Numeral classifiers in Sgaw Karen

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The fact that Southeast Asia abounds with numeral classifiers is well known. Robert B. Jones in his “Classifier Constructions in Southeast Asia”, an essay honoring Mary R. Haas in 1970, suggested that the Tai group of languages is a possible source of influence in the spread of the use of classifiers in Southeast Asia and China. Numeral classifiers in languages of different families in Southeast Asia have been described at length since Haas (1942). However, Karen happened to be overlooked, alluded to only by a few examples in Jones (1970). It is the purpose of this paper to present data on classifiers in the Mae Chaem dialect of Sgaw Karen. The writer of this article is also the compiler of a dictionary of this dialect of Sgaw Karen, viz. the Thai-Sgaw Karen Dictionary, two volumes, 1,277 pages, 1986. Data in this paper are taken exclusively from this dictionary.

Numeral classifiers (see Jones 1970, T’sou 1976, Allen 1977) are those morphemes which identify units, usually by reference to the shape of the object or objects concerned, when a number is present. All countable nouns are obligatorily associated with a classifier if a number is used in counting them --- for example,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{cə}^1 & \quad \text{thi}^1 & \quad \text{pə}^1 & \quad \text{tə}^1 & \quad \text{phlo}^1 \\
\text{I} & \quad \text{see} & \quad \text{tent} & \quad \text{one} & \quad \text{CL} \\
\text{I see one tent.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{cə}^1 & \quad \text{lu}^1 & \quad \text{ne}^1 & \quad \text{she}^2\text{ka}^2 & \quad \text{sə}^3 & \quad \text{be}^1 \\
\text{I} & \quad \text{choose} & \quad \text{obtain} & \quad \text{shirt} & \quad \text{three} & \quad \text{CL} \\
\text{I chose three shirts.}
\end{align*}
\]

Uncountable nouns include such lexical items as thi$^2$ ‘water’, so$^2$ ‘oil’, and me$^2$ ‘cooked rice’. When used with numbers these nouns must take the measures classifiers.

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1. Types of classifiers

There are three types of numeral classifiers in Sgaw Karen: unit classifiers, noun-derived classifiers, and verb-derived classifiers.

1.1 Unit classifiers

Unit classifiers constitute a set of morphemes whose only function is to classify nouns. They cannot be used as a common noun. If they appear as a common noun (ex. thu² as a noun means ‘mountain’ and is used also as a classifier for cloth, cigarettes and banana), then it is the case of homonym. Unit classifiers in Sgaw Karen are simple unit classifiers. Twenty unit classifiers have been found:

1. po² ‘section of bamboo’, with: wa¹ ‘bamboo’, me² te² blɔ² ‘preparation of glutinous rice cooked in a bamboo joint’, me¹ ʔu² ‘fireworks’.


4. phuʔ³ ‘bunch of flowers, cluster of flowers’, with: phə² ta¹ shə¹ yi¹ ‘roses’.

5. tə² ‘place’, with: ma² ta¹ ‘work’, phiʔ³ ‘place’.

6. thu² ‘roll, curl, furl’, with: mə⁵ thu² ‘cigarette’, ʔɔ² kʰi♭ la¹ ‘banana leaf’, ta¹ kiʔ² naʔ² ‘cloth’.

7. cu¹ ‘set with: shə² ka² ‘shirt’, phlɔʔ² kʰi² ‘trousers’.

8. koʔ¹ ‘heap, pile, stack’ with: lə¹ bo² ‘straw’, ʔɔ² mi² ‘firewood’.


10. kləʔ¹ ‘piece, fragment, pipe, tube’ with: khri² ‘wild yam (a head of)’, ʔə¹ ‘wood (a long section of cut timber)’, ʔɔ² mi² ‘firewood’, si♭ na♭ ‘pistol, firearm’.

11. kʰuʔ³ ‘piece’ with: ʔə¹ ‘wood (a cylindrical section of cut timber used as a chair)’. 

13. mɔ² ‘mouthful’ with: me² ‘cooked rice’, sɔ¹ be¹ ‘a concoction to be chewed having betelnuts as the main ingredients’.

14. shɔ² ‘item’ with: ta¹ do³ ceɔ³ ‘examination questions’, kɔ¹ na² ‘arithmetic problems’.

