A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE NUMERAL CLASSIFIERS OF BODO, RABHA AND KOKBOROK LANGUAGES

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ABSTRACT

This Paper attempts to compare and analyze numeral classifiers of Bodo, Rabha and KokBorok languages. They have been recognised with same sub-group and they migrated together in North-East India. (Chatterji, Suniti Kumar, Kirata Jana Kriti, 2007, page -45-46). Some Similarities and Dissimilarities are found among these languages. Each language has its own Structures and Functions in numeral classifiers.

KEYWORDS: Classifiers, Structures, Functions, Similarities and Dissimilarities

INTRODUCTION

Bodo, Rabha and KokBorok languages has developed from same sub-group of Tibeto-Burman branch of the Sino-Tibetan language family which is second largest language family in the world. These languages spread in different places in North-East India. Today the Bodo and Rabha have their basic concentration in Assam and the KokBorok in Tripura. The gap in communication and relation among these languages led to dissimilarities among them. To study the historical relationship between these languages many comparative study has been done by writers and researchers.

Scope of Study

- {p^{h}ang}: This classifier is used in Bodo language for tree, herb and climbers.

  For example -

  P^{h}ang – se goi or goip^{h}ang – se. (one areca nut tree)

  P^{h}ang – nɯit^{h}aizɯɯu or t^{h}aizɯɯup^{h}ang – nɯi. (Two mango trees)

- {gong}: This classifier is used for things, house, musical instruments, furniture, household articles, fishing, hunting tools, agricultural tools, transport, electronic media and many things.

  For example –

  gong – se k^{h}anzong or k^{h}anzong gong – se. (One comb)

  gong – nɯi no or no gong – nɯi.(Two houses)

  gong – t^{h}amsipung or sipung gong – t^{h}am. (Three flutes)

  gong – brɯibisina or bisina gong – brɯi. (Four beds)

  gong – bat^{h}ɯrsi or t^{h}ɯrsi gong – ba. (Five dishes)

gong – dʰozekʰai or zekʰai gong – dʰo. (Six fishing tools)

gong – sniruɰa or ruɰa gong – sni. (Seven axes)

gong – dainlaotʰi or laotʰi gong – dain.(Eight sticks)

gong – gunao or nao gong – gu. (Nine boats)

gong – zi T. V. or T. V. gong – zi.(Ten Televisions)

- {tʰai}: This classifiers is used for fruits and vegetables.

For example –

Tʰai – se tʰalir or tʰalirtʰai – se. (one banana)

Tʰai – nɰitʰaibeng or tʰaibengtʰai – nɰi. (Two cucumbers)

Tʰai – tʰampantʰao or pantʰaotʰai – tʰam. (Three brinjals)

- {pong}: This classifiers is used for human speech, biting, kicking hands and beating with sticks.

    For example –

Pong – se batra or batra pong – se. (One word)

Pong – nɰizɰnai or zɰnai pong – nɰi. (Two kick)

Pong – tʰambunai or bunai pong – tʰam. (Three times beating)

- {dɰng}: This classifier is used for long and flexible things like –hair, rope, necklace, tail, string and electrical string.

    For example –

dɰng – se kʰanai or kʰanaidɰng – se. (A hair)

dɰngnɰidirung or dirungdɰng – nɰi. (Two ropes)

dɰng – tʰam mala or mala dɰng – tʰam. (Three necklaces)

dɰng - brɰilanzai or lanzaidɰng – brɰi. (Four tails)

dɰng – bakʰundung or kʰundungdɰng – ba. (Five strings)

- {tʰong}: This classifier is used in Bodo language for cutting bamboo, and tree for posts.

    For example –

  - tʰong – se kʰuntia or kʰuntia tʰong – se. (One post)

  - tʰong – nɰisalkʰuntʰa or salkʰuntʰa tʰong – nɰi. (Two posts of weaving loom)

  - {dung}: This classifier is used in Bodo language for hole of insects.

    For example –

dung – se kʰangkʰraigudung or kʰankʰraigudung dung – se. (One hole of crab)

dung – nɰianzorgudung or anzorgudung dung – nɰi. (Two holes of rat)

- {gʰor}: This classifier is used in Bodo language for small and round things like – seeds, stones.

