

Classificatory Analysis of Serial Verb Constructions in Fulfulde Maare

Sadiq Usman Musa

Department of Languages and Liberal Studies, Ramat Polytechnic, P. M. B. 1070 Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria. Corresponding Author: Sadiq Usman Musa

Abstract: This paper is a classificatory analysis of serial verb constructions (henceforth SVCs) in Fulfulde Maare (henceforth FM). Fourteen (14) FM sentences were classified within seven headings: Locative/Directional, Manner, Purposive, Resultative, Circumstantial, Temporaneity and Negative Construction. The researchers used native speaker's intuition and unstructured interview in collecting data for this study. In this paper, it is observed that some verbs in SVCs share the same Tense, Voice, Aspect and Polarity whereas some do not. The model of approach adopted for this research is Lawal (1989).

Date of Submission: 14-08-2018

Date of acceptance: 31-08-2018

Abbreviations

SVCs= Serial Verb Constructions
FM= Fulfulde Maare
CS= Conjugational Suffixes
VR= Verb Root
VAP= Voice Aspect Polarity
VE= Verbal Extension
NCM= Nominal Class Marker
LGA= Local Government Area
PT= Past Tense
AUX= Auxiliary
Ngt= Negation Suffix
Prog=Progressive Marker

I. Introduction

Serial Verb Constructions also known as verb serialisation or verb stacking, is a syntactic phenomenon in which two or more verbs or verb phrases are strung together in a single clause. They are widespread in Creole languages, especially in the languages of West Africa, Southeast Asia, Amazonia, Oceanic, and New Guinea, Dixon (2006). It is a common feature in African languages, particularly Niger-Congo languages such as Yoruba, Edo, Nupe, Akan, Ewe, Ibibio, Igbo, Igala, Yimas, Yatye, Degema, etc (Heine & Leyew 2008).

The phenomenon of Serial Verb Constructions has been a subject of interest among linguists for sometimes since Christaller 1875. Thus, many grammatical descriptions of serial verb constructions have appeared in the literature. So far, three major phases of the investigations on SVCs in languages have emerged;

Phase 1: 1875 to early 1960s – As part of the pedagogical issues on the grammar and initial description of some languages (Christaller 1875, Balmer & Grant 1929, Westermann 1930, Westermann & Bryan 1952, Stewart 1963 and others).

Phase 2: Late 1960s to the 1990s – theorizing on the defining features, syntactic sources of SVCs and application of relevant theories to the syntactic representation of SVCs (Boadi 1968, Awobuluyi 1967, 1971, 1973, Bamgbose 1973, 1974, 1982, Schachter 1974, Baker 1989, Agbedor 1994, very many others).

Phase 3: Late 1990s to the present – Semantics of SVCs, demarcation between SVCs and other verb sequence constructions, comparative studies, typological and cross linguistic investigations of SVCs (Schiller 1990, Lord 1993, Bearth 1999, Baker & Stewart 2002, Ameka 2005, 2006, Aikhenvald & Dixon (eds.) 2006, Bisang 2009 and very many others).

A historical account of the studies on SVCs would reveal a period of about one hundred and thirty six (136) years of continued relevance and sustained interest, (Omachonu, 2011).

Fulfulde Maare is a sub-dialect of Fulfulde spoken in Borno state and its surroundings, Mohammadou (1997). Arnott, (1970) in his classification of Fulfulde dialects mentioned Borno Fulbe as part of Central Northern Nigerian dialect. Although his classification was challenged by Girei (2009), where he reveals many aspects of Fulfulde dialects that were not mentioned by the previous scholars on the language. He identifies fifteen different individual dialectal features found operating in the area of his research. Some dialects are recorded for the first time while others have been peripherally mentioned in other dialectological works on Fulfulde. Thus, Girei *ibid*, maintains that there is no clearly stated practical geographical dialects boundary within the area covered by his research. He calls Fulfulde Maare as Keesu/Maare Gulumba. He then mentions some local government areas where the dialect is spoken. These include; Ngala, Dikwa and Maiduguri. Blench, (1994) in his circular version, listed Fulbe clans in Nigeria alphabetically and mentioned Borno'en as a general term for Fulbe from Borno. Stening, (1959:33), cited in Mohammadou, (1997:261), Opines that, "Under Ardo Sali , the Mare Fulbe established in Borno probably since the 15th century, had refused to enter the holy war and side with GoniMukhtar. They had remained faithful to the Mai, but did not display the same loyalty to Muhammad Elkanemi who had Ardo killed and his community exterminated", according to Brenner (1973:33).

