Chapter 3

Grammatical features of phrasal repetition structures in Khmu

3.1 Introduction

Apart from word-level reduplication and phrasal reduplication, which are found in Khmu discourse as well (cf. chapter two), this section will focus on phrasal repetition structures, with special consideration of right-dislocated repetition structures.

As right-dislocated repetition (RDR) is a new-coined term which involves repetition as well as right-dislocation of lexical items, some distinct morphosyntactic features correlate with RDR as a grammatical phenomenon in itself. In Khmu, various grammatical structures qualify for being a RDR structure, namely those labeled as G1-G5 and G10 and G11 in Table 10 below.

The following symbols and schema in Table 9 are used to describe repetition structures.

Symbol	Prose description
X	Original element (lexeme or phrase) that is repeated
X_R	Repeated element
X'	Secondary element that is repeated
X'_R	Repeated secondary element
$]_s$	Internal clause boundary separates X from X_R
Y	A semantically meaningful constituent
…	Indicating non-continuity

Table 9: Prose description of grammatical symbols

A right-dislocated repetition structure involves the original sentence S, in which the original element X (and sometimes a second original element X') are situated, and the overarching sentence, whose boundaries are not marked, which includes the original sentence S plus the repeated phrase. The repeated phrase consists of the repeated element X_R (and sometimes a second repeated element X'_R, a semantic constituent Y and an adverb ADV).

With other repetition structures, namely G9 ($[…X X_R....]_s$) and G12 ($[…X…X_R…]_s$), the original element X and the repeated element X_R occur in the same sentence S.

In some repetition structures, there is an adverb (ADV) or a semantic constituent Y, which separates the original sentence from the repeated phrase (cf. G3 ($...X...]_s$ ADV X_R), G4 ($...X...X'...]_s$ ADV X_R X'_R), and G11 ($...X]_s [Y X_R]$)).

Additionally, there is repetition of a complete sentence S (which includes at least a subject and a verb) (cf. G6 ([ ]$_s$ ... [ ]$_s$) and G7 ([ ]$_s$ Y/ ADV [ ]$_s$)).

Elaborate expressions (G8 ([Xa Xb][Xa$_R$Xc]$_{EL}$)) represent a reduplication structure within a phrasal repetition structure: the first part of the elaborate expression Xa repeats itself in Xa$_R$, the second part Xb is reduplicated in Xc.[18]

The following table gives an overview and a grammatical definition of the twelve different repetition structures dealt with in this research.

---

[18] Theoretically, an elaborate expression can also be represented by the structure [Xa Xb][XcXb$_R$]$_{EL}$. However, in Khmu I did not encounter such a configuration. Furthermore, in the 'Poor' text, there is found another structure [Xa Xa$_R$][XbXb$_R$] in *luañ luañ laañ laañ* 'odd odd weird weird' (P.103). However, I do not consider such a structure as an elaborate expression, because an elaborate expression is usually characterized by the variation of its inherent elements. Instead, I refer to the structure [Xa Xa$_R$][XbXb$_R$] solely as a rhyming structure. Sometimes a rhyming structure looks like an extended elaborate expression with six words, like in the following example in P.154: *meh gôn thuk meh gôn rmaang* 'being a poor person being a rich person'. However, this is not an elaborate expression, since the inherent elements do not bear the same overall meaning. The latter rhyming structure actually means 'being a poor person becoming a rich person'. Hence, the syntactic repetition of *meh* 'be' does not represent a semantic repetition. A further rhyming structure, which looks like an elaborate expression including six words, can be seen in P.164: *haay tua leey, haay tua lèèv* 'disappeared body further on, disappeared body already'. Here, the final elements *leey* and *lèèv* do not represent semantic reiteration, but bear a different, but complementary meaning.

