ASPECTS OF INTER-CLAUSAL RELATIONS IN KHMU

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0. *Introduction*

This paper attempts to investigate certain mechanisms involved in the manifestation of inter-clausal relations in Khmu,[1] and will discuss the Khmu that is spoken in Huoyen village, Chiengkhong district, Chiengrai province, Thailand. This variety is also found widely spoken in the Park Bang area of northern Laos.

Khmu is a Mon-Khmer language spoken by a group of hill tribesmen found primarily in northern Laos, northern Thailand—especially the area along the Thai–Lao border—northern Vietnam and southern China. They are believed to have previously occupied a larger area than at present, their arrival to this area predating that of Thai speakers and other more recent hill tribes such as Miao, Yao, Lisu, Karen, and others.

A. *General syntactic structure*[2]

Words in Khmu are mainly monosyllabic, though disyllabic words are still numerous. It is possible that Khmu once had a very complex system of affixation even though nowadays many affixes are found only in fossilised form and have often lost their meanings.

In text materials, although most of the items can obviously be defined as belonging to the natural word classes such as noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, demonstrative, etc., there are a number of 'syntactic' particles that do not seem to have meaning by themselves but do have certain functional meanings. They have a possible word shape, Cv(C), but they are never stressed. A number of them occur before the main verb. Many seem to be semantically related to the verb morpheme while in other cases they are related to the whole clause or even to a higher level. Without a knowledge of functional meanings of the particles (PT) it is almost impossible to understand the subtlety of the expressions and thus to follow a conversation, story, or talk thoroughly, even though the meanings of all the major words are clearly known. In order to give a clearer view of this curious syntactic feature which may lead to the understanding of inter-clausal syntax in Khmu, an overview will be given here, including a discussion of the verb phrase.

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1. I am grateful to my Khmu friends who patiently gave me the data discussed here and for David Thomas' comments and suggestions.
2. Further information on Khmu structure (phonology and syntax) can be found in Suwilai Premsrirat (1987c). Detailed information on phonology (different dialects) and morphology will also be found in Smalley (1961) and Svantesson (1983).

The normal word order in Khmu is SVO. In case of emphasis the OSV order is very common. Examples of normal clause patterns are:

Intransitive clause - *kɔ́:n   jam*[3]
child   cry
'The child is crying.'

Transitive clause - *nɔ: pə?   mah*
they   eat   rice
'They are having a meal.'

Bi-transitive clause - *?o?   ?úan   ma? joŋ   te?   kmú:l*
I   give   parents   take   money
'I gave my parents some money.'

Semi-transitive clause - *ja?   jat   ta   ka:ŋ*
grandmother   stay   at   home
'My grandmother is at home.'

Equative clause *?o?   məh   kʰrú:*
I   am   teacher
'I am a teacher.'

Existive clause *ta   ka:ŋ   ?ah   h?íər,   ?ah   sɔ́?,   ?ah   síəŋ*
at   home   have   hen,   have dog,   have pig
'There are hens, dogs and pigs at home.'

Quotative clause *joŋ   pra:k   law   jɔh   lə?   lə?*
father say before   say   go   well well
leaving
'My father wished them a safe trip.'

Modifiers (Mod.) in a noun phrase normally follow the head noun (HN).

HN + Mod.

$\underline{sɔ́?}$ $\underline{híəŋ}$ $\underline{pa:r}$ $(to:)$ $\underline{kam}$ $\underline{nám}$ $\underline{kəna:j}$
dog black two (class.)* which big   that
'those two big black dogs'

However, it is noticeable that the reversed orders of clause pattern, (O)VS, and of noun phrase, Mod. + HN, have also been found in text materials.

(1) *lam   mah   lam   má:r*
delicious   rice delicious   salt
'Have a good life.'

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3. ´ refers to the clear tense register of this Khmu variety, whereas the breathy lax register is unmarked.
* = classifier (Ed.).

(2) *puh kmáʔ*
fall rain (n.)
'It is raining.'

The Khmu verb phrase normally consists of one or more main verbs (MV) and their modifiers (auxiliaries and preverbal adverbs) occurring mainly in the pre-verbal positions. The pre-verbal modifiers (preV) can be classified into 5 categories according to their positional occurrences away from the main verb.

preV 5   preV 4   preV 3   preV 2   preV 1   MV

PreV 1 indicates state of existence like /piən/ 'able', /jat/ 'to have been happening, still', /hó:c/ 'already', /cúʔ/ 'want to', /ʔɨk/ 'not want to', /kɔ:j/ 'slowly, gradually', /lak/ 'completely', /pʰɔ́:n/ 'never,' etc.