On the position and location of Fulbe Maare in Borno; Low's Sketch (1972:73), cited in Mohammadou, (1997:288) illustrating his findings which are stated in the following terms:

"The Fulani Mare were so called, it appears from the place-name of one of their two known loci of wet (and perhaps dry) season habitation- the Mare or Dilara plain on the southern banks of Lake Chad. Their other known side was in Damaturu-Gujba-Daya zone of west Bornu. Ardo of this category (Fulbe Mare) provided the royal houses of Missau, Jema 'are and Adamawa emirates".

The Fulbe Maare are said to have acquired the name 'Mare' only during the last hundred years and the separate sections state that they have nothing in common except the long residence together in Bornu, Reed, (1932), cited in Mohammadou, (1997). Mare or (F. Maare) considered by some writers as a synonymes to Dilaara. The name has an equivalent in the Kanuri word *máré*, an emphatic particle meaning approximately 'of course' (Cyffer and Hutchison 1990: 119). The etymology given nowadays in Borno of 'Fulbe Maare' is that some Fulbe groups were named so because of their frequent use of the Kanuri term *mare*. Such a superficial explanation does not have a ground. A possible origin of the nickname could be related to the town Marte, Mare being an older variant or an alternation of this place-name, an ancient Sao city on the south western shore of Lake Chad, which has survived up to present. The town was much known to Fulbe pastoralists who used to spend the dry season in its environs, Mohammadou, *op'cit*.

II. Serial Verb Constructions

Westermann, (1930) was one of the early linguists who hinted about the notion of SVCs. He writes as follows:

"A peculiarity of Ewe is that we often find a row of verbs one after the other. The chief features of this are that all the verbs stand next to each other without being connected, that all have the same tense or mood, and that in the event of their having a common subject and object, these stand with the first, the others remaining bare"(Westermann 1930: 126) cited in Agbedor, (1994:1).

Matthews and Yip, (1994) says that the SVC is one of the most important and productive pattern in Cantonese syntax. They affirmed that SVC in Cantonese is a simple concatenation of verbs. The core function of SVC is to serialize the event of the component verb of the construction and to conceptualize the component event as a single, unified event, (Baker 1989, Chung 1993, Collins 1997 etc.). Matisoff, (1969:71), cited in Ejele (1992) puts it as:

"SVCs serve to provide in a uniform way the sort of information that in surface grammar of languages like English is handled by a formally desperate array of subordinating devices; complementary infinitives, -ing complements, modal auxiliaries, adverbs, prepositional phrases, even 'who' subordinate clauses".

Serial Verb Constructions consist of two verbs (or verb phrase), that occur in sequence without an intervening conjunction (subordinating or coordinating) between the verbs. The following sentences illustrate frequent type of serializing verb construction in Krio, Finney (2004).

1. I bai klos gi im pikin
He buy clothes give his child
'He bought some clothes and gave his child'
2. A tek nef kut di bred
I take knife cut the bread
'I cut the bread with knife'

The SVC in (17) uses the second verb phrase (give his child) in order to express benefactive interpretation. In (18) the serializing verb 'take' is used in order to get an instrumental interpretation. Both of these constructions contrast with the English equivalents. The English sentences need either a relative clause or coordinate conjunction to express the same meanings, Finney (2004).

Ejele (1992) observes that although SVCs have complex syntactic structure being internally made-up of a number of verbs, it functions syntactically as a whole/unit with respect to syntactic processes like negation, question and verbal categories like tense and aspect. Semantically, the SVCs function as a bundle of information which is itself made-up of the meaning contributed by the composite verbs.

3. Èfè ré ópià hián éran

Efe take cutlass cut wood

‘Efe used the cutlass and cut the wood’.

4. Èfè dédigue tué àbá le.

Efe kneel down greet father her

(i) Efe knelt down to greet her father (purposive)

(ii) Efe knelt down and greeted her father (purposive)

(iii) Efe knelt down greeting her father (simultaneous)

Durie (1997:291) puts it that:

“A single serial verb complex describes what is conceptualized as a single event: this is repeatedly reported to be a clear intuition of native speakers, and can be demonstrated through semantic analysis. It follows that a serial verb complex can often be best translated into a non-serializing language using a single, mono-verbal clause”.

Fannami, (2001) examines some of the characteristic features of the SV Cs in Kanuri where he maintains that some SVCs in Kanuri are similar to what Lawal, (1989) and others called Purposive, Resultative, Circumstantial and Temporality SVCs. The SVCs in Kanuri have indeed exhibited unique features in SVCs which may be different from those in other Languages. This is attributed to the agglutinative nature of Kanuri verbs and the fact that Kanuri is a strictly verb final language.

