KHMER FINAL PARTICLES *phɔɔŋ* & *dae*

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1 Introduction

In Khmer, there are a number of words occurring at the end of sentences, clauses, or phrases which add meanings such as “question” or “emphasis”. Huffman (1967) and Ueda (2002) refer to these words as “final sentence particles”. Jacob (1968) calls them “final phrase particles”. Because it is difficult to identify the exact locus of occurrence of these words, I will call them “final particles” collectively in this paper. This paper deals with two “final particles”, *phɔɔŋ* and *dae*, which occur with an apparently similar meaning “too, also”.

(1) **msə́l mæŋ**  
    kʰnom riən  
    nə́v  
    pannalaj  
    *phɔɔŋ*  
    yesterday  
    I study at  
    library

(2) **msə́l mæŋ**  
    kʰnom  
    riən  
    nə́v  
    pannalaj  
    yesterday  
    I study at  
    library  
    haaj  
    nə́v  
    pteah  
    kə́o  
    kʰnom  
    riən  
    *dae*  
    and at  
    home  
    I study  
    FP

“Yesterday I studied at library, and studied at home, too”

There also exist usages of *phɔɔŋ* and *dae* which cannot be translated into “too” or “also”.

(3) **cənəŋ**  
    *phɔɔŋ*  
    !
    delicious  
    FP

“It is unexpectedly delicious!”

(4) - **cənəŋ**  
    tèe  
    “Is it delicious?”  
    delicious  
    (question)

- **cənəŋ**  
    *dae*  
    “It is not so delicious.”  
    delicious  
    FP

Table 1 shows the range of meanings assigned to *phɔɔŋ* and *dae* in three previous studies.

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**Table 1: Previous studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>phoon</th>
<th>dae</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Huffman (1967:196)</td>
<td>“too, also”</td>
<td>“as well”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob (1968:102)</td>
<td>“too, as well”</td>
<td>“too, also, even so”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ueda (2002:46)</td>
<td>“to emphasize the clauses”</td>
<td>“to express that a sentence shares the same predicate as the other sentence”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Huffman (1967) notes that *phoon* means “too, also” and *dae* means “as well”. Jacob (1968) states that *phoon* means “too, as well” and *dae* means “too, also, even so”. Ueda (2002) observes that *phoon* is used “to emphasize the clauses” and that *dae* is used “to express that a sentence shares the same predicate as the other sentence”.

Previous studies seem to have left it unclear what the differences are between these two particles. This paper is intended to identify the function of each particle and the differences.

## 2 Analysis

In this section, based on my elicitation results, I will show how *phoon* and *dae* are used. It should be noted that the range within a syntactic unit (e.g. phrase, clause, sentence) where a final particle operates is referred to as its “scope”, which is somewhat different from the general usage of this term. Each “scope” is indicated by a gray square.

### 2.1 phoon

The scope of *phoon* is one predicate and its function is to parallel different predicates in a sentence as in Figure 1.

![Figure 1:](image)

**Figure 1:**

```
Subject < Predicate 1 + phoon
         + Predicate 2 + phoon
```

#### 2.1.1 Basic usage

First, consider example (5).

(5) jop meŋ knom nam baaj phoon
    last night I eat dinner FP

    mol tuurrëtô phoon
    watch TV FP

    “I ate dinner, watched TV, too”

As in Figure 2, two different predicates, *nam baaj* “ate dinner” and *mol tuurrëtô* “watched TV”, are both followed by *phoon* in a sentence.
Figure 2:

Subject | Predicate
---|---
kpom | nam baaj + phoon
I | eat dinner
    | mool tuur-ba-boh + phoon
    | watch TV

Scope: ate dinner
Parallel Predicate: watched TV

Example (5) shows that these two activities occurred at the same time. (6a) is an example where only the objects of the predicates occur in parallel.

(6a) nêk kruu têng krooc phoon ceek phoon
teacher buy orange FP banana FP
“The teacher bought orange, and banana, too”

Figure 3 shows how just the objects, “orange” and “banana”, are arranged in parallel.