15. sho² ‘pair, item (especially with engine, machine, motor, things having movement, music instruments)’ with: cɔ¹ ‘cymbals’, khɔ¹ phĩ³ ‘shoes’, na¹ di³ ‘earrings’, tha¹ ‘loom’, ce² shɔ² ta¹ ‘sewing machine’, kɔ¹ ha¹ ‘water wheel’, kɔ¹ ha¹ ri³ ‘bicycle’, kwɛ³ le¹ lo² ‘telephone’, mɔ¹ to¹ ka³ le¹ so² ‘bus’, na¹ ri¹ ‘clock, wrist-watch’, le¹ ‘ox-cart’, le¹ di³ ta¹ ‘tank’, le¹ me¹ tu² ‘train’, le¹ zo¹ ‘bicycle’, shĩ² ‘cradle, hammock’, swe¹ cu¹ ‘balance, a pair of scales’, te² na¹ ‘lute’, thɔ¹ lo² ‘fiddle’, sɔ¹ xe² ‘harmonica’.

16. ye¹ ‘line’ with: pa² co³ pho² ‘pupils, students’, si³ pho² ‘soldiers’.


18. zi¹ ‘thing, affair, business’ with: pɔ² lo² plɔ² ‘story’, ta¹ νɔ² mu² ‘movies’.

19. zu?¹ ‘classifier for a sleep, a nap’ with: mi² ‘a sleeping time’.

20. lo¹ ‘lump, block, chunk’ with: bɔ ‘a sheaf of rice’, ta¹ νɔ² ‘cloud’, ta² pa¹ ‘flesh, meat’, di² ci² ‘brick’, di² ‘fried eggs’ (NB. boiled eggs have phlɔ² classifier; see supra), kɔ¹ thi² xe² ‘loaf of palm sugar’, sa² pja² ‘soap’, tɔ¹ shi¹ wa² ‘potash alum’.
1.2 Noun-derived classifiers

Noun-derived classifiers in Sgaw Karen are common nouns which are used in the position of classifiers. Noun-derived classifiers include simple unit classifiers, group classifiers, time classifiers, and measurement classifiers. All in all there are 62 noun-derived classifiers.

Simple unit classifiers

1. pa²
   as a noun means ‘side’, used as a classifier for one side of things which usually come in pairs. Used with: pa²l só¹ ‘lung’, tho² ‘pig (one half of)’, kho¹ ‘foot’, kha¹ phi² ‘shoe’, kho¹ phe¹ ‘sock’, ci² ‘hand’, khe² ta² bo² ‘pencil (one tip of)’, sho ‘chicken (one half of)’, yo² pa² ‘wall’.

2. pu²
   as a noun means ‘hole’, used as a classifier with: b² ‘rice (a bucket of)’, pe¹ pu² ‘mosquito net’.

3. phle¹

4. te¹
   as a noun means ‘sack’, used as a classifier for things coming in a sack such as b² ‘unhusked rice’, li² sa¹ ‘salt’.

5. thi¹
   as a noun means ‘word’, used as a classifier with: ta¹ kwə¹ ‘language, word’.

6. thu¹
   as a noun means ‘tree’, used as a classifier with all kind of trees such as tho² ‘Toddy palm’, ko¹ce²lo¹ ‘longan’, sa¹ mə² kə²
‘tamarind’, səl khɔ²³ ‘mango’, sə² kwɔ²³ ‘banana (plant)’, lɔ² mi² lɔhɔ² ‘parasitic plant’ xo²³ ‘rubber’ etc.

7. ca²¹ as a noun means ‘kind, sort, category’, used as a classifier with: pɔ² lɔ¹ thɔ² ‘ink’, phɔ² ‘flower’, phɔ² la¹ shri¹ ‘rose’, phɔ² lɔ ‘sedge, medicinal bulbs’, ta¹ thɔ² byɛ² l ‘mould, mildew’, ta¹ ki² pɔ² l ‘cloth’, ta¹ lɔ² l ‘food’, ta² sa¹ ‘fruit’, kɔ² l ‘sweetmeats, cake’, be² ‘taste’, na¹ ‘fish’, sa² phja² l ‘soap’, se¹ ‘wood’.

8. ki²³ as a noun means ‘piece, one quarter of’, used as a classifier with: pɔ² l sə² wa² ‘(about half a clove of garlic)’, ta² na¹ ‘meat’, na¹ phɔ² ‘fish’, kɔ² l ‘sweetmeats, cake’.

