

Semantic structure and passive meaning of *được, bị, phải* in Vietnamese and *ban, trəw* in Khmer

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Abstract. This paper deals with the semantic structure and passive meaning of words *được, bị, phải* (in Vietnamese) and *ban, trəw* (in khmer). These words bear the meaning of passiveness and modality. Analyses of the Vietnamese language and Khmer language data expose:

- a. Their semantic structures, especially their meaning of passiveness share special similarities. *được, ban* are opposed to *bị, phải* and *trəw* with modal features of \pm *unluckiness* and/or \pm *favour*.
- b. *được, bị, phải* and *ban, trəw* really are meaningful verbs, not functional words as someone thought. These words can take part to organize passive syntactic structure. However, they are absolutely not indicators as like as indicators of passive voice in the inflexional languages.

Được, bị, phải in Vietnamese and *ban, trəw* in Khmer are special words⁽¹⁾. They are verbs bearing the meaning of passiveness and modality. Their semantic and grammatical features are rather complicated. In *Mon-Khmer Studies Journal* No. XXI, Nomura, N.M had mentioned those words and called them passive verbs. This researcher brought out some helpful comments on "the so-called passive verbs in some Indochinese languages" [1].

The question we would like to deal with in this paper are:

- How are semantic structure of these words?

- What and how are their passive meaning and modality manifested?

- May we consider them grammatical indicators of passive sentences or indicators of passive voice in these languages?

Followings are our analysis.

1. Data for analysis

Data for analysis, verifying and comment in this paper are collected from the following sources:

- Từ điển Việt-Khmer (Viet Khmer Dictionary); Hoàng Học, Hanoi, 1977. [2]

- Từ điển Khmer-Việt (Khmer Viet Dictionary); Hoàng Học, Hanoi, 1979. [3]

- Từ điển tiếng Việt (Vietnamese Dictionary); Viện Ngôn ngữ học, Hanoi, 1994. [4]

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⁽¹⁾ In this paper, the Khmer language is transcribed with international phonetic symbols, the Vietnamese is transcribed with Vietnamese alphabet.

- Khmer students (Cambodian) in Hanoi 2000).
- Two Vietnamese who are fluent in the Khmer language.

2. The semantic structure of *được*, *bị*, *phải* and *ban*, *trở*

2.1. The word *được*

In the Vietnamese dictionary [4] published in 1994, the semantic structure of this word consists of 13 different meanings. However, it is the task of dictionary compilers to separate meanings of polysemic words. Based on the structure and content of these meanings, we have found that the word **được** has three basic general meanings as follows:

2.1.a. The meaning of receiving something (unexpectedly) considered to be lucky/favourable (according to the subjective judgement of the speaker). E.g.

- *được về nhà* = *được* - go home (luckily be allowed to go home)
- *được của rơi* = *được* - smth. dropped (to get smth. dropped)
- *lấy được người chồng tốt* = (luckily (she) got married to a good husband)

In term of practice this meaning is usually called the receptive meaning of **được**.

2.1.b. The meaning of gaining something (not on the purpose) considered to be satisfied/lucky/good... (Here, the meaning of gaining can be considered as a type of receiving). E.g.

- *may - được - hai - cái áo - rồi.*
= to sew - *được* - two - shirts - already.
(I have got two shirts made)
- *cháu - được - 20 - tháng tuổi - rồi.*
= the baby- *được* - 20 - months - already.
(The baby is 20 months old)
- *cô ấy - ở - đây - được - hai - năm - rồi.*

- = *she - satay- here- được- two- year- already.*
(She has been living here for two years)

This meaning can be called the result meaning of **được**.

2.1.c. The meaning of the ability to do something (not on the purpose) as desired or considered to be lucky/good... E.g.

