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Numeral System in Thadou

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Abstract

The paper aims to discuss the nature of numeral system in Thadou, a Kuki-Chin language of the Northern Kuki-Chin group of the Tibeto-Burman group of the Sino-Tibetan languages spoken mainly in the north-eastern part of India including Manipur, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura and some parts of the neighbouring country, Myanmar by 2000,000 speakers approximately. Thadou, like other Kuki-Chin languages follows the decimal system of counting. The numbers from 1 to 10 have separate lexical item and follow a monomorphemic pattern. From 1 to 19, the numeral system of Thadou is purely decimal. The higher numerals are formed by different processes like additives, multiplicatives etc. Numerals in Thadou can be classified into: cardinals, ordinals, fractional,multiplicative and approximates. Numerals in Thadou are adjectives and they follow the head noun as in other SOV languages.

Keywords: decimal, basic numerals, cardinal, ordinal

1 The Language

Thadou (ISO 639-3: TCZ) is a Kuki-Chin language of the Nothern Kuki-Chin group of the Tibeto-Burman group of the Sino-Tibetan languages and is spoken mainly in the north-eastern part of India including Manipur, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura and some parts of the neighbouring country, Myanmar with a population of 2000,000 speakers approximately. It is also spoken in the Chittagong hill tract of Bangladesh. Various spellings exist: Thado, Thadou, Thadow, Thaadow, Thaadou. The name also occurs in combination with names for groups of closely related languages, Kuki (in India) and Chin (in Myanmar), such as Thadou-Kuki, Kuki-Thadou, Chin-Thado, etc. It is closely related to other Kuki-Chin languages like Gangte, Paite and Zo. The language is called *Thadou pao* which literally means 'Thadou language'.

Thadou is a tonal language with three constrastive tone in isolation. Every syllable carries any one of the three underlying tones. Thadou is monosyllabic in that there is an almost perfect one-to-one correspondence between the syllable and the morpheme, especially for function morphemes.

Like other Kuki-Chin group of the Tibeto-Burman language family, Thadou is also a verb-final language, with SOV as its basic word order. Thadou exhibits a large number of characteristics expected of it as an OV language. Thadou employs postpositions (Pp), which follow the noun phrase they combine with. Genitive noun phrases (G), noun phrases modifying a noun and expressing possession or a relationship like kinship, precede the noun. Pronominal genitives (possessives) also precede the possessed noun, and are attached as proclitics. Thadou has two genitive constructions: one is marked by word order and the other is marked morphologically. When possession is marked by word order, the possessor precedes the head. Relative clauses also precede the main clause.

Another interesting feature of Kuki-Chin languages is that Thadou observes the distinction between stem1 and stem II forms of the verb. This verb stem alternation is considered to be a Proto-Kuki-Chin feature. Verbal alternation is an important grammatical notion in the language. Verbs in Thadou have two forms known as Stem I and Stem II in the literature of Kuki-Chin group of languages. The two forms usually differ in their tone and final consonants

2. **Numeral System in Thadou**

Numerals in Thadou are adjectives and they follow the noun. Numeral system in Thadou follow the decimal counting system. As in other Kuki-Chin languages, compounding is the productive morphological process in forming the higher numerals in the language.

The numerals can be classified into:

a. Cardinals
b. Ordinals
c. Fractionals
d. Multiplicatives

e. Approximants

2.1 Cardinals Numerals

Cardinal numerals in Thadou can be sub-classified into two types: (i) basic numerals and (ii) compound numerals. There is no lexical word for zero. The numbers from 1 to 10 have separate lexical item and follow a monomorphemic pattern. The higher numbers are formed by the process of compounding.

2.1.1 Basic Cardinal numerals

The number one through ten fall under basic numerals. In addition, there are other numbers: *za* 'hundred', *saŋ* 'thousand' lakh borrowed from Hindi, which belong to the basic numeral type. Excepting *sagi* 'seven' all other basic numerals are monosyllabic in nature. The basic cardinal numerals are illustrated in Table: 1.

