Complex Predicates in Australian and Oceanic Languages

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ABSTRACT

A standard clause has one subject and one predicate (Foley 2011:1). However, a range of languages permit the combination of more than one lexical predicational element within a clause. This phenomenon is termed 'complex predication' (Alsina et al. 1997; Bodomo et al. 2010; Nash & Samvelian 2010). There is a lot of variation in the use of this term. This raises the question whether the various constructions that have been referred to as complex predication constitute a logical grouping by syntactic analysis. I examine this question by looking at complex predicates in Australian and Oceanic languages because the syntactic structures that are termed complex predication in these two families differ significantly. Australian languages employ co-verb constructions (CVC) (Bowern 2010), whereas Oceanic languages employ serial verb constructions (SVC) as a type of complex predicate (Bril & Ozanne-Rivierre 2004).

OBJECTIVES

The theoretical and comparative elevation of the concept of 'complex predicates' are often two core studies of different language families: the northern Australian language Wagiman features predicates of CVC (Wilson 1999), and the Oceanic language Tuvalu of Tuvaluan has SVC (Besnier 2009). There have been studies on small or monolingual whether the term complex predicate is used coherently in the literature and what the predicate categories of the two languages can tell us about theoretical approaches to the term complex predicate.

DEFINITIONS

Complex Predicate:
A complex predicate is a monomorphemic composition of at least two grammatical elements, each of which is predicational and therefore head a clause on their own (Alsina et al. 1997; Bril 2010; Matsuda et al. 1998). The term is typically defined and is used inconsistently cross-linguistically.

"The terms 'complex predicate' may be used as an umbrella term to designate a number of [cross-]constructions." (Matsuda 1997:241)

"What is a complex predicate? There is currently no widely accepted answer to the question, an agreed set of criteria." (Ledgeway et al. 2010:1)

Co-verb Construction (CVC):
A CVC is a combination of a co-verb and a verb. Co-verbs are inflectionally unanalysable, like verbs. However, unlike verbs, they are non-finite, as they cannot take TAM inflection when stand-alone. Co-verbs are an open class, whereas verbs are a closed class.

Serial Verb Construction (SVC):
An SVC is a monoclausal sequence of at least two verbs, which form a single predicate, are neither coordinated nor subordinated, and are next to a predicate argument relationship. They never have a boundary (cf. Aikhenvald 2006:1).

WAGIMAN

1. language: Iwaidjan
2. southeast (2 speakers)
3. few monolingual under 30/40, positional
4. mostly multilingual with ergative
5. agglutinative morphology, with 10 cases
6. mostly suppressive modelling
7. majority of predicates by complex verbs
8. about 200 hours of recorded speech

(1) a. *Alawa-ma* *ma-n-ga* *nah-ga*
angay 3PL.SUBJ-PST-hit-PUNC *nanga* ACC.1SG
'I will go back home.'

b. *Ni-n-ga* *nah-ga*
3SG.SUBJ-go-PUNC *nanga* ACC.1SG
'I will go back home.' [verb verb] ✓

c. **Alawa-ma* *nah-ga*
nanga ACC.1SG *nanga* ACC.1SG
(intended: 'I will return home.') [verb verb] ✗

(2) *Gulkun* *wurdugu gawu* *ngarrga-ni* *dji-ga-ni* [transitive same subject]
ngarrga *dimbuk* *nga* *ngarrga-ni* 3SG.SUBJ-go-PUNC
'The old man ran the rope.'

(3) *Gurrwa* *bad-ni* *ng-a-ni-ng-ng* [transitive verbal reference]
ngarra *Bada*$_{PROP}$ 3SG.SUBJ-PST-3SG.OBJ-hit-PUNC
'I broke the spear by throwing it.' – 'I threw the spear and it broke.'

(4) *Wilik-ma* *ga-n-ga* *dilibarrik-ma* *gurrdu-gurrung* *warrkal* [2 verbal elements]
walk 3SG.SUBJ-PST-hit *ma-ngga* *ma-ngga* *warrkal* *bird*
'He is walking (hopping, he has a wart there' (cf. walk, HIT) (Eth.)