- *việc - khó - nhưng - làm - được.*
= this thing - difficult - but - do - *được*.
(I can do it although it is difficult)
- *ăn - được - ớt, uống - được - rượu.*
= eat - *được* - chilly, drink - *được* - alcohol
(I can eat chilly and drink alcohol)
- *nó - đi - xe máy - được*
= he/she- drive - motorbike - *được*
(he/she can drives motorbike)

This meaning can be called the meaning of ability of **được**.

2.2. The word *ban*.

The semantic structure of **ban** consists of following meanings:

2.2.a. The meaning of "receiving something (not on the purpose) considered to be good/favourable/ satisfied". E.g.

- *ban rơi* = *ban* - smth. dropped (to get smth. dropped)
- *dzo ban p'dǎj l'ch* = to get - *ban* - a husband - good
(luckily (she) got married to a good husband)
- *ban thưởng* = *ban* - reward (to get reward)

- *ban trở sala* = *ban* - go - to school (luckily be allowed to go to school)

2.2.b. The meaning of gaining something (not on the purpose) considered to be good, unharmed, satisfied. (Here the gaining can be considered as the receiving). E.g.

- via (ban) năw tih ban bǎj cnăm hǎj.
= he- stay - here- ban- three- year- already.

(He has been living here for three years)

- mhop nih hop ban

= food - this - eat - ban. ([quality of] this dish is OK)

- bɔ:ŋ t'wə dzaŋ nuh ban hǎj

= you- do- in such way- be- ban.

(You do in such a way is OK)

2.2.c. The meaning of "the ability to do something (not on the purpose) as desired or considered to be lucky/ good". E.g.

- kaŋja lumbah pɔntɛ t'wə ban

= this thing- difficult- but- do- ban.

(I can do it although it is difficult)

- hop mte ban hop sra ban = eat- chilly- ban- drink- alcohol- ban.

(I can eat chilly and drink alcohol)

- nieŋ nuh ci moto ban

= she - drive - motorbike - ban.

(she can drive motorbike)

- χroum bɔprɛ χlie nih ban

= I - translate - sentence - this - ban.

(I can translate this sentence)

It is very easy for us to see that the semantic structure of **ban** in Khmer is fairly similar to that of **được** in Vietnamese. The difference between them only lies in some delicate derived meanings.

Their semantic structures have three clearly seen basic corresponding meanings. Moreover it is not difficult to identify the meaning 2.1.a. (the meaning of "receiving") as the original meaning of the word **được**; the meaning 2.1.b. ("result" meaning) and the meaning 2.1.c. (meaning of "ability") are derived from the meaning 2.1.a. It is also with **ban**; the meaning 2.2.a. (the meaning of "receiving") generates

meaning 2.2.b. (the meaning of "result") and meaning 2.2.c. (the meaning of "ability").

2.3. The word *phải*

The semantic structure of **phải** seems to be more complicated than that of **được** because it has two groups of meanings, and the derivational relation between these groups is difficult to identify. The first group has the following meanings:

2.3.a. The meaning of "receiving something (not on the purpose) considered to be unlucky/unfavourable/ not satisfied". E.g.

- đại bàng - phải - tên - vào - cánh

= the eagle - phải - arrow - in - the wing

(the arrow got into the wing of the eagle)

- phải - đi tù = phải - to imprison (to be imprisoned)

- lấy - phải - người chồng - cờ bạc

= to get - phải - a husband - gambling.

(to unluckily and accidentally get married to a gambler)

2.3.b. The meaning of "necessity".

It seems that this meaning has no connection with meaning 2.3.a. (the meaning of receiving). However, this meaning is also *receiving something not on the purpose* and it denotes the fact that the agent has to receive something because of some obligations from outside. E.g.

- phải - nói - ngay - cho - họ - biết

= phải - tell - immediately - for - they - know.

(must tell them immediately)

- phải - đi - bây giờ - cho - kịp

= phải - go - now - for - in time.

(must go now to be there in time)

- phải - dịch - câu - này - cho hay

= phải - translate - sentence - this - interesting

(must translate this sentence we!!)

