

A Study on Plural Marking of Nouns of Minority in Northwest China Based on Linguistic Typology

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Abstract: The minority languages in Northwest China include Salah, Uyghur, Turkic, Kazakh and Mongolian. The plural marking of nouns of minority in Northwest China has its unique commonness and individuality. Many languages have the problem of high or low usage of plural noun markers, but there are also many languages that are not limited by the frequency of use, and can be casually replaced in daily use. The plural noun marking of Northwest minority languages has its unique character, which is also a cultural characteristic of different ethnic languages. From the perspective of linguistic typology, this study makes a comparative analysis of the commonness and individuality of the plural marks of the northwest minority nouns, in order to help us deepen our understanding of the grammatical forms of the Northwest minority nouns.

Keywords: Language type; Northwest ethnic minorities; Noun; Complex number marking

1. Introduction

Grammar is not only the treasure of a national language, but also one of the most intact and difficult to borrow. The plurals of nouns in languages are highly personalized, which is an important cultural characteristic that distinguishes languages from each other. Ethnic minorities in Northwest China account for about 33.3% of China's population of ethnic minorities, including Uyghur, Mongolian, Kazakh and Tibetan. Each ethnic group has its own representative languages, such as Salah, Uyghur, Turkish, Kazakh and Mongolian. From the perspective of linguistic typology, this study makes a comparative analysis of the commonness and individuality of the plural marks of the nouns of the northwest ethnic minorities, in order to deepen the understanding of the grammatical forms of the Northwest ethnic minorities and enhance the mutual integration of the various ethnic groups in the Northwest.

2. Plural marks of nouns in Northwest minority languages

2.1. Uyghur language

There are singular and plural nouns in Northwest Uyghur language. A: In terms of forms, the singular is the same as the stem, while the plural is the addition of -ler or -lar to the single numeral form, for example, jolda l for comrade, jolda- lar means comrades; kifi means one person, and kifi-ler can be interpreted for the people. B: If -ler or -lar is added to abstract nouns, proper nouns, or personal names, it represents the collective meaning, e.g., toxti -lar keldi means that people are coming. C: -ler or -lar added to uncountable material or general nouns to indicate the general name of an object, variety, or general kinds, such as: qu l - lar represents all kinds of birds. D: -ler or -lar is placed in the same part of a sentence. In general, the plural sign is added only to the end of the noun and represents a generalization. For example:

Mende kitap, qelem we depter-ler bar

Here; Books; Pens; And notebooks; Have

Translated as: I have a lot of pens, books and notebooks here.

2.2. Salah

In the Northwest minority Salah, there is a difference between the retelling and the singular:

(1) The singular is expressed by the base form, and the plural is the addition of -ler/-lar to the stem, for example, at-lar for many horses;

(2) If there are more than two nouns in a sentence, the plural is usually added at the end of the noun, for example, men zi-de jumuda.samzax, soEan-la(r) -no al gel-d3i, which means I bought scallions, eggs, garlic, etc., at the market;

(3) There are uncountable nouns followed by a plural addition, which represents the general name of things, e.g. ja "-lar" for oil;

(4) After some proper nouns, plural additional elements are added to represent a certain kind of thing or person referred to by the noun. Plural additional elements have the function of word formation in the sentence, for example, buxun xandzod3ilar ge(l) - miŋ, meaning Han Zhaoji and others will come today.

2.3. Kazakh language

Kazakh, one of the minority languages in northwest China, has a distinction between singular and plural nouns. The singular is represented by stem or root, and its main components are -tar/-ter, -lar/-ler and -dar/-der. The addition of number is not restricted after nouns, but can also be added after pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, numerals and verbs.

(1) -lar/-ler at the end of r, w, j and vowel stem, for example. ini-ler for younger brothers, and alpha k-lar for older brothers;

(2) Add -dar/der to the end stem of a voiced consonant except r, w, and j, for example: Ə l a w - dar said a lot of our le o;

(3) Add -tar/ter to the stem at the end of a clear consonant, for example. at-tar means a lot of horses[1];

(4) If there are more than two nouns belonging to the same element in the sentence, and they are both plural, the plural addition is usually added only at the end of the noun. For example: mektebimizdiŋ kitapxanasƏnda kitap, durnal, gazetter bar signifies that "our school has a lot of newspapers, books and magazines in the library".

(5) Sometimes, the plural is added to the noun, which does not mean plural noun, but for many people. For example, kkitapxana-lar-opozdan kitap alawsa bola ma? It means that Did Orazbai and his colleagues come to your house yesterday? (Table 1)

Table 1: Forms of marking of plural nouns of Kazakh

Plural nouns	-lar/-ler	-dar/der	-tar/ter	Nouns at the end	The plural is appended to the noun
Examples	ini-ler: Brothers	awƏl-dar Many Ahool	at-tar Many horses	mektebimizdiŋ kitapxanasƏnda kitap, durnal, gazetter bar There are many newspapers, books and magazines in our school library	kitapxana-lar-opozdan kitap alawsa bola ma? Did Orazbai come to your house yesterday?

2.4. Mongolian

There are also countable and uncountable nouns in Mongolian, among which countable nouns add the additional element of retelling to the stem. If countable nouns do not contain the additional element of retelling, then their number category is uncertain and can be singular or plural. If the noun after the numeral does not contain the retelling additive, that is, the plural additive and the numeral cannot appear together before and after the noun. (1) The plural additional components in common - uud, for example, xuux Ə d - uud means children; (2) If the plural additional ingredients - tonguebase uud on nasal ending noun or long vowels at the end, after the additional element between the stem and must add consonants - g, for example, Ə rb Ə Ə xee - g - uud said many butterfly [2]. See Figure 1.