PreV 2 indicates negative meaning like /pé/ 'not', /plɔ́ʔ/ 'not any more'.

PreV 3 indicates intention, determination and future action like /ce/ 'will'.

PreV 4 indicates tense and aspect like /há/ 'already (past action)', /nɔ́:ŋ/ 'still, will'.

Some of the pre-verbals of category 1 and category 2 like /piən/, /hó:c/, /lak/, and /plɔ́ʔ/ may sometimes be shifted to the post-verbal position.

Examples of verb phrases containing preV 1, 2, 3, and 4 functioning in the clause are

na: pʰɔ́:n ʔɨək   pu:c
　　1   MV
she never drink wine
'She has never drunk wine.'

(3) *snáː*　　*há*　　*rɔːt*
　　　　　　4　　　MV
they (two) already arrive
'They have come.'

(4) *ʔoʔ pé piən jɔh ta júʔ*
　　　　2　1　MV
I   not able go to forest
'I did not have a chance to go to the forest.'

(5) *ʔoʔ nɔ́ːŋ ce jɔh mɔːt kmúːl káːl*
　　　　4　　3　　MV
I   still will go   take money before
'I still have to go to take the money first.'

(6) *nɔː há   ce plɔ́ʔ   piən ʔə́h jaːŋ kiː*
　　　　4　　3　2　　　　　1　MV
they already will not any more able do   like this
'They will not be able to act like this any more.'

PreV 5 indicates modality such as the actor's volition, obligation, necessity or ability in doing something. Since it involves a relationship between a causer which may be stated or unstated and the actor and the action it is more like a clause rank notion than a phrase one. In Khmu it contributes a good deal to the inter-clausal relationship. This category includes /taŋ/, /le/, /cen/, mák/, /kaj/ and /tʰa/.[4] These will be dealt with in detail in the next section. Examples of Khmu utterances with various pre-verbal particles including the category 5 pre-verbals[5] are

(1) *prap lɔh las ʔìʔ mák pé piən jɔh*
       5   2   1   MV
    dress body quickly we afraid not able go
    'Dress quickly otherwise we will not be able to go.'

(2) *náj   ʔoʔ law ce pé jɔh ʔoʔ taŋ   ha   ce*
                        3   2 MV   5   4   3
    a moment ago I   say will not go I   certainly already will
    pé jɔh jɛʔ jɔh ʔoʔ le   jɔh
     2 MV MV   5   MV
    not go you go I   therefore go
    'I said that I would not go so I should not go. But you will go so I will too.'

(3) *pɔ: jɔh ká:l ʔìʔ taŋ   ce nɔ́:ŋ jɔh*
                       5   3   4   MV
    you go before I   certainly will still go
    'You go first and I will follow you.'

It should be noted here that the preV 3 /ce/ which indicates the future and the speaker's intention and determination can also function at the inter-clausal level (as will be seen in the next section) whereas the preV 5 /taŋ/ which also indicates the speaker's determination or obligation (though in a higher degree) can be manifested at the clause level.

B. *Inter-clausal Relations*

In the context of speech, a semantic sentence represents a minimum speech act consisting of one or more predications (semantic clauses). A structural sentence is therefore composed of at least one main independent clause with or without subordinate clauses and occurs with a distinct illocutionary force (mood) which may be a statement, question or command. In Khmu, two clauses or series of clauses whose meanings are related are structurally joined by various devices. The formal linguistic devices used may be conjunctions, pre-verbal particles, and reversed word

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4. Since these pre-verbal particles do not have any content meaning, the explanation here is presented without giving the meaning of each item. However, in the following examples the approximate meaning of each item has been attempted.
5. The category 4 pre-verbals can appear after the category 3 in certain cases.
    It is noticeable that consciously and off context the co-occurrence between the category 4 pre-verbals /há/ and /nɔ́:ŋ/ and the category 3 pre-verbal /ce/ is considered as 'possible' but 'not quite right'. The /ce/ seems to be the main item.

order in the subordinate clauses. Apart from this, there are structurally independent clauses that are just juxtaposed (strung together within a common intonation contour but without any formal conjunction markers). I shall discuss inter-clausal relationships in terms of temporal, logical, and compounding sequences.