42

# of cat.	Syntactic definition	Prose description	Right-dislocated repetition
G1	$...X...]_s X_R$	Repeated element in sentence final position	RDR
G2	$...X...X'...]_s X_R X'_R$	Repetition of two originally separated elements in a row in sentence final position	RDR
G3	$...X...]_s$ ADV X_R	Adverb before sentence final repetition	RDR
G4	$...X...X'...]_s$ ADV $X_R X'_R$	Adverb before sentence final repetition of two originally separated elements in a row	RDR
G5	$...X...X'...]_s X_R (X'_R)$ ADV	Repeated element(s) in sentence final position is/ are followed by an adverb	RDR
G6	$[\,]_s ... [\,]_s$	Repetition of a complete sentence	
G7	$[\,]_s$ Y/ ADV $[\,]_s$	Semantic constituent Y or adverb ADV before repetition of a complete sentence	
G8	$[Xa\ Xb][Xa_R Xc]_{EL}$	Elaborate expression: The first part of the elaborate expression Xa repeats itself in Xa_R. The second part Xb reiterates in Xc.	
G9	$[...X\ X_R...]_s$	Repeated element(s) X in adjacent position inside S	
G10	$...X]_s [X_R Y]$	Repeated element in sentence final position is extended by an additional semantic constituent Y	RDR
G11	$...X]_s [Y\ X_R]$	Semantic constituent Y before sentence final repetition	RDR
G12	$[...X...X_R...]_s$	Discontinuous emphatic repetition inside S (catch-all category)	

Table 10: Grammatical classification of repetition
structures in Khmu

There are several conditions which need to be fulfilled in order to qualify as RDR. These will be outlined in the following:

First, there must be some repetition and not only reiteration. This excludes the semantic reiteration of concepts in elaborate expressions (G8) like 'big' and 'large' in the elaborate expression 'a big village, a large village' (P.006), even though the repeated 'village' would qualify.[19]

Second, the constituents need to fit the definition of dislocation as to be situated apart from the clause (and its predication), but still adjoined to the clause within a single sentence (Payne 1997:273f). This is not the case for G6 - G9 and G12 in Table 10 above.

---

[19] The difference between repetition and reiteration is further treated in section 3.4 below.

Third, to be right-dislocation, the repeated constituent must be situated at the very end of a clause. This is not the case for G6 - G8 and not necessarily the case for G9 and G12 in Table 10 above, because G6 and G7 represent the repetition of a complete sentence, and G8 does not only involve repetition but also reduplication by definition. G9 and G12 though may have the repeated element in sentence final position by co-incidence.

Additionally, there are several variations which are still considered to be a right-dislocated repetition structure.

First, there may be intervening emphatic elements or particles involved either in between the original element X and the repeated element X_R or after the repeated element X_R (cf. Table 10: G3, G4, G5).

Second, there may be more than one constituent (i.e. two constituents) repeated in right-dislocated position (cf. Table 10: G2 and G4).

Third, there may be additional semantic information, realized by a semantic constituent Y, intertwined within the RDR structure (cf. Table 10: G10 and G11).

3.2 Delineating adverbs, particles, laughter and pausing

The adverbs which occur in the Khmu data within or after a RDR structure are *bat gi* 'at this time/ then', *nah bat gi, la'/ lè' bat gi, lèèv bat gi, ni' lèèv bat gi* (which all have emphatic meaning translated like 'then'), *ay bat gi/ ni'* and *la'ay bat gi* (having affirmative meaning like 'right'), *la'ay* 'right', *h'w'* 'right', *i'* 'right', *ni nê'* 'like.this', and *ni'* 'there'. Other particles like *go'* 'so', *lè' go'* 'and so', *ni lè'* 'like.this', *nê'* 'right' occur independently from RDR structures. Additional elements, which bear semantic content (e.g. in P.148: *tua* 'body' in haay, *haay tua* 'disappeared, disappeared body' or in P.155: *am be', tèèng nèèv hmeh, am be'* 'not eating, doing whatever, not eating'), are represented by the semantic constituent Y. Y occurs either within a RDR structure (cf. G10 and G11 in Table 10) or independently from RDR (with G7).