Lawal (1989) divides SVCs in Yoruba into two groups. The first is the group in which one of the verbs cannot function as an independent verb in a sentence. This group of SVCs constitutes a small class which she calls the prepositional SVCs. In the second group of SVCs consisting of several classes, both verbs can function as independent verbs in a sentence. She calls this group self-standing SVCs.

Baker and Stewart (2002), investigate the synthetic properties of Serial Verb Constructions (SVCs) consisting of two transitive verbs that seem to share a single direct object, as found in Edo, Nupe, and Yoruba. They discuss this construction in three Niger-Congo languages; that is, Yoruba, Edo and Nupe.

Lin, (2004) asserts that, Serializing languages refer to those demonstrating serial verb constructions (SVCs), while non-serializing languages are those having secondary predicates. Taiwanese is a language that has both constructions and thus hardly can be clearly defined as one or the other type of language.

Drozdk (2008) states that the SVC is most currently presented as a construction consisting of two or more verbs or verb phrases without any subordinating or coordinating conjunction (the exclusion of conjunctions seems to be the major source of controversies about the SVC structure).

Drozdk (2008) affirms that an SVC must have:

- Only one expressed subject.
- At most one expressed direct object
- One specification for tense/aspect (only on the first verb or on both verbs but semantically one specification/or only one second verb).
- Only one possible negator
- No intervening coordinating conjunction
- No intervening pause possible.

On the features and characteristics of SVCs, Sebba, (1987) mentions that SVCs have at least the following properties or characteristics:

- a. They have only one overtly expressed (syntactic) subject;
- b. They contain two or more verbs without overt markers of coordination or subordination;
- c. The actions expressed by the verbs are either simultaneous or consecutive, and all verbs are interpreted as having the same tense;
- d. Negation, whether marked once or more than once, applies to the whole string;
- e. Tense, aspect, mood and polarity (or whichever of these a particular language has) are either marked only once in the string, or else each verb in the string is marked as having the same tense, aspect, mood and polarity;
- f. Either the semantic subject of V_i is the subject of V_{i+1} , or the object of V_i is the semantic subject of V_{i+1} .

Dixon (1997) states that the feature of SVCs is as follows: 1) an SVCs consist of more than one verb, 2) there is no mark of linkage or subordination in an SVC, 3) Each verb in an SVC may also occur as the sole verb in a clause. 4) an SVC functions like a single predicate; 5) an SVC will generally have its own transitivity value, 6) there must almost always be (at least) one argument shared by all the verbs in an SVC; 7) the verbs in an SVC

may make up one word, or may remain separate words; 8) asymmetrical SVCs tend to be grammaticalized and symmetrical SVCs tend to be lexicalized; 9) although most SVCs in a language involve just two verbs, in most languages there can be three or most verbs involved. Based on the above features, SVC is based on Semantic-grammatical category chain. Semantically, it describes two or more than two actions or behaviour made by the same subject. Grammatically it refers to a construction in which two or more successive verbs are joined together with no connecting particle, clitic, etc. It describes a complete event which may be composed of more than one sub-event which can be encoded and conceptualized as interrelated and connected in accordance with a certain order.

Aikhenvald (2006:1) integrates in her work previous ideas about SVCs (Foley and Olson 1985, Durie 1997, Crowley 2002, etc.), having as a result the following definition:

“An SVC is a sequence of verbs which act together as a single predicate, without any overt marker of coordination, subordination, or syntactic dependency of any other sort. They are monoclausal; their intonation properties are the same as those of a monoverbal clause and they just have one also share core and other arguments. Each component of an SVC must be able to occur on its own right”.

Omachonu (2011), states that SVCs are clearly recognisable and highly productive grammatical constructions in Igala. It is robust and productive syntactic process in the language. It is different from other closely related multi-verb constructions because they are mono-clausal and the VPs in SVCs are construed as occurring within the same temporal frame. The verbs share a common subject and object, expressing a single overall event, argument and grammatical categories such as aspect, expressing a single over all events, argument and grammatical categories such as aspect, mood and modality from a unit with the first verb, with the exception of negation, which in most cases follows the last verb in the series. He continues that SVCs in Igala serve to convey a broad range of semantic notions which are tandem with the culturally recognisable activities and world view of the people. He gave examples (5) and (6) on SVCs in Igala as follows:

5. Áudu a la oje je.