2.3.c. The meaning of "certainty".

This meaning includes the semantic feature "not on the purpose" because it denotes the fact that the agent, whether or not, has to receive something. E.g.

- uống - thuốc - này - thì - phải - khỏi
= drink - medicine - this - phải - recover.

(if you take this medicine, you are sure to get well)

- đã đi - là - đến - đã bàn - phải - thông
= if go - so - arrive, if discuss - phải - agree.

(if you go you certainly get to the destination and if you discuss you certainly reach an agreement).

The second group has the following meanings:

2.3.d. The meaning of "suitability, right".
E.g.

- ơn - trời - mưa - nắng - phải - thì
= thank to - God - rain - sunshine - phải - time.

(thank to God for rain and sunshine at the right time)

- chẳng - phải - đầu - cũng - phải - tai.
= not - phải - head, phải - ear.

(In no way you can avoid the trouble)

2.3.e. The meaning of "truth/ right". E.g.

- nói - phải - ai - cũng - nghe
= tell - phải - everyone - follow.

(everyone follow your advice if you tell a right thing)

- anh - làm - như thế - là - phải
= you - do - in such way - be - phải.

(that you behave in such a way is right)

2.3.f. The meaning of "right" (to be used as a copula in negational or interrogative structures). E.g.

- bà ấy - không - phải - người Hà Nội.
= she - not - phải - Hanoian.

(she is not a Hanoian)

- anh ấy - có phải - sinh viên - trường - này - không?

= he - phải - student - university - this - (or) not (Is he a student of this university?).

- không - phải - đâu.

= no - phải. (No, he is not).

From the above analyses we can easily come to the conclusion that in the first group, the meanings 2.3.b; 2.3.c. are derived from meaning 2.3.a. and in the second group, the meanings 2.3.e; 2.3.f. are derived from meaning 2.3.d. (see [5]).

According to the results of the research on the process of forming the opposition of the three words *được*, *bị*, *phải* [6] the meaning 2.3.d. of **phải** could originate from the word **thị** (the SinoVietnamese word) and it is very clear that the meaning 2.3.a. has the same origin with the meaning of the word **bị** - a parallel word of **phải**, which is mentioned later.

So the meaning of "passiveness", modality (2.3.a.) of **phải** do not have the same origin with the meanings of "suitability/ truth/ intention" ... (2.3.d.) of this word; because historically, beside the fact that the word **phải** and **bị** have been clearly proved to have the same SinoVietnamese origin [6], there could be two more possibilities:

First, the word **phải** is used to translate the word **thị** (a Sino-Vietnamese word) and then people merged the meaning of **phải** and the meaning of **thị**. (As we have known, during the contact and relation with the Chinese language for ages, the Vietnamese language has borrowed a great deal of words from Chinese, which are often called Sino-Vietnamese and they have been Vietnamized.

Second, there could be another **phải** originating from the word **thị**, and then it integrates into Vietnamese, making the merger with **phải** which originates from **bị** which had

integrated into Vietnamese before. (However, the second possibility is not clear enough. Although signs of their genetic relation of **thị** and **phải** can be proved, researchers have not definitely affirmed about that, because of the shortage of linguistic reliable data [6]).

Whether or not the original meaning (2.3.a.) "receiving something (not on the purpose) considered to be unlucky/ unfavourable/ opposite to the requirement" in the first meaning group has been exposed very clearly.

2.4. The word **bị**

Bị and **phải** share the similarity in the meaning of "receiving" and modality. Their differences are as follows:

2.4.a. In the combination with verbs, **bị** can only precede the verb, whereas **phải** can be either before or after the verb. E.g.

- **bị** đòn = bị - beat (to be beaten)
- **bị** phạt = bị - punish (to be punished)
- **phải** đòn = phải - beat (to be beaten)
- **phải** phạt = phải - punish (to be punished)
- **giẫm phải** gai. = tread on smb's toe- **phải**-thorn (the thorn hit into the foot)
- **lấy phải** người chồng cờ bạc = get - **phải** - husband - gambling.

