

A GRAMMAR SKETCH OF WESTERN (CAMBODIAN) CHAM

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1. INTRODUCTION¹

The Cham language is in the Chamic branch of the Austronesian family of languages. It is spoken by about 300,000 to 350,000 people in Vietnam and Cambodia. The language is divided into two major dialects, or more likely, two separate languages. Eastern (or Vietnamese) Cham is spoken by about 35,000 people in Vietnam in the area of the towns of Phan Rang and Phan Ri, and Western (or Cambodian) Cham (WCham) is spoken in Cambodia by about 250,000 to 300,000 people and by about 20,000 people in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam, with concentrations in Chau Doc, Tay Ninh, and Saigon. There are three main divisions of Western Cham—Western Cham as spoken along the Mekong, Western Cham as spoken along the Tonle Sap especially in the Kompong Chhnang province, and Western Cham as spoken in Vietnam—as well as a fourth small group of Chams near Kompot. Pronunciation accounts for much of the difference between the dialects, with vocabulary also being a factor. There seem to be few, if any, differences in grammatical structure.

This is a grammar sketch of Western Cham and is based on texts that were collected in 1970–1975 in Southeast Asia by Timothy and Barbara Friberg, who were working there with the Summer Institute of Linguistics. The texts represent several of the dialects of Western Cham. These texts have been supplemented by a small amount of elicited data. Many questions still exist and may be answered after looking at more data.

2. CLAUSES

The basic clause structure of WCham is subject–verb–object (SVO). Adverbial elements—words or phrases that modify a verb or an entire sentence—occur at four places in the clause. They may occur at the beginning of the clause (conjunctions), at the end of the clause (final particles), before the verb (preverbal adverbs) or after the verb (adverbs). Embedded adverbial clauses may occur at either the beginning or end of the clause.

2.1 BASIC CLAUSES

Basic clauses in WCham are of two types, active and non-active (also known as stative).

¹ See the appendix for a list of abbreviations.

2.1.1 ACTIVE CLAUSES

2.1.1.1 AMBIENT ACTIVE CLAUSES

Only one example of an ambient clause has been found so far. It contains the word *djauk* 'to hit' with the phrase *ngĩn rabuk* 'storm':

- (1) *Djauk ngĩn rabuk.*²
 VT N <
 to.hit storm <
 There arose a storm.

More examples are needed before a description of the structure of ambient clauses can be given.

2.1.1.2 INTRANSITIVE ACTIVE CLAUSES

Intransitive clauses have the structure of noun phrase as subject followed by the verb phrase. For example:

- (2) *Ku non đuaik nao.*
 N DET VI DIR
 Khmer that to.run away
 The Khmers run away.
- (3) *Nhu đuaik nao.*
 PRO VI DIR
 3 to.run away
 They all ran away.

2.1.1.3 TRANSITIVE ACTIVE CLAUSES

Transitive clauses have the structure of noun phrase as subject, verb phrase, and noun phrase as direct object. For example:

- (4) *Hlũn mayai ha rĩng.*
 PRO VT NUM N
 1SG.LORESP to.say one story
 I tell a story.

2.1.1.4 BITRANSITIVE ACTIVE CLAUSES

Bitransitive clauses have the subject noun phrase followed by the verb phrase with the direct object noun phrase followed by the indirect object prepositional phrase. The prepositional phrase is introduced by the preposition *ka* 'to'. For example:

² The orthography used here follows Vietnamese conventions.

- (5) *Yah rôk nao, bôh drăp kau,*
 ADVZ VT DIR VT N PRO
 if to.dig away to.see thing 1.RESP
hu' djauk ta bray ni ka kau wôk.
 PRO AUX ADV VB DET PREP PRO FIN
 2.LORESP must only to.give this to 1.RESP back
 If, when digging, I find my belongings, you must give this territory back to me.
 (*Rôk* means literally 'to dig around something that can be seen'.)

2.1.2 NON-ACTIVE CLAUSES

Non-active clauses are clauses that do not show any action in the verb. This type of clause includes equative clauses, descriptive clauses, adverbial clauses (such as 'he is here'; 'he is at home') and existential clauses.

2.1.2.1 EQUATIVE NON-ACTIVE CLAUSES

Equative non-active clauses contain two noun phrases. The first (in bold) functions as the subject of the clause and the second (underlined) is the predicate complement. There is no verb. For example:

- (6) ***Kau*** *kra* *kađuh*.
 PRO N ≤
 1.HIRESP turtle ≤
 I am a turtle.

2.1.2.2 DESCRIPTIVE NON-ACTIVE CLAUSES

Descriptive clauses have the structure of noun phrase as subject and adjective phrase as the predicate complement. In my data there are no words that function as a verb in descriptive clauses. For example:

- (7) *Nhu uan tabuan.*
 PRO ADJ <
 3 happy <
 They (the Khmers) were very happy.
- (8) *Nhu uan tabuan sabai tai lô.*
 PRO ADJ < ADJ < ADV
 3 happy < happy < very
 They were very, very happy.