Audu Asp buy food eat
'Audu buys/buying food to eat'.

6. I che omi gwe eju

3sg scoop water wash eye
'He/She fetched water to wash his/her face'.

Lord (1993) rightly observes, there are various types of serial verb constructions even in a single language and there are cross-linguistic variations such that the properties of SVCs in one language may not map whole sale onto those of another language (See also Ameka 2005). Consequently, the descriptions of SVCs, in many instances, had appeared not quite adequate either because of the intricacies of the constructions or the tendency on the part of the researcher to address or concentrate on only one particular problem or a few of such problems in a language or across languages. Hence, the questions concerning the nature of verb serialization in languages arise again and again like the phoenix birds from the flames.

Furthermore, according to Heine & Leyew (2008), serial verbs do occur outside Africa and particularly common in African languages especially in Niger-Congo. Heine & Leyew (2008:298) states that serial verbs can be define loosely as;

“Constructions in which two or more verbal lexemes combine without any overt indication of a dependency between them: none of the verbs is morphologically marked as dependent, no conjunction between them”.

Or more narrowly as;

“constructions that involve two or more verbs but that, taken as a whole, have the behaviour of a single predicate, and not that of a construction involving distinct predicates in some dependency relation”.

Major, (2014) shows that SVCs in Ibibio fit in with the typological literature on SVCs on both syntactic and semantic grounds, he provides a more exhaustive list of SVCs in Ibibio that were not covered before.

III. ANALYSIS OF SVCS IN FM

Self-Standing SVCs has been the subject of controversy by many scholars both in terms of their source analysis and classification. They are verbs that can stand independently and function as main verb in sentence. The suffixes attached to the verb root were described based on Breedveld, (1995). The verb root (VR) is underlined and in some sentences the verbal extensions are abbreviated as (Ext) and conjugational suffix as (CS). Below are the classification of SVCs in FM and their analyses.

Locative/Directional Constructions

In this construction the verbs that show the location in SVCs do not occur as first verb in the series rather preceded by the verb(s) of the main event which are usually verbs of action. Let us consider the following examples under this type:

7. Hamman umm-anang-ujjuul-u dill-u saare.
 VR-CS VR-CS VR-CS VR-CS
 Hamman stand catch pray go home
 ‘Hamman get up and perform ablution, pray and go home’.

Sentence (8) is an imperative sentence because it expresses command. There are four main verbs in the sentence that is, ‘umm’ ‘stand’, ‘nang’ ‘perform ablution’, ‘juul’ ‘pray’, ‘dill’ ‘go’. All of them are intransitive verbs because they take no object in the sentence. The first three verbs are verbs of action or main event, while the last verb ‘dill’ ‘go’ show the location/direction. The Noun ‘saare’ ‘house’ functions as adjunct and is the final location/destination of the subject. The verbs share the same subject ‘Hamman’. All the four verbs in the sentence have the same tense which is present tense, active voice, incomplete aspect and affirmative polarity.

8. Ali njang-id-ii dill-i luumo.
 VR-Ext-CS VR-CS
 Ali read go market

‘Ali finished reading and went to the market’.

Sentence (9) is a declarative/statement sentence. It has two main verbs i.e. ‘njang’ ‘read’ and ‘dill’ ‘go’. The suffix –id- in the first verb ‘njang-id-ii’ is a verbal extension. While the suffixes -ii- of the first verb and that of the second verb mark voice, aspect and polarity. All the verbs share the same subject ‘Ali’, tense (past tense), active voice, complete aspect and affirmative polarity. The first verb indicates the main event and the second verb show location/direction of the subject. The Noun ‘luumo’ ‘market’ functions as adjunct.

Manner Constructions

These are sentences that express the manner in which an action or process is carried out or perceived. In manner construction, the first verb usually describes the manner while the second verb indicates the main action or process. Manner construction simply answers the question how the action took place. Let us examine this in the example (10 and 11) that follows:

9. Hassan don dar-i saan-i esum.
 VR-CS VR-CS
 Hassan is stand greet in-law his

‘Hassan greeted his in-law while standing’.

Sentence (10) is a declarative sentence. It has two main verbs, i.e. ‘dar’ ‘stand’ and ‘saan’ ‘greet’. The first verb is an intransitive verb because it has no any object in the sentence. The second verb is a transitive verb with an object ‘esum’. The first verb ‘dar’ ‘stood’ describes the manner of how the action of greeting was performed. The second verb ‘saan’ ‘greet’ indicates the main action or event. Both the verbs in the sentence share one subject ‘Hassan’ and the same tense (past), active voice, complete aspect and affirmative polarity.