(to unluckily and accidentally get married to a gambler)

In term of meaning when the agent gets or suffers something unfavourable from outside, the Vietnamese people use **bị**. E.g.

- bị* **hắt** (to be arrested), *bị* **trói** (to be tied), *bị* **tiêu diệt** (to be destroyed), *bị* **phát hiện** (to be discovered), *bị* **gãy tay** (one's arm is broken), *bị* **rạch túi** (to have/get one's pocket(bag) cut), *bị* **mất cắp** (one's property was stolen), *bị* **hông thi** (to fail the exam), *bị* **vợ hờ** (to be divorced)....

So the meaning of "receiving", modality of **bị** is as follow:

To receive something (not on the purpose) considered to be unlucky/unfavourable/opposite to the requirement.

This meaning corresponds to the meaning of "receiving", modality of **phải**.

2.4.b. However, **bị** never replaces **phải** when **phải** expresses the meaning of "necessity" (2.3.b.) or "certainty" (2.3.c.). E.g.

- **phải** đi ngay (+) → **bị** đi ngay (-)
- **phải** **gắng** ăn để giữ sức (+) → **bị** **gắng** ăn để giữ sức (-)
- dùng thuốc này thì **phải** khỏi (+) → thuốc này thì **bị** khỏi (-)
- đã **hàn** **phải** thông (+) → đã **hàn** **bị** thông (-)

2.4.c. In the case that **phải** expresses the derived meaning of necessity, **bị** can combine with **phải**, it follows **phải** to form the emphasis of an obligation. E.g.

Các bị cáo này phạm tội thuộc trường hợp đặc biệt nghiêm trọng nên phải bị trừng phạt nghiêm khắc. [These defendants who have committed specially serious crime, so they must be strictly punished] (Nhân dân Newspaper, 15. 5. 1997, p.7).

2.5. The word **traw**

To some extent, it is very easy to see the fact that the word **traw** in the Khmer language has different meanings corresponding to those of **phải** in Vietnamese. The semantic structure of **traw** is as follows:

2.5.a. The meaning of "receiving something (not on the purpose) considered to be unfavourable/ opposite to the requirement". E.g.

- **traw** រំដួល = **traw** - beat (to be beaten)
- **traw** គាត់ = **traw** - punish (to be punished)

- traw flieŋ = traw - rain (to be caught in the rain)

2.5.b. The meaning of "necessity". E.g.

- χfloum traw taw əjlāw nih

= I - traw - go - now (I must go now)

- χfloum traw nihzəj emuoi p'on 0

= I - traw - speak - to - you (I must tell you)

- hɔŋ traw twə kanja nuh

= You - traw - do - it (You must do it)

2.5.c. The meaning of "certainty". E.g.

- hasəncie hɔŋ rien ps'ieziem æŋcaŋ kw rəw cuop həj.

= If - you - learn - hard - like that - traw - pass - already.

(You learn so hard, you must pass the exam)

- louk pām t'nām nih traw cie həj.

= you - eat - medicine - this - traw - recover already.

(If you take this medicine, you are sure to get well)

- fte nih traw t'lāj həj

= house - this - traw - expensive

(Certainly, this house is expensive)

2.5.d. The meaning of "truth/ right". E.g.

- hɔŋ nihzəj traw həj

= you - speak - traw - already (What you said is right)

- cɔmləj p'on mīm traw te

= answer - you - not - traw (Your answer is not correct)

- louk mək traw pel

= you - come - traw - time (You come in time)

2.5.e. The meaning of "suitability/in accordance with...". E.g.

- pii niēh nuh traw knie.

= two - person - that - traw - together.

(those two people are in common with each other)

- mhop nih traw mwat χfloum. = food - this - traw - mouth - I.