1. *Temporal sequence relations:* these have an initial action followed by one or more succeeding actions. They are normally joined by the medial conjunctions /hó:c/ 'after that, already, then' /ɲa:m/ 'at the time, when, time', /ká:l 'before, in front of' and /kʰníʔ/ 'after, at the back'. However, in certain contexts the succession of actions may appear without any conjunction. The structural manifestation of this kind of relation is:

SVO (conj.) SVO

(1) *peʔ mah <u>hó:c</u> ʔɔ́h wiək*
     eat rice then do work
     'I will eat rice first then I will go to work.'

(2) *ʔoʔ ʔɔ́h rna: <u>hó:c</u> ka:j síh*
     I   do rice field then come sleep
     'When I finish working on the rice field I will come to sleep.'

(3) *kɔ: jɔ́h ɲa:m ʔoʔ nɔ́:ŋ síh*
     he go when I still sleep
     'He went while I was sleeping'

(4) *ʔoʔ mu:m ʔóm   ká:l pəʔ mah*
     I   bath water before eat rice
     'I take a bath before having a meal.'

(5) *ʔoʔ rɔ́h   ta síh <u>kʰníʔ</u> maʔ   jɔh ta réʔ*
     I   get out from sleep after mother go to field
     'I got out of bed after my mother had gone to the field.'

Sometimes the meaning of words chosen indicates the temporal sequence.

(6) *jɛʔ jɔh ká:l   ʔoʔ ce jɔh nam ta kʰníʔ*
     you go before I   will go follow at the back
     'You go first. I will follow you.'

In some contexts a series of verbs following one another indicates the sequence of actions that happen one after the other. They may or may not have the conjunction /hó:c/ in between. The /hó:c/ normally occurs before the last verb of the utterance.

(7) *pa:t   plúʔ   Ø   cʰrêh   (<u>hó:c</u>) kóh*
     cut off leg   remove flesh then   chop
     'Sever and bone the leg and then chop it up.'

8. *pok Ø pliət Ø pen tɔ:n Ø traɲ Ø wah ɲɛ:r*
   cut off cut short to be piece   cut square split small
   ɲɛ:r (hó:c) hɔ́:c
   small then   cut smooth
   'Cut down (a tree) cut it into (short) pieces, smooth off the rough edge, split it into small pieces, then smooth them.'

The pre-verbal particle category 5 /tʰa/ or its variants /ta~ da~sa/ has also been found optionally co-occurring with the pre-verbal category 3 /ce/ and the conjunction /hó:c/ in the following clause to indicate that the event happens after another. Its structure can be manifested as

SVO (hó:c) S (tʰa) ce VO

(1) *ʔoʔ rɔ:t lor jɔʔ pa: hó:c   ʔoʔ (tʰa) ce jɔh peʔ mah*
    I   come talk with you after that I then will go eat rice
    'I will come to talk to you first, then I will go to eat rice.'

(2) *kmáʔ há   pʰrɨəŋ hó:c   ʔoʔ (tʰa) ce jɔh ʔɔ̆h wiək*
    rain already stop after that I then will go do work
    'When the rain has already stopped I will then go to work.'

(3) *ʔoʔ nɔ́:ŋ   pəʔ mah hó:c   ʔoʔ (tʰa) ce hian tɔ:*
    I   still have to eat rice after that I then will learn continue
    ' I have to have a meal first then I will continue learning.'

(4) *ʔɔ̆ʔ mu:m ʔɔ̆m hó:c   ʔoʔ (tʰa) ce jɔh síh*
    I   bath water after that I   then will go sleep
    'I will go to sleep after I have taken a bath.'

2. *Logical sequence relations:* these will be discussed mainly in terms of various 'conditional' sequences that are different in the degrees of determination, possibility, certainty, expectation and counter-expectation, including various shades of overtone. This type of sequence normally consists of a main clause stating 'condition', 'cause' or 'environment' and one or more dependent clauses stating 'consequence'. Notions like 'causal', 'resultant' and 'co-varying' will also be included in the discussion of this type of relationship.

2.1. *Conditional relations:* six different pre-verbals /ce/, le/, /taŋ/, cen/, /mák/, and /kaj/ are found attached to the consequence clause distinguishing six different types of conditional relations. The first particle has been discussed as pre-verbal category 3, whereas the last five belong to category 5. They can be manifested structurally as

SVO S preV VO

$$\begin{bmatrix} ce \\ le \\ taŋ \\ cen \\ mák \\ kaj \end{bmatrix}$$

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2.1.1. /ce/ normally occurs within a clause to indicate futurity and the actor's determination to do something. Occurring in the consequence clause, it indicates that the action it is attached to will normally happen as the possible consequence of the preceding event. It is the most common type of conditional relationship. There is more than one way of manifesting this type of conditional relationship. Apart from the fact that the verb in the consequence clause is introduced by /ce/, the conditional clause may be introduced by the Lao loan conditional conjunction /kʰán/ or the Thai loan /thâ:/, both meaning 'if'. The structural manifestation of this relation can be summarised as:

(conj.) SVO S preV VO

(1) *(kʰán) ʔoʔ pup ró:j ʔoʔ ce tar*
If   I   meet spirit I will run
'If I see the spirit I will run.'

