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Verb Phrase Serialization in Yorùbá
in Discourse Perspective

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Linguistics

by

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Qrun re o!

And ye shall seek me and find me
when ye shall search for me with
all your heart.

Jeremiah 29:13.

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Abbreviations used

ADV	=	Adverb
AG	=	Agent
AGR	=	Agreement
ASP	=	Aspect marker
AUX	=	Auxiliary
BENEF	=	Benefactive
BLS	=	Berkerley Linguistic Society
COMIT	=	Comitative
CONJ	=	Conjunction
DEF	=	Definite marker
DP	=	Discourse particle
EMPH	=	Emphasis
FOC	=	Focus marker
FOLK	=	Folklore
FUT	=	Future marker
HTS	=	High tone syllable
IDEO	=	Ideophone
INSTR	=	Instrumental
JWAL	=	Journal of West African Languages.
LOC	=	Locative
NEG	=	Negation marker
NOM	=	Nominalizing morpheme
NP	=	Noun Phrase
NUCL	=	Nucleus

OBL	=	Oblique case marker
OGBOJU	=	Ogbójú Ọdẹ Nínú Igbó Irúnmalẹ
PAT	=	Patient
PL	=	Plural marker
QUES	=	Question marker
S	=	Sentence
SAL	=	Studies in African Linguistics.
SC, SD	=	Structural Description, --- Change
SVC	=	Serial Verb Construction
TG	=	Transformational grammar
U	=	Undergoer (Foley andand Valin 1985)
WERE	=	Wọ̀n Rò Pé Wẹ̀rẹ̀ Ni (A play)
XMAS	=	Christmas
3sg	=	Third person singular.

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Abstract of the Dissertation

Verb Phrase Serialization in Yorùbá
in Discourse Perspective

by

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Verb Phrase Serialization, variously known as serial verb construction, compound verbs etc, is a syntactic type that combines more than one verb in a sentence without any mark of coordination. In the early 1970's, Equi-NP deletion had been hypothesized as causing the serialization. While most accounts in other language families now hold a contrary opinion, analysts of Yorùbá maintain that the early analysis to be valid. This dissertation re-examines the claims and comes to the conclusion that there is no evidence that any deletion is involved, but rather that single events for which no single verbs are available in the language utilize serialization. In fact verbs in serial verbs constructions function like affixes or even suprasegmentals do in other languages.

The dissertation is made up of five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the construction and the linguistic insights that motivate the re-examination of the verb phrase serialization phenomenon. Chapter 2 examines a representative sample of the previous scholarship and contends that the issues might not be resolvable by using composed sentences. Chapter 3 looks at the phenomenon as it occurs in various discourse contexts. Here it is shown that while the use of serial verbs is not as discourse-bound as other phenomena, like anaphora, for instance, it shows that SVC's have no optional variant forms and therefore not amenable to a transformational treatment. The data reveal that the construction is used for a variety of expressive purposes such as supplying background information, expressing comparatives, causatives, locatives and a great deal more. The discourse data also reveal certain materials in the sentences that will not surface in composed sentences but which are nevertheless vital to our understanding of the construction. Chapter 4 surveys a subclass of serial verb construction which seems to offer alternative ways of expressing the same idea. The subclass effects the function of 'stress' a function which is realized as prosody in many languages. Chapter 5 is a summary of the dissertation.

VERB PHRASE SERIALIZATION IN YORUBA
IN DISCOURSE PERSPECTIVE

CHAPTER 1.

1.0: Introduction.

Yorùbá is a Kwa language (a subdivision of the Niger-Congo family (Greenberg 1963)) spoken in the South-western part of Nigeria and the south-eastern part of Benin Republic. It is a verb medial, subject prominent languages (Li and Thompson 1976). In Greenberg's (1966) word order typology, it is SVO. A significant characteristic of the language family is that other than the monoverbal sentence types and various forms of complex sentences there is a sentence type with a noun phrase subject and a chain of two or more verbs, as shown in (1). The verbs in the serialization are underlined in the early examples for easy identification:

1a. O ní kí àwọn ọdẹ sá pamọ (FOLK)¹

3sg say that they hunter run hide

'He asked the hunters to hide'.

b. Orí rẹ kò ju tóbóló lẹ....(Awoniyi 1972)

head his NEG surpass IDEO go

'His head is very small'.

- c. Ojú ń kán mi jù béè lẹ (OGBÓJU ODE)¹
 eye ASP hurry me be-more that go
 'I am so much in a hurry (that I don't
 have time for that)'.
 d. Njé ìwọ yóò lè se é fún mi? (OGBÓJU)
 QUES you FUT can do it give me
 'Will you be able to do it for me?'
 e. Wón bèrè sí wó wá sí ilé mi (OGBÓJU)
 they begin to troop come to house my
 'They started to troop down to my house'.

The sentences in (1) exhibit a construction variously called the serial verb construction, the verb phrase serialization construction, and in earlier grammatical descriptions, the complex verb construction. The names have been used interchangeably without any attempt to attach different syntactic types to them. Here are a few definitions of the construction type:

- 2a. ".....a subject NP and a sequence of concatenated VP's"
 (Schachter 1973:256)
 b. ".....what in English may be expressed by one verb consists of series of actions: in Yorùbá...the separate actions into which the idea may be analyzed are usually expressed by separate verbs."
 (Ward 1952:106)

- c. We will use the term serial construction to refer to a sentence that contains two or more verb phrases or clauses juxtaposed without any marker indicating what relationship is between them.....
.....the verb phrase in the serial verb construction always refers to events or state of affairs which are understood to be related as part of one overall event or state of affairs".
(Li & Thompson 1981:594)

With the entrenchment of Transformational Generative Grammars per Chomsky (1965), arguments have raged over the source of this unique (exotic) construction. It is held by some linguists that every verb in the sentence represents some reduced form of an underlying sentence. This view is consistent with the tenet of the theory that transformations could accomplish such operations as: move items around, delete, insert, and so on. The notion 'underlying structure' was another powerful construct in the generative model. However, the theory did not fully account for a number of properties of the construction. Fundamental was the nature of the relationship of the supposed underlying sentences. Now that the theoretical assumption that motivated the controversy (as surveyed in Chapter 2) has changed considerably, and since the issues in the sentence type are far from settled, it appears reasonable to take a fresh look at the construction.

1.1: Aim of the dissertation

The general aim of this dissertation will be to provide as accurately as possible a syntactic description of this sentence type, primarily from the point of view of its use in discourse: in dialogues, ex-tempore narratives, oral histories, prose, poetry and newspapers. Until now, research on this sentence type have been based on formal characterization with the social context of the language discounted. There is a need to re-examine old disputes but more importantly to take into account the functional use of the construction.

1.2: Organization of the dissertation.

The dissertation will be organized into five chapters as follows:

Chapter 1.

This is an introductory chapter that introduces the language: its setting and a brief sketch of the structure. The serial verb construction (SVC) is exemplified and some definitions of the sentence type are given. The remaining sections of the chapter gives a delimitation of the dissertation and the model to be employed in characterizing the issues involved.

Chapter 2.

This chapter surveys in some detail previous scholarship on the SVC. It also looks briefly at the analyses

posited for similar or related structures in other language families. It concludes with a critique of the existing research and states the major reasons for the present endeavor.

Chapter 3.

This chapter deals with various aspects of the SVC in a variety of discourse contexts. Here, an attempt is made to isolate four major types of SVC. Functions of the SVC are investigated in some detail bearing on the issue of the intuitions of the native speaker of the language as well as universal principles that may help to shed light on the language-particular phenomenon. A passing comparison is made between this construction on the one hand and simple and complex sentences on the other, in the light of the analyses reviewed in chapter 2. Also, in this chapter, major constituents of the SVC as well as 'satellites' are investigated for what they can contribute to a decision as to the discourse function of the construction: roles of NP participants, the functions of component verbs and verbal operators. The notion of prototypicality and lexical categories (Hopper & Thompson 1984) suggests that constituents of the SVC will be coded as Noun or Verb when they are performing prototypical functions; otherwise, they will be seen as lesser variant forms of the major categories. Other observations are revealed from a survey of the database, some immediately

accounted for as they follow certain principles (universal or language specific) while others are merely noted for now.

Chapter 4.

After noting the restrictions on the occurrence of the verbs in Chapter 3, particularly the fixed order of the verbs, special attention is paid to the Valence-increasing SVC (to be defined later) because of the nature of the verb it consists of ---- non-prototypical verbs, namely, 'bleached', and a seeming violation of the restriction. A functional explanation is offered for the behaviour of this SVC type.

Chapter 5.

This is a concluding chapter which summarizes the findings and highlights the recalcitrant issues that may have been encountered.

1.3. The Model.

The serial verb phenomenon will be investigated from the point of view of discourse function. This approach enables us to consider the relevance of the contexts in which the construction type is used to their grammatical analysis. Hitherto, the construction has been investigated solely by using isolated composed sentences with the result that possibly only a narrow range of meaning and a limited number of verbs have been considered. I have

chosen to work in the discourse framework because otherwise contextual hints possibly crucial to the analysis are unavailable. As Schegloff (1982) has shown, even the seemingly meaningless 'uh', 'huh' in English serve a significant purpose in discourse. This analysis will therefore borrow from descriptive models generally termed 'the functional approach' but variously interpreted (Cf: Dik (1978), Chafe (1975, 1976), Hopper and Thompson (1980), Li and Thompson (1981), Hopper and Thompson (1984), Thompson (1985), and Givón (1979, 1983)).

It must be stated from the outset that this work is not necessarily opposed to formalism. Rather, it advocates that the constructions to be formalized be thoroughly understood. Dik's view of language description strikes me as particularly relevant at this point:

5. ".....a theory of grammar should not be content to display the rules of language for their own sake, but should try whenever possible to explain these rules in terms of their functionality with respect to the ways they are used and to the ultimate purpose of these uses".

The task undertaken here is to offer an explicit description of verb phrase serialization in Yorùbá. Attempts will also be made to explain why the construction is used. Nor is it the case that this essay will just make a catalogue of observations; in this endeavor, rather, I have in mind a framework which explains the

semantic nuance of certain grammatical "options", such as, for instance, the use of adverbial clauses in English (possibly in other languages) in various sentence positions. In Thompson (1985), and Chafe's (1984) studies of these clause types, attempts were made to explain the functional difference between preposed and postposed adverbial clauses. See (6):

6.a. Brendan was rushing madly further and further out to sea. To slow her down we streamed a heavy rope in a loop.... From the stern also dangled a metal bucket; only twenty four hours earlier we had been using it to cook an excellent meal of Irish crabs.

(Thompson, 1985)

b. Because it has such a big memory, I decided to buy it.

c. I decided to buy it because it has such a big memory.

(Chafe 1984)

Both Thompson and Chafe agree that preposing and postposing the underlined adverbials serve different discourse purposes. In Thompson's words, the preposed adverbials 'create a set of expectations'.

It will be relevant to investigate whether serial verb constructions are options to some other construction type since such a notion has been suggested (see Section 2.1.2) below). If they are options of some sort, then certain pragmatic factors can be hypothesized to trigger

the variation, as has been suggested for the use of certain 'transformational' variants (see Hooper and Thompson (1973), Gary (1976), and Tomlin (1981)).

Footnotes on Chapter 1.

¹ All textual sources of the discourse data will be cited in upper case. See list of abbreviations for the full names of the sources.

Languages will also be cited in upper case. All the data are from Yorùbá, unless otherwise indicated.

CHAPTER 2.

2.00 Survey of related literature.

Awareness of the SVC in Yorùbá dates back to about the beginning of the study of the language, although the verbs may have been called by various names, or reanalyzed as some other lexical categories. However, until recently, grammarians were not looking into explaining these series of verbs. The verbs in the construction have been analyzed variously and diverse hypotheses have been posited for them. Following is a brief account of the of the grammar of the pioneering works in Yorùbá as they relate to serialization.

2.1. Traditional Grammar.

2.1.1 Crowther (1852).

In the earliest work on Yorùbá, grammatical categories of the language are determined on the basis of their translational equivalence into English parts of speech. Thus, ga 'be tall' , pupa 'be red' and pón 'be red/bright' are categorized as adjectives:

- 5a. igi ga fíofíó
tree tall very¹
'The tree is very tall'.

- b. Aşə yîi pôn rokirokí
 cloth this red very
 'This cloth is exceedingly red'.

It is the same approach that allows Crowther to categorize

- 6a. jù (be more) 'more'
 b. jù lə (surpass go) 'most'
 c. burú jù (bad surpass) 'worse'

as adverbs of comparison (Crowther 1852:31). In the same vein, fún 'give' fi 'use, by means of' and kəjá 'pass, be above' as in the sentences below, are called prepositions:

- 7a. Şişé yîi fún mi
 do-work this give me
 'Do this work for me'.
 b. Fi igi tì í
 use stick prop it
 'Prop it up with a stick'
 c. Mo ré kəjá irú nńkan wọwọni
 I cross-pass type thing those
 'I am above such things'

Where today the sentences in (7) will be called serial verb constructions, such an analysis was not entertained by Crowther for the simple reason that some elements are not considered to be true verbs.

2.1.2. Bowen (1858).

In another early work on Yorùbá (Bowen 1858), the traditional grammatical assumption of one verb per sentence is employed, and the other verbs in the sentence are categorized as adverbs or prepositions. This work however recognizes the verbal status of the items. To Bowen, these verbs are only "used adverbially" (Bowen 1858:50). In the sentences below, verbs are underlined and the supposed verbs used adverbially are post-marked with asterisks [*]

8a. Wón sòrò tó*

they speak be enough

'They spoke enough'.

b. Wón gbě̀rò pẹ̀*

they take-consultation be plenty

'They discussed (together)'.

The items in bold face in (8), which Crowther calls prepositions, are also analyzed as prepositions by Bowen, but with a caveat:

"Many verbs are employed as prepositions
although they still continue to be construed as
verbs"

(Bowen 1858:52)

Bowen would say

9a. "a verb bá 'to meet' becomes a preposition bá

'with' as in:

Bá mi lɔ

with me go

'Go with me'

- b. a verb fún 'to give' becomes fún 'for' as in

O wí fún mi

he say give me

'He told me'.

and

- c. the verb mó 'stick to' becomes mó 'to' as in

Wón kan Jésù mó igi

they nail stick-to tree

'Jesus was crucified'.

(Bowen 1858:52)

Although Bowen does not make use of the label 'serial verbs' or any such name, his grammar contains the materials of which today's claims and counter claims are made. See Lord (1973), Givón (1976, 1979, 1984) and subsequent review sections below.

2.2. 'Pre-transformational Grammar'.

Since Crowther and Bowen, there has been a progressive recognition of the series of verbs as verbs with each author qualifying them in various ways such as "compound verbs" (De Gay and Beecroft (1914), Lucas (1964), and

Ogunbowale (1970), "verbal combinations" (Rolands 1969) and "double verbs" (Delano 1965). Ansre, working on Twi (a Ghanian language in the Kwa family) suggests the name "verbid" (Ansre 1965).

In essence, the realization of the series of verbs as verbs by the 'pre-transformationalists' will be input into the investigation of the serial verb construction later. Judging by the various names such as 'compound verbs', 'verbal complex' and the like, it appears that with these scholars, the phenomenon began to attract serious attention.

2.3. Transformational Grammar.

Work on serial verbs in Kwa languages (e.g. Akan, Yorùbá, Nupe, etc) intensified with the emergence of transformational grammar, especially in the first half of the 1970's. See Bámgbóšé (1974), Awobuluyi (1967, 1973), Stahlke (1970), Lord (1973, 1976), Welmers (1973), Schachter (1973), George (1975, 1976) and Hyman (1971), among others. The consensus, barring a few dissenting views (i.e, Stahlke 1970, Schachter 1973, and Lord 1973, 1974), is that for every surface verb, there is an underlying sentence, and that some transformation has applied to reduce the underlying sentences to only verb phrases. The derivational process is assumed to employ *equi NP*

deletion, such that only the first occurrence of coreferential NP's is retained. I shall cite a few analyses of the Yorùbá language to illustrate the transformational process hypothesized to be involved in the derivation of the sentence type.

2.3.1 Awobuluyi's Analysis.

Awobuluyi, to my knowledge, is the first to employ the transformational analysis to Yorùbá (Awobuluyi 1967). In his characterization of the "compressed sentence construction", which has now come to be known as the "serial verb construction", Awobuluyi says:

"This label (i.e Ward's 'verbal combination', Ward 1952:106) and the sort of analysis it seems to imply, namely, that the construction involves mere strings of verbs, would seem to be inadequate, however; for the sentences which exemplify the construction usually have variants containing as many conjoined sentences as there are verbs in their "verbal combination" counterparts. It thus appears that the construction involves strings not so much of verbs as of sentences which have been reduced or compressed".

(Awobuluyi 1967:86).

(emphasis mine, O.Y.)

He subclassifies the construction into two types: the 'double-base compressions' which can be traced to two underlying conjoined sentences and the 'multi-base compressions' which have more than two conjoined sentences in their bases. (10) exemplifies the double-base and (11) the multi-base compressions:

10a Bólá mú Chicago wá

took come

'Bola brought Chicago'

(presumably Chicago is a personal name ---O.Y.)

b. Bólá ra búrédi jẹ

bought bread eat

'Bola bought bread and ate it'.

11a. Dàda ra mààlúù pa jẹ

bought cow kill eat

'Dada bought a cow and slaughtered it for food'

b. Dàda lọ ra búrédi jẹ

went buy bread eat

'Dada went to buy bread to eat'

Supposedly underlying (10a), to take just one example, is
(12)

12. # Bólá mú Chicago # sì # Bólá wá #

took and came

'Bola took Chicago and Bola came'

('#' is a sentence boundary).

In addition to the conjunction sì 'and', the connectives láti (= Awobuluyi's láàti) 'in order to', or títífi 'until' are hypothesised as possible conjunctions. And to

arrive at the surface sentence, it is postulated that this rule will operate:

13. ^{Tob} Subject Deletion in Conjoined sentences;

$$\text{SD: } \begin{array}{c} X \text{ \#NP - VP - } \\ 1 \end{array} \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{sì} \\ \text{lati} \\ \text{titifi} \\ 2 \end{array} \right| \begin{array}{c} - \text{NP - VP \# Y} \\ 3 \quad 4 \end{array}$$

SC: X-1-2-3-4-Y ==> X-1-2-4-Y

Condition: 1=3, iterative, optional except when 2 contains lāti, X,Y = null/non-null. (p.110)

If objects are identical, the same rule will operate. And there are series of rules that will clean up other items like the conjunction:

$$\text{14. SD: } \begin{array}{c} X - \text{\#S\#} - \\ 1 \end{array} \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{sì} \\ \text{lààti} \\ \text{títifi} \\ 2 \end{array} \right| \begin{array}{c} - Y \\ 3 \end{array}$$

SC: X-1 -2 - 3 -Y ==> X - 1 - 3 -Y

Condition: optional when 2 = lāti, does not apply when 2=lāti and 1 contains any one of: gbàgbé 'forget', mú ara 'be ready', gba iyànjú 'to make an effort', se tán 'be prepared, be ready', ba èrù 'to be afraid'. Obligatory otherwise. X,Y, = null/non-null.

More deletions may be required depending on the sentence type. For instance, in comparative sentences like :

15a. Eyii dara ju iyen
 this good surpasses that one
 'This is better than that'

which supposedly has (15b) as its underlying structure:

15b. Eyii dára ó sî jú iyeṇ ní dídára
 this good it and surpasses that one in goodness
 'This one is better than that'.

after the deletion of the pronoun ó 'it', and the conjunction sî 'and', the prepositional phrase ní dídára 'in goodness' which is not carried over to the surface structure is deleted. See Awobuluyi (1967:100) for details of the formulation of the rule.

The serial verb construction is similarly characterized in subsequent works (although the rules are not necessarily so clearly spelt out).

2.3.2 Stahlke's analysis.

At the time when transformational grammar was being used rigorously to pose searching questions into the structure of language, Stahlke surveys the serial verb phenomenon again. He finds that the expressive power of the SVC includes the coding of instrumental, manner, adverbial, dative, benefactive, locative, causative, inchoative, comparative and auxiliary relations. Using

universal constraints on transformations as proposed in Ross (1967), Stahlke rejects the postulation that the serial verb construction could be derived from coordinated sentences. Briefly, these are his arguments:

(i) The language has no independently motivated "gapping" rule; hence the ungrammaticality of (16b), which is supposedly derived from (16a):

16a. Adé mu ɛmu, Oyè mu omi, Dòkun sì mu ɔtí
 drink wine drink water and drink beer
 'Ade drank wine, Oye drank water, and Dokun drank beer'

16b. *Adé mu ɛmu, Oyè omi, Dòkun sì ɔtí
 drink wine water and beer
 'Ade drank wine, Oye water, and Dokun beer'.