2.1.2.3 EXISTENTIAL NON-ACTIVE CLAUSES

An existential clause in WCham may have the structure: verb phrase, consisting of the existential verb *mada* 'there is', followed by a noun phrase. For example:

- (9) *Mada Chẵm ha rang nòn trah.*
 VN N.PROP NUM CL DET VI
 there.be Cham one person that to.cast(fish-nets)
 There was a Cham man casting fish-nets.

2.1.3 ADVERBIAL ELEMENTS

Adverbial types of elements can occur in four positions in a clause, but generally a particular adverbial word will be found in only one of these positions. Adverbial elements can occur at the beginning of a clause, at the end of a clause, before a verb or after a verb. Those that occur sentence-initially (examples 10,11) generally carry a meaning of time or of sequencing of events in relation to other events and relate the entire sentence to a clause or sentence preceding it. Typically, these are called conjunctions. They differ from conjunctions that connect two clauses into sentences or two phrases or words. They seem to function at the discourse level and tie the time-line of the story or episode together. They also differ from adverbialisers (i.e. subordinating conjunctions) in that adverbialisers connect a subordinate clause to its main clause, with the subordinate clause providing background or setting information, while the main clause usually presents new information. This type of conjunction will be called a sentence conjunction (CNJS).

- (10) *Bloh patao Chẵm laik:*
 CNJS N N.PROP VT
then king Cham to.say
 Then the Cham king said:
- (11) *Hani kau bray hũ hu nũk ha rang.*
 CNJS PRO VT PRO - VT N NUM CL
now 1.HIRESP to.give 2.LORESP to.have child one CL (person)
 Now, I will give you a child.

Adverbial elements that occur at the end of the clause or sentence have the entire clause or sentence in view and semantically carry the idea of completion (finished, completed, already), certainty (indeed, true), negation, possibility or impossibility, immediateness, or customary action (often, again). For lack of a better term these will be called sentence-final particles (FIN). For example:

- (12) *Ru bloh nũk nòn matai yơ dok kađong.*
 VT FIN N DET VT FIN VI ADV
 to.rock **finished** child that to.die **already** to.stay quite
 Finished rocking, the child was dead and silent.

Preverbal adverbial words (PVA) carry the meaning of 'ever, nearly, only, still, always, or again'. These are part of the verb phrase and occur after the tense or auxiliary and before the verb. For example:

- (13) *Miũk đel ngăk sang ray?*
 N PVA VT N YN.QM
 younger.uncle **ever** to.make house also
 Have you (young uncle) ever built a house?

The postverbal adverbial words (ADV) are what are more typically thought of as adverbs and usually relate the manner of action (melodiously, clumsily, well, much, for pleasure) or location or position (in a line, far). For example:

- (14) *Ông* *nơn* *hamit* *nhu* *mayai* *bangi* *pǎng*.
 N DET VT PRO VT ADV <
 TITLE.RESP that to.hear 3 to.talk **melodious** <
 He heard them speaking melodiously.

Of course, there are exceptions to the above, both in that some words occur in more than one place, and some places occasionally have a meaning other than what is listed above.

2.2 CLAUSE VARIATIONS

2.2.1 NEGATION

Negative clauses, as in examples (15) and (20), are formed by adding the final particle *ô* 'NEG' at the end of the clause.

- (15) *Rean* *ngăk* *pap* *gah* *nũk* *matau* *nơn* *ô*.
 VT VT ADJ N N N DET NEG
 to.dare to.do evil direction child child.in.law that NEG
 He didn't dare do any more evil things to the son-in-law.

2.2.2 CHANGES IN GRAMMATICAL RELATIONS

In Cham, grammatical relations are indicated almost entirely by word order as there are no inflectional affixes, case markings or agreement markings. Passivisation has been found, but as yet no dative movement or other similar changes have been observed.

Passive clauses in Cham, as in examples (17) and (18), are formed by moving the noun phrase functioning as direct object to the beginning of the sentence and inserting *djauk* 'PASS', a passive marker or auxiliary verb, between the direct object noun phrase and the subject noun phrase.

- (16) *Sohput* *khan* *hlũn*.
 N VT PRO
 friend to.tell 1SG.LORESP
 A friend told me.
- (17) *Hlũn* *djauk* *sohput* *khan*.
 PRO AUX N VT
 1SG.LORESP PASS friend to.tell
 I was told by a friend.

An impersonal passive can be formed by using *rang* 'someone' after *djauk*. Whether the subject noun phrase can be omitted completely has not yet been determined.

- (18) *Hlũn djauk rang khan.*
 PRO AUX PRO VT
 1SG.RESP PASS 3.INDEF to.tell
 I was told by a friend.

