

Things to listen for in ភាសាខ្មែរបុរីរម្យ (in order as they occur in the interview):

1. ស្រួលបូលទេ? This is a common greeting in all of the "Surin Khmer" dialects; it's basically equivalent to Central Khmer សុខសប្បាយទេ?
2. Notice how the woman pronounces the vowel in "ជាប់" (which can mean "to stick to," among other things; in this case it means "to abut, to border," as in Buriram Province bordering on Surin Province). This vowel does not occur very often in Central (Standard) Khmer (you can hear it in the word ពណ៌ [color]), but it does exist in Siem Reap and other Northwestern dialects. Basically, you'll hear it in these dialects in any word spelled with the vowel ា with បណ្តាក់ in second series.
3. Use of intonation: listen for the "musical" nature of her speech in some sentences, especially the falling intonation on the word ទេ (where it stresses the negative nature of certain statements). This is again common in many Northwestern Khmer dialects. In general, her response to the question of "Is there any work in Buriram" will probably be hard for you to understand, especially because she mixes Thai vocabulary and Thai grammatical constructions in with her Khmer. Basically, she says that one becomes frustrated with the lack of employment options there, which is why she (and others) chose to seek work in Bangkok. Note also her use of ជា, which you may remember from the podcast means "pleasant, fun, enjoyable" in Surin Khmer dialects. Here she uses it in the sense of "to improve," speaking of the employment/earning situation. It's used in Central Khmer to refer to improvement, but only related to one's state of health.
4. Notice that the woman does not understand my use of ឪពុកម្តាយ to mean "parents;" in the Surin Khmer dialects only មែឪ is used to refer to parents.
5. She uses several Thai expressions (mixed with Khmer words) in the final section of the interview, describing her feelings after arriving in Bangkok. These include តឹងត្រា ("I had to be brave," which in Central Khmer would be ត្រូវតែត្រាហាន) and បានតាំង ; តាំង is Thai for money.

Listen to the interview several times to see how much you can get out of it. Console yourself with the fact that this dialect of Khmer (Buriram, which is similar to but distinct in many ways from Surin and Sisaket dialects, also spoken by Khmers in Thailand) is probably the farthest of any dialect from Central Khmer.