A phonological analysis (Ex.(2))

TUVALU

1. Southern Oceanic (Austronesian)
2. endangered (2,000 speakers)
3. fixed SVO order
4. agglutinated monomorphic morphology
5. analytic morphology, with two case marking
6. multifunctional focal marking
7. majority of predications by complex verbs
8. about 20 hours of recorded speech

(1) a. *Ne* *gei-mafi* *ki* *ni-galuaa* [intransitive SVC]
ne 3SG.SUBJ-**go.home** *mafiti* LOC-**home**
'I will go back home.'

b. *Ne* *gei-mafi* *ki* *ni-galuaa* [SVC verb]
ne 3SG.SUBJ-**go.home** LOC-**home**
'I will go back home.'

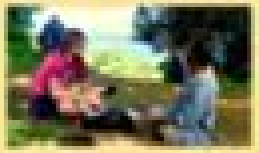
c. *Ne* *gei-mafi* *ki* *ni-matou* [SVC verb]
ne 3SG.SUBJ-**go.home** LOC-**home**
'I will return home.'

(2) *Ne* *i-ki* *tagi* *ne* *fuga-a* *manuia* [transitive same subject]
ne 3SG.SUBJ-PST-**take.away** ERG-**wind** ABS-**world**
'Take away the wind of the world.' (cf. Bell, Dyer, p. 4)

(3) *Ne* *matagi* *ne-i* *tiki* *a* *ia* [transitive verbal reference]
ne 3SG.SUBJ-PST-**hit** ABS-**wind** LOC-**him**
'The old man ran the rope.'

(4) *Te* *nee* *nofi* *kae* [2 verbal elements]
te 3SG.SUBJ-**go** *fafine* *grupu* LOC-**place** ABS-**bridge**
'There he goes up to a higher ground (with) to (his) talking to.'

A phonological analysis (Ex.(4))
Based on Clauson, Bender (2013)



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

CVCs and SVCs pose problems for word-complex theories. This section offers an analysis to account for both syntactic phenomena using the minimalist program within the generative framework. For Wagiman CVCs, this analysis is problematic. Wagiman is a more configurational language with less phonologically determined complement order. The example in (2) is an idealistic representation for an SVC structure. For two other structures, one of which is a CVC, a minimalist representation would be to analyse the movement of both verbal elements from V-level into a CP-projection. There is no evidence for a CP in Wagiman, so subordinations with complementisers is not a feature of the language. On the other hand, a TP-shell analysis with a covert PRO in vP for the SVC in Tuvalu (to capture the underlying structure much better. There is sufficient evidence for PRO in Tuvalu, as it becomes overt in one type of non-canonical control predication (see on this passim). Other approaches such as [VP] and [RP]s are still to be tested against these two languages.

In conclusion, the use of the term 'complex predicate' in the theoretical and descriptive literature varies greatly. In the literature on Australian languages, the term 'complex predicate' tends to be used as an alternative for CVC; sufficient sufficient evidence does the construction is in fact multi-headed. In the literature of Oceanic languages, the term SVC, which requires investigation, tends to be replaced by 'complex predicate' without providing more for its exact classification. There is inconsistency whether serial-verb constructions should be used and a complex predicate (Foley 1997) or paraphrastic representations of some (Aikhenvald et al. 2010).

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Complex Predicates In Oceanic Languages

Malcolm Ross,Andrew Pawley,Meredith Osmond

Complex Predicates In Oceanic Languages:

Complex Predicates in Oceanic Languages Isabelle Bril,Françoise Ozanne-Rivierre,2012-04-17 Serial verbs and complex predicates have a long history of research yet there is comparatively little documentation on Oceanic languages This volume presents new data for further typological studies While previous research on serial verbs in Oceanic languages was mostly devoted to core serial constructions with non contiguous sV o sV o nuclei this volume contributes a more detailed investigation of the nuclear type of complex predicates involving contiguous sVV o nuclei Complex predicates of the form VV may correspond to two different syntactic structures either co ranking or hierarchized head modifier Though the VV pattern does evidence a tendency towards structural compression often entailing the fusion of the argument structures of two or more nuclei yet it cannot be reduced to cases of co lexicalization compounding or grammaticalization The data also show the nuclear type to be compatible with all types of basic word orders VSO VOS SVO SOV with no evidence that this results from any word order change This challenges the claim that nuclear serialization correlates with verb final order and core serialization with verb medial order *Nexus and Juncture Types in Complex Predicates of Oceanic Languages: Functions and Semantics* Isabelle Bril (linguiste).),2007 Verb-Verb Complexes in Asian Languages Taro Kageyama,Peter E. Hook,Prashant Pardeshi,2021-02-20 This volume is the first to present a detailed survey of the systems of verb verb complexes in Asian languages from both a synchronic and diachronic perspective Many Asian languages share to a greater or lesser extent a unique class of compound verbs consisting of a main verb and a quasi auxiliary verb known as a vector or explicator These quasi auxiliary verbs exhibit unique grammatical behaviour that suggests that they have an intermediate status between full lexical verbs and wholly reduced auxiliaries They are also semantically unique in that when they are combined with main verbs they can convey a rich variety of functional meanings beyond the traditional notions of tense aspect and modality such as manner and intensity of action benefaction for speaker or hearer and polite or derogatory styles in speech In this book leading specialists in a range of Asian languages offer an in depth analysis of the long standing questions relating to the diachrony and geographical distribution of verb verb complexes The findings have implications for the general understanding of the grammaticalization of verb categories complex predicate formation aktionsart and event semantics the morphology syntax semantics interface areal linguistics and typology *Proceedings of 27th International Symposium on Frontiers of Research in Speech and Music* Keikichi Hirose,Deepak Joshi,Shankha Sanyal,2024-06-18 This book features original papers from 27th International Symposium on Frontiers of Research in Speech and Music FRSM 2023 jointly organized by Sardar Vallabhbhai National Institute of Technology Surat India and Sir C V Raman Centre for Physics and Music Jadavpur University Kolkata India during 4 5 August 2023 The book is organized into four main sections considering both technological advancement and interdisciplinary nature of speech music language and their applications The first section includes chapters related to computational modelling and cognitive aspects of the speech signal The second

part contains chapters covering the foundations of both vocal and instrumental music processing with the signal computational and cognitive aspects The third section relates to the variety of research being done in the peripheral areas of languages and linguistics with special focus on regional languages of India A lot of research is being performed within the speech and music information retrieval domain which is potentially interesting for most users of computers and the Internet Therefore the fourth and final section is dedicated to the chapters related to multidisciplinary applications of speech and music signal processing **Language Description, History and Development** Jeff Siegel,John Dominic Lynch,Diana Eades,2007-01-01 This volume in memory of Terry Crowley covers a wide range of languages Australian Oceanic Pidgins and Creoles and varieties of English Part I Linguistic Description and Typology includes chapters on topics such as complex predicates and verb serialization noun incorporation possessive classifiers diphthongs accent patterns modals in Australian English and directional terms in atoll based languages Part II Historical Linguistics and Linguistic History ranges from the reconstruction of Australian languages to reflexes of Proto Oceanic to the lexicon of early Melanesian Pidgin Part III Language Development and Linguistic Applications comprises studies of lexicography language in education and language endangerment and language revival spanning the Pacific from South Australia and New Zealand to Melanesia and on to Colombia The volume will whet the appetite of anyone interested in the latest linguistic research in this richly multilingual part of the globe The Lexicon of Proto-Oceanic Malcolm Ross,Andrew Pawley,Meredith Osmond,2007 This is the second in a series of five volumes on the lexicon of Proto Oceanic the ancestor of the Oceanic branch of the Austronesian language family Each volume deals with a particular domain of culture and or environment and consists of a collection of essays each of which presents and comments on lexical reconstructions of a particular semantic field within that domain Volume 2 examines how Proto Oceanic speakers described their geophysical environment An introductory chapter discusses linguistic and archaeological evidence that locates the Proto Oceanic language community in the Bismarck Archipelago in the late 2nd millennium BC The next three chapters investigate terms used to denote inland coastal reef and open sea environments and meteorological phenomena A further chapter examines the lexicon for features of the heavens and navigational techniques associated with the stars How Proto Oceanic speakers talked about their environment is also described in three further chapters which treat property terms for describing inanimate objects locational and directional terms and terms related to the expression of time Studies in Language ,2009 Spatial Expression in Caac Aurélie Cauchard,2018 Based on firsthand data this book explores three domains of spatial expression location motion and orientation in Caac an under researched language spoken in New Caledonia It offers a formal categorization of the linguistic resources relevan *A Reference Grammar of Puyuma, an Austronesian Language of Taiwan* Stacy Fang-Ching Teng,2008 The Puyuma people reside in southeastern Taiwan in Taitung City and Peinan Township in Taitung County There are still fourteen extant Formosan Austronesian languages in Taiwan but only thirteen indigenous groups are officially recognised by the Taiwanese