(ii) The conjoined sentence (17a) can be extended by the contradictory conjunct:

şùgbón mo gbàgbé láti mú un wá pèlú
 but I forget to take it come also
 'but I forgot to bring it along'

but the serial verb sentence (17b) cannot be so extended:

17a. Mo mú ìwé, mo sì wá ilé
 I take book I and come home
 'I took the book and came home'

17a' Mo mú ìwé, mo sì wá ilé, sùgbón mo gbàgbé
 I take book I and come house but I forget
 lati mú ìwé wá pèlú
 to take book come also

17b. Mo mú ìwé wá ilé
 I take book come house
 'I brought the book home'.

17b' *Mo mú ìwé wá ilé mo sì gbàgbé láti mú
 I take book come house I and forget to take
 ìwé wá pèlú
 book come also
 (I brought the book, but I forgot to bring
 the book also).

Stahlke uses the differences in the grammaticality of the prime counterparts of (17a, b) to argue for the difference between coordinate sentences and serial verb constructions.

(iii) Stahlke also observes that while any NP could be moved out of serial verb constructions, movement in conjoined constructions must obey the coordinate structure constraint (Ross 1967). Thus while one can say (18a) in a focused construction:

18a. Ilé ni mo mú iwé wá

house FOC. I take book come

'It's to the house that I brought the book'

(18b) is impossible:

18b. *Ilé ni mo mú iwé, mo sì wá

house FOC. I take book I and come

'It's to the house I took the book and came'

Apart from the points raised in (i-iii) above, it appears that Stahlke has made the right observation about serial verbs, an observation that should keep the research on serial verb constructions alive until a satisfactory answer is found:

".....we apparently have some important issues before us. Why, for example, do we find a strongly limited verb inventory in the lexicon, a type of syntactic structure in which groups of verbs get in concert to form complex meanings such as 'go-take-come' for 'fetch' or 'take-give' for the three argument verb 'give.....?' (p.95)

This challenge is still very relevant.

2.3.3 Bámgbóşé (1974).

Bámgbóşé (1974) assumes the correctness of the "traditional analysis" ('traditional' in the sense that it was the prevalent and customary one at the time) of deriving serial verb constructions from two or more underlying sentences. He also assumes that the construction

must be derived from a coordinate structure, and makes use of the equi-NP deletion rule like Awobuluyi. Sentences so derived are called the "Linking type". I shall talk about the type that does not make use of the rule later.

Apparently in response to Stahlke (1970), he defends the claim that serial verbs must be derived from a coordinate structure. His defence includes two syntactic and four semantic arguments. In the paragraphs below, I shall briefly summarize his position.

2.3.3.1 Syntactic arguments

2.3.3.1.1. Obeying Ross's Constraints.

Bámgbósé argues that the grammaticality of (18a) and the ungrammaticality of (18b) can be accounted for by the fact that "at the point when NP movement rule operates on (18a), it is no longer dominated by two S nodes, whereas (18b) which is still so dominated obeys Ross's coordinate structure constraint which forbids the movement of any conjunct or any element within it". (p.21).

2.3.3.1.2. Single Tense and Aspect Marking.

The obligatory uniform tense-aspect (to be discussed fully later) for all the verbs seems to be problematic.

2.3.3.2. Semantic.

2.3.3.2.1. Reference.

Concerning 'reference', Bámgbóṣé states that the analysis must reveal which NP a verb is talking about. For the first verb, the NP preceding it must be its subject. The verbs at issue are subsequent ones. Thus in sentences like (19):

19a. Olú gbé àga wá (=Bámgbóṣé #18)

Olú carried chair come

'Olú brought the chair'.

b. Olú lo aṣṣ náà gbó (=Bámgbóṣé #19)

Olú used cloth the old

'Olú used the cloth and it is torn'.

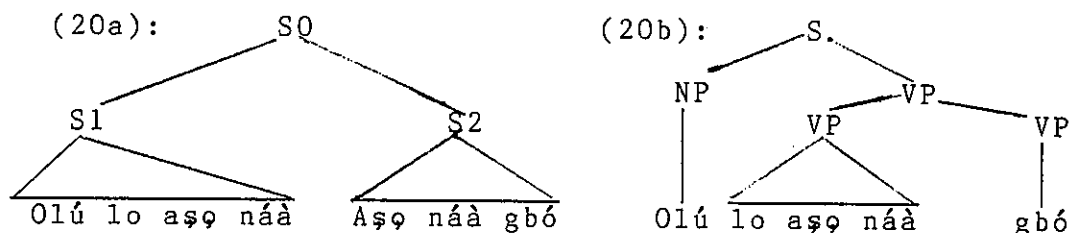
c. Olú lé ọmọ náà jáde (=B. #20)

Olú drove child the go-out

'Olú drove the child out'.

gbé 'carry', lo 'use' and lé 'drive' must refer to Olú. But there is possible ambiguity for the referents of wá 'come, gbó 'old' and jáde 'come out'. The case of wá can be resolved by its semantics; only the animate NP Olú can come. In (b), either Olú or aṣṣ 'cloth' could be old and in (c) both Olú or ọmọ náà 'the child' could go out. Therefore, Bámgbóṣé maintains that the facts will be difficult to explain if two underlying sentences

are not postulated. Thus the underlying structure will be (20a) rather than (20b):



2.3.3.2.2. Sequence and Consequence.

This argument claims that serial verbs form an irreversible string. A reversal will either change the meaning or result in ungrammatical sentence. Thus

21a. Olú gbé àga wá
 Olú carried chair come
 'Olú brought the chair'

cannot mean the same thing as:

21b. Olú wá gbé àga
 Olú came carry chair
 'Olú came to carry the chair'

Also, a reversal of the string of verbs in

22a Wọn mu ọtí yó
 they drink wine full
 'They are drunk'

as

22b *Wón yó mu ɣtí
they full drink wine

is impossible as getting drunk presupposes drinking first.

While it is true that pragmatically, there is sequence and consequence, it is not entirely clear how this actually supports the claim that we are dealing with two sentences, in which case the alleged derivation is still open to question. This will be taken up later.

2.3.3.2.3. Negation.

That serial verbs have coordinate sentential bases is supposedly shown by the scope of negation, namely, that negation affects only one verb in the series. Thus, in

22c. Wón ò mu ɣtí yó
they NEG. drink wine full
'They are not drunk'.

NEGATION affects only yó 'be drunk' and not mu 'drink' as the participants may have drunk some wine without being drunk. It is claimed that the derivation should include two underlying structures before such readings can be explained.

Using Fillmore's (1968) Case hypothesis, Bámgbóṣé claims that the identical NPs bear the same case relations (even when one of the NP's may have been deleted). Thus, both occurrences of omọ náà 'the child' in (19c') are said to be in the Dative case (Bámgbóṣé 1974:):

and eegun 'bone' in (21a, b) are Instrumental (p.)

I need to mention briefly that there appears to be an error in the Case specifications for omɔ náà 'the child' in (19') and eegun 'bone' in (21b). One occurrence of omɔ náà is PATIENT (S₁) and the other THEME (arguably AGENT). The only instrumental eegun is the one in S₂ of (21b), the other being clearly OBJECT. Thus the NP's in the second conjuncts do not bear the

c. O sə fún mi (=B. #62)

He said give me

'He told me'.

where, to use (22a) as an illustration, it cannot be meaningfully claimed that underlying the sentence are the following sentences:

22a' S₁: O ñ sùn S₂: O ñ lə

he ASP. sleep he ASP. go

'He is sleeping' 'He is going'.

The derivation that will yield the serial construction will require a change of meaning. In other cases for which the modifying type is called for, some of the verbs in the string may not occur as the only verb of the supposed underlying structure. (23) is an illustration:

23. Olú rìn tì (=B. #66)

Olú walk fail

'Olú was unable to walk'.

which may not have these sentences as its underlying structure:

23b. Olú rìn *Olú tì

'Olú walked' 'Olú failed'

In yet other circumstances, ambiguity will require that while one reading is deemed to have come from the the linking type, only the modifying type can explain the other. The following sentence is ambiguous on the meanings indicated:

24. Olú rìn lẹ

Olú walk go

- a. 'Olú went walking' (Linking Type)
- b. 'Olú is lost' (Modifying Type)

Consequently, a verb may be [\pm MODIFYING] depending on whether it occurs as the only verb in the sentence or whether it occurs with another verb in the serial construction.

To summarize, Bámgbóṣé has hypothesised two types of serial construction; the 'Linking type' which has coordinate structure in its underlying structure and the 'Modifying type' which has only one sentence at the base. The Modifying type, with its parallel structure to the Linking type suggests that serial verb construction can have just a single sentence in the base.

2.3.4. George (1975).

A major work on the serial verb construction in the transformational tradition is George's (1975) dissertation. In his Kwa type Verb Serialization, George reports extensively on a number of languages of West Africa, including Ewe (Westerman 1930), Fanti (Welmers 1946), Ijo (Williamson 1963, 65), Twi (Boadi 1968, Ansre 1966), Yatye (Stahlke 1970), and Yorùbá (Awobuluyi 1967, Bámbgbóṣé 1974). He notes that the general hypothesis that serial verbs may have come from conjoined sentences has been suggested as far back as Westerman (1930). But in his own detailed study of Nupe connectives, he rejects this hypothesis:

"To summarize this brief survey of the coordinate conjunction, we have found no basis to assume that coordinate structures underlie serial verbs, nor have we found instances of conjoined verb phrases".
(George 1975:91-92)

He however claims that the asymmetrical conjunction kangi....ci 'and then' may however be deleted to yield a serial verb construction². Witness his example from Nupe below:

25. a. Musa fã èwò (NUPE)

Musa wore garment

(kangi) u ci dà de

then he and went out

b. Musa fā èwò ci dà de

c. Musa fā èwò dà de

all of which mean

'Musa wore a garment (and then) went
out'.

He further claims that the symmetrical conjunction
(to)...tò 'and' cannot join verb phrases as his example
below shows:

26. d. Musa koni u ci yanyà (NUPE)

Musa sang he and then danced

'Musa sang and then danced'

e. *Musa koni to nyanyà

(Musa sang and danced) (i.e. simultaneously)

As an explanation as to why the language has serial
verb construction, George postulates 'lexical parsimony'
whereby an unavailable semantically composite verb is
replaced by a combination of basic verbs. For example,
the concept expressed in English as bring is expressed in
Nupe as lá....bé 'take....come' because of the lexical gap
for semantically composite verbs in the language. As for
the syntactic source of such construction, he postulates
'Complementing serialization' (contra. Awobuluyi (1967)
and Bámgbósé(1974)). Thus for a sentence like

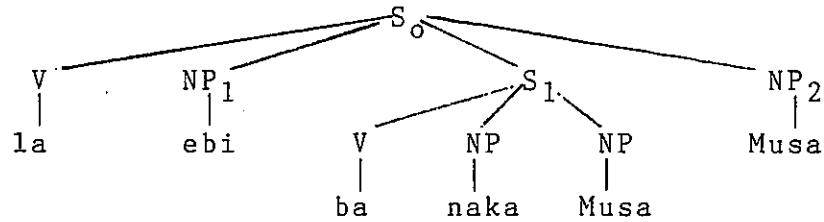
26(f) Musa la ebi ba naka (George 1975)

take knife cut meat

'Musa cut the meat with a knife'

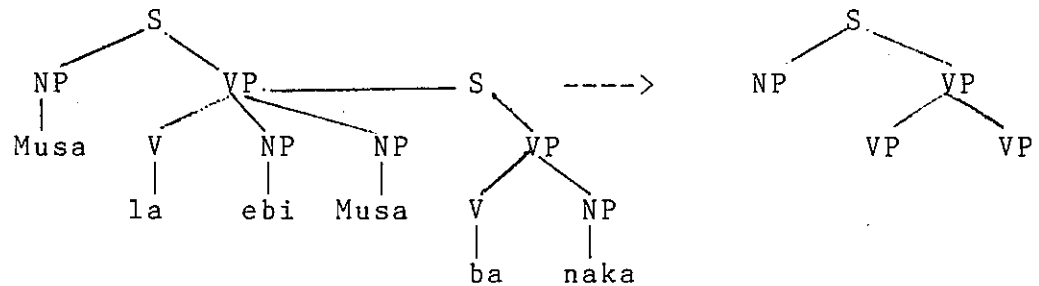
the syntactic process is illustrated below:

PM-1.



which "by rule of objectivalization and subectivaliza-
tion [sic] yields an intermediate structure":

PM-2 :



And he claims that Equi will delete the subjects of the embedded sentences while "prunning" will take care of the rest.

George's work on serialization is limited to a set of action and locative verbs like la 'take', be 'come', ya 'give', lo 'go', ta 'to be on' and dã 'to be in' on the grounds that "they feature prominently in the grammar of verb serialization and that they are basic and universal"

(p.54). I will need to make the observation here that George, on the one hand, and Awobuluyi and Bámgbóṣé, on the other, are making conflicting claims regarding the source of serial verb constructions for such closely related languages as Nupe and Yorùbá. The pendulum will swing again when we review Hyman (1971), below.

2.3.5. Hyman 1971.

In his grammar of consecutivization in Fe'fe', Hyman makes a cross-linguistic identification of serialization and consecutivization (using Nupe for serialization and Igbo and Fe'Fe' for consecutivization), claiming that in some languages, coordinate constructions (i.e consecutivization) are found in exactly those positions where serializations are found in other languages. 'Consecutivization' is defined as

"....a case of sentential conjunction in which the verb of the second conjunct represents an action that is subsequent in time to the action represented in the verb of the first conjunct."

(Hyman 1971:31)

Here are his examples which show the parallelism between consecutivization and serialization:

27a. U lá duku bé (NUPE)

he take pot come

b. O were ite bya (IGBO)

he took pot & come
 c. A ka lah cak nsa (FE'FE')
 he PAST take pot & come
 'He brought the pot'

In conclusion, Hyman hypothesises that serializing languages were once consecutivizing, thus positing coordination as the historical (and possibly also the synchronic) source of serialization (Cf. George, above). It may be noted that consecutive constructions still have marks of linkages, i.e. a vowel suffix in the consecutivized verb in Igbo, and a nasal prefix in the consecutivized verb in Fe'fe' whereas no such linkage is attested in serial verb constructions.

2.4. Non-transformational analyses

Of all the linguists that I have reviewed so far, only Stahlke has refrained from hypothesizing some type of sentential source for serial verbs, although he is working within the transformational model. I shall report in the ensuing sections analyses of verb serialization which make use of neither multi-sentence underlying structures nor transformations.

2.4.1. Schachter 1973.

While arguments vacillate between coordination or embedding underlying structures for serial verb construction, Schachter questions even the foundation of such hypotheses, namely the need for deletion under identity in grammar (Schachter 1973:253). Schachter then proposes that the underlying structure of the serial verb construction is essentially identical to the surface structure: "a subject noun phrase and a sequence of concatenated verb phrases" (p.256). The rule schema that will generate the structure is:

28. S ---> NP AUX VP VP*

(where 'VP*' means zero or more occurrences of VP. Schachter has amended this rule as S ---> NP AUX VP VP⁺, where 'VP⁺' stands for one or more VPs, (Schachter, personal communication))

Among the arguments he marshalls to support the hypothesis are the impossibility of independent choice of tense and aspect for the verbs in the series and the lack of markers of sentence complexity like conjunctions or complementizers. In addition, Schachter notes that in Akan, there is polarity and mood agreement. Witness his examples below:

Negation:

29. Kofi nye aduwa mma Amma (AKAN)

Kofi not-does work not-give Amma

'Kofi does not work for Amma'.

(the preverbal nasal is the negative morpheme)

Imperative:

30a. fre Kofi bra

call Kofi come

'Call Kofi and come'

'Call Kofi (to come) in'

b. Momfre Kofi mmra (mbra --> mmra)

you (pl) call Kofi (pl) come

'(You-all) call Kofi and come'

'(You-all) call Kofi (to come) in'

In (30b) the plural distinction in the imperative is marked even in the second verb despite the fact that Kofi would be argued (in transformational analysis) to be the subject of 'come'. These examples make Schachters 'aux-spreading' postulation (p.260) more general and ultimately supports his verb concatenation hypothesis. These pieces of evidence also show that these related Kwa languages make use of the same rules but differ systematically in their implementation of the rules.

2.4.2. Other Non-transformational Accounts.

Two other accounts that do not employ any transformations are Lord (1974) and Foley and Olson (1984). Lord's analysis is essentially similar to Schachter's, but Lord goes beyond a synchronic account to hypothesize that the serial verbs are in transition to becoming prepositions. Foley and Olson's work is based on **Role and Reference Grammar** (RRG) propounded by Van Valin and Foley (1980), Foley and Van Valin (1985). The RRG model views the clause as a complex layering of grammatical units, "smaller within larger": the nucleus (i.e., the verb), the core layer, which is made up of the nucleus and the participant roles associated with the verb (i.e., indicated in the lexical entry of the verb), and the peripheral layer, which is made up of the core and non-core arguments like LOCATIVE and TIME adverbials. The schema might be diagrammed in a simplified form as

31a. [PERIPHERY [CORE [NUCLEUS] CORE] PERIPHERY]

and this can be used to analyze the sentence below:

31b. [yesterday [John [carefully (burned)] his
notebook] in his study]

where the nucleus is the verb burn, carefully being its operator, the core layer consisting of the nucleus and the essential arguments of the verb --- John and his

note book, and the peripheral layer consists of the core and the time phrase yesterday and the locative phrase in his study.

Hypothesizing that there could be juncture at every layer (although they did not develop the idea of peripheral layer juncture), juncture being a joining of identical layers (indicated graphically as '=') Foley and Olson have attempted to account for serial verbs with this model. RRG would analyze serial verb construction as either core juncture or nuclear juncture phenomena. Using sentences (32a and b) from Barai (a New Guinea language), they illustrate the core and nuclear juncture respectively as (33a and b):

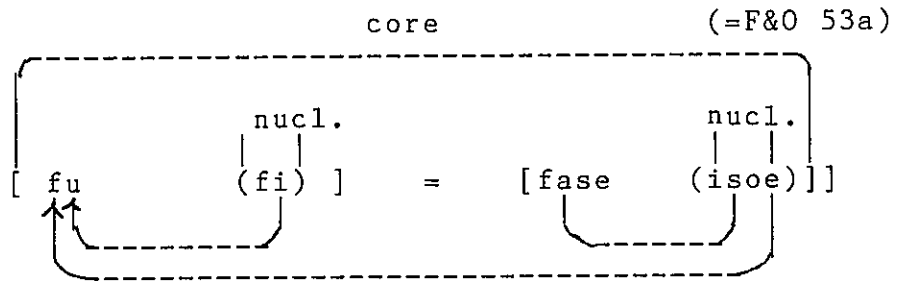
Core juncture

32a. fu fi fase isoe (BARAI)
he sit letter write.
'He sat and wrote a letter'

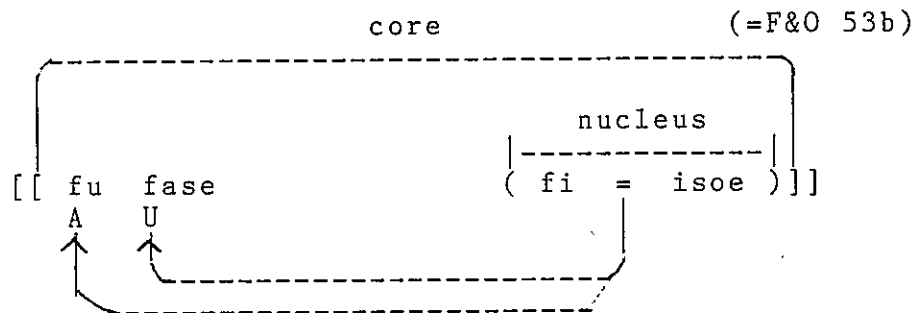
Nuclear juncture:

b. fu fase fi isoe (BARAI)
he letter sit write
'He sat and wrote a letter'.

33a. Core juncture



33b. Nuclear juncture



(A, U, mean 'Actor' and 'Undergoer')

The Yorùbá serial verb construction is claimed to belong to the core juncture type.

2.5. Serial Verb Constructions in other Language families

Serial verb constructions have been reported in other language families, particularly in East and Southeastern Asia (Li and Thompson 1973, 1981, Needleman 1973, and Foley and Olson, above). There have been reports of the construction type in Australian languages

too (Pawley 1980,1984). Allowing for language-specific behavior, the characteristics of the serial verbs in these languages are roughly similar to the Kwa-type verb serialization. I shall briefly mention the Mandarin Chinese example as reported by Li and Thompson in their series of investigation on the phenomenon.

In their analysis of Mandarin Chinese, Li and Thompson (1973) had analyzed the serial verb construction as deriving from either coordinate or subordinating conjunction, depending on the nature of the first verb and the "knowledge of the world" one brings to bear on the interpretation of the construction. For instance, a sentence like

35. Ni guì-xialai qiú Zhang-san (CHINESE)
you kneel down beg Zhang-san

can have any of the following interpretations:

- a. You knelt down in order to beg Zhang-san. (Purpose)
- b. You knelt down and then begged Zhang-san. (Consecutive action)
- c. You knelt down begging Zhang-san. (Simultaneous action.)
- d. You knelt down and begged Zhang-san. (Alternating action)

(Li & Thompson 1973:98)

Such interpretations are possible for Yorùbá serial verb construction too, particularly in varying discourse contexts.