(2) *(kʰán) kḿaʔ rɔ:t   ŋɔ́ʔ   ce   piən woh*
If   rain arrive paddy will get plenty
'If it rains we will get plenty of paddy.'

(3) *(kʰán) ʔoʔ pé ʔɔ́h wìək pommma:j   ʔoʔ ce   cu:r*
If   I   not do work the second day I will go down
                           after tomorrow
    rɔ:t   rác pa:
    arrive visit you
'If I do not work on the second day after tomorrow I will go to see you.'

(4) *(tʰa:) ʔoʔ ʔah   snâ:t ʔoʔ ce píŋ   sí:m*
If   I   have gun I   will shoot bird
'If I have a gun I will shoot the birds.'

(5) *(tʰa:) pa jɔh ʔiʔ ce jɔh dɛ̀*
If   you go we will go together
'If you go so will we.'

Some speakers put the word /ʔúan/ 'give' before the first clause of a sentence with /ce/.

(6) *ʔúan mar tók nɔ: nɔ: ce   há:n*
give snake bite then they will die
'If they are bitten by a snake they will die.'

(7) *ʔúan joŋ   rɔ:t   ʔoʔ ce   jɔh*
give father arrive   I   will go
'If my father comes I will go.'

(8) *ʔúan ʔoʔ ʔah pnîr ʔoʔ ce tì:r mìən sí:m*
give I   have wing I   will fly like bird
'If I had a wing I would fly like like a bird.'

2.1.2. /le/ indicates that the action it is attached to has naturally happened or has to happen as the consequence of the preceding action. It is information which is being reported to somebody.

(1) ʔoʔ muːm ʔ5m hóːc   ʔoʔ le   jɔh síh
    I   bath water already I   therefore go sleep
    'I go to sleep after taking a bath.'

(2) maʔ   cɛ́h ʔoʔ ʔoʔ le   jaːm
    mother scold me I   therefore cry
    'My mother scolded me so I cried.'

(3) híc   ŋ5ʔ ʔúan mɔk   hóːc le   kuːm
    crush paddy cause small piece already therefore winnow
    'Crush the paddy until it becomes small pieces then winnow it.'

(4) joŋ kə: ʔík   ʔiək puːc kə: le   tɛ́ːŋ te: paːɲ
    father he not want drink wine he therefore make himself drunk
    'My father did not want to drink wine so he pretended to be drunk.'

(5) ʔə: jɛʔ klám piən le   mɔːt ʔ5ːr jɔh ʔ5m⁶
    init. part. you carry able therefore take lead go fin. part.
    'If you can carry it then take it.'

2.1.3. /taŋ/ indicates that the action it is attached to certainly and obligatorily happens as determined by the event or circumstances which may be expressed in a clause, or even by a non-verbal behaviour or situation. It implies the speaker's expectation and determination. It may also co-occur with /ce/.

(1) nɔ: jat piən ʔiʔ taŋ   jat piən
    they live able we certainly live able
    'If they can stay so can we.'

(2) ŋkiːn   ʔoʔ jɔh ta júʔ miː skiː ʔoʔ taŋ   ce jɔh meʔ
    yesterday I   go to forest today I   certainly will go new
    'Yesterday I went to the forest, today I will go again.'

(3) ma   wât taŋ   wât
    init. part. fight certainly fight
    'Let's fight.'

(4) ten ta kiː taŋ   piən
    sit at here certainly able
    'Have a seat here.'

(5) ʔoʔ cúʔ   luːj ʔoʔ taŋ   jɔh bɔːk paː
    I   have a pain stomach I   certainly go tell you
    'If I have a stomach-ache I will tell you.'

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6. fin. part. is abbreviated from 'final particle'. The other related abbreviation is init. part. (= initial particle).

2.1.4. /cèn/ indicates that the action it is attached to is unavoidable and would logically happen as a result of a specific action or state. It normally has an overtone of 'sarcasm', 'unconcern', or sometimes 'annoyance'. In some cases it indicates that the action it is attached to is an unreal situation. It normally occurs with the final particle /(ʔu) ʔɛh/.

