CHAPTER-IV

SYNTACTIC AND SEMANTIC ASPECTS
OF THAI CLASSIFERS
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4.0. Introduction

In this chapter the role of classifiers in the Thai language will be dealt with depending upon the position of classifiers in the syntactic structure and their realization at the semantic level.

4.1. Studies of Earlier scholars in respect of these aspects

Different scholars have discussed about the nature of the occurrences of classifiers in a Thai sentence and also about their semantic interpretation.

Campbell (1969:58-67) while discussing numeral classifiers agreeing with Haas (1942:201-206) observes the occurrence of classifiers in a Thai sentence, when nouns are accompanied by quantifiers, indicators and attributives.

Sindhvananda (1970:67-93) studies the use of specific classifiers with particular sets of nouns. She discusses the presence of classifiers /thæm/, /ləm/, and /lɒŋ/ as substitutes for the noun antecedents /dinsʐ/, /náŋʂː/ and /bâːŋ/ respectively. The classifiers are attributed to the head noun in a Thai sentence.

Warotamasikkhadit (1972:23-70) provides a classification of the Thai classifiers, which is presented in the following:
1. Specific Classifiers
2. Collective Classifiers
3. Classifiers of Weight
4. Classifiers of Distance
5. Classifiers for time
6. Reduplicative classifiers

Bandhumedha, Navavan (1976:4-12) discusses the role of a classifier as a constituent of a noun phrase rather than a quantifier. She argues, whether a classifier in Thai is a quantifier constituent or a noun phrase constituent should not depend on the presence of other elements in the construction.

She encapsulates the following facts about the occurrence of the classifiers in Thai sentences.

(i) A classifier alone can not modify a noun phrase. But, interestingly, a noun phrase construction can have a classifier as its head.

(ii) A classifier can co-occur with any specifier of a noun phrase. Besides a quantifier, a determiner and a sentence, a classifier can co-occur with an adjective and prepositional phrase as well.

(iii) A classifier can occur repeatedly in a noun phrase. But if there is a quantifier in a noun phrase, the classifier can not co-occur with specifier that follow the quantifier.”

She concludes her argument by stating “that a classifier is a reduced form of a noun rather than a quantifier element” and so the semantic properties of nouns are found inherent in the classifiers. She observes (pp. 10 “since a classifier is a reduced noun, it does not occur alone with a noun and it can be a head of the noun phrase.”) A noun can
repeat itself whenever it is modified; therefore a classifier can co-occur with any specifier.


Jeffrey (1981:13-19) studies quantification in Thai and observes that the quantified noun phrase requires the presence of a classifier in the sentence, whenever it is counted. A sentence in the Thai language is characterized by a noun + classifier combination.

Singhapreecha (2001:259-270) examines the concatenate relation of the Thai classifiers to count nouns and tries to conceptually establish the fact that “classifiers are fixed in number, form their own word class, and have a categorical relationship with count nouns.” Syntactically viewing, classifiers in Thai behave like agreement constructs.

Phorkpoon (2001:84-85) states that a classifier works as an attribute to the head noun phrase in the Thai sentence. It can occur with demonstratives and numerals. Classifiers in Thai precede adjectives. The classifier when used before an adjective specifies the agreement relationship between the adjective and the head noun to which the classifier refers. For example,

\[
\text{pha.pthà:j nákrian phæ:n mài nán}
\]

picture student CL new that

'that new picture of student'
As classifiers in Thai can co-occur with almost all kinds of nominal modifiers like adjectives, demonstratives, relative clauses, and prepositional phrases, classifiers constitute an agreement device for quantificational reference in the Thai NPs.

Matthews and Leung (2004:445-459) examine the nominal and verbal classifier constructions in Cantonese and Thai. They emphasize on the systematic occurrence of noun classifier constructions and the occurrence of verbal classifier constructions with particular sets of verbs which is lexical specific. Sound symbolic verbal classifier constructions which have no nominal usages have been dealt with examples in the study. It is being stated that the two types of constructions— verbal classifier constructions and nominal classifier constructions are syntactically distinct. But the verbal classifier constructions in many cases are derivable from noun classifier constructions. Though both nominal classifier constructions and verbal classifier constructions are functionally modifier in nature, nominal classifier constructions serve to modify nominals whereas verbal classifier constructions are usually used to modify events. Following Greenberg (1972) nominal classifier constructions have been observed to perform the function of individuation of nominals, a prerequisite for counting or quantification.

Simpson (2005:806-838) discusses the classifiers and DP structure of Southeast Asian languages. He mentions that numeral classifiers and demonstratives in Thai sentence structure follow the head noun. According to him the classifier occurs as a constituent of DPs. He discusses classifiers of various languages, such as Thai, Khmer, Burmese, Hmong, Malay, and Vietnamese. Some of the patterns of the constituents
including classifiers as they occur in deep phrase structure have been observed as follows:

(i) Thai, Khmer : N Adj RC Num CL Dem
(ii) Burmese : Dem RC N Adj Num CL
(iii) Hmong, Malay, Vietnamese : Num CL N Adj RC Dem

Kookiattikoon (2005:15-33) discusses the classifiers in Thai as having an obligatory use with numbers in the noun phrase. The occurrence of classifiers with other quantifiers such as, ‘many, a few, almost etc.’ has been dealt with in the study. The author argues on the functionalist notion of gradual semantic bleaching in the grammaticalization of nouns into classifiers as put forth by Dixon (1977), Delencey (1986), Craig (1992), Johnson (1993) and Grinevald (2000). While discussing on the argument mention has been made on the existence of ‘pure classifiers’ that never occur as nouns, ‘repetition classifiers’ which Delencey (1986) calls ‘marginal classifiers’ (as they are used exclusively with the nouns from which they are derived), and those which can occur as both a noun and a classifier. He concluded his argument by stating that “a classifier is just a semantically empty shell used to satisfy the structural requirement of the language.”

Singnoi (2008:76-90) discusses that a classifier in Thai is the noun which occurs in the initial position and acts as the head. A classifier can occur after the numeral in the modifying phrase. A classifier can precede and follow a numeral in the sentence. A classifier can also occur in the sentence without the numeral where an inherent sense of singularity remain involved in the construction. While discussing on the function of the Thai classifiers she remarks that they constitute numeral phrases,
stand for head nouns, substitute for the head nouns of nominal phrases, 
act as the heads of certain modifying constructions, act as the noun 
modifiers and distinguish noun phrases from other constructions 
appearing in the same pattern. The structural disambiguation as a function 
of classifier has also been mentioned by her.

Taking cues from the studies of the earlier scholars as mentioned 
above we offer the following observations as regards the syntactic and semantic aspects of the Thai classifiers.

4.2. Syntactic Aspects of Thai Classifiers

In this section we discuss mainly the position of the classifier in relation to the other components of the sentence.

