

Classifiers in Paresi-Haliti (Arawak)

Classificadores em Paresi-Haliti (Aruák)

Ana Paula BRANDÃO*

Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC)

ABSTRACT: This work presents the nominal classification system of Paresi. Paresi is an Arawak language, spoken in Mato Grosso (Brazil). The data comes from field work in the Formoso and Rio Verde communities. In Paresi, similar to other Arawak languages, nouns can be inalienable or alienable. Inalienable nouns are bound nouns that can only occur with the possessor prefixes or the non-possessed suffix. There are two types of inalienable nouns: simple inalienable nouns and inalienable nouns with a classifying function. These nouns have their meaning metaphorically extended in order to categorize a nominal referent. Furthermore, they can be part of a compound, be incorporated into a verb, and occur also with numerals and demonstratives. These bound nouns have functions similar to classifiers as described in the main literature on the types of nominal classification systems: Dixon (1986); Payne (1987); Derbyshire e Payne (1990); Grinevald (2000); Aikhenvald (2000); and Grinevald e Seifart (2004).

KEY WORDS: Noun classification. Classifiers. Multiple classifiers.

RESUMO: Este trabalho aborda o sistema de classificação nominal da língua Paresi. Paresi é uma língua pertencente à família Aruák, falada em Mato Grosso (Brasil). Em Paresi, assim como em outras línguas Aruák, nomes podem ser inalienáveis ou alienáveis. Nomes inalienáveis são nomes dependentes que só podem ocorrer com os prefixos de posse ou o sufixo de não-possuível. Há dois tipos de nomes inalienáveis: os nomes simples inalienáveis e os nomes inalienáveis com função classificatória. Estes nomes têm seu sentido metaforicamente estendido a fim de categorizar um referente nominal. Além disso, eles podem ser parte de um composto, ser incorporados em verbos, e ocorrer também com numerais e demonstrativos. Estes nomes inalienáveis têm funções semelhantes a dos classificadores, de acordo com a literatura sobre tipos de sistemas de classificação nominal: Dixon (1986); Payne (1987); Derbyshire e Payne (1990); Grinevald (2000); Aikhenvald (2000); e Grinevald e Seifart (2004).

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Classificação nominal. Classificadores. Classificadores múltiplos.

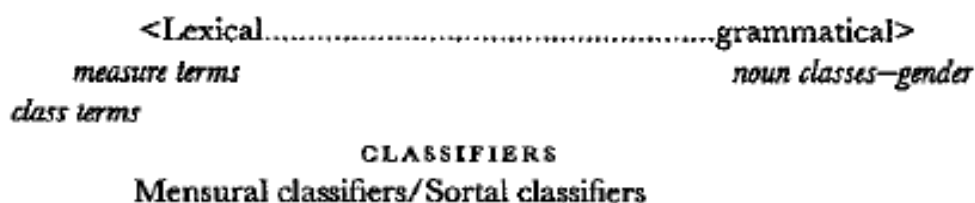
Introduction

Dixon (1986) provides properties distinguishing noun classes and classifier systems while Grinevald (2000) proposes a typology of classifiers. In Grinevald (2000), classifiers are placed at the intermediate stage in a lexical-grammatical continuum of systems (2000, p. 55). At the grammatical end are gender and noun class systems, such as the noun class systems of Bantu languages. At the other end of the continuum, the lexical end, are measure terms and class terms, as for example, class terms in the Tai

-
- Pós-doutoranda no Programa de Pós-Graduação em Linguística da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina.
Email: apbrandao7@gmail.com.

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family (DELANCEY, 1986). Grinevald (2000, p.61) considers classifiers to be “overt systems of nominal classification of clear lexical origin used in specific morphosyntactic constructions”, and she proposes the following types: numeral, noun, genitive, verbal, and deitic (demonstrative/article) classifiers. She also mentions the co-occurrence of types (the case of multiple classifier systems).