Table 1: Basic Numerals

THADOU	GLOSS
xət	'one'
ni	'two'
t^{h}um	'three'
li	'four'
ŋa	'five'
gup	'six'
sagi	'seven'
get	'eight'
ko	'nine'
som	'ten'
za	'hundred'
saŋ	'thousand'

1.1.2. Compound Cardinal Numerals

In addition to the basic numerals, numerals are also formed by the process of numeral compounding. Based on their formation process, numerals are classified into different types. The three different types of compound numerals are additive compound numerals,

multiplicative compound numerals and multiplicative-cum-additive compound numerals. Each of this will be discussed in this section.

1.1.1.1 **Additive Compound Numerals**

From 11 to 19, the numeral system of Thadou is purely decimal and are formed through the process of compounding. This is done by adding the basic numerals 1 to 9. to the decimal *som* 'ten'. This is done by the connective particle *le* 'and'.
10+1=11, 10+2=12, 10+3=13 etc. The numerals from 11 to 19 are listed in Table 2.

Table 2: Additive Compound Numerals

THADOU	GLOSS	THADOU	GLOSS	THADOU	GLOSS	THADOU	GLOSS
som	ten	*le*	and	*x↔t*	one	*som le x↔t*	'eleven'
som	ten	*le*	and	*ni*	two	*som leni*	'twelve'
som	ten	*le*	and	*t^{h}um*	three	*som let^{h}um*	'thirteen'
som	ten	*le*	and	*li*	four	*som le li*	'fourteen'
som	ten	*le*	and	*ŋa*	five	*som le ŋa*	'fifteen'
som	ten	*le*	and	*gup*	six	*som le gup*	'sixteen'
som	ten	*le*	and	*sagi*	seven	*somle sagi*	'seventeen'
som	ten	*le*	and	*get*	eight	*som le get*	'eighteen'
som	ten	*le*	and	*ko*	nine	*som le ko*	'nineteen'

1.1.1.2 **Multiplicative Compound Numerals**

The numerals in the multiple of 10 to 90 are formed by multiplicative process. This is done by multiplying the decimals *so□m* 'ten' with the basic numerals one to nine.
10X1= 10, 10X2= 20 and so on.

Table 3: Multiplicative Compound Numerals (i)

THADOU	GLOSS	THADOU	GLOSS	THADOU	GLOSS
som	ten	*x↔t*	one	*som x↔t*	'ten'
som	ten	*ni*	two	*som ni*	'twenty'
som	ten	*t^{h}um*	three	*som t^{h}um*	'thirty'
som	ten	*li*	four	*som li*	'forty'

som	ten	*ŋa*	five	*som ŋa*	‘fifty’
som	ten	*gup*	six	*som gup*	‘sixty’
som	ten	*sagi*	seven	*som sagi*	‘seventy’
som	ten	*get*	eighty	*som get*	‘eighty’
som	ten	*ko*	nine	*som ko*	‘ninety’

Similarly, the higher numerals 100 to 900 are formed by multiplying 100 with the basic numerals 1 to 9. 100X1=100, 100X2=200.

Table 4 Multiplicative Compound Numerals (ii)

Za	hundred	*x↔t*	one	*za x↔t*	‘one hundred’
Za	hundred	*ni*	two	*za- ni*	‘two hundred’
Za	hundred	*t^{h}um*	three	*za -t^{h}um*	‘three hundred’
Za	hundred	*li*	four	*za li*	‘four hundred’
Za	hundred	*ŋa*	five	*za ŋa*	‘five hundred’
Za	hundred	*gup*	six	*za gup*	‘six hundred’
Za	hundred	*sagi*	seven	*za sagi*	‘seven hundred’
Za	hundred	*get*	eight	*za get*	‘eight hundred’
Za	hundred	*ko*	nine	*za ko*	‘nine hundred’

Numerals 1000 to 9000 are also formed by multiplying 1000 with the basic numerals. 1000X1=1000, 1000X2= 2000. Illustration of multiplicative compound numerals is given in Table 3.