9. kə² do¹ l as a noun means ‘bunch, cluster’, used as a classifier with: pɔ² l sa² wa² ‘a bunch of several cloves of) garlic, kwɔ¹ xo²³ ‘torch’, li¹ ‘cotton thread’, lɔ² bo² ‘straw’, sə² mi² ‘firewood’.

10. kə³ l thɔ² as a noun means ‘storey’, used as a classifier with: dɔ²³ ‘house’.

11. kə¹ kru¹ as a noun means ‘small bunch of plant’, used as a classifier with: kə¹ hɔ² ‘a kind of tropical fruit’, se² sa¹ l ‘(a bunch of) betelnuts’.

12. kə³ as a noun means ‘bottle’, used as a classifier with: thi² ‘water’, so² ‘oil’.

13. kho¹ as a noun means ‘head’, used as a classifier with: sə² kwɔ²³ ‘(a grove of), banana’, no² bo² ‘(a tussock of) Cyperaceal’, wa¹ ‘(a clump of) bamboo’.

14. khi¹ as a noun means ‘spool, reel’, used as a classifier with: pli² ‘rope’, li¹ ‘cotton thread’.

15. khle¹ as a noun means ‘a stem-part of flowers such as that of coconut, a cluster of fruit such as that of Toddy palm’, used as a classifier with: thɔ² sa¹ l ‘Toddly palm’, kə¹ hɔ¹ ‘a kind of tropical fruit’, bi² (ears of) paddy’, se² sa¹ l ‘betelnuts’, xo² sa¹ l ‘coconut’.

16. khɔ² as a noun means ‘the outside of’, used as a classifier with: hɔ¹ kho¹ ‘land’.

17. be²¹ as a noun means ‘skin, bark, rind’, used as a classifier with: pe² tr² ‘(a pane of) door’, pɔ² l u² ‘termite’, phe² xi² ‘a sieve’, phlo² ‘wasp’, tə² khwe² ‘fishhook’, ta¹ də² ‘basket’, ta¹ ki² pə² l ‘(a sheet of) cloth’, ta¹ be² l ‘(a sheet of) skin’, ta¹ kho¹ phlo¹ ‘a woven food cover’, ta¹ yɔ² ‘picture’, thə² b ‘needle’, thə² plə² ‘chisel’, thə² tə¹ ‘tweezers’, tho¹ ‘bird’, tho¹ phyo² l ‘peacock’,

18. bo²

As a noun means ‘a long thin object’, used as a classifier for fish, reptiles, and long objects. Used with: pi² lo¹ wɔ² ‘skink’, pa¹ thɔ² sa¹ ‘a pod of bean’, phɔ¹ ‘necklace’, phɔ² de¹ ‘boa constrictor, python’, pli² ‘rope’, phle¹ ‘tree lizard, chameleon’, ti² tu² ‘eel’, tɔ¹ khut³ ‘iguana’, tɔ² kwe² ‘rainbow’, thi² klo³ ‘river’, the¹ bo² ‘plough’, tha² pɔ² li² ‘drill, gimlet’, tha² pho² ‘wire’, tha² kə¹ le² ‘earthworm’, ka² ne² xo² ‘candle’, kə¹ ‘dragon’, kre² ‘crocodile’, kle² ‘train’, kle² mi¹ ‘road’, khe² ta¹ bo² se¹ ‘pencil’, kho¹ su² ‘head hair’, khwi¹ ‘tree lizard’, khwi¹ ze¹ ‘ground lizard (Liolepis belliana)’, ba¹ mi¹ ‘Chinese noodle’, do² le¹ ‘house lizard’, me² pe¹ ‘paddle’, me² su² ‘pole (punt) a boat’, no¹ ti¹ ‘javelin’ no¹ thu² ‘me² la² bo² ‘toothbrush’, pa¹ pho² ‘fish’, pa¹ mi¹ ‘whale’, pa¹ so² ‘candle’, yə¹ ‘snake’, si² wə¹ de¹ ‘millipede’, sə¹ li² ‘water leech’, su² ‘land leech’, zə¹ ki² ru² ‘belt’, wa¹ ‘(a pole of) bamboo’.