Works about the nominal classification systems of Amazonian languages (AIKHENVALD, 2000; GRINEVALD; SEIFART, 2004) claim that classifying morphemes in these languages can serve both derivational and agreement functions, which is an areal feature. In Paresi, classifiers have derivational function, anaphoric usage (with numerals, relative clause, and the anaphoric proclitic *ha-*), and marginal agreement function.

1 Morphology and semantics of classifiers

Semantically, classifiers in Paresi express a property-entity relationship referring to general properties of the entities, such as shape, consistency or dimension.¹ The first three classifiers in Table 1 *-tse*, *-hi*, and *-li*, are plant-parts bound nouns that show semantic extension of their original meanings: *-tse* 'seed of', *-hi* 'fiber of', and *-li* 'fruit of'. Classifiers are used metaphorically with nouns referring to plant-parts, body-parts, objects, animals and humans (only *-katse* and *-natse* are used with human referents). The following salient physical properties of plant-parts are mapped onto other semantic fields: shape (flexibility, size, mass, linearity), dimension and consistency. Table 1 shows the set of classifiers in Paresi.

¹ Silva (2013) has a different analysis of the words described here as classifiers. He describes them as adjectives based on properties presented in Baker (2003).

Table 1: The set of classifiers

classifier	Gloss
tse	small, headwater
hi	long, slender, flexible (vine-like)
li	round
he	powder
natse	long horizontally, cylindrical, three-dimension
katse	thin, rigid, long vertically (stick-like)
za	liquid; speech
hoko	circled, three-dimension
taotse	piece, one-dimension
koa	flat surface , one-dimension
ako	inside of a hollow, three-dimension

The classifier *-li* 'CLF.round' (which has an allomorph *-ri* after high vowels), can occur with body parts, and , or objects that have a 'roundish, fruit-like shape', and .

- (1) totoni-ri 'nipple'
breast-CLF.round
- (2) kano-li 'forearm'
arm-CLF.round
- (3) kete-ri 'yuca cake'
manioc- CLF.round
- (4) nihe-ri 'nest'
nest-CLF.round

The classifier is lexicalized in some body part nouns and in a few nouns referring to animals (*katseri* 'calf', *tseiri* 'head,' *wairi* 'deer', *zonoiri* 'coral snake').

The classifier *-hi* 'long, slender' also occurs with body parts, and , or objects that have a long, slender, flexible, vine-like shape, and .

- (5) atxi-hi 'gut'
gut-CLF.long.slender
- (6) kitxi-hi 'bird leg'
foot-CLF.long.slender
- (7) olawa-hi 'rope'
tucum- CLF.long.slender
- (8) makala-tya-kala-ti-hi 'clothes-line'

be.dry-TH-NMLZ-UNPOSS-CLF.long.slender

The classifier occurs lexicalized in some nouns for body parts, animals and objects (*halatahiti* 'rib', *tararahiti* 'trachea', *zozohi* 'earthworm', *kamaiyekahi* type of fish, *awiyahi* 'needle').

The classifier *-tse* 'CLF.small' derives words referring to animals and objects that are small. Different from *-li*, the important semantic property of *-tse* is size, not dimension.

- (9) txini-tse 'cat'
jaguar-CLF.small
- (10) zomo-tse 'small beiju (flat bread)'
flat.bread-CLF.small
- (11) kore-tse 'bullet'
arrow-CLF.small

This classifier is in a more advanced stage of grammaticalization meaning 'diminutive', indicating that these referents are smaller than the average. It may be used with body parts, animals and objects.

