Chapter 3

CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS OF NOMINAL

Chapter 3

1 GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

A Đoàn Kıa Lôu (Terminal, Type of item, Terminal National Library)

Thesaurus classes in Taiwan
shape, and sometimes also position of the referent noun. There are languages which have just one set of classifiers found in this context only, e.g. Toba and Pilagá (Guaycururan languages from Argentina; see Klein 1979 and Vidal 1994); Teop (Austronesian, Bougainville: Mosel and Spriggs n.d.), and Mandan (Siouan: Barron and Serzisko 1982). In a number of languages the same, or almost the same, set of classifier morphemes occurs in quantitative expressions, as numeral classifiers, and with demonstratives; classifiers in different contexts often display distinct morphosyntactic properties (see Goral 1978, for Vietnamese, and the discussion in Aikhenvald forthcoming).

A number of languages have multiple classifier systems – there may be either more than one set of classifier morphemes in different functions, or the same classifier morphemes can be used in distinct morphosyntactic contexts. The first possibility can be illustrated with Akatek (Mayan) (Zavala, this volume). (Bantu languages, e.g. Swahili, also use the same prefixes as noun class markers (indicating agreement) and as noun classifiers, on head nouns.) The second type is typical of classifier languages of South America, especially those of Northwest Amazonia – see the discussion of Tariana in sections 2–4 of this chapter.

The existence of multiple classifier systems in which the same, or almost the same, set of morphemes is used in different morphosyntactic loci is instructive from the point of view of the criteria to be used for distinguishing types of classifiers. They may be crucial for providing further evidence in favour of ‘marginal’ types and subtypes – such as ‘demonstrative’ and ‘article’ classifiers.

This chapter considers such a multiple classifier system in Tariana, a North Arawak language from Northwest Amazonia. In section 2 I give a brief description of classifiers in Tariana (more details are found in Aikhenvald 1994b). Classifiers with demonstratives and articles are described in section 3. In section 4, areal properties of the classifier system in Tariana are considered. The status of demonstrative and article classifiers in Tariana and their implications for the typology of classifiers are briefly discussed in section 5.

### 2 An overview of the multiple classifier system in Tariana

#### 2.1 Classifiers and gender

Like the majority of Arawak languages (Aikhenvald 1996), Tariana distinguishes two genders, feminine animate vs the rest, in prefixes which cross-reference subjects and possessors (see examples (1), (2), (3)). This gender opposition is neutralized in plural. There is also a large set of suffixed morphemes each used in several classifier functions.

Every noun in Tariana requires a classifier. All inanimate nouns are classified in terms of their shape; animate nouns divide into feminine and non-feminine.

Inanimate nouns can be classified in several different ways depending on the aspect of the referent which the speaker wants to focus on. There are over fifty established classifiers; ‘repeaters’ are used for new or previously unclassified items, as well as for nouns in focus (see Aikhenvald 1994b). Thus, classifiers constitute a potentially open system. A sample list of established classifiers is given in table 3.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal, possessive and noun classifiers</th>
<th>Numeral classifiers</th>
<th>Noun class markers</th>
<th>Semantics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-ita</td>
<td>-hipa; -ita</td>
<td>-ita</td>
<td>male; non feminine animate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ma</td>
<td>-ma</td>
<td>-ma</td>
<td>feminine (with numeral classifiers and noun classes only if sex is in focus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-da</td>
<td>-da</td>
<td>-da</td>
<td>round objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-depama</td>
<td>-depama</td>
<td>-depama</td>
<td>habitat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ipa</td>
<td>-ipa</td>
<td>-ipa</td>
<td>big open space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ku</td>
<td>-ku</td>
<td>-ku</td>
<td>extended cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-kweka</td>
<td>-kweka</td>
<td>-kweka</td>
<td>flat and round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-kha</td>
<td>-kha</td>
<td>-kha</td>
<td>curved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-makia</td>
<td>-makia</td>
<td>-makia</td>
<td>clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-na</td>
<td>-na</td>
<td>-na</td>
<td>long vertical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-pa</td>
<td>-pa</td>
<td>-pa</td>
<td>large and long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-pi</td>
<td>-pi</td>
<td>-pi</td>
<td>long, thin, vertical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-pi</td>
<td>-pi</td>
<td>-pi</td>
<td>long, hollow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-pukiai</td>
<td>-pukiai</td>
<td>-pukiai</td>
<td>round, hollow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subdivision (‘superclassing’: see Sands 1995, for this term) of all nouns into animates and inanimates, with a special generic ‘animate’ classifier, is characteristic of numeral classifiers, and of noun classes. Noun classifiers are used differently with animate and with inanimate nouns. All classifiers except noun classifiers can be used anaphorically. The same set of classifier morphemes is used in possessive constructions, and as verbal classifiers (section 2.2). These morphemes have
The same set of morphology is different with nouns and