For functional reasons, I treat laughter (and a relative long pause) in between of a repetition structure as having the same function as adverbs, as both seem to have the same function regarding the following repeated element, namely to separate two identical phrases and give added emphasis to the expressed contents.

3.3 Right-dislocated repetition (RDR) vs. left-dislocation vs. tail-head linkage (THL)

A dislocated repetition structure needs to be discriminated in terms of reference to the previous or the following sentence. As dislocation is beyond the canonical word order of a sentence, the decision to which sentence the dislocated structure belongs to may heavily lean on phonological and intonation features of the sentence and not on its morphosyntactic structure.

If a clause final dislocated repetition structure belongs to the previous sentence, it represents a right-dislocated repetition structure (RDR). The repeated dislocated structure either follows the original sentence immediately or it follows an intervening adverb in between or a semantic constituent Y, respectively (without remarkable pauses). The intonation contour of the right-dislocated repetition structure is usually identified by the prolongation of the original sentence or by dropping.

If the dislocated repetition structure actually belongs to the following sentence (which is usually recognized by a relatively long pause, marking the separation of two sentences, and by the intonation contour of the new sentence), it is situated at the onset position (i.e. at the beginning) of a new sentence and may even represent a left-dislocated structure. Morphosyntactic features of left-dislocation structures are not treated here in depth, but they basically resemble the features of right-dislocation.[20] The issue of left-dislocation is "whether the element to the left of the main predication is grammatically a part of the predication or not" (Payne 1997:274). The element in clause-initial position can either be fronted but still belonging to the clause, or "grammatically adjoined to the clause but not an integral part of it" (left-dislocated), or separated from the following clause (which is called 'apposition') (cf. Payne 1997:274).

An ambiguous instantiation, where the phonological representation of the discourse decides about the position of the dislocated repetition structure, is seen in Poor.113/114.

(53) Poor.113

Sna	een	va	fa	fèèt	een	va	koon	hrlaang	ô	koon	hrlaang	eeh	koon
those.two	call	that	sky	twin	call	that	child	twins	oh	child	twins	hm	child
3DL	V	APL	N	N	V	APL	n	N	EMPH	n	N	EMPH	n

hrlaang.
twins
N

Those two were called twins, called twins, right, twins (Khmu listener's comment), hm, twins.

---

[20] Cf. Payne (1997:274ff) for a more detailed discussion of left-dislocation.

Poor.114

Sna	ni'.	Môôy	ni'	meh	gôn	kam	da'	ôm	môôy	kam	da'
those.two	there	one	there	be	person	supervise	at	water	one	supervise	at
3DL	DET	NUM	DET	V	N	V	LOC	N	NUM	V	LOC

môk.
mountain
N

Those two there. One of them is watching the water, one is watching the mountains.

From a mere morphosyntactic standpoint one is tempted to relate the clause initial *sna ni'* 'those two there' in P.114 to the previous clause P.113 being a right-dislocated repetition structure. Then, there would be a sentence final repetition of the initial subject in clause P.113.

However, the relatively long pause between the end of P.113 and the onset of P.114 and the relatively small pause between the element *sna ni'* 'those two there' and the following apposition *môôy ni'* 'one there' leads to the decision to treat *sna ni'* 'those two there' as subject of the clause in P.114, being a left-dislocated element, which is reduplicated by the following apposition *môôy ni'* 'one there'. Furthermore, the apposition *môôy ni'* 'one there' is only understood from the presence of the subject *sna ni'* 'those two there'.

A different case is tail-head linkage (THL), where there is repetition across sentence boundaries. The final constituent in the previous sentence is just repeated, reiterated or summarized (cf. Dik 1997:438) as the first constituent (in onset position) of the following sentence, where it may represent a left-dislocated element. The decisive criterion for the decision to which sentence the element(s) in tail-head linkage really belong to is again the intonation contour of the discourse (including pauses). An example for a reiterated tail-head linkage structure can be seen in the following two sentences:

(54) Poor.053

Ge	dwang	ya'	ni'	plwp	thôm.
he	take	grandmother	there	put	close
3MSG	V	N	DET	V	V

He took grandmother there, put (her in) (and) closed (it).