- (12) aikoli-tse 'small tooth'
tooth-CLF.small
- (13) watyali-tse 'small wrist/arm'
wrist-CLF.small
- (14) zokozoko-tse 'small ant sp.'
type.of.ant-CLF.small
- (15) matalo-tse 'small pot'
pot-CLF.small

Its co-occurrence with other classifiers is very common within the same compound,² as illustrated in . In the example, both the frog and his children are small in size but they have different shapes. In order to show the difference in shape, the classifiers *-hoko* (referring to the shape of the frog) and *-hi* (referring to the slender/thin

² A possible explanation for this is its more advanced process of grammaticalization.

shape of a toad larva) are used. *-tse* occur after *-hoko* because the inverse order gives another meaning (that something small is around something); while in *haitsanitsehi*, it is before *-hi*.³

- (16) e=kali-ye-*hoko-tse* atyo ala ha=iyanityo
 3SG=frog-POSSED-CLF.circled-CLF.small TOP FOC 3SG=wife
- Ø=kaoke-heta nali oza Ø=zane ha=itsani-*tse-hi*
 3SG=chegar-RE LOC ? 3SG=go 3SG=filho-CLF.small-CLF.long.slender
- Ø=waiya-hena
 3SG=ver-IFV
 'his small frog was already there with his wife and his children, they saw them'
 (Dirizonae)

In addition, *-tse* is used to refer to parts or pieces of a whole. It is commonly used with the noun *one* 'water' or with river names meaning 'headwater':

- (17) one-*tse*'headwater'
 water-CLF.small
- (18) halohalo-*tse* 'headwater of the Figueira river'
 type.of.tree-CLF.small

The classifier is lexicalized in nouns referring to body parts, animals and of natural elements (e.g.: *zotse* 'eye' and *kaolitse* 'knee', *wamotse* 'armadillo sp.', *hawaretse* 'peccary', *zoretse* 'star').

There is no lexical origin for this classifier. It is used with nouns referring to humans, body-parts, or things that have a thin, rigid, and long vertically 'stick-like' dimension. The classifier occurs lexicalized in the word *tsekatseti* 'hair'.

- (19) baiyo-*katse* 'elder who is tall and thin'
 elder-CLF.long
- (20) iyali-*tse-katse* 'long pubic hair'
 body.hair-CLF.small-CLF.long
- (21) in=iho-*katse* 'his tail'
 3SG=tail-CLF.long
- (22) hati-*katse* 'rafter'

³ The combination *-hitse* has the meaning 'bundle'.

house-CLF.long

- (23) kotaza-katse 'the rafter in the center of the house'
rafter-CLF.long

The classifier *-natse* may have as its source the noun *natse* 'pestle'. It is used with things that have a cylindrical, long horizontal, three-dimension 'pestle-like' dimension:

- (24) Dadi-natse 'Dadi (a fat woman)'
PN-CLF.cylindrical
- (25) molone-natse 'back'
back-CLF.cylindrical
- (26) kore-natse 'gun'
arrow-CLF.cylindrical
- (27) balazoko-natse 'bottle'
bottle-CLF.cylindrical

The classifier does not occur with nouns for animals. However, it occurs in compounds where the second noun is *ohiro* 'woman' or *ena* 'man', which refer to the gender of the animal. Rowan (2001) and Silva (2013), say that the classifier is used with quadrupeds and long horizontally animals. The classifier is lexicalized in a few animals names (*halanatsé* 'dog', *kaimalonatsé* 'type of rat')

- (28) txini ohiro-natse 'a female jaguar'
jaguar woman-CLF.cylindrical

The classifier *-he*⁴ may have as its source the noun *niyehe* 'ash'. It is used with things that have a 'powder-like' consistency. It is not as productive as the other classifiers:

- (29) waiko-he 'sand'
ground-CLF.powder
- (30) axiyehé 'tobacco powder'

⁴ Silva (2013) mentions a similar form *-he* used in borrowings from Portuguese for things which have a concave-like shape. The only example in my corpus is *balatoahe* 'plate' (from *prato* in Portuguese).

tobacco-CLF.powder

This classifier is lexicalized in the words: *tyolohe* 'yuca flour' and *waikohe* 'sand'.

