It is well known that the major languages of Southeast Asia, whilst not necessarily genetically related to one another, show an impressive number of linguistic features in common. For example, honorific titles and terms marking rank or kinship are widely used in place of personal pronouns. Nearly all of these languages make use of reduplication, and numerals and classifiers usually constitute a grammatical category. From one language to another, moreover, given lexical items appear to have remarkably similar ranges of meaning. Collectively, all such shared features not only reflect a certain community of cultural heritage but also suggest interchanges close enough to have favored their transmission across linguistic boundaries.

I propose to discuss here yet another areal feature of Southeast Asian languages, limiting mysel to Burmese, modern Khmer, Malay, and Thai. I tentatively term this feature elaboration, by which I refer to a set of specific processes of expression.

When we examine the lexicon of Southeast Asian languages or analyze Southeast Asian literary works we are apt to be struck by the ways in which essentially simple ideas are expressed by strings of words which, while supporting each other, convey more or less the same notion. The effect of this style of expression is, depending upon the requirements of the
text, to give emphasis, to introduce a certain
tility of meaning, or to embellish. We may also
under various florid styles making much use of
lications and compounded synonyms. In other
s, several modes of expansion are operative in
languages by which base forms can be 'inflated'
out altering their lexical meaning. While such
orated forms are occasionally more figurative
the forms on which they are based, this modifi-
ion of meaning is probably not inherent in the
ess: usually the topic or the context is felt
demand a particular style of utterance for which
elaborations are appropriate. The following
amples illustrate how elaboration is manifested.

er:

/ʔomiyor to: tヌ so:m neek tεen ʔos pίnit
iscay ?aoy pվt pra:kɔt/ 'From now on, will you
ase examine it clearly?'
/pίnit/ 'to examine'
/pίniscay/ (Sanskrit viniscaya 'exam-
nation'), no meaning in modern Khmer.
/pվt/ 'true, clear'.
/prɑːkɔt/ 'true, clear, exact'.

/ʔiːə thνy: ?aoy kʰmae ʔvrːŋ phey kʰlaːt
slot ?ʔt seckdʁy kʰlaːhɑːn/ 'They frightened us
odians'.
/phey/ 'to fear'.
/kʰlaːt/ 'to fear'.
/tɔkslɔt/ 'to be shocked'.
/?ʔt seckdʁy kʰlaːhɑːn/ 'to have no
bravery'.

j:
/ca tham ?aray coŋ phίnίt phίcaːrana: h ayr laʔlɛt
łaʔɔː: thiː:thúen kɔːn/ 'Before doing anything, you should examine it thoroughly'.
/phin̩i:t/ 'to examine'.
/phícaːraːn/: 'to examine, consider'.
/laʔiːt/ 'fine, thorough, all through'.
/łaʔɔː:/ 'fine, beautiful'.
/thiː:thúen/ 'thoroughly, fine'.

Malay:
kiːta mesti hapuskan sēteru mahu yang maseh merbak di segenap hutan rimba 'We should wipe out our enemies who are spreading in the jungle'.
sēteru 'enemy'.
mahu 'bee'.
hutan 'jungle'.
rimba 'jungle'.

To non-native speakers of these languages the use of successive words of the same or similar meaning in the same grammatical position may seem not only redundant but also excessive. One naturally wonders why native speakers use two or more words when one would do, and one is surprised to learn that the 'superfluous' words add little or nothing either to the sense or to the understanding of what is to be expressed.

To native speakers of these languages, on the contrary, such elaborations introduce a definite polish and fluidity. This is a simple esthetic or stylistic datum, which it behooves us to analyze and understand but which does not have to be justified. The skillful combination of words with similar meaning and the use of reduplications give color and force to what is said and respond to an interest in overtones above and beyond lexical meaning in the
Elaborations, then, are associated with style in a tacit sense. An essential ingredient of literary mentation, they are by no means confined to nature or even to the self-conscious embellishment of speech. They are an indispensable feature of real discourse. Even on the most ordinary levels of communication one finds elaborations without difficulty. It is not too much to say in fact that real speech purged of elaborations, though unambiguous and grammatically correct, sounds unpleasantly harsh and alien to native speakers. In some cases elaborations have an intensive effect in the sense that they elicit more than ordinary attention from hearer or reader. In other cases they offer nothing but expansion for reasons of stylistic deference alone. In all situations they are much recited by speakers and writers in most Southeast Asian languages.