10. Alii don tur-ii loot-a
 VR-CS VR-CS
 Ali is bow washing

‘Ali is bowing down and washing’.

Sentence (11) is a declarative sentence. It has two main verbs, i.e. ‘tura’ ‘bow’ and ‘loot’ ‘wash’. Both the verbs are intransitive verbs. The first verb ‘tura’ ‘bow’ describes the manner of how the action of washing was performed. The second verb ‘loota’ ‘washing’ indicates the main action or event. Both the verbs in the sentence share the same subject ‘Eemad’. The first verb ‘turii’ ‘bowed’ is in past tense, active voice, complete aspect, and affirmative polarity. The second verb ‘loot-a’ is in present tense, active voice, incomplete aspect and affirmative polarity.

In the examples (10 and 11) above, the first verbs in the sentences shows how the subject performs the main action.

Purposive Constructions

This is a construction that denotes purpose. In this construction it is the second verb that denotes the purpose. Let us examine this in examples (12 and 13) below:

11. Umaru umm-i tagg-i daago.
 VR-CS VR-CS
 Umaru stood roll mat

‘Umaru stood up and rolled the mat’.

Sentence (12) is a declarative sentence. It has two main verbs i.e. ‘umm’ ‘stand’ and ‘tagg’ ‘roll’. The first verb is an intransitive verb because it takes no object in the sentence. The second verb is a transitive one with an object ‘daago’ ‘mat’. The verb ‘umm’ ‘stood up’ describes the main action, process or event. The second verb ‘tagg’ ‘coil’ denotes purpose. The verbs share the same subject ‘Umaru’ and the same tense (past). Both the first

verb ‘umm-i’ and the second verb ‘tagg-i’ are in active voice. The verbs are in completive aspect and affirmative polarity.

12. Eemad nyed-i diyam loot-i limce maako.
VR-CS VR-CS

Eemad fetched water washed cloth his
‘Eemad fetched water and washed his cloth’.

Sentence (13) is a declarative sentence. It has two main verbs i.e. ‘nyed’ ‘fetch’ and ‘loot’ ‘washed’. Both the first and the second verbs are transitive verbs because each of the verbs takes an object in the sentence. The first verb ‘nyed’ ‘fetched’ takes an object ‘ndiyam’ ‘water’. The second verb ‘loot’ ‘washed’ takes an object ‘limce’ ‘cloth’. The first verb ‘nyed’ ‘fetched’ describes the action or process. The second verb ‘loot’ ‘wash’ describes the action which denotes purpose of fetching water. The verbs share the same subject ‘Eemad’ and the same tense (past), active voice, completive aspect and affirmative polarity.

In sentences (12-13) mentioned, the second verbs denote the purpose of the action which was presented by the first verb.

Resultative Constructions

This is another type of constructions in which the second verb denotes the result or consequence of the action which was performed by the first verb or verb phrase. This can be examined in the sentences below:

13. Aise nyaam-i nyiirii haar-i.
VR-CS VR-CS

Aise ate food satisfied

‘Aise ate food and was satisfied’.

Sentence (14) is a declarative sentence. It has two main verbs, i.e. ‘nyaam’ ‘eat’ and ‘haar’ ‘satisfy’. The first verb ‘nyaam’ ‘eat’ is a transitive verb because it takes an object ‘nyiirii’ ‘food’ in the sentence. The second verb ‘haar’ ‘satisfied’ is an intransitive verb because it takes no object in the sentence. The first verb expresses the action and the second verb denotes the result or consequence of the action performed by the first verb. In this sentence, the second verb ‘haar’ ‘satisfy’ denotes the result of ‘nyaam’ ‘eat’ which is our first verb in the sentence. The verbs share the same subject ‘Aise’ and the same tense (past), active voice, completive aspect and affirmative polarity.

14. Alii duhny-i yam doyŷ-ii mi.
VR-CS VR-CS

Alii pushed me fell I

‘Ali pushed me and I felled down’.

Sentence (15) is a declarative sentence. It has two main verbs, i.e. ‘duhny’ ‘push’ and ‘doyŷ’ ‘fall’. The first verb ‘duhny’ ‘push’ is a transitive verb because it takes object ‘yam’ ‘me’ in the sentence. The second verb ‘doyŷ’ ‘fall’ is an intransitive verb because it takes no object in the sentence. The first verb expresses the action and the second verb denotes the result or consequence of the action performed by the first verb. In this sentence, the second verb ‘doyŷ’ ‘fall’ denotes the result of ‘duhny’ ‘push’ which is our first verb in the sentence. The verbs share the same subject ‘Alii’ and the same tense (past), active voice, completive aspect and affirmative polarity.