Chinese type verb serialization is similar to Yorùbá along another dimension, namely in the so-called "coverbs" (Li & Thompson 1973, 1981). Li and Thompson would disallow coverbs as verbs. For them the items are prepositions (Li & Thompson 1973:98). While Bámgbóṣé calls some of the parallel items (for Yorùbá) "Modifying Verbs", Awobuluyi (1973) states that they are prepositions. Recall too, the analysis of Lord (1974) and Bowen's (1858) analyses reported earlier.

Because of language-specific syntactic behaviours, one may not press the similarities between Chinese and Yorùbá serial construction too far. For instance while a description such as (36)

36. (NP) V (NP) (NP) V (NP)
(Li and Thompson 1981:594)

is possible for Chinese, an equivalent expansion does not occur in Yorùbá. Also, the pervasiveness of the zero pronoun in Chinese (Li and Thompson, 1979), which may in fact contribute to the preponderance of verb serialization in the language, is not used in Yorùbá syntax. Thus, there is need to pursue the similarities in the serial verb construction in the two languages with caution.

However, one general observation made by Li and Thompson concerning serial verbs seems to me to be valid for Yorùbá, and may be a universal for the construction type. In fact, I think that it is the overriding hypothesis that can help in understanding the discourse function of serial verbs:

".....the property they (i.e. the juxtaposed verb phrases) share is that the verb phrases in the serial verb construction always refer to events or states of affairs which are understood to be related as parts of one overall event or state of affairs". (Emphasis mine, O.Y.)

(Li and Thompson 1981:594)

2.6 Critique of earlier works.

In the previous sections, I have looked in some depth at the representative analyses of the serial verb construction, as they relate to the Yorùbá language. Broadly, the analyses can be grouped into two camps; the transformationalist and the non-transformationalist. The latter group is not actually a unified class in that there are generative as well as non-generative (traditional) representatives here. Whatever the division within each group, the important thing is that despite their advancement of our knowledge on the phenomenon, their analyses still leave open an explanation concerning the use of the construction. A few of their postulations

which motivate my redoing of the grammar of the SVCS are noted below.

One of my primary motivations for this re-examination is the fact that the construction has been construed only in formal terms and the overall function has not been adequately attended to. By this, I mean that individual verb forms and their meanings are focused on while the collective meaning or function of the verbs (and their arguments) have not been given much attention. That is why arguments like the scope of negation, for instance (See Bamgbose, *inter alia*) arise. If the overall event we are reacting to is, say, <BRING>, it is not appropriate that we say negation affects just come and not take, i.e. only a fraction of the composite event. Clearly, the scope of negation as used by Bamgbose does not help in a situation like this:

37. a. Olú se iṣu jẹ
Olú cook yam eat
'Olú cooked yams and ate them/it'.
- b. Olú kò se iṣu jẹ
Olú NEG. cook yam eat
'Olú did not cook yams to eat'.

where the scope of negation, by analogy with (22c) could be any of the component verbs. However, one cannot, (in

terms of our knowledge of the world) claim that (b) means 'Olú ate yams but he did not cook them'. Neither does the sentence mean that 'Olú cooked the yams but he did not eat them'. In other words, in the serial verb construction, we are dealing with a single event that did (as in (37a)) or did not (as in (37b)) take place. There are other cases, actual or composed, that clearly show that the scope of negation is the entire series of verbs:

38. a. Wọ̀n ò tíí fún mí ní lícèns mi (XMAS)

they NEG. give me OBL. my

padà

return

'They have not returned my license'.

b. Bàbá mí kò rán mí lọ sí ilé ìwé

father my NEG. send me go to house book

'My father did not send me to school'.

c. Adé ò ga tó bàbá rẹ̀

A. NEG. tall equal father his

'Ade is not as tall as his father'.

I shall suggest, below, that we are dealing with a collocation of verbs with a unique function (even bordering on idiomaticity). In fact, I shall use the single occurrence of the negation morpheme to claim that serial verbs

function to code a single event, this event being under the scope of a single Tense-Aspect and Mood (TAM) (Givón 1980, Schuh, Ms).

Secondly, as has been shown, the rule system plays a significant role in the transformational study of serial verbs. It will appear that the rules are unmotivated. In most analyses, it is suggested only implicitly that serial verb constructions are variant forms of complex sentences. Only Awobuluyi makes an explicit claim that the constructions actually have coordinate counterparts (refer back to Section 2.3.1). However, as indicated in the Chafe and Thompson studies on adverbial clauses, variant constructions usually carry certain discourse functions. As I shall show in chapter 4, various forms of NP promotion (alias Move-Alpha) are variant word orders performing special discourse functions. These can be shown to be motivated by certain nuances of meaning. But it remains to be shown under what circumstances complex sentences will become serial verb constructions. If serial verb constructions are actually compressed sentences, there should be a rule that will predict when we have the variant forms.

A third reason why I think that a retention of the transformational analysis is probably misguided is that

there are too many unmotivated deletions. It would appear that these rules ---- Equi-NP deletion, conjunction deletion, PP deletion (as in comparative constructions) and complementizer deletion (if the structure comes from complement constructions as George (1975) claims), auxiliary deletion, etc ---- are simply expediences to arrive at the target structure. In short, they appear to be ad hoc. Note that even if an Equi-NP rule is allowed on pragmatic grounds, namely, economy of effort, none of the other deletion rules has this explanation. And there are other complications too. I would, in fact, think the analysis as postulated in the transformational treatment is expensive, in terms of the evaluation metric that requires simplicity (be it in rule or feature counting) for a more valued grammar (See Chomsky 1965, and Hyman 1976).

A further delineation on the transformational analysis is that if we grant that serial verbs constructions result from a deletion transformation, then all complex sentences should be reducible (optionally) to serial verb constructions. Take the case of (38) which consists of two simple but sequentially related sentences which can be conjoined to form a coordinated structure:

- (39) a. Mo ní Táyé, še ó hit e ni (XMAS)
 I say Táyé, QUES he hit you EMPH

b. \$é o ríran

QUES you see-scene

'I said, Táyé, did he hit you? Can you see?

(40) a. Mo ní Táyé \$é ó hit ẹ ni,

I said Táyé QUES he hit you EMPH

\$é o \$ì ríran

QUES you still see-scene

'I said, "Táyé, did he hit you

and can you still see?"'

Reducing this to a serial verb construction as in (40b) results in an ungrammatical sentence:

(40) b. *Mo ní Táyé \$é ó hit ẹ ni ríran

I say Táyé QUEST he hit you EMPH see-scene

(I said "Táyé, did he hit you see?"')

Neither is a coordinate structure as in (41) reducible to a serial construction as in (42):

(41) Mo bá a sọrọ ní àná, (XTMAS)

I with him speak OBL yesterday

ó sì sọ pé òun gbọ

3sg and say that he hear

'I spoke to him yesterday and he agreed'.

- (42) *Mo bá a sọ̀rọ̀ ní àná,
 I with him speak OBL yesterday
 sọ̀ (òun) gbọ̀
 say he hear
 (I spoke with him yesterday say (he) hear)

While selectively composed sentences can be used to prop up the proposal that serial constructions come from complex sentences, it will be hard to maintain such a claim using live discourse examples such as (38) and (41). In other words, the transformational hypothesis is not supported by real language use. An appeal to diachrony may not be of much help either, being, in this situation, at best some form of abstraction too. At any rate, it appears that the sentential basis for the serial verb construction does not stand in the face of live discourse data. In view of these observations, I shall make use of the following hypotheses, based on the observation of the serial verb construction used in actual communication situations.

2.7. Discourse function of serial verbs.

Taking as point of departure, the view that serial verbs code aspects of a single overall event (Lord 1973, Li and Thompson 1981, and Ward 1952), I want to posit that the serial verb construction results from lack of

semantically composite verbs in the language to code an event with internal structure. 'Event' is here defined as "changes from one state in the participant(s) to another" (Cf: Givón 1979:221). Prototypical actions or states will be coded by verbs and the participants by nouns (See Hopper and Thompson 1984). Thus, a basic hypothesis underlying this work is that an event is coded by a verb or verbs depending on its internal complexity. As a consequence of this hypothesis, the following principles are identified:

1. If the internal structure of the event is action oriented, action verbs will be used, otherwise state verbs will be employed.
2. As a result of the limitation that reality imposes on what can be called a single event, in actual discourse, the component action or state as coded by verbs will be limited (as opposed to iterative). A typical internally complex event will be coded by two verbs corresponding to action and consequence.
3. In a prototypical transitive event, the Agent and the Undergoer will be seen to be arguments of full verbs while any participants in oblique relations to the verb will be coded by some 'bleached' verb, some of which may have reanalyzed as prepositions or are in the process of being so analyzed (see Lord 1973). In other words, the initiator of an action and the affected object (in the sense of Hopper and Thompson 1980) (i.e patient) will be arguments of a full verb while peripheral participants will be coded by less than a typical verb which functions more or less like a case marker.

Footnotes to Chapter 2.

1. The items that I have glossed as 'very' in (5) are known as ideophones ---- lexical items which usually perform qualification functions but whose syntactic category is still controversial. See Awoyale (1974) for a comprehensive discussion.

2 In my opinion, the asymmetrical conjunction is only a varietal of the specific taxon CONJUNCTION. At best, George seems to be saying that a small proportion of SVC may be derived from conjunction.

CHAPTER 3

3.00 Introduction.

In chapter 2, the serial verb construction (henceforth 'SVC') was introduced and illustrated mainly with composed sentences as exemplified in the literature. Various insights contributed by scholars working on different languages were noted. In that chapter, it was shown that the serializing languages can collocate a number of verb phrases without any overt grammatical linkers between the verb phrases. In this chapter, I shall draw on samples of live discourse to show precisely what use speakers make of this collocational possibility. I shall also discuss various aspects of the sentence type that are revealed by considering it in its discourse context.

As has been suggested at the close of the previous chapter, the SVC construction is not employed arbitrarily, but rather, it is used primarily to code events with internal complexity (namely, showing a sequence of happenings) in lieu of composite verbs for such events. As shall be revealed in the discussion, such complex events cannot be expressed morphologically, as the language also lacks the derivational devices to expand on the meaning on a single verb¹. Also, this chapter shall investigate where there appears to be an alternative expression to serial verbs. The chapter concludes that

SVCs code single overall events. Support for the claim is drawn from such known factors as the sentence operators, including tense-aspect, mood, or polarity indicators (but which may have been wrongly interpreted in earlier analyses²) and the function of NP participants in discourse. In all, while this chapter cannot boast of leaving no stone unturned, it strives to investigate many new aspects of the construction type as found in actual discourse.

3.1. SERIAL VERBS IN DISCOURSE.

While the use of the SVC is not strictly discourse-bound (at least not as clearly as it is perceived for the interpretation of anaphora seems to be, for example), I have used discourse data to investigate the serialization phenomenon in the conviction that only an investigation of the use of the linguistic forms can yield an explanation as to why the forms behave as they do. Stated another way, the meaning and usage of the collocation as opposed to just the forms of individual verbs are the general guides to the analysis. I shall show that there are certain strict constraints on the actual occurrence of certain collocations of verbs, a fact that cannot be observed by considering only composed sentences.

3.1.1. The SVC and Nuances of Meaning.

In this first brief survey, I will begin with the question of whether serial verbs are dispensable and what sort of discourse options they offer. In the following data, I shall survey the scenes evoked by the SVC, discussing not just the verbs but also the speech situations that call for the use of a chain of verbs:

- 1a. Ijàpá àti ẹlédè ní se ọrẹ pò (FOLK)
tortoise and pig ASP. do friend plenty
'Tortoise and Pig were friends'.
- b. O fún un ní ọjọ méje (FOLK)
3sg. give 3sg.Obj. OBL day seven
[ki ó fi san owó náà padà]
COMP he use pay money the return
'He gave him seven days to pay the money back'.
- c. O bá gbé ọlọ Yáníbo (FOLK)
3sg. DP carry grinding stone Y.
jù síta
throw SI-outside
'He therefore threw Yáníbo's grinding stone out'

In each of these sentences drawn from a popular folktale (as retold by Yínká Ọlárewájú, a college student,

approximately 26 years old, at least two verbs are used as shown by the underlining. While each sentence can be expressed with a single verb, as in 1':

1' a'. Ijàpá àti ɛlédɛ́ n̄ sɛ ɔ́rɛ́
 tortoise and pig ASP do friend
 'Tortoise and Pigs were friends'.

b'. kɪ́ [ó fi san owó náà]
 that 3sg use pay money the
 '...for him to pay the money'

c'. O bá ju ɔ́lɔ́ Yánníbo síta
 3sg DP throw grinding stone Y. to-outside
 'He therefore threw Yánníbo's grinding stone out'

the fact that serial verbs are used should call for an explanation. As a first step towards such an explanation, I will say that the 'variants' do not really paraphrase each other. The two sentence types perform different communicative functions. In other words, the "extra" verb in each SVC is not redundant. Specifically, the additional verbs may code meanings that are interpretable in the light of a wider discourse context, or they may code extra-linguistic information. Thus, pɛ 'plenty' in (1a) for example, conveys the implication of intimacy between the participants. In the additional composed examples below, such an implication becomes clearer:

2. a. Wón ñ gbé pò
 they ASP. live be:together
 'They are living together'
- b. Wón ñ jẹun pò
 they ASP. eat be:together
 'They are eating together'

It is not the participants' being together under one roof or the fact that they are eating on the same table at the same time that pò codes (although this may be part of the meaning under other discourse situations); it is the relationship that exists between the participants that the verb conveys. Note that if just living in the same apartment or dining at the same time and place were the sole functions expressed by pò, it would be redundant, since the pronoun wón 'they' or the conjoined NPs in (1) already codes this sufficiently. Alternatively, where personal relationship is not coded in the message, (2a), for example, could have been rendered as:

- 2' a. Wón ñ gbé inú ilé 'kan náà
 they ASP live inside house one the
 'They live in the same house'.

It appears then that certain nuances of meaning not strictly traceable to formal items are conveyed by the use

of pò, and consequently, the SVC.

The case of padà 'return' in (1b) gives us more information about the use of the SVC. Padà is not redundant either. It conveys the idea that the payment is not made for a purchased item, but for a loan. Thus, by the use of a SVC rather than a monoverbal sentence as in (1'), a larger scene of an earlier money-borrowing event is evoked. This is similar to Fillmore's suggestion that:

"A metaphor that fits the view of semantics I am proposing is that when you pick up a word, you drag along with it a whole scene".

(Fillmore 1977:114).

Similarly, in (1c), by the inclusion of gbé 'carry' in the sentence, the inherent property of the object thrown out, namely, its heaviness is indicated. Without gbé, there can be a possible misinterpretation, i.e, that the daughter stone as opposed to the big (mother) slab is thrown out. Alternatively, with gbé left out, the impression that the speaker might convey or the hearer interpret is that the agent of jù 'throw' must be extraordinarily strong to toss aside, as if it were a pebble, what the average human (the pig being personified) will haul. Thus, gbé, and consequently the SVC, give us a clearer picture that we are not dealing with a superhuman event here.

It is intriguing that though gbé here means 'carry', it is not this formal meaning that the SVC conveys. It is as if the formal interpretation of the verb is backgrounded as part of our encyclopaedic knowledge; a heavy object will have to be heaved before it can be hurled. Note that had the daughter stone been the one thrown by the irate creditor-pig, gbé or its parallel mú 'take' (for small objects) would not have been necessary.

With the examples above, it has been demonstrated that the SVC codes nuances of meaning. The seeming options (coded with single verb sentences) can thus be seen to code really different events from the SVC.

3.1.2. Diverse uses of the SVC.

The SVC does more than code fine shades of meaning. It is in fact used in a variety of ways ranging from functioning like inflections do in other languages to introducing participants into discourse. In (3), for example, jù 'surpass' collocates with some other verbs to indicate some form of comparison:

3. a. Ijàpá rò pé (FOLK)
 tortoise think COMP

òun ní [òun gbón jù]

he FOC he wise surpass

'The tortoise thinks that he's the wisest'.

b. Iyá ti tóbi jù (FOLK)

mother ASP big surpass

'Mother was too heavy'. (i.e the corpse)

Thus in (3a), to express the superlative form of BE WISE, two verbs, gbón 'be wise' and jù 'surpass' are used, the latter being an analogue of the English inflectional morpheme -est. The same jù expresses the intensifier 'too' as in tóbi jù 'too heavy' in (3b). Thus the same verb functions as an inflectional morpheme in some discourse contexts and as an adverb in others. Further uses of the SVC are shown in (4):

In (4a), to express the the meaning TO HIDE two verbs sá pamó 'run keep' are used.

4. a. O ní kí [àwọn ọdẹ sá pamó] (FOLK)

3sg say COMP they hunter run keep

'He asked the hunters to hide'

- b. B́í ìjápá àti erin ẹ́e ń ẹ̀bọ̀ (FOLK)
 as tortoise and elephant ? ASP come
 [àwọ̀n ọ̀dẹ̀ tí fí ara pamọ̀]
 they hunter ASP use body keep
 'As Tortoise and elephant were coming, the
 hunters hid'.

It may be noted that no 'running' need to be involved in this situation. Sá 'run' may merely indicate that the actions of the hunters is to be brisk. This guess is supported by another instance of HIDING as in (4b) where fí 'use, INSTRUMENTAL' is employed. One has a feeling that with the use of fí 'use' instead of sá the action is more gentle, more stealthy, and less brisk than the one in (4a). The point is that for the semantic structure HIDE, Yorùbá has to use two verbs. This is a case of a lexically composite verb in Yoruba doing the work of a single verb in English.

Sentences like (5) and (6) show further dimensions in the functions of the SVC. In (5), extra-linguistic information is implicit in the use of the SVC. Lẹ́ bá 'go meet' are not just coding a meeting of two people, but the words suggest that the parties concerned will discuss some matter. And in (6), mú erin jẹba 'take elephant be king' shows some manipulation by the Agent of the Patient:

5. Ijàpá bá lɔ bá erin
 tortoise DP go meet elephant
 'The tortoise therefore went to meet the elephant'
6. A ó mérin jɔba
 we ASP take-elephant be-king³
 'We'll make the elephant king'.

There will be a further discussion on these various uses in Section 3.2. In the mean time, I shall give a summary of the survey so far.

In the previous sub-sections, I have tried to indicate the various expressive functions of the SVC. These functions include indicating, implicitly, the scenario for the state of affairs being talked about, and employing verb forms to function like inflections or markers do in other languages. In what follows now, I shall try to investigate whether all verbs, be they active or stative, function similarly in the SVC.

3.1.3. States and the SVC.

Most of the verb phrases investigated so far express some form of action. States can also be expressed by the SVC's as exemplified in the comparison constructions in (7) below:

7. a. àwọ̀n ọ̀dẹ́ tí kò gbójú tó..(OGBOJU)

they hunter REL-PART NEG bold enough

'The hunters who are not strong enough...'

b. Èranko ibẹ̀ pọ̀ ju

animal there plenty surpass

ti igbó irúnmalẹ̀ lẹ̀

REL forest gnome go

'There are more animals there than there
are in the forest of gnomes'.

Both examples in (7) are comparative constructions of a sort. There is need for a further discussion, particularly for (b) as there are three verbs.

A cross-linguistic survey of comparison constructions (Ullan 1972) has shown that there are five components in a comparison sentence: the item compared, the standard of comparison, the quality/quantity along which comparison is made, the standard marker and the degree marker. These are clearly exemplified in the examples above. Thus, we have the item compared, the subject (THEME), which is compared with the standard, the object (this may be an abstract noun as in (3a, 7a)). The standard, even when covert, is marked with tó for equative, ju 'surpass' for comparative. lẹ̀ 'go' is the degree marker. lẹ̀ appears to occur when the standard is overtly expressed, even if the

standard is an ideophone, as in:

7c. Orí rẹ̀ kò ju tóbóló lẹ (Awoniyi 1972)

head his NEG surpass IDEO go

bí orí ejò

like head snake

'His head is so small, like a snake's'.

Otherwise it is optionally left out. Thus, verbs which might occur as independent predicators in monoverbal sentences here function as mere markers.

3.1.4. The SVC and 'bleached verbs'.

It is pertinent to note that it is not always the case that full verbs with inherent meaning ('full verbs' being verbs that can occur as the only predicator in a monoverbal sentence) are used to report events. In (8) are bleached ('bleached', in not having full range of verbal trappings) verbs in various positions in the sentence.

8. a. a kò fẹ́ (OGBOJU)

we NEG want

[kí ẹ́ bá wa jà]

COMP you COMIT us fight

'We don't want you to fight us'.

- b. Ọmọ ọlọmọ bá ilé rẹ lẹ
 child owner-child via house his go
 'The son of man is gone to his house'.
- c. ohun tí [ó kù fún mi... (XMAS)
 thing REL 3sg remain give me
 'What is left for me (to do now)...'
- d. Two thousand ni Olú fí kẹrù rẹ. (XMAS)
 FOC O. INST gather-load his
 'It's two thousand that Olu spent
 freighting his luggage'.