**Thiele Elaboration**

Elaborations consist essentially of a base word with an accompanying elaborator either preceding it or following it. In some cases it is not possible to determine which term of the combination is the base word which is the elaborator; in these cases both terms may be regarded as collateral elaborators. The elaborator may show various values in relation to the base word: it may have precisely the same lexical meaning or it may have a meaning which is less close, related, or even in opposition to that of the base. However meaning the elaborator may have, its force usually diminished in the process of elaboration.

Four types of elaboration are in common use in Southeast Asian languages. These are identified
here, according to the semantic relationship between their components, as iteratives, polymers, reduplicatives, and antonymies.

Iteratives

Iteratives are combinations of two words of the same or similar meaning. The two components of iteratives, namely the base word and its iterative elaborator, confirm or emphasize each other's meaning. Though extra meaning is gained by iteration, words and sometimes constructions are lengthened, and in the case of words having more than one meaning the process of iteration may help to clarify, intensify and/or specify the meaning selected. It should be noted that I use the word "meaning" in a very broad sense. By "words of the same or similar meaning" I refer to the lexical meaning of words that a user of the language readily thinks of. It is generally held that there are no such things as true synonyms. Therefore, in my investigation, the components of iteratives are either words which yield approximately the same translation or words which fall within a common field of association. Iteratives can be easily found in Modern Khmer, Malay, Burmese and Thai.

Khmer:

/vuŋ tɛːkuː:/ (family + family) 'family'
/mhoːp comŋxv/ (food + food) 'food'
/pihpup loːk/ (world + world) 'world, earth'
/niyiːy sdxv/ (say + say) 'say'
/sɔp krupt/ (all + all) 'all'
/cas cɛeriːɔ/ (old + old) 'old'
/?ətʰibaːy puɛnŋyuɛl/ (explain + explain) 'explain'
ay: 1

hutan rimba  (jungle + jungle)  'jungle'
sawah ladang  (farm + farm)  'farm'
chepat ligat  (quick + quick)  'quick'
tempik surak  (shout + shout)  'shout'
tari menari  (dance + dancing)  'dance'

mese: 2

/pyò hsoù/  (speak + speak)  'speak'
/kauñ muñ/  (good + good)  'be good'
/cí hyú/  (look + look)  'look'
/ãhceiñ āhka/  (time + time)  'time'
/ayu wadá/  (belief + belief)  'belief'
/badha sakà/  (language + language)  'language'

ai:

/sáp sōmbát/  (treasure + treasure)  'treasure'
/pà: doŋ/  (jungle + jungle)  'jungle'
/fā: phanãŋ/  (wall + wall)  'wall'
/bè:p yà:ŋ/  (kind, sort + kind, sort)  'kind, sort'
/hô:m lǒ:m/  (surround + surround)  'surround'
/khiên tiː/  (beat + beat)  'to beat'

Polymers

Polymers are one step removed from iteratives. The meanings of the components of a polymer are related in the speaker's thought; they are put together because one of them makes him think of the other. A polymer reflects the speaker's efforts as he searches his lexicon and brings to the surface words that immediately strike his mind. The structure of a polymer may coincide with that of a kind of absolute compound. Any decision on where to put the
dividing line between polymers and additive compounds rests with individual speakers. If one of the components is reduced to being an incidental elaborator, i.e., if its lexical meaning is almost ignored, the combination may then be considered a polymer and hence an elaboration. Additive compounds, on the semantic level, must be derived from adding something to something, not from adding something to almost nothing.