ᠡᠳᠢᠶ᠋ᠢᠨ ᠵᠠᠰᠭᠢᠶ᠋ᠢᠨ ᠥᠰᠥᠯᠲᠤ	Эдийн засгийн өсөлт	ᠡᠳᠢᠶ᠋ᠢᠨ ᠵᠠᠰᠭᠢᠶ᠋ᠢᠨ ᠥᠰᠥᠯᠲᠤ
ᠵᠠᠨᠠᠯᠬᠢᠶᠢᠯᠠ ᠬ	Заналхийла х	ᠵᠠᠨᠠᠯᠬᠢᠶᠢᠯᠠ ᠬ
ᠬᠠᠮᠲᠤᠨ ᠠᠵᠢᠯᠢᠯᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠ	Хамтын ажиллагаа	ᠬᠠᠮᠲᠤᠨ ᠠᠵᠢᠯᠢᠯᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠ

Figure 1: Example of Mongolian plural nouns

2.5. The Turkish language

(1) The singular number of Turkish languages is usually expressed by the stem, but sometimes there is a form of the singular number of nouns, which is the combination of the number word "one" and the stem. Here, the number word "one" usually loses its independence, that is to say, representing the abstract grammatical meaning, and then changes the sound of the word, for example, ku (n) η ge redz (᠊) means a man; (2) -sge and -gula represent the plural number of nouns, replacing each other. For example: t ᠊ reegu ku (n) η gula jaag ᠊ n ii? What are people doing there?

2.6. Bonan language

There are also two forms of nouns, singular and plural. (1) In terms of the form, singular nouns and stem has the same form, the plural form is marked for -l ᠊, for example: ᠵᠢᠯᠡ-l᠊(many tables) (2) If there is a numeral qualifier before and after the noun, or the sentence indicates that the thing referred to by the noun is plural, it is not necessary to use the plural sign of the noun. For example: Gon᠊ dzir Gura᠊ adaldzi o. (to place 60 sheep); (3) To avoid plural marks when nouns denote physical, natural and psychological phenomena. For example, Gura means rain, Ki means wind, and hajim means thunder.

Based on the above detailed elaboration, the marking of plural noun of language in Northwest minority is summarized as follows (Table 2):

Table 2: Marking of plural noun in Northwest minority languages

	Kazakh language	Uyghur language	Mongol	Salar language	Monguor language	Bonan language
Plural form	-lar/-ler -tar/ter -dar/der	-lar/-ler	-᠋ᠣᠳ/-uud	-lar/-ler	-ηgula,-sge	-l᠊

3. The characteristics of plural noun marking in Northwest Minority languages

By comparing the plural marks of language nouns above, it is found that the plural marks of nouns in different languages of northwest ethnic minorities include the following characteristics:

3.1. The plural form of the noun

Although the plural marks of minority nouns in northwest China vary, there is regularity among different languages: (1) many minority languages have the same singular form and stem, such as Salah and Uyghur. In some minority languages, the singular expression can be expressed by stem or grammar; (2) Salah, Uyghur and Kazakh have similar plural nouns, all using -lar, sometimes using -ler, -ler, but the difference is that "e" has a lower tongue position. This similarity directly indicates that different minority languages are related to each other and belong to the Altaic language family [3].

3.2. The use of plural nouns

The plural marking of northwest minority nouns is also reflected in its usage link.

(1) If there are more than two nouns in a sentence, a plural additional element is usually added at the end of the noun, which is more obvious in Saharan and Kazakh[4];

(2) There is more than one plural marker for the nouns of northwest ethnic minorities, but all languages have the most common and frequently used plural markers. For example, the common plural adhesive components of Daur are -r, -sul and -nur, among which -sul is the most frequently used plural, usually used to represent plants, people or animals. Most nouns in which -r is used mean only person; Most nouns that use -nur simply mean kinship terms[5];

(3) Different types of nouns with plural additional elements represent different grammatical meanings. For example, the addition of -lar or -ler to an uncountable Saharan noun represents the general category of things, while the addition of -lar or -ler to a proper noun represents the category of things or people to which the noun refers. In the Uygur language, if you do so with -lar or -l after a proper noun, a person, or an abstract noun, you are doing so in a collective sense; In a non-numbered or ordinary noun, -lar or -l is doing so in a giri r, generally in the case of the object, breed, or general term [6];

(4) Generally, the post-plural component of nouns is incompatible with the pre-modifiers, which is reflected in almost all the northwest minority languages. For example, "there are 60 sheep" Gon ð means the sheep, since there is no change in form in the number word "dzirGura" (meaning sixty), we still use the basic form of the noun. But in many cases, even if no numerals are used, if the words that appear represent the majority, such as many etc., plural additional elements should be avoided [5].

(5) Nouns ending in different consonants have different plurals, for example, the main forms of Kazakh plural noun additions include -lar/-ler, -tar/ter, and -dar/der, where -lar/-ler is generally added to w, r, j and vowel endings, and -dar/der is frequently added to voiced consonant endings other than r, j, and w, while -tar/ter is added to the stem of the consonant ending. While these three cases are different with complementation of each other[7].

4. Conclusion

Based on linguistic typology, this paper analyzes the morphology and characteristics of the plural marking of nouns of the Northwest minority. The results show that the plural marking of nouns of the Northwest minority has its unique commonness and personality. Many languages have the problem of high or low usage of plural noun markers, but there are also many languages that are not limited by the frequency of use, and can be casually replaced in daily use. The plural noun marking of Northwest minority languages has its unique character, which is also a cultural characteristic of different ethnic languages. But the languages also have commonness, which proves that these languages were related in the early days, which is the effective testimony of the ethnic unity in our country.

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