5.1 Noun classifiers

The main point here is that noun classifiers are not

accused, non-accusative classifier stems, and can be pluralized.

The number noun classifiers, the same non-accusative, and

non-classifiers are not acceptable.

(1) 'Non-accusative' (non-ACCUSATIVE) non-accusative classifiers are not acceptable.

(2) 'Non-accusative' (non-ACCUSATIVE) non-accusative classifiers are not acceptable.

(3) 'Non-accusative' (non-ACCUSATIVE) non-accusative classifiers are not acceptable.

(4) 'Non-accusative' (non-ACCUSATIVE) non-accusative classifiers are not acceptable.

(5) 'Non-accusative' (non-ACCUSATIVE) non-accusative classifiers are not acceptable.

(6) 'Non-accusative' (non-ACCUSATIVE) non-accusative classifiers are not acceptable.

(7) 'Non-accusative' (non-ACCUSATIVE) non-accusative classifiers are not acceptable.

(8) 'Non-accusative' (non-ACCUSATIVE) non-accusative classifiers are not acceptable.

(9) 'Non-accusative' (non-ACCUSATIVE) non-accusative classifiers are not acceptable.

(10) 'Non-accusative' (non-ACCUSATIVE) non-accusative classifiers are not acceptable.

(11) 'Non-accusative' (non-ACCUSATIVE) non-accusative classifiers are not acceptable.
Numerical classifiers for animates and humans differ from verbal, possessive and noun classifiers in the following ways. Numerical classifiers divide into animate and inanimate. The animate classifier *-ita* is used for all sex-differentiable referents, if their sex is not in focus:

(8) *pa-ita*  inaru  
    one-CL:AN  woman  
    'one woman'

(9) *pa-ita*  api  
    one-NUM,CL:AN  snake  
    'one snake'

The feminine animate classifier *-ma* can be used if the sex of the referent is being focused on, as in (10). For the types described above *-ma* is always used with feminine referents, and cannot be replaced with *-ita* 'animate' (cf. (4)).

(10) *pa-ma*  inaru  
    one-CL:FEM  woman  
    'one woman'

There is a special numerical classifier *-hipa* 'non-feminine human', used just in this and no other meaning. This classifier is interchangeable with *-ita* 'animate'; there is a mild preference to use *-hipa* for human male referents, as in (11), (12).

(11) *phupa*  (< *pa* + *-hipa*)  tfāri  
    one+NUM,CL:AN  man  
    'one man'

or

(12) *pa-ita*  tfāri  
    one-NUM,CL:AN  man  
    'one man'

The 'animate' classifier, *-ita*, is always used with a non-human animate referent, such as *api* 'snake' in (9). The classifier *-hipa* is acceptable with a non-human referent only if it is personified, for instance, in a traditional legend (13).

(13) *phupa*  api  
    one+NUM,CL:AN  snake  
    'one snake (acceptable only if personified)'

The semantics of numerical classifiers is shown in figure 3.1.

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Figure 3.1. Semantics of numerical classifiers

(14) illustrates an anaphoric use of numerical classifier *-da* 'round objects'. The full noun, *piperi* 'pupunha fruit', is introduced in the first line, and then this object is referred to with the classifier attached to numeral 'one' (both occurrences are underlined).