4.2.0. Nominal elements occurring as Classifiers

As already mentioned (sections 3.3.0 and 3.3.2) classifiers in Thai occur as nominal elements and as classifiers— both simultaneously in the same sentence structure (because a noun when used as a classifier becomes attributive in nature, therefore, reflexive in nature). These have been called repeated or repetitive or reduplicative classifiers. For example,

(1) /khā:/ as a classifier for ‘leg, microphone-pole, four legs of furniture’, 
e.g.,

\[ \text{chá:ŋ mi: khā: jù: si: khā:} \]

‘An elephant has four legs.’
(2) /wád/ as a classifier for ‘monastery’, e.g.,

\[ \text{mu:ba:n} \quad \text{khb:y} \quad \text{chăn} \quad \text{mi:} \quad \text{wád} \]

village of I have monastery

\[ \text{ju:} \quad \text{s5:ij} \quad \text{wád} \]

be two CL

‘There are two monasteries in my village.’

(4) /lūm/ as a classifier for ‘hole, pit’, e.g.,

\[ \text{khăw} \quad \text{khud} \quad \text{lūm} \quad \text{wāj} \quad \text{să:m} \quad \text{lūm} \]

he dig hole keep three CL

‘He dug three holes.’

(5) /ru:/ as a classifier for ‘hole’, e.g.,

\[ \text{chăn} \quad \text{hĕn} \quad \text{ru:} \quad \text{pu:} \quad \text{ju:} \quad \text{să:m} \quad \text{ru:} \]

I see hole crab to be three CL

‘I saw three crab-holes.’

(6) /kβ?/ as a classifier for ‘island’, e.g.,

\[ \text{chăn} \quad \text{paj} \quad \text{thĪaw} \quad \text{kβ?} \quad \text{ma:} \quad \text{să:m} \quad \text{kβ?} \]

I go tour island come three CL

‘I went three islands for tour.’
(7) /pleːj/ as a classifier for ‘music’, e.g.,

\[
\text{khāw} \quad rāːj \quad \text{pleːj} \quad dâj \quad sāːm \quad \text{pleːj}
\]

he \quad sing \quad song \quad get \quad three \quad CL

lāːw \quad kšː \quad lāb \quad pāj

already \quad then \quad sleep \quad go

‘He sang three songs and then slept.’

(8) /kɔnθāːb/ as a classifier for ‘army force’, e.g.,

\[
\text{prāthēdihaj} \quad \text{miː} \quad kɔnθāːb \quad jùː \quad sìː \quad kɔnθāːb
\]

Thailand \quad have \quad force \quad be \quad four \quad CL

‘Thailand has four forces.’

(9) /hǎːj/ as a classifier for ‘tail of animal’, e.g.,

\[
\etauː \quad \text{miː} \quad hǎːj \quad jùː \quad nŋŋ \quad hǎːj
\]

snake \quad have \quad tail \quad be \quad one \quad CL

‘The snake has a tail.’

4.2.1. A Particular classifier occurring with a Particular noun

A particular classifier can occur with a particular noun in a sentence. For example,
(10) */law/* as a classifier for 'flute' only, e.g.,

\[ \begin{array}{llll}
\text{chan} & \text{mi:} & \text{kluj} & \text{ju:} \quad \text{n} \ddot{\text{n}} \text{hj} \\
\text{I have flute be one CL} & \\
\text{I have a flute.} \\
\end{array} \]

(11) */rian/* as a classifier for 'watch' only, e.g.,

\[ \begin{array}{llll}
\text{ph} \ddot{\text{h}}: & \text{mi:} & \text{na:lika:} & \text{s} \ddot{\text{a}} \ddot{\text{m}} \quad \text{rian} \\
\text{father have watch three CL} & \\
\text{Father has three watches.} & \\
\end{array} \]

(12) */kuli:/ as a classifier for 'cloth with 20 pieces' only (with restricted use), e.g.,

\[ \begin{array}{llll}
\text{bon} & \text{keb} & \text{pha:} & \text{wa:j} \quad \text{naj} \\
\text{I keep cloth keep in} & \\
\text{I kept twenty pieces of cloth in the cabinet.} & \\
\text{t} \ddot{\text{u}}: & \text{n} \ddot{\text{n}} \text{hj} & \text{kuli:} & \\
\text{cabinet one CL} & \\
\end{array} \]

(13) */khlo:rj/* as a classifier for 'herd of wild elephants only', e.g.,

\[ \begin{array}{llll}
\text{bon} & \text{khaw} & \text{luk:} & \text{ni:} \quad \text{mi:} \quad \text{cha:y} \\
\text{on mountain CL this have elephant} & \\
\text{p} \ddot{\text{a}}: & \text{j} \ddot{\text{u}}: & \text{n} \ddot{\text{n}} \text{hj} & \text{khlo:rj} \\
\text{forest be one CL} & \\
\text{There is a herd of wild elephants on this mountain.} & \\
\end{array} \]
(14) /\textipa{phráʔοɲ}/ as a classifier for ‘king, queen and royalty only’, e.g.,

\[ \text{pàdcuban} \quad \text{práthédthaj} \quad \text{mi:} \quad \text{phrámahǎ:kasàd} \]

present \quad Thailand \quad have \quad king

\[ jù: \quad nǐŋ \quad \text{phráʔοɲ} \]
be \quad one \quad CL

‘There is a king at present in Thailand.’

(15) /\textipa{pēn}/ as a classifier for ‘saw only’, e.g.,

\[ \text{khāw} \quad \text{ sıː} \quad \text{lāj} \quad \text{maː} \quad \text{sāːm} \quad \text{pēn} \]
he \quad buy \quad saw \quad come \quad three \quad CL

‘He bought three saws.’

4.2.2. Classifiers following the Head noun

Classifiers follow the head noun in a sentence. When a noun word follows the head noun it becomes the attribution of the head noun and is considered as a classifier of the noun in the sentence. For example,

(16) /\textipa{lǎŋ}/ as a classifier for ‘house, mosquito-net, tent, palanquin etc.’,

e.g.,

\[ \text{bâːn} \quad \text{lǎŋ} \quad \text{nǐː} \quad \text{sǔaj} \quad \text{māːk} \]

house \quad CL \quad this \quad beauty \quad very

‘This house is very beautiful.’
(17) /chʰak/ as a classifier for 'pet-elephant', e.g.,

chaːŋ  chʰak  nán  kamlanḍːn  maː  nɨ:
elephant  CL  that  walking  come  here

'That elephant (pet) is coming here.'

(18) /tua/ as a classifier for 'all kinds of animals, four legs of furniture, alphabet letter, shirt, trousers, doll etc.', e.g.,

māː  tua  nîː  chǎːn  chɔːb
dog  CL  this  I  like

'I like this dog.'

(19) /rūːb/ as a classifier for 'Buddhist monk, picture', e.g.,

phrá  rūːb  nán  pen  phrá  māj
monk  CL  that  be  monk  new

'That monk is new.'

(20) /lam/ as a classifier for 'airplane, bamboo, boat, sugarcane', e.g.,

māːjphāːj  lam  nîː  jàːj  kwaː  lam  nán
bamboo  CL  this  big  than  CL  that

'This bamboo is bigger than that bamboo.'
(21) /baːn/ as a classifier for ‘door, window, mirror, picture frame’, e.g.,

\[ \text{nāːtāːŋ baːn nān jāŋ pəːd jùː} \]

window CL that still open be

“That window is still open.”

(22) /tʰɛ̄ːŋ/ as a classifier for ‘pencil, chalk only’, e.g.,

\[ \text{dɪn̥s任教 tʰɛ̄ːŋ nìː súːaŋ diː} \]

pencil CL this beauty good

‘This pencil is beautiful’.

