

## **Contact issues in the reconstruction of the Southwestern-Grusi numeral system**

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*Forty years have passed since the Southwestern-Grusi group (SWG) was recognized as a distinct cluster based on linguistic evidence (i.e. Grusi groupe C cluster in Manessy; Manessy, see also Grusi Southwestern (Naden, 1989) and Grusi Central (Manessy, 1999)). In this study we compare the basic numerals of five languages (i.e. Vagla, Chakali, Tampulma, DĚg and Sissala) and present an analysis of the numeral system of Chakali as an instance of a numeral system found in the SWG group. The three resources of the body part model (Heine, 1997), i.e. vigesimal (base-20), decimal (base-10) and quinary (base-5), can be identified in one or more of the SWG's numeral systems. Based on our treatment of the numeral system in SWG, we provide evidence which partly support Manessy's original language clustering. We ask whether a Proto-SWG numeral system can be worked out, given the heterogeneous nature of the forms denoting '20' across SWG. Tentatively we will claim that Proto-SWG could not have been entirely or partly vigesimal. Further we ask whether linguistic change in the numeral domain is unidirectional, as it is claimed for other domains.*