(1) *jɛʔ   nə:ŋ   priʔ*   *jɛʔ* *cen*   *pé ʔɔh ja:ŋ kəní ʔɛh*
    you know the right thing you definitely not do like this fin. part.
    'If you know what is right and wrong you will definitely not do like that.'

(2) *ka:j   cen   ka:j   pa: na   jat ʔɔh mɔh ta ki:*
    go back definitely go back you part. live do what at here
    'If you want to go (home) then go. Why continue living here?'

(3) *há:n cen   há:n ʔɛh   pá: na   prɨəl ʔɔh mɔh*
    die definitely die fin. part. you part. alive do   what
    'If you want to die then die. Why stay alive?'

(4) *sí:m kə: ʔah pnɨr kə: tí:r cen   piən ʔu ʔɛh*
    bird it have wing it fly definitely able fin. part.
    (jɛʔ pé ʔah pnɨr jɛʔ tí:r ce piən mɔh)
    you not have wing you fly will able what
    'Birds have wings so they can fly. (You don't have wings, how can you fly?)'

(5) *kɛʔ pɔh   ja:ŋ kɔniʔ kə: cen   la:c   ʔɛh*
    you leave like this it   definitely fin. part. lose
    'You left it here like this so (of course) it got lost!'

(6) *Sɔ:n, jɛʔ cen   síh   rɔh   srúət   ʔɛh   jɔh ʔɔh wiək*
    Sorn, you definitely sleep get up early   fin. part. go do work
    tʰa   ce   tan
    then will be in time
    Sorn, if you had got up early you would have been able to go to work in time.'

(7) *na: cen   tar las   ʔu ʔɛh   na: nɔ:ŋ nɨm*
    she definitely run quickly fin. part. she still young
    'She is still young, of course she can run quickly.'

2.1.5. /mák/ indicates that the action to which it is attached is undesirable, and will (probably) happen as a result of another action. It has the overtone of 'warning' or 'concern'. It may occur with the conjunction /híʔ/ 'in a moment, otherwise'.

(1) *há   ta: lor rɛ:ŋ (híʔ)   kə: mák   mec*
    already not talk loud otherwise he probably hear
    'Don't talk loudly or he will hear what you say.'

(2) *ta: lor ja:ŋ kəní nɔ: <u>mâk</u>   mɔ:r jɛ?*
not talk like this they probably fine you
'Don't talk like this or they will fine you.'

(3) *kɨr   ?íh   ?i? ka:j   las   <u>mâk</u>   puh*
thunder loud noise we go back quickly probably be soaked in
kmâ? ka:j   <u>mâk</u>   pê tan
rain go back probably not be in time
'It is thundering so we have to go quickly, otherwise it will rain
and we will not be able to go back.'

(4) *ta: jɔh sɛ̂:t   hí?   <u>mâk</u>   la:c*
not go alone otherwise probably get lost
'Don't go alone or you will get lost.'

(5) *ta: hɔ́:j wɛ:l hí?   <u>mâk</u>   ?oh*
not play knife otherwise probably cut oneself
'Don't play with the knife, otherwise you will cut yourself.'

(6) *ta: jɔh krɨp kâ? te: jɔ?   nɔ: <u>mâk</u>   píŋ pɔ:*
not go seize fish other people because they probably shoot you
<u>mâk</u>   hâ:n lɛ:ŋ
probably die free
'Dont' go to catch others' fish or they will shoot you and you will
die for nothing.'

2.1.6. /kaj/. In concessive or adversative sequence, the main independent
clause and the subordinate clauses that follow are contrasted in content.
The subordinate clause normally posits an exception or 'concession' to
that which was or will be stated in the main clause. In Khmu this
relationship is expressed by the occurrence of the pre-verbal particle /kaj/
in the subordinate clause. /kaj/ indicates that the event it is attached to
happens in a contra-normal sequence, as an unexpected consequence of
the preceding event, or even as a kind of conflict with the condition.

(1) *?e: jat ta kúŋ   jɛ? <u>kaj</u>   ?ah kmú:l woh ?o? kam*
init. part. live at village you become have money a lot I who
jɔh câ:ŋ   <u>kaj</u>   pê ?ah
go be employed become not have
'How come you who stay at home are rich but I who go to work
outside am not?'