4.2.3. Classifiers following the Cardinal numbers

Classifiers in Thai usually follow the cardinal numbers. The only exception is the singular number which can both precede or follow the classifier. When the classifier precedes the number, it is necessarily singular and an inherent sense of emphasis remains involved in the construction. For example,

(23) /kham/ as a classifier for ‘mouthful, word (oral speech), bite’, e.g.,

\[ \text{khāw kin khâːw sǎːm kham} \]

he eat rice three CL

‘He eats three mouthfuls of rice.’

cf.
\( \text{khàw kin khàw} \text{ kham nǐŋ (diaw)} \)

`he eat rice CL one (single)`

`He eats a mouthful of rice.'`

or

\( \text{khàw kin khàw} \text{ nǐŋ kham} \)

`he eat rice one CL`

`He eats a mouthful of rice.'`

(24) /khřīŋ/ as a classifier for `television, computer, radio, motor car, wireless etc.'`, e.g.,

\( \text{chan mi: kʰəmpuːtəɾ juː: sǎm khr̥̄ŋ} \)

`I have computer be three CL`

`I have three computers.'`

cf.

\( \text{chan mi: kʰəmpuːtəɾ juː: khr̥̄ŋ nǐŋ (diaw)} \)

`I have computer be CL one (single)`

`I have one computer.'`

or

\( \text{chan mi: kʰəmpuːtəɾ juː: nǐŋ khr̥̄ŋ} \)

`I have computer be one CL`

`I have one computer.'`
(25) /phəːn/ as a classifier for ‘paper, breath, C.D., board, sticker etc.’,
e.g.,

\[ chăn \ miː \ kràdàːd \ jùː \ sǎːm \ phəːn \]

I have paper be three CL

‘I have three pieces of paper.’

cf.

\[ chăn \ miː \ kràdàːd \ jùː \ phəːn \ nǐː (diaw) \]

I have paper be CL one (single)

‘I have one piece of paper.’

or

\[ chăn \ miː \ kràdàːd \ jùː \ nǐː \ phəːn \]

I have computer be one CL

‘I have one piece of paper.’

(26) /lèm/ as a classifier for ‘knife, axe, pin, needle, sword, candle, book,
bull-cart etc.’, e.g.,

\[ miː \ mìːd \ sǎːm \ lèm \ jùː \ naj \ khrua \]

have knife three CL be in kitchen

‘There are three knives in the kitchen.’

cf.
There is one knife in the kitchen.

or

There is one knife in the kitchen.

(27) /khan/ as a classifier for ‘spoon, car, hook, umbrella etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\text{chan dāj ród māj ma: sā:m khan}
\]

I get car new come three CL

‘I got three new cars.’

or

\[
\text{chan dāj ród māj ma: nîj khan}
\]

I get car new come one CL

‘I got one new car.’
(28) /luː:k/ as a classifier for ‘fruit, ball, mountain, balloon etc.’, e.g.,

khāw mi: mamūañ jù: sib luː:k
he have mango be ten CL

‘He has ten mangoes.’

cf.

khāw mi: mamūañ jù: luː:k nǐːŋ (diaw)
he have mango be CL one (single)

‘He has one mango.’

or

khāw mi: mamūañ jù: nǐːŋ luː:k
he have mango be one CL

‘He has one mango.’

4.2.4. Classifiers preceding the Ordinal numbers

Classifiers in Thai precede the ordinal numbers. Examples are given below:

(29) /tôn/ as a classifier for ‘tree, plant, stalk, post, pillar etc.’, e.g.,

tônmâːj tôn rāːk/ thî:nǐːŋ nán chān plùːk
tree CL first / first that I grown

‘I have planted that first tree.’
(30) /khabuan/ as a classifier for ‘train, parade’, e.g.,

\[ \text{rødøj khabuan thi:sā:m caŋ k}:k \]

\begin{align*}
\text{train} & \quad \text{CL} \\
\text{third} & \quad \text{will} \\
\text{run} & \quad \text{at} \\
\text{ten} & \quad \text{o’clock (watch)}
\end{align*}

‘The third train will run at ten o’clock.’

(31) /dā:m/ as a classifier for ‘pen’, e.g.,

\[ \text{på:kka: dā:m thi:sōŋ sūaj kwā: dā:m ræ:k} \]

\begin{align*}
\text{pen} & \quad \text{CL} \\
\text{second} & \quad \text{beauty} \\
\text{than} & \quad \text{CL} \\
\text{first}
\end{align*}

‘The second pen is more beautiful than the first one.’

(32) /khon/ as a classifier for ‘all kinds of human beings’, e.g.,

(a) \[ \text{nakaŋ khon thi:sī cā:k sāj rian kēŋ} \]

\begin{align*}
\text{student} & \quad \text{CL} \\
\text{fourth} & \quad \text{from left} \\
\text{study} & \quad \text{intelligent}
\end{align*}

‘The fourth student from the left is intelligent.’

(b) \[ \text{daŋŋ pen nakaŋ khon sūdṭāj nāj} \]

\begin{align*}
\text{Deang} & \quad \text{be} \\
\text{student} & \quad \text{CL} \\
\text{last} & \quad \text{in}
\end{align*}

\text{room} \quad \text{this}

‘Deang is the last one in the room.’
(33) /I5:d/ as a classifier for ‘tooth paste, electric bulb etc.’, e.g.,

\[ ja:sifan \ I5:d \ ra\v: \ n\a:n \ cha\v j \ di: \]

‘The first tooth paste is good.’

(34) /f\O:y/ as a classifier for ‘egg, bubble’, e.g.,

\[ kh\a:j \ f\O:y \ thi:\ha: \ n\a:w \ la\v:w \]

‘The fifth egg has spoiled already.’

4.2.5. Classifiers preceding the Determiners

Classifiers precede the determiners in a sentence. The determiners ‘this’ and ‘that’ are mostly found to occur with classifiers. Examples have been given in the following:

(35) /khr\a:y/ as a classifier for ‘time, period, event (with verbs only)’, e.g.,

\[ cha\v j \ ma:\ \ khr\a:y \ ni:\ \ ph\a:a \ khun \ th\a:w\a:n \]

‘I came this time for you only.’

(36) /kh\o:n/ as a classifier for ‘all kinds of human beings’, e.g.,

\[ cha\v j \ kh\o:n \ ni:\ \ di:\ \ kw\a:a \ cha\v j \ kh\o:n \ n\a:n \]

‘This man is better than that man.’
(37) /khuː/ as a classifier for ‘pair, couple (with lover, sock, shoe etc.)’, e.g.,

\[
pəːŋːəː \quad \text{khuː} \quad \text{nî} \quad \text{chan} \quad \text{chﬁ:b}
\]

pen CL this I like

'I like this pair of pens.'

(38) /khaːrj/ as a classifier for ‘side, (of body and material objects)’, e.g.,

\[
təː \quad \text{khaːj} \quad \text{nî} \quad \text{khﬁ:j} \quad \text{chan} \quad \text{məːj} \quad \text{mahkan}
\]

eye CL this of I look not see

'This side of my eye can not see.'