2.3 EMBEDDED CLAUSES

Embedded clauses are clauses that are contained as part of the main clause, such as a relative clause, a complement clause functioning as the subject or object of a clause, or a clause that replaces an adverb phrase showing time, location, purpose, reason, and so on. Constructions such as indirect quotes, embedded questions, embedded commands, and subject-to-object raising have not yet been thoroughly analysed.

2.3.1 RELATIVE CLAUSES

A relative clause, as in examples (19)–(21), is a clause that is embedded in a noun phrase and that modifies the head noun of the noun phrase. Relative clauses are positioned just before the determiner (DET) if one is present, or at the end of the noun phrase if there is no determiner. The phrase in the relative clause that is the same entity as the head noun is replaced by *kung* ‘who/what/which/when, etc.’, the relative pronoun in Cham. In the following example, the relative clause is a non-active descriptive clause. The relativised noun phrase in the relative clause functions as the subject. Note that in these relative clause examples the head noun that is modified by the relative clause is underlined and the relative clause is in bold.

- (19) *No, tãl hray ha - sa nơn mada dãm ha rang*
 PART ADVZ N NUM < DET VN N NUM CL
 PAUSAL.PART when day one < that there.be suitor one CL
kung nas, mai duh daok ông nơn.
 REL.PRO ADJ VI VT < N DET
who intelligent to.come to.serve < old.man that
 One day it happened that an intelligent suitor came to serve the father.

In the following example, *dãm* ‘suitor’ is the head noun of the noun phrase that contains the relative clause. The relativised noun phrase is the subject and is realised by the relative pronoun *kung* ‘who’.

- (20) *Yau nơn yơ dãm tởng hadôm **kung mai mớng***
 CNJS < < N ADJ ADJ REL.PRO VI PREP
 that's.why < < suitors all many **who to.come from**
dahlau mai nơn hu đrôm hỡng ông nơn
 N FIN DET VT VI PREP N DET
before toward that to.be.able.to to.endure with old.man that
ngãk pap ô.
 VT ADJ FIN
 to.make evil NEG
 Therefore all those previous suitors could not endure the man's evil deeds.

Relative clauses have been found in noun phrases that are a subject, direct object, predicate complement (predicate in non-active clauses) or a vocative or addressive. The relativised phrase in the relative clause can be a noun phrase, or adverbial phrase. The relativised phrase, whether a noun phrase, adverb phrase, or predicate complement, is replaced by *kung*. If the relativised phrase is not the subject of the relative clause, *kung* will be moved to the front of the clause. Below is an example of the relativised phrase being an adverb phrase. The noun phrase containing the relative clause is underlined, and the relative pronoun, *kung*, is in bold.

- (21) *Tāl hamit yau nơn nao dăm nơn nao blay kan mők*
 CNJS VT PRO < FIN N DET VI VT N VT
 when to.hear thus < away suitor that to.go to.buy fish to.take
- nao kăk dălăm ea lăm bōng kung ông nơn*
 DIR VT PREP N PREP N REL.PRO N DET
 away to.tie.up in water in lake **where** old.man that
- khea mők nao trah pagê.*
 VT VT VI VT N
 to.propose to.have to.go to.fish.with.net tomorrow
 When the suitor heard this he went and bought fish and took them to put them
 in the lake where the old man planned to fish the next day.

2.3.2 COMPLEMENT CLAUSES

Complement clauses are clauses that are used in place of a subject, object, or some other nuclear element of the clause. (Subject complements have not yet been observed in Western Cham.) Direct and indirect quotes are also complement clauses. The only complementiser found so far is *laik* 'that'. Not all complement clauses use a complementiser.

2.3.2.1 OBJECT COMPLEMENTS

In Cham, with certain verbs, the direct object of a clause (i.e. the noun phrase that follows a verb in a transitive clause) may be a full sentence (i.e. an object complement). In example (22) the subject of both the main clause and the embedded clause is *Jawa*, so *Jawa* does not appear in the embedded clause. In (23) the subject of the main clause (Khmer, understood from context) and the subject of the embedded clause are different, so the subject of the embedded clause (*Malayu*) must appear. The complement clauses in (22) and (23) do not use a complementiser to introduce them.

- (22) *Jawa khĩn bōng kők ta-uk.*
 N VT VT N <
 Javanese to.want **to.eat knee** <
 The Javanese want to eat their knees.
- (23) *Bōh Malayu mai gaik.*
 VT N VI ADV
 to.see **Malay to.come again**
 The Khmers see the Malays coming again.

Another type of complement clause uses a complementiser to introduce the complement clause. The main clause verb is a verb of mental activity (e.g. think, want,³ wonder, believe, hope, know, understand) as in examples (24) and (25), or a verb of speech (e.g. say, ask, cry, scream) as in (26). The clauses using verbs of speech will be presented in the section on direct quotes. The complementiser, *laik* 'that' is in bold, and the embedded clause is underlined.

