

Homorganic point of articulation in modern Khmer songs

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Abstract

This paper examines six final stops: -p, -t, -c, -k, -ʔ and -h in Khmer as found in songs sung by different Khmer singers. It is found that the six word-final consonants tend to vary when they are pronounced in songs. In general, these final stops vary with nasals: -m, -n and -N respectively when they occur in singing. In other words, this linguistic phenomena is in line with what is called homorganic point of articulation: -m < -p; -n < -t; -N < -c, -k, also -h and -ʔ. However, words with such final stops may not always vary with the same singer and if so, they tend to be homorganic point of articulation. As a result, this homorganic point of articulation plays an important role in helping make the pitch levels of the words of the songs become level. The songs are thus good to listen to. Whether the homorganic point of articulation, by Khmer singers, is an intentional or sub-unconscious, further sociolinguistic study should be carried out to gain a better understanding of such linguistic phenomena.

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