The bleached verbs (underlined), with varying meanings depending on the context, function to introduce oblique participants ('oblique' in the sense that they are neither subject nor objects of the verb, and neither are they required by the meaning of the full verb, i.e not subcategorized) into the discourse situation. Recall that these are the verbs that Bowen (1858) calls 'verbs that are used as prepositions', and the same class that Lord (1973) hypothesizes as being in transition to becoming prepositions. In fact synchronically they function syntactically as prepositions. However, they have pragmatic functional correlates too. Note that in each situation one action or state is involved, the event not being really complex. Extra non-participatory arguments (in the

sense of Andrews (1985)) are required in the discourse with their roles stated. In as much as the roles of the arguments are peripheral (in the sense of Foley and Van Valin (1985)) they will be coded by less-than-prototypical verbs. In other word, the participants are non-core and as such they are coded by less than full verbs. This is predicted in Hopper and Thompson (1984). The functions of these bleached verbs shall be discussed further in Chapter 4.

3.1.5. Summary.

Thus far, it has been indicated that serial verbs are used to code a variety of communicative functions: internally complex events, some aspects of extra-linguistic information, and introducing additional non-participatory arguments into the event. In the following section, I shall group the construction into sub-classes in an attempt to reflect the rich expressive functions of the construction.

3.2. CLASSIFICATION OF THE SERIAL VERB CONSTRUCTIONS.

Although structurally, SVC's are alike, namely showing a subject and a number of verb phrases, a look at the function of the construction suggests that there can be four broad types. The four types are given below:

- a. The splitting type
- b. The manipulative type
- c. The valence-increasing type
- d. The infinitival type

The classification is based on about four hundred examples of the SVC. The type with the largest number of examples in my data base is the Splitting type as shown by the table below:

	SPLIT	MANIP.	VAL.	INF.	TOTAL
XMAS	38	2	23	12	75
FOLK	30	2	6	13	51
INSTRUCT	25	-	5	1	31
WERE	53	1	31	25	110
ATATA	51	-	13	9	73
OGBOJU	39	2	17	14	72

TOTAL	236	7	95	74	412
%	57.2	1.7	23	18	

Table 1: The distribution of the SVC types.

The groupings are defined and exemplified below.

3.2.1. The Splitting SVC.

This term is adapted from Awobuluyi (1978) but with a slight difference in its use. In Awobuluyi, the term is defined thus:

"When used with an object, each verb in this class is always split into two halves, and the object is inserted between them". (1978:53).

His examples of this verb type include the following list:

9.	bàjé ⁴	'spoil'
	báwí	'rebuke, scold'
	réjẹ	'cheat, swindle'
	gbàgbó	'believe'
	bẹ̀wò	'visit'
	tànjẹ	'deceive'
	yípo	'surround'

(Awobuluyi 1978:117)

(10) illustrates how they occur in sentences:

10b. i. O ba ìwé náà jé (Awobuluyi 1978:117)

3sg ? book the ?

'he spoiled the book'.

ii. O tàn mí jẹ (Awobuluyi 1978:118)

3sg deceive me eat

'He deceived me.'

iii. Kia mo ti pa ilẹ mó

quickly I ASP kill ground clear

'Immediately, I tidied things up'.

iv. Iwọ fọnnu títí (OGBOJU)

you boast repeatedly

[o sì tàn mí jẹ]⁵

you and deceive me eat(?)

'You boasted so much and you deceived me'.

In the original usage, i.e. in Awobuluyi (1967, 1972, 1978), the splitting verbs are not serial verbs:

"Splitting verb sentences look and sound like serial verb sentences. But the two types of sentences are, in fact, different. Splitting verb sentences are in the majority of cases idiomatic in meaning. Partly for this reason, **they are not** formed by combining simple sentences." (1978:117)

(Emphasis mine, O.Y.)

In the new use of the term, splitting serial verb constructions are verbs which collectively describe a single action or state and there is just one object if the verb is transitive. This class will turn out to include verbs that may be independently meaningful and can exist

in monoverbal sentences. Thus (10b) above, and examples such as (11) will be called splitting SVC:

11a. Paribotoriboto, mo gbómọ jó (LULLABY)

IDEORHONE I carry-child dance

'With glee, I dance with my child'.

b. Èsẹ Ifá yíí jẹ ọkan nínú àwọn Ifá ńláńlá

line this be one in they big-big

tí [a fà yọ kúrò nínú ọ̀túà méjì]

that we pull be:out leave inside otua two.

Méjì ni àwọn onímọ̀ èdè Yorùbá tó

two FOC they knower language that

ti yẹ ẹsẹ Ifá wò fínífiní pẹ̀lú ìjìnlẹ̀

ASP turn line look IDEO with deep

ìmọ̀ ọ̀de ọ̀nì.....

knowledge out today

Bí a bá sì là wọn. wò.....

if we COND and cut them look

'This Ifa verse is one out of the big ones'

that are pulled out from the two 'otua'.

There are two Yorùbá scholars who have

investigated Ifa verses carefully with modern

knowledge....And if we analyze them.....'

(Yai 1976:43)

From spoken discourse, a lot more can be added. Here are a few more:

12. a Gbé ọmọ wá kí mi (PROVERB)
 carry child come greet me
 owó ní í ná 'ni
 money be HTS spend one
 'It costs to bring a child over to visit'.
- b. A gbé tàná dànù, (JUJU SONG)
 we carry yesterdays throw-away
 Sunny gbé tuntun dé
 carry new come
 'Good bye yesterday's song, Sunny has
 brought a new one'
 (Sunny Adé: 'Sunny ti de')
- c. ... Mà á mú ẹ lọ sí bank mi (XMAS)
 I FUT take you go to bank my
 'I will take you to my bank'.
- d. Mà á máa yọjú wò ẹ lẹ̀ẹ̀kọ̀ọ̀kan (XMAS)
 I FUT CONT peep look you occasionally
 'I'll be visiting you occasionally'.

And such frequently cited serial verbs meaning 'bring' and parallel constructions belong to this class:

13a. Mo mú ìwé wá (Stalhke 1970/Bamgbose '74)

I bring book come

'I brought the book'.

b. Mo gba Jé sú gbó (The Creed, CMS,)

I take hear

'I believe in Jesus'.

c. Mo n dá ọkà jẹ

I ASP ? ọkà eat

'I feed by buying from local food sheds'.

This class will also account for such reduplicated verbs like wò...wò 'look':

14. Jẹ kí N wo ìwé rẹ wò

allow SUBJUNC I look book your look

'Let me see your book'.

Comparative constructions like (3a, 7a) repeated here as (15) also belong in this type of SVC:

15a. Ijàpá tí rò pé òun ni

tortoise ASP think that he be

òun gbọ́n jù.

he wise surpass

'Tortoise had thought that he was the wisest'.

b. Franko ibè pò ju
 animal there plenty surpass
 ti igbó irúnmalè lò
 REL forest gnome go

'There are more animals there than there are in
 the forest of the gnomes'.

The examples in (11) to (14) have been unequivocally classified as SVC's but analysts have not noticed their similarities with (10). As pointed out earlier, Awobuluyi, who is the only one to volunteer any explanation of examples like (10), gives two reasons why they are not serial verbs, namely (a) that some of them are not full verbs and (b) that they cannot be derived from multiple sentences in the base. But as my approach does not have to explain serial verbs as reflexes of reduced sentences, it is clear that one can easily pool (11) to (14) together. If there is an object, the object follows the first verb (cf. the behaviour of Tense-aspect, Negation, etc (to be discussed later)). Thus, apart from the previously identified split verbs, there are many other verbs that belong to this class. That they are meaningful or can stand as the only element in the monoverbal sentence does not set them apart from the not-so-meaningful components in (10).

Following are more examples of the Splitting SVC:

16. a. Nígbà tí ó wí báyii tán .(OGBOJU)
time that 3sg say like-this be:finished
'After saying thus.....'
- b. Wón tèlè e dé inú igbó (FOLK)
they follow him reach inside forest
'They followed him to the forest'.
- c. Ọpọlọpọ aláńgbá ló (OGBOJU)
plenty lizard FOC-3sg
da inú délè
? stomach cover-ground
a ọ mọ èyíí tí inú ń run
we NEG know one REL stomach ASP pain
'Many lizards lie belly-down, so we do not
know which ones actually have a stomach
ache (i.e. We do not know people who are
true, who hypocritical).
- d. N kò tún dá ọwọ lé (OGBOJU)
I NEG again ? hand be:on
ohun líle kan mọ
thing hard one anymore
'I shall never attempt any difficult task
anymore'.

- e. Èlẹ̀bọ́lọ̀ògùn kò lẹ̀ rí mi gbé se (OGBOJU)
 medicineman NEG can see me carry do
 'No medicineman can do me any harm'.
- f. Olúwa rẹ̀ ní
 person his have
 láti la Igbó Irúnmalẹ̀ kọjá
 to wade cross
 'This person will have to cross Igbó
 Irúnmalẹ̀'.
- g Kí ó má jẹ̀ èmi nìkan ni yó (OGBOJU)
 that 3sg NEG be I alone be FUT
fi orí la ikú lọ
 use head wade death go
 'That I may not be the only one to wade
 through the dangers'.
- h. Wọ̀n kó gbogbo rẹ̀ jọ
 they gather all it be:together
 'They gathered every thing together'.

As can be seen from the many examples, this type of SVC's includes the previously labelled subtypes such as the 'Simultaneous' (11a, 13c), the 'Purposive' (12a), the 'Comparative' (15) and many for which no adequate labels have been found. The fact that analysts can find ready labels simply shows that the expressive function of the

SVC's is vast. I think that if any SVC can be formed productively it will be this type.

3.2.2. The manipulative SVC.

This type has the Agent in the sentence controlling or manipulating the Patient to arrive at a state or to effect an action. The first verb in the collocation carries the manipulative function. Witness the examples below:

17 a.Kí ẹ rán wọn lọ (OGBOJU)

SUBJUN. you:PL send them go

'....that you send them'.

b. A ó mérin jọba (=3d) (FOLK)

we ASP. take:elephant eat:king

'We'll make the elephant a king'

The Agent is actually in position to exercise some authority, being either higher in status, or put in position of power according to the structure of the society. I refer back to earlier examples for verification:

18 a. kí ẹ rán wọn lọ

 A P
that you send them go

'...that you may send them'.

(A = Actor, P = Patient)

where the A refers to the king, while P refers to the hunters i.e. subjects to the king. Also in

- 18 b. A ó mérin jɔba
 A P
 we ASP take-elephant be-king
 'We shall make the elephant king'.

where A 'we' refers to the king makers and the common voice of the people and erin 'elephant' is a non-human participant who is not supposed to be king but is going to be now by the act of the people. Note the use of the 'honorific plural' for the Agent in (17a) and (18a), namely, e 'you'(PL) is used for the king. This is a clear indication of the superiority of this participant.

The construct 'manipulation' was originally developed in Givon's Binding Hierarchy (Givon 1980).

Here are a few more examples. Some are from the literature:

- 19a. Fɛ́mí tí Adé ʂubú (Lord 1976)
 F push A. fall
 'Fɛ́mí pushed Adé down'.
 b. Bòbò yèn mú mí bínú gan ní (XMAS)
 guy that cause me get:mad a:lot be
 'That guy really made me mad'.

c. Kí ni ó máa n sún wọn dé (XMAS)

what be it HABIT push then reach

dé ìdí igbó ó mu

reach place bush HTS drink

'What pushes them into smoking hemp?'

To summarize the characteristics of the Manipulative SVC, the following points are noted:

- a. These are of necessity transitive clauses with at least two participants (See Hopper and Thompson 1980)
- b. There is a strong tendency for the Agent to be higher in social status than the Object/Patient
- c. The manipulated NP does not act independently and in most cases has little control compared to the Agent.

3.2.3. The Valence-Increasing SVC.

A third type of SVC is the Valence-increasing SVC where there is usually a verb denoting an action or state and a bleached verb which merely introduces an additional participant into the event being reported by the full verb. The bleached verb usually takes its meaning from the NP it introduces. Some of the verbs have a general meaning while others are restricted in their range of meaning:

21a. Njé ìwọ yóò lè ɛ́ é fún mi(OGBOJU)

QUEST you FUT can do 3sg.obj give(?) me

'Will you be able to do it for me?'

b. A kò fẹ́ kí ẹ́ bá wa jà (OGBOJU)

we NEG want COMP you with us fight

'We don't want you to fight us'.

c. Ọmọ ọlómọ bá ilé rẹ́ lẹ́ (OGBOJU)

child owner-child via house his go

'Son of man's gone to his house'

d. ...kí [ẹ́ gbé whisky yẹn ti beer] (XMAS)

that you carry that ?

'that you put the whisky together with beer'.

- e. 0 fún Asùnlé ní oyún (Yusuf 1985)
 3sg give A. OBL pregnancy
 'He made Asùnlé pregnant'

The underlined verbs (also printed in bold face) which have been identified earlier as prepositions do more than case-mark the NPs. They actually introduce non-participatory arguments and also indicate their discourse roles. Thus, while earlier analyses will be able to label (21a-b) as BENEFACTIVE and COMITATIVE respectively, their system is not equipped to talk about (c-d) as it is not case roles that the bleached verbs mark here. Again, I shall have to defer the explanation of the function of these bleached verbs until Chapter 4. In the meantime, let me hint that that the positions of the bleached verbs and their object denote the topicworthiness (roughly, the discourse importance) of their objects. Note that (b) is indeterminate between COMITATIVE and BENEFACTIVE; they could fight (with) us or fight for us. In my treatment, this indeterminacy is resolvable by the discourse context. But a treatment that captures a wider generalization will see bá as functioning pragmatically to introduce non-core arguments in the event being reported. Thus 21a,b, as well as the others will have an NP that cannot be introduced by either the transitive verb or an intransitive verb. In other words, the valence-increasing SVC has an

argument in oblique relationship with the event being reported.

Looking back at (21), we can see that each sentence can stand without the valence increaser and its object although the meaning of the sentence will be altered somewhat:

- 21'. a. Njé iwọ yóó lè ẹ é
QUES you FUT can do it
'Will you be able to do it?'
- b. A kò fẹ kí ẹ jà
we NEG want COMP you:PL fight
'We don't want you to fight'
- c. Kí ẹ gbé whisky yẹn
that you take that
'Take the whisky'
- d. Ọmọ ọlómọ lẹ ilé rẹ
child owner-child go house his
child owner-child go house his
- e. O fún Asùnlé
3sg give
'He gave Asùnlé'.

By leaving out the oblique arguments, the information on the sentence is equally reduced. To the extent that the arguments are oblique, they will not be able to stand without the core (in the sense of Foley and Van Valin

1980, 1984) participants:

- 22 a. Njé ìwọ yóó lè fún mi
QUES you FUT can give me
'Will you be able to give me'
- b. *A kò fẹ kí ẹ bá wa
we NEG want that you:PL with us
(*We don't want you to with us)
- c. Ọmọ ọlómọ bá ilé rẹ
child owner-child with house his
(????)
- d. Kí ẹ ti whisky
that you:PL ?
(?????)

While (22a) is interpretable, it does not have the intended meaning. The others are simply meaningless, there being no core event in which the participants are involved.

It is important to note that this class belongs to the subset Bamgbose (1974) calls 'The Modifying Serial Verbs'. My view however is that the events are what they are by virtue of the interaction of all the participants, both core and oblique. To see the valence-increasing verbs as simply modifying would be to look only at the form and discount the whole speech situation.

3.2.4. The Infinitival SVC.

While all the SVC identified so far appear to have verb phrases simply strung together, the infinitival SVC usually has certain items that cannot be considered part of any VP. The extraneous items could be a mere high tone (referred to as the High Tone Syllable, 'HTS' (see Lord 1974, Awoyale 1983), or the word láti '(in order) to', or sí, for which there does not seem to be any gloss. (23) illustrate this variety:

23a. Mo lɔ sí ibè lɔ ɔ bá wɔn⁶

I go to there go HTS meet them

'I went there to meet them'

a'. Mo lɔ sí ibè láti lɔ bá wɔn

I went to there in order to go meet them

'I went there to meet them'.

b. Kí olúwa rẹ tó ó lè dé ìlú náà(OGBOJU)

before person ? HTS can reach town the

'Before one could reach the town...'

c. O bèrè sí í tójú rẹ (OGBOJU)

3sg. start ? HTS take:care it

'It started to take care of him'.

The variation between (23a) and (23a') does not seem to code any semantic nuance. Sentences (b) and (c)

illustrate two types of the HTS-sub types. While (b) just has the verbs collocate contiguously with the vowel of the first verb giving a segmental form to the high tone, (c) has an optional intervening sí before the second verb. It is the vowel of this sí to which the high tone associates. It appears that only bèrè 'start' uses the sí, as the item does not show up anywhere else in the data except in the environment of bèrè, nor could I think up any other example.

A distinction between the lāti and the high tone subtypes is that the former has a purpose meaning while the latter does not. The forms appear to be mutually exclusive. Witness (22) and (23):

22a. N kò rí ààyè tò wọn lẹsẹsẹ (OGBOJU)

I NEG. see chance line them line-by-line

'I have no time to narrate the whole thing'.

b. N kò rí ààyè lāti tò wọn lẹsẹsẹ.

I NEG. see chance in order to line them line

'I have no time to narrate all of them'.

c. *N kò rí ààyè e tò wọn lẹsẹsẹ

23a. Kí ó tó ó mọ.....
 before 3sg. reach HTS know
 'Before he knows'.

b. *Kí ó tó láti mọ.....
 that he reach in-order-to know

The ungrammaticality of the starred sentences is caused by the underlined HTS. and láti 'in order to'. However, despite the semantic and collocational difference, it seems expedient to group the two kinds together as they are the only serial verb construction types that allow the insertion of non-verbal or non-nominal particles between their component VP's.

Desiderative verbs like fẹ and wù 'want, please' also belong to this SVC type:

24c. Mo fẹ é jẹun
 I want HTS eat:food
 'I want to eat'

d. Oyìnbó wù mí í gbọ
 English please me HTS hear
 'I love to understand English'

In Chapter 4, I shall try to elucidate the function of the extraneous particles, particularly the HTS.

3.2.5. Summary.

In this section, I have classified the SVC into four major types:

(a). 'the splitting SVC' which appears to be the largest group, encompassing the verbs that have been called splitting as well as verbs that retain independent identity in various contexts.

(b). 'the manipulative SVC' where the Agent of the sentence manipulates the Patient to effect a change in the Patient,

(c). 'the valence-increasing SVC' which has a full verb collocating with a 'bleached verb', the bleached verb allowing an increase in the valence of the full verb and also identifying the discourse role of the peripheral participant, and

(d). 'the infinitival SVC' where there are 'extra-neous' particles like the High Tone Syllable (HTS) or the word láti 'in order that' between the component verbs.

The section also hints at the functions of the types. A further discussion of the functions will be presented in Chapter 4.

3.3 THE CODING OF EVENTS.

The notion 'event' has been used in the definition of SVC. The term needs to be clarified. Thus in this section, I shall attempt to show that a conceptual situation (which I call event), an action or state, need not be coterminous with a verb. Particularly with a language like Yorùbá which has no derivational morphology to expand on the meaning of the base form of the verb, the internal structure of the event may have to employ more than one verb.

A few comparative examples are used from Hausa and English to show how languages view and code events.

Borrowing from Rosch (1978), I shall give the operational definition of 'event' as:

".....the cutting up of the continuity of
experience into discrete bounded temporal units...
(Rosch 1978:43)

This definition arose from a pilot study in which students were asked to recall some events of a particular evening. The students were to answer to questions like "what did I do?" or "what happened to me?". Among others, the following responses were listed:

25. a. brushing my teeth
- b. making coffee
- c. taking a shower
- d. going to statistics classes.

These activities are seen as units within a temporal span. Other non-personally involved experiences might include happenings like RAINING. The events in (25) as well as (26) will be expressed in Hausa, and Yorùbá with mono-verbal sentences:

26. ENGLISH: It rained yesterday.
- HAUSA: Yaa yi ruwa jiyà
AGR. do water yesterday
- YORUBA: Ojò rẹ lánàá
rain pour OBL-yesterday

States, though not exactly bound temporally, being more enduring, can constitute events like the activities reported below:

27. a. ENGLISH: I am tired.
- HAUSA: Naa gàji
AGR. tired
- YORUBA: O rẹ mí
3sg. tire me

- b. ENGLISH: I am hungry
- HAUSA: inàa jîn yunwàa
 AGR. feel hunger
- YORUBA: Ebi ñ pa mí
 hunger ASP kill me

A common trait here is that these are discrete units of experiences and they are coded alike in all the languages. With these limited examples, events seem to be coterminous with a single verb. Notice however what happens in (28) where experiences which might be called events are coded differently in the languages:

- 28a. HAUSA: Naa karànc-èe littafî-n
 AGR. read-COMpletely book-REF.
 ENGLISH: 'I read the book completely'.
- b. HAUSA: Yaa yank-èe shi
 AGR. cut-COMpletely it
 ENGLISH: 'He severed it'.

