure is exact but it refers to no discrete physical entity. Pounds, gallons, and feet for example, are commonly known as measure words. Their function is to delimit exact amounts of unstructured and non-entity mass. The measure is applied to the unit of measurement and not to entities of the delimited mass. Two pounds of chicken (or beef) pre-
nts an exact measure, but it need not be a discrete entity in that more likely than not the 'Shylockian it' could not have been made. In (III) there is a finite sense of a well-defined discrete entity or entities, but the quantity is not exact either by design or by convention. For example, a brood of hicks (or a plate of chicken) is not an exact measure but there is a definite sense of physical entity and can be referred to as a unit. This may be contrasted with two pounds of chicken (legs) as in I ought two pounds of chicken (legs) yesterday. Here reference is made to an exact quantity rather than object and there is the sense of physical entityacking. In (IV), which characterizes mainly stract nouns, the measure is neither exact nor does refer to a discrete physical entity.

Natural language exhibits all four kinds of measure, but the range of each kind of measure may vary in different languages. Mass nouns in English, in comparison to those in Chinese, may be good examples of range difference. In the case of cattle: two head(s) of cattle, head is a [+ exact] measure; in two herds of cattle, herd is a exact entity] measure; in twenty thousand pounds of cattle, pound is a [+ exact - entity] measure; and in two pounds of cattle, kind refers to [-exact -entity] measure.

Count nouns in English and other European languages usually require no overt markers for [+ exact + entity] measure, but the contrary is generally true of the languages in Asia, where (I) embodies a rich and complex classificatory system. The number of categories is culture-bound and relatively finite for (I). It depends on the standard measures of weight, volume, length, temporal extent, etc. (IV) univer-