(This dish is right to my taste)

It is very easy to identify the fact that the meanings 2.5.a, 2.5.b, 2.5.c of **traw** correspond to the meaning 2.3.a, 2.3.b, 2.3.c of **phải** in Vietnamese. And the meanings 2.5.d, 2.5.e of **traw** correspond to the meanings 2.3.d, 2.3.e of **phải**. The meaning 2.3.f - the meaning of "truth/ right" - (to be used as a copula in negational and interrogative structures) of **phải** mainly corresponds to the meaning and function of the word **mèn** in Khmer. E.g.

- hɔŋ cie nisət mèn rɔw te ? - Anh là sinh viên (có) phải không? (Are you a student?)

- mīm mèn te.

Không phải đâu. (No, I am not).

- mèn həj. - Đúng rồi. (Yes, I am).

In the structure expressing the meaning of interrogativeness and denial, **traw** is usually replaced by **mèn**. The word **traw** itself is seldom in this position of spoken language. E.g.

The question: *hɔŋ cie nisət mèn rɔw te ?* (You are a student, aren't you?) can be answered as follows: - mèn həj. đúng/phải rồi. (Yes, I am)

- traw həj. đúng/ phải rồi. (Yes, I am)

2.6. Above analyses show clearly that the semantic structures of *được, bị, phải* in Vietnamese and of *bau, traw* in Khmer are semantic structures of verbs. On the other hand,

as we analysed, they (those semantic structures) are so similar that we even can say that is a "strange" similarity.

How can strange corresponding between **được, bị, phải** and **ban, traw** not only in terms of meaning of "receptiveness", "passiveness", "modality" but also in terms of the tendencies of their derivation of meanings be explained?

Vietnamese and Khmer have a genetic relation. Although both languages belong to Mon-Khmer branch of the family of Austroasiatic languages, **được, bị, phải** were borrowed from Chinese about one thousand years ago [6]. Where are **ban, traw** from, so that they are similar in semantic structure to **được, bị, phải**? Deep and careful studies must be continued to find the answer.

I think that sometimes many similarities of Southeast Asian or Indochinese languages can be explained with genetic relations, however, in many cases, contacts of languages in this area or borrowing from each other are real answer to the question.

3. On the passive and modal meaning of **được, bị, phải** and **ban, traw**.

3.1. All analyses above show that the semantic structures of "receiving" and modality of **được, bị, phải** and **ban, traw** are corresponding to each other at such a level that they can be considered an isomorph. These structures consist of semantic features as follows:

- [receiving (object / action ...)]
- [- intentative]
- [± favourable / beneficial ...]

Here, the main feature of meaning [- intentative] (without the receiver's intention when the action happens) is the decisive factor creating the passive meaning of these verbs. It

is this feature of meaning creates the meaning of modality and assessment: the agent seemingly can not avoid the object or action; it has to accept reluctantly or without his intention. Right from this point a passive structure is set up when a part of an utterance representing the "character" implementing an action aiming at the receptive agent. For example:

V.1. Sarin được ông chủ tịch khen.
(Sarin was praised by the chairman)

K.1. Sarin ban louk prɔ t'ien sɔsə.
(Sarin was praised by the chairman)

V.2. Cô ấy được bạn bè giúp đỡ.
(She is assisted by her friends)

K.2. nieŋ nuh ban mɔɪt'ɛ cuoj.
(She is assisted by her friends)

V.3. Tôi bị nó đánh.
(I was beaten by him)

K.3. xɲoum traw kwat vɛaj.
(I was beaten by him)

V.4. Anh ấy bị Pol pót giết.
(He was killed by Polpot)

K.4. bɔ:ŋ nuh traw sɔmlăp dɔj Polpot.
(He was killed by Polpot)

The participation of **được, bị, phải** and **ban, traw** in the passive construction in Vietnamese as well as in Khmer has a special similarity. From the examples mentioned above in Vietnamese and Khmer, we can draw out the common model as follows:

S1 - [**được/ bị/ ban/ traw**] - S2 - V.