In these examples of simple events, where the notion of 'completeness' is involved, Hausa expresses this morphologically using the surfix ee on the verb base (namely the Grade 4 verb form (Parsons 1960)) and English uses two strategies; the use of the adverb completely as in (28a) and a composite verb as in (28b). The 'totality' meaning

is coded by another verb (which varies from event to event (see the underlined items in (28c-d)) in Yorùbá.

c. Mo ka ìwé náà tán

I read book the finish

d. O gé e jà

3sg. cut 3sg-obj. snap

Thus in these events, Hausa and English conceive of the involvement of the participants as a single action and code them as such. It is noteworthy that there is a clear indication that the actions of the participants are modified somewhat. Hence the ee suffix in Hausa. English may have added the particle up to each of the verbs too. The modifications are indications of some internal structure, a complexity, to the event. It is this additional meaning that Yorùbá, being deficient in verb morphology as well as lacking in composite verbs, codes with an additional full verb.

A few more examples will help clarify what is meant by a single event. I shall use Hausa and English as usual.

- 29a. Yanàa ja-woo hankàli-n matàfiya
AGR. pull-TO SELF. wisdom-GEN. passer-by
'He's drawing the attention of customers'.
(Cowan & Schuh 1972)

- b. Kira-wo minì yarò-n nan
 call-TO SPEAKER me boy-REF. that
 'Call me that boy'.
- c. Sai in say-oo gawàyii
 must AGR. buy-TOWARDS SPEAKER charcoal
 'I have to buy charcoal'.

In (29) there's additional meaning conveyed by the variant forms of oo (i.e. Grade VI verb form, (Parsons 1960)) on the verb base. The action coded by the verb and its suffix is done toward the speaker (b,c) or the subject of the sentence (a). The discourse context will determine which direction the action goes. The English expression of the same idea has some of the information backgrounded, but such information is recoverable by the hearer. In Yorùbá, again, these events are expressed with more than one verb, the subsequent verb(s) practically effecting the function of inflection (as in Hausa) or adverb (as in English). In other words, wá in (a,c) merely indicates direction of the speaker rather than COMING. The wá is possible in (b) too.

- 30a. O ñ wó èrò wá
 3sg. ASP. pull customer come
 'He's drawing the attention of customers'.

- b. Pe ɔmɔ yɛn fún mɪ
 call child that (give)/for me
 'Call that child for me'.
- c. O yɛ kí [N lɔ ra èɛdú wá]
 it fit COMP. I go buy charcoal come
 'I must go buy charcoal'.

What this cross-linguistic comparison has shown is that languages schematize **events** differently and develop varying syntax to code them. It further shows that event need not be coterminous with a verb.

As the above examples further reinforce, a conceptual event is schematized differently by languages; incorporation (i.e backgrounding component actions and coding the most salient part) or by lexical decomposition and analytical coding. In general, the various ways by which languages code events may be seen as a continuum, ranging from analytic (i.e serial) to lexical (i.e. incorporation). The continuum may be diagrammed as in Fig.1:



Fig.1. Event-coding systems in languages.⁷

To return to Yorùbá, such events as BRING, BE DRUNK etc. are perceived by speakers as one single event. The completion of all the component parts is what gives the event its meaning. That verbs which can be used in independent sentences concatenate to code the event is explainable in terms of the schematization as well as the analytical nature of the language.

In sum, I want to say that an event need not be coterminous with one verb; a number of verbs, the prototypical vehicle for reporting events, might be involved. A corollary of this is that a clause need not be coterminous with a single verb. If languages differ in the way they structure a situation, they might as well differ in the way they code such situations. What is regarded as a single event despite the number of verbs used to code it falls within a single time span ---- as encoded by Tense-aspect.

Concerning schematization and codification, I might need to add that Yorùbá does not always spell out the conceptual event. In certain discourse contexts, the use of a single verb may code an internally structured event. A hypothetical case is exemplified in the following sentence:

31a. Mo ti rí ìwé mi
 I ASP. see book my
 'I have seen my book'

For (31a) to be felicitous, there will be a situation where someone has lost his book, the hearer has been informed about the loss and the speaker is known to have been searching for the said book. The speaker may well have reported the situation more elaborately with an SVC as in (31b):

31b. Mo ti wá ìwé mi (tí ó sọ̀nù) rí.
 I ASP. look book my REL. 3sg. lost see
 'I have (searched for and) found my (lost) book'

That (31b) is not used is indicative of the fact that where the discourse context can supply the information which serial verbs code, the SVC is not redundantly used. Thus at the time (31a) is uttered, the speaker has assumed that the loss and the search for the book are in, or can be recalled to the consciousness of, his audience (Cf. Chafe 1976). The completed event is all that counts, and provided components that add up to the event can be recovered by the hearer, the speaker need not explicitly state it. Recall the tooth-brushing event in Rosch (1978). The component actions like getting the paste, squeezing it on the brush, etc., are backgrounded as they can be recovered

by the listener. Thus, an event may be internally structured and yet coded with a single verb or more than one verb. Recoverability of the component actions in the consciousness of the listener is a determining factor for the use of serial verbs. For further elucidation on the idea of recoverability, compare the episode in (1b), repeated here as (32), where serial verbs must be used or the wrong interpretation is evoked:

32. O fún un ní ọjọ méje
 3sg. give 3sg.:obj OBL. day seven
 [kí ó fi san owó náà padà]
 COMP. 3sg. INSTR. pay money the return
 'He gave him seven days to repay the money'.

Here, padà is required to ensure that the audience knows the context of the statement, namely repaying a loan as opposed to paying for an item earlier bought on credit.

At this point, I shall restate that an event is a sum total of the component parts of an experience that might be considered a unit, this unit being conceptually bounded.

3.4 OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SVC

In the last few sections, I have identified the subtypes of SVC and indicated their use in discourse. I shall now describe some other aspects of the construction. Some of these aspects have not been reported before, and in fact may have been overlooked. These aspects, I believe will help us understand the construction better as these are part of the discourse contexts in which the verbs appear. The items I have in mind include the number of verbs per sentence, the ordering constraints on the verb and the appearance of Auxiliary elements.

3.4.1. Number of comutable verbs.

In the literature on SVC's, usually two-verb constructions are cited, more as a convenience than to illustrate the actual use of serial verbs. The rules that 'derive' serial verbs are believed to be iterative (as proposed in Yusuf 1980, for example). However, as it turns out, with a look at different types of discourse, the two-verb constructions is statistically predominant. In a survey of 546 SVC's, there were only 34 three-verb sentences. The rest are two-verb. See the table below:

	Freq.	SVC	3-verb SVC
XMAS	231	216 (93.5%)	15 (6.5%)
FOLK & INSTR.	105	93 (88.6%)	12 (11.4%)
WERE	210	203 (96.7%)	7 (3.3%)
Total	546	512 (93.8%)	34 (6.2%)

Table 2: Number of verbs per SVC.

The preponderance of the two-verb construction must have some correlation with semantic structure for which I have no immediate explanation. However, the table shows that verbs are not indefinitely concatenated as composed sentences might make us believe.

3.4.2. Commutability.

Verbs can be classified as **active** or **stative** depending on whether they show dynamic action or mere state of being. It has been observed that where both types of verbs collocate, there is an invariant order, with the active verbs (A) preceding the stative verbs (S) (Lq 'go' which seem to defy this constraint has an explanation which I shall give later). Thus the general rule is a combination of the following order:

33. AA SS AS *SA (*SA being unattested)

Thus we have such combinations as

- 34a. Ló bá gbé ọlọ Yáníbo (AA)
 EMPH-3sg DP carry grinding stone Y.
ju sita
 throw to-out
 'He therefore threw Yanibo's grinding stone out'.
- b. Mo gbé tàná dànù..... (AA)
 I carry that of yesterday throw away
 'I've done away with old stuff....'
- c. Ijàpá àti ẹlédè n se ọré pọ (AS)
 tortoise and pig ASP do friend be:together
 'Tortoise and Pig were friends'
- d. Nígbà tí ó wi báylí tán (AS)
 OBL time REL 3sg say thus be:finished
 'After speaking thus.....'
- e. Itàn ti pọ jù nípa ìjàpá (SS)
 story ASP plenty surpass about tortoise
 'There are too many stories about ijapa'
- f. Ọbẹ náà dùn tó (SS)
 soup the sweet enough
 'The soup is sweet enough'.

('DP' means a discourse particle, or linker)

where (a-b) illustrate occurrences of AA and (c-d) illustrate AS and (e-f) illustrate SS. The reason for this cooccurrence restriction is not immediately known, but it has bearings on the Tense-aspect specification to be discussed below:

3.4.3. The Auxiliary and the SVC's

The continuity of experience, as stated earlier, is usually cut into discrete units. Every such unit, prototypically a clause, has an Auxiliary ---- tense-aspect, polarity, mode, etc. To claim that the SVC is a single overall unit (and therefore a simple clause) it must be the case that it has just one Auxiliary element.

In this section then, I shall investigate a few constituents of the Auxiliary in an attempt to show that the SVC represents a single overall event bounded by a single instance of the set of constituents in the Auxiliary. In other words, I intend to show that the single occurrences of constructs like tense-aspect, negation, or imperative and other constituents of the Aux. are indications that the SVC's are simple clauses.

3.4.3.1. Tense-Aspect.

Yorùbá as an aspect-dominated language⁸ (i.e. utilizing Aspect more than it does Tense) marks the temporal setting of events with the following aspect markers ('aspect' being the "different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation" (Comrie 1976)):

ń	'CONTINUATIVE'	yóó	'FUTURE' ⁹
máa ń	'HABITUAL'	máa	'FUTURE'
ti	'PERFECTIVE'	á	'FUTURE'
		ó	'FUTURE'.

To these may be added the \emptyset -marker which is interpreted as PAST when the verb is active or PRESENT when the verb is stative (See Welmers 1973). It might be added too that the FUTURE markers are variants (some phonological and others lexical). The aspect markers in SVC are illustrated in (35) below:

- 35a Wón ń kòrin tẹ̀lẹ̀ 'jàpá (FOLK)
 they CONT sing follow tortoise
 'They were singing after the tortoise'.
- b. Ná bá ń ru òkú lẹ̀ (FOLK)
 FOC-they DP CONT carry corpse go
 'And they were carrying the corpse along'.

- c. A ó mérin jɔba (FOLK)
 we FUT take-elephant be-king
 'We'll make the elephant king'.
- d. A á rɛ erèé olójú dúdú sínú omi
 we FUT soak bean owner-eye black inside water
 'We'll soak black-eyed peas in water'.
- e. Qrɔ́ crime ti pò jù (XMAS)
 matter PERF plenty surpass
 lórí American TV
 on-head
 'There is too much reporting of crimes on American TV'
- f. Mo ti mu un fún wɔn padà (XMAS)
 I PERF take it give them return
 'I have returned it to them'

In (35) (as well as where ever the SVC is used), the aspectual marker occurs only once and invariably before the first verb.

The zero aspectual marker (i.e, the sentence unmarked for any aspectual morpheme) is illustrated in (36). In these, there is no aspect marking on any verb in the SVC:

- 37a. Qbè náà dùn tó (Bamgbose 1974)
 soup the sweet enough
 'The soup is delicious enough'.

- b. Ló bá gbé ɔlɔ Yánibo (FOLK)
 EMPH-3sg DP carry grinding stone Y.
 jù síta
 throw to-outside
 'He therefore threw Yanibo's grinding stone
 outside'.

The important thing is that whether the aspectual marker is overtly expressed or not, the time reading is uniform for all the verbs in the construction. In other words, where there is an overt marking, it is specified only once and on the first verb, and a sentence that has none on the first verb cannot have one on subsequent verbs. Thus, the event coded by the verbs is a single unit, temporally.

One might need to note that though aspectual marking may be absent in a sentence as in the sentences in (34) above, the time interpretation is not confused. The discourse as well as the following general principle help to determine the temporal setting of the statement:

37. If the verb unmarked for aspect is stative, usually PRESENT reading is most appropriate for it. If the verb is active, it gets a COMPLETIVE (PAST) reading.

See Welmers (1973:346-347) for a cross-Kwa characterization.

The uniform aspectual marking for the SVC is not a new discovery. In fact Schachter's analysis which rejects the derivation of the SVC from complex sentences depends crucially on this observation, namely that there is a single specification of tense-aspect marking in the serial verb construction (Schachter 1973:259). But nobody has been able to explain why, if serial verb sentences are compressed sentences, such a constraint is built into the grammar. I shall use the fact of a single Aspect marking to argue that despite the two or more verbs, the SVC represents a single overall event, conceptually ---just as if the sentence had been monoverbal.

It is significant that there is a uniform tense-aspect for the verbs in the SVC despite the principle stated in (37). We expect an SVC coded by a combination of active and stative verbs to obey (37) but as exemplified in (38), the time interpretation is specified by the (A) and of necessity, (S) agrees:

- 38a. Adé jẹ oúnjẹ tán (AS)
 A eat food be:finish
 'Ade finished the food/ Ade finished eating'.
- b. Ijápá àti ẹlédè n ẹ se ọrẹ pọ (AS)
 tortoise and pig ASP do friend be:together
 'Tortoise and Pig were friends'.

- c. Gbogbo yín kọ́ ni yóò fi ọwọ́ rọrí
all you NEG FOC FUT INSTR hand ease-head
- f. kú tán (ASS)
die finish
'Not all of you will die in the comfort of
your beds'.

The fact that the specification of tense-aspect in the SVC overrides a principle as expressed in (37) argues for the contention that the SVC is not a collection of events expressed by different predicators but that there is a single event marked only once for its temporal setting.

The foregoing shows, by the fact that SVC's have a single time interpretation, that they are viewed by speakers as single events. Further support for this claim will be adduced from the occurrence of other constituents of the Auxiliary as illustrated below.

3.4.3.2. The Negation Marker.

The position of the negation marker and its semantics give added support for the fact that the SVC codes single event. Like the Aspect marker, the Negation marker kò (or ò) appears once in the SVC and it invariably precedes the first verb. (38) illustrates the negative SVC:

- 38a. Ọbẹ náà kò dùn tó (Bámgbóṣé 1974)
soup the NEG sweet enough
'The soup is not delicious enough'
- b. Mi ò kó o pẹ tẹlẹ (XMAS)
I NEG gather it be:together before
'I did not put them together before'.
- c. Nkeonye ò tiẹ lẹ wá dá gbére (XMAS)
NEG even can come say bye
'Nkeonye cannot even come to say good bye'.
- d. Kò wá dáná pàápàá (XMAS)
3sg-NEG come cook IDEO
'She did not even come to cook'.
- e. Erin kò gbà gbọ (XMAS)
elephant NEG take hear
'Elephant did not believe'.
- f. Kí ó má lẹ yọ bá mi níbẹ (XMAS)
that 3sg NEG:IMP go come:out meet me at-there
'I hope he does not spring on me there'.

Further, the NEG precedes the Aspect marker if one is present. As the above examples (which virtually exhausts all the NEG sentences in my data) have the zero Aspect marker, I shall use the made-up example in (39) to illustrate the position of NEG relative to Aspect:

39. Mi ò ní ra ɔtí fún ɛ mu
 I NEG FUT buy liquor give you drink
 'I shall not buy you a drink.'

The point is, if the negative SVC is a single event all the verbs must be within the scope of the NEG element. This is seemingly difficult to demonstrate in view of Bámbóšé's claim that only one verb in the SVC will be in the scope of NEG. His example is given as (40):

40. Wɔn ò mu ɔtí yó (Bámbóšé 1974)
 they NEG drink liquor full
 'They are not drunk'.

Bámbóšé argues that the participants in (40) may drink without being drunk. I want to argue that in isolation, the sentence could be interpreted in some other ways too. For instance it is possible that the said people did not even drink at all (they might just be over-excited over some other cause). The discourse will dictate what is taken to be within the 'scope of NEG'. The immediate

interpretation of (39) is that all the verbs are negated although other interpretations are possible.

As another example, if an illiterate farmer boy were to utter (41), it would be difficult for one to argue over the scope of negation:

41. Bàbá mi ò rán mi lɔ ilé ìwé
father my NEG send me go house school
'My father did not send me to school'.

The situation reported with rán 'send' and lɔ 'go' is simply that the boy did not go to school. The question of a limited scope for negation is irrelevant here (cf. (39)); all the verbs are in the scope of negation.

In sum, it appears that we can only come to one conclusion; the single occurrences of Tense-Aspect or NEG in the auxiliary will indicate that we are dealing with a single event.

3.4.3.3. Other preverbs.

There are other preverbal morphemes besides tense-aspect markers or the negation particle. Such elements include the following, among others:

42. kúkú 'even, in fact'
 tètè 'quickly'
 sèsè 'just'

lè	'can'
jàjà	'hardly'
tilẹ	'even'
kàn	'just'

While these items are meaningful, they do not occur as the only verbal element in the sentence. Witness their use in the following composed sentences:

- 43a. Mo kúkú mọ ohun tí mo ń ẹe (XMAS)
 I in fact know thing REL I ASP. do
 'I in fact know what I was doing'.
- b. Mo tètè bèrẹ iṣẹ náà
 I quick start work the
 'I started the work pretty early'.
- c. Nígbà tí ogun ṣẹṣẹ bèrẹ, àwọn sọjà Argentina
 time REL war just start they soldier A
 ń lérí
 ASP brag
 'When the war first started, the Argentine
 soldiers were boasting'.

- d. Mo tiè gbó [pé àwọn soldier kan
 I in fact hear COMP they soldier one
 fẹ́fẹ́ gbà 'jọba
 want take govt
 'I in fact heard that some soldiers want to
 topple the government'.

In these sentences, the preverbs affect the interpretation of the whole clause. Clearly their function has to do with the larger discourse. For instance, kúkú 'in fact' or lè 'can' will be used where someone is doubting the speakers ability, or tiè 'in fact' may be making a switch in the topic being discussed.

These preverbs may appear with serial verbs. We would expect that they will modify the verbal chain if the chain is indeed a single event. Otherwise their influence should be limited to just one verb in the chain. With this premise in mind witness the sentences below:

- 44a. Ló bá kúkú gbé ọlọ
 EMPH 3sg DP just carry grinding stone
 Yáníbo jù síta
 Y. throw to-out
 'He just threw Yáníbo's grinding stone out'.

- b. Wón dédé ñ kòrin tẹ̀lé jàpá
they suddenly ASP sing:song follow tortoise
'They suddenly started singing after Tortoise.'

In these, as well as any sentences that they may occur in, they modify the series of verbs, not just the first or second or any segregated verb in the chain. Thus they appear to function like the preverb elements we have already considered: tense-aspect and negation. They are selected once, they precede the first verb and are interpreted with respect to the entire event the monoverb or multiple verb sentences may be coding. These morphemes reinforce the claim that serial verb sentences code a single overall event. That we have more than one verb is explainable by the nature of the lexicon as well as the syntax of the language.

3.4.3.4. Summary.

In this section, a number of factors were considered, some seemingly unrelated. However, together, they point to the fact that the SVC codes a single event. First, different classes of verbs --- Active and Stative --- are observed to collocate in a specific order. Invariably, the Active precedes the Stative verb. Further, despite the constraint that the stative verb has a PRESENT reading while the Active has a PAST reading when the sentence is

not overtly marked for Tense-aspect, it was noticed that in combination, the Active verb determines the time reading and the Stative inevitably agrees. In general, all the members of the Auxiliary --- Tense, Aspect, Negation and other preverbs --- are shared by the chain of verbs. This fact supports the hypothesis that the SVC codes a single event. It may be noted that all the verbs share the same Subject. I do not think that these are chance behaviors.

These factors should lead us to expect that the verbal combinations behave as a unit with respect to more than preverbal elements. In section 3.5 below, I shall investigate this proposal by looking at some syntactic processes.

3.5. SYNTACTIC OPERATIONS & SERIAL VERB SENTENCES.

In this section, I shall investigate whether individual verbs will be accessible to certain syntactic operations like focusing, for example. It is hypothesized that if the characterization of the verbs in the SVC as aspects of a single overall event is correct, then the verbs should collectively undergo the syntactic operation. That is, like the Auxiliary agreement facts revealed in the sections above, the whole event (i.e. all the verbs) will be seen to be affected by the particular operations.

3.5.1. Focusing

3.5.1.1. NP Focusing.

Focusing in Yorùbá is effected by placing a particular constituent sentence-initially with an accompanying ni 'be'. As NP focusing is better known than verb focusing, I shall illustrate what focusing is like with it. In (45), the underlined NP's are focused:

45. a. Olú rí Adé
see
'Olú saw Adé'
- b. Olú ni o rí Adé
be 3sg see
'It's Olú who saw Adé'.
- c. Adé ni Olú rí
be see
'It's Adé that Olú saw'

Virtually any noun argument can be focused.