Poor.054

46

Thôm	hôôc	lèèv	ge	na'
close	be.finished	already	he	then
V	TNS	COMPL	3MSG	EMPH

After (he) closed (it), he (said): ...

The clause final verb *thôm* 'close' in P.053 is reduplicated in P.054 by a tail-head linkage structure clause initially. Notice that *thôm hôôc lèèv* 'after (he) closed (it)' is not in a left-dislocated structure but represents an initial adverbial clause by itself (with the subject being in ellipsis). Thus it is grammatically linked into the next sentence.

3.4 Repetition versus reiteration

Although right-dislocated repetition structures basically refer to repetition, there is a need to distinguish repetition from reiteration as reiteration is intertwined in right-dislocated repetition structures.

Reiteration is a much broader concept than repetition. Halliday and Hasan (1976:278) provide the following definition for reiteration: "Reiteration is a form of lexical cohesion which involves the repetition of a lexical item ... A reiterated item may be a repeated lexical item (repetition), a synonym or near-synonym, a super-ordinate, or a general word". An example in English discourse, cited from Halliday and Hasan (1976:279), would be the following: 'I turned to *the ascent* of the peak. *The ascent* [repeated item]/ *the climb* [synonym]/ *the task* [superordinate]/ *the thing* [general noun]/ *it* [personal reference] is perfectly easy.'

The usage of the term reiteration in this thesis includes repetition of lexical items, semantic similar lexical items as well as any additional semantic constituent Y, which refers to the original lexical item, which is reiterated along with a repeated item.

Whereas right-dislocated repetition structures generally use instances of repetition (namely G1 to G5 in Table 10 above), other right-dislocated repetition structures in Khmu discourse (namely G10 and G11, cf. Table 11 below) usually utilize reiteration of lexical items for concept specification (cf. discourse category 6 below), mostly in form of participant reference[21] or props reference.[22] A reiterated item then uses the semantic constituent Y, which is accounted for in G10 and G11 (cf. Table 11 below). The structures of G10 and G11 include the repetition of one element but the phrase itself includes more information and thus is a reiteration.

---

[21] Participant reference refers to the tracking of people or animals, who are involved in a discourse.

[22] Props are animate or inanimate participants in a discourse that have only a passive role (cf. Grimes 1975:44).

G10	...X]ₛ [X_R Y]	Repeated element in sentence final position is extended by an additional semantic constituent Y	RDR
G11	...X]ₛ [Y X_R]	Semantic constituent Y before sentence final repetition	RDR

Table 11: RDR including potential reiteration

An example for a reiteration structure within a right-dislocated repetition structure is the following sentence P.028.

(55) Poor.028

Da'	gaang	ni'	ah	so'	môôy	tô	so'	ñè'	ôôr	hngèng	hngèng	ni'
at	house	there	have	dog	one	CLS.animal	dog	small	cry	dog.barking	dog.barking	there
LOC	N	DET	V	N	NUM	CLS	N	ADJ	V	SW	SW	DET

lè'	eeh.
then	right
EMPH	TVF

At home there, there was (have) one dog, a small dog, barking 'hngeng, hngeng' like this right.

Here, *so' ñè'* 'small dog' is the reiterated item of *so' môôy tô* 'one dog'. Hence, there is right-dislocated repetition of the repeated lexical item *so'* 'dog' and there is reiteration because of the additional attribute *ñè'* 'small', which has the discourse function of concept specification. The fact that the reiterated item is uttered with pitch prominence and a following relative long pause as well shows that it is not the missing subject of the following clause, but actually is in the position of a right-dislocated element.