For example –

gʰor – se sibing or sibinggʰor – se. (One lentil)

gʰor – nɰibutʰ or butʰgʰor – nɰi. (Two grams)

gʰor – tʰamontʰai or ontʰaigʰor – tʰam. (Three stones)

- {mɰzɰm}: This classifier is used for handful of things like – rice, paddy seed, sugar, sand, soil and seeds.

For example –

mɰzɰm – se mai or maimɰzɰm – se. (One handful of paddy seeds)

mɰzɰm – nɰisini or sinimɰzɰm – nɰi. (Two handful of sugars)

mɰzɰm – tʰambala or balamɰzɰm – tʰam. (Three handful of sands)

mɰzɰm – brɰidali or dalimɰzɰm – brɰi. (Four handful of dhal seeds)

- {haldinga}: This classifier is used for a string of meat, insects andfishes. Sometimes for fruits, vegetablesand flowers too.

For example –

haldinga – nɰikhusengra or khusengrahaldinga – nɰi. (Two strings of one kind of insects)

haldinga – tʰamna or nahaldinga – tʰam. (Three strings of fishes)

haldinga – brɰipitʰai or pitʰaihaldinga – brɰi. (Four strings of fruits)

Classifiers of Rabha Language

- {sak}: This classifiers is used for human being in Rabha language.

For example –

sak – sakʰai or kʰaisak – sa. (One man)

sak – niNtriNgir or triNgirsak – niN. (Two students)

- {ma}: This classifier is used for all kinds of animal, birds, insects, water animals and creature.

For example –

ma – samasu or masu ma – sa. (One cow)

ma – niNtʰokʰa or tʰokʰa ma – niN. (Two crows)

ma – tʰamkʰarokʰ or kʰarokʰ ma – tʰam. (Three cockroaches)

ma – cʰar kʰen or kʰen ma – cʰar. (Four crabs)

ma – baluk^{h}bak^{h}or luk^{h}bak^h ma – ba. (Five frogs)

- {p^{h}aN}: This classifier is used for tree, herb and climbers.

For example –

p^{h}aN – sak^{h}ui or k^{h}uip^{h}aN – sa. (One areca nut tree)

p^{h}an – niNp^{h}oc^{h}o or p^{h}oc^{h}op^{h}aN – niN. (Two mango trees)

p^{h}aN – t^{h}amzaluk^h or zaluk^{h}p^{h}aN – t^{h}am. (Three chilli trees)

p^{h}aN – c^{h}a narim or narimp^{h}aN – c^{h}a. (Four cucumber trees)

- {k^{h}on}: This classifier is used in Rabha language for leaves, pieces of cloths, wings, books and papers, all kinds of flat things, house, household things, furniture, musical instruments, fishing tools, hunting tools, agricultural tools, utensils, transport, sport and educational tools and so on.

For example –

k^{h}on – sasak or sakk^{h}on – sa. (A leaf)

k^{h}on – niNnen or nenk^{h}on – niN. (Two cloths)

k^{h}on – t^{h}amt^{h}areN or t^{h}areNk^{h}on – t^{h}am. (Three wings)

k^{h}on – c^{h}ar boi or boik^{h}on – c^{h}ar. (Four books)

k^{h}on – banok or nokkhon – ba. (Five houses)

k^{h}on – soik^{h}oc^{h}eN or k^{h}oc^{h}eNk^{h}on – soi. (Six combs)

k^{h}on – siyat^{h}ibil or t^{h}ibilk^{h}on – siya. (Seven tables)

k^{h}on – gin domphol or d^{h}omp^{h}olk^{h}on – gin. (Eight drums)

k^{h}on – gin k^{h}odur or k^{h}odurk^{h}on – gin. (Eight baskets for keeping fish)

k^{h}on–biNbak^{h}eN or bak^{h}eNk^{h}on – biN. (Nine axes)

k^{h}on – sat^{h}at^{h}ɯrsi or t^{h}ɯrsik^{h}on - sat^{h}a. (Ten dishes)

k^{h}on – sat^{h}atringdam or tringdamk^{h}on – sat^{h}a. (Ten schools)

- {t^{h}e}: This classifier is used in Rabha language for fruits and vegetables.