3.5.1.2. Verb Focusing.

The plain verb is not focused in Yorùbá. The verb is first nominalized by prefixing a copy of the first consonant to the verb root and there is an i-epenthesis to break the consonant clusters as the language does not allow consonant clusters. Nominalization is exemplified

in (46) below:

46. VERB

NOMINALIZATION

rí	'to see'	====>	rírí	'seeing'
lọ	'to go'	====>	lílọ	'going'
gbà	'take'	====>	gbíggbà	'taking'
mu	'drink'	====>	mímu	'drinking'

Though in these cases, a nominalized verb is focused, it is better to talk about verb focusing here as the focused verb does not behave exactly like a focused noun or any noun for that matter--the focused nominalized verb does not take all the trappings of a noun like qualifiers, determiners, etc. As pursuing the properties of the focused verb will take us too far afield, I shall not discuss them here. Verb focusing is illustrated in (47)

47. Rírí ni Olú rí Adé

seeing be see

'It is seeing Ade that Olu did' (i.e. he did not do any other thing)'

3.5.2. Focusing in the SVC.

The first verb (unless it is a bleached verb) in the verb chain is apparently the one involved in the verb focusing. It is the one nominalized and coded sentence-

initially, (49a-b) are verb-focused counterparts of (48a-b) respectively:

48a. O lɔ sɔ fún àwọn ẹgbé wọn... (FOLK)
 3sg go tell give they companion their
 'He went to tell his companions....'

b. Mo gbé tàná dànù (FOLK)
 I carry that of yesterday throw away
 'I have done away with old stuff'.

49a. Lílɔ ni ó lɔ sɔ fún àwọn ẹgbé wọn..
 going be 3sg go tell give they companion their
 'He only went to tell their companions.'

b. Gbígbe ni mo gbé tàná dànù
 carrying be I carry yesterday's throw-away
 'I had to throw yesterday's stuff away'.

Involving any verb other than the first in the focusing process will either produce a marginally acceptable sentence or a totally ungrammatical one:

50a. (?)Sísɔ ni ó lɔ sɔ fún
 saying be 3sg go tell give
 àwọn ẹgbé wọn
 they companion their
 'It is telling that he went to tell
 their companion'.

b. *Fifun ni o lo so fun awon egbe....
giving be 3sg go tell give they companion...

b'. (?)Dídànú ni mo gbé tàná dànú
throwing-away be I carry yesterday's throw-away
'I just threw yesterday's stuff away'.

To take one more example, consider the split-verb (in Awobuluyi's (1978) sense) sentence below:

50a. O ba iwé náà jé (=Awobuluyi 1978:117)
3sg ? book the ?
'He ruined the book'.

b. O máa tún un se
3sg FUT again 3sg:obj do
'He will repair it'.

When the first half of the split verb is focused, the sentence is grammatical:

51a. Bíbà ni ó ba iwé náà jé
? FOC 3sg ? book the ?
'It's ruining that he did to the book'.

b. Títún ni ó máa tún un se
? FOC 3sg FUT again 3sg.-obj do
'It's repairing it he has to do'.

However when the second half is focused, ungrammaticality results:

52a. *Jíjé ni ó ba ìwé náà jé
 ? be 3sg ? book the ?

b. *Síse ni ó máa tún un se
 doing be 3sg FUT again it do
 (*Doing is what he is going to repair it)

However, another syntactic option is that all the verbs (and their objects) can be in the focus position; in this case still only the first verb is partially reduplicated.

49a'. Lílọ sọ ni ó lọ sọ fún
 going tell FOC 3sg go tell give
 àwọn ẹgbé rẹ
 they companions his
 'It is reporting that he went to report to
 his mates'

51a'. Bíbàjé ni ó ba aago jé
 ruining FOC 3sg ? watch ?
 'It's ruining that he did to the watch'.

This fact in my opinion shows the lexical unity of the verbs in the SVC.

As hinted above, the valence-increasing type of SVC, namely, the SVC involving bleached verbs, behave differently in that if the bleached verb comes first, it is not focused. The (b) set of (53) and (54) illustrate this fact:

53a. O fi ɔjɔ méje san owó náà padà
 3sg DUR day seven pay money the return
 'He paid the money back in seven days'.

b. *fifi ni ó fi ɔjɔ méje.....

54a. o lè bá mi fi ojú gánní
 you can BENEf me INSTR eye see...

Okè Lángbódo

O.L

'...you can (go) see Okè Lángbódo for me.....'

b. *bíba ni o lè bá mi fi ojú gánní Okè Lángbódo..

The fact that the valence increasing verbs do not nominalize to feed focusing is indicative of their reduced verbal status. Note that the valence increasers have been characterized as functioning to mark case roles only.

To summarize the focusing process, it has been found that focusing involves the whole verb phrase, but as only the first verb is the one actually required in the reduplication operation, it is only that one that gets focused.

That the verbs in the SVC can behave like a unit under this syntactic operation shows that they conjointly code a single event.

It might need to be explicitly stated that the focused verb has nothing to do with emphasizing the meaning of that verb. The meaning of the whole verb phrase is focused. For example, gbé 'carry' is not specially emphasized in

55. Gbígbe ni mo gbé iwé wá

NOM-carry FOC. I carry book come

'It's the case that I brought the book'.

Neither is GOING nor CARRYING emphasized in examples like (49). The whole event as coded by all the verbs in the sentence is emphasized. The case of the so-called splitting verbs (in Awobuluyi's sense) convincingly show that no particular morphemes are especially emphasized. Bà and tuń in (51) are not independently meaningful and as such have no meaning that will be especially emphasized. Thus while the syntax may place the first part of the serial verb sentence-initially, the overall meaning of the verbs is focused. This in my opinion supports the fact that the serial verbs code a single event.

3.6. Consequences of the findings.

In the preceding sections, the construct **event** was defined as "the cutting up of the continuity of experience into discrete bounded temporal units....". Also, the concept of event and its coding were surveyed in different languages. A number of preverbal elements were investigated with the intent of showing whether they behave differently for monoverbal sentences and the SVC. The finding is that both construction types allow such elements once and in the same positions. A logical conclusion of the syntactic and semantic behavior is that the two sentence types function alike; they code one event.

There are a few more things to be explored with respect to SVC's. The role of participants has not been assessed for what they can contribute to our understanding of the construction. I shall attempt such an investigation next.

3.7. Participants in discourse

In monoverbal sentences, there is no duplication of syntactic, semantic or pragmatic roles. In this section, participants in the SVC will be surveyed to see whether duplicate roles occur, namely whether there could be any possible occurrences of two Subjects, Objects, Agent, Patients, Topics, etc. I shall first survey the roles in monoverbal sentences. I will then move on to see which of

these roles are coded on the arguments of the SVC. I hypothesize that for as long as there is no such duplicated discourse roles, namely if the SVC behaves like simple sentences, then the SVC codes a single event.

3.7.1. Major Functions of NP's in Discourse.

Other than imperative sentences every sentence, either in isolation or in discourse has to have a subject overtly expressed in Yorùbá. There is also an object if the verb is transitive.

56a. O rí Gbólá sá àbó ò roun (XMAS)

you see Gb. DP or-you NEG see-him

'Did you see Gbola or not?'

b. Iyẹn ti ship tiẹ (XMAS)

that ASP his

'That man has shipped his'.

c. O sù kù diẹ (XMAS)

3sg and remain little

'It still remains a little'.

d. O dára bẹẹ (XMAS)

3sg good like:that

'It's o.k that way'.

By definition, subject and object in Yorùbá are pre-verbal (complex) and post verbal arguments. This word order is sufficient to define the grammatical functions

for the language. However, arguments in the simple sentence bear different semantic roles, reflecting the fact that they perform different functions in the event. Even in the few examples in (56), the arguments can be seen to perform different semantic roles. The subject in (a) and (b) is AGENT and the object PATIENT (Thompson (personal communication) and Andrews (1985) analyze the object of see as PATIENT). In (c) the subject, whose identity depends on the previous discourse, is identical with the the object díè 'little', both being THEMES (i.e. a participant which is characterized as being in a state or position or changing state or position (Andrews 1985:70)). The referent of the subject of (d), like (c), depends on context for its identity. It too is a THEME. Its referent may be an event or a group of events in a narrative, a situation which has been narrated or observed.

Other than subjects and objects, there could be other arguments in the sentence. Where these are not marked by prototypical verbs, they may be coded as Oblique (i.e. peripherally) with ní:

- 57a. Bòbò yèn rí Mark lódè ni (XMAS)
 guy that see M. OBL-fool EMPH.
 'The guy knows that Mark is a fool'.

b. Iyẹn fún mi ní wahala púpò. (XMAS)

that give me OBL trouble plenty

'That one gave me a lot of difficulties'.

c. Qrọ yẹn n jẹ mí lókàn

matter that ASP eat me OBL-heart

ní gbogbo ìgbà

OBL all time

'The matter is giving me a lot of concern
all the time'.

(l as in lódè and lókàn (62a, c) are a phonologically conditioned variants of ní).

Although these oblique participants cannot be identified with any consistent semantic function, their pragmatic role is fairly clear. Mark and òdè 'fool' have one pragmatic identity in (a), wàhálà could have been used as a verb to replace fún (an indication of its non-referentiality) in (b), and okàn has been demoted, being less affected, or salient than the human mí 'me', while the human mí has been 'promoted' to object position (See Hyman 1977, Hopper and Thompson 1980, and Fox 1981). Gbogbo ìgbà is a TIME expression. In short, the objects of ní can be called OBLIQUE. They are peripheral to the event. More will be said about them in Chapter 4.

So far, I have been able to state syntactic roles, i.e. subject and object of the sentences. Other arguments cannot be pinned down to any syntactic role, say, as INDIRECT OBJECT as there is no uniform way of coding this in the language (See Faltz 1977, and Yusuf 1985). The important thing is that despite the number of arguments in different grammatical roles, the sentences characterize a single event, some arguments being participatory (i.e. actual participants in the situation implied by the verb" (Andrews 1985:69)), others only peripheral.

Oblique arguments may be participatory in the event. To the extent that they are, they will be coded differently from the ni-NPs. Compare (63a and b):

- 58a. Mo rí i ní ilé
 I see 3sg obj OBL house
 'I saw him at home'
- b. Mo lɔ si ilé
 I go to house
 'I went home'.

Here, ilé 'house' is object to different types of prepositions, indicative of its roles in the sentences; in (a) it is a non-participatory LOCATIVE whereas it is a participatory GOAL in (b).

In the examples in (56-58), it may be noticed that a single grammatical or semantic role is represented only once in each clause. Where there are more than two NP arguments, the role of the additional NPs must be different. It has also been shown that participatory arguments are coded differently from non-participatory arguments in these monoverbal sentences. It is expected that such a distinction will be found in SVC's where participatory arguments will be coded by inherently meaningful verbs or prepositions while non-participatory or circumstantial arguments will be coded by other means.

3.7.2. Semantic Roles of NPs in SVC.

There is no a priori delimitation as to what roles participants will be in a given event, their roles depend on the discourse context. While it is possible that certain verbs assign predictable semantic roles to their arguments, it is the situational use of such verbs that can fully account for the role. Take for an example the verb of GIVING fún. It is expected to have an AGENT, an OBJECT, and a BENEFICIARY as in (59a):

- 59a. Olúwa fún mi ní ayò (NAME)
 God give me OBL joy
 'God has given me joy'.

The semantic roles may be labelled thus:

59a'. Olúwa fún mi ní ayò
 AGENT V BENE OBL PATIENT

where the Patient, because of its non-adjacency to the verb fún for reasons of its being less affected, and less referential, gets coded as OBLIQUE. The same verb with the same inherent meaning assigns different roles in (59b'):

59b. Isé yẹn fún mi ní wahala
 work that give me OBL trouble
 'The work gave me some difficulty'.

59b'. Isé yẹn fún mi ní wahala
 SOURCE V EXPERIENCER OBL. THEME

Thus, to be sure what role a verb will assign, one has to take into consideration the discourse frame in which the verb appears. One must note that the syntactic roles Subject, Object etc, will not reveal this distinction. Thus, in what follows, I shall explore the semantic roles SVC's exhibit. It is expected that as in monoverbal clauses, NPs will not code duplicate semantic roles in the same sentence. This is indeed a well-formedness condition: one of any given semantic role per event. If we characterize SVC's only syntactically, such an insight will be lost. Note that it has been stated that that SVC

has one overt subject NP, but the number of Objects is not so constrained. In fact there will be as many objects as there are transitive verbs. But if we consider the meaning of the SVC, it will be found that just as there is one subject NP coding only one semantic role, there will be only one instance of any other semantic role in the sentence:

- 60a. Wọn bá ń kọrin tẹlẹ 'jápá
 AGENT DP ASP [_vV+OBJ] V PATIENT
 they DP ASP sing-song follow tortoise
 'They were singing after Tortoise'

(The notation '[_v V+OBJ.]' means a Verb combines with its noun Object to form a compound verb)

- b. Wọn bá gbé erin jókòó lórí àga
 AG DP V PAT V OBL LOC
 they and carry elephant sit on-head chair
 'They then sat the elephant on a chair'.

- c. Uncle Ọrẹ, Mo ti sọ kalẹ fún yín
 TOP TH ASP V V V BENE
 I say put:on:ground give you
 'Uncle Ore, I have said that for you earlier'.

- d. O wá fi ata sáyà ẹ
 AG DP V OBJ OBL-GOAL
 3sg put pepper to chest his
 'He then put pepper on his chest'.

e. [É é wá pín in fún]
 AG ASP DP V OBJ V
 you ASP DP divide 3sg.obj give

 àwọ̀n tó bá fẹ́fẹ́ jẹ
 BENE.

 they REL 3sg COND want eat
 'You will then share it out to those who want
 to eat'.

Each semantic role occurs just once in these sentences, an indication that we are dealing with a single overall event. Note how the various objects of the transitive verbs get interpreted as participants in the event. Where the subject codes an AGENT, only one verb has a PATIENT. Other verbs code other semantic roles.

Particularly interesting cases are found with the so-called causative constructions which I have interpreted as 'Manipulative SVC'. Note that constructs like same-subject or different-subject reading have been employed in analyzing them (See Lord 1974). Here, as in other SVC's, each semantic role surfaces just once in a sentence:

61. a. A ó mérin jọba (FOLK)
 AGENT ASP V-PATIENT [V-Obj]

 we take-elephant be-king

 'We'll make the elephant king'.

b.mo réyẹ mú bọ̀gún (Babalola 1963)

AG V-PATIENT V [_vV-OBJ.]

I find-bird take worship-Ogun

'I found a bird to sacrifice to the God of iron'.

c. Fẹ́mi gbé Adé ẹ̀subú (Lord 1974)

AG V PAT [_v V-OBJ]

F. carry A. fall

'Fẹ́mi caused Adé to fall'.

d. Èrùn mú ìyàn mú
AG V PAT V

draught cause famine sharp

'The draught caused the famine'.

Again, each semantic role occurs only once per sentence. In some instances where there would have been double patients as in examples like (61a-b), the non-referential NP's merge with the verb to form a complex 'incorporated object' construction ('incorporated objects' are discussed in Hopper and Thompson 1984 and Mithun 1984) like jọba 'be-king' and bọ̀gún 'make sacrifice to Ogun'.

Other instances non-referential NPs in SVC's can be seen from the following examples:

- 62a. Awon nnkan méjì yìí níye lórí
 THEME [V-OBJ] OBL V
 ju wúrà àti fàdákà lẹ
 surpass OBJ OBJ V
 goal and silver surpass
 'These two things are more precious than gold and silver'
- b. N kò tún dáwọ́ lẹ ohun lẹle kan mó
 AG NEG DP [V-OBJ] V OBJ adv.
 I again put-hand on thing hard one anymore
 'I shall never attempt any difficult thing anymore'.

In coding stative events (i.e. a non-transitive situation) the same phenomenon is attested. If more than one NP shows up here, no NP, even when governed by a verb will be found to be a PATIENT.

- 63a. Ogúndìran dára kún iwà rẹ.
 TH V V ACCOMP
 good add character his
 'Ogundiran is handsome in addition to his character'.
- b. Olá dùn ju oyè (NAME)
 TH. V V OBJ
 honor sweet surpass chieftaincy
 'Honor is more noble than chieftaincy'.

What these examples have shown is that multi-verb clauses as in serial verb constructions need not be complex sentences. It is simply a peculiarity of serializing languages to code aspects of events with verbs where other languages have employed various morphological or composite verb devices. Fillmore (1968:21) has made a similar claim (although the definition of the sentence needs a readjustment in the light of SVC types) that:

"The sentence in its basic structure consists of a verb and one or more noun phrases, each associated with the verb in a particular case relationship".

He further notes that

"The 'explanatory' use of this framework resides in the necessary claim that, although there can be compound instances of a single case (through NP conjunction), each case relationship occurs only once in a simple sentence". (Fillmore 1968:21).

The survey of the SVC presented in this section shows that the construction behaves like simple sentences. Each semantic role appears only once per sentence.

3.8 Summary.

In this chapter, the SVC was viewed in different discourse contexts. A number of factors were revealed, some already mentioned in the literature and others unsurveyed or ignored. In general, the discourse functions of the SVC were briefly surveyed, while a wide variety of the

formal aspects of the syntactic properties were observed. The syntactic properties were interpreted in the light of the overriding hypothesis that the SVC codes a single overall event.

On the basis of the uses of the construction, the SVC was classified into four types. Only a sketch of the uses of each type was presented, a detailed discussion being deferred until Chapter 4.

Among the discourse functions of the SVC are the coding of some background information, extra-linguistic information, nuances of meaning and the use of verbs to effect what is done by means of derivational morphology in other languages. These uses are claimed to derive from the fact that the language does not have composite verbs, inflectional, or derivational morphology.

Also in this chapter, a number of seemingly unrelated syntactic properties were observed. For example, there is one subject per sentence and the preverbs like Tense-aspect and Negation have one member per sentence. Further, though there could be many NP's in the sentence --- objects, obliques ---, a survey of their semantic roles shows that, like the subject and preverbs, no semantic role is duplicated. All these facts conjointly point to the fact that a single event is coded by the SVC. Syntactic processes which specially focus on verbs, as in

Focusing, support the single-over-all-event hypothesis for the SVC.

In Chapter 4, I shall investigate the uses of the four different SVC types in more detail.

Footnotes to Chapter 3.

1. Cf. the Hausa verb grade system (Parsons 1960, 1971/72) where the base form of a verb will operate various suffixes to extend the meaning of a verb, e.g., shaa 'to drink', shanyee 'drink completely', shayar 'cause to drink, water (flowers)', shayu 'be thoroughly drinkable, i.e., enjoyable', etc.

2. Bamgbose (1974, 1982) uses the single occurrence of NEG to argue for the sentence complexity of the SVC. But that treatment is inconsistent as Tense and Aspect show the same single occurrence, yet this fact cannot be exploited to advance the same argument.

3. jeba [< je o ba] 'be king' is thought to be

je o ba
eat king

This is false etymology derived from childhood folk etymology. The Mid tone of je seemingly supports this. However, in all probability, this je is a reflex of je 'to be'. While the tone lowering may be difficult to account for, it also occurs in ni 'to have' which surfaces as Mid ni in sentences like

Emi ni mo ni àpò yíí
I be I have bag this
'I have this bag'.

Note that it has been confirmed in the literature that the COPULA and 'to have', i.e. POSSESSION are related (Welmers 1973, Lord 1973, Givón 1974 and Clark 1978). It should not be an accident that je and ni both lower their tones to function as COPULA.

4. Verbs are usually monosyllabic in Yorùbá. Bisyllabic verbs are often traceable to a compounding of a verb and a noun. It is therefore hard to see these as a single verb, more so when there is no sign of an incorporated noun. Therefore, they must be two independent verbs originally but now undergoing a process of lexicalization. In fact, in most cases, there is ample evidence that they are two separate verbs.

5. The materials in the brackets are the relevant parts for this analysis.

6. I have no explanation as to why this HTS surfaces with a Mid tone. The tone could optionally be High though with the Mid on lɔ 'go' lowering to Low!.

7. Professor Celce-Murcia's suggestion for this scale is acknowledged.

8. This term is borrowed from Jaggar (1983).

9. The FUTURE is traditionally called a tense, but as this will be the only tense marked in Yorùbá, I have decided to treat it together with the other temporal markers, which are aspectual. Note that I have characterized Yorùbá as Aspect-dominated, not solely an aspectual language.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0: Introduction

In Chapter 3, the uses of the SVC's were surveyed. It was proposed that SVC's are lexical, not discourse options, since the function performed by this structure are performed by single (sometime inflected) verbs in some other languages. As noted in Chapter 3, there are indications that this construction is lexical; a removal or substitution of one of the verbs results in a different message. In addition, it was found that the order of the verbs is strict. To interchange the VP's is to have either a different meaning or outright ungrammaticality. However, the Valence-increasing SVC (which has bleached verbs as part of the verbs in the series) poses a challenge on this score. The order of the VP's can be reversed (with some changes, to be discussed) with each variant bearing paraphrase relations. It is the aim of this chapter to find out what factors dictate the choice of one variant or the other. It is hypothesized that the discourse factor that allows for the variation in the order of the VP's will have to do with the topicality or salience of the participants in the event being reported. The more topical NP's are stressed, 'stress' being effected through the use of bleached verbs in Yorùbá.