- (24) *Nhu thau laik Patao Chẵm nơn tắk phũn krếk nơn pajaloh.*
 PRO VT **CMPZ** N N.PROP DET VT N N DET VT
 3 to.know **that** King Cham that to.cut tree krek that to.destroy
 They knew that the Cham king had cut the krek tree down.

- (25) *Dray yỏl laik ngắk yau nơn jiang ô.*
 PRO VT **CMPZ** VT PRO < NEG <
 1PL to.understand **that** to.do like.that < can't <
 We understand that we cannot do like that.

2.3.2.2 DIRECT QUOTES

In a clause in which the main verb is a speech act, the direct object is an embedded clause, which is preceded by the complementiser *laik* 'that'. For example:

- (26) *Ông Chẵm nơn sua laik: "Djauk gêk phông*
 N N.PROP DET VT **CMPZ** WH.QM < N
 TITLE.RESP Cham that to.ask **that** why < group
hủ đũaik?"
 PRO VI
 2.LORESP to.run
 An old Cham man asks them: "Why are all of you running?"

2.3.3 ADVERBIAL CLAUSES

Adverbial clauses are clauses which are embedded in another clause and which give information about the time, purpose or reason of the action of the clause in which it is embedded. An adverbial clause may also give the hypothetical or contrafactual condition (i.e. if...then) for the clause in which it is embedded. This is not the conjoining of two clauses, but rather the embedding of one clause inside another, with the embedded clause taking the place of an adverbial phrase. The embedded clause is introduced with an adverbialiser (ADVZ) which some may call a subordinating conjunction. In the following examples the adverbialiser is in bold, and the embedded clause is underlined.

2.3.3.1 TIME ADVERBIAL CLAUSES

Embedded time Adverbial Clauses usually come at the beginning of the sentence, with the main clause following it. For example:

³ The verb *khin* 'to want' is found both with and without a complementiser. See example (22).

- (27) *Haday mông thau brük nhu bloh, Patao Chắm*
 ADVZ < VT N PRO FIN N N.PROP
 after < to.know matters 3 already King Cham
ko bray nhu dok.
 FOC VT PRO VI
 FOC to.let 3 to.stay
 When he knew their situation the Cham king let them settle.

2.3.3.2 PURPOSE ADVERBIAL CLAUSES

To indicate purpose, the purpose clause is embedded at the end of the main clause and it is introduced by the adverbialiser *tôk* 'in order that'. For example:

- (28) *Dray ngăk saphou ni yau ni tôk nưk neh nhu*
 PRO VT N ADJ ADV < ADVZ N < PRO
 1PL to.make book this like.this < **in.order.that** children < 3
taku tai hi baik.
 VT < FNS VT
 to.like < FUT to.study
 We make the book like this so that the students will want to study.

2.3.3.3 REASON ADVERBIAL CLAUSES

Reason is indicated by embedding a clause at the end of the main clause, introducing the embedded clause with the adverbialiser *kayoa* 'because'. The second clause gives the reason for the first. For example:

- (29) *Nhu thau laik yau nơn bray mai nơn kayoa*
 PRO VT VT COMP.ADV < VT DIR DET ADVZ
 3 to.know to.say like.that < to.let toward that **because**
mai hi pajaloh phưn krək.
 VI TNS VT N N
 to.come FUT to.destroy tree kre
 They say that because she came to destroy the 'krək' tree.

2.3.3.4 HYPOTHETICAL CONDITION ADVERBIAL CLAUSES

Hypothetical condition clauses are if...then clauses. The embedded conditional clause (the 'if' clause) is first and is introduced by *yah* 'if', with the main clause giving the conclusion. For example:

- (30) **Yah** phũn kayau nơn prung, *nao* *jhũl*, *nao* *pajaloh*
 ADVZ N < DET ADJ VI VT DIR VT
 if trees < those big to.go to.push away to.destroy
- phũn kayau nơn.
 N < DET
 trees < those
 If the tree was big it would push it over.

2.3.3.5 CONTRAFACTUAL CONDITION ADVERBIAL CLAUSES

A contrafactual condition clause is an if...then clause which could be stated as 'if this were true, but it isn't...'. Contrafactual clauses in Western Cham have the same structure as hypothetical clauses. The identification of them as contrafactual comes from the context. In the following example, the one who came from India had asked permission to live there.

- (31) **Yah** hư thau laik tanuth ea ni drăp hư
 ADVZ. PRO VT CMPZ N < DET N PRO
 if 2.LORESP to.know that territory < this thing 2.RESP
- nơn, hư mai mơng play India doh mai,
 DET PRO VI PREP N N.PROP PREP DIR
 that 2.RESP to.come from country India over.there toward
- hêt gêk hư mai lakau di kau dok?
 N WH.QM PRO VI VT PREP PRO VI
 reason why? 2.RESP to.come to.ask from I.RESP to.live
 If you knew that this territory was yours, when you came from India why did you ask us permission to live here?

