Title: A laryngoscopic study of Chong vocal registers: another look

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Abstract

Chong is a Mon Khmer language of the Pearic group spoken in Thailand by about 500 and was spoken in Cambodia as well. It is believed there are as many as 5000 speakers all together. It has been much discussed because it has four contrastive vocal registers:

R_1—modal vocal register, medium pitch, more open or on-gliding vowels,
R_2—modal vocal register followed by harsh vocal register with strong ventricular incursion and dynamically increasing constriction that with sonorant codas can lead to glottally interrupted syllables and high-to-low falling pitch,
R_3—breathy vocal register followed by modal vocal register with lower pitch and raised vowels.
R_4—breathy vocal register followed by harsh vocal register with strong ventricular incursion and glottal interrupted constriction and high-to-low falling pitch.

This paper studies the articulatory mechanisms of registers in this language as exhibited in the speech of the last-named co-author, a 69 year-old man. Mr. Chern demonstrates very clear examples of the four register contrast. From direct visual evidence obtained by transnasal laryngoscopy we were able to note with particular interest the role of the ventricular folds in forming the harsh vocal register contrast, which appears to be responsible for throttling airflow and producing the characteristic features of harsh vocal register. In our paper we intend to show full motion video evidence and provide phonetic analysis of Chong registers in terms of the system of throat valves proposed by Edmondson and Esling 2006**,** The valves of the throat and their functioning in tone, vocal register, and stress: laryngoscopic case studies. *Phonology* 23.157-91.