The classifier *-hoko* may have as its source the noun *hoko* 'beam.of a circled object'. It is used with objects that have a circled/hollow, one-dimension shape. It occurs lexicalized only in the name of a community: *Owihoko*.

- (31) kore-hoko 'bow'
arrow-CLF.circled
- (32) tala-hoko-ty-oa-re 'fence'
protect-CLF.circled-TH-MM-NMLZ

The other classifiers do not seem to have a class term origin and some of them have no clear lexical origin. There is no lexical origin for the classifier *-za* (and its allomorph *-ya*), which is used with fruits and vegetables to refer to their juice, as in and , or with river names, as in and , referring to liquid consistency in general.

- (33) wenore-za 'pineapple chicha beverage'
pineapple-CLF.liquid
- (34) kazalo-za 'chicha of kazalo yuca'
type.of.manioc-CLF.liquid
- (35) one-za 'river'
water-CLF.liquid
- (36) airaze-ro-za 'the Perfume river'
savory-NMLZ-CLF.liquid
- (37) kotyoi-ya 'tapir river'
tapir-CLF.liquid

This classifier can also be used with inanimate referents (in particular from the Paresi mythology) to refer to a speech about them (story or song), as seen in and .

- (38) kozetoza 'corn chicha/ story of the corn origin'
corn-CLF.liquid
- (39) tsehali-tyatya-ko-za 'song about the crack of the stone'
rock-bark-LOC-CLF.liquid

The classifier *-taotse* may have as its origin the noun *taotse* 'flat piece of wood', and it is used to refer to a piece of something.

- (40) *imiti-taotse* 'cloth'
roupa-UNPOSS-CLF.piece
- (41) *talare-taotse* 'part of the dam'
dam-CLF.piece
- (42) *hati-taotse* 'tent'
house-CLF.piece

*-ako*⁵ is a classifier that does not have a known lexical origin, and it is used with body parts and plant-parts, that have an internal cavity, three-dimension shape.

- (43) *kilako* 'nostril'
nose-CLF.inside
- (44) *tanako-ako* 'ear (the internal part)'
ear-CLF.inside
- (45) *atya-natse-ako* 'hole of the tree'
tree-CLF.cylindrical-CLF.inside

The classifier *-ako* is not productive in compounds. It is lexicalized only in two body part nouns: *koloako* 'throat', *tyako* 'stomach', and in the name of the Formoso village *Hohako* (which is located in a deep area).

*-koa*⁶ is a classifier that does not have a known lexical origin. In contrast to *-ako*, it is used with body parts, and things that have a flat surface, one-dimension shape.

- (46) *kahe-koa* 'palm'
hand-CLF.flat
- (47) *abali-koa* 'sieve (flat sieve type)'
type.of.sieve-CLF.flat
- (48) *eno-koa* 'sky'
high-CLF.flat

Another use of *-koa* is with nouns that refer to an open space, as shown in to :

⁵ There is the postposition *ako* used to indicate a location inside of a container.

⁶ Similar to *-ako*, there is a postposition related to this classificatory noun which is used to indicate the location in a flat surface.

- (49) matsekoa 'ground (open space)'
field-CLF.flat
- (50) wenakalako 'village'
life-NMLZ-CLF.flat
- (51) in=itima-ko 'his place where he burned (an open space)'
3SG=fire-CLF.flat

The classifier *-koa* occurs lexicalized in place names of villages such as: *Zanako* and *Tsakoreko*.

2 Function of classifiers and the typology of classification

As it was mentioned in the introduction of this section, an areal feature of Amazonian languages is the use of classifiers in derivational and agreement functions. Below I provide a description of the morphosyntactic contexts in which classifiers in Paresi occur (see Table 2): with nouns, verbs, numeral and demonstratives. I also describe the anaphoric and agreement functions. In addition, there is a general discussion on how the Paresi nominal classification system fits into the Amazonian language model, and some comparative notes on the nominal classification systems of other Arawak languages.

