

NUMERALS IN SOMDAL

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Abstract

Somdal, also known as Shongran (endonym) is one of the dialects of Tangkhul, a Tibeto-Burman language. This dialect of Tangkhul is spoken in a village called Somdal, which is located in the west of Ukhrul district of Manipur, India. As per 2011 census, the village has a total of 468 families of 2375 persons, of which 1209 are males while 1166 are females. Of the total population, 13.14 % are in the age group of 0-6 years. The average sex ratio of the village is 964 female per 1000 male. The literacy rate of the village is 92.39%. The present paper attempts to describe the numerals in Somdal, which is one of the dialects of Tangkhul language.

Key words: *Tibeto-Burman, Tangkhul, Naga, Somdal, Numerals.*

1. Introduction

Somdal is one of the dialects of Tangkhul language, a Tibeto-Burman language. Like many other dialects of Northeast India, Somdal is a hitherto undescribed, undocumented and unexplored dialect of Tangkhul, which is found spoken in west of Ukhrul district, Manipur, India. Linguistically, according to the Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India Volume III part II. (1904), Tangkhul belongs to the Kuki-Chin Naga subgroup of the Tibeto-Burman family. But Benedict and Shafer (1940-1) clubbed it under the Kukish section which includes Central-Kuki, Northern-Kuki, Old-Kuki, Southern-Kuki, Northern-Naga, and Lushai. Tangkhul is also known as Luhuppa in old literatures (see Grierson's L.S.I Vol. III, part-II). It is a language which is mainly specific to the Somdal village. It is one of the numerous sub-tribes of Tangkhul. They don't have their own indigenous script and proper literature; however Roman script has been adopted to write their language with some modifications. Similarly, the dialect is not being taught in schools and colleges as a medium of instruction or as a subject. Some of the written works done on Tangkhul are 'Tangkhul Naga Grammar and Dictionary (Ukhrul dialect) With Illustrative Sentences' by William Pettigrew (1918), 'Tangkhul Naga Vocabulary' by D.N.S.Bhatt (1969), 'Tangkhul Naga Grammar' by S. Arokianathan (1987), 'Tangkhul Naga and Comparative Tibeto-Burman' by James A. Matisoff and 'Comparative Tangkhul' by David Mortensen (2003). And so far not even a single literary work has been carried out in this dialect of Tangkhul i.e. 'Somdal'

2. Typological Features of Somdal

- a) Like most of the tonal dialects of Tibeto-Burman language, Somdal is a tonal dialect.
- b) The basic structure of syllable in Somdal is (C)V(V)(C)

- c) Somdal being a dialect of Tibeto-Burman language has a nominal pronominalization i.e., the pronominal markers are attached to the nominal root in the form of prefixes and as a result it expresses the sense of possession.
- d) As in many other Kuki-Chin Naga languages, tense is not prominent in Somdal; rather, the aspect is frequently expressed by the verbal suffixes.
- e) Like many other Tibeto-Burman languages, negation in Somdal is expressed by means of affixation.
- f) As many other South Asian Languages, the preferred order of clausal constituents in Somdal is SOV.

3. Numerals

Numeral is a word or a phrase which is used to name a number. All the numerals are adjectives; likewise numerals of Somdal are adjectives and follow the noun. The numerals of Somdal can be classified as cardinal, ordinal, multiplicative, aggregative, approximate, fractional, indefinite, distributive and restrictive. They are discussed below:

3.1 Cardinals

The numerals 1 to 3 are found prefixed with a formative prefixes, i.e, *-kə* is prefixed to the numeral 1 and 3 and *-kʰə* is prefixed to the numeral 2. And the numerals from 4 to 10 are found without any formative prefixes. Some examples of cardinal numerals are as follows:

Somdal	Gloss
<i>kəsi</i>	'one'
<i>kʰəni</i>	'two'
<i>kətʰum</i>	'three'
<i>pəti</i>	'four'
<i>pʰəŋa</i>	'five'
<i>tʰəruk</i>	'six'
<i>ʃini</i>	'seven'
<i>cisət</i>	'eight'
<i>ciku</i>	'nine'
<i>tʰəra</i>	'ten'
<i>məkui</i>	'twenty'
<i>tʰumra</i>	'thirty'
<i>həpəti</i>	'forty'
<i>həpʰəŋa</i>	'fifty'

<i>hə^hərək</i>	‘sixty’
<i>hə^hfini</i>	‘seventy’
<i>hə^hcisət</i>	‘eighty’
<i>hə^hciku</i>	‘ninety’
<i>sak^hə</i>	‘hundred’
<i>t^hiŋk^hə</i>	‘thousand’

From the above examples, it can also be seen that the numerals from 11 to 19 are formed by suffixing its respective numerals to the numeral ‘*t^həra*’ which means ‘ten’.

Examples are given below:

Somdal	Gloss
<i>t^həra kəsi</i>	‘eleven’
<i>t^həra p^həŋa</i>	‘fifteen’
<i>t^həra t^hərək</i>	‘sixteen’
<i>t^həra fini</i>	‘seventeen’
<i>t^həra ciku</i>	‘nineteen’

Likewise, the numerals from 21 to 29 are formed by prefixing *məkui*- ‘twenty’ to its respective numerals i.e., from 1 to 9 and the numerals from 31 to 39 are also formed by prefixing *t^humra*- ‘thirty’ to its respective numerals i.e., from 1 to 9.

Examples are given below:

Somdal	Gloss
<i>məkui kəsi</i>	‘twenty one’
<i>məkui pəti</i>	‘twenty four’
<i>məkui t^hərək</i>	‘twenty six’
<i>məkui fini</i>	‘twenty seven’
<i>məkui ciku</i>	‘twenty nine’
<i>t^humra kəsi</i>	‘thirty one’
<i>t^humra k^həni</i>	‘thirty two’
<i>t^humra t^hərək</i>	‘thirty six’
<i>t^humra fini</i>	‘thirty seven’
<i>t^humra cisət</i>	‘thirty eight’

The numerals 40, 50, 60, 70, 80 and 90 are formed by prefixing /*hə*-/ to the numerals 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. Consider the following examples.