19. de²

As a noun means ‘claw (of a crab), a bunch of flowers’, used as a classifier with: xo² sa¹ shφɔ² ‘blossom (spadix) of the coconut tree’, and shwè de² ‘crab’s claw’.

20. do²

As a noun means ‘box, case, wrapper’. Used as a classifier with: ba¹ tho² ‘firecrackers’, mo² thu² ‘(a case of) cigarettes’, wi² thɔ² yu² ‘radio’.
21. mi\(^2\) as a noun means ‘name’. Used as a classifier meaning ‘kind, sort, category, specimen’. Used with: \(ta^2\)sa\(^l\) ‘fruits’, \(b\dot{o}l\)so\(^2\) lo\(^l\)tho\(^l\) ‘(several transfiguration of) tiger’.

22. mi\(^1\) as a noun means ‘liana, vine, climbers’. Used as a classifier with: \(se^1\)xi\(^l\) ‘vine’, \(lu^l\)khe\(^2\) ‘pumpkin vine’, \(lu^l\)sa\(^l\) ‘white (wax) gourd’.

23. si\(^1\) as a noun means ‘comb’. Used as a classifier meaning ‘a hand of’. Used with: s\(\varrho\)kwi\(^3\) ‘bananas’.

24. s\(\varrho\)be\(^3\) as a noun means ‘arrangement’. Used as a classifier meaning ‘a unit of things which one has arranged’. Used with: s\(\varrho\)kwi\(^3\) la\(^l\) ‘banana leaves’, n\(\varrho\)m\(\varrho\)li\(^l\) ‘fermented tea-leaves (around 30 leaves)’, s\(\varrho\)bli\(^3\) la\(^l\) ‘Piper betel leaves (around 8-9 leaves)’.

25. shu\(^3\) as a noun means ‘room’. Used as a classifier with: d\(\varrho\)3 shu\(^3\) ‘a room in a house’.

26. swa\(^2\) as a noun means ‘a ladder-step’. Used as a classifier with: x\(\varrho\)2 ‘ladder’.

*Group classifiers*

1. pu\(^1\) as a noun means ‘heap, pile’. Used as a classifier with: p\(\varrho\)2 ‘(a group of) men’, ta\(^2\)pa\(^l\) ‘meat’, bi\(^2\) ‘paddy’, s\(\varrho\)m\(\varrho\)mil ‘firewood’, si\(^3\) ‘alcoholic drink’, me\(\varrho\)2 ‘sand’.

2. k\(\varrho\)phi\(^2\) as a noun means ‘group’. Used as a classifier with: p\(\varrho\)2 ‘(a group of) men’.

3. kla\(^3\) as a noun means ‘group’. Used as a classifier with: p\(\varrho\)2 ‘(a group of) men’, t\(\varrho\)mla\(^2\) pho\(^2\) ‘bandits’.

4. ?u\(^3\) as a noun means ‘group’. Used as a classifier with: p\(\varrho\)2 ‘(a group of) men’, p\(\varrho\)n\(\varrho\)al ‘(a herd of) wild buffalos’, ta\(^l\) ‘things’, th\(\varrho\)l ‘(a flock of) birds’, ja\(^2\)sa\(^2\) ‘(a group of) policemen’, sha\(^l\) ‘(a constellation of) stars’, sh\(\varrho\)li\(^3\)si\(^3\) ‘(a crowd of) foxes’, m\(\varrho\)li\(^3\) ‘(a throng of) monkeys’, l\(\varrho\)kho\(^2\) ‘(a set of) dishes’.

5. du\(^1\) as a noun means ‘a brood of, a litter of’. Used as a classifier with: th\(\varrho\)2 ‘(a litter of little) pigs’, sho\(^2\) ‘(a brood of) chickens’.

*Action classifiers*

1. b\(\varrho\) as a noun means ‘one time’. Used as a classifier with several action verbs such as ph\(\varrho\)2 ‘beat’, d\(\varrho\)3 ‘fight’, le\(^2\) ‘go’.
2. co¹ as a noun means 'a little while'. Used as a classifier with verbs such as khɔʔ³ 'wait', toʔ² co² 'help'.

3. co² as a noun means 'a generation'. Used as a classifier with verbs such as ʔoʔ¹ 'live'.