(14) *naha*  *piperi*  na-yana-ri-se-nuku  
    they  pupunha fruit  3pl-cook-REL-LOC-TOP,NON,A/S  
    na-mar-ka-de-pidana  na-te  di-na  
    NEG-NEG+order-TH-NEG-REM,P,INFR  3pl-enter  3sgnf-OBJ  
    *na-*  *pa-*  *ta*  
    phula  pi-nu  
    3sg-OBJ  one-CL:ROUND  2sg+bring  2sg+come  
    di-a-pidana  di-1a-de-nuku  
    3sgnf-say-REM,P,INFR  3sgnf-spouse-REM,P,INFR,TOP,NON,A/S  

"They ordered him not to come to the place where they were cooking pupunha fruit. "Bring me one", he said to his wife."

2.5 Noun class markers

Classifiers are also used in the function of noun class markers. Noun class markers obligatorily mark agreement on adjectives.

As with numerical classifiers, there is a generic 'animate' noun class, marked with *-ite* This is the only case of a noun class marker being formally distinct from the corresponding classifier, *-ita*. This is illustrated in (15) and in (16) (the classifier *-ita* and the noun class marker *-ite* are underlined).

(15) *apa-ita*  tfāri  hamu-ite  
    one-CL:AN  man  big:NOUN,CL:AN  
    'one big man'

(16) *inaru*  *matu-ite*  
    woman  good:NOUN,CL:AN  
    'good woman'
The document contains a diagram and text discussing various aspects of marine mammals. The text is not fully legible due to the quality of the image, but it appears to be related to the classification and characteristics of marine mammals. The diagram likely represents the classification hierarchy or some other classification scheme for these animals. The text includes references to specific classifications and terms, which may be crucial for understanding the content. Without clearer visibility, the exact details are not discernible.
is used with proximate demonstrative (underlined) because the noun it modifies (‘hill’) is in focus.

(24) **kvana ha-na yapana**
    who DEM:INAN-CL:VERT hill-CL:VERT
    have-REL-LOC REL-bring REL-cross+CAUS
    thatPLACE-ONE.OF.PAIR-LOC
    khetu
    REL+get+CAUS 1sg-daughter-PL-TOP.NON.A/S
    ka-sa-dwada
    REL-spouse-FEM-PART
    ‘Who takes this very mountain across to the other side of the river (lit. that one place of a pair) will marry my daughter.’

(25) shows a similar use of ‘-NA CL:VERT’ with distal demonstrative **hane**.

(25) **hane-na hoku-na ititha-ka di-suwa**
    that-CL:VERT tree-CL:VERT near-DECL 3sgnfn-stay
    ‘(the baby) is under that very tree (over there).’

(26) and (27) illustrate the contrast between the generic demonstrative and a demonstrative with a classifier. In (26) a classifier of the ‘repeater’ type, -idaki ‘CL:HUMAN BODY’, is used anaphorically with a proximate demonstrative (underlined). Here it refers to the superficial shape assumed by a spirit who had just taken off its snake appearance, and taken the shape (‘human body’-like) of a man:

(26) **dibha-maka-nuka di-wo di-a he-CL:CLOTH LIKE-TOP.NON.A/S 3sgnfn-start 3sgnfn-go di-soleta
    3sgnfn-take off+CAUS
    he-idaki-na-pidana
    DEM:INAN-CL:HUMAN BODY-INS-REM.P.INFR
    dibhu di-sala-pidana
    3sgnfn-come 3sgnfn-greet-REM.P.INFR
    ‘He (spirit) took off his cloth-like one (snake’s looks), came in this human body-like one and greeted (his son-in-law).’

In (27) the shape of ‘idaki ‘body’ is not in focus; and so the generic proximate form **hi** is used:

(27) **naka-pidana hi**
    3pl+look for-REM.P.INFR DEM:AN:GENERIC
    didaki-nuka
    3sgnfn-body-TOP.NON.A/S
    ‘They were looking for his body.’