government The present study investigates the Nanwang dialect of the Puyuma language spoken by the people in Nanwang and Paoshang Suburbs of Taitung City in southern Taiwan The aim of this grammar is to describe the phonology and morphosyntax of Puyuma The work is descriptive in nature and the theoretical framework employed is Basic Linguistic Theory BLT BLT emphasises the need to describe each language in its own terms rather than imposing on it concepts derived from other languages Thus in this study the author abandons traditional terms used by linguists studying Philippine type languages such as agent focus patient focus locative focus or instrumental focus and replaces them with the terms like transitive and intransitive that are more familiar to most of the worlds linguists Provided by publisher *Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts* ,2008-02 *A Grammar of Abma* Cynthia Schneider,2010 Serial Verb Constructions in Austronesian and Papuan Languages Gunter Senft,2008 This volume of new work explores the nature of verb serialisation in a range of languages from the Pacific region both Austronesian and non Austronesian Serial verbs can be described linguistically as a sequence of verbs which behave as a single complex predicate A particular focus of this book is the detailed examination given by most authors to the relationship of such uniclausal linguistic structures with the real world notion of eventhood The book also makes a valuable addition to the description and analysis of serial verb constructions from the Pacific a region which has generally been under represented in cross linguistic discussions of verb serialisation The book will appeal to syntacticians and typologists as well as to Austronesianists and Papuanists Provided by publisher *MLA International Bibliography of Books and Articles on the Modern Languages and Literatures* Modern Language Association of America,2008 Vols for 1969 include ACTFL annual bibliography of books and articles on pedagogy in foreign languages 1969 **Linguistics** ,2007 □□□□□□ ,2007 Tamambo Dorothy Jauncey,2011 A Grammar of Kilmeri Claudia Gerstner-Link,2018 From 1963 to 2011 Pacific Linguistics located at the Australian National University published over six hundred books concerned with the languages of the Pacific Australia Indonesia Malaysia the Philippines Southeast South and East Asia The Mouton Pacific Linguistics series represents a continuation of this publishing venture under the same Editorial Board The Pacific Linguistics series presents linguistic descriptions dictionaries and other materials concerned with languages of this region The authors and editors of Pacific Linguistics publications are drawn from a wide range of institutions around the world and its publications are refereed by international scholars with relevant expertise Pacific Linguistics has built a reputation as the most authoritative publisher of works on the languages of the Pacific and neighbouring areas read by scholars with an interest in the region as well as by linguists with interests in language typology sociolinguistics language contact and the reconstruction of linguistic change and culture history Pacific Linguistics is proud to act as a vehicle for the dissemination of knowledge about the languages of the Pacific and the Pacific Rim many of which are little known and to bring them to the attention of scholars around the world as well as providing local communities with published language material at a time when many minority languages are under threat *Clause Structure and Argument*

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A Grammar of South Efate Nicholas Thieberger,2006-07-31 This book presents topics in the grammar of South Efate an Oceanic language of Central Vanuatu as spoken in Erakor village on the outskirts of PortVila It is one of the first such grammars to take seriously the provision of primary data for the verification of claims made in the analysis The research is set in the context of increasing attention being paid to the state of the world s smaller languages and their prospects for being spoken into the future In addition to providing an outline of the grammar of the language the author describes the process of developing an archivable textual corpus that is used to make example sentences citable and playable using software Audiamus developed in the course of the research An included DVD provides a dictionary and finderlist a set of interlinearized example texts and elicited sentences and playable media versions of most example sentences and of the example texts

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