Table 5:Multiplicative Compound Numerals (iii)

saŋ	thousand	*x↔t*	one	*saŋ x↔t*	‘one thousand’
saŋ	thousand	*ni*	two	*saŋ ni*	‘two thousand’
saŋ	thousand	*t^{h}um*	three	*saŋ t^{h}um*	‘three thousand’
saŋ	thousand	*li*	four	*saŋ li*	‘four thousand’
saŋ	thousand	*ŋa*	five	*saŋ ŋa*	‘five thousand’
saŋ	thousand	*gup*	six	*saŋ gup*	‘six thousand’
saŋ	thousand	*sagi*	seven	*saŋ sagi*	‘seven thousand’

saŋ	thousand	*get*	eight	*saŋ get*	‘eight housand’
saŋ	thousand	*ko*	nine	*saŋ ko*	‘nine thousand’

1.1.1.3. Multiplicative-cum- Additive Compound Numerals

The numerals from 21 to 29, 31to 39, 41 to 49. 51to 59, 61 to 69, 71 to 79, 81 to 89, 91 to 99, 101 to 110, 201 to 210, 301 to 310, 401 to 410, 501 to 510, 601 to 610, 701 to 710, 801 to 810, 901 to 910, 1001 to 1010, 2001 to 2010, 3001 to 3010, 4001 to 4010, etc. are all multiplicative-cum-additive compound numerals.are Multiplicative-cum-Additive Compound Numerals. There are four forms of multiplicative-cum-additive numerals. They are:

a) Decade X basic numerals + basic numerals
b) Century X basic numerals + basic numerals
c) Thousand X basic numerals + basic numerals and

1.1.1.4. Decade X basic numerals + basic numerals

The numerals 21 to 29, 21 to 29, 31 to 39, 41 to 49, 51 to 59, 61 to 69, 71 to79, 81 to 89, 91 to 99 belong to this category. These numerals are formed by multiplying the basic numerals 1 to 9 to the decimal *som* ‘ten’ and again adding 1 to 9.

Table 6: Decade X basic numerals + basic numeralsTable

som		*ni*	*le*	*xat*		*som ni le xat*
10	X	2	+	1	=	21
som		*t^{h}um*	*le*	*xat*		*som thum le xat*
10	X	3	+	1	=	31
som		*li*	*le*	*xat*		*som li le xat*
10	X	4	+	1	=	41
som		*ŋa*	*le*	*xat*		*som ŋa le xat*
10	X	5	+	1	=	51
som		*gup*	*le*	*xat*		*som gup le xat*
10	X	6	+	1	=	61
som		*sagi*	*le*	*xat*		*som sagi le xat*
10	X	7	+	1	=	71

1.1.1.5. Century X basic numerals + basic numerals

In this type of numerals, the basic numerals are multiplied by century and added to the basic numerals.

Table 7: Century X basic numerals + basic numerals

za		*ni*	*le*	*xat*		*za ni le xat*
100	X	2	+	1	=	201
za		*t^{h}um*	*le*	*xat*		*za thum le xat*
100	X	3	+	1	=	301
za		*li*	*le*	*xat*		*za li le xat*
100	X	4	+	1	=	401
za		*ŋa*	*le*	*xat*		*za ŋa le xat*
100	X	5	+	1	=	501
za		*gup*	*le*	*xat*		*za gup le xat*
100	X	6	+	1	=	601
za		*sagi*	*le*	*xat*		*za sagi le xat*
100	X	7	+	1	=	701

1.1.1.6. Thousand X basic numerals + basic numerals

Here, the basic numerals are multiplied by thousanf and added again to the basic numerals.

