

## ATTENDANT WORD COMPLEXES IN KHMER (CAMBODIAN)\*

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**Abstract:** This paper examines units including *barevasap* ‘attendant words’ in Khmer. The units including attendant words (‘attendant word complexes’) are compound-like units, which break down into two words under certain conditions. The ‘decomposition’ of attendant word complexes is done by systematic ways.

**Keywords:** Attendant word complex (or ‘AC’); Decomposition; General condition of decomposition; Favorable factors for decomposition

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. *The aim of the paper*

In Khmer, there are forms traditionally called *barevasap* (*bareva* ‘to attend’, *-sap* ‘words’). A *barevasap* is an item that is not a free lexeme but occurs only with a steady partner word. In (1), the second component, *tèen*, is a *barevasap*. In (2), the first component *komprii* is a *barevasap*. *Barevasap* words are glossed as ‘--’.

- |     |         |                   |                |
|-----|---------|-------------------|----------------|
| (1) | mèen    | tèen <sup>1</sup> |                |
|     | true    | --                | ‘be true’      |
|     |         |                   |                |
| (2) | komprii | kompchèə          |                |
|     | --      | be.an.orphan      | ‘be an orphan’ |

In spite of its phonological similarity to its partner word, there seems to be no phonological device that puts out new *barevasap* words (hereafter ‘attendant words’, following Gorgoniev 1976’s translation) at least in modern Khmer. However, there has already been a large stock of attendant words used both in colloquial and literal Khmer. For example, in Sisovath (1973), which is a list of attendant words, approximately 1000 items are listed.

Previous studies examined semantic and phonological characteristics of attendant-word complexes (Gorgoniev 1966: 58-61; Jacob 1990[1968]: 188-193, for instance), but none of them examined their actual usage in phrases and clauses. All of the previous studies assumed attendant word complexes (or ‘AC’, shortly) to be “compound words”. For example, Maspero (1915: 226-227) called them ‘composés (euphoniques)’, and Jacob (1990: 188-193) called them

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<sup>1</sup> The transliteration in this paper follows Y. Sakamoto (1988: 1479-1505).

‘(reduplicative) compounds’. However, as far as I have examined their actual realizations in morpho-syntax, ACs behave differently from compound words.

The aims of this paper are as follows:

- [i] To show that ACs are not compound words: The morpho-syntactic behavior of ACs show that ACs are not cohesive, i.e. each component of ACs may be separated from each other.
- [ii] To show the conditions which allow components of ACs to be separated from each other: The ‘decomposition’ of ACs may occur under certain conditions. The conditions are syntactic, semantic, and stylistic.

## 1.2. The terms and the definitions

The term *barevasap* seems to have been used with a rough standard so far. In this paper, I will discuss only complexes which contain at least one bound item, which is semantically empty and which does not have an isolated usage. Since this paper aims to deal with the phenomenon where bound items can behave as if they were full-fledged free items, I exclude complexes which are consisted of two free items from the discussion, such as *juut juu* be late/be slow ‘be very late’ and *luut ləh* grow/bloom ‘grow up in all directions’. (They might be recognized as ACs by Khmer native speakers’ tacit intuitions, however.)

Some ACs contain items which have absolutely different meanings from the meanings of the entire constructs. For example, as for *ɲəm ɲii*, ‘to bully’, the second item *ɲii* means ‘to crumple (a piece of paper, for example)’ which seems to be reflected somehow in the meaning of the entire construct. The first item *ɲəm*, on the other hand, has an isolated usage as a noun meaning ‘salad’, which seems to have no relationship with the meaning of the whole. Such items that coincidentally have an independent usage with a completely different meaning from the meaning of the entire construct are regarded here as bound items. (The meanings of the independent usages will be shown in footnotes.)

## 2. THE WEAK COHESIVENESS OF ACS

ACs have some characteristics common to compound words. First, both compounds and ACs have internal semantic integrity; they both express a single meaning. Second, both compounds and ACs are unitive, i.e. they are not separable by inserting an element between the components, such as a conjunction. (ACs are separable under certain other conditions, however.)

### (3) Compound

a. *ròtèeh-pləəŋ*  
vehicle-fire

‘train’

b. *\*ròtèeh nuŋ pləəŋ*  
vehicle and fire

(the meaning ‘vehicle and fire’ is possible)

## (4) AC

a. cəmɲəj cəmɲok

food --

‘food in general’

b. \*cəmɲəj nɯŋ cəmɲok

food and --

However, ACs have several characteristics that compounds do not have. First, the order of the individual components of compound words is fixed, but that of ACs (but not all ACs) is not fixed.

(5) a. Compound: rət̚tèh-pləəŋ =&gt; \*pləəŋ-rət̚tèh

vehicle-fire

fire-vehicle

‘train’

b. AC: kmaŋ kməl =&gt; kməl kmaŋ

enemy --

-- enemy

‘enemies’

Second, each of the individual components of compounds is not accessible to any morpho-syntactic processes. However, those of the ACs (but not all cases) are accessible. In the examples below, the individual constituents of a compound can not be negated respectively.

(6) Compound: rət̚k-sii, seek/eat, ‘to earn one’s living’

a. kət̚t mɯn [rət̚k-sii] cəə kruu t̚e.

3SG NEG earn.living COP teacherFP

‘(S)he doesn’t earn his/her living as a teacher.’

b. \*kət̚t mɯn rət̚k mɯn sii cəə kruu t̚e.

3SG NEG seek NEG eat COP teacher FP

(If (6b) means ‘(S)he does not seek and does not eat as a teacher’, it is possible.)

However, the individual constituents of an AC may be negated respectively. (7a) is the example where the AC as a whole is negated, and (7b) is the example where each component of the AC is negated respectively.

(7) AC: rəm̚ʔae rəm̚ʔək, persistent / --, ‘persistently annoying’

a. kət̚t mɯn [rəm̚ʔae rəm̚ʔək] dak kɲom t̚e.

3SG NEG persistently.annoying put 1SG FP

‘S/he is not annoying me persistently.’

b. kət̚t mɯn rəm̚ʔae mɯn rəm̚ʔək dak kɲom t̚e.

3SG NEG persistent NEG -- put 1SG FP

‘S/he is not annoying me persistently.’

According to the definition of ‘words’ in Matthews (1991: 208-215), ‘fixed ordering’ and ‘cohesiveness’ are two of the several criteria for differentiating

compounds from non-compounds. The fact that the components of ACs may be reversible, such as in (5b), as well as the fact that each component of ACs may separate from each other, such as in (7b), show that ACs are not compounds.

Although an AC is not one compound word, this does not justify the statement that an AC is a construction with two full-fledged words, because (i) at least one of the constituents does not have semantic content and does not have an independent usage, and (ii) normally, ACs appear in sentences as a unit as in (7a), and decompositions of ACs like (7b) is a non-canonical phenomenon, which occurs only under certain conditions. ACs might be intermediate constructs between compounds and non-compounds.