2.4 CLAUSE COMBINING

Two or more clauses can be combined either with a Conjunction (CONJ) or by simply placing one clause after the other. With the tendency to leave out known information, the subject of a juxtaposed second clause can be omitted, especially if it is also the subject of the first clause.

3. PHRASES

3.1 NOUN PHRASES

3.1.1 HEAD AND MODIFIERS

In Western Cham, the head of the noun phrase (NP) can be a noun (N) (examples 37–41), pronoun (PRO) (examples 31, 33), a proper noun (N.PROP) (example 32), a determiner (DET) (example (34)) or classifier (CL) (examples 35, 36). A pronoun, proper noun, or determiner when used as the head of a noun phrase will always appear alone.

- (32) *Ai long lakay, ai long kamay,*
 N < ADJ N < ADJ
 oldest.sibling < male(human) oldest.sibling < female
mai pǎng Idares mayai takal ha rǔng gaik.
 VI VT N.PROP VT N NUM N ADJ
 to.come to.listen Idris to.tell story one story more
 Brothers and sisters, please come close to hear Idris tell another story.

- (33) *Hlǔn lakau ma-ah di doa rang diuk pasang*
PRO VI < PREP NUM CL N N
1SG.RESP to.pardon < from two CL wife husband
ai long.
 N <
 oldest.sibling <
 I would like to ask the two of you (the couple) for pardon.

- (34) *Ni mayai mǔng rǔng tanǔh ea Chǎm mǔng asǎl awǎl*
 DET VT PREP N N < N.PROP PREP N <
 this to.speak about history kingdom < Cham from origin <
beah mai tǎl Chǎm_ bih tanǔh ea.
 ADVZ DIR PREP N.PROP VT N <
 until towards at Cham completely kingdom <
 This is to speak about the Cham kingdom, from the beginning to the complete disappearance of it.

When used as the head of the noun phrase, a classifier will be preceded by at least one number (NUM). For example:

- (35) *Tajuh tapǎn rang nao tǎl kuh glai nǔn.*
 NUM NUM CL VI < ADV N DET
 seven eight person to.arrive.at < middle forest that
 Seven or eight people went to the middle of the forest.

- (36) *Jawa blay tangoi di Chǎm ha ratus rial.*
 N VT N PREP N.PROP NUM NUM CL
 Javanese to.buy corn from Cham one hundred riel
 The Javanese people buy corn from the Cham for a hundred riels.

If a noun is the head of the noun phrase, it can be followed by an optional possessive NP (examples 37, 38), an adjective (ADJ) (examples 37, 38) (the order of the NP and ADJ can be switched), a number (NUM) (examples 37–39) and classifier (CL—the number cannot appear without the classifier) and finally by a determiner (example 39).

- (37) *Nhu bǔh sang hlǔn prung klau bǔh.*
 PRO VT N **PRO** **ADJ** **NUM** **CL**
 3 to.see house 1SG.RESP big three CL
 He saw my three big houses.

- (38) *Nhu bôh sang prung hlũn klau bôh.*
 PRO VT N ADJ PRO NUM CL
 3 to.see house big 1SG.RESP three CL
 He saw my three big houses.
- (39) *Đuaik nao tãl labik ha sa nơn, ông Chăm*
 VI DIR PREP N NUM CL DET N N.PROP
 to.run away to place one CL that TITLE.RESP Cham
nơn sua laik...
 DET VT CMPZ
 that to.ask that
 After running for a while, they arrive at a place, and an old Cham man asks them...

In addition to the above, a prepositional phrase (PP) or a noun phrase which consists of a noun or two nouns has been used to modify a head noun. Apart from coming after the head noun and before the determiner, it has not been possible to place them more accurately in the noun phrase since there were no clauses in the data which included the prepositional phrase or noun phrase along with an adjective, possessive noun phrase, or number–classifier combination. In example (40) the NP is underlined and the PP that is modifying the noun *tanũh ea* is in bold. Note that the NP in the PP—*play Ku*—consists of two nouns, with *Ku* modifying the main noun *play*.

- (40) *Nhu hu mayai laik mớng samăn dahlau tanũh ea*
 PRO TNS VT CMPZ PREP N ADJ N <
 3 PAST to.say that from time in.the.past kingdom <
đi play Ku ni sết ta tasik.
 PREP N N DET ADV < N
in country Cambodian this entirely < sea
 They say that formerly Cambodia here was entirely sea.

In example (41) a location NP consisting of two nouns—*chỏk đangrêk* ‘mountain Dangrek’—modifies the head noun, *takai* ‘foot’.

- (41) *Maka moh labik tasik nơn di takai chỏk Đangrêk nơn*
 CNJS PREP N N DET PREP N N N DET
 then at area sea that at foot **mountain Dangrek** that
mada ha sa koh, rang iau Koh Gôk Dalók.
 VN NUM CL N N VT N N.PROP N.PROP
 there.be one CL island people to.call Island Gok Dalok
 In the sea, near the foot of the Dangrek Mountains, there was an island; the Khmers called it Gok Dalok Island.

