

## Numeral System of Mao

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### Abstract

Mao is a language of the Naga-Kuki groups of Tibeto-Burman language family and spoken mainly in the Senapati district, the Northern part of Manipur. The Speaker of Mao language is known as Mao. This paper is attempted to study about the Mao numeral system. Like other Tibeto-Burman language, Mao also has decimal numeral systems. Generally, numeral is a word denoting a number. It can be considered as an integral part of a language which is used in everyday life and mainly in higher mathematics also. The way of constructing higher number system is of multiplication and addition type. The Mao numeral can be classified as Cardinal, Ordinal, Multiplicative, Aggregative, Approximate, Fractional, Indefinite and Restrictive. But cardinal numbers have more complex and more formal structure than ordinal numbers.

**Keywords:** Numeral, Cardinal, Ordinal, Multiplicative, Aggregative.

### Introduction

The Speaker of Mao language is known as the Mao. It is a small tribe inhabiting in the Northern hill district of Manipur. They belong to the Mongoloid racial group. The language they speak is one of the Naga-Kuki groups of the Tibeto-Burman language family. The villages lie in a compact group on the Manipur Naga hill frontier. It is 62 miles far away from Imphal by road on the National Highway 39. It is one of the oldest hill stations of Manipur and its area is blessed with a rich flora and fauna. They live in a simple life very close to nature. The total population of Mao tribe is 69,131 according to the 2001 census report.

Few scholars like G.A. Grierson (1903), Mao included in the Naga-Kuki group of Tibeto-Burman language family. Benedict P.K (1972) described that Mao belongs to the Naga group of Sino-Tibetan family. And Robert Shafer (1974), also describe Mao as in the Luhupa unit in the Eastern Branch under the old Kukish section of Burmic division of Sino-Tibetan. According to Scott Delancy (1987), Mao belongs to the Naga group under the Assam-Burmese section of the Tibeto-Burman family. Ethno culturally, Mao is with the Nagas of Nagaland being closely related to the Angami-Nagas (P.P.Giridhar 1994).

### Literature Review

The Mao language is the one of the Naga-Kuki group of language. It is closely connected with the western Naga languages. More than thirty three (33) Tibeto-Burman languages are found in Manipur. Out of these languages a few of them have officially recognized. There are a few

written works on Mao languages such as ‘Mao Naga Grammar’ by P.P.Grridhar (1994). In his work, he mentions about the grammar of Mao languages. Grammar is divided into three major parts i.e. (a) the phoneme, its phonetics realization and its graphic representation (b) the word, its internal structures and external functional and (c) the phrase and sentences into phonology, morphology and syntax respectively. Another work on Mao languages is ‘Mao phonology’ a dissertation paper under Manipur University by Th. Jamuna Devi (1991). In her dissertation only Mao phonology of this language is discussed.

## Methodology

In this present paper, primary data is incorporated. To avoid error in transcription of the sounds from the native speakers, questionnaires and tape-recorder are also scientifically used. The collection of primary data from different informant of various age group both educated and uneducated from different sexes. The interviewing and questionnaire methods are also used for this paper.

## Numeral

A numeral is a word denoting a number. It can be classified into two categories i.e. (i) Cardinal number and (ii) Ordinal number.

## Cardinal Numbers

Cardinal is a traditional term retained in some models of grammatical description referring to the class of numerals- one, two, three, four, five etc. It may be divided into two types. They are (a) Basic cardinals (b) compound cardinals.

## Basic cardinal number

Basic cardinal numbers are those numbers which are used in counting and showing specifics as one, two, three etc. The basic cardinal in Mao is as follows.

## Examples

Mao	Gloss
kəli	one
kəhe	two
kosa	three
pəde	four
poŋo	five
cəro	six
cəne	seven
cəca	eight
coko	nine
cia	ten

kəre	hundred
t <sup>h</sup> u	thousand
ŋa	lakh

## Compound cardinal

Compound cardinals are formed by compounding the basic cardinals. It may be divided into two types. They are (i) Additive compound and (ii) Multiplicative compound.

### Additive compound

Additive compounds are formed by adding the basic expression of numerals from one to nine to the decade numerals or multiplicative compounds. In Mao, they are formed by adding the basic numerals with the word /cia/ means 'ten', /məke/ means 'twenty' i.e. ten plus one(10+1), ten plus two(10+2), twenty plus one(20+1) etc.