(39) /duay/ as a classifier for ‘sun, moon, dot, seal, stamp, spot etc.’, e.g.,

\[
duːənːəː \quad \text{duay} \quad \text{nî} \quad \text{suaːj} \quad \text{ciːn}
\]

moon CL this beauty real

'This moon is really beautiful.'

(40) /kﬁ:n/ as a classifier for ‘soap, stone, coal, cloud, etc.’, e.g.,

\[
məː \quad \text{sि} \quad \text{sabuː} \quad \text{kﬁ:n} \quad \text{nî} \quad \text{maː}
\]

mother buy soap CL this come

\[
cəːk \quad \text{taləːd} \quad \text{miːwəːn} \quad \text{nî}
\]

from market yesterday this

'Mother bought this soap from market yesterday.'
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(41) */jà:ŋ/ as a classifier for ‘kind of things, kind of foods, sort, variety of food etc.’, e.g.,

\[ ?aːhaː:n \quad sāːm \quad jà:ŋ \quad niː \quad ?arːj \quad mā:k \]

food \quad three \quad CL \quad this \quad tasty \quad very

‘These three kinds of food are very tasty.’

4.2.6. Classifiers following the Interrogative Adverbs

Classifiers follow the Interrogative Adverbs in Thai. For example,

(42) */dɔ:k/ as a classifier for ‘all kinds of flowers, incense, arrow, firecracker etc.’, e.g.,

\[ khun \quad sīː \quad dɔːkkulāː:b \quad maː \quad kīː \quad dɔːk \]

you \quad buy \quad rose \quad come \quad how \quad many \quad CL

‘How many roses do you buy?’

(43) */lɔː/ as a classifier for ‘wheel’, e.g.,

\[ rōdkrāba \quad n̥ŋ \quad khan \quad mīː \quad lɔː \quad jūː \quad kīː \quad lɔː \]

vehicle \quad one \quad CL \quad have \quad wheel \quad be \quad how \quad many \quad CL

‘How many wheels are there in a vehicle?’
(44) /sāːj/ as a classifier for ‘river, road, chain, wires, cable, belt etc.’,
e.g.,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{miː} & \quad \text{mæːnáːm} & \quad \text{kìː} & \quad \text{sāːj} & \quad \text{thìː} \\
\text{have} & \quad \text{river} & \quad \text{how many} & \quad \text{CL} & \quad \text{that} \\
\text{khun} & \quad \text{rúːcâk} \\
\text{you} & \quad \text{know} \\
\end{align*}
\]

‘How many rivers do you know?’

(45) /chabāb/ as a classifier for ‘letter, telegram, newspaper, banknote, lottery, document etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{khun} & \quad \text{sòŋ} & \quad \text{còdmãːj} & \quad \text{maː} & \quad \text{hâj} & \quad \text{chān} \\
\text{you} & \quad \text{sent} & \quad \text{letter} & \quad \text{come} & \quad \text{give} & \quad \text{I} \\
\text{kìː} & \quad \text{chabâb} & \quad \text{mũkawaːn} & \quad \text{níː} & \quad \text{how many} & \quad \text{CL} & \quad \text{yesterday} & \quad \text{this} \\
\end{align*}
\]

‘How many letters did you send to me yesterday?’

(46) /phěːn/ as a classifier for ‘cloth, mat, towel, sheet, curtain, rug,
blanket, hanger ship, land (paddy) etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mãː} & \quad \text{miː} & \quad \text{phâːchétua} & \quad \text{kìː} & \quad \text{phěːn} \\
\text{mother} & \quad \text{have} & \quad \text{towel} & \quad \text{how many} & \quad \text{CL} \\
\end{align*}
\]

‘How many towels does mother have?’
(47) /thūy/ as a classifier for ‘pouch (full i.e., not empty)’, e.g.,

\[
\text{khun sī: kæ:ŋ ma: kì: thūy}
\]

you buy curry come how many CL

‘How many packs of curry do you buy?’

4.2.7. Classifiers preceding the Relative Pronoun

Classifiers precede the relative pronoun in a sentence. For example, (48) /khon/ as a classifier for ‘all kinds of human beings’, e.g.,

\[
nākrian khon thī: māj ma: rian wannī: pen khāj
\]

student CL that not come study today be sick

‘The student who has not come today to study is sick.’

(49) /chanīd/ as a classifier for ‘species, kinds, type, variety description, sorts’, e.g.,

\[
sād chanīd thī: phōm māj ch5:b khi: sunūk
\]

animal CL that I not like be dog

‘The animal that I do not like is dog.’
(50) /praphêd/ as a classifier for ‘kind, type, sort’, e.g.,

\[
\text{ร่ำหำน} \quad \text{praphêd} \quad \text{ที่:} \quad \text{ชัน} \quad \text{จ่ำ:k}
\]

food \quad CL \quad that \quad I \quad want

\[
\text{กิน} \quad \text{khi:} \quad \text{pla:} \quad \text{ที:d}
\]

eat \quad be \quad fish \quad fry

‘The food that I want to eat is fish fry.’

(51) /pli:/ as a classifier for ‘flower clusters (of banana)’, e.g.,

\[
\text{pli:klúaj} \quad \text{pli:} \quad \text{ที่:}
\]

flower cluster (of banana) \quad CL \quad that

\[
\text{khun} \quad \text{nam} \quad \text{ma:} \quad \text{jàj} \quad \text{mâ:k}
\]

you \quad bring \quad come \quad big \quad very

‘The cluster of banana flowers (a cone) that you bring (is) very big.’

(52) /ch3:/ as a classifier for ‘cluster, bunch (of fruit, flower)’, e.g.,

\[
\text{d$:kmd:j} \quad \text{ch3:} \quad \text{ที่:} \quad \text{khun} \quad \text{hâj} \quad \text{ชัน} \quad \text{ma:}
\]

flower \quad CL \quad that \quad you \quad give \quad me \quad come

\[
\text{wa:}n \quad \text{jù:} \quad \text{bon} \quad \text{tiaj}
\]

put \quad be \quad on \quad bed

‘The flower that you gave me is on the bed.’
(53) /phē:n/ as a classifier for ‘cloth, mat, towel, sheet, curtain, rug, blanket, hanger ship, land (paddy) etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\text{phē: } \text{phē:n }\text{ thī: }\text{ tōk }\text{ jū: }\text{ tāj}
\]

cloth CL that fall be under

tiaŋ pen khō:n chan

bed be of I

‘The cloth that is under the bed belongs to me’

(54) /sāmrāb/ as a classifier for ‘set of food, card’, e.g.,

\[
\text{ʔaːhā:n }\text{sāmrāb }\text{ thī: }\text{ khun }\text{namma: }\text{ māj }\text{ ʔarj}
\]

food CL that you bring not tasty

‘The set of food that you bring (is) not tasty.’

4.2.8. Classifiers preceding the Adjectives

Classifiers can precede the adjective in a Thai sentence. For example,

(55) /tua/ as a classifier for ‘all kinds of animals, four legs of furniture, alphabet letter, shirt, trouser, doll etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\text{sīa }\text{ tua }\text{kāw }\text{ khō:n chan}
\]

shirt CL old of I

‘My old shirt’
(56) /hæŋ/ as a classifier for ‘place, location (of building, school, store, point etc.)’, e.g.,

ro:ŋrian hæŋ məj jù: məj kłaj cã:k bå:n phôm

school CL new be not far from house I

‘New school is not far from my home.’