(2) *bɔ:k ?úan pa: jɔh ?ə̂h wiək hó:c   pa: <u>kaj</u>   jat ?ə̂h mə̂h*
tell give you to do work already you become stay do what
'I told you to go to work. Why are you still here?'

(3) *nɔ: jat piən ?i? <u>kaj</u>   jat pê piən*
they live able we become live not able
'They can stay; how come we can't?'

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(4) *mɨ: skɨ: ʔoʔ pé   ʔah   wiək ta súʔ ʔoʔ kaj   ʔɔ́h wiək   ta kɨ:*
    today   I   not have work there I   become do work   here
    'I come to work here because there was not any work over there.'

(5) *skjəʔ*   *ʔoʔ pʰa:k*   *kmú:l ʔúan jɔʔ kə: ʔúan*
    a long time ago I   ask to take   money give to him give
    kə: ʔuán jɔʔ joŋ   hô:c kɔ́: kaj   pé ʔúan jɔʔ joŋ   kaj
    him give to father then he become not give to father become
    jɔh ʔúan jɔʔ tmkɔʔ te:
    go give to wife his
    'A long time ago I gave him the money (asking him) to give (it) to
    my father but he didn't. He gave it to his wife instead.'

(6) *kə: ce sróŋ kɔ́:n te: ku:t ro:ŋrian kə: kaj   law*
    he will send child his enter school   he become say
    pé ʔah məʔ pɔ́:s   hɛ́:m   te:
    not have who look after younger sibling his
    'Instead of sending his child to school he said that there was no
    one else to look after his younger sibling.'

2.2. For 'causal' sequences the conjunction /jɔʔ/ 'because' is used between
the consequence and its conditional cause. The structural manifestation
of this type of relationship can be written as:

                        SVO conj. SVO

(1) *kə: há:n jɔʔ mar   tôk*
    he die with snake bite
    'He died of snake bite' (lit. 'The snake bit him to death')

(2) *kʰmúʔ híəŋ jɔʔ   púh   wa:r*
    Khmu black because to be in the sun hot
    'The Khmu are dark because they work in the sun.'

(3) *na: taŋ   ʔɨk   jɛ jɔʔ   jɛʔ há   ʔah tmkɔʔ*
    she certainly not want you because you already have wife
    'She must not want you because you already have a wife.'

(4) *ʔoʔ jɔh ta júʔ   jɔʔ   te: ce ʔɔ́h hʔɔ́ʔ*
    I   go to forest because myself will do firewood
    'I will go to the forest to get the firewood.'

2.3. Co-varying sequence or a sliding-scale conditional sequence consists of
two clauses that are grammatically balanced but semantically opposing,
with a free variable and a conditioned variable. It indicates the increasing
degree in the event of the second clause. The conjuctions normally used are
the Thai loan /jɨəŋ... jɨəŋ/ and the Lao loan /hɛ́:ŋ... hɛ́:ŋ/. The structural
manifestation of this type of relationship can be written as:

                     conj. SVO conj. SVO

(1) *ji̇əŋ* *ʔɔ́h ji̇əŋ* *ʔah kmú:l woh*
the more do the more have money a lot
'The more (he) works the more money he has.'

(2) *hɛ́:ŋ* *trket hɛ́:ŋ cú ʔ* *mpóŋ*
the more think the more pain head
'The more I think the more I have a headache.'

(3) *hɛ́:ŋ* *lŋiɲ hɛ́:ŋ* *ŋɔ ʔ*
the more dark the more fear
'The darker it gets, the more I feel afraid.'

2.4. In certain conditional constructions the subordinate clause which states the result has the normal clause order reversed.

<div align="center">SVO OVS</div>

(1) *ʔo ʔ sr ʔê:ŋ ma ʔ* *joŋ* *lian* *ʔóm mat*
I miss mother father come out water eyes
'I miss my parents so much that the tears fall.'

This characteristic has been extended to other sequences such as certain contrastive compounding (which is treated in the next section) and also to an immediate answer to the question in a question–answer sequence.

(2) *mə ʔ ce ra:* *sntɛh ra:* *ʔi ʔ*
who will clean dishes clean we
'Who will do the dishes? We will.'

(3) *mə ʔ ruŋ* *pu:c kə ki: lam* *lak* *pu:c ruŋ ʔo ʔ*
who cook make wine this   delicious a lot wine make I
'Who made this delicious wine? I did.'

(4) *mə ʔ pɛ́ŋ* *s ʔɔ:ŋ s ʔɔ:ŋ pɛ́ŋ* *ʔo ʔ*
who cut down tree tree cut down I
'Who cut the tree down? I did.'