Table 2: Properties of classifiers in Paresi

	Properties	Paresi
1.	derive nouns from nouns	Y
2.	occur with nouns	Y
3.	occur with verbs	Y
4.	derive nouns from verbs (nominalizing)	Y
5.	occur with numeral/demonstrative	Y
6.	“anaphoric”	Y
7.	agreement	Y/N

2.1 Nominal roots

Classifiers function as derivational elements in some compounds, and they may be lexicalized in nouns for introduced cultural items. They derive nouns from other

nouns, as in to or stative verbs . In examples and , the classifier *-natse* does not modify the noun *kore*, referring to the shape of the arrow (if so, it would be optional), but instead it refers to the shape of the gun or the bullet, respectively.

- (52) kore-natse 'gun'
 arrow-CLF.cylindrical
- (53) kore-tse 'bullet'
 arrow-CLF.small
- (54) itima-za 'gasoline'
 fire-CLF.liquid
- (55) wiye-ri 'candy'
 be.sweet-CLF.round

This feature is widely attested in Amazonian languages exhibiting the multiple classifier systems, such as Miraña (GRINEVALD; SEIFART, 2007), Tariana, Waurá, Terena (AIKHENVALD, 2000), and Apurinã (FACUNDES, 2000).

2.2 Verbs roots

Classifiers can be incorporated into verbs, similar to inalienable nouns referring to body and plant parts. The incorporation of classifiers is very productive. This type of incorporation does not change the valency of the verb, and it also rare with intransitive verbs. The incorporated noun may be accompanied by the external NP, but once it is identified in the discourse, only the incorporated noun is sufficient. Classifiers can also be used as nominalizers, deriving nouns from stative verbs, as in :

- (56) wi=riko-tse-koa-t=ene
 1pl=cut-CLF.small-CLF.flat-TH=3O
 'we cut it into small pieces (E)
- (57) wiye-ri 'candy'
 be.sweet-CLF.round

2.3 Numerals and demonstratives

At least in Paresi a classifier may be attached to a numeral or demonstrative. There are three construction types: (i) the head noun and the head modifier are marked with the classifier ; (ii) only the noun head occurs with the classifier (the optionality of the classifier in the modifier is marked by the parentheses in *hanamataotse* 'three pieces'), and (iii) only the modifier occur with the classifier, as shown in through the optional use of the noun *atyakatse* 'stick'.

(58) atya-taotse hanama-taotse
 tree-CLF.piece three-CLF.piece
 'three pieces of wood' (E)

(59) eze hanama-katse atya-katse
 this three-CLF.long tree-CLF.long
 'these are three sticks' (xikonahati)

Generally, in texts, classifiers occur as the head of NPs with demonstratives and numerals. In , *-tse* 'CLF.small' occurs with the demonstrative *eze* 'this', and in the classifier *-li* 'CLF. round' occurs with the numeral *hinama*. In , the classifier *-tse* 'CLF.small' occurs with the numerals *hanama* and *quatro* and it functions as the head of the NPs.

(60) ezetse n=aikoli kawe-ta
 this-CLF.small 1sg=tooth hurt-CONT
 'This tooth hurts' (E)

(61) hinama-li ala konare noloka
 two-CLF.round FOC cará.fish pull
 'She pulled two cará fish' (ximatyati)

(62) katse-ze hanama-tse quatro-tse hare
 ATTR-seed-NMLZ three-CLF.small four-CLF.small also
 'It has seeds, three, four seeds' (E)

Example and show that a classifier can occur as the head of an NP with a nominalized stative verb. In , the classifier functions as the head of the NP, which is in an apposition to the NP *manakata* 'manakata fruit'.