The phenomenon that a normally indissoluble compound is separated has been reported in the studies of the other languages; ‘Ionization’ in Chinese (Chao 1968: 159-160), ‘(compound) ionization’ in Lahu (Matisoff 1973: 81-86), and ‘parallelism’ in Pwo-Karen (Kato 2005), for instance. These studies do not seem to lay out the conditions which make compound-like units split. In the rest of the paper, I will examine the nature of the phenomenon and will exhibit conditions which make the two components of ACs split.

### 3. ACS IN MORPHOLOGY

There are two kinds of morphological processes in Khmer, i.e. affixations, and reduplications of the initial consonant. Both of these morphological processes have become fossilized already. As for affixations, there are two kinds of affixes, i.e. prefixes and infixes. There is no suffix in Khmer<sup>2</sup>. Prefixes are attached in the pre-slot of a root, and infixes are inserted after the initial consonant of a root.

#### (8) Prefixation

Prefix *bɔN*-‘(causative<sup>3</sup>)’ + *kaət* ‘to occur’ → *bɔŋ-kaət* ‘to found, to originate’

#### (9) Infixation

Infix *-ɔm-* ‘(causative)’ + *slap* ‘to die’ → *s-ɔm-lap* ‘to kill’

As for reduplications of the initial consonant, the reduplicated initial consonant is attached in the pre-slot of the root with the bridging vowel /ɔɔ/ or /ɔ̌ɔ̌/.

#### (10) Reduplication of the initial consonant

*tuuk* ‘water’ → *tɔ̌ɔ̌-tuuk* ‘to be wet’

With regard to the applications of these morphological processes to an AC, the AC is not treated as one unit, but as two distinct units, that is, affixations and reduplications obligatorily apply to each of the two individual constituents of the AC. (11) is an example of infixation.

<sup>2</sup> According to Greenberg (1966: 92), exclusively prefixing languages are quite rare.

<sup>3</sup> Causation is one of the several functions of the prefix *bɔN*-. For details, see Jenner (1969).

## (11) Infixation

- a. *təək*                      *təəŋ*  
     catch                      --                      ‘to relate’
- b. *t-əmn-əək* *t-əmn-əəŋ*                      ‘relationship’

In (11b), each of the two components, i.e. *təək* and *təəŋ*, receives infix respectively, regardless of whether it is a semantically full item or a semantically empty item. This shows that in morphological level, the AC *təək təəŋ* ‘to relate’ does not behave as one cohesive unit. The same is true for prefixation and reduplication of initial consonants. (12) is an example of prefixation and (13) is that of reduplication of initial consonant.

## (12) Prefixation

- a. *phut phèj*  
     --    be.scared                      ‘to be scared’
- b. *bəmn-phut bəmn-phèj*  
     CAUS -- CAUS be.scared                      ‘to scare’

## (13) Reduplication of the initial consonant

- a. *təəh*                      *təəŋ*  
     conflict(v.)                      --                      ‘to quarrel’
- b. *təə-təəh*                      *təə-təəŋ*  
     RDPL conflict(v.)                      RDPL --                      ‘to quarrel repeatedly’

(12b) and (13b) also show that the AC is separated into two components, and each of them obligatorily accesses to morphological processes. It is not permitted that the entire AC construct take an affix or a reduplicated consonant as in (14).

- (14) a. \* *bəmn- [phut phèj]*    (cf. (12))  
             CAUS be.scared
- b. \* *təə- [təəh təəŋ]*    (cf. (13))  
             RDPL quarrel

The impossibility of (14) shows that the entire AC construct does not behave as one unit in morphological level<sup>4</sup>. When morphological processes are applied

<sup>4</sup> One reason that (14a) and (14b) are impossible is that affixations and reduplications of the initial consonant can apply only to monosyllabic words, and ACs, by necessity, contain two or more syllables, so morphological processes cannot apply to an entire AC construct. Although it is possible to assume that affixes and reduplicated consonants occur in each of the monosyllabic components of the ACs because it cannot be helped, in order to fulfill the restriction. However, this assumption is not well-motivated, because it cannot answer the following question: If there is an alternative monosyllabic word (e.g. *phèj* ‘be scared’) which basically has the same meaning as an AC (e.g. *phut phèj*, -- / be scared, ‘be scared’), why do we bother to apply morphological processes to ACs? This needs another motivation.

to an AC, the AC is obligatorily separated, and each of the components has to receive morphological processes.

#### 4. ACS IN SYNTAX

The phenomenon that the individual constituents of compound-like units, although semantically empty, have to receive morphological processes separately is not uncommon. According to Ebata (2003), the individual constituents of Yakut's compound-like unit called 'paired words' have to take inflectional and/or derivational suffixes respectively. But this phenomenon in Yakut occurs only in morphological level, thus individual constituents of paired words do not access to any syntactic processes<sup>5</sup>. In Khmer, however, each component of the compound-like units called here as ACs can establish syntactic relationships with other words. In the discussions hereafter, I will call the phenomenon that the individual components of ACs access to syntactic processes respectively as 'decomposition', since the form which was erstwhile a bundle expressing a single semantic content turns out to be decomposed into two units.

The decomposition of ACs is constrained by several conditions. The conditions are primarily divided into two types, (i) a general condition and (ii) favorable conditions (or tendencies). I will discuss these two conditions in the following sections.

##### 4.1. The general condition

Decompositions of ACs may occur when an AC (presented by means of '[XY]') is preceded by a certain element (indicated by means of '@'). However, when an AC is followed by such an element, it cannot be decomposed. This is illustrated in Figure 1.

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|                                                   |   |                     |
|---------------------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 1. The possible form of decomposition:            |   |                     |
| Before decomposition                              |   | After decomposition |
| @[XY]                                             | → | [@X][@Y]            |
| 2. The (almost) impossible form of decomposition: |   |                     |
| Before decomposition                              |   | After decomposition |
| [XY]@                                             | → | * [X@][Y@]          |

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*Figure 1. The general condition for AC decomposition in syntax*

This formal restriction that only a pre-AC (not a post-AC) element can be an @ which triggers decompositions is a general condition which (almost) obligatorily is fulfilled when decompositions of ACs occur. (There are two counterexamples. See (23)) (15) is an example of AC decomposition by using a pre-AC element. The @ and AC are underlined. @ is in bold face.

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<sup>5</sup> A similar situation is found also in Afrikaans reduplication (Botha 1988: 19-20).

- b. \*kəət khəŋ      kreev **nah**    kraot      **nah** .  
          3SG get.angry    --            very    get.angry    very  
 (Intended meaning: ‘S/he was very angry.’)  
 (*kreev kraot*, -- / get angry, ‘get angry, be easily offended’)

The decomposition of the AC is possible when a pre-AC element is the @ (= (17b)), but it is not possible when a post-AC element is the @ (= (18b)). Although @s usually consist of a single word, there are some cases where two or more words are shared. (19) is the relevant example.