However, it must be noted that this kind of syntactic reversal occurred only in certain contexts. The effect is probably topicalisation.

3. *Compounding sequence relations:* these refer to the co-ordination of two independent clauses acting as a single unit in the higher grammatical level or sentence level. I shall discuss this type of relation in Khmu in terms of additive, contrastive and alternative sequences. There is no formal conjunction between clauses. The clauses are just juxtaposed. However, they normally occur within a common intonation contour. The structural manifestation of this relation is

<div align="center">SVO SVO</div>

However, in contrastive sequence the subordinate clause may have a reversed order of the elements.

<div align="center">SVO OVS / OVS SVO</div>

3.1. Additive compounding consists of clauses with only either the subject, predicate or the object in contrast.

(1) *na: jɔh dɛ́: ja:m dɛ́:*
she go also cry also
'She was crying while going.'

(2) *ta kúŋ ʔoʔ ʔɔ́h réʔ ʔɔ́h pra:j liaŋ sɔ́ʔ liaŋ síaŋ*
at home I do field do trap feed dog feed pig
'At home I worked on the rice field making traps, feeding dogs and pigs.'

(3) *nak ŋɔ́ʔ séh nak kla:ŋ séh*
heavy paddy put in heavy rock put in
'It is heavy because both paddy rice and rocks have been put in there.'

(4) *na: kuʔ nɔ: woh na: pé lóŋ nɔ:*
she love them a lot she not forget them
'She loves them a lot and she will not forget them.'

(5) *co:n lə:c kʰɔ́:ŋ pʰá:n nɔ: há:n*
thief steal thing kill them die
'The thieves took the things and killed them.'

3.2. Contrastive compounding consists of two contrasting clauses in subject and predicate (verb or object).

(1) *jɛʔ nám ʔoʔ nɛʔ*
you big I small
'You are big (but) I am small.'

(2) *ʔoʔ tuk pa: rma:ŋ*
I poor you rich
'I am poor (but) you are rich'.

(3) *ʔoʔ hɛ́:t kə: pé jás*
I call he not answer
'I called (him) (but) he did not answer.'

(4) *ʔoʔ ce jɔh ta mok na ce jɔh ta ʔóm*
I will go to mountain she will go to water
'I will go to the mountain (but) she will go to the river.'

(5) *mɛ:w pé péŋ sʔɔ:ŋ kʰmúʔ péŋ sʔɔ:ŋ*
Meo not cut down tree Khmu cut down tree
'The Meo do not cut the tree down (but) the Khmu do.'

(6) *ʔoʔ pé cʰá:j tɔ́:m kə: cʰa:j*
I not know how to sing he know how to
'I do not know how to sing Khmu traditional song (but) he does.'

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The order of the subordinate clause in the last two examples is naturally reversed in the text.

(5)a *mɛ:w pé péŋ   s⁷ɔ:ŋ s⁷ɔ:ŋ péŋ   kʰmu⁵*
Meo not cut down tree   tree cut down Khmu
'The Meo do not cut the tree down (but) the Khmu do.'

or (5)b *s⁷ɔ:ŋ péŋ   kʰmú⁷ mɛ:w pé péŋ*
tree cut down Khmu Meo not cut
'The Khmu cut down the tree (but) the Meo do not.'

(6)a *⁷o⁷ pé cʰá:j   tə̂:m cʰá:j   kə:*
I   not know how to sing know how to he
'I do not know how to sing Khmu traditional song (but) he does'.

3.3. Alternative compounding consists of two clauses with alternative predicate or alternative participants.

(1) *pa: ce jɔh (pa:) ce pé jɔh*
you will go you will not go
'You will go or not.'

(2) *pa: ce jɔh pa: ce jat taŋ   pɨən pá⁷ pà:r*
you will go you will stay certainly able both two
'You will go or you will stay.'

(3) *pa: lor 'mo:j cum' taŋ   lə⁷ 'mo:j kú:' taŋ   lə⁷*
you say 'mo:j cum' certainly right 'mo:j ku:' certainly right
'You can say either 'mo:j cum' or 'mo:j ku:'.'

(4) *lor   rɔŋ lor hɔ́:j*
speak real speak play
'Are you just joking or not?'

(5) *pa: ⁷ah kmú:l woh pa: ce wɛ:t lôt pa: ce ro⁷ ka:ŋ*
you have money a lot you will buy car you will build house
'If you have a lot of money will you buy a car or will you build a house?'