Somdal	Gloss
<i>hə-kʰəni</i>	'twenty'
<i>hə-kətʰum</i>	'thirty'
<i>hə-pəti</i>	'forty'
<i>hə-pʰəŋa</i>	'fifty'
<i>hə-tʰəruk</i>	'sixty'

The numerals from 41 to 49, 51 to 59, 61 to 69, 71 to 79, 81 to 89 and 91 to 99 are formed by prefixing /hə-/ and suffixing /-pa/ to the root (numeral) 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, followed by numeral 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9.

Examples are given below:

Somdal	Gloss
<i>həpətipa pəti</i>	'forty four'
<i>həpətipa ciku</i>	'forty nine'
<i>həpʰəŋapa kʰəni</i>	'fifty two'
<i>həpʰəŋapa tʰəruk</i>	'fifty six'
<i>hətʰərukpa kəsi</i>	'sixty one'
<i>hətʰərupa kətʰum</i>	'sixty three'
<i>həʃinipa kʰəni</i>	'seventy two'
<i>həʃinipa cisət</i>	'seventy eight'
<i>həcisətpa kəsi</i>	'eighty one'
<i>həcisətpa pəti</i>	'eighty four'
<i>həcikupa kʰəni</i>	'ninety two'
<i>həcikupa ciku</i>	'ninety nine'

Some examples of numerals from 100 found in Somdal are as follows:

Somdal	Gloss
<i>ʃakə</i>	'hundred'
<i>ʃakəpa kəsi</i>	'hundred and one'
<i>ʃaciku</i>	'nine hundred'
<i>ʃacikupa ciku</i>	'nine hundred and nine'
<i>tʰiŋkʰə</i>	'one thousand'
<i>tʰiŋkʰəʃa pʰəŋa</i>	'one thousand five hundred'

<i>thijciku</i>	'nine thousand'
<i>thijkhəfa cikupa kəsi</i>	'one thousand nine hundred one'
<i>lak</i>	'lakh'

3.2 Ordinals

In Somdal, ordinal numerals are expressed by adding the formative prefix /kə-/ to the cardinal numbers, except in the case of first, i.e. *kəre*. Examples are given below:

Somdal	Gloss
<i>kəre</i>	'first'
<i>kəkəni</i>	'second'
<i>kəkəthum</i>	'third'
<i>kəpəti</i>	'fourth'
<i>kəpəhəŋa</i>	'fifth'
<i>kəthəruk</i>	'sixth'
<i>kəfīni</i>	'seventh'
<i>kəcisət</i>	'eighth'
<i>kəciku</i>	'ninth'
<i>kəthəra</i>	'tenth'

3.3 Multiplicatives

Multiplicative numerals in Somdal can be expressed by suffixing /-fi/ at the end of the cardinal forms of the numerals except in the case of 'once', it is not so. Examples:

Somdal	Gloss
<i>kəsikkəfi</i>	'once'
<i>kəhəni fi</i>	'twice'
<i>kəthum fi</i>	'thrice'

3.4 Aggregative

Aggregative numeral is formed suffixing /-kətoŋa/ 'all' to the basic cardinal.

Examples:

Somdal	Gloss
<i>ciku kətoŋa</i>	'all the nine'
nine all	

<i>vajur katoŋa</i>	‘all the birds’
bird all	
<i>əwi əva katoŋa</i>	‘all the parents’
parents all	

3.5 Approximate

Approximate numerals in Somdal are formed by suffixing the free morpheme /-*suk^hə*/which means ‘about’ to the basic cardinal. Examples are given below:

Somdal	Gloss
<i>thumra-suk^hə</i>	‘about thirty’
<i>sak^hə-suk^hə</i>	‘about hundred’
<i>thərap^həŋa-suk^hə</i>	‘about fifteen’

3.6 Fractional

Some of the examples of fractional numerals found are as follows:

Somdal	Gloss
<i>təŋk^hai</i>	‘half’
<i>pətilai kəsik^hə</i>	‘one-fourth’
<i>thəralai kəsik^hə</i>	‘one-tenth’

3.7 Indefinite

Some examples of indefinite numerals found in Somdal are as follows:

Somdal	Gloss
<i>kətenao</i>	‘little’
<i>kəcuŋk^hə</i>	‘many’
<i>k^hor</i>	‘pile’

3.8 Distributive

Distributive numerals are formed by suffixing /-*rip*/ meaning ‘each’ to cardinal numerals. Examples are given below:

Somdal	Gloss
<i>kasi-rip</i>	'one each'
<i>pəti-rip</i>	'four each'
<i>thəra-rip</i>	'ten each'

3.9 Restrictive

Restrictive numerals are formed by prefixing /-kəssə/ meaning 'only' to the cardinals, except in the case of 'only one', i.e. the first one, the restricted form is used by adding the suffix /-kʰə/. Examples:

Somdal	Gloss
<i>kəsik-kʰə</i>	'only one'
<i>pʰəŋa-kəssə</i>	'only five'
<i>ciku-kəssə</i>	'only nine'

Conclusion

From the above presentation, it can be concluded that like many other Tibeto-Burman languages, numerals in Somdal are adjectives and follow the noun. The numerals of Somdal can be classified as cardinal, ordinal, multiplicative, aggregative, approximate, fractional, indefinite, distributive and restrictive as discussed above.

Abbreviations

V - Vowel

C - Consonant

SOV - Subject Object Verb

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