(63) wi=yane manakata kalo-li-ro wa=hiyoka

- 1pl=go type.of.fruit a.lot-CLF.round-NMLZ 1pl=suck
 'We are going to chew only big manakata fruits' (ketetse)
- (64) ne-hena nea moko-hen=ene konaho zotya-li-ro
 say-IFV say hit-IFV=3O yam be.red-CLF.round-NMLZ
 'he said, and then the cará fish hit him' (wenakalati-AF)

2.4 Agreement-like function

In Paresi, the agreement-like function is rare in texts. It is possible to find classifiers attached to both the head noun and the head modifier, as in and . However, the classifier on the modifier is not obligatory, as seen in . Instead of analyzing it as agreement occurring in the same NP, I prefer to analyze the noun and the modifier to be in different NPs headed by the classifier. In Amazonian languages such as Miraña (GRINEVALD; SEIFART, 2007), agreement is obligatory, that is, the classifying morpheme occurs in all modifiers of a noun in a NP. Other languages, such as Hup (EPPS, 2008) classifiers also show a marginal agreement-marking function.

2.5 Anaphoric reference

According to Grinevald e Seifart (2004), Amazonian classifier systems have characteristics that mark them as less grammaticalized. Some of these characteristics are their discursive nature and anaphoric function, “features generally considered as more characteristic of large numeral classifier systems” (GRINEVALD; SEIFART 2004, p.282). In Paresi, the major use of classifiers is the anaphoric one. They occur in constructions with numerals, with headless relative clauses, and with the proclitic *ha=* meaning '3sg' (cf. §4.1.2) or 'one, 'other', as shown in Table 3.

- (65) hanama-katse kirane-ze
 three-CLF.long be.small-NMLZ
 'Three small sticks' (E)
- (66) eze zoaha-tya kina-te-re eze Celio
 this and-FOC be.strong-CONT-NMLZ this Celio
 z-a-maira-ki-tsa-tse-hare eze
 NMLZ-CAUS-be.afraid-CAUS-TH-CLF.small-MASC this
 ka-tyatya-li-ro eze
 ATTR-bark-POSSED-CLF.round-NMLZ this
 zotya-katse-ro eze

be.red-CLF.long-NMLZ this
 'This is also strong, this is the one who scares Celio, which has hard bark and it is red' (tolohe)

Table 3: Proclitic ha= and classifiers

	Example	Gloss
1.	ha= li one-CLF.round	'one round thing'
2.	ha= natse one-CLF.cylindrical	one cylindrical/long thing (basket, corn ear, dog, etc)
3.	ha= za other-river	'other river'
4.	ha= tse one-CLF. small	'one small thing'
5.	ha= katse one-CLF.long	'one stick-like thing'
6.	ha= ako other-CLF.inside	'other village'

For example, in the text *Kozeto*, the noun *kozeto* 'corn' was mentioned for the first time in , and then 4 lines later *hatse* 'one small thing' was used to make reference to a part of that referent :

(67) kozeto tximate koni
 corn pile? among
 'a pile of corn' (Kozeto)

(68) mo-te-hekoa-tya hoka n=itsa kala n-ita ene
 put-TH-REP-TH CON 1sg=give EVID say-CONT PST
 ha-tse hololo
 3sg=CLF.small drop
 'he was crunching it and eating, and then he dropped a grain (of corn)'(Kozeto)

A discourse function of classifiers is to highlight some properties of referents, and this individuation function is identified cross-linguistically as an important feature of noun classifiers. The example in illustrates the use of classifiers to highlight the shape properties of wood-like things in an elicitation task (where the consultant had to describe the objects he saw in the pictures):

(69) hatya atyali hatya atyakatse zokolatyo-ita hatya atyali
 IND fruit IND tree-CLF.long attach-CONT IND fruit
 zokolotyo-ita meketse hatya atya-taotse ehokotyo-ita
 attach-CONT in.the.middle IND tree-CLF.piece lay.down-MM-CONT

‘One round thing is attached to a stick, the other one is in the middle of the round thing, and the other lies down in the middle of the flat wood’ (E)