Figure 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Object</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nêk kruu</td>
<td>têng</td>
<td>krooc + phoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>buy</td>
<td>orange ceek + phoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>banana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(6a) indicates that the teacher bought both the orange and the banana at the same time. We can in fact repeat the verb twice as in (6b) and have two parallel predicates.

(6b) nêk kruu têng krooc phoon têng ceek phoon
teacher buy orange FP buy banana FP
“The teacher bought orange, and bought banana, too”

Scope: bought orange
Parallel Predicate: bought banana

So it is safe to say that, even in (6a), two predicates (not only objects) are paralleled. It is not acceptable to repeat the subject twice as in (6c).

(6c) *nêk kruu têng krooc phoon
teacher buy orange FP
nêk kruu têng ceek phoon
teacher buy banana FP

The observation that the scope of phoon is one predicate, thus holds true.
Let’s move to (7a), where only adjuncts are arranged in parallel.

(7a)  msal mën  knom  rion  nôv  pannaalaj  phœŋŋ
       yesterday  I  study  at  library  FP
       nôv  pteŏh  phœŋŋ  (= 1)
       at  home  FP

“Yesterday I studied at library, and at home, too”

Figure 4 shows how the two adjuncts are paralleled and that “I” studied both at library and at home.

Figure 4:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Adjunct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>knom</td>
<td>rion</td>
<td>nôv  pannaalaj  +  phœŋŋ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>study</td>
<td>at  library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>nôv  pteŏh  +  phœŋŋ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>at  home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As in (6b), we can repeat the verb twice as in (7b).

(7b)  msal mën  knom  rion  nôv  pannaalaj  phœŋŋ
       yesterday  I  study  at  library  FP
       rion  nôv  pteŏh  phœŋŋ
       study  at  home  FP

“Yesterday I studied at library, and studied at home, too”

Scope : studied at library
Parallel Predicate : studied at home

2.1.2  When parallel predicates are contextually recoverable
When parallel predicates are not expressed explicitly, they need to be presupposed in the context. (8) is an utterance of surprise by the speaker at his friend’s ability to speak Chinese.

(8)  ?aeŋ  nîɲjeaj  pheasaa  can  phœŋŋ
    you  speak  Chinese  FP

“You speak Chinese, too!?”

Scope : speak Chinese
Parallel Predicates : speak Khmer, speak English, etc…

In (8), there must be one or more languages that the person can speak. For example, the person may be able to speak Khmer and English besides Chinese.

2.1.3  When parallel predicates are not contextually recoverable
Unlike examples shown above, there exist some examples of phœŋŋ in which parallel predicates are not contextually recoverable.
(9)  ṭε按规定 phoxay
   delicious  FP
   “It is unexpectedly delicious!”

Scope: delicious
Parallel Predicates: the other states that it has

(9) is an utterance where one finds something delicious unexpectedly. According to the function of phoxay discussed so far, it may be presupposed that the parallel predicates encode the other states that the food could be in (e.g., be good looking). The choice of the state of being delicious, among all the other possible states may lead to the nuance of emphasis.

2.2  dae

Next, we move to the analysis of dae. The scope of dae is the whole of one sentence. Dae effects its function “by placing focus on a subject, an object or an adjunct to show that the verb in the scope expresses the same behavior/state as that in another contrasted sentence”. In the examples of dae, focused elements are followed by kɔɔ and placed at the beginning of the sentences. Each focused element is referred to as the “focus” in this paper, which again may be different from the general usage of this term and is indicated in a gray square. Fukuda (1980) notes that kɔɔ has a variety of meanings, but I won’t discuss these in detail here.

2.1.1  Basic usage
First, consider the examples of dae in which the subjects are focused.

Figure 5:
Contrasted Sentence  → Subject 1 Verb Object  
   Scope  → Subject 2 kɔɔ Verb Object + dae

(10)  ំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំងំɡ
In (11), the verb of the sentence in the scope of *dae* “beautiful” and that of the contrasted sentence “good-looking” are not completely identical. But both of them are similar in that they encode attractive appearance. Therefore, it does not matter whether *dae* has scope over a verb which is identical to that of contrasted sentence or not. What is important is that the verb of the sentence in *dae*’s scope and that of the contrasted sentence indicate the states which the speaker considers to be the same or similar in meaning.