(57) /krabɔːk/ as a classifier for ‘gun, rifle, section of bamboo’, e.g.,

khɔw mɿ: pɿ:n jù: sə:m kracɔːk jàj

he have gun be three CL big

‘He has three big guns.’

(58) /kɔːn/ as a classifier for ‘soap, stone, coal, cloud, etc.’, e.g.,

jìb səbuː kɔːn sədæŋ maː hɔj ɬhàŋ dûːaj

bring soap CL red come give I too

‘Bring the red soap for me too’.

(59) /làŋ/ as a classifier for ‘house, tent, mosquito-net, palanquin, building etc.’, e.g.,

bå:n ləŋ məj sːəŋ səd ləːw

house CL new build finish already

‘New house has already been built.’
(60) /lɔ:dl/ as a classifier for ‘tooth paste, electric bulb, pipette etc.’, e.g.,

\[ja:si:fan\ \ lɔ:dl\ \ lɛk\ \ chaj\ \ di:\]

tooth-paste CL small use good

‘A small tube of tooth paste is good (for use).’

(61) /duaŋ/ as a classifier for ‘seals, stamps, stars, sun, moon, eyes, soul, stains etc.’, e.g.,

\[phracan\ \ duan\ \ ni:\ \ duan\ \ jaj\ \ mǎ:k\]

moon CL this CL big very

‘This moon is very big.’

4.2.9. Classifiers occurring more than once in the sentence

A classifier can occur more than once in a sentence.

(62) /tua/ as a classifier for ‘all kinds of animals, four legs of furniture, alphabet letter, shirt, trouser, doll etc.’, e.g.,

\[tukkata:\ \ tua\ \ si:dæ:n\ \ tua\ \ thî:sã:m\ \ cã:k\ \ sã:j\]

doll CL red CL third from left

‘that third doll from left’
(63) /lêm/ as a classifier for ‘knife, axe, pin, needle, sword, candle, book, bull cart’ e.g.,

(a)  nannsː: lêm thiː waːŋ jùː bon tɔːŋ?

   book CL that put be on table

   lêm nán pen khɔːŋ khraj

   CL that be of who

   ‘Whose book is there on the table?’

(b)  thian lêm lêk lêm nîŋ hɔːŋ paj nɔŋ

   candle CL small CL one lost go where

   ‘Where is the small candle lost?’

(64) /rɔːŋ/, as a classifier for ‘round, cycle, time, period’, e.g.,

   phɔːm wîŋ rɔːŋ nîː pen rɔːŋ sùdthɔːŋ

   I run CL this be CL last

   ‘I am running the last round.’

(65) /tɔn/ as a classifier for ‘tree, plant, stalk, post, pillar etc.’, e.g.,

   tɔnmaːj tɔŋ nîː tɔn thiː raw tɔd mɔːwaːŋ

   tree CL this CL that we cut yesterday

   ‘This is the tree that we cut yesterday.’
(66) /chín/ as a classifier for ‘meat, work, piece (of meat, cloth, paper etc.)’, e.g.,

\[ nítá hā́: chin ní: chín thî:să:m lékthî:sùd \]

meat five CL this CL third smallest

‘Of these five pieces of meats, the third one (is) the smallest.’

(67) /lăŋ/ as a classifier for ‘house, tent, mosquito-net, palanquin, building etc.’, e.g.,

\[ bâː:n lăŋ màj lăŋ nán pen khî:j y khraj \]

house CL new CL that be of build

‘Whom does that new house belong to?’

4.3. Semantic Aspects of Thai Classifiers

Thai classifiers exhibit a wide range of semantic interpretation as found in many classifier languages of the world. As already initiated in chapter III (see section 3.5), the Thai classifiers are found to cover a broad spectrum of semantic interpretation.\(^1\) The semantic features that are conveyed by different types of Thai classifiers\(^2\) are as follows:

(i) Concept /Idea
(ii) Material Object
(iii) Quanta
(iv) Arrangement
(v) Space
(vi) Body Parts
Each of these semantic categories along with the subcategories will be discussed and exemplified in the following subsections.

4.3.0. Concept /Idea

It indicates a principle in relation to something abstract or a notion combining elements into the idea of one object. The following classifiers exemplify this feature:

(68) /matiʔ/ as a classifier for ‘resolution, opinion’, e.g.,

\[
\text{thiːpræcum miː matiʔ jùː sãːm matiʔ}
\]

committee have resolution be three CL

‘The committee has three resolutions.’

(69) /fuːŋ/ as a classifier for ‘flock, herd of animals, air force etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\text{nök bin maː sãːm fuːŋ}
\]

bird fly come three CL

‘Three flocks of birds are flying.’
(70) /jà:ŋ/ as a classifier for ‘kinds of things, kinds of food, sort, plan’, e.g.,

khāw wa:nphē:n jana:khód wāj lā:j já:ŋ

he plan future keep many CL

‘He has many plans in his future’

(71) /phākh/ as a classifier for ‘political party’, e.g.,

prāthēdihaj mi: phākhka:nmīnj jaj jaj

Thailand have political party big big

jù: sā:m phākh

be three CL

‘Thailand has three very big political parties.’

(72) /phē:n/ as a classifier for ‘plan, policy’, e.g.,

khāw mi: phē:nka:n jù: sā:m phē:n

he have plan be three CL

‘He has three plans.’

(73) /chanīd/ as a classifier for ‘species, kinds, types, descriptions, sorts etc.’, e.g.,

sādpā: mi: jù: lā:j chanīd
animal-forest have be many CL

‘The wild animals are of many types.’
4.3.1. Material Object

It speaks of something which is concrete and is realized through the physical sense organs. Examples of classifiers indicating this feature are given below:

(74) /dâːm/ as a classifier for ‘pen’, e.g.,

\[ \text{khāw} \ \ jiːm \ \ pàːkka: \ \ khɔːŋ \ \ chān \ \ pāj \ \ sǎːm \ \ dâːm \]

he borrow pen of I go three CL

‘He borrows three of my pens.’

(75) /nɔː/ as a classifier for ‘offshoot, sprout, banana shoot etc.’, e.g.,

\[ \text{chān} \ \ dāːj \ \ nɔːmāːj \ \ maː \ \ càːk \ \ pàː \ \ sǎːm \ \ nɔː \]

I get bamboo-shoot come from forest three CL

‘I have got three bamboo shoots from the forest.’

(76) /krathaiːŋ/ as a classifier for ‘pot (of flowers)’, e.g.,

\[ \text{chān} \ \ plùːk \ \ dɔːkmāːj \ \ wāj \ \ sǎːm \ \ krathaiːŋ \]

I set up flower keep three CL

‘I set up three pots of flowers.’
(77) /thôː/ as a classifier for ‘toilet-bowl, lavatory-pan’, e.g.,

\[
\text{chan paj sî: thosùam ma: sā:m thô}
\]

I go buy toilet-bowl come three CL

‘I bought three toilet bowls.’

