

3.3 Quantity classifiers realizing Proportion

Only one classifier has been found that realizes Proportion:

kyng2 "half." This can be used with any common noun that realizes something that can be divided into portions.

4. The place of the classifier within the Nominal Group.

A Noun Phrase is a cluster of words that are related in two ways. Structurally in the grammar of a language they are bound together by tactic rules governing such things as word order, agreement, and the structure of smaller units embedded within the Noun Phrase. Semantically this cluster of words are given unity in that they all realize functional elements that are related to a single referent. The semantic functions that are typically related to a referent and might be realized as words within a Noun Phrase include ATTRIBUTE, NUMBER, OWNER, PART-WHOLE relationships, SPATIAL or TEMPORAL LOCATION, EVENTS that are connected with the referent, information about KNOWN vs. GIVEN and many others.

In Tai Lue there are often two Noun Phrases in a place where one would be expected in English. One of these has as its head a common noun and the other a classifier noun. These two Noun Phrases are

coreferential and the semantic information that must be realized is divided between them. These two Noun Phrases together form a Nominal Group.

#3 jə² xaw1
bait his
His bait.

#4 s>>ng1 too1
two CLF-for-animals
Two of the animal class.

#5 hung6 loong1 too1 nyng5
hawk big CLF-for-animals one
A big hawk.

In #3 above the function being realized within the Noun Phrase is that of OWNERSHIP. This function is normally connected with the common noun. In #4 the function being realized is NUMBER. This function must be connected with the classifier noun. Example #4 is a complete Noun Phrase, and this kind of Noun Phrase is found often in texts where the specific reference is clear from the context. If the reference was not clear one could say, məew4 s>>ng1 too1 "two cats".

In #5 two functions are being realized, an ATTRIBUTE and NUMBER. In this case two Noun Phrases must appear as an ATTRIBUTE comes with the common noun and NUMBER with the classifier. We have here in fact two coreferential noun phrases, one built around a common noun and one around a classifier noun. This can be illustrated as follows:

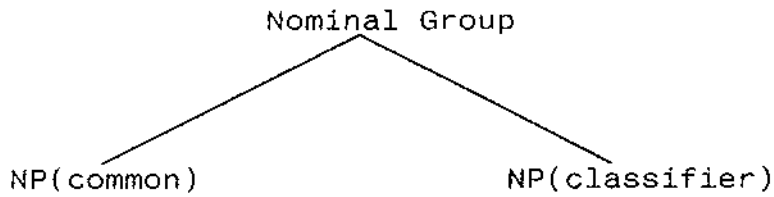


Illustration 1: Nominal Group

It is not uncommon for the two Noun Phrases of a Nominal Group to be separated within a clause by other clausal material.

#6 x>>1 suu1caw3 pan1 xaw3 hyy3 s>>ng1saam1 met1 dii1 kaa4
 please you share rice give two-or-three grain good plead
 Please share just two or three grains of rice with me.

#7 x>>j3 tang3caj1 cung1 laa4 maa4 hyy3 taan5 too1 nyng5
 I decide lead donkey come give you CLF one
 I have decided to bring you a donkey.

In #6 xaw3 and s>>ng1saam1 met1 are the two Noun Phrases within a Nominal Group, separated by the verb hyy3. In #7 laa4 and too1 nyng5 form a Nominal Group interrupted by two verbs and their object. This phenomenon does not change the pattern of distribution of the semantic information.

4.1 Functions realized within the common Noun Phrase.

Many different functions are realized in conjunction with the common Noun Phrase. Examples are as follows:

MATERIAL COMPOSITION:

#8 lak1 cin6 ngoo4 tii5 kaat2 han3 maa4 t>>n2 nyng5
 steal meat cow at market there come piece one
 He stole a piece of meat from the market.

OWNERSHIP:

#9 cin6 man4 t>>n2 nan6
meat (of)it piece that
That piece of its meat.

ATTRIBUTE:

#10 maa1 baj3 too1 nan6
dog silly CLF that
That silly dog.

#11 caa3cæen2 j>>mi too1 nyng5
locust skinny CLF one
A skinny locust.

#12 khwaam4huu6 cap2mæen5
knowledge true
True knowledge

PART-WHOLE RELATIONSHIPS:

#13 xæem5 nam6b>>2
edge well
The edge of the well.

SPECIFICATION Specification is normally connected with the classifier Noun Phrase. However there are occasional instances in texts of Specification coming in a simple Noun Phrase with no classifier. I am not sure what considerations govern the placement here.

#14 nam6b>>2 nan6
well that
That well.

In a later case of Specification with the well in that same text a classifier was used:

#15 nam6b>>2 b>>2 nii6
well CLF this
This well.

NUMBER Number is normally associated with the classifier, but certain words such as "all" are attracted to the common noun.

#16 nok1jung4 tang4laaj1
peacock all
All the peacocks.

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE Prepositional phrases realizing many different functions such as LOCATION and "genitive" functions are connected with the common noun.

#17 xaw3x>>ng1 hæng2 phaj5mæang4
possessions of population
The people's property.

#18 xaw3 naj4 haj5 naj4 naa4
rice in field in paddy
Rice in the fields.

RELATIVE CLAUSE Normally clausal information is realized in conjunction with the classifier noun. Some instances turn up in texts however of relative clauses connected with a common noun. I am not sure what considerations govern the placement here. The relative clause marker in Tai Lue is ?an4, and relative clauses can appear either with or without this marker.

#19 cin6 ?an4 xing4 kaap5 daj3 maa4 nan6
meat which you carry-in-mouth get come that
That meat which you (a dog) carried here.

#20 seeng1 pii2 too1caw3 paw2
sound pipe you blow
The sound of the pipe that you are blowing.

4.2 Functions realized within the classifier Noun Phrase.

As was explained above certain classifiers, quantity classifiers, directly realize functional information such as Subdivision, Measure, and Proportion. Examples of these are given in section 3 above.

Only a few functions are realized in conjunction with general classifiers. Examples are as follows:

SPECIFICATION Probably the most common Nominal Group in any text consists of merely a classifier and a specifier. This also occurs in conjunction with a common Noun Phrase.

#21 p>>p5 n>>j6 nooj2 nan6
book small CLF that
That small book.

NUMBER Numbers must come in a position preceding the classifier. The exception to this is the number "one." When this is in the normal position preceding the classifier it realizes the function of Number. When it follows the classifier it is signifying the presence of New Information, and this is the typical device for introducing a new referent into the discourse.

#22 set2 s>>n1 too1 nan6
animal two CLF that
Those two animals.

#23 kaan1jaj2 c>>ng5 nyng5
problem CLF one
A problem.