

3737034 LCLG/M : MAJOR : LINGUISTICS ; M.A. (LINGUISTICS)

KEY WORDS : KHMER / AUSTROASAITIC/ LANGUAGE USE

WICHAT PROMRAT : A STUDY OF THE NUMERAL CLASSIFIERS
IN PRESENT STANDARD KHMER. THESIS ADVISORS : SURIYA
RATANAKUL, Ph.D., SUWILAI PREMSRIRAT, Ph.D., RUENGDET
PANKHUENKHAT, Ph.D. 131 P. ISBN 974-662-275-7

The objective of the study was to examine classifiers which occur together with nouns as used in the Khmer language. The relationship between classifiers and nouns was defined through the use of syntactic analysis and semantic analysis of numeral classifier systems (to identify syntactic or semantic features). The groups of classifiers and nouns where they occur together in structures such as the noun phrase were classified.

The results of the study indicate that most Khmer classifiers are nouns which can also be used as classifiers and that most classifiers occur within the syntactic structure: Noun + Numeral + classifiers.

Most classifiers have a meaning which has a basic function of referring to nouns. Therefore, the use of classifiers for each noun is different and the meanings of classifiers are different too. The categories of Khmer classifiers have semantic defining criteria influenced by basic cultural perceptual factors and social, economic and religious influence from other languages, such as Thai and Chinese.

Khmer classifiers in the present day are used more in formal language, than in colloquial language. That is, when Khmer people speak informally, they do not usually use classifiers, but when they write or use formal language, especially in newspapers, books, and magazines, they use many of classifiers.