Circumstantial Construction

Circumstantial refers to the circumstance or context under which a given state of affairs or event occurs. Thus, in circumstantial constructions the focus is on the circumstance under which the action takes place. One of the verbs in the SVCs usually denotes the action or main event while the other verb provides the context or circumstance under which the action takes place.

15. Ali don sahl-oo fi-i yam bee boccol.
VR-CS VR-CS

Ali is passing beat me with cane

‘Ali beat me with cane when passing’.

Sentence (16) is a declarative sentence. It has two main verbs, i.e. ‘saal’ ‘pass’ and ‘fi’ ‘beat’. The first verb ‘saal’ ‘pass’ is an intransitive verb because it takes no object in the sentence. The second verb is a transitive verb with an object ‘yam’ ‘me’. The first verb ‘sahl’ ‘pass’ describes the circumstance under which the action of beating took place. The second verb ‘fi’ ‘beat’ denotes the main action or event. The verbs share the same subject ‘Alii’ and the same tense (past) but different voice; the first ‘saal-oo’ with the suffix –oo- is in middle voice. The second verb ‘fi’ ‘beat’ is in active voice. The verbs share the same aspect (completive) and polarity (affirmative).

16. Hajja don nyaam-a don yewt-a.
 VR-CS VR-CS
 Hajja is eating is speaking

‘Hajja is speaking while eating’.

Sentence (18) is a declarative sentence. It has two main verbs, i.e. ‘nyaam’ ‘eat’ and ‘yewt’ ‘speak’. The first verb ‘nyaam’ ‘eat’ is a transitive verb. The second verb ‘yewt’ is an intransitive verb. The first verb ‘nyaam’ ‘eat’ describes the circumstance under which the action of speaking took place. The second verb ‘yewt’ ‘speak’ denotes the main action or event. The verbs share the same subject ‘Hajja’ and the same tense (present), active voice, incomplete aspect and affirmative polarity.

Temporaneity Constructions

This type of construction deals with time of action expressed by the sequence of verbs. It simply defines the temporal sequence of events. That is the actual time of the happening or process of action. This can be examined in the sentences below:

17. Eemad nyaam-i nyiiri daan-i.
 VR-CS VR-CS
 Eemad ate food slept

‘Eemad ate food and slept’.

Sentence (18) has two main verbs, i.e. ‘nyaam’ ‘eat’ and ‘daan’ ‘sleep’. The first verb ‘nyaam’ ‘eat’ is a transitive verb with an object ‘nyiiri’ ‘food’. The second verb ‘daan’ ‘sleep’ is an intransitive verb because it takes no object in the sentence. The first verb ‘nyaam’ describes the time of occurrence of action of the second verb. This simply means that the action of sleeping occurs after eating. The verbs share the same subject ‘Eemad’ and the same tense (past), active voice, complete aspect and affirmative polarity.

18. Abdu nang-i juul-i dill-i.
 VR-CS VR-CS VR-CS
 Abdu catch pray went

‘Abdu performed ablution, prayed and went’.

Sentence (19) has three main verbs, i.e. ‘nang’ ‘catch’ ‘juul’ ‘pray’ and ‘dill’ ‘go’. All the verbs in the sentence are intransitive verbs because they take no object in the sentence. The first verb ‘nang’ ‘catch’ (performed ablution) express the first sequence of event. The second verb ‘juul’ ‘prayed’ state the time of prayers which occur after performing ablution. The third verb ‘dill’ ‘went’ express the third sequence of event which occur after the time of prayers. The verbs share the same subject ‘Abdul’ and the same tense (past), active voice, complete aspect and affirmative polarity.

In temporaneity construction, the first or two initial verbs specify the time of the action of the second or third verb. This can be examine in sentences (18) and (19) where the verbs in sentence (18) ‘nyaam’ ‘eat’ specifies that the sleeping occurs after the time of ‘eating’. In sentence (19) ‘nang’ ‘perform ablution’, ‘juul’ ‘pray’, entails that the ‘going’ occur after the two processes of ‘performing ablution and praying’.