Next is an example of *dae* with object focus. As in Figure 6, the focused object is placed at the beginning of the sentence.

**Figure 6:**
Contrasted Sentence → Subject Verb Object 1
Scope → **Object 2** *kəo* Subject Verb + *dae*

(12) .snapshot ɲiʔjəj phəʊəa capon  
I speak Japanese  
**phəʊəa ʔonklee** *kəo* kəom ɲiʔjəj  
English I speak FP  
“I speak Japanese, I also speak English”

Focus : English  
Contrasted Object : Japanese

In (12), following the contrasted sentence “I speak Japanese”, the scope of *dae* indicates that “I also speak English”. In (12), the object “English” is the focused element, and is placed at the beginning of the sentence with *kəo*.

(13) snapshot məŋ kəom riən nəv pannaalaj  
yesterday I study at library  
haaj nəv pəəh kəo kəom riən  
and at home I study FP  
(= 2)  
“Yesterday I studied at the library, I also studied at home, too”

Focus : at home  
Contrasted Adjunct : at library
In (13), following the contrasted sentence “I studied at library”, the scope sentence indicates that “I studied at home, too”. In (13), the adjunct “at home” is focused, and is placed at the beginning of the sentence with ៃឆ្នា.

2.2.2 Where the contrasted sentence is contextually recoverable
The sentence contrasted with the sentence in the scope of ដំ does not necessarily need to be expressed overtly.

(14) នៅ ៃឆ្នា ៃនិង ការប្រើប្រាស់ ការជ្វាប ចំ៖ កញ្ច បាន ដំ
she love (name) very much FP
“She also loves Chav Chat very much” (KLP)

Focus : she
Contrasted Subject : Chav Chat

In (14), the contrast sentence is not expressed overtly. Because the information that Chav Chat has loved her for a long time has already been contextually available, it is clear that the subject contrasted with the focus “she” is “Chat.”

2.2.3 Where the focus is not overtly expressed
Unlike the examples of ដំ discussed so far there also exist examples of ដំ where focus is not present.

(15) ៃញ្ច ៃនិង ផ្លែ ៖ “Is it delicious?”
delicious (question)
- ៃញ្ច ដំ ៖ “It is not so delicious.”
delicious FP (=4)
(literally “it is also delicious”)

In (15), in answering the question “Is it delicious, or not?” ដំ is used. ៃញ្ច ដំ here means “It is not so delicious.” Here, the meaning of “delicious” seems to be weakened, if not canceled. Taking into account the function of ដំ shown in 2.2., we can explain the usage of ដំ in (15) as follows. In (15), it is presupposed that other foods are delicious. What (15) indicates is that the particular food questioned in (15) is as delicious as the other foods, though the context never specifies what the other foods in the background contrast set actually are/might be. The pragmatically induced meaning of the sentence is therefore that the food being discussed is felt to be more delicious than certain other contextually presupposed foods. Thus, when the focus relating to ដំ is not overtly expressed, the “contrast sentence” can be pragmatically inferred, and the result is a weakened meaning of ដំ.

3 Conclusion
I have given a description of the usages of ៃណាល and ដំ. Although both of them have a meaning of “too, also” in common, their functions are different, as follows:
Function of *phaoy* → To parallel different predicates

Function of *dae* → By placing focus on a subject, an object or an adjunct using *dae* indicates that the verb in its scope expresses the same behavior/state as that in another contrasted sentence.

To have a better understanding of their usages, it is important to consider the elements paralleled/contrasted by *phaoy* and *dae*, even when these elements are not overtly expressed or available from the context.

Notes
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The romanization follows Sakamoto (1988). Example (14) is quoted from “A rose in Pailin (1960) by Nhok,Thaem” abbreviated as “KLP”. The other examples were elicited from the informant directly. I appreciate the cooperation of Ms. Kep Sokunthearah.

References