- (19) a. *nəv kroŋ tookjoo, mən pləv [kvat kvaen] nah.*  
 LOC city Tokyo exist road intricate very  
 ‘In Tokyo, roads are very intricate.’
- b. *nəv kroŋ tookjoo, mən pləv kvat pləv kvaen nah.*  
 LOC city Tokyo exist road -- road cross very  
 ‘In Tokyo, roads are very intricate.’
- c. *nəv kroŋ tookjoo, mən pləv kvat mən pləv kvaen nah.*  
 LOC city Tokyo exist road -- exist road cross very  
 ‘In Tokyo, roads are very intricate.’  
 (*kvat kvaen*, --/ to cross, ‘be intricate’)

There are two decomposed versions for the AC in (19a). In (19b), one pre-AC element is shared by both of the two components respectively, and in (19c), two pre-AC elements are shared. Another example is shown in (20).

- (20) a. *kom cuə kət ʔəj! kət niʔjèəj [trəɔləp trəɔləŋ].*  
 NEG.IMP believe 3SG what 3SG say mixed.up  
 ‘Don’t trust him! He always says differently. (i.e. He speaks inconsistently.)’
- b. *kom cuə kət ʔəj! kət niʔjèəj trəɔləp niʔjèəj trəɔləŋ.*  
 NEG.IMP believe 3SG what 3SG say return say --  
 ‘Don’t trust him! He always says differently. (i.e. He speaks inconsistently.)’
- c. *kom cuə kət ʔəj! kət niʔjèəj trəɔləp kət niʔjèəj trəɔləŋ.*  
 NEG.IMP believe 3SG what 3SG say return 3SG say --  
 ‘Don’t trust him! He always says differently. (i.e. He speaks inconsistently.)’  
 (*trəɔləp trəɔləŋ*, to return / --, ‘fluctuate, mixed up, confused’)

Decompositions of ACs usually involve one pre-AC element, and those involving two or more elements are extremely rare. The possible reason for this is that the decomposition of AC prefers to avoid phonological heaviness. According to the informant, even when the @ consists of one word, some of the decompositions are judged as impossible because the decomposed forms are ‘too



long’ or ‘hard to pronounce fluently’. For example, (21b), where the @ is a disyllabic word *coolcət* ‘like’, is judged as impossible.

- (21) a. *kəət*     ***coolcət*** [*rəəm rək*].  
           3SG     like     dance  
           ‘S/he likes dancing.’
- b. \**kəət*     ***coolcət***     *rəəm*     ***coolcət*** *rək*.  
           3SG     like             dance     like     --  
           (Intended meaning: ‘S/he likes dancing.’)
- (*rəəm rək*, dance / --<sup>6</sup>, ‘dance’)

The AC *rəəm rək* ‘to dance’ itself is not always impossible to be decomposed. (22) is an example where it is decomposed by a monosyllabic word.

- (22) a. *nəv pèel cool-cnam,*             *kjəm* ***baan*** [*rəəm rək*] *craən nah*.  
           LOC time new.year’s.day     1SG     REAL dance     many very  
           ‘On new year’s day, I danced very much.’
- b. *nəv pèel cool-cnam,*             *kjəm* ***baan*** *rəəm*     ***baan*** *rək* *craən nah*.  
           LOC time new.year’s.day     1SG     REAL dance     REAL     --     many very  
           ‘On new year’s day, I danced very much.’
- (*rəəm rək*, dance / --<sup>7</sup>, ‘dance’)

Because the @ in the possible example (20c) is phonologically longer than that of the impossible example (21b), we cannot say how long is the maximum phonological length which is allowed to be decomposed. All we can say is that the shorter is more likely for decomposition than the longer. The possibility for the decomposition is the result of the interaction of several conditions, so the fact that the long decomposed form in (20c) is possible is because it is judged suitable for decomposition with regard to other conditions.

Although the general condition in Figure 1 is in most cases necessarily fulfilled, there are two exceptions to this. Reflexive and reciprocal pronouns can be post-AC @s.

<sup>6</sup> The independent usage; as a verb (*predicative*, in Headley et al 1977’s term) meaning a specific way of carriage, “to carry something with a yoke or bar across the shoulders, having the goods suspended at either end” (Headley et al. 1977: 563).

<sup>7</sup> The independent usage; see footnote 6.

- (23) a. *kəət baan [dəmkom dəmkaəŋ] **kluon** jaan klaŋ. => dəmkom **kluon***  
 3SG REAL praise REFL ADV intensive -- REFL  
*dəmkaəŋ **kluon***  
 raise REFL  
 ‘(S)he bragged about herself/himself intensively.’  
 (*dəmkom dəmkaəŋ*, -- / to raise the standard, ‘to praise, to brag about’)
- b. *jəəŋ [ruop ruom] **knèə** tvəə-kaa. => ruop **knèə** ruom **knèə***  
 1PL gather.together REC work -- REC gather.together REC  
 ‘We got together to work.’  
 (*ruop ruom*, -- / to gather together, ‘to gather together, to unite’)

As far as I have examined, the decomposition from ‘[XY]@’ to ‘[X@][Y@]’ is possible only when the @ is either a reflexive or a reciprocal pronoun.

An interesting observation is drawn from the general condition described above. That there is no post-AC syntactic @ (except reciprocal and reflexive pronoun) triggering decompositions shows a parallelism with the morphological decomposition.<sup>8</sup> In morphology, where the decomposition is obligatory, (see Section 3), there is no suffix in Khmer. In other words, there is no post-AC morphological @. This fact is reflected in the syntax. That is, in syntactic decompositions, only pre-AC elements (but not post-AC elements, except reciprocal and reflexive pronouns) can trigger the decomposition of the ACs.<sup>9</sup> Although the morphological processes are already fossilized in modern Khmer, its prefix-prominence survives in syntax.

#### 4.2. *Favorable conditions*

The decompositions are not always permitted even if the general condition is fulfilled. There are several other conditions. They are not necessarily fulfilled, but they motivate the decompositions of ACs. These conditions are structural, semantic, and stylistic. Figure 2, below, shows the rough image of these factors.

Since it is difficult to make absolute claims about the acceptability or unacceptability of sentences with decomposed ACs, I will discuss the examples in terms of relative acceptability. The rough approximations of acceptability are given in four gradations as follows.

1. no mark: judged as acceptable without a moment’s hesitation
2. the sign ‘?’: judged as awkward but probable

<sup>8</sup> This observation is due to Ebata Fuyuki (p.c.)’s critical and valuable comments.