4.01: The Valence-increasing SVC and Variant Structures

To exemplify the type of variation that the valence-increasing counterparts allow, let us look at these extracts from two procedural discourses on the same topic. They are here named '(How to make) Mọ́ínmọ́ín 1 & 2'. All PP's (to be discussed later) are underlined:

1. How to make 'mọ́ínmọ́ín' (1).
- i. A á mú erèé ọlọjú dúdú tí a ń
we FUT take beans owner-eye black REL we ASP
- ii. pè ní 'black-eyed peas'. A á rẹ é
call be we FUT soak it
- iii. sínú omi fún bíi wákàtí kan tàbí méjì
in water for like hour one or two
- iv. Lẹhìn iye, á á bó awọ ẹyìn rẹ.
after that we FUT peel skin back it
- v. Nígba tí a bá bó awọ 'ẹ tán,
time REL we COND peel skin it finish
- vi. a á sàń án nínú omi dáadáa
we FUT rinse it in water well
- vii. kí awọ yíí lẹ kúrò lára rẹ....
that skin this can leave be:at-body it
- viii. A á wá lẹ o pẹlú ọlọ tàbí blender
we FUT DP grind it INSTR grind-stone or
- ix. Lẹhìn a á wá pò ó
after we FUT DP mix it

x. Yálà kí a pò ó pèlú ɔwó tàbí ɔmɔrogùn
either that we mix it INSTR hand or stick

xi. tàbí síbí.... A á fi ata sí it
or spoon we FUT put pepper SI it

xii. pèlú epo pupa tàbí òróró
INSTR oil red or peanut:oil

i. 'We'll take beans with black eyes that we call

ii. call 'black-eyed peas'. We will soak them

iii. in water for about an hour or two.

iv. After that, we will peel their shells

v. After we have finished peeling them

vi. we shall rinse them in water thoroughly

vii. so that the skin will be washed clean

viii. We will then grind it with grinding stone or
blender.

ix. After.... we will mix it (the blended beans)

x. We mix it either with our hands or a stick

xi. or spoon. We shall put pepper in it

xii. with palm oil or peanut oil'.

(Fúnké Yusuf)

In (1), TEMPORAL (iii), LOCATIVE, (vi), INSTRUMENTAL (viii, x), and ACCOMPANIMENT (xii) are coded as post-verbal PP's, as peripheral information. The bleached verbs involved here are fún, ní and pèlú. The sentences containing these bleached verbs have the following

constituent structure:

PS-1. NP VP₁ VP₂

(where VP₂ is a bleached verb and its object).

Following traditional categorization of bleached verbs as prepositions, I shall use Phrase Structure rule 2 (PS-2) instead of PS-1:

PS-2. NP V (NP) PP

A look at another set of instructions on how to make mọ́ínmọ́ín (Henceforth Mọ́ínmọ́ín 2) gives a different constituent order:

2. How to make 'mọ́ínmọ́ín' (2).

i. Bí a bá fẹ́fẹ́ se mọ́ínmọ́ín

 If we COND want do

ii. ẹ lẹ bu nńkan bíi agolo erée mẹta

 you:PL can scoop thing like can beans three

iii. kẹ rẹ ẹ sínú omi fún nńkan bíi

 that-you:PL soak it in water for thing like

iv. ìṣẹ́jú mẹwàá. Bí ẹ bá ti rẹ ẹ tán,

 minute ten if you COND PERF soak it finish

v. ẹ ẹ yó ọ. Ẹ é da omi rẹ kúrò.

 you FUT sieve it. you FUT pour water it leave

vi. Ẹ lẹ fi ọwọ́ tàbí kẹ fi ọlọ

 you can INSTR hand or that-you INSTR grind-stone

- vii. bó erèé náà. Tẹ bá dẹ ní nńkan
 peel beans the if COND DP have thing
- viii. tán ń pẹ ní blender,
 REL-they ASP call be
- ix. ẹ lẹ fi ẹrọ alọta kẹ
 you can INSTR machine grinding-pepper that-you
- x. fi bó erèé yẹn.....
 INSTR peel beans the

- xi. Ẹ ẹ wá àwọn èlò yín sí tòòsí.
 you FUT find they ingredients yours be nearby
- xii. Te ẹ bá ti lẹ ọ tán....Uhm..
 if you COND ASP grind it finish
- xiii. Ẹ lẹ fi ẹyin tàbí edé, ẹran àwọn
 you can INSTR egg or lobster meat they
- xiv. èlò wéwéwéwéwé bí ata tòmatò,
 ingredients small-small like pepper tomato
- xv. iyọ..... ẹ lẹ fi se mọínmọín yẹn
 salt you can INSTR cook that
- xvi. kó lẹ dùn.
 that-it can be:sweet
- xvii. Ti ẹ bá ní nńkan tí wọn ń pẹ ní
 if you COND have thing REL they ASP call be
- xviii. "foil wrap", ẹ lẹ fiyen se e, tàbí
 you can INSTR-that cook it, or
- xix. agolo. Ẹ ẹ wá tò ó sínú ikòkò
 can you FUT DP arrange it inside pot

- xx. tí a á fi se mǫ́ínmǫ́ín náà
REL we FUT INSTR cook the
- i. 'If we want to cook mǫ́ínmǫ́ín,
ii. you can scoop about three cans of beans
iii. (and) soak them in water for about
iv. ten minutes. After you've soaked them,
v. you'll remove the water
vi. You can use hands or a grinding stone
vii. (to) peel them. And if you have the thing
viii. which is called a blender
ix. you can use the blender
x. (to) peel the beans.....
xi. You get your ingredients ready
xii. After you have finished grinding it....Uhm...
xiii. You can put eggs or lobster, meat,
xiv. minor ingredients like pepper, tomato,
xv. salt....you can use (them) to cook the mǫ́ínmǫ́ín
xvi. so that it will be delicious.
xvii. If you have the thing that is called
xviii. "foil wrap", you can use that to cook it, or
xix. cans. You will then arrange them in the pot
xx. which will be used to cook the mǫ́ínmǫ́ín'.

Níkẹ́ Qlárewájú

Of the eleven PP's in 'Móinmóin (2)', eight (73%) are preverbal with the structure

NP PP V (NP)

What these two extracts show is that there are two variant structures for the expression of the same semantic content. The literature is however replete with the claim that variant structures have discourse motivations, and each variant will carry some semantic nuance (See Mithun (Ms), Payne (Ms), and Gary (1976) for a representative expositions of factors that motivate variant orders). The contexts of these structures suggest the explanation to the variation. In what follows, I shall look at each variant in turn to discuss the discourse factors that may be responsible for the use of one option rather than the other.

4.1: Post-Verbal PP's.

Prior to the sentence in (1.viii), stated below as (4) (the numbers to the right indicate the source in (1) and (2) above):

4. A á wá lẹ ọ pẹlú ọlọ..... (1.viii)
 we FUT DP grind it INSTR grind-stone
 'We'll then grind it with a grinding stone...'

the processing of beans was being discussed (the beans are referred to as ɔ 'it' in (4)). The beans are the main topic and any non-central information is added as an adjunct. In this particular instance, the instrument for the processing is mentioned after the event itself, namely as a postverbal PP.

Throughout, the speaker in 'Móínmóín 1' seems to be concerned with getting the beans to become 'móínmóín'. Witness another example (1x) where she codes the INSTRUMENTAL ɔwó 'hand' ɔmɔrogùn 'stirring stick' and síbí 'spoon' as postverbal PP:

5. Yálà kí a pò ó (1x)
 either that we mix it
pèlú ɔwó tàbí ɔmɔrogùn tàbí síbí
 INSTR hand or stick or spoon
 'We either mix it with our hand or with a stick
 or a spoon'.

The coding of these peripheral participants is consonant with the structure of the language as shown in the earlier section of the extract:

6. A á rẹ e sínú omi (1.iii)
 we FUT soak it in water

fún bíi wáka'tí kan tàbí méjì

for like hour one or two

'We'll soak it in water for about an hour or two'

where the location of the beans and the duration for the soaking are coded post-verbally; i.e., as peripheral information. Thus the core event as coded by full verbs takes priority in the linear order of the constituents of the sentence. In pragmatic terms one might say that the central information is attended to before peripheral issues.

Let us now look at what happens in 'Móínmóín (2)'. Here most of the same peripheral elements are coded pre-verbally or internal to the core event.

4.2: Pre-verbal PP's

In 'Móínmóín (2)' as the examples below will demonstrate, most of the participants that could be coded as external PP's are coded event internally, namely, as Pre-verbal PP's. Here are a few examples from 'Móínmóín (2)'.

7a. Tí ẹ bá dẹ ní nńkan tí a ń pẹ (2vii)

if you COND DP have thing REL we ASP call

ní blender, ẹ lẹ fi ẹrọ alọta (2ix)

be you can INSTR machine grinder-pepper

ké fi bó erèè náà (2x)

that-you INSTR peel beans the

'And if you have the thing that is called a
blender, you can use the blender to peel the
beans'.

b. àwọ̀n èlò wééwéèwéé bí ata, (2xiv)

 they ingredients small-small like pepper

tomato, iyò..... ẹ lè fi se mọ́ínmọ́ín yẹn

 salt you can INSTR cook the

kó lè dùn

that-it can be:delicious

'...the minor ingredients like pepper, tomato
salt.... you can use them to make the moinmnoin
so that it will be delicious'.

c. Bí ẹ bá ní nńkan tí a ń pè ní (2vii)

if you COND have thing REL we ASP call be

foil wrap, ẹ lè fi yẹn sè é tàbí agolo

 you can INSTR that cook it or can

'If you have something that is called "foil
wrap", you use that to cook it or use a can'.

d. Ẹ e wá tò ó sínú ìkòkò (2xix)

you FUT DP arrange it inside pot

tí a á fi se mọ́ínmọ́ín náà (2xx)

REL we FUT INSTR cook the

'You will then arrange it in the pot that will
be used to cook the mọ́ínmọ́ín'.

Here the same instruments that were coded as post-verbal participants in 'Móínmóín (1)' are coded pre-verbally. However, this is not without a previous mention elsewhere in the text. For example the èrə aləta 'blender' in (a) has been mentioned in the conditional clause preceeding it. Also, in (b), the èlò wééwééwé 'minor ingredients' that fi precedes have been listed before the fi-clause. Similarly, in (d) ìyən 'that one' has been used as a 'pro-nominal epithet' to the ìkòkò 'pot' mentioned earlier. A pattern thus emerges here: a mention of a participant followed by a subsequent preverbal coding of the item.

This observation concerning the preverbal coding of participants can be explained with the centrality hypothesis proffered earlier. In the 'Móínmóín 2' examples, the topic being pursued, i.e the processing of beans, is interrupted by the introduction of a participant (INSTRUMENTAL or ACCOMPANIMENT). This is momentarily treated as possessing higher topicality and therefore stressed by coding it event-internally. Six of the eight occurrences of the preverbal fi-NP clauses conform to this explanation. The fi-NP is more salient in the discourse than if it had been coded event-externally. In other words the external coding of the instruments as in 'Móínmóín (1)' is indicative of their peripherality to the topic of the discourse whereas the same instruments are

stressed in 'Móínmóín (2)'.

In short, the centrality of the participant NP to the event dictates its coding: post-verbally if it is peripheral, but preverbally if it is central or stressed. As the discourse process described in these extracts is actually general in the language, I shall look at other participants which are not INSTRUMENTALS. This variation will be treated under a generalization that I shall call **participant promotion**. It is hypothesized that the more central participants (other than the subject) in an event will be coded either as a direct objects of the full verb or a preverbal prepositional phrase.

4.3: Participant Promotion

'Participant promotion' is the coding of peripheral participant to function as core participant. This is effected by coding the participants as preverbal PP's as illustrated in section 4.2 above.

As has been illustrated, both postverbal and preverbal PP's are possible, using a set of bleached verbs that are in complementary distribution. Other bleached verbs involved in the participant promotion (other than those illustrated in Section 4.2 above) are ti, látí 'be from LOCATION', bá 'BENEFACTIVE/ACCOMPANIMENT', fún 'BENEFACTIVE', fi 'MANNER/INSTRUMENT' and ní 'be at LOCATION'---

- v. òkan ń tìbàdàn bọ
 one ASP be:from-Ibàdàn come
- vi. òkan ń tìlọrin bọ
 one ASP be:from-Ilọrin come
- vii. Ni wọn bá forí gbára wọn
 be they DP INSTR-head hit-body they
- viii. LOdó Qnà
 be:at-Odò Qnà
- ix. Mọtò méjèèjì ló ti rún wómúwómú
 vehicle the:two be-3sg ASP spoil IDEO
- i. 'It was someone.....
- ii. 'Be calm! He did what?
- iii. He came to tell us at home that
- iv. your two trucks
- v. One was coming from Ibàdàn
- vi. One was coming from Ilọrin
- vii. And they collided at Odò Qnà
- ix. The two trucks are damaged beyond repair'.

In (8iii) and (8viii) the postverbal PP's code peripheral participants that are really not central to the message being conveyed by the house boy in the story. It does not matter (at least no one is asking for such a verification) who was told and where the telling took place. Therefore no special stressing is effected. But while (8v-vii) could have been acceptably rendered as:

8y. Ọkan í bọ látí Ibàdàn

one ASP come from

Ọkan n bọ látí Ilorin

one ASP come from

Wọn bá kọ lu ara wọn....

they DP ? hit body their

'One was coming from Ibàdàn, One was coming
from Ilorin. They then hit each other'.

with a similar meaning, the preverbal positioning of the locative sources of the trucks and the point of impact indicates their centrality to the report on the accident. The locations that are deemed salient to the message are coded event-internally; promoted to the preverbal position.

A look back at the instructions for the preparation of 'móínmóín' further reinforces what I mean by participant promotion. (9a) is used instead of (9b) by one speaker because she had changed the topic of the discourse momentarily:

9a. È lè fi ẹrọ alọta (2ix)

you can INSTR machine grinder-pepper

kẹ fi bó erée yẹn

that-you INSTR peel beans the

'You can use the blender to peel the beans'

b. È lè bó o pèlú blender

you can peel it INSTR

'You can peel it with a blender'.

The introduction of the blender temporarily interrupts the flow of discourse and so the speaker of (9a) pursues this 'new participant' before returning to the more continuous topic---the beans. (9b) is used when the blender is only incidental to the description. In short, the centrality of the participant in the event dictates what order it takes in the sentence structure.

As a further reinforcement of the centrality hypothesis, The preverbal position of the instrumental participants in (10) is similarly accounted for:

10i. Olórí 'gbó o! Olórí 'gbó ! (OGBOJU)

head forest head forest

ii. Iwọ ni Ọlọjà iwin

you be king gnomes

iii. Mo ní iwọ ni Ọlọjà iwin

I say you be king gnomes

iv. Kò sí Ọlọjà tó dàbí ìrẹ

NEG be king REL-3sg be-like you

v. Apá ọmọ aráyé ni iwọ fi ń jẹ'yán

arm child native-world be you INSTR ASP eat-iyán

- vi. Gèngè àyà wọn ni iwọ fi ń jẹ ọkà
 IDEO chest their be you INSTR ASP eat oka
- vii. Atàrí wọn ni iwọ fi ń mu ẹkọ
 scalp their be you INSTR ASP drink gruel
- i. 'Lord of the forest, lord of the forest!
- ii. You are the king of all gnomes
- iii. I say that you are the king of all the gnomes
- iv. There is no king like you!
- v. It's the hand of humans that you eat your meal
- vi. with. It's their chest that you eat oka with
- vii. Their scalp, you use to drink gruel with.

Notice that the fi-NP¹ in (10v, vi, vii) and (7a-d) have earlier mentions (cf. 7a-d) by way of focusing. Being topical items, they are coded clause-internally instead of the peripheral coding with the verb pẹlú 'INSTRUMENTAL'.

Other than ti-NP and fi-NP's, other bleached-verb-coded NP's are amenable to the same explanation. Bá and fún are treated below to illustrate the claim.

4.3.2: Bá-NP and fún-NP

Like ti/láti and fi/pẹlú illustrated above, bá and fún are in complementary distribution; the bá-NP is a preverbal option while fún-NP occurs postverbally. The denotative meaning is the same but the preverbal coding accords a higher topicality to the participant than the

peripheral coding, as shown above. These examples taken, from the Christmas conversation, illustrate some of the nuances of meaning conveyed by the two options.

11a. A ní mo fěě bá òun náà sọrọ (XMAS)

we say I want ACCOMP he DEF speak

'I say I want to speak with him'.

b. Wọn fẹ kí ń bá àwọn cooperate

they want that I ACCOMP they

'They want me to cooperate with them'.

c. Kò bá mi sọrọ now!

NEG ACCOMP me speak

'He did not speak to me'

d. Kò sẹni tó sọ fún ẹ?

NEG be-person REL-3sg say BENE you

'Nobody told you?.'

e. Emi tiẹ rò pé o máa lè mọwó

I infact think COMP you FUT can take-money

wá fún mi ni

come BENE me EMPH

'I in fact thought that you will be able to bring me some money'.

f. Emi kàn tiẹ sílẹkùn fún un

I just infact open-door BENE-3sg

pé kó wọlé.....

COMP that-3sg enter

'I just opened the door for him to enter...'

The preverbal PP's in (11a-c) can be expressed as postverbal PP's, but this will require a different discourse situation. If (11a) were expressed as (12) for instance, the connotation will be that the speaker wants to chide the third party, i.e. the fún-coded participant:

12. A ní mo fé é sọrọ fún òun nàà

we say I want HTS speak BENE he DEF

'I say I want to talk to him too' (i.e give him
a piece of my mind)

Thus, the same participant, coded as a preverbal PP using bá 'ACCOMPANIMENT' is a co-discussant with the speaker, but when he is coded as a postverbal PP with fún 'BENEFACTIVE', he is demoted to a less active participant who is chided. This is to say that the choice of either a postverbal or preverbal PP is motivated by a pragmatic factor.

In the same way, if (11d) is coded with bá 'BENEFACTIVE' preverbally, as in (11d'), it will sound like there is a dialogue, a discussion instead of the matter-of-fact telling that the sentence conveys:

11d'. Kò sɛ̀ni tó bá mi sɔ ɔ̃
 NEG be-person REL-3sg ACCOMP me say it
 'Nobody discussed it with me'.

Thus while bá and fún carry the same denotative meaning, the choice of one over the other presupposes the status of the participant that it codes.

Similarly, rendering (11c) as (13) will mean "he did not insult/command/tell me:

13. Kò sɔ̃rɔ̃ fún mi now!
 NEG speak BENE me
 'He did not rebuke/tell me'

Whatever the circumstance that will require the use of (13), the participant coded with fún will be a passive recipient as distinct from the co-discussant that he was in (11c). The converse situation obtains if (11e) is alternatively expressed as (14):

14. Mo rò pé
 I think COMP
 o máa lè bá mi mɔ́wó wá ni
 you FUT can BENE me take-money come EMPH
 'I thought that you will bring me some money'.

The message here would be that there is a joint account from which the second party is supposed to bring money, or

that the person being spoken to owes an obligation to bring the money. Under the circumstances from which (11e) was spoken, there was no such obligation, rather, the speaker was only soliciting aid.

In sum, with the use of one bleached verb or the other, and the concomitant linear arrangement for selecting each, there is some nuance of meaning being conveyed. The same serial verb construction is involved and the case relations of the participants remain the same, but a different semantic and pragmatic factor will dictate whether a participant is coded event-internally or externally. Syntactically, the preverbal coding of a peripheral participant results from stressing its salience (namely, its more active participation) in the discourse. If no stressing is effected, then the peripheral participants remain as postverbal PP's.

4.4: Participant Demotion

Just as a peripheral participant can be specially stressed, namely coded as a pre-full verb PP to increase its salience, so can a core participant, particularly an Object, be 'de-stressed' (i.e. demoted) by coding it as a peripheral participant. In this section, I shall pursue the demotional process. This process allows some other participant to be focused on. It will be shown that ní-NP's (discussed below) are less central to the discourse and therefore "demoted". Ní, the erstwhile Niger-Congo locative verb meaning 'to be at' (See Welmers 1973, Lord 1973, Givón 1974 and Clark 1978 for a discussion of this verb), is involved in this 'stress shift'.

4.4.1: Ní-NP and Demoted Participants

The sentences in (15) below, one of which was picked up in a casual discussion, will illustrate what I mean by 'demotion':

- 15a. Wón pa Qaddafi lómọ (lómọ = ní ọmọ)
they kill ní-child
'They killed Qaddafi's child'.
b. Wón pa ọmọ Qaddafi
they kill child
'They killed Qaddafi's child'.