Table 8: Thousand X basic numerals + basic numerals

saŋ		*ni*	*le*	*xat*		*saŋ ni le xat*
1000	X	2	+	1	=	2001
saŋ		*t^{h}um*	*le*	*xat*		*saŋ thum le xat*
1000	X	3	+	1	=	3001
saŋ		*li*	*le*	*xat*		*saŋ li le xat*
1000	X	4	+	1	=	4001
saŋ		*ŋa*	*le*	*xat*		*saŋ ŋa le xat*

1000	X	5	+	1	=	5001
saŋ		*gup*	*le*	*xat*		*saŋ gup le xat*
1000	X	6	+	1	=	6001
saŋ		*sagi*	*le*	*xat*		*saŋ sagi le xat*
1000	X	7	+	1	=	7001

1.2. **Ordinal Numerals**

Ordinal numerals are derived from cardinal numerals by prefixing *ə-* and suffixing *-na* to the cardinal numerals. The cardinals are given in Table: 5.

Table 9: Ordinal Numerals

THADOU	GLOSS
ə-xet-na	'first'
ə-ni-na	'second'
ə-t^{h}um-na	'third'
ə-li-na	'fourth'
ə-ŋa-na	'fifth'
ə-gup-na	'sixth'
ə-sagi-na	'seventh'
ə-get-na	'eighth'
ə-o-na	'nineth'
ə-som-na	'tenth'

1.3. Fractional Numerals

There are different ways of forming fractional numerals. The lexical word for half is *ake xat* '*portion of one'*. The lexical item *hop* 'divide' denotes the fraction of the whole. It denotes the fraction of the wholes, as quarter, three quarters, etc. This is illustrated in Table 10.

0.10 **Fractional Numerals**

THADOU	GLOSS
ke xat	½ 'half'
xatle ke	One and half
hop-t^{h}um	one third'

hop-li	'one fourth'
hop-som	'one tenth'

1.3. Multiplicative Numerals

For the formation of multiplicative numerals, the morpheme *-vei-* can be either prefixed or suffixed to the cardinal numeral.

0.11 **MultiplicativeNumerals**

THADOU	GLOSS
x↔t-vei/vei-x↔t	'once'
ni-vei/vei-ni	'twice'
som-vei/vei-som	'ten times'
za-x↔t-vei/vei-za-x↔	'hundred times'
saŋ-x↔t-vei/vei-saŋ-x↔t	'thousand times'

1.4. Approximative Numerals

'About X numeral' is formed by suffixing *-vel/tabaŋ* 'like' to the cardinal numeral. This is illustrated with examples below:

Table 12: Approximate numerals

THADOU	GLOSS
som-vel	'about ten'
saŋ-som-vel	'about ten thousand'
za-ŋa-tabaŋ	'about five hundred'
som-get-le-ŋa-tabaŋ	'about eighty five'

2. The Position of Numerals in the Noun Phrase

Numeral are one of the optional grammatical elements in a Noun Phrase. They modify the nouns and can be classed as adjectives and follow the head noun that they modify. The position of the numerals in the noun phrase is: Noun+Numeral. This is illustrated with the examples in (1) and (2). However, if the head noun is modified by an adjectival and a numeral, the order is the head noun followed by an adjective, followed by the numerals as in (3) and (4).

(1) ***In*** ***ni*** *ka=nei=e*

house two 1CLT^{i}=have=DECL

'I have two houses.'

(2) ***uica t^{h}um*** *ka=mu=e*

dog three 1CLT=have=DECL

'I saw three dogs.'

(3) ***In hoi ni*** *ka=nei=e*

house beautiful two 1CLT=have=DECL

'I have two beautiful houses.'

(4) ***uica*** *len* ***t^{h}um*** *ka=mu=e*

dog big **three** 1CLT=have=DECL

'I saw three big dogs.'

3. Conclusion

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that Thadou numerals are mainly of the decimal type. The basic numerals from one (1) to ten (10) are monomorphemic in nature and mostly monosyllabic. Compound numerals are formed by multiplication and addition. Higher numerals are formed by the process of compounding which includes both multiplication and addition. The connective particle *le/le* play an important role in forming compound numerals. Like many other Tibeto-Burman languages, the ordinal numerals in Thadou are formed by means of affixation both prefixation and suffixation. Thus, it can be concluded that Thadou shares most of the typological features of Kuki-Chin languages in terms of its numeral system.

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[i] Abbreviaitions

1	First person
CLT	Clitic
DECL	Declaratrive