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Methods of expressing order by means of numerical quantitativeness in Classical Chinese (Wenyan)

Abstract
This article analyzes the means expressing a sequence through numeric quantitativeness in Classical Chinese. The study is conducted within the framework of the author's classification that assigns primary importance to the numeral existence principle. Two groups were identified: (i) numeric quantitativeness (ordinal numerals) and (ii) non-numeric quantitativeness. In this study, the focus is made on the former. The group is further subdivided into two subgroups: (1) without prefix (unmarked), (2) with prefix (marked). This is a complex diachronic study as it considers Ancient Chinese, Middle Chinese and Modern Chinese. Using the internal reconstruction method and building on syntactic features, the author concludes that the marked forms of rendering the meaning of a sequence have worked their way from abnormal in Ancient Chinese to widespread in Modern Chinese, as part of this, the number of prefixes used to render the meaning of a sequence in the pre-contemporary Chinese was much bigger compared with the contemporary stage. Among them, the prevalence of prefix 第 *dì* over the others was observed throughout the entire history of the language. In Ancient Chinese, a numeral could determine the noun both in pre- and postposition, it could also combine with an ordinal prefix without the noun. In Middle Chinese, the "第 *dì* + numeral + (noun)" pattern was adopted, and that was a crucial point in the history of the means rendering the meaning of a sequence. In Middle and Modern Chinese, the pattern allowed a variety of epentheses that became irrelevant in Contemporary Chinese.

Keywords: Classical Chinese (Wenyan), Chinese numerals, ordinal numerals, numerical quantitativeness, Chinese ordinal prefix