It is a traditional way of saying used in Vietnamese and Khmer. There has recently appeared another model of passive construction in both languages:

S1 - [**được/ bị/ (phải)/ ban/ traw**] - V - *bởi/ dɔi* - S2.

We think, this phenomenon, is the result of making contact with books, newspapers, mass media through the learning, translating and interpreting and imitation of number of grammatical phenomena of European languages such as French, English, Russian ... For example, in Vietnamese we have sentences:

- *Cuộc sống tự lập (...) ít bị ràng buộc bởi gia đình, bố mẹ.* [The independent life ... is little bounded by the family, parents] (Giáo dục và thời đại Newspaper, Oct. 9, 1999, p.7.).

- *Email là dịch vụ được cung cấp bởi mạng Internet.* [Email is a service provided by Internet] (Hà nội ngày nay Newspaper, N.69, Jan. 2000, p. 55).

- *... họa phẩm quý hiếm này được sáng tác không phải bởi Véc ne mà bởi một họa sĩ hiện đại ...* [this precious picture was not drawn by Vermer but a modern painter] (Hà nội ngày nay Newspaper, N.70, Feb. 2000, p. 56).

In Khmer we also have following examples:

- Sarin ban sɔsə dɔj louk prɔt'ien.

Sarin được khen bởi ông chủ tịch.

(Sarin was praised by the chairman)

- bɔ:ŋ nuh trəw sɔmlăp dɔj Polpot.

Anh ấy bị giết bởi Polpot.

(He was killed by Polpot)

- kəldal trəw si dɔj cma.

Con chuột bị ăn bởi con mèo.

(The rat was eaten by the cat)

However, in both Vietnamese and Khmer, the choice of model for language use depends on language style (spoken or written, scientific or literary or political commentary...) or the presence (in the aspect of language) of the agent carrying out the action: the noun or the pronoun ... (This question should be given separate studies in greater details).

3.2. Detailed analyses allows us to recognize both similarities and delicate differences of these two word groups. Their differences are as follows:

3.2.1. In Vietnamese the modal features [+ lucky/ favourable ...] are for **được**, and the modal features [- lucky/ favourable...] are for **bị**, **phải**, but in Khmer the distinction of these modal features between **ban** and **trəw** is not very clearly to be recognized because it varies from case to case. E.g.

in Vietnamese	in Khmer
được phần thưởng	ban toŋvwan (to get a rize)
bị tai nạn	cuop kruot'năh (to get an accident)
được 20 tháng tuổi	mien adzu to be 20 months old
bị mưa	trəw flieŋ (to be caught in the rain)
bị/phải đòn	trəw ropuot (to be beaten)
được điểm mười	ban pǎntuh đɔp (to get mark 10)
bị điểm một ⁽²⁾	Ban pǎntuh muoj (to get mark 1)

Through the above examples we recognize that generally speaking there is no opposition of modal features " ± lucky / beneficial " between **ban** and **trəw** in Khmer when these words precede the noun phrases. That is why Vietnamese people use and distinguish clearly **được** from **bị**, **phải**, whereas their corresponding words in Khmer are **mien/ ban/ cuop/ trəw** depending on uses of each one.

However, it does not mean that there is absolutely no difference and opposition between **ban** and **trəw**. If there is no such a

⁽²⁾ However, when Vietnamese do not concentrate on the expression of modal meaning "unlucky/ not satisfied", they can say; *Nó được điểm hai* (s/he gets mark 2)... In this case, **được** just expresses the result meaning.