The correspondences between various types of semantic relations and syntactic devices is summarised in Fig. 1 on the following page.
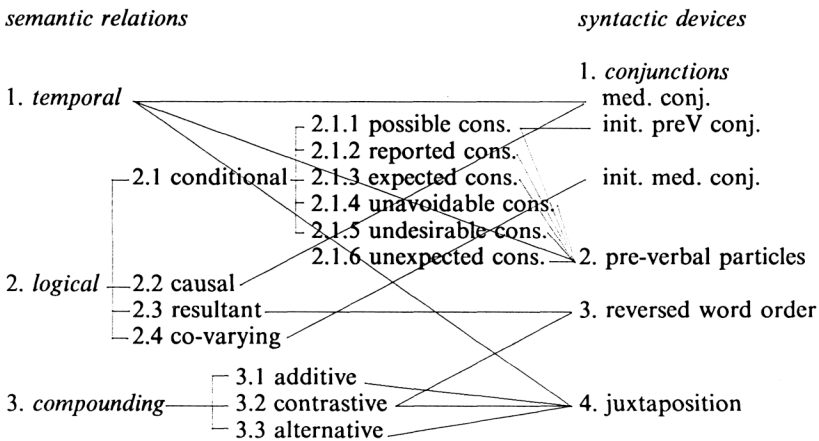
semantic relations   *syntactic devices*

Fig. 1

Conclusion

Inter-clausal relations in Khmu have been discussed both semantically and structurally. Three main types of semantic relations, temporal, logical and compounding sequences, including various sub-types, have been discussed. The syntactic devices used in manifesting these semantic relations are conjunctions, pre-verbal particles, reversed word order and juxtapositions or a mixture of these. It is obvious that in Khmu conjunctions are not in predominant use, only a few examples having been found. Some are Thai or Lao loanwords, for instance, those initial, or initial and medial, conjunctions discussed in 2.1.1 and 2.4. The common Khmu medial conjunctions are /hô:c/ 'then, after that', /jɔʔ/ 'because', and /híʔ/ 'otherwise'. It is noticeable that their occurrences are not obligatory. They may be left out, or some other way of expressing the relationship may be taken instead. They also occur normally in positions of other word classes such as /jɔh *hô:c*/ 'to have *already* gone', /ckóʔ *hiʔ*/ '*this coming* evening', /pɘʔ *jɔʔ* tíʔ/ 'to eat *with* hand', /jɔh *jɔʔ jɔʔ*/ 'to go *with others*'.

The reversed word order has been found used mainly in special or emphasised cases. The use of pre-verbal particles and juxtaposition is quite clear and obligatory. Pre-verbal particles are mainly used for subordinative constructions manifesting temporal and various logical (conditional) sequences, whereas juxtaposition is mainly used for co-ordinative constructions manifesting various compounding sequences. The systematic use of different pre-verbal particles for distinguishing different conditional relations in Khmu is unique. It also shows certain things about how the speakers of this language view and systematically categorise their 'conditional (cause and consequence)' experiences.

The young Khmu consider the pre-verbal particles as the conservative

forms of Khmu. Those who work in urban areas among the Thais tend to lose them gradually and unconsciously adopt the Thai pre-verbal particles /kɔ̌ː/ 'then' /tɔ̂ŋ/ 'must' and final particles /sǐ/ and /ləːj/, even though they are not exactly equivalent, whereas the people at home, especially the old and the women, still make quite a lot of use of the old forms. They sometimes adopt Thai conjunctions, /tʰâː/ 'if', /pʰrɔ́ʔ (wâː)/ 'because', /lɛ́ʔ/ 'and', /tɛ̀ː/ 'but', and /rɯ̌ː/ 'or'. However, they said that they still found it difficult and unnatural to express the contrastive, alternative or additive compoundings using the conjunctions /tɛ̀ː/, /rɯ̌ː/ and /lɛ́ʔ/, respectively. Looking at the text materials of another Khmu variety which is spoken in the Nam Pan, Huay Moy, and Nam Lu villages in Chiengklang district, Nan province, Thailand, it is noticeable that the syntactic constructions in that area have been simplified quite a lot and become more like those of Thai. However, unconsciously, in certain contexts, most of the pre-verbal particles mentioned above are still retained, though the pronunciation may be slightly different. The exception is /cen/ which is generally replaced by / ce/, the equivalent of the Thai /câʔ/ which indicates the speaker's intention and future action. This pre-verbal seems to be very common and can sometimes replace other pre-verbals such as /mák/ and /taŋ/.

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