Khmer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Khmer</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/cvt thlaem/</td>
<td>(heart + liver)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/muk moet/</td>
<td>(face + mouth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/thlok komphaen/</td>
<td>(clown + funny)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/phlec traciek/</td>
<td>(forget + ear)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/khlaŋ klaː:/</td>
<td>(strong + brave)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/chuəh prəkaek/</td>
<td>(quarrel + quarrel)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Malay:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Malay</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>setebru madu</td>
<td>(enemy + bee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kurus kering</td>
<td>(be thin + be dry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cherah chuacha</td>
<td>(clear + temperature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>budi bahasa</td>
<td>(merit + language)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reuh rendah</td>
<td>(be busy + be lower)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>punah jehanan</td>
<td>(be spoiled + hell)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Burmese:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/hceʔ pyou/</td>
<td>(cook + boil)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/yei tha/</td>
<td>(write + inscribe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/yaʔ sè/</td>
<td>(stop + slacken off)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/kiŋ hyiŋ/</td>
<td>(be free from + be clear)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/yá hyi/</td>
<td>(get, obtain + have)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In modern Khmer, Burmese and Thai there are certain idiomatic expressions which can be classed as polymers. Most of these consist of four main syllables or four words. The components of these expressions are combined on grounds of their similar or related meanings: they may signify things of the same kind, things that normally appear together, things that are very much alike, or things that imply the same overall meaning as the whole combination. The arrangement of words is usually fixed in a certain order either because such things occur in that sequence or because a certain euphonic effect is achieved by that order. Rhyming, chiming and alliteration play an important part in the arrangement as well as in the selection of components. The meaning of a polymer of this type may be fairly literal and compass all that its components suggest; more commonly, however, speakers want only one or two words in the total combination to be meaningful and put the other words in for the effect of elaboration. Polymers of this type have not been observed by my lay informant.
carry in the mouth + to carry suspended in the hand) 'to lead and help'.

/chmuen cuen luak do:/ (trader + to trade + to sell + to exchange) 'to do business, trade'.

das tuen sdyu pradau/ (to rouse + rouse + say + teach) 'to instruct'.

/srae comka: chba: domnam/ (rice field + garden flower garden + plantation) 'land for plantation'.

/mi:æs prak thuæn-thiæn/ (gold + silver + treasure) 'wealth'.

Burmese:

/kau? pè æthi ahnañ/ (paddy + pulse + fruit + grain) 'crops, agricultural produce'.

/où iñ hkwè? yau?/ (pot + bowl + cup + ladle) 'household goods'.

/nyi ākou mauñ hnäma/ (brother + brother + brother + sister) 'brothers and sisters'.

/sei? le? eîh cãñ/ (mind + limb + be calm, cool feel cold) 'to be peaceful, serene'.

/hnou? hkùñ hse? thá/ (mouth + word + join + offer) 'greet'.

Thai:

/ti: ran fan the:ñ/ (beat + poke + chop + pierce) 'fight, fighting'.

/dì:t sì: tì: pàw/ (pluck + rub + beat + blow) 'to play musical instruments'.

/yèp pàk thàk rò:y/ (sew + embroider + knit, plait, crochet + to thread) 'needlework'.

/thùey thò: ?o: cha:m/ (bowl + big jar with lid bowl-shaped vessel + plate) 'crockery'.

/rwø phe: na:wa:/ (boat + raft + ship) 'boat'.

/mû: hêt pèt kày/ (pork + mushroom + duck + chicken) 'foodstuff'.

/hùey nõ:ñ khîc:ñ bûn/ (brook + swamp + canal + large swamp) 'waters'.

Reduplicatives

Reduplicatives, our third type of elaboration,
combinations of a base word and a reduplication it. In many languages reduplication may possess other phonaesthetic or grammatical meaning. This is so true in modern Khmer, Burmese, Malay and Thai, where both repetitive and partial reduplication occurs in many types of grammatical meaning can be observed. Here I am concerned only with the kind of partial reduplication which produces a euphonic effect, and not dealing with the kind of reduplication which is an effect in grammar. I regard reduplicatives as constructions of two components: a base word and its reduplication. The base word carries its own meaning whereas the reduplication is a "nonsense" word and is a reduplicative product of the base word. In the following examples the absence of the meaning of the reduplication will be presented by a zero (φ).

Example:

/manus maniːə/ (human being + φ) 'human being'
/khmeːŋ khmaːŋ/ (children + φ) 'children'
/khɔrp khsʔiəʔ/ (whisper + φ) 'whisper'
/kɔmpriː kɔmpriːə/ (φ + orphan) 'orphan'
/thɲŋɛn thɲːə/ (heavy + φ) 'heavy, strong'
/tuːlom tuːliːəy/ (φ + wide) 'wide'

Example:

bukit bukau (hill + φ) 'hill'
sekali sekala (once + φ) 'once'
waris warah (relatives + φ) 'relatives'
gunung ganang (mountain + φ) 'mountain'
maki hamun (curse + φ) 'curse'
Thai:

/ruŋ raːw/ (story, matter + φ) 'story, matter'
/manút manaː/ (human being + φ) 'human being'
/thanàt thaniː/ (dexterous + φ) 'dexterous'
/kraçyːt kraçyːŋ/ (φ + dispersed) 'dispersed'
/neṭ niwēy/ (φ + tired) 'tired'
/?uən thuən/ (be stout + φ) 'to be stout'

Burmese:

/thwe? le?/ (be nimble + φ) 'to be nimble'
/myaŋ hsaŋ/ (be quick + φ) 'to be quick'
/nyi nya/ (be even + φ) 'to be even'
/làŋ pàŋ/ (road + φ) 'road'
/tàyà təpauŋ/ (law + φ) 'law'
/ni na/ (method + φ) 'method'

Antonymies

The fourth and last type of elaboration comprises antonymies, which are constructions the two members of which have contrary meanings. These are not elaborations in the strictest sense, but rather additive compounds, inasmuch as the meaning of the combination is derived from that of its first member plus that of its second member. However, it is the lexical opposition of the two members that brings them together and it is the implications arising out of their contrariety that justifies their inclusion under elaborations. It should be noted, moreover, that if the relationship between the members of all four types of elaboration is represented on a graduated scale we obtain a symmetrical continuum ranging
m components of the same meaning, components of similar or related meaning, components of non-related meaning, and finally components of opposite meaning, below.

One further point justifies the inclusion of antonymies with elaborations. In many contexts only one member of the construction is really meaningful, and one need not use both components in order to be clearly understood. In Thai, for instance, the combination /sǔːŋ-təm/ ('high' + 'low') means 'size'. However, when one asks about a person's "size" one normally wants to know his height and is not interested in the question of his shortness. Thus the sentence /kháw sǔːŋ-təm khèː nāy/ means precisely the same thing as the sentence /kháw sǔːŋ khèː nāy/ how tall is he?'

Example:

/sok tuːk/ (happiness + suffering) 'ups and downs of life'

/(kaː) khɔs troːv/ (matter + wrong + right) 'whatever right or wrong, responsibility'
/cwt chğa:y/  (near + far) 'all, everywhere'
/to:ç thom/  (small + big) 'all sizes'
/ti:ap khpuęs/ (low + high) 'all, high and low'

Malay:

tuwa muda  (old + young) 'all, everybody'
kechil besar  (small + big) 'all sizes'
tinggi rendah  (high + low) 'every level, every class'
lelaki prampuan  (male + female) 'everybody, all sexes'

Burmese:

/thà thǎmᵢ/  (son + daughter) 'children'
/hyeĩ nau/  (front + back) 'front and back'
/ ámbi ãhpǎ/  (mother + father) 'parents'
/yaũn we/  (sell + buy) 'trade'
/thwà la/  (go + come) 'travel about'

Thai:

/hè:t phǒn/  (cause + result) 'reason'
/phít chô:p/  (wrong + right) 'whether right or wrong'
/sùk thúk/  (happiness + suffering) 'ups and downs in life'
/nó:y yày/  (small + big) 'all, large and small'
/nũę tây/  (north + south) 'all directions, north and south'
Compound Elaboration

As has been said earlier, elaborations of the types just described are linguistic processes which are highly appreciated by speakers of the languages under discussion. However, such expansions may be applied not only to simple words but also to compounds and grammatical constructions, at least in modern Amur and Thai. In these two languages, if one member of a compound occurs also as a member of a simple elaboration the compound itself may be expanded into a four-member elaboration. In other words, if X occurs in composition with C (CX) and if X occurs also in a simple elaboration with Y (XY) the compound CX may be expanded into CXCXY or CYCX.

Amur:

CX /tūk mōet/ (water + mouth) 'saliva'
XY /mōet kō:/ (mouth + neck) 'to argue'
CXCXY /tūk mōet tūk-kō:/ 'saliva'

CX /prúeɔ cît/ (worry + heart) 'to worry'
XY /cît thlæm/ (heart + liver) 'heart'
CXCXY /prúeɔ cît prúeɔ thlæm/ 'to worry'

Thai:

CX /ná:m-taː:/ (water + eyes) 'tears'
XX /hūː taː:/ (ear + eye) 'eyes, ears'
CXCXY /ná:m hūː ná:m-taː:/ 'tears'