Demonstratives can be specified for shape and form (with inanimate nouns), and for sex (animate nouns); this is done with the same set of classifiers as the one used for noun, verbal and possessive classification. As said before, the use of classifier -ma ‘feminine’ and of shape classifiers depends on the role of the noun in the discourse.

The generic form of demonstratives (hi and hane) is used with a noun that has an animate referent (20).

(20) **hi phensi hi Taria na-nu**
    DEM:AN brothers DEM:AN Tariana 3sgl-come
    ‘These brothers, these Tarianas came’.

(21) **di-nya-ka-pidana hane itfiri**
    3sgnfn-swim-DECL-REM.P.INFR that animal
    ‘That animal is swimming.’

The animate demonstrative **hi** can be used anaphorically only if it refers to an animate noun. See (22).

(22) **hi puuya-sina wa-na di-dia**
    DEM:AN different-REM.P.NON.VIS. 3pl-OBJ 3sgnfn-return
    waaku
    1pl+give
    ‘This one (Creator) made our speech (languages) different.’

**Hi** can be used with a noun with an inanimate or female referent if the noun is not in focus. In (23) **hi ina** means ‘these women’ as a class; **ha-ma ina** would mean ‘this very woman’.

(23) **hi ina: ma-niha-ka-da**
    DEM:AN women NEG-think-TH-NEG
    ‘These women (as a class) do not think.’

Demonstrative **ha** + classifier is used to refer to inanimate objects if the noun itself, or its shape, is in focus. In (24), classifier ‘-NA CL:VERT’
Unusual classifiers in Tariana

Table 3.2. Properties of classifiers with demonstratives and with articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>with demonstratives</th>
<th>with articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animate vs inanimate distinction</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generic vs specific form</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatic effect of shape classifiers with inanimates</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligatory use of feminine</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatic effect of feminine classifier</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualizing semantic effect</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In table 3.2 semantic and pragmatic properties of classifiers with demonstratives and with articles, are compared. Our preliminary conclusion is that in Tariana classifiers with demonstratives and classifiers with articles must be considered distinct subtypes—formally, semantically and pragmatically. Further conclusions will be drawn in section 5, where we compare classifiers used with demonstratives and with articles and classifiers in other morphosyntactic loci.

4 Areal Properties of Multiple Classifier Systems in Tariana

Multiple classifier systems are an areal feature of the region of Northwest Amazonia which includes the basin of the Upper Rio Negro and the Vaupés in Brazil and Colombia, and the adjacent regions of northeastern Peru. All these languages typically have the same set of classifier morphemes used in possessive constructions to refer to the possessed noun, and with nouns, numerals and adjectives; some also use classifiers with verbs.

The main difference between the North-Arawak languages spoken on the Upper Rio Negro, and Tariana and Tucano, is that in the former classifiers are not used with demonstratives and articles. Compare the following examples from Tariana (36), (37), Tucano (East-Tucanoan (38)), and Baniwa of Içana, a North-Arawak language from the Upper Rio Negro (39), (40). Unlike Tucanoan languages, Tariana and Baniwa have articles. However, Tariana uses classifiers with articles in the way described in section 3.2, and Baniwa does not: feminine vs non-feminine gender distinction is used instead.
The following conclusions concern the status and function of demonstrative and article classifiers in the multiple classifier system of Finnland.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possesses</th>
<th>Demonstrative Classifier</th>
<th>Article Classifier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
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<td>yes</td>
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<td>yes</td>
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<td>yes</td>
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<td>no</td>
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<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3-9: Properties of classifiers in Finnland.

The properties of the classifiers found in Finnland are summarized in Table 3-9.
and classifiers in other contexts (within a possessive NP, and in a clause, i.e. possessive and verbal classifiers).

(iii) The existence of a generic and a specific form, and the pragmatic effect of shape classifiers with inanimate nouns, are the only properties which are common to demonstrative classifiers and article classifiers, but not to classifiers of any other type.

Classifiers with demonstratives and with articles are used to focus on the referent, and/or on its shape. That the context of demonstratives and articles is chosen for this purpose follows from pragmatic and functional properties of demonstratives and articles as correlated with individuation and with focusing.