thing (opposition) they can not coexist. The difference between **ban** and **traw** in Khmer, though not as clearly seen as the difference between **được** and **bi**, **phải** in Vietnamese, can be identified: When the agent has to accept something unfavourable from outside factors, the word **traw** must be used. For example, people say:

traw tch = **traw** - beat. (to be beaten)

kruap hæk = **traw** - grenade. (to be attacked with a grenade)

traw flieg = **traw** - rain. (to be caught in the rain)

traw kdəj = **traw** - sue. (to be sued)

traw kwat vɛaj = **traw** - he - beat. (to be beaten by him)

traw hæk kbal = **traw** - break - head. (one's head is broken)

but do not say:

* **ban tch**

* **ban kruap hæk**

* **ban flieg**

* **ban kdəj**

* **ban kwat vɛaj**

* **ban hæk kbal**

3.2.2. Data of language in use reveals the fact that **ban** usually precedes the phrase showing something good, lucky, favourable, or at least unharmed to the agent (the receiver of an action); whereas **traw** is usually used before the phrase showing something unlucky or unfavourable to the agent, and the combination of **traw** and **ban** creates a neutral shade of meaning. That is why, with the two words: **sɔsə** (= to praise. Positive meaning) and **sɔmlăp** (= to kill; negative meaning) people can only say:

- **hɔ:ŋ nuh ban sɔsə** [He was praised]:

- **hɔ:ŋ nuh traw ban sɔsə dɔj prɔtɛn**
[He was praised by the chairman], (the passive sentence);

- **hɔ:ŋ nuh ban sɔsə dɔj prɔtɛn**
[He was praised by the chairman], (the passive sentence);

- **hɔ:ŋ nuh traw sɔmlăp** [He was killed];

- **hɔ:ŋ nuh traw ban sɔmlăp dɔj Polpot**
[He was killed by Polpot], (the passive sentence)

- **hɔ:ŋ nuh traw sɔmlăp dɔj Polpot**
[He was killed by Polpot], (the passive sentence); but can not say:

* **hɔ:ŋ nuh traw sɔsə**,

* **hɔ:ŋ nuh traw sɔsə dɔj prɔtɛn**

* **hɔ:ŋ nuh ban sɔmlăp**,

* **hɔ:ŋ nuh ban sɔmlăp dɔj Polpot**.

The above mentioned conclusion can be confirmed by the following reality:

Supposing a person (called Sarin by name) receiving the written request of the chairman to be present at his office. The information of the above-mentioned could be interpreted in one of three following possibilities.

First, if the reason of the request made by the chairman is not clear, the word **ban** in Khmer is often used. For example:

1. Sarin **ban** louk prɔtɛn hăw ləj karizalăj kwat.

Sarin was invited to the chairman's office

In vietnamese, we have a corresponding sentence:

1'. Sarin **được** ông chủ tịch gọi lên văn phòng (của) ông ấy.

Sarin was invited to the chairman's office

Second, if the reason of the request made by the chairman is positive (good) for Sarin (in

favour of Sarin), the word **han** must be used to express the above mentioned information. For example:

2. Sarin **han** louk prɔ̄tien hãw læŋ karizalǎj kwat (dǎmbǎj tɔ̄tuol lui).

Sarin was invited to the chairman's office (to receive money)

And in Vietnamese we have a corresponding sentence:

2'. Sarin **được** ông chủ tịch gọi lên văn phòng (của) ông ấy (để nhận tiền).

Sarin was invited to the chairman's office (to receive money)

Third, on the contrary, if the reason of the chairman's request is not in favour of Sarin, the **traw** must be used. For example:

3. Sarin **traw** louk prɔ̄tien hãw læŋ karizalǎj kwat (sǎj tɔ̄j).

Sarin was called to the chairman's office (to be criticized)

And in Vietnamese we have a corresponding sentence:

3'. Sarin **bị** ông chủ tịch gọi lên văn phòng ông ấy (nói cho một trận).

Sarin was called to the chairman's office (to be criticized)

3.3. Thus we found two general modal features in the meaning of **được, bị, phải** and **ban, traw** as follows:

[± lucky / beneficial ...]