<sup>9</sup> In morphological level, there is one more type of the @ other than pre-AC @s, that is inside-AC @s (infixes). However, this morphological @ logically do not have syntactic counterparts. If there were a decomposed form °[X @ Y] in syntactic level (the sign ‘°’ indicates that the form is fictive), this would be a realization of an inside-syntactic-@ parallel to an infix, however, this structure does not fulfill the general condition.

3. the sign ‘?’: judged as awkward and might be impossible
4. the sign ‘\*’: judged as unacceptable without a moment’s hesitation

| Decomposition of ACs is                                       | more likely<br>←                                  | less likely<br>→                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| a. STYLISTIC FACTORS                                          | lyric<br>emphatic                                 | general<br>neutral                                       |
| b. STRUCTURAL FACTORS<br>(the connection between @ and AC is) | tight                                             | loose                                                    |
| c. SEMANTIC FACTORS                                           | negative<br>directive<br>undesirable<br>intensive | affirmative<br>assertion, question<br>neutral<br>neutral |

Figure 2. Favorable factors for decomposition of ACs

#### 4.2.1. Stylistic factors

Decompositions occur often in either (i) skillful and lyrical narratives or (ii) emphatic and explicatory narratives. As for in lyrical narratives (such as in poetry or in comedians’ talk etc.), all of the decompositions are potentially possible as far as the general condition in Figure 1 is fulfilled. For example, (24b) is judged awkward or even impossible in normal speech style, but is not improbable in lyrical narratives.

- (24) a. *kəət baan riən [trədde trəddə]*.  
 3SG REAL study try.hard  
 ‘S/he has been studying hard in spite of his/her fatigue.’

- b. ?\**kəət baan riən trədde riən trəddə*.  
 3SG REAL study -- study --  
 ‘S/he has been studying hard in spite of his/her fatigue.’  
 (*trədde trəddə*, -- / --, ‘try hard frequently in spite of fatigue’)

Other than lyrical speech, decompositions of ACs occur often in an emphatic and/or an elaborative speech. In fact, all of the decomposed versions express emphatic senses in comparison with non-decomposed versions. According to my consultant, (25b) sounds more emphatic and is felt that the speaker commands the hearer more seriously and more strongly than (25a).

- (25) a. *lèəŋ [caan kbaan] təv!*  
 wash tableware DIR  
 ‘Wash dishes!’



differentiates affixes and bound/free words, and the criterion (ii) further sub-divides words into bound words and free words. (28) is the summary of the classification of Khmer morpheme categories and criteria for the classifications.

(28) The classification of Khmer morphemes

a. Affix: [+phonological alternation], e.g. prefix: *bɔN-* (causation, etc.), infix: *-ɔmn-* (nominalizer, etc.)

b. Word: [-phonological alternation]

(b-i) Bound word: [-free], e.g. *muun*= (negative), *kom*= (negative imperative).

(b-ii) Free words: [+free], e.g. verbs, nouns, pronouns.

Among these three types of morphemes, affixes obligatorily yield decomposition of ACs. As for bound words, they do not obligatorily yield decompositions but they are more accessible to decompositions than free words. (29) and (30) are relevant examples. Bound words are connected with following elements by the sign '=' in order to distinguish them from free words.

(29) a. **?aa**=[krəj krɔɔ]

NOML poor

'poor person(s)'

b. **?aa**=krəj    **?aa**=krɔɔ

NOML --    NOM=poor

'poor person(s)'

(krəj krɔɔ, --/ poor, 'poor')

(30) a. **mɔ̀nuh** [krəj krɔɔ]

person    poor

'poor person(s)'

---

*bɔN-* (causation)

a. *bɔŋ-khooc*

CAUS-break(intr.) 'to break (tr.)'

b. *bɔn-thɔɔj*

CAUS-bear.off 'to lower (tr.)'

The final nasal consonant of the prefix alters under the influence of the following consonant. The consonant assimilation does not apply to words.

The vowel harmony also applies only within a word. There are two series of vowels in Khmer; series 1: /e, ə, o, ɛ, a, ɔ, ee, əə, oo, aa, ɔɔ, ae, aə, ao/, and series 2: /i, u, u, ii, uu, ɔə, è, ə, ò, è, ò, èə, əə, òò, èè, òò, èə, òə/. (The other vowels, namely three more diphthongs /iə, uə, uo/, are ambivalent.) The vowels of a syllable alternates to that of the same series as the vowels of the preceding syllable except for when there is a consonant which blocks the harmonic chain (stops, /s/, and /h/). For example, the vowel [èè] (Series 2) in *vèèŋ* 'long' alters to [ae] (Series 1) when affix *bɔN-* is attached, i.e. *bɔŋ-vəəŋ* 'to lengthen, to mislead', because the vowel [ɔ] in the affix *bɔN-* is that of Series 1. The harmonic chain does not extend beyond the boundary of a word.

- b. \***m̀̀̀̀nuh** krəj **m̀̀̀̀nuh** krəw  
 person -- person poor (Intended meaning: ‘poor person(s)’)   
 (krəj krəw,--/ poor, ‘poor’)

A bound word nominalizing particle *ʔaa=* (nominalizing particle, meaning ‘(a) person(s) who ~’) in (29) can trigger decomposition, but a free word *m̀̀̀̀nuh* ‘person’ cannot. (29b) is judged possible but (30b) is judged impossible. (31) and (32) are other examples.

- (31) a. kəət tvəə-kaa **m̀̀̀̀n=**[lʔət lʔən].  
 3SG work NEG serious  
 ‘S/he does not work thoroughly.’  
 b. kəət tvəə-kaa **m̀̀̀̀n=lʔət** **m̀̀̀̀n=lʔən**.  
 3SG work NEG tiny NEG --  
 ‘S/he does not work thoroughly.’  
 (lʔət lʔən, tiny / --, ‘serious, thorough’)

- (32) a. kəət m̀̀̀ən **cət** [lʔət lʔən].  
 3SG exist mind serious  
 ‘S/he has a serious mind.’  
 b. ?\*kəət m̀̀̀ən **cət** lʔət **cət** lʔən.  
 3SG exist mind tiny mind --  
 ‘S/he has a serious mind.’  
 (lʔət lʔən, tiny / --, ‘serious, thorough’)

In (31b) the decomposition of an AC by a bound word is possible, while in (32b) the decomposition of the same AC as (31) is almost impossible. Similar examples are given in (33).

- (33) a. kəət riən **jaən=**[trədee trəddəw] daəmbəj ~.  
 3SG study ADV=try.hard in.order.to  
 ‘S/he studied hard in spite of his/her fatigue in order to ~.’  
 b. kəət riən **jaən=trədee** **jaən=trəddəw** daəmbəj ~.  
 3SG study ADV -- ADV=try.hard in.order.to  
 ‘S/he studied hard in spite of his/her fatigue in order to ~.’  
 (trədee trəddəw,--/ try hard, ‘try hard (in spite of fatigue, handicaps, etc.)’)