3.5 Grammatical classification of RDR and other repetition structures exemplified in Khmu sentences

In the following, I present one example for each of the twelve different grammatically defined repetition structures observed in Khmu oral narratives. They are primarily selected from the longest, the 'Poor' text and ordered according to their grammatical category number G1 to G12.

48

G1: ...X...]ₛ Xᵣ (Repeated element in sentence final position, RDR)

(56) Poor.119

Sna	bay	neeng	ci	tèèng	leey	sna.
the two of them	anymore	know	will	make	continue	the two of them
3DL	TAM	V	FUT	V	V	3DL

They did not know anymore what to do further, they.

G2: ...X...X'...]ₛ Xᵣ X'ᵣ (Repetition of two originally separated elements in a row in sentence final position, RDR)

(57) Poor.007

Ya'	gni'	nê'	ya'	ni'	go'	lav	go'	lav	bwan	añu'	bwan	120
grandmother	this.one	right	grandmother	there	then	say	then	say	have.had	year	can	120
N	DEM	TVF	N	DET	CN	V	CN	V	TAM	N	AUX	120

pi]	ya'	ni'	120	pi.
year]	grandmother	there	120	year
N]	N	DET	120	N

This grandmother, right, the grandmother there, (there is) then to say (and) to mention, reached the age, reached 120 years, the grandmother there, 120 years.

G3: ...X...]ₛ ADV Xᵣ (Adverb before sentence final repetition, RDR)

(58) Poor.013

Ya'	ni'	go'	o	maak	nwm	maak	pi	lè'	go'	thav	lè']	bat	gi
grandmother	there	then	oh	many	year	many	year	and.then	old	then]	time	this
N	DET	CN	TVF	ADJ	N	ADJ	N	CN	ADJ	EMPH]	TAM	DEM

thav.
old
ADJ

The grandmother there then: Oh, many, many years, and so, old (is she) then, at this stage, old.

G4: …X…X'…]ₛ ADV Xᵣ X'ᵣ (Adverb before sentence final repetition of two originally separated elements in a row, RDR)

(59) Flee from Tiger.070

Bat	gi	ge	go'	hm'wr	dôh	la'ay]	bat	gi	hm'wr	dôh.
time	this	he	then	smell	stink	right]	time	this	smell	stink
TNS	DEM	3MSG	CN	V	V	TVF]	TNS	DEM	V	V

At this time, he then smelled bad, right, at this time smelled bad.
Comment: *La'ay* and *bat gi* are not conjoined into a single emphatic element in this context, as only *la'ay* is in pitch prominence.

G5: …X…X'…]ₛ Xᵣ (X'ᵣ) ADV (Repeated element(s) in sentence final position is/ are followed by an adverb, RDR)

(60) The water pond.029

Sna		yoh	iik	sna		am	lav	me'	dé']		am	lav	yoh	iik
the two of them		go	again	the two of them		not	say	who	to]		not	say	go	again
3DL		V	ADV	3DL		NEG	V	QP	IO MKR]		NEG	V	V	ADV

ni nê'.
like.this
EMPH

Both went again, both. Not saying to anybody, not saying, going again like this.

G6: [ ]ₛ … [ ]ₛ (Repetition of a complete sentence)

(61) Poor.124 (- Poor.126)

Ô'	ci	phaan	sba	lè'."
I	will	kill	you two	then
1SG	FUT	V	2DL	EMPH

I will kill you, yes.'
Poor.125

Èèh bèèp lav pnngo' nèèv me'.
hm model say frighten like what
SW N V VCAUS MAN QP

Here we go, speaking like frightening somehow.

Poor.126

"Ô' ci phaan sba.
I will kill you two
1SG FUT V 2DL

'I will kill you.

G7: [ ]ₛ Y/ ADV [ ]ₛ (Semantic constituent Y or adverb ADV before repetition of a complete sentence)

(62) Poor.150

Bat ni no itsa ay bat gi no itsa.
time this they envy right time this they envy
TNS DEM 3PL V TVF TNS DEM 3PL V

At this time, they (people) were jealous, right, they were jealous.