[- tentative].

Basically, modal features of the meanings of these two word groups are corresponding to each other. We use the word "basically" because of the fact that the contrast of assessment attitude (good luck - bad luck, favourable - unfavourable) between **được** and **bị, phải** in Vietnamese is clearly seen, but that between **ban** and **traw** in Khmer is not very

clearly seen. The contrast between **han** and **traw** with the meaning of "assessment attitude good luck - bad luck, favourable - unfavourable" can be clearly seen when they precede the verb (or verb phrase) only. When they precede nouns (or noun phrase), their contrast is not very clearly seen (see 3.2.1. above).

4. Grammatical features of **được, bị, phải, ban, traw** and passive structure

4.1. **Được, bị, phải, han, traw** really are verbs because their lexical meanings of "receiving" are expressed clearly. Moreover, these words have the ability to require and to receive the objects. Their objects exist in a variety of forms. (See the above mentioned analyses and descriptions). For example:

- được của rơi	ban robɔh cruh	to get dropped property
được điểm mười	ban pǎntuh đɔp	to get mark 10
- được hút thuốc lá	ban cuoh barǎj	to be allowed to smoke
- bị mưa	traw flieŋ	to be caught in the rain
- phải đòn	traw tɔh	to be beaten
- bị nó đánh	traw kwat vɛaj	to be beaten by him
- Sarin được/bị gọi ... hãw ...	Sarin ban/traw ... hãw...	Sarin was called ...

When we mention the passive meaning of **được, bị, phải, ban, traw**, we must confirm the fact that this meaning is the self-meaning existing right in these words and belonging to lexical aspect of words. It is not the passive meaning derived from the structure of passive voice. Thus these words are words of passive meaning, not words in the passive voice or words used to form the passive voice of other verbs.

We can see clear evidences above: All of them are verbs of real meaning- the meaning of "receptiveness", modality and assessment, with the ability to require or combine with a variety of objects.

4.2. In language activities both **được, bị, phải** of Vietnamese and **ban, traw** of Khmer have to operate in the predicative frame of the sentence. When they stand before nouns (or noun phrases), their meaning of "receptiveness" and modality are presented in the form of "two in one". On the other hand, when they stand before the verbs (or verb phrases) it seems that there appears a distribution of responsibility: the verb in the verb phrase tends to describe the event, and **được, bị, phải, ban, traw** tend to describe modality and assessment. That is why the observation, analyses and assessment of **ban, traw, được, bị, phải** will become more complete if we extend our research of these words to their pragmatic aspect because these words, whether or not, always operate in the modal frame of the sentences.

Thus through the observation and analyses of linguistic data in Vietnamese and Khmer we can say that in both languages the passive syntactic structures can be constructed by the words having passive meaning.

However, as mentioned above, these words are absolutely not the inflexional words representing the passive voice. They are not either elements used to form the passive voice (understood as a grammatical category). It is clear that in order to present the passive meaning corresponding to that of European inflexional languages, the Vietnamese and Khmer languages (Southeast Asian isolated and non-inflexional languages) use lexical means instead of grammatical ones.

5. Based on analysis mentioned above, we go to some conclusions as follows:

a. The semantic structures of **được, bị, phải** and **ban, traw**, especially their meaning of passiveness share special similarities that must be continued to study.

b. Based on their modal meaning, the words **được, bị, phải** are divided into two groups: the first group is of the word **được** expressing the meaning of "luckiness/ favour"; the second group is of **bị, phải** expressing the meaning of "unlucky/ unfavourable".

The word **ban** of Khmer corresponds to the word **được** in Vietnamese and **traw**, completely corresponds to **bị** and **phải** in Vietnamese.

c. **được, bị, phải** and **ban, traw** are really meaningful verbs, not functional words as someone used to thought. These words can take part to organize passive syntactic structure however they are absolutely not indicators as like as indicators of passive voice in the inflexional languages.

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