In Table 4, based on Brandão and Facundes (2013), the properties of Paresi are listed with regards to the characteristics of noun class and classifier systems in Grinevald (2000, p. 62). The classifiers in Paresi are pretty much as different from class terms as from typical classifiers (they are multiple classifier systems). Different from classifiers, class terms involve more semantic fields (beyond fauna, flora and body parts), do not incorporate in the verb, and are not used with agreement-like functions. This suggests that the noun classification systems attested in Amazonian languages may be characterized as an example of a particular stage in the development of noun classification systems and, perhaps, given its stability (since part of it seems reconstructible to Proto-Arawak), a particular classification subsystem on its own.

Table 4: The Paresi nominal classification system compared to the typology of classification

	Properties	Paresi	Class terms	Typical CLF	Noun class
1	natural elements as source meaning (fauna, fauna and other nature elements)	Y	N	Y/N	N
2	classify all nouns in the language	N	N	N	Y
3	classifying morphemes form a closed system	Y/N	Y	N	Y
4	fused with other grammatical categories (number, case)	N	N	N	Y
5	bound morpheme	Y	Y/N	N	Y
6	agreement	Y/N	N	N	Y
7	occur with nominal roots	Y	Y	Y	Y
8	occur with verbs	Y	N	Y	N
9	occur with numeral/demonstrative	Y	N ⁷	Y	Y
10	“anaphoric”	Y	N	Y	N
11	derive nouns from nouns	Y	Y	N	N
12	derive nouns from verbs nominalizing	Y	N	N	N

Table 4 shows that Paresi, from the twelve properties listed, has almost all properties of classifier systems. Classifiers do not occur with all nouns; like noun classes, they are independent of grammatical categories such as number and gender. However, classifiers in Paresi unlike in other Amazonian languages, do not constitute an open system. Paresi exhibits a small number of classifiers (only 11) compared to the number of classifiers in other languages, such as the Arawak language Baure (DANIELSEN, 2007) which has approximately 42. Classifiers also occur as bound forms in compounds with other nouns or numerals, they are not affixed to a noun. Because of their anaphoric function, classifiers occur as the head of the NP, as seen above. Agreement pattern is marginal, that is, it is not obligatory with classifiers, which may occur more than once in the noun phrase. Arguments also are rarely cross-referenced on the verb when a classifier is incorporated.

⁷ Thai has both class terms and a robust numeral classifier system, and the form used with the quantifying expressions are the numeral classifiers – many of which do not play the double function of acting as both class term (used derivationally) and also numeral classifier.

Most of the Arawak languages have feminine and non-feminine or masculine gender distinctions. In addition, they have also multiple classifier systems, especially North-west Arawak languages, such as Tariana, Baniwa of Içana and Kurripako, and Resígaro (AIKHENVALD, 2012, p. 295). South Arawak languages (e.g.: Baure, Terena, Waurá, Paresi, Asheninka) also have classifiers which occur with numerals, verbs and nouns. Compared to other Arawak languages, Paresi does not mark gender on pronouns or have gender agreement (gender is only marked in nominalizations), and it has an incipient classifier system.

Another Arawak language with an incipient classifier system is Apurinã, a North-western Arawak language. Apurinã has bound nouns recurrently used in the formation of other nouns and incorporated into verbs (FACUNDES, 2000). They are not called classifiers because they are more like class terms, and FACUNDES (2000) calls them classificatory nouns (CNs). Differently from classifiers in Paresi, CNs are bound nouns with metaphorical usage, and they only occur with nouns and verbs.

A question that remains to be answered (see BRANDÃO and FACUNDES, 2013) is whether Proto-Arawak has classifiers. Payne (1991) shows few sets of cognates between lexical nouns in some Arawak languages and noun classifying morphemes in other languages. However, although some forms with a classification function in present day languages can be reconstructed, it remains to be demonstrated conclusively that classifiers themselves were found in Proto-Arawak.

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