- (34) a. kəət riən [trəddeə trəddəw] daəmbəj ~  
 3SG study try.hard in.order.to  
 ‘S/he studied hard in spite of his/her fatigue in order to ~.’

- b.? \*kəət riən trəddeə riən trəddəw daəmbəj ~  
 3SG study -- study try.hard in.order.to  
 ‘S/he studied hard in spite of his/her fatigue in order to ~.’

(trəddeə trəddəw, --/ try hard, ‘try hard (in spite of fatigue, handicaps, etc)’)

In (33) and (34), the verb AC *trəddeə trəddəw* ‘to try hard’ is functioning as a modifier of the main verb *riən* ‘to study’. In Khmer, verbs can be used adverbially either with an overt adverbializer as in (33a) or without it as in (34a). The adverbializer (a bound word) successfully yields decomposition (= (33b)). In (34), the pre-AC slot element is a free word (a verb, in this case). The decomposition by using this free word is judged as impossible (= (34b)).

#### 4.2.2.2. Syntactic relations between @s and ACs

Among free word @s, the decomposition is more likely when an ‘@ + [AC]’ construct constitutes a PHRASE rather than a CLAUSE.

- (35) When ‘@+AC’ constitutes a 
←
→
  

>
  
 The decomposition is 
more likely
less likely

(36) is an example of the decomposition of a clausal ‘@+AC’, and (37) is that of a phrasal ‘@+AC’.

#### (36) Clause

- a. nèəŋ tòn plòn nah.  
 3SG.F modest very  
 ‘She is very modest.’

- b.\*nèəŋ tòn nèəŋ plòn nah.  
 3SG.F soft 3SG.F -- very  
 (Intended meaning: ‘She is very modest.’)  
 (tòn plòn, soft / --, ‘modest’)

#### (37) Phrase

- a. puok kèe cèə nèək tòn plòn nah.  
 group 3 COP person modest very  
 ‘They are very modest people.’

- b. puok kèe cèə nèək tòn nèək plòn nah.  
 group 3 COP person soft person -- very  
 ‘They are very modest people.’ (tòn plòn, soft / --, ‘modest’)

The ‘@ + [AC]’ in (36a) and that in (37a) consist of a noun (@) and a verb (AC). They seemingly have the same structure, however, the ‘noun – verb’ alignment in Khmer corresponds either to “subject – predicate” relation or to “head – modifier” relation. In the former case, the two items constitute a clause, and in the latter case, the two items constitute an NP. This difference is reflected in the possibility of decomposition. The clause level decomposition in (36b) is judged as unacceptable, but the phrase level decomposition in (37b) is acceptable.

Regarding clause level syntactic relations between a predicate and an argument, the possibility of decomposition varies according to the syntactic role of the argument. In Khmer, there are four types of core arguments, transitive subjects ‘A’, transitive objects ‘O’, intransitive subject which occur in the same position as transitive subjects ‘Sa’, and intransitive subjects which occur in the same position as transitive objects ‘So’.<sup>11</sup> A and Sa are placed in the pre-verbal slot. O and So are placed in the post-verbal slot. The syntactic relation is tighter between O/So and a verb than between A/SA and a verb.<sup>12</sup> The difference in terms of the tightness relationship is also reflected in the accessibility to decompositions of ACs. The decomposition of ACs in ‘V + O/So’ units (tighter) is more likely than that in ‘A/SA + V’ units (looser).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The labels ‘A’, ‘O’, ‘S<sub>A</sub>’, ‘S<sub>O</sub>’ are drawn upon Van Valin (1990). Khmer is a so-called ‘fluid-S’ (Dixon 1979: 82) language. The ‘SA’ vs. ‘SO’ distinction is discussed in A. Sakamoto (2004).

<sup>12</sup> The syntactic relation between O/S<sub>O</sub> and a verb is very tight. Basically, nothing can intervene between them. (If something intervenes between them, another special construction will be used. See A. Sakamoto 2005.) (b) below, the time adverbial phrase *səp-tɕaj* ‘these days/ recently’ appears between the verb and the O, but it is possible.

a. *kɲom riən phèəsaasəh.*

1SG study linguistics

[ A ] [ V ] [ O ]

‘I study linguistics.’

b. \**kɲom riən səp-tɕaj phèəsaasəh.*

1SG study these.days linguistics

[ A ] [ V ] ~~~~~ [ O ]

(Intended meaning: ‘I am studying linguistics these days.’)

The syntactic relation between A/S<sub>A</sub> and a verb, on the other hand, is loose. They can be detached from each other by inserting adverbials.

c. *kɲom səp-tɕaj riən phèəsaasəh.*

1SG these.days study linguistics

[ A ] ~~~~~ [ V ] [ O ]

‘I am studying linguistics these days.’

<sup>13</sup> The distinction between A/SA vs. O/SO is also reflected in other aspects of Khmer (A. Sakamoto 2005).



Examples (39) and (40) are examples of ‘V + O/So’, and (41) and (42) are those of ‘A/SA + V’.

(*bɔnlæ* *bɔnlɔk*, vegetable / --, ‘vegetables in general’)

(*kdəj kdam*, lawsuit / --, ‘lawsuit’)

b. \* *cruuk kɲom vèə cmuh vèə cmòl cɔmkaa kèe.*  
 pig 1SG 3 -- 3 dig field 3  
 (Intended meaning: ‘My pigs, they dig the other people’s field.’)  
 (*cmuh cmòl*, -- / dig, ‘dig and get into the hole’)

(*clēe clāa*, -- / --, ‘be in a mad rush, scamper about’)

### 4.2.3. Semantic tendency

Decompositions of ACs tend to occur often in sentences which have certain semantic content. This seems to be a corollary from the fact that the semantic effect of decompositions is EMPHASIS; there might be a tendency that people utter certain linguistic forms which have certain utterance-meanings emphatically.

#### 4.2.3.1. Negative vs. Affirmative

In terms of polarity, decompositions occur more often in NEGATIVE rather than AFFIRMATIVE utterances.

- (43) When the polarity of a sentence is negative > affirmative  
 The decomposition is more likely ←————→ less likely

There are two types of negative sentences included in the discussion: (i) lexically negated sentences; sentences whose negative meaning is attained by lexically negative expression. E.g. *kmèən* ‘not exist, there is no ~’, *ʔət* ‘not have’, etc., and (ii) grammatically negated sentences; sentences whose negative meaning is attained by the negative particle (*mun*= (negation marker, a bound word)).

- (44) a. *kət mèn [dəj tlii] craən.*  
 3SG exist land many  
 ‘S/he has so much land.’

- b. *kət mèn dəj mèn tlii craən.*  
 3SG exist land exist -- many  
 ‘S/he has so much land.’