Negative Construction

This construction was not mentioned by Lawal (1989). It is another type of SVCs which takes negation markers in their verbs. The negative markers are suffix to the first verb, second verb or both verbs in the SVCs. This can be exemplified in the sentences below:

19. Isa yah-aay sood-i gawri.
 VR-CS VR-CS
 Isa go Neg bought corn.

‘Isa did not go to buy corn’.

Sentence (20) is a declarative sentence. It has two main verbs, i.e. ‘yah-ay’ ‘didn’t go’ with negation suffix ‘aay’ ‘didn’t’ and ‘sood’ ‘buy’. The first verb ‘yahaay’ ‘didn’t go’ is an intransitive verb because it has no object in the sentence. The second verb ‘sood’ ‘buy’ is a transitive verb because it takes an object ‘gawri’ ‘corn’ in the sentence. The first verb ‘yah-aay’ ‘didn’t go’ take the negation marker ‘aay’ ‘didn’t’ and make the sentence to be in negative polarity. The second verb ‘sood’ ‘buy’ describes the second sequence of event in the sentence. The verbs share the same subject ‘Isa’ and the same tense (past), active voice, complete aspect and affirmative polarity.

20. Hamman don waal-i nyaam-ataa yar-ataa.
 VR-CS VR-CS VR-CS
 Hamman is lying eat Ngt drink Ngt

‘Hamman is sick and is neither eating nor drinking’.

Sentence (21) is declarative sentence. It has three main verbs, i.e. ‘waal’ ‘lie’, ‘nyaam-ata’ ‘not eating’ ‘ata’ is a suffix stands for negation and ‘yar-ata’ ‘not drinking’. All the verbs in the sentence are intransitive verbs because they take no object in the sentence. The second and third verbs take negation marker ‘ataa’ ‘not’ in the sentence. The first verb ‘wal’ ‘lie’ describes the first sequence of event in the sentence. The second and third verb describes the subsequent event with a negation suffix ‘ataa’ ‘not’. The verbs share the same subject ‘Hamman’ and the same tense (past), active voice. The first verb ‘waal-i’ ‘lied’ is in completive aspect. The second verb ‘nyaam-ataa’ is in negative incompleted aspect. The third verb yar-ataa is in negative incompleted aspect. The first verb ‘waal-i’ ‘lied’ is in affirmative polarity. The second verb ‘nyaam-ataa’ and the third verb ‘yar-ataa’ are in negative polarity.

IV. CONCLUSION

Serial Verb Constructions behave differently in different languages. In FM they are series of two or more verbs or verb phrases sharing the same subject and expressing series of events and action in a sentence. However, the sequence of actions or events must be presented orderly i.e. first verb, second verb, third verb and fourth verbs. If the verbs are used interchangeably in SVCs it yield ungrammatical sentence. In this paper, SVCs in FM were classified under seven headings based on Lawal classification. The last heading (negative construction) is found operating in FM and it was not mentioned by Lawal in his classification of SVCs in Yoruba.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Agbedor, Paul. (1994)“Verb Serialization in Ewe”. University of Victoria, Canada.
- [2]. Aikhenvald, Alexandra, Y. and Dixon, R. M.(2006) *Serial Verb Constructions: Across-linguistic Typology*, Published by Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- [3]. Arnott, D. W. (1970) *The Nominal and Verbal System of Fula*. Oxford University press.
- [4]. Baker, Mark, C. and Stewart, Osamuyimen. T. (2002)“A Serial Verb Constructions withoutConstructions”. Rutgers University Ms.
- [5]. Bamgbose, Ayo(1982)“On Serial Verbs and Verbal Status”.JWAL 9, 1974, P. 17-48.
- [6]. Bamgbose, Ayo(1982)“Issues in the analysis of Serial Verb Constructions”.
- [7]. Journal of West African Language X II, 2.
- [8]. Bashir, Usman. (2014) *An Analysis of Fulfulde Ideophones*. Unpublished M. A. Thesis, University of Maiduguri.
- [9]. Blench, Roger. M. (1994)“Fulbe, Fulani and Fulfulde in Nigeria: Distribution and Identity.”Nigerian National Livestock Resource Survey: Working Paper 23, Circular Version.
- [10]. Breedveld, J. O. *Form and Meaning in Fulfulde: A Morphological Study of Maasikoore*. Research School CNWS 1995.
- [11]. Chomsky, Noam (1995) *The Minimalist Program*. The MIT Press.
- [12]. Chomsky, Noam(2001) *Derivation by Phrase*, in M. Kentowicz (ed), Ken Hale: Life in Language, MIT Press.
- [13]. Corax, F.W. (1998) *Fulfulde-English Dictionary*. Centre for the study of Nigerian Languages Bayero University.
- [14]. Drozdik, Ladislav (2008)“A Search for Serial Verb Constructions in Arabic”. Asian African Studies, 17, P.1-3-6.
- [15]. Durie, M. (1997) *Grammatical structures in verb serialization in Complex predicates*, eds. Alex Alsina, Joan Bresnan and Peter Sells, 289–354. CUP, P. 1-66.
- [16]. Ejele, P. E. (1992)“The Semantic Import of Serial Verb Constructions in Communication”.Nigerian Languages Studies No2, P. 60-68.
- [17]. Fannami, Mohammed(2001)“Serial Verb Constructions in Kanuri”. MAJOLLS, Vol. 3.
- [18]. Finney, M. (2004)“Substantial Influence on the Morphosyntactic Properties of Krio”.Linguistic Discovery. Vol. 2.2, P. 58-81.
- [19]. Girei, Abubakar, U. (2003)“The Morphology of Fulbe Names”. MAJOLLS.
- [20]. Girei, Abubakar, U(2009) *A Study of Selected Nigerian Fulfulde Dialects*. University of Maiduguri.Unpublished PhD thesis, Department of Languages and Linguistics.
- [21]. Greenberg,Joseph, H. (1963) *Languages of Africa*. India University Press.
- [22]. Heine & Z. Leyew(2008) *Is Africa a linguistic area?* In Heine & Nurse (eds.), P. 15-35.
- [23]. Iya, Ahmed A. (1994) *Indirect Object Constructions in Adamawa Fulfulde*. M. A Dissertation, University of Maiduguri.
- [24]. Iya, Ahmed A. (2011) *Binding Theory and Fulfulde Nominal Phrases*. Published by VDM Verlag Dr. Müller GmbH & Co.