### Examples

Mao			Gloss
cia 'ten'	kəli 'one'	ciakəli	eleven
cia 'ten'	kəhe 'two'	ciakəhe	twelve
cia 'ten'	kosa 'three'	ciakosa	thirteen
cia 'ten'	pəde 'four'	ciapəde	fouteen
məke 'twenty'	kəli 'one'	məkekəli	twentyone
sia 'thirty'	kosa 'three'	siakosa	thirtythree
repono 'fifty'	pono 'five'	repopono	fiftyfive

### Multiplicative compounds

Multiplicative compounds are formed by compounding the basic cardinals to each other. It may be divided into two types.

- (i) Lower multiplicative compounds and
- (ii) Higher multiplicative compounds.

### Lower multiplicative compounds

The lower multiplicative compounds are twenty, thirty, forty, and fifty, up to ninety. But in this forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety are formed by adding prefix /re-/ 'it gives the meaning of ten' to the basic numerals. However, in the case of twenty, thirty the prefix /re-/ is not because they have their distinct form.

### Examples

Mao	Gloss
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məke	twenty
sia	thirty
repəde	forty
repono	fifty
recəro	sixty
recəne	seventy
recəca	eighty
recoko	ninety

### Higher multiplicative compounds

Higher multiplicative compounds may be expressed as the multiples of hundred and thousand by placing /kəre/ means ‘hundred’ and /t<sup>h</sup>u/ means ‘thousand’ before cardinals.

#### Examples

Mao	Gloss
kərekəli	one hundred
kərekəhe	two hundred
kərekosa	three hundred
t <sup>h</sup> ucia	ten thousand
t <sup>h</sup> upono	five thousand
t <sup>h</sup> ucəro	six thousand

### Ordinal number

In Mao, ordinal numbers are formed by adding the suffix /-na/ to the cardinal numbers. But there is an exception for the word /kərena/ ‘first’. This is a separate word used instead of /kəlina/.

#### Examples

Mao	Gloss
kərena	first
kəhena	second
kosana	third
pədena	fourth
ponona	fifth
cokona	ninth
məkəna	twentieth

### Multiplicative numeral

The multiplicative numeral can be denoted by prefixing marker /kəvu-/to the numerals. The first syllable of the numeral is loss.

### Examples

Mao	Gloss
kəvu + kəli > kəvuli	once
kəvu + kəhe > kəvuhe	twice
kəvu + kosa > kəvusa	thrice

In the above examples, the initial sounds of the numerals are loss morphophonemically when it is combined to form the multiplicative numerals.

### Aggregative numeral

Aggregative numerals are formed by suffixing /-no/ ‘together’ to the cardinal numerals.

### Examples

Mao	Gloss
kəheno	two together or both
kosano	three together
poŋono	five together
ciano	ten together

### Approximate numeral

In Mao, approximate numerals are formed by suffixing /-p<sup>h</sup>a/ means ‘about’ to the cardinal numerals.

### Examples

Mao	Gloss
kəli + p <sup>h</sup> a > kəlip <sup>h</sup> a	about one
kəhe + p <sup>h</sup> a > kəhep <sup>h</sup> a	about two
kosa + p <sup>h</sup> a > kosap <sup>h</sup> a	about three
cia + p <sup>h</sup> a > ciap <sup>h</sup> a	about ten
məke + p <sup>h</sup> a > məkep <sup>h</sup> a	about twenty

### Fractional numeral

Fractional numerals in Mao can be divided into monomorphemic and dimorphemic fractions.

Monomorphemic numerals:

Mao	Gloss
əda	half
opoli	piece
t <sup>h</sup> ofre	full

Dimorphemic numerals are formed by adding /-hino-/ to the cardinals.

### Examples

Mao	Gloss
kosa-hino-kəli	one third
pəde-hino-kəli	one forth
poŋo-hino-kəhe	two fifth
poŋo-hino-kosa	three fifth

### Indefinite numerals

Mao	Gloss
kotuta	some/few
pəji	many
kətara	anyone
ome	group
k <sup>h</sup> ru	bunch

### Restrictive numerals

Restrictive numerals in Mao are formed by adding the suffix /-lik<sup>h</sup>ri/ ‘only’ to the cardinal numerals.

### Examples

Mao	Gloss
kəlik <sup>h</sup> ri	only one
kəhelik <sup>h</sup> ri	only two
kosalik <sup>h</sup> ri	only three
cialik <sup>h</sup> ri	only ten

### Conclusion

Numeral is an integral part of a language which is used in everyday life. It has sometime been considered as part of core vocabulary. It is also an important role in the construction of syntactic

and morphology. The way of constructing higher number is by multiplication and addition. Overall, the numeral system in Mao is a decimal system. However cardinal numbers are more complex and more formal structure than ordinal numbers.

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