4. na¹ri¹ as a noun means 'one hour'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

5. ni¹ as a noun means 'year'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

6. ni² as a noun means 'day'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

7. nw immersion³ as a noun means 'week'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

8. so¹ as a noun means 'night'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

**Measurement classifiers**

For standardized measures of weights and space, both lineal and square, the Sgaw Karen people have their own, at least among older people. These may become obsolescent, as English and Metric measures are on the way to replace them.

1. baʔ¹ (T.) as a noun means 'Baht' both for monetary and weight. Used as a classifier after numerals.

2. bəʔ¹ (ləʔ³ ciʔ³) as a noun means 'one scoop up with one hand'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

3. ʃə¹ (ləʔ³ ciʔ³) as a noun means 'one scoop up with both hands'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

4. cya² (ləʔ³ ciʔ³) as a noun means 'one scoop up with one clenched fist'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

5. tha² as a noun means 'a span, a Karen unit of linear measure equal to the fully extended hand (between the thumb and the middle finger)'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

6. si¹tə¹ as a noun means 'a span, a Karen unit of linear measure equal to the fully extended hand (between the thumb and the index finger)'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

7. tha¹ as a noun means 'a pail'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

8. tho² as a noun means 'a dozen'. Used as a classifier after numerals.
9. *ceʔ³* as a noun means 'a little bit of'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

10. *kə¹phoʔ¹* as a noun means 'a measure equal in length to a joint of the middle finger'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

11. *ke¹* as a noun means 'a handful of'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

12. *ke¹ phaʔ³doʔ¹* as a noun means 'a handful of (using both hands)'. Used as a classifier after numerals.

13. *khri²* as a noun means 'a Karen measurement for height equal to one fist (with the flat thumb)'. Used as a classifier after numerals, usually used to measure the height of pigs, piles of wood etc.

14. *phiʔ¹* as a noun means 'a Karen measurement for height equal to one fist (with a little bit elevating of the thumb)'. Used as a classifier after numerals, usually used to measure the height of pigs, piles of wood etc.

15. *coʔ³* as a noun means 'a Karen measurement for height equal to one fist (with a fully elevated thumb)'. Used as a classifier after numerals, usually used to measure the height of pigs, piles of wood etc.

16. *khə²ciʔ³* as a noun means 'a Karen measurement for length equal to one hand', Used as a classifier after numerals.

17. *khli²* as a noun means 'a Karen linear measure equal to two extended arms', Used as a classifier after numerals.

18. *pla²* as a noun means 'a Karen linear measure equal to the span between the elbow to the tip of the extended middle finger', Used as a classifier after numerals.

19. *ta²* as a noun means 'a Karen linear measure equal to the span between the elbow to the clenched fist', Used as a classifier after numerals.

20. *shi²* as a noun means 'a unit of ten', Used as a classifier after numerals.

21. *kəʔ¹phi²* as a noun means 'a group of about ten people', Used as a classifier after numerals. Usually used with *ya²sa²* 'policemen', *siʔ³pho²* 'soldiers'.

22. koʔja² as a noun means ‘a group of about one hundred people’, Used as a classifier after numerals. Usually used with ya²sa² ‘policemen’, siʔ²pho² ‘soldiers’.

23. koʔtho² as a noun means ‘a group of about one thousand people, Used as a classifier after numerals. Usually used with ya²sa² ‘policemen’, siʔ²pho² ‘soldiers’.

1.3 Verb-derived classifiers

Verb-derived classifiers are classifiers which are also verbs. They are less numerous than noun-derived classifiers. All in all the following items are found:

1. shiə² as a verb means ‘to carry (hold) in both arms’. Used as a classifier after numerals. Used with: boʔl ‘bamboo-shoots’, saʔmi¹ ‘firewood’.

2. bo¹ as a verb means ‘to wrap’. Used as a classifier after numerals. Used with: koʔl ‘(a wrapped-up package of) sweetmeats’, maʔl thu² ‘(a carton) of cigarettes’, sha²kho³ ‘(a wrapped-up package of) paper’.

3. ko¹ as a verb means ‘to coil, to roll, to curl up’. Used as a classifier after numerals. Used with: pli² ‘rope’.

4. kiʔ³ as a verb means ‘to cut into sections’. Used as a classifier after numerals. Used with: taʔja² ‘meat’, koʔl ‘sweetmeats, cake’.

5. khliʔ³ as a verb means ‘to fold’. Used as a classifier after numerals. Used with: ta¹kiʔ³jaʔl ‘cloth’, jaʔl ‘blanket’.