  For example –

t^{h}e – sapoc^{h}o or poc^{h}o t^{h}e – sa. (A mango)

t^{h}e – niNbant^{h}ao or bant^{h}ao t^{h}e – niN. (Two brinjals)

- {t^{h}uka}: This classifier is used for the human speech.

For example –

tʰuka – sakatʰa or katʰatʰuka – sa. (One word)

tʰuka – niNkatʰa or tatʰatʰuka – niN. (Two words)

- {tųng}: This classifier is used for long and flexible things like – rope, hair, necklaces, tail, string and so on.

    For example –

tųng – sakʰur or kʰurtųng – sa. (A rope)

tųng – sakʰoro or kʰorotųng – sa. (A hair)

tųng – niNzimi or zimitųng – niN. (Two tails)

tųng – tʰamnentʰeng or nentʰengtųng – tʰam. (Three strings)

- {tʰok}: This classifier is used in Rabha language for drops of liquids.

For example –

tʰok – sacʰoki or cʰokitʰok – sa. (A drop of wine)

tʰok – niNmacʰu-pʰu or macʰo-pʰutʰok – niN. (Two drops of milk)

- {bada}: This classifier is used for bunch of fruits like – areca nut, grapes, coconut and litchi.

    For example –

bada – sakʰui or kʰuibada – sa. (A bunches of areca nuts)

bada – sanariyol or nariyolbada – sa. (A bunch of coconuts)

bada – niNlesu or lesubada – niN. (A bunch of litchis)

- {pal}: This classifier is used in case of flock of birds, herd of cows, cattle etc.

For example –

pal – sabugil or bugil pal – sa. (A herd of cranes)

pal – samasu or masu pal – sa. (A herd of cows)

- {halsiN}: This classifier is used for a string of fishes, meat or so on.

For example –

halsiN – sana or nahalsiN – sa. (A string of fishes)

halsiN – niN kaka or kaka halsiN – niN. (Two string of meats)

- {zor}: This classifier is used for pair of peoples and birds.

    For example –

zor – samisa or misazor – sa. (A pair of girls)

zor – niNtiya or tiyazor – niN. (Two pair of parrots)

Classifiers of Kokborok Language

- {khorok/borok}: This classifier is used in KokBorok language for human being.

    For example –

k^{h}orok – saborok or borokk^{h}orok – sa. (One man)

k^{h}orok – nuiserai or seraik^{h}orok – nui. (Two children)

- {ma}: This classifier is used for all kinds of animals, insects, birds and creatures.

    For example –

ma – samusuk or musuk ma – sa. (A cow)

ma – nuilarima or larima ma – nui. (Two butterflies)

ma–t^{h}amtak^{h}um or tak^{h}um ma – t^{h}am. (Three ducks)

- {p^{h}ang}: This classifier is used for all kinds of tree, herb and climbers.

    For example –

p^{h}ang – saboroi or boroip^{h}ang – sa. (A plum tree)

p^{h}ang – nuit^{h}alikor t^{h}alikp^{h}ang – nui. (Two banana trees)

p^{h}ang – t^{h}amfant^{h}ak or fant^{h}akp^{h}ang – t^{h}am.(Three brinjal trees)

p^{h}ang – bruimilok or milokp^{h}ang – brui. (Four pumpkin trees)

- {k^{h}ung}: This classifier is used for house, weapons, all kinds of household things, furniture, musical instruments, agricultural tools, hunting and fishing tools, utensils and any kind of things.

    For example –

k^{h}ung – sagatinok or gatinokk^{h}ung – sa. (One kitchen)

k^{h}ung – samanui or manuik^{h}ung – sa. (A weapon)

k^{h}ung – nuibetra or betrak^{h}ung – nui. (Two combs)

k^{h}ung – t^{h}amtailam or tailumk^{h}ung – t^{h}am. (Three windows)

k^{h}ung – bruigodal or godalk^{h}ung – brui. (Four spades)

k^{h}ung – ba c^{h}ai or c^{h}ai k^{h}ung – ba. (Five fishing nets)

k^{h}ung – bamairang or mairangk^{h}ung – ba. (Five dishes)

- {t^{h}ai}: This classifier is used for fruits and vegetables.