(*dəj tlii*, land/ --, ‘land’)

- (45) a. *kət mèn [bəmnae bəmnaə] craən.*  
 3SG exist ambition many  
 ‘S/he has many ambitions.’

- b. ? *kət mèn bəmnae mèn bəmnaə craən.*  
 3SG exist -- exist hope many  
 ‘S/he has many ambitions.’

(*bəmnae bəmnaə*, --/ hope, ‘hope, ambition’)

- (46) a. *kət kmèn [bəmnae bəmnaə] ʔəj tē.*  
 3SG not.exist ambition what FP  
 ‘S/he doesn’t have any ambition.’

- b. ក្មេង kmèən បំណាច់ kmèən បំណង វ៉ាជ តើ.  
 3SG not.exist -- not.exist hope what FP  
 ‘S/he doesn’t have any ambition.’  
 (bំណាច់ បំណង, --/ hope, ‘hope, ambition’)

The decomposition of ACs with a verb *mèən* ‘exist’ is not constant; it is sometimes acceptable as in (44b) and is sometimes awkward (but not improbable) as in (45b). On the other hand, (46b), when a lexically negative verb *kmèən* ‘not.exist’ alternative to *mèən* ‘exist’ is used, it is acceptable.

The examples of the negative sentences of the grammatical negation include (7) in Section 2 and (31) in 4.2.2.1. In fact, decompositions with negation particle *muun* ‘not’ occur very often. (47) is another example.

- (47) a. ក្រុម muun=[lèəj ləm] ក្មេង តើ.  
 1SG NEG mixed up REC FP  
 ‘I am not mixed up.’  
 b. ក្រុម muun=lèəj muun=ləm ក្មេង តើ.  
 1SG NEG mix NEG -- REC FP  
 ‘I am not mixed up.’  
 (lèəj ləm, mix/ --, ‘be mixed up, be jumbled up’)

The AC *lèəj ləm* ‘mixed up, jumbled up’ can be decomposed by the negative particle. This AC is not always likely to be decomposed, however, by other elements which do not have negative meaning. In (48), the *baan* (realis marker) is used as @. Like *muun* (negative particle), *baan* is a bound word, but unlike *muun*, it does not have negative meaning. (48b) is judged awkward (but not improbable).

- (48) a. ក្មេង baan=[lèəj ləm] ក្មេង.  
 3SG REAL mixed.up REC  
 ‘S/he is mixed up.’  
 b. ក្មេង baan=lèəj baan=ləm ក្មេង.  
 3SG REAL mix REAL -- REC  
 ‘S/he is mixed up.’  
 (lèəj ləm, mix/ --, ‘be mixed up, be jumbled up’)

#### 4.2.3.2. Directive vs. Other illocutionary forces

In terms of illocutionary force, the decomposition tends to occur in utterances of ‘orders’, ‘commands’, ‘requests’ and ‘recommendations’. Lyons (1995) has classified illocutionary forces into three subtypes, i.e. STATEMENTS (or ASSERTIONS), QUESTIONS, and DIRECTIVES. Orders, commands and requests belong to DIRECTIVES (Lyons 1995: 247-251). Decompositions in DIRECTIVES

occur more likely than the other two illocutionary forces, namely STATEMENTS and QUESTIONS.

(49) When the illocutionary force is Directive > Statement or Question



The decomposition is                      more likely                      less likely

The distinction of STATEMENTS/QUESTIONS/DIRECTIVES is utterance-based, not grammatical structure-based. For example, interrogative sentences are not always QUESTIONS but may belong to STATEMENTS (e.g. *Who could possibly think that such negotiations would bring lasting peace to the region!* (Lyons 1995: 182). Similarly, the DIRECTIVE utterances are not always grammatically imperative. In the examples below, both (i) grammatically imperative sentences, and (ii) grammatically non-imperative sentences whose utterance meaning are DIRECTIVES, are included. Examples of (i) are given in (50), and an example of (ii) is given in (51).

(50) a. hav knii hav knèə m̀òk! [Command]

call -- call REC DIR

‘Go and get your associates!’

(*knii knèə*, -- / (reciprocal pronoun), ‘associates, friends’)

b. som cuoj ptiaj cuoj ptəət cəm̀ləəj kɲom phəəj! [Request]

ask.for help(v.) check help(v.) -- answer 1SG FP

‘Please check my answer carefully.’

(*ptiaj ptəət*, check / --<sup>14</sup>, ‘check carefully, check again and again’)

c. som prəəjat som prəəjaeŋ taam pləv! [Optative]

ask.for pay.attention ask.for -- along road

‘Please be very careful along the way.’

(*prəəjat prəəjaeŋ*, to pay attention / --, ‘be very careful, take all possible precautions’)

d. kom=dəm?oɔŋ kom=dəm?ae dak kɲom! [Prohibition]

NEG.IMP complain NEG.IMP -- put 1SG

‘Don’t complain to me!’

(*dəm?oɔŋ dəm?ae*, complain / --, ‘complain again and again’)

<sup>14</sup> The independent usage; as a verb (*predicative*, in Headley et al 1977’s term) expressing “to flick, to touch lightly” (Headley et al. 1977: 396).

- (51) haet ʔəj baancèə mun=ròk krəomom mun=ròk krəomak  
 reason what therefore NEG find woman NEG find --  
 nuŋ kèe? [recommendation]  
 with 3  
 ‘Why don’t you find a woman (and get married) like everyone else?’  
 (krəomom krəomak, girl (old enough to get married) / --, ‘girl, woman’)

The grammatical form of (51) is not imperative but interrogative. However, the utterance-meaning is not a QUESTION but a DIRECTIVE; the speaker does not anticipate an answer, but s/he recommends that the hearer should get married. This DIRECTIVE meaning makes the AC in (51) a favorable candidate for decomposition. Furthermore, the negative form of the sentence also improves the preference degree for the decomposition.

DIRECTIVES are the most preferred candidates for decomposition among Lyons’s three types of illocutionary forces. ACs in utterances of other than DIRECTIVES may or may not be decomposed, depending on other factors.

- (52) a. kom=lət kom=lən pèek! [DIRECTIVE]  
 NEG.IMP tiny NEG.IMP -- too.much  
 ‘Don’t be so serious!’
- b. ʔ\* kəət mèən cət lət cət lən. (= (32b)) [STATEMENT]  
 3SG exist mind tiny mind --  
 ‘S/he has a serious mind.’  
 (lət lən, tiny / --, ‘serious, thorough’)
- (53) a. kom=ləj kom=ləm knèə ʔəj! [DIRECTIVE]  
 NEG.IMP mix NEG.IMP -- REC what  
 ‘Don’t be mixed up!’
- b. ʔkəət baan=ləj baan=ləm knèə bat haəj. (= (48b)) [STATEMENT]  
 3SG REAL mix REAL -- REC lose ASP  
 ‘S/he is absolutely mixed up.’  
 (ləj ləm, mix/ -, ‘mixed up, jumbled up’)

The decompositions in DIRECTIVE utterances in (52a) and (53a) are judged as acceptable, while those in STATEMENT utterances (52b) and (53b), which contain the same ACs as (52a) and (53a), are not always acceptable.