2. Classifier constructions

Sgaw Karen constructions are of the “Southeast Asian”² type, that is to say, they follow the order noun + numeral + classifier. This noun-phrase pattern can be extended by the addition of demonstratives and adjectivals, so that the full noun-phrase order is: (N.)Noun + (Adj)Adjectival + (Num)Numeral + (CL)Classifier + (Dem)Demonstrative.

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²Jones (1970) divides the languages of Southeast Asia and South China into two large groups distinguished by the structure of noun phrases involving classifiers. The difference is based on the position in the phrase of the head noun. One group employs the pattern numeral + noun (e.g., Chinese, Vietnamese); Jones terms this the “Chinese” type. The other group employs the pattern noun + numeral + classifier (e.g., Thai, Burmese); this he calls the “Southeast Asian” type.
Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Adj</th>
<th>Num</th>
<th>CL</th>
<th>Dem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>na¹ri¹</td>
<td>ye²</td>
<td>khi²</td>
<td>sho²</td>
<td>ne¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;those two good watches&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she²ka²</td>
<td>ye²</td>
<td>so³</td>
<td>be¹</td>
<td>?i²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;these three red shirts&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However if we divide this big noun-phrase into two smaller ones, i.e. 1). numeral noun phrase, and 2). demonstrative noun phrase we will have these constructions:

**numeral noun phrase**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Adj</th>
<th>Num</th>
<th>CL</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sha¹</td>
<td>pha³do³</td>
<td>ta¹</td>
<td>phlο¹</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;one big star&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dɔ²</td>
<td>cu¹</td>
<td>khi²</td>
<td>be¹</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;two pointed knives&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this type of noun phrase the CL is obligatory. To delete the CL from the numeral noun-phrase is impossible; i.e. will obtain an ungrammatical phrase in Sgaw Karen.

**demonstrative noun phrase**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>(CL)</th>
<th>Dem</th>
<th>Adj</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>te¹</td>
<td>(phlο¹)</td>
<td>?i²</td>
<td>phy²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;this light (≠ heavy) sack.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ko³</td>
<td>(be¹)</td>
<td>?i²</td>
<td>be²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cake (CL)</td>
<td>this</td>
<td>tasty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;this tasty cake.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can see that with the demonstrative noun phrase, the CL is not obligatory. We have numerous examples of demonstrative noun phrase without CL.

3. Discussion

1. Classifiers are well established in Sgaw Karen. In this study, we find that the use of CL is consistent for every speaker. However, cases where one noun
can take either of two CLs have been also found. For example, that ‘loom’ can have as CL either sho\textsuperscript{2} ‘CL for moving machine’ or phu\textsuperscript{2} ‘CL signifying the shape of a comb or a bunch of bananas, which the loom (with its many strings) resembles. Another example kwe\textsuperscript{2}le\textsuperscript{2}lo\textsuperscript{2} ‘telephone’ can have as CL either sho\textsuperscript{2} ‘CL for moving machine’ or d\textsuperscript{2} ‘CL signifying the shape of a box’. sa\textsuperscript{1}mo\textsuperscript{2}kle\textsuperscript{2} ‘tamarind fruit’ can have as CL either phla\textsuperscript{2} ‘CL for round object and as such is CL for most fruits’ or ‘CL for long objects’. Anyone who sees tamarind pods will know that it is difficult to designate its shape as either round or long.

2. Classifiers in Sgaw Karen signify first and foremost the shape of the objects they classify.

3. Classifiers in Sgaw Karen categorize the objects according to their taxonomy in nature i.e., according to whether the thing referred to is a machine, a four-footed animal, a fowl, a reptile, an insect, etc. And this Karen categorization corresponds well with scientific categorization. Exceptions are, however, found. For example khli\textsuperscript{3} ‘turtle’, which is four-footed, does not have as CL di\textsuperscript{2} ‘CL for four-footed animal’, but instead has be\textsuperscript{1} ‘classifier used for many small animals and fowls and insects’. And ironically enough both so\textsuperscript{2}kha\textsuperscript{2} ‘Buddhist monk’ and co\textsuperscript{2}s\textsuperscript{2} ‘Buddhist novice’, which in Thai and Burmese require highly elevated CL, have as CL di\textsuperscript{2} ‘CL for four-footed animals and ogreish beings’.

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