G8: [Xa Xb][Xaᵣ Xc]ₑₗ (Elaborate expression: The first part of the elaborate expression Xa repeats
itself in Xaᵣ. The second part Xb reiterates in Xc.)

(63) Poor.003

Yat da' bri' jé' bo' ya' tloot yat da' bri' da' ray.
stay at forest grandchild carry grandmother always stay at forest at field
V LOC N N V N ADV V LOC N LOC N

In the forest, the grandchild carried the grandmother all the time, in the forest (and) the field.

51

G9: [...X X_R....]_s (Repeated element(s) X in adjacent position inside S)

(64) Poor.002

Ñaam	ye'	ñaam	ye'	ah	jé'	kap	ya'	yat	broom	yo'.
time	long. ago	time	long. ago	have	grandchild	with	grandmother	stay	together	with
N	TNS	N	TNS	V	N	CN	N	V	PREP	REF

Long long ago, there was a grandchild with (its) grandmother staying together.

G10: ...X]_s [X_RY] (Repeated element in sentence final position is extended by an additional semantic
constituent Y, RDR)

(65) Poor.022

An	ya'	haan	pwp	lè'	an	jé'	ni'	moot	cme'
if	grandmother	die	immediately	finish.like.that	if	grandchild	there	take	string
COND	N	V	ADV	COMPL	COND	N	DET	V	N

tuk	tuar	ya'	hahaha	tuk	tuar	ya'	tmbrih	tuk	tuar	ya'	tmbrih."
tie	neck	grandmother	laughing	tie	neck	grandmother	drag	tie	neck	grandmother	drag
V	N	N	SW	V	N	N	V	V	N	N	V

If grandmother dies immediately, and (then) grandchild there takes a string, tying grandmother's
neck, hahaha, tying grandmother's neck (and) drag (her), tying grandmother's neck (and) drag (her).'

G11: ...X]_s [Y X_R] (Semantic constituent Y before sentence final repetition, RDR)

(66) Poor.155

Ge	go'	am	be'	tèèng	nèèv	hmeh	am	be'.
he	then	not	eat	make	like	what	not	eat
3MSG	CN	NEG	V	V	MAN	QP	NEG	V

But he did not eat, doing whatever, (he) did not eat.

G12: [...X...X_R...]$_s$ (Discontinuous emphatic repetition inside S)

(67) Poor.066

Ge	gaay	nêêm	oor	so'	dé	gaay	lè'	so'	gaay	kaal	ge	ge	go'
he	return	content	lead	dog	self	return	and	dog	return	before	he	he	then
3MSG	V	ADJ	V	N	REFL	V	CN	N	V	LOC	3MSG	3MSG	CN

gaay	nam	so'	gaay	root	da'	gaang	lèèv.
return	with	dog	return	arrive	at	house	already
V	REF	N	V	V	LOC	N	COMPL

He returned content, leading his dog returning, while the dog returned before him, anyway he returned with the dog, returned home already.

3.6 Summary

So far, I have grammatically defined twelve different phrasal repetition structures, of which some belong to the new-coined category 'right-dislocated repetition structure' (RDR). The term 'right-dislocated repetition structure' refers to repeated lexical items in right-dislocated position at the very end of a sentence. Dislocation means that the constituents are situated apart from the clause (and its predication), but are still adjoined to the clause within a single sentence (Payne 1997:273f).

Even though reiteration may be intertwined in some of the phrasal repetition structures (namely G10 and G11) and reduplication in elaborate expressions (G8), the prototype RDR (G1-G5) only involves the repetition of one or two original element(s) in an overarching sentence, which may be separated from the original sentence by an adverb.

Next, the various phrasal repetition structures will be observed from a discourse perspective and will be divided into discourse categories.