The decomposed versions in (52a) and (53a) are, actually, judged as “more than acceptable”, i.e. they are nicer than un-decomposed versions if the speaker wants to express his/her prohibition clearly and strongly to the hearer. prohibitions are directive in terms of illocutionary force and are negative in terms of polarity. Therefore, they contain two of the preferable factors for decomposition. In fact, decompositions of ACs occur more often and more likely

in prohibitions than others. With regard to verb ACs, it is observed in my data that if an AC is not decomposed by *kom=* (prohibition marker), the AC is not decomposed by any other elements, either.

(54) a. ***kom=[pʔaem lhaem]***      *dak kɲom!*

NEG.IMP indulgent      put 1SG

‘Don’t be indulgent with me!’

b. \****kom=pʔaem***      ***kom=lhaem*** *dak kɲom!*

NEG.IMP sweet    NEG.IMP --    put 1SG

(Intended meaning: ‘Don’t be indulgent with me!’)

(*pʔaem lhaem*, be sweet / --, ‘be indulgent (in the hope of getting something in return)’)

(55) a. *kəət* ***baan=[pʔaem lhaem]*** *dak kɲom.*

3SG REAL indulgent      put 1SG

‘S/he was indulgent with me.’

b. \* *kəət* ***baan=pʔaem*** ***baan=lhaem*** *dak kɲom.*

3SG REAL sweet    REAL --    put 1SG

(Intended meaning: ‘s/he was indulgent with me.’)

(*pʔaem lhaem*, be sweet / --, ‘be indulgent (in the hope of getting something in return)’)

Generally an @ consists of one word. However, in decompositions of directives, there are some cases where more than one element are the @s.

(56) a. *som*      *cuoj*      *jəək*      ***[mhoop mhaa]*** *məək!*

ask.for help      bring      food      DIR

‘Please bring me (a lot of and many kinds of) food!’

b. *som*      *cuoj*      ***jəək*** *mhoop*      ***jəək*** *mhaa* *məək!*

ask.for help    bring    food    bring    --    DIR

‘Please bring me (a lot of and many kinds of) food!’

c. *som*      ***cuoj***      ***jəək*** *mhoop*      ***cuoj jəək*** *mhaa* *məək!*

ask.for help    bring    food    help bring    --    DIR

‘Please bring me (a lot of and many kinds of) food!’

(*mhoop mhaa*, food / --, ‘lots of and many kinds of food’)

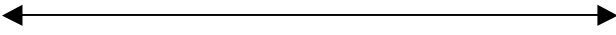
In the examples above, both (56b) and (56c) are the possible decomposed versions for (56a). In (56b), one pre-AC element is functioning as @ and in (56c) two pre-AC elements are jointly functioning as @. Generally, the @ consists of one pre-AC element, however, in the environment where the decomposition is

more likely to occur, such as in directive utterances, the individual component of the AC can split away from each other more remotely by multiple elements.

#### 4.2.3.3. Undesired vs. Neutral

Decompositions occur often in sentences which contain UNDESIRED or UNEXPECTED meanings rather than in sentences which do not contain such meanings.

(57) When a sentence expresses; Undesired/Unexpected meaning > Neutral



The decomposition is      more likely      less likely

For example, an adverbializer *təəŋ=* is used when the concomitant circumstance is undesirable or unexpected. (58) and (59) are such examples.

(58) *kəət təv tətəŋ=[taanat taanaeŋ].*

3SG go ADV be.in.a.rush

‘S/he went out in a mad rush (without proper preparation for the departure).’

(*taanat taanaeŋ*, -- / --, ‘be in a rush, fluster’)

(59) *kəət daə tətəŋ=[tətəiim tətətəəm] mətək ptəəh kɲom.*

3SG walk ADV lose.balance come house 1SG

‘S/he walked to my house totteringly. (i.e. She staggered to my house.)’

(*tətəiim tətətəəm*, -- / --, ‘tottering’)

The concomitant situations expressed by the adverbial phrases in the two examples above are both undesirable or unexpected. (Normally, people are not expected to go out in a mad rush. And, to walk totteringly is similarly undesirable.) *jaaŋ=* is also an adverbializer, but this particle does not have any implication that the concomitant manner which the adverbial phrase expresses is undesirable or unexpected. It has a function simply to convert verbs into adverbial phrases. Examples include (60) below.

(60) *kəət khəm riən.soot jaaŋ=[puh pətə].*

3SG try.hard study ADV try.hard

‘S/he studies very hard.’

(*puh pətə*, boil / --, ‘to try hard (with one’s all might)’)

ACs are more likely to be decomposed by *təəŋ=*, which expresses undesirable concomitant manners, rather than *jaaŋ=*, which do not have undesirable nuances.

- (61) a. *kɔət tən tɛəŋ=taanat tɛəŋ=taanaeŋ.* (c.f. (58))  
 3SG go ADV -- ADV --  
 ‘S/he went out in a mad rush (without proper preparation for the departure).’  
 (*taanat taanaeŋ*, -- / --, ‘be in a rush, fluster’)
- b. *kɔət daə tɛəŋ=tòtiim tɛəŋ=tòtəəm m̀̀ɔk ptəh kɲom.* (c.f. (59))  
 3SG walk ADV -- ADV -- DIR house 1SG  
 ‘S/he walked to my house tottering. (i.e. She staggered to my house.)’  
 (*tòtiim tòtəəm*, -- / --, ‘tottering’)
- c. \* *kɔət khəm riən-soot jaəŋ=puh jaəŋ=pèə.* (c.f. (60))  
 3SG try.hard study ADV boil ADV --  
 (Intended meaning: ‘S/he studies very hard.’)  
 (*puh pèə*, boil / --, ‘to try hard (with all one’s might)’)

There are many other examples of decomposed ACs in sentences whose semantic contents are undesirable, such as “COLLAPSE”, “IRRITATION”, “MISERY”, “ANNOYANCE”, “PEJORATIVE”, etc. (62) are some of the examples. (62a) is COLLAPSE, (62b-c) are ANNOYANCE, and (62d) is PEJORATIVE.

- (62) a. *rɔəttha?phi?baal baan=bɔmplèc baan=bɔmplaəŋ prèj chəə.*  
 government REAL -- REAL destroy forest wood  
 ‘Government has utterly destroyed forests.’  
 (*bɔmplèc bɔmplaəŋ*, ‘destroy utterly’)
- b. *sat klaa taəŋ=tae m̀̀ɔk jèə m̀̀ɔk jii kòo*  
 animal tiger always come -- come -- cow  
*krɔ̀bəj r̀̀ɔ̀bɔh nèək phuum.*  
 water.buffalo GEN person village  
 ‘Tigers always come to threaten cows and water buffalos of the village people.’  
 (*jèə jii*, --<sup>15</sup> / --<sup>16</sup>, ‘threaten, irritate’)

<sup>15</sup> The independent usage: as a verb meaning ‘(e.g. rubber bands) become old and stretch’ (according to the informant).

