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Word building patterns of numerals in Tungus-Manchu languages

Abstract

The article discusses the reconstruction of the archetype of cardinal numbers, word formation of the categories of numbers in the Tungus-Manchu languages. Based on the available data on languages, 15 categories are analyzed: cardinal, ordinal, multiples, dividing, distributive, restrictive, collective, numerals for counting days, numerals for counting animals, numerals for counting households, numerals for counting fingers, numerals for counting pairs of objects, numerals for counting places and directions, numerals for counting various objects, numerals for counting the years of an animal. It turns out that certain forms are ancient, but most of them were formed later and were characteristic only for a certain group, subgroup or one language. Word-building patterns of numerals are connected with form-changing patterns, although in a number of cases syntactic functions of derivatives change, and sometimes we can observe forms with complex morphological structure, derived not only from cardinal numerals but also from numerals of other categories.

Keywords: Tungus-Manchu languages, word formation, numerals, archetype reconstruction, numeral categories.

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