(iv) Three properties distinguish demonstrative and article classifiers from each other. Like noun class markers, but unlike classifiers with demonstratives, articles have a plural animate form. There may be a historical explanation for this. Articles originated in a combination of cross-referencing personal prefixes with an emphatic particle -ha, and personal prefixes display a neutralization of +feminine/-feminine opposition in the plural (see section 2.1). For the same reason, feminine marking, obligatory with cross-referencing prefixes, is also obligatory for articles, but not for demonstratives.

Inanimate classifiers have the semantic effect of individuation with demonstrative but not with article classifiers. This property is shared with noun classifiers. This semantic effect seems to be related to the pragmatics of shape classifiers with demonstratives, the major function of which is pointing at and individuating referent nouns.

This effect has not developed with articles, possibly due to their semantics and function. Articles in Tariana are used to identify and draw attention to a previously mentioned or otherwise known participant, and not to individuate it. This provides a functional explanation for a semantic difference in the use of classifiers with demonstratives, and with articles.

(v) Unlike other languages with demonstrative classifiers (see section 1), demonstrative and article classifiers in Tariana overlap with classifiers of other types. Demonstrative and article classifiers differ from other types in their form, and in their pragmatics. These facts favour the inclusion of demonstrative classifiers as a separate type within an overall morphosyntactic typology of classifiers.

Unusual classifiers in Tariana

A further question arises: in a classifier language with distinct systems of demonstratives and articles, is it necessarily the case that different types of classifiers have to be used with these two word classes? The data of Tariana, summarized in tables 3.2 and 3.3, suggest this. However, in Tariana demonstratives and articles are etymologically different. Languages in which articles and demonstratives come from the same historical source may well behave in a different way.

NOTES

1 A few further distinctions can be made within types. Possessive constructions in fact allow for two subtypes of classification devices. One kind includes classifiers which characterize the possessed noun in terms of how it can be handled. These are also known as 'relational classifiers', and are found in Austronesian languages (see Lichtenberk 1983; Scoft 1986, for Kilivila); and in a few North American and South American Indian languages. They are usually restricted to alienably possessed nouns. The other kind are classifiers which characterize the possessed noun, usually in terms of its shape and animacy, and are used independently of alienable vs inalienable distinctions. These are found in a few South American Indian languages, as a type independent from 'relational' classifiers (see Aikhenvald 1994b; forthcoming; and examples (1), (2) above).

2 Another rare type are classifier morphemes known as 'locative classifiers' which occur on locative adverbs and adpositions, and indicate shape, form and animacy of the argument. So far only one language has been found in which there is a separate set of morphemes used in this context: Palikur (North-Arawak, Brazil: Green and Green 1972; Aikhenvald 1994b; Aikhenvald and Green 1998).

3 Tariana is a North-Arawak language spoken by around 100 people in the linguistic area of the Vaupés. Tariana is the only Arawak language spoken in the Vaupés linguistic area, a region characterized by an obligatory poly-lingualism due to marriage patterns based on linguistic exogamy (Sorensen 1967, Aikhenvald 1996). The other languages spoken in the area belong to the East-Tucanoan family, genetically unrelated to Tariana. East-Tucanoan languages and Tariana display a striking number of structural similarities due to arael diffusion of patterns, mostly unilateral, from East-Tucanoan to Tariana. Materials on Tariana were collected during three fieldtrips in 1991 and 1994–96. They contain word lists, conversations and around 700 pp. of texts told by speakers of different generations.

I am extremely grateful to my teachers of Tariana: Cândido, José, Jovino, Graciliano, Oliva and Rafael Brito. I owe thanks to R. M. W. Dixon, for useful discussion and help. Abbreviations used throughout this paper are: AN – animate; ART – article; CAUS – causative; CL – classifier; COLL – collective; COMPL – completer; DECL – declarative; DEM – demonstrative;
REFERENCES

and for names in Cartwright's employment is provided by Eugenine (1999). 8

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