- [25]. Lawal, Adeniyi, S. (1989) "The Classification of Yoruba Serial Verb Constructions." [26]. Journal of West African Language XIX, 2.
- [27]. Lin, H. (2004) "Serial Verb Constructions vs. Secondary Predication." Concentric: [28]. Studies in Linguistics, 30.2, National Chung Cheng University, P. 93-122
- [29]. Lord, Carol (1993) *Historical change in serial verb constructions*. Amsterdam: John [30]. Benjamins.
- [31]. Lyons, John (2009) *Language and Linguistics: An Introduction*. CUP.
- [32]. Major, Trask (2014) "Serial Verbs in Ibibio". Kansas Working papers in Lings Vol.35, P. 129-148.
- [33]. Matisoff, J. (1969) "Verb Concatenation in Lahu: The Syntax and Semantic of "simple" juxtaposed". Acta Linguistica, Hafniansa, 12, P. 69-120.
- [34]. Matthews P. H. (2007) *The Concise Dictionary of Linguistics*, St Edmonds Bury Press Ltd.
- [35]. Mathews and Yip. (1994) *Cantonese: A Comprehensive Grammar*. MIT.
- [36]. McIntosh, Mary. (1984) *Fulfulde Syntax and Verbal Morphology*. St Edmunds bury press.
- [37]. Mohammadou, Eldridge. (1997) "Kanuri Imprint on Adamawa Fulbe and Fulfulde". Rüdiger Köppverlag Köin.
- [38]. Mu'azu, Mohammed, A. (2003) *The Morphology of Kilba Verbs*, Unpublished PhD. Thesis, University of Maiduguri.
- [39]. Mukosy, Ibrahim, A. (1984) *Morphemes and Morphology of Fulfulde*. Unpublished Phd thesis, University of Khartoum.
- [40]. Omachonu Gideon S. (2011) "Serial Verb Constructions in Ígálà", Journal of the [41]. Linguistic Association of Nigeria Volume 14 Number 2 (pp. 263-281).
- [42]. Sebba, Mark. (1987) *The syntax of serial verbs*. John Benjamins.
- [43]. Singh, K. Y. (2006) *Fundamentals of Research Methodology and Statistics*. New Age International (P) LTD.
- [44]. Stennes L. H. (1967) *A References Grammar of Adamawa Fulfulde*. Compiled and produced at the African Study Centre, Michigan State University.
- [45]. Trask, R. L. *A Dictionary of Grammatical Terms in Linguistics*.
- [46]. Yang, Y. (2013) "Word Order and Constituency of Serial Verb Constructions." *Lingua Posnaniensis*, Doi: 10.2478/inpo. -0008,
- [47]. Yule, George. *The Study of Language*. Second Edition, CUP.