<sup>16</sup> The independent usage: as an interjection “expressing astonishment, fear, shock, scolding, reproach” (Headley et al. 1977: 500).



- c. vèə taen=tæ **pah** kbaal **pah** kboon ʔaŋ.  
 3 always hit head hit -- 1SG  
 ‘She/He/They always irritate(s) me. (lit. She/He/They always hit my head.)’  
 (kbaal kboon, head / --, ‘head’)
- d. kəət cəə **ʔaa=ckii** **ʔaa=ckuot**.  
 3SG COP NOML -- NOML foolish  
 ‘S/he is an idiot.’  
 (ckii ckuot, -- / foolish, ‘be very foolish, total fool’)

In (62d), both the AC itself and the nominalizer *ʔaa=* express PEJORATIVE sense (e.g. *tooc taac*, ‘small’=> *ʔaa=tooc* (*ʔaa=*)*taac* ‘diminutive person, person with little value (lit. small person)’). The pejorative nominalizer *ʔaa=* very often triggers decompositions, as opposed to another nominalizer *kaa=*, which has a function simply to convert verbs into nouns<sup>17</sup>. *kaa=* generally does not trigger decompositions.

- (63) a. kəət mən **kaa=[pləc pləəŋ]** jaŋ=klaŋ nəv peel tməj tməj nih.  
 3SG exist NOML forget ADV strong LOC time new new this  
 ‘S/he has a strong forgetfulness these days. (i.e. S/he is very forgetful these days.)’
- b. \*kəət mən **kaa=pləc** **kaa=pləəŋ** jaŋ=klaŋ nəv peel  
 3SG exist NOML forget NOML -- ADV strong LOC time  
 tməj tməj nih.  
 new new this  
 (Intended meaning: ‘S/he has a strong forgetfulness these days. (i.e. S/he is very forgetful these days.)’)  
 (pləc pləəŋ, forget / --, ‘forget, be absentminded’)

The fact that undesired meanings are more likely for decomposition might relate to the frequent occurrence of PROHIBITIONS in AC decompositions (see 4.2.3.2). (Speakers usually prohibit hearers’ actions because the hearers’ actions are undesirable for speakers.)

#### 4.2.3.4. Intensive vs. Neutral

Decomposition occurs more likely in sentences with INTENSIVE meanings rather than in those without such meanings.

<sup>17</sup> Both of *ʔaa=* and *kaa=* has a nominalizing function, but the effect of it is different; *kaa=* changes “action” verbs into “action” nouns. *ʔaa=*, on the other hand, is so called a TYPE-CHANGING nominalizer (Croft (1991: 67-68)), i.e. it changes stative verbs (adjectives), which denote “properties”, into nouns which refer to “entities” that have such properties.



- However, if the intensifier *nah* ‘very’ co-occurs, they turn to be possible or probable sentences, as in (68). The intensifier *nah* ‘very’ is wavy-underlined.

- ## 5. CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have examined usages of ACs and pointed out that ACs are not compound words. Regarding the actual realizations of ACs in phrases and clauses, the individual constituents of ACs may respectively access to syntactic processes (negation, nominalization and adverbialization, etc.) or may establish grammatical relationships with other words (predicate-object relationships, head-modifier relationships, etc.). ACs are cohesive semantically, but they are less cohesive morpho-syntactically. This mismatch between semantics and morpho-syntax in terms of cohesiveness could not be attained without observations of ACs' actual realizations in phrases and clauses.

Decompositions of ACs are in fact non-canonical. However, this deviance from the norm is done by certain systematic ways. It is attained by (i) utilizing ‘reduplication’, which is a very common phenomenon in Khmer and, (ii) utilizing the prefix-prominent characteristics that Khmer language has. That is, decompositions are achieved only by the reduplication of the pre-AC (not post-AC) element as a general condition.

All the other factors motivating decompositions of ACs examined in this paper together with the general condition stated above are summarized in Table 1, below.

|                                                                |                                     |             |                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| I. FORM OF DECOMPOSITION (GENERAL CONDITION): @[XY] → [@X][@Y] |                                     |             |                               |
| -----                                                          |                                     |             |                               |
| II. FAVORABLE FACTORS                                          |                                     |             |                               |
| 1. CATEGORY OF @:                                              |                                     |             |                               |
| @ is                                                           | <b>Affix</b>                        | >           | <b>Bound word</b> > Free word |
| The decomposition is obligatory                                |                                     | more likely | less likely                   |
| -----                                                          |                                     |             |                               |
|                                                                | <b>MORE LIKELY</b>                  |             | <b>LESS LIKELY</b>            |
| 2. STYLE                                                       | <b>Lyric</b>                        | >           | General                       |
|                                                                | <b>Emphatic</b>                     | >           | Neutral                       |
| 3. SYNTAX                                                      |                                     |             |                               |
| “@ + AC” unit is                                               | <b>Phrase</b>                       | >           | Clause                        |
| When “@ + AC” unit is a clause                                 | <b>V + O/So</b>                     | >           | A/SA + V                      |
| 4. SEMANTICS:                                                  | <b>Negative</b>                     | >           | Affirmative                   |
|                                                                | <b>Directive</b>                    | >           | Assertion, Question           |
|                                                                | <b>Undesirable</b>                  | >           | Neutral                       |
|                                                                | <b>Intensive</b>                    | >           | Neutral                       |
| 5. PHONOLOGY:                                                  | <b>Phonologically light (short)</b> | >           | Phonologically heavy          |

Table 1. The general conditions and favorable factors of AC decompositions

## ABBREVIATIONS

|         |                                        |
|---------|----------------------------------------|
| 1SG     | 1st person singular pronoun            |
| 3       | 3rd person singular and plural pronoun |
| 3SG     | 3rd person singular pronoun            |
| 3SG.F   | 3rd person singular feminine pronoun   |
| ADV     | Adverbializer                          |
| ASP     | Completive aspect                      |
| CAUS    | Causative                              |
| COP     | Copula                                 |
| DIR     | Directionals                           |
| FP      | Final particle                         |
| LOC     | Locative                               |
| NEG     | Negative                               |
| NEG.IMP | Negative imperative (prohibition)      |
| NOML    | Nominalizer                            |
| PURP    | Purposive conjunction                  |
| RDPL    | Reduplicated consonant                 |
| REAL    | Realis marker                          |
| REC     | Reciprocal pronoun                     |
| REFL    | Reflexive pronoun                      |

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