(78) /kraràd/ as a classifier for ‘diamond, jewelry, gem’, e.g.,

\[
somcha:j mân somsonj dûaj
\]

Somchay engage Somsong with

\[
phêd sib kraràd
\]

diamond ten CL

‘Somchay had engaged Somsong with ten karats of diamond.’

There are some subcategories of the semantic category known as ‘material object’. These subcategories are discussed below:

(i) Long Cylindrical category
(ii) Round category
(iii) Thin Long category
(iv) Flat Flexible category
(v) Hollow Bulky category
(vi) Long Curved / Flexible category
(vii) Flat Inflexible category
(viii) Square Hollow category
(ix) Square category
(x) Thin Flat category
(xi) Bulky Inflexible category
Each of the above-mentioned semantic subcategories are defined and exemplified below.

I. Long Cylindrical category

It mentions those objects which are long and look like a cylinder. The following classifiers exemplify this feature:

(79) /saw/ as a classifier for ‘lamp-post, post’, e.g.,

\[
\begin{align*}
  m_i: & \quad s\text{aw}f\text{aj} \quad j\text{ù}: \quad s\text{ã}:m \quad s\text{aw} \\
  \text{have lamp-post be three CL} \\
  \text{‘There are three lamp posts.’}
\end{align*}
\]

(80) /krabZr.k/ as a classifier for ‘gun, rifle etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\begin{align*}
  k\text{hₐw} & \quad t\text{hù}:k & \quad c\text{ã}b & \quad p\text{hr}\text{Ý}wₐ: & \quad m_i: & \quad p\text{i}:n \\
  \text{he passive arrest because have gun} \\
  j\text{ù}: & \quad n\text{a}:j & \quad k\text{hr}\text{Ý}b\text{khr}\text{Ý}:\eta & \quad s\text{ã}:m & \quad k\text{rabZr.k} \\
  \text{be in occupy three CL} \\
  \text{‘He has been arrested because he has three guns with him.’}
\end{align*}
\]

(81) /law/ as a classifier for ‘flute’, e.g.,

\[
\begin{align*}
  \text{chan} & \quad m_i: & \quad k\text{lu}j & \quad j\text{ù}: & \quad s\text{ã}:m & \quad l\text{aw} \\
  \text{I have flute be three CL} \\
  \text{‘I have three flutes.’}
\end{align*}
\]
II. Round category

It refers to any round object or oval shaped top with three dimensions. The following presents some examples of classifiers having this feature:

(82) /pʰən/ as a classifier for ‘fruits’, e.g.,

\[ \text{chan} \quad \text{mi:} \quad \text{mamūŋ} \quad \text{jù:} \quad \text{sã:m} \quad \text{pʰən} \]

I have mango to be three CL

‘I have three pieces of mangoes.’

(83) /phum/ as a classifier for ‘bush, grove of trees, grove of flowers’, e.g.,

\[ \text{phum} \quad \text{maŋg} \quad \text{siŋ} \quad \text{phum} \]

bush ten CL

‘ten bushes’

(84) /tûm/ as a classifier for ‘large earthen storage, wart’, e.g.,

\[ \text{mi:} \quad \text{nã:m} \quad \text{jù:} \quad \text{sã:m} \quad \text{tûm} \]

have water be three CL

‘There are three large earthen jars (full of water).’

(85) /rûn/ as a classifier for ‘coin’, e.g.,

\[ \text{pʰom} \quad \text{mi:} \quad \text{rûn} \quad \text{bâ:d} \quad \text{sã:m} \quad \text{rûn} \]

I have coin of one baht three CL

‘I have three coins of Baht.’
(86) /duanŋ/ as a classifier for ‘seals, stamps, stars, sun, moon, eyes, soul, stains etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\text{duanŋ} \text{ca} \text{n} \text{n}îŋ \text{duaŋ} \text{jù:} \text{bon} \text{loːk} \text{khɔːŋ} \text{raw}
\]

moon one CL be on world of we

‘There is one moon on our earth.’

III. Thin Long category

It speaks of those objects which are long and thin in appearance. For example,

(87) /ŋiaŋ/ as a classifier for ‘hook, barb of fish’, e.g.,

\[
\text{plaːk} \text{ód} \text{miː} \text{ŋiaŋ} \text{jù:} \text{sɔːŋ} \text{ŋiaŋ}
\]

catfish have barb be two CL

‘The catfish has two barbs.’

(88) /fan/ as a classifier for ‘tooth pick, eraser, hook, locket, all kinds of small things etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\text{chæn} \text{raw} \text{majo} \text{ sınıf} \text{maː} \text{sɔːm} \text{fan}
\]

I take tooth-pick come three CL

‘I brought three pieces of tooth pick.’
(89) /khem/ as a classifier for ‘clock-pin, syringe’, e.g.,

\[
\text{mi: khemnailika: ju: sa:m khem}
\]

have clock pin be three CL

‘There are three clock pins.’

IV. Flat Flexible category

It indicates any object which has flexibility and/or is flat in shape. Some classifiers marking this feature are given below:

(90) /plhɛ:k/ as a classifier for ‘mobile-case, pillow-case, etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\text{chɛn mi: pl\theta:km\ddot{\text{n}} ju: s\ddot{\text{x}}n plhɛ:k}
\]

I have pillow case be two CL

‘I have two pillow cases.’

(91) /phɛ:n/ as a classifier for ‘cloth, mat, towel, sheet, curtain, rug, blanket, hanger ship, land (paddy) etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\text{s\ddot{\text{x}}a phɛ:n ni: s\ddot{\text{u}}aj}
\]

mat CL this beauty

‘this beautiful mat’

(92) /ch\text{\text{"i}}n/ as a classifier for ‘meat, work, piece (of meat, cloth, paper etc.)’, e.g.,

\[
\text{n\ddot{\text{k}}a sa:m chin naj ca:n n\ddot{\text{n}}\ddot{\text{n}}}
\]

meat three CL in dish that

‘those three pieces of meat on the dish’
V. Hollow Bulky category

It refers to something which is empty inside and bulky in shape and size. The following classifiers indicate this feature:

(93) /taw/ as a classifier for ‘stove’, e.g.,

\[
\text{chan mi: taw ju: s\=a:m taw}
\]

I have stove be three CL

‘I have three stoves.’

(94) /baj/ as a classifier for ‘leaf, fruit, egg, blade (of fan), basket, box, cup, bag, basin, bank-notes, certificates, tickets, earthen jar etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\tilde{\text{do}}:\text{j} \ s\=a:m \ \text{baj} \ \text{j} \=\text{aj}
\]

jar three CL big

‘three big earthen jars’

(95) /th\={x}/ as a classifier for ‘ditch, pipe etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\text{widsawak\={x}:n \ wa:}\=\text{y} \ \text{th\={x}:raba}:\text{jna}:\text{m} \ \text{sib} \ \text{th\={x}}
\]

engineer set up water pipe ten CL

‘The engineer sets up ten water pipes.’

VI. Long Curved / Flexible category

It speaks of those objects which are long but curved and flexible in shape and size. The following presents some examples of classifiers having this feature:
(96) /khabuan/ as a classifier for ‘rail or train, parade’, e.g.,

\[ mi: \ \text{rod}faj \ \text{khaw} \ ma: \ \text{sam} \ khabuan \]

have train entry come three CL

‘Three trains have come.’