In a few examples, the head noun follows the number and classifier. This is apparently found in older stories, in speech told to make them sound older, or in the speech of older speakers of Cham. This word order, with the noun coming after its modifiers, is similar to the word order of the noun phrases in Eastern (Vietnamese) Cham.

3.1.2 POSSESSION

Possession is shown by placing a noun phrase after the noun that is possessed. If an adjective exists in the main noun phrase, it may come before or after the possessive noun phrase (examples 42, 43). It is possible that the possessive noun phrase is restricted in form, although the limited amount of data examined for this sketch is not conclusive one way or the other.

- (42) *Nhu bôh sang hlǔn prung klau bôh.*
 PRO VT N PRO ADJ NUM CL
 3 to.see house 1SG.LORESP big three CL
 He saw my three big houses.

The possessive noun phrase and the adjective may also be reversed, with no apparent change in meaning.

- (43) *Nhu bôh sang prung hlǔn klau bôh.*
 PRO VT N ADJ PRO NUM CL
 3 to.see house big 1SG.RESP three CL
 He saw my three big houses.

3.2 VERB PHRASES

The verb phrase in Western Cham contains several elements. The head of the verb phrase is of course a verb. The verb may be intransitive, transitive, bitransitive, or non-active.

Three categories of words may precede the intransitive, transitive, and bitransitive verbs in the verb phrase: tense (TNS—*hu* ‘past’, *hi* ‘future’) (example 44), auxiliary (AUX—*djauk* ‘must’) (examples 45, 46) and a preverb adverb (PVA) (examples 45, 47).

- (44) *Nhu hu mayai laik mông samăn dahlau tanuh ea*
 PRO TNS VT CMPZ PREP N ADJ N <
 3 PAST to.say that from time in.the.past territory <
di play Ku ni sět ta tasik.
 PREP N N DET ADV < N
 in country Cambodian this entirely < sea
 They say that formerly the territory of Cambodia here was entirely sea.
- (45) *Yah rôk nao, bôh drăp kau, hu djauk ta*
 ADVZ VT DIR VT N PRO PRO AUX PVA
 if to.dig away to.see thing 1.HIRESP 2.LORESP must only
bray ni ka kau wok.
 VT DET PREP PRO FIN
 to.give this to 1.HIRESP back
 If you go dig it up and find my things, you have to give it back to me.

- (46) *Rani djauk hũ bray pagöl tanũh ea ni mai*
 ADV AUX PRO VT VT N < DET DIR
 now **must** 2.LORESP to.give to.hand.over territory < this toward
ka kau wøk.
 PREP PRO FIN
 to 1.HIRESP back
 Now you must hand over this territory back to me.
- (47) *Miũk dẽl ngăk sang ray?*
 N PVA VT N YN.QM
 younger.uncle **ever** to.make house also
 Have you (young uncle) ever built a house?

Two categories of words occur after the verb, directional (DIR—*nao* ‘away’, *mai* ‘come’) (examples 48, 50, 60, 65), and adverbs (ADV) (example 49, 50). Directionals generally occur immediately after the verb. Adverbs occur after the directionals.

- (48) *Yah røk nao bõh drăp kau, hũ djauk ta*
 ADVZ VT DIR VT N PRO PRO AUX PVA
 if to.dig **away** to.see thing 1.HIRESP 2.LORESP must only
bray ni ka kau wøk.
 VT DET PREP PRO FIN
 to.give this to 1.RESP back
 If you go dig it up and find my things, you have to give it back to me.
- (49) *Hu dok sanăng sanea găn lamũ rai patao*
 TNS VI ADV < PREP NUM N N
 PAST to.live **peacefully** < for.the.duration.of five reign king
păk Gøk Daløk nõn.
 PREP N.PROP N.PROP DET
 at Gok Dalok that
 They lived peacefully for five generations of kings at Gok Dalok.
- (50) *Nhu đũaik nao tah yơ.*
 PRO VI DIR ADV FIN
 3 to.run **away far** already
 They have run far already.

The non-active verb appears alone (example 9), if it is there at all. Sometimes there is no verb in a non-active clause (examples 6–8).

3.3 ADJECTIVE PHRASES

Adjective phrases in WCham have an obligatory adjective (examples 51, 52) followed by an optional intensifier (usually *lõ* ‘very’) (example 52).

- (51) *Katiang ni prung.*
 N DET ADJ
 boil this big
 This boil is big.
- (52) *Katiang ni prung lô.*
 N DET ADJ INT
 boil this big very
 This boil is very big.

3.4 ADVERBIAL PHRASES

Phrases that are adverbial in nature have three different structures: adverb phrases, prepositional phrases, and a limited set of noun phrases.