CX /khāw-cay/ (enter + heart) 'understand'
YX /ʔòk cay/ (chest + heart) 'heart'
CXCXY /khāw ʔòk khāw-cay/ 'understand'
CX /hɔn-ṇāːːm/ (room + water) 'water closet'
XY /nāːːm thâːː/ (water + water site) 'water site'
CXCY /hɔn-ṇāːːm hɔn thâːː/ 'water closet'

Grammatical constructions of two constituents may also undergo elaboration. For examples, if WX represents a grammatical construction, and XY represents a simple elaboration of one type or another, then WX may be expanded into WXWY or WYWX. The grammatical constructions capable of elaboration are of any type except that of the subject-verb construction.

Khmer:
WX /pum dvn/ (not + know) 'not to know'
XY /dvn yuəl/ (know + understand) 'know'
WXWY /pum dvn pum yuəl/ 'not to know'

WX /craən baəp/ (many + type) 'many types'
XY /baep yaːːŋ/ (type + type) 'type'
WXWY /craən baəp craən yaːːŋ/ 'many types'

WX /dvn tuk/ (know + suffering) 'to know the hardships of life'

YX /sok tuk/ (happiness + suffering) 'ups and downs of life'

WXWY /dvn tuk dvn sok/ 'to know the hardships of life'
Wx /khon ke:/ (person + old) 'old person'

Yx /thèw ke:/ (old + old) 'old'

Wywx /khon thèw khon ke:/ 'old person'

Wx /klay ta:/ (far + eye) 'out of sight'

Yx /hû: ta:/ (ear + eye) 'eyes, ears'

Wyx /klay hû: klay ta:/ 'out of sight'

Wx /pen rûəŋ/ (to be + matter, story) 'be a matter, be some-

thing'

Xy /rûəŋ ra:w/ (matter, story + 'matter, story'

Wxwy /pen rûəŋ pen ra:w/ 'be a matter, be something'

Elaborations, then, are yet another areal

linguistic feature of Southeast Asia. Far from being

autological or mere word-play, they are a widely used

techniques of diversifying lexical meaning. As such, they

exercise an important function in ordinary discourse

as well as in writing; it is not too much to say that

they are an essential feature of effective speech and

mark of good literary style. Neither the languages

nor the literatures of Southeast Asia can be fully

appreciated without knowledge of their patterns and

impact.

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1 I should like to record my thanks to Mr. Hasdin

Salaeh, Lecturer in Malay at The Faculty of Arts,

Nalulalongkorn University, for his explanation of

Malay syntax and also for supplying the Malay exam-

ples listed here.
Examples of Burmese are taken from John Okell's A Reference Grammar of Colloquial Burmese 1, London, Oxford University Press, 1963. Okell classifies this type of forms as "doubled verbs" and "doubled nouns" and explains that they occur "especially in formal or literary contexts" (op. cit., p. 26).

Characteristic of Thai alone is a type of chiming reduplicative showing constant vowels. If the base word is monosyllabic, the vowel of the elaborator is limited to /ɤ, ɤː/: e.g., /kɪn/ > /kɪn kɪn/ 'to eat', /tόʔ/ > /tόʔ tόʔ/ 'table', /bɯɛ/ > /bɯɛ bɨː/ 'to be bored'. This /ɤ, ɤː/ vowel chimes with any base-vowel except itself; when the base word has this vowel, the elaborator shows /ɛ, ɛː/: e.g., /yɛʔ/ > /yɛʔ yɛʔ/ 'plentiful', /dɛ:n/ > /dɛ:n dɛ:n/ 'to walk'. If the base word is disyllabic, a compound, or even a two-word grammatical construction, the vowel of the elaborator may show these same limitations. Alternatively, the second member of the base word may yield an alliterating reduplication with the fixed vowel + final /-ɔŋ/ plus a tone in harmony with that of the base: e.g., /ʔaːhɔːn/ > /ʔaːhɔːn ʔaːhɔːn/ or /ʔaːhɔŋ ʔaːhɔːn/ 'food'; /náːk-rjɛn/ > /náːk-rjɛn náːk-rjɛn/ or /náːk-ɾjɔŋ náːk-rjɛn/ 'student'; /kɪn khɔːw/ > /kɪn khɔːw kɪn khɔːw/ or /kɪn khɔŋ kɪn khɔːw/ 'to have a meal'.