(97) /lam/ as a classifier for ‘airplane, bamboo, sugar cane etc.’, e.g.,

\[ mi: \ \text{kh}\text{\textis{h}}\text{\textis{a}jbin} \ ma: \ \text{maj} \ \text{sam} \ lam \]

have airplane come new three CL

‘There are three new airplanes.’

(98) /khan/ as a classifier for ‘spoon, car, hook, umbrella etc.’, e.g.,

\[ \text{chan} \ mi: \ \text{rod} \ \text{sy} \ \text{han} \]

I have car two CL

‘I have two cars.’

VII. Flat Inflexible category

It speaks of something which is flat in shape and not flexible. Some classifiers marking this feature are given below:

(99) /lém/ as a classifier for ‘knife, axe, pin, needle, sword, candle, book, bull cart etc.’, e.g.,

\[ \text{chan} \ kh\text{\textis{h}}: \ \text{da:b} \ \text{sam} \ \text{lém} \ \text{nán} \]

I request sword three CL that

‘I request for those three swords.’
(100) /krɔ:b/ as a classifier for 'frame, picture frame', e.g.,

\[ chân \quad sì: \quad krɔ:bru:b \quad ma: \quad sã:m \quad krɔ:b \]

I buy picture frame come three CL

'I bought three frames of picture.'

(101) /ba:n/ as a classifier for 'door, window, mirror, picture frame, etc.',

\[ nǎ:tà:ŋ \quad ba:n \quad thî:sĩ:ŋ \quad pò:d \quad jù: \]

window CL second open be

'The second window is open.'

(102) /plæ:ŋ/ as a classifier for 'land, field, pot of land; a paddy field',

\[ khâw \quad mi: \quad thî:dîn \quad sã:m \quad plæ:ŋ \]

he have land three CL

'He has three lands.'

VIII. Square Hollow category

It speaks of something which is square in shape and hollow inside.

The following classifiers indicate this feature:

(103) /klɔŋ/ as a classifier for 'box (of rice, fruits etc.)', e.g.,

\[ mâ: \quad mi: \quad klɔŋkâ:w \quad hâj \quad sã:m \quad klɔŋ \]

mother have rice-box give three CL

'Mother has three packs of rice.'
IX. Square category

It indicates any object which has square shape. The following examples are given below:

(106) /ba:n/ as a classifier for ‘door, window, mirror, picture frame, etc.’, e.g.,

\[ \text{mi: nâ:tà:ŋ jù: sǎ:m ba:n} \]

'I have window be three CL'

'There are three windows.'
(108) /khr̥n̥/ as a classifier for ‘television, computer, wireless, radio, motor car, mobile, mechanical factory etc.’, e.g.,

\[ \text{chan} \ \text{mi:} \ \text{tho:rasâbmi:thi:} \ \text{jù:} \ \text{sã:m} \ \text{khr̥n̥} \]

'I have mobile be three CL

'I have three mobiles.'

X. Thin Flat category

It refers to those objects which are thin and flat. For example,

(109) /phâ:b/ as a classifier for ‘picture’, e.g.,

\[ \text{chan} \ \text{mi:} \ \text{phâ:bthâ:j} \ \text{jù:} \ \text{sã:m} \ \text{phâ:b} \]

'I have picture be three CL

'I have three pictures.'

(110) /kli:b/ as a classifier for ‘petal, leaf like object, piece of garlic, piece of flower, pleat etc.’, e.g.,

\[ \text{mi:} \ \text{kli:bkulâ:b} \ \text{jù:} \ \text{sã:m} \ \text{kli:b} \]

I have petal of rose be three CL

'There are three petals of rose.'

(111) /chabâb/ as a classifier for ‘telegram, newspaper, banknote, lottery, document etc.’, e.g.,

\[ \text{chan} \ \text{sî:} \ \text{nãysõ:phim} \ \text{ma:} \ \text{sõ:õ} \ \text{chabâb} \]

I buy newspaper come two CL

'I have bought two newspapers.'
XI. Bulky Inflexible category

It indicates something which is round and heavy. Some classifiers marking this feature are given below:

(112) /chúd/ as a classifier for ‘cloth, suit, furniture, cabinet, glassware, book, ornament etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\text{chan mi: so:fa: ju: sā:m chúd}
\]

I have sofa be three CL

‘I have three sets of sofa.’

(113) /huā/ as a classifier for ‘head, bulb, cassava, sweet potato’, e.g.,

\[
\text{chan si: manthē:d ma: sā:m huā}
\]

I buy sweet potato come three CL

‘I bought three sweet potatoes.’

(114) /k3n/ as a classifier for ‘soap, stone, lump, butter, brick, cake etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\text{chan hën hūn sā:m k3:n jāj}
\]

I see stone three CL big

‘I saw three big stones.’
4.3.2. Quanta

It mentions discrete particles, the values of which are expressed as the frequency, the measurement, the unit of energy or action as well. The following classifiers present this feature:

(115) /samaŋ/ as a classifier for ‘time, period’, e.g.,

\[ \text{khāw pen na:jok ma: sɔŋ samaŋ} \]

he be prime minister come two CL

‘He was the prime minister for two terms.’

(116) /fǔd/ as a classifier for ‘unit of linear measure (foot)’, e.g.,

\[ \text{tōʔ tua ni: sǔŋ sā:m fǔd} \]

table CL this tall three CL

‘This table is three feet tall.’

(117) /wan/ as a classifier for ‘day’, e.g.,

\[ \text{khāw căʔ paj kruythē:b sā:m wan} \]

he will go Bangkok three CL

‘He will go to Bangkok for three days.’
(118) /chûamoːŋ/ as a classifier for ‘hour, time table’, e.g.,

khânâʔ khrú: châj we:laː də:nthaːŋ

group teacher use time travel

sib chûamoːŋ
ten CL

‘A group of teachers travelled for ten hours.’

(119) /kilo:kram/ as a classifier for ‘kilogram’, e.g.,

mæː sîː khâːw hôk kilo:kram

mother buy rice six CL

‘Mother buys rice of six kilograms.’

(120) /méːd/ as a classifier for ‘measurement (meter)’, e.g.,

ch̀ƙak sën nîː jaːw pəːd méːd

rope CL this long eight CL

‘This rope is long of eight meters.’

4.3.3. Arrangement

It indicates something laid out in a particular order or in a specific fashion. Some examples are given below:

(121) /wiː/ as a classifier for ‘comb of bananas (one hand of bananas)’, e.g.,
mother buy banana come three CL

‘Mother bought three bunches of bananas.’

(122) /khria/ as a classifier for ‘bunch of bananas (more than one hand)’,
e.g.,

\[\text{chăn tăd klûaj ma: să:m khria}\]

I cut banana come three CL

‘I have cut three bunches of bananas.’

(123) /kx:ŋr[^]j/ as a classifier for ‘military company, section’s troop’,
e.g.,

\[\text{mi: thahă:n jù: sįŋ kx:ŋr[^]j}\]

have military be two CL

‘There are two companies of military.’