3.4.1 ADVERB PHRASES

Adverb phrases are made up of an obligatory adverb as head (examples 53, 54, 67) and an optional intensifier (usually *lô* ‘very’, occasionally *đay* ‘very’) (example 54).

- (53) *Ông nơn hamit n̄hu mayai bangi păng.*
 N DET VT PRO VT ADV <
 TITLE.RESP that to.hear 3 to.talk **melodious** <
 He heard them speaking melodiously.
- (54) *Madô laik mông dray mada brūk rawăm lô đay dray*
 CNJS < PREP PRO VT N ADJ ADV INT PRO
 but < from IPL there.be work to.be.busy **much** **very** IPL
ngăk saphou ni dhăt ô.
 VT N ADJ ADV FIN
 to.make book this **completely.gone** NEG
 Because we were so busy we weren’t able to finish the book.

3.4.2 PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

Prepositional phrases are adverbial in nature and can modify a verb or a noun. In example (55) the larger prepositional phrase, indicating where something was written, is in bold, the noun phrase that is part of the prepositional phrase is underlined, and the embedded prepositional phrase that modifies the noun *tapūk* ‘book’ is double underlined.

- (55) *Dalăm tapūk Ku mông kal dahlau nhu hu*
 PREP N N PREP N ADJ PRO TNS
in **book** **Cambodian** **from** **time** **in.the.past** 3 PAST
hrăk, ngěn saphou Preah Thong Neang Neak.
 VT N N N.PROP N.PROP N.PROP N.PROP
 to.write name book Preah Thong Neang Neak
 This is written in an ancient Khmer book called ‘Preah Thong Neang Neak’.

3.4.3 NOUN PHRASES

There is a limited set of noun phrases that can be used adverbially. The head noun of these noun phrases often relates to time or location, such as *malam* ‘night’, *mabroi* ‘yesterday’, and other time-related nouns, as well as a few words like *sang* ‘house, home’ (examples 56–58).

- (56) *Tăl păng nao malăm dĩ sa, dăm nơn hamit ông hống*
 ADVZ VT VI N ADJ < N DET VT N PREP
 when to.listen to.go **night first** < suitor that to.hear old.man with
muk mayai gawk laik: “Pagê ni ông khĩn
 N VT REFL CMPZ N DET N VT
 grandmother to.speak together that **tomorrow this** old.man to.want
padăr dăm nơn ngăk jiang jal meok nao
 VT N DET VT VN N VT VI
 to.do.again suitor that to.do to.be large.fish.net to.carry to.go
trah kan dalăm bōng ni bōng nơn”.
 VI F PREP N DET N DET
 to.fish.with.net fish in lake this lake that
 While he was listening the first night, the suitor heard the man and woman talk together, saying: “Tomorrow I want to use that suitor as a fish net which I will take to fish in such and such a lake”.

- (57) *Marekăng mai mabroi.*
 N VI N
 American(s) to.come **yesterday**
 The Americans came yesterday.

- (58) *Hlũn hi nao sang.*
 PRO TNS VI N
 1SG.LORESP FUT to.go **house**
 I will go home.

4. SENTENCES

4.1 QUESTIONS

4.1.1 YES/NO QUESTIONS

Yes/no questions in Cham can be formed in at least three ways, all of which involve adding a word or a phrase to the end of the clause.

The first way is by adding the word *ray* to the end of the clause (example 59). In other locations in the sentence, *ray* can mean ‘or’, ‘so’, or ‘also’. In this type of yes/no clause, *ray* marks the sentence as a question. In addition, the intonation, which usually falls at the end of a sentence, rises at the end of yes/no questions.

- (59) *Bôh ray?*
 VT FIN
 to.see YN.QM
 See?

The second type of yes/no question adds *mǐn* to the end of the clause (example 60). It can also be used at the end of a statement as an affirmative particle, but in the following clause, it marks the clause as a yes/no question. Rising intonation at the end of the clause indicates this is a question.

- (60) *Chǐm kung rang chuh nơn rang mōk mai*
 N REL.PRO PRO VT DET PRO VT DIR
 animal that 3.INDEF to.hunt that 3.INDEF to.bring toward
bōng hu mǐn?
 VT VT FIN
 to.eat to.be.able.to YN.QM
 Can they eat animals that they hunted?

The third type of yes/no questions uses a phrase at the end: *ray ha soh mǐn*. This seems to function as a tag ending on the sentence, as in English ‘Bill is tall, isn’t he?’ For example:

- (61) *Rang đêl pađār sau nao doah pagui chǐm ray*
 PRO ADV VT N VI VT VT N ADV
 3.INDEF ever to.use dog to.go to.search.for to.chase animal also
ha soh mǐn?
 CONJ FIN <
 or or.not <
 Do they or don’t they ever use dogs to search for, to chase the animals?