    For example –

t^{h}ai – sajambi or jambit^{h}ai – sa. (One lemon)

tʰai – nuifantʰakmukʰui or fantʰakmukʰuitʰai – nui. (Two tomatoes)

- {pung}: This classifier is used for human speech and beating by hands, kicking by legs and with other things like stick.

    For example –

pung – satapora or taporapung – sa. (One slab)

pung – nuiyamasung or yamasungpung – nui. (Two times of kick)

- {tung}: This classifier is used for long and flexible things like rope, hair, tail and string.

    For example –

tung – sakutʰung or kutʰungtung – sa. (A string)

tung – nuikanai or kanaitung – nui. (Two hairs)

tung – tʰamdukui or dukuitung – tʰam. (Three ropes)

- {kok}: This classifier is used for small round things like seed.

    For example –

kok – sasobai or sobaikok – sa. (One land till)

kok – nuihɥirɥ or hɥirɥkok – nui. (Two seeds of mustard oil)

- {lam}: This classifier is used for hole of insects.

    For example –

lam – sabɥlam or bɥlam lam – sa. (One hole)

lam – nuisinzobɥlam or sinzobɥlam lam – nui. (Two holes of snake)

- {bar}: This classifier is used for flower.

    For example –

bar – sabubar or bubar bar – sa. (One flower)

bar – nuibubar or bubar bar – nui. (Two flower)

- {lai}: This classifier is used in KokBorok language for leaves.

    For example –

lai – sabɥlai or bɥlailai – sa. (One leaf)

lai – nuibɥlai or bɥlailai – nui. (Two leaves)

- {lap}: This classifier is used for small pieces of skin.

    For example –

lap – sabuk^hur or buk^hur lap – sa. (One piece of skin)

lap – nuibuk^hur or buk^hur lap – nui. (Two pieces of skin)

STRUCTURE OF CLASSIFIERS

The classifiers of these languages have some similarities and dissimilarities in structure. In Bodo, Rabha and KokBorok languages the classifiers are found to be monosyllabic and polysyllabic (more than one syllable) too. Like in Bodo {sa}, {ma}, {p^hang}, {gong}, {t^hai}, {p^hong}, {duɳg}, {t^hong}, {dung}, {g^hor}, are monosyllabic and some classifier like {mɯɥzɯɥm}, {haldinga} are found to be polysyllabic.

In Rabha language the classifier {sak}, {maN}, {p^han}, {k^hon}, {t^he}, {tuɳg}, {t^hok}, {pal}, {zor} are monosyllabic and {t^huka}, {bada}, {halsing} are polysyllabic.

In KokBorok Language the classifiers like {ma}, {p^hang}, {k^hung}, {t^hai}, {pung}, {tung}, {kok}, {lam}, {bar}, {lai}, {lap} are monosyllabic and the classifier {k^horok} is polysyllabic.

In KokBorok language maximum classifiers are monosyllabic in structure than Bodo and Rabha languages. The first phonemes of classifiers of these Languages starts withconsonant phoneme than vowel phoneme like Alveolar fricative voiceless consonant {s}, Bilabial voiced nasal consonant {m}, Bilabial stop voiceless consonant phoneme {p^h}, velar voiced stop unaspirated phoneme {g}, alveolar voiceless stop phoneme {t^h}, Alveolar voiced stop phoneme {d}, glottal fricative phoneme {h}, alveolar voiced fricative phoneme {z}, velar voiceless stop phoneme {k^h}, alveolar lateral voiced phoneme {l} and bilabial stop voiced phoneme {b}.

FUNCTION OF CLASSIFIERS

The classifiers ofthese languages are used before and after a noun words and before the numeral in sentence. Noun precedes or follows the classifier and most of the classifiers of these three languages are used as bound morpheme in sentence.

CONCLUSIONS

This papertries to explore the similarities and dissimilarities of classifiers of three cognate languages in structure and function. In North-East India the four language families Indo-Aryan, Tibeto-Burman, Austro-Asiatic and Dravidian (small number of Tamil speakers in Morch District of Manipur) are found. The Bodo, Rabha and KokBorok belong to the Bodo group of Tibeto-Burman language group. This paper tries to highlight the unique characters of classifiers of Bodo group of languages that it shares by other languages families.

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