4.3.4. Space

It mentions the place or area. The following presents some examples of classifiers having this feature:

(124) /cha:nhala:/ as a classifier for ‘platform (of train)’, e.g.,


station train have platform be ten CL

‘The railway station has ten platforms.’
(125) /chɛŋ/ as a classifier for ‘ventilation, television channel, hole, wind gap, cavity etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\text{tiːviːː ~ khɔːŋ ~ chan ~ miː ~ sɨb ~ chɛŋ}
\]

television of I have ten CL

‘My television set has three channels.’

(126) /sæʔ/ as a classifier for ‘pool, pond’, e.g.,

\[
\text{bâːn ~ chan ~ miː ~ sáʔnáːm ~ jùː ~ sɔːŋ ~ sàʔ}
\]

house I have pool be two CL

‘My house has two pools.’

4.3.5. Body Parts

The nominal elements indicative of body parts are used as classifiers in Thai. Some examples of classifiers marking this feature are given below:

(127) /sìː/ as a classifier for ‘tooth, body’s bone’, e.g.,

\[
\text{dēk ~ khon ~ nǐː ~ miː ~ fan ~ jùː ~ sāːm ~ sìː}
\]

child CL this have tooth be three CL

‘This child has three teeth.’

(128) /kхаːŋ/ as a classifiers for ‘side (of shoulder, hand, arm, shoe, sock etc.)’, e.g.,
khon raw mi: ta: jù: s5:y khâ:y
human-being we have eye to be two CL

‘We people have two eyes.’

(129) /nuaj/ as a classifier for ‘trunk of elephant’, e.g.,
chá:y mi: nuij jù: nîh nuaj
elephant have trunk be one CL

‘An elephant has one trunk.’

(130) /hû:/ as a classifier for ‘ears’, e.g.,
kratâ:j tua nîh mi: hû: jù: s5:y hû:
rabbit CL one have ear be two CL

‘A rabbit has two ears.’

4.3.6. Animacy

It marks those classifiers which are actually nouns indicating life that experiences locomotion, i.e., feel or move. For example,

(131) /phrá?oŋ/ as a classifier for ‘king, queen, royalty’, e.g.,
mi: phrara:cha: jù: nîh phrá?oŋ
have king be one CL

‘There is a king.’

(132) /tua/ as a classifier for ‘all kinds of animals, four legs of furniture, alphabet letter, shirt, trouser, doll etc.’, e.g.,
135

chăn dâj nok ma: s5:y tua

I get bird come two CL

'I got two birds.'

(133) /na:j/ as a classifier for 'official man', e.g.,

mi: tamrückad ju: sǎ:m na:j
have police man be three CL

'There are three police men.'

4.3.7. Inanimacy

It speaks of those forms which indicate life devoid of locomotion. The following classifiers denote this feature:

(134) /lây/ as a classifier for 'house, tent, mosquito-net, palanquin, building etc.', e.g.,

chăn sī: bâ:n wǎj sǎ:m lây
I buy house keep three CL

'I bought three houses.'

(135) /rian/ as a classifier for 'watch', e.g.,

khǎw dâj na:lika: mǎj ma: sǎ:m rian
he get watch new come three CL

'He got three new watches.'
(136) /baj/ as a classifier for ‘leaf, fruit, egg, blade (of fan), basket, box, cup, bag, basin, bank-notes, certificates, tickets etc. e.g.,

(a)  
\[ \text{chăn kèb bajmá:j ma: sìb baj} \]

\[ \text{I take leaf come ten CL} \]

‘I took ten leaves.’

(b)  
\[ \text{khāw sī: ca:n ma: sā:m baj} \]

\[ \text{he buy dish come three CL} \]

‘He bought three dishes.’

(c)  
\[ \text{thē: rāb parka:sani: jabād ma: nīh baj} \]

\[ \text{she obtain certificate come one CL} \]

‘She obtained a certificate.’

4.3.8. Impression (Visual/Auditory)

The words denoting some sensory impressions which may be visual, auditory or even tangible are found to be used as classifiers in Thai. The classifiers marking feature are given below:

(137) /khra:b/ as a classifier for ‘perspiration stains, stains, dirt etc.’, e.g.,

\[ \text{siā khrā:b chăn mi: khrā:bsi:} \]

\[ \text{cloth of I have stain of colour} \]

\[ \text{tid jù: sā:m khrā:b} \]

\[ \text{stick be three CL} \]

‘My cloth has three stains (of colour).’
(138) /rəːj/ as a classifier for ‘track, stain, impression, footprint, fingerprint etc.’, e.g.,

\[
\text{-chan hên rəːjþhá:w jù: nỳŋ rəːj}
\]

'I saw three footprints.'

(139) /traː/ as a classifier for ‘trademark, seal’, e.g.,

\[
\text{miː traːprajsháːnǐŋ traː bon sɔːŋcōːdmáːj}
\]

'locale
I have seal one CL on envelop

'There is a seal on the envelop.'

4.3.9. Action

It speaks of the forms that indicate activity, a process of doing something by using energy or influence. The following presents some examples of classifiers having this feature:

(140) /tɕːn/ as a classifier for ‘sleep’, e.g.,

\[
\text{chän nɔːn láb paj sʑːŋ tɕːn}
\]

'I have slept twice.'
(141) /khráj/ as a classifier for ‘time, period, event’, e.g.,

\[ kháw \ ma: \ thi:ní: \ szą: \ khráj \]

he come here two CL

‘He came here twice.’

(142) /r3:b/ as a classifier for ‘round, cycle, time, period’, e.g.,

\[ chan \ wirj \ paj \ bâ:n \ ma: \ szą: \ r3:b \]

I run go house come two CL

‘I ran twice to the house.’

(143) /cob/ as a classifier for ‘round, cycle, time (of writing, running, chanting etc.)’, e.g.,

\[ phrá \ suad \ sã:m \ côb \ laə:w \]

monk chant three CL already

‘The monk has already chanted for three rounds.’

(144) /prajò:k/ as a classifier for ‘sentence’, e.g.,

\[ kháw \ phu:d \ sã:m \ prajò:k \]

he speak three CL

‘He speaks three sentences.’
Notes

1. In this connection we may refer to some classifiers which are lexically restricted as mentioned by Kingkham (1995:79-84). For example, /traj/ for ‘monk’s dress’, /châk/ for ‘elephant (pet)’, /law/ for ‘flute’ and so on.

2. It is important to mention that a single classifier can be used to indicate more than one semantic feature. For example, the classifier /tual/ can indicate both *animacy* and *inanimacy* as in /nôk sâm tua/ ‘three birds’ and /tô: ? sâm tua/ ‘three tables’. Again, the classifier /chîn/ ‘meat, work and piece (of cloth, paper etc.)’ can be used for both concept and material object.

3. To indicate the semantic feature called ‘*animacy*’ several classifiers are used. It is notable that as Haas (1942:201-205) mentions some of them have some social significance. The classifiers /phráʔon/ and /ʔon/ are used to refer to the members of the royal family. The classifier /ʔon/ is used to refer to the Buddhist monks, Buddha image, god, prince and princess in common usage. In addition, the classifier /rû:b/ is also used for the Buddhist monks generally in formal situation. The classifiers /na:j/ (for male) and /na:y/ (for female) indicate official men. To show respect another classifier namely /thân/ is used for persons like prime minister, minister, teacher and so on. There is another classifier, viz., /ton/ for ghost, giant etc.
References