4.1.2 CONTENT QUESTIONS

4.1.2.1 WH QUESTIONS

Content questions are questions that ask for more than a yes or no answer. Typically, these questions use a word that replaces part or all of the noun phrase, adverb phrase, adverbial clause and so on. In some cases, the questioned part of the sentence is moved to the front of the sentence.

In the following non-active sentence, the type of the subject noun is questioned (i.e. the quality, type, etc.). The noun *chǐm* is followed by the content question word, *gêk*.

- (62) *Chǐm gêk manưng kung rang nao*
 N WH.QM ADJ REL.PRO PRO VI
 birds/animals(generic) what some that 3.INDEF to.go
chuh nơn?
 VT DET
 to.hunt that
 What are the birds (animals) that they go hunting?

In example (63) the direct object is questioned. The word *hagêk* replaces the direct object in the sentence following the verb.

- (63) *Rang pađār hagêk manưng samrap chuh chǐm nơn?*
 PRO VT WH.QM ADJ CONJ VT N DET
 3.INDEF to.use what? some for.the.purpose.of to.hunt animals that
 What (material) do they use to hunt animals?

In example (64) the manner is questioned. The content question word (or actually phrase) is *yau bǎr* and it occurs in the position in the sentence where adverbs or adverbial clauses explaining manner would be found.

- (64) *Kanrǎm ko rang chěk **yau bǎr?***
 N FOC PRO VT **WH.QM** <
 animal.trap(falls on victim) FOC 3.INDEF to.place **how?** <
 How do they set up the trap that falls on victims?

4.1.2.2 EITHER/OR

Either/Or questions are content questions that give the one who responds only two options (examples 65, 66). In this type of question, there are two clauses which are connected by the conjunction *ha* ‘or’. The conjunction is marked by bold type, and the full clauses are underlined on either side of the conjunction.

- (65) *Rang nao chuh nǎn rang nao chuh ma-ǎn ha*
 PRO VI VT DET PRO VI VT ADV **CONJ**
 3.INDEF to.go to.hunt that 3.INDEF to.go to.hunt for.pleasure **or**
rang chuh mǎk mai bǎng?
 PRO VT VT DIR VT
 3.INDEF to.hunt to.bring toward to.eat
 When they go hunting, do they hunt the animals for pleasure or do they hunt them for food?

- (66) *Hí nao ha rang doa rang ha nao lô gauk?*
 TNS VI NUM CL NUM CL **CONJ** VI ADJ N
 FUT to.go one person two person **or** to.go many companion
 Do they go alone, in a group of two, or a lot more (than that)?

4.2 COMMANDS

There are two types of commands that have been found so far. The first is a mild command or request. It begins with *lakau* ‘to ask’ and ends with *wek* ‘mild imperative’. For example:

- (67) *Lakau chǎp đơ ni wek!*
 VT VT ADV < **FIN**
to.ask to.stop at.this.point < **MILD.IMPER**
 Please let me stop now! (lit. I ask to stop now.)

The second is a negative command. In this type of command, the word *đi* is found between the noun phrase subject and the verb phrase and *juai* ‘negative imperative’ is found at the end of the clause (examples 68–70).

- (68) *Hư đí tǎk juai.*
 PRO **NEG...** VT **FIN**
 2.RESP **don’t** to.cut **NEG.IMPER**
 Don’t cut (me) down.

The subject of the negative command is optional. For example:

- (69) *Di đuaik juai.*
 NEG... VI FIN
don't to.run NEG.IMPER
 Don't run away.

A regular command may be given in which the main clause (underlined) ends with the final particle *wek*. For example:

- (70) *Hoi, rup huf di nao hlay juai, hu*
 INTER N PRO NEG... VI PRO FIN PRO
 Oh body 2.LORESP don't to.go where neg.imper 2.LORESP
- chang kau moh ni wek.*
 VT PRO PRO < FIN
 to.wait.for 1.HIRESP here < MILD.IMPER
 Hey, body, don't go anywhere, just wait for me here.

APPENDIX: LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<	Connects to previous word to form compound word
ADJ	adjective
ADV	adverb
ADVZ	adverbialiser
AUX	auxiliary
CL	classifier
COMP.ADV	comparative adverb
CMPZ	complementiser
CONJ	conjunction
CNJS	conjunction, sentence level
DET	determiner
DIR	directional
DUM.SUBJ	dummy subject
FIN	final particle
FOC	focus marker
HIRESP	higher respect
IMPER	imperative
INT	intensifier
INTER	interjection
LORESP	lower respect
N	noun
N.PROP	noun, proper
NEG	negative
NUM	number
PART	particle
PREP	preposition

PRO	pronoun
PVA	preverbal adverb
REFL	reflexive
REL.PRO	relative pronoun
TNS	tense
U	unknown
VB	verb, bitransitive
VI	verb, intransitive
VN	verb, non-active
VT	verb, transitive
WH.QM	WH question marker
YN.QM	yes/no question marker