Both sentences in (15) are acceptable paraphrases of each other. As can be seen, however, they are different structurally: in (a) the logical object of the verb pa 'kill' is coded with ni while the participant who was not killed gets coded as the Object of the verb 'to kill'. In (15b) Qaddafi is a mere qualifier to the participant qmq 'child'. With Qaddafi (who was not killed) being coded as the object of pa 'kill' one should ask what semantic nuance (5a) conveys. The construct 'possessor promotion' (Hyman 1977, Fox 1982) was used to explain cases like (15a) namely that Qaddafi was promoted over the possessed entity qmq 'child'. Below, I sketch the 'possessor promotion' hypothesis.

4.4.2. Possession Promotion.

As a relevant diversion, let me state how the 'possessor promotion' applies in (15a). The possessor of an item, be it alienable or inalienable possession, is seen to be more topicworthy (roughly, 'salient'), than the possessed item, and in language after language, it is found that the possessor is coded as the direct object while the possessed is coded with a preposition, i. e. demoted to a peripheral participant. This universal language process is obeyed in (15a) with the connotation that it codes the speaker's empathy for Qaddafi. A

similar meaning emerges for such made-up examples like (16):

16a. 0 gbá mi ní etí (Yusuf 1985)

3sg hit me be:at ear

'He cuffed me in the ear'.

b. 0 ya mí ní aṣṣ (Yusuf 1985)

3sg tear me be:at cloth

'He tore my cloth'.

where the point of contact is etí 'ear' in (a) and the affected item is aṣṣ 'cloth' in (b) but their possessors (the participant who feels the pang of the action), the pronoun mí 'me' are coded as objects.

Notice that (16) can be alternatively expressed as (18)

17a. Wón gbá etí mi

they hit ear my

'They cuffed me in the ear'

b. 0 ya aṣṣ mi

3sg tear cloth my

'He tore my cloth'.

Before I proceed to explain participant demotion generally, here are some instances of ní-NP in larger contexts:

18. Wón dá Shàgàrí ní àrẹ (EWI 1979)

they apportion ? innocence

wón dá Awólówò ní ẹ̀bì

they apportion guilt

wón yan Shàgàrí lárẹ

they choose Ní-president

'They pronounced Shàgàrí right

They pronounced Awólówò guilty

They made Shàgàrí president'.

19i. Ní ìgbà kan

be time one

ii. obìnrin kan wà ní ilu Ijàpá

woman one exist be:at town tortoise

iii obìnrin yìí ń dín àkàrà olóròóró

woman this ASP fry nugget NOM-have-peanut oil

iv. Akàrà yìí maa n ta sánsán

nugget this HABIT waft IDEO

v. O sì n dá èyàn ní ọfun

3sg and ASP grip person be:at throat

vi. bí olúwa rẹ bá wà ní tòòsí ìyá yìí

if person it COND exist be:at near mother this

i. 'Once upon a time,

ii. there was a woman in Tortoise's town

iii. This woman fries bean nuggets

iv. The nuggets waft in the air

- v. And it raises one's appetite
- vi. if one is near this woman's (place)'

(18) and (19) show ní coding a variety of NP's. In (18), abstract NP's like are 'right/innocence' èbi 'guilt', and ààrè 'president' are ní-coded whereas all the ní-coded NP's in (19), except for (19v), are LOCATIVES. In (20v), òfun 'throat' a part of the body, is ní-coded. It is significant that of all the ní-NP sentences, there is no single case of a human participant coded with ní. This observation is probed below.

4.5: Functional Explanation.

Having observed that all the ní-NP's are non-human, one should ask why human NP's are exempt from ní-coding?. The explanation that I want to suggest utilizes the construct topicworthiness (where topicworthy NP's have inherent characteristics like ANIMACY, INDIVIDUATION (as opposed to 'mass'), REFERENTIALITY, and DEFINITENESS (Thompson, p.c). What I posit here is that in bitransitive clauses, the more human, more definite, more individuated, more referential NP's will be coded as objects while NP's lower on these scales will be ní-coded. On scanning various texts, I found that the ní-NP's break down as follows:

Ní-NP	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
LOCATIVE	77	57.0
TIME	25	18.5
MANNER	1	0.7
REASON	9	6.7
OTHER	23	17.0
TOTAL	135	99.9

TABLE 3: Ní-Coded NP's

The category 'other' is a mixed bag comprising numerals, body parts, deities and so on. Here are a few examples:

- 20a. Bí ẹ ò bá dá mi lòhùn..... (WERE)
 if you NEG COND ? me NI-voice
 'If you do not respond to me....'
- b. Wọn ó han ara wọn lọya (XMAS)
 they FUT ? body their NI-ọya
 'They will keep on bothering each other'.
 (Oya is a female deity)
- c. Ayòkà jókòóní òun nìkan (WERE)
 sit Ní she be-one
 'Ayoka sat all by herself'.

None of the ní-NP's is human.

While it is possible to make up certain sentences that will seemingly defy the claim that less topicworthy NP's are the ones that get coded as ní-NP's, my data show that in natural discourse the topicworthiness principle is not violated. Thus adverbials like TIME, REASON, CONDITION.... will be coded as Obliques, marked by the bleached verb ní.

4.6: 'Exceptions'?

Finally, a few issues raised earlier will be attended to here. Precisely, I want to offer an explanation as to why qmq 'child', a human NP, (in 15a) is ní-coded. The sentence is repeated here as (21):

21. Wón pa Qaddafi lómq (=15a)
 they kill Ní-child
 'They killed Qaddafi's child'.

Also, I shall want to answer the question why Qaddafi is the object of the verb pa 'kill' when he was not the one killed. Part of the task of this section will be to explain the apparent counter-example in (22):

22. Wón sɔ ɔkò wón ní Jesse Owens
 they name vehicle their Ní
 'They named their vehicle 'Jesse Owens''.

Most of these questions relate to the topicworthiness construct sketched above; some participants are more topicworthy than others. And the higher a participant is on the topicworthiness scale the less likely it is to be ní-coded. The details are attended to below.

4.6.1: Topicworthiness Hierarchy.

As stated above, topicworthiness makes use of features like ANIMACY, HUMANNES, REFERENTIALITY, DEFINITENESS, and INDIVIDUATION (see Hopper and Thompson 1980 for a discussion of some of these features). Any participant in an event with more positive values of these features will be seen to be coded as Direct Object and less likely to be ní-coded. Thus 'Qaddafi', which is [+HUMAN +REFERENTIAL +INDIVIDUATED +DEFINITE], i.e. having many features of high topicworthiness, gets coded as the Object while omo 'child', which is less definite and less referential, is demoted. Also in (16), the [+HUMAN +DEFINITE +INDIVIDUATED +REFERENTIAL] mi 'I' wins out in which NP gets coded as Object. Similarly, 'Shàgàrí' and 'Awólówò,' being high on the topicworthiness scale are coded Objects over abstract value judgements and titular position.

Coming to the seeming counterexample (23), although Jesse Owens is ní-coded, it must be noted that this is not the [+HUMAN +REFERENTIAL] Olympic legend. There is simply a metaphorical extension here. In short, there is no

violation of the topicworthiness universal; no less topic-worthy participant gets coded as Object over more topic-worthy participants. A hierarchy which emerges here is that Human, Animate, Inanimate, Abstract NP's will be more accessible to being coded as objects in the order given. Stated another way, the categories as tabulated below show accessibility to demotion:

PERSONAL PRONOUN < HUMAN < ANIMATE < INANIMATE < ABSTRACT

Diagram 1: Accessibility to Demotion

4.6.2: Invariant Valence-increasing SVC's.

Finally, I shall survey ní-NP sentences which have no non-ní counterparts to see how they are accommodated in the participant promotion/demotion surveyed above.

Sentences like (24) have no variant forms:

- 24a. O yá mí ní owó
 3sg lend me NI money
 'He lent me some money'.
- b. Wón fún Asùnlé ní oyún
 they give NI pregnancy
 'Asùnlé was made pregnant'.

Why this is so may involve invoking a diachronic explanation, as posited in Lord (1973) and Givón (1979). However

the immediate concern here is that the bleached verb ní, the erstwhile Niger-Congo LOCATIVE verb, still behaves like a full verb meaning 'to have' (See Fillmore 1968, Welmers 1973 and Clark 1978 for the discussion of the relationship between LOCATIVES and POSSESSIVES). Notice that I had stated earlier that non-bleached verbs do not exchange positions without attendant semantic changes. In this case, where ní retains a vestige of its full verbal form with the meaning 'to have', no interchange is possible. It may be noticed, however, that ní here still retains some degree of semantic bleaching making it similar to other bleached verbs. Precisely, more topic-worthy participants come before participants coded with ní.

To ascertain that the explanation here is not ad hoc, I have checked through collected data as in Awobuluyi (1969) and Yusuf (1985) with the result that either the ní-NP can be promoted when the participant is topical, replacing ní with fi or that ní retains the HAVING meaning and is thus lexicalized like other serial verbs. In (25) there are two examples where the ní retains the 'to have' meaning while (26) shows a possible preverbal coding of the ní-NP:

- 25a. O gbà mí ní ìyànjú (Yusuf 1985)
 3sg take me NI trial
 'He encouraged me'.

b. Wọn gbé e ní iyàwó (Yusuf 1985)

they carry her NI wife

'She was married off (lit: they married her)'.

c. O kó mi ní agbára

3sg teach me NI strength

'She taught me to be strong'.

c'. Adánílóró fi agbára kó ni (PROVERB)

the evil doer INSTR strength teach one

'The slave driver only makes one to be strong'.

25a-b do not have variant forms, say, with fi-NP in the preverbal position. The HAVING meaning is however clear; in (a)---someone gave the speaker encouragement, i.e. he has encouragement, and in (b) someone has a wife (the impersonal 3rd PL is the only way 'passive' can be formed in Yorùbá). Example (25c) should have been parallel to (25a) in having no variant form. Note that the POSSESSION meaning is retained here. The prediction is not really violated as the variant form survives only in a proverb. In (26) where there is no strong retention of the HAVING meaning, variant forms are possible:

26a. Dàda di Ojó ní okùn (Awobuluyi 1969)

tie NI rope

'Dàda tied Ojó with a rope'

a'. Dàda fi okùn di Ojó

INSTR rope tie

'Dàda tied Ojó with a rope'.

b. Qṭí ñ fọ mi ní orí (Yusuf 1985)

liquor ASP break me NI head

'I have a hangover'.

b'. Qṭí ñ fi orí fọ mi

liquor ASP INSTR head break me

'I have a hangover'.

The point however is that the topicworthiness principle is not violated whenever there are invariant SVC's involving bleached verbs; the less topicworthy NP's are coded as peripheral participants, i.e as postverbal PP's. Where such peripheral participants become topical, they cannot be coded with ní; other bleached verbs (indicating their roles) are employed.

4.7: Summary.

In this chapter, I have attempted to investigate the unique behavior of the Valence-increasing SVC. The reason why the VP's can be interchanged was investigated with the constructs **participant promotion** and **participant demotion**. Universal language properties like **topicality** and **topic-worthiness** (the latter of which is a bundle of features) lend credence to the hypothesis. With topical participants, bleached verbs like fi, bá and ti are used as a participant-stressing device. NP's that play less central roles in the discourse are demoted, 'de-stressed' and marked with ní. Syntacticization may be in progress but at this stage, the variant forms show some semantic differences.

Footnotes to Chapter 4

1. The objects of fi 'INSTRUMENTAL' have zero coding as they are easily identifiable, having been introduced earlier through focusing. See Givon (1983) and Chen (1984) for the relative values and functions of participant tracking devices like zero anaphora and pronouns.

CHAPTER 5.

5.0. Summary.

This dissertation set out to explore the functions of the SVC in actual language use as opposed to composed sentences. The intention was to see what the construction actually does rather than using the sentences to illustrate any particular theory.

Most of the discussions in Chapter 2 centered on the earlier formal characterization of the SVC. At the end of the chapter, a critique of the earlier grammars posited the following:

(a). The theory that gave rise to earlier analyses of the SVC has changed radically such that recent versions of the theory (culminating in Chomsky 1981) would refute the claims concerning the transformational basis of the constructions. Schachter's analysis (1973) anticipated the development and Lightfoot's survey (1979) has confirmed Schachter's foresight.

(b). The earlier analyses of the SVC were too abstract in that they did not consider how the use of the construction was used. It was suggested that the discourse situations that call for the use of the construction type should be emphasized.

It is in the light of the more positive suggestion made in (b) above, that the rest of the work was carried out.

Chapters 3 and 4 concentrated on revealing the use of SVC. Various aspects of the construction were surveyed.

Holding to the hypothesis that the SVC codes aspects of a single overall event, Chapter 3 surveyed different strands of the construction. It was found that the SVC'S do not have monoverbal paraphrases in Yorùbá. The use of the SVC is not a discourse option and therefore no verbs in the construction will be redundant. In examples like

1. ó fún un ní ọjọ méje (FOLK)

3sg give him NI day seven

láti fi san owó náà padà

to INSTR pay money the back

'He gave him seven days to pay the money back'.

where san 'pay' is sufficient to convey the information that the money was paid, padà 'return' evokes the scene under which the money was owed; a debt from borrowing as opposed to a credit purchase. Thus the SVC, by supplying some background information, makes the message more precise. It was also found that not all the aspects of the message need be explicitly stated if they can be recovered by some other means.

Part of the functions of the SVC that surfaced was that due to the lack of inflectional morphology in Yorùbá, serial verbs are employed where other languages may use inflectional or derivational morphology. Concepts like

causation and comparison, which are either expressed lexically or with affixes, are expressed by verbs in Yorùbá. Also, concepts that may be expressed by adverbs in other languages require full verbs in Yorùbá. Implicitly, we can conclude that the repertoire for grammatical categories is limited in this language. All indications point to the fact that there are two grammatical categories: Noun and Verb. The others are derived from these two categories. Only a casual mention of this was made as a more rigorous pursuit would take us too far afield.

On the whole, Chapter 3 surveyed different aspects of the SVC and came to the conclusion that the construction codes aspects of an overall event. The syntax of the sentences supports the claim: the non-duplication of semantic roles, the single occurrence of NEGATION, TENSE-ASPECT, and the syntactic process 'focusing' behave like undisputed simple sentences.

Chapter 4 is almost exclusively concerned with the valence-increasing SVC. Noticing that the sub-type of SVC behaves differently from the other types in that it allows an alternative way of expressing the same semantic content, I have looked at the circumstances that call for one or the other option. It was found that as a result of the reanalysis of the bleached verbs into function words like prepositions (Lord 1973, 1982), the verbs effect the

function of emphasizing or de-emphasizing certain participants in the discourse. Thus, while full verbs may add required contextual information to the discourse, the bleached verbs function like contrastive stress in some other languages; some bleached verbs stress more central but otherwise non-core participants while others code less functionally referential or salient participants.

5.1. Unresolved Issues.

Among the unresolved problems unearthed by surveying various discourse samples is the use of the High Tone Syllable (HTS) as found in the Infinitival SVC. It appears that further work will have to be done to gain a better understanding of this item.

5.2. Conclusion.

My extensive examination of different discourse types which has revealed some functions of the SVC leads to the conclusion that the SVC's are not discourse options in Yorùbá. They do not seem to have semantic paraphrases with either monoverbal sentences or conjoined sentences. This being the case, seeing them in transformational terms---as has been done in the past and may still be being done (See Bamgbose 1982)---may be preventing valid insights. Where there appears to be some structural variation, as shown with bleached verbs, both variants are SVC's. Even here the variation shows a clear pragmatic

motivation---the speaker wants to express the relative topicality of participants. Thus the variation is dictated by a communicative need, not by arbitrary abstract rules. If the other subtypes of SVC were variants of some sort, there should be some discourse factor that would motivate the variation. So far, no one has posited any reason why compound or complex sentences would reduce to SVC's.

From my findings, I think it is safe to assume that the SVC's are unique and basic sentence types used to bridge the gap in the lack of composite verbs, derivational morphology and contrastive prosodies.

Also, although this work analyzes Yorùbá almost exclusively, I believe that the other serial verbal languages, at least in the Kwa family, use serial verbs for similar purposes. Thus this analysis can perhaps be usefully extended to other serial-verb languages too.

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APPENDIX: SAMPLE TEXTS.

A. Narrative.

i. Oral.

Ijàpá àti Elédè 'Tortoise and Pig'

Elédè àti ìjàpá tí ń sè ọ̀rẹ̀ bò ọ̀jó tí pé.
pig and tortoise COMPL CONT do friend come day ASP late

Gbà tó wá yá, elédè ó ní problem. Elédè wà nínú trouble
time REL-3sg DP ready pig 3sg have pig be inside

Kò lówó. And ìjàpá nìyíí, ó máa ń lówó nígbà kòòkan
not have-money tortoise be-this 3sg HABIT have-money at-time once

tó máa ń yá elédè, but ó wá wà the other way round
REL-3sg HABIT lend tortoise it DP be

tó jẹ pé ìjàpá lówó lówó. Elédè lówó.
REL-it be that tortoise have-money be:in-hand pig have-money

O wá yá (LAUGH).... Elédè yá ìjàpá lówó. O wá fún un
3sg DP lend pig lend tortoise NI-money 3sg DP give him

ní ìgbà kan pé ọ̀jó báyíí loun máa padà wá gbowó òun
NI time one that day like-this be-he FUT return come take-money his

O fún un ní nńkan bí ọ̀jó méje. igbà tó wá yá o,
3sg give him NI thing like day seven time REL-it DP ready O,

ọ̀jó ń bò díẹ díẹ, Ijàpá ó dè lówó lówó.
day ASP come little little tortoise not DP have-money in-hand

Kò nísẹ. Kò ní nńkan kan. Oun àti iyàwó rẹ Yáníbo
not have-work not have thing one he and wife his

ìgbà tó wá di ọ̀jó tí elédè ń bò wá gbowó lówó
time REL-it DP become day REL pig ASP come come take-money NI-hand

ìjàpá, ó wá ní ó ku nńkan bí wákàtí bí méjì àbí
tortoise it DP say it remain thing like hour like two or

ogbòn isẹ́jú. Yáníbo wá gbé Ijàpá síta. O wá fi ata
thirty mininute DP carry tortoise SI-outside 3sg DP put pepper

sáyà ẹ. O wá ń lẹ ọ. Bí elédè sè dé, ó wá bá
SI-chest him 3sg DP ASP grind it. as pig SE come 3sg DP meet

Yánníbo tó ń lọ ata. O ní "Yánníbo, ọkọ ẹ dà?"
 that-she ASP grind pepper 3sg say Y. husband your where

Yánníbo ò dáhùn. "Yánníbo ìwọ kọ ni mo ń bá wí ni?
 not answer you not be I ASP ACCOMP say be

Ọkọ ẹ dà?". Yánníbo ò dà'ùn. Ni ẹlẹdẹ bá bínú.
 husband your where not answer be pig DP got:mad

O bá gbé ọlọ Yánníbo ó bá jú nù. Pé kó lọ
 3sg DP carry stone 3sg DP throw it be:lost that SUBJUN-3sg go

bá'un wọkọ ẹ wá. Ijàpá ti sáré yá dìde.
 ACCOMP-him fetch husband her come tortoise ASP run be:quick get:up

O ti gba ẹyìnkùlé wọ'nú'lé. Wọn bá kẹjọ lọ
 3sg ASP take backyard enter-inside-house they DP take-case go

sí... Yánníbo bá ń ké pé ó gbọdọ lọ bá òun wá ọlọ òun
 to DP ASP cry that 3sg must go BENEf her look stone her

wá. Ijàpá nàà bá jáde wá pé tí kò bá lọ wọlọ 'yàwó
 come tortoise too DP come:out come that if not COND go find wife

òun wá, òun ò níí fún un lówó. Ni wọn bá kẹjọ yẹn
 his come he not FUT give him NI-money be they DP take-case that

lọ sílé ọba pé bí wọn ẹe máa dájọ niyẹn. Ọjọ tí
 go SI-house king that how they SE FUT judge-case be-that day REL

ẹlẹdẹ bá tó rí ọlọ Yánníbo ni kó tó wá gbowó 'ẹ
 pig DP reach find stone be that-3sg reach come take-money his

Atọjọ yẹn lẹlẹdẹ ẹe ń fímú wúlẹ kàà kiiri
 from-day that be-pig SE ASP INSTR-nose dig-ground go:about go:about

títí dèní eléní.
 till become-today ?

'Pig and Tortoise had been friends for a long time.

At a time, the pig had a problem. He was in difficulty.

He had no money. And as for Tortoise, he usually had money once in a while which he lent to Pig. It happened to be the other way round that tortoise had no money. Pig had money. He then lent.... The pig lent Tortoise money. He then gave him a certain time that he was going to have his money back. He gave him like seven days. As time went by, the day was gradually approaching; Tortoise had no money. He had no job. He had nothing. He and his wife Yánníbo. When the pig was coming to take his money, it remained about two hours or maybe thirty minutes. Yánníbo took Ijàpá outside. She put pepper on his

chest. She started to grind it. As Pig came, he met Yáníbo grinding pepper. He said "Yáníbo, where is your husband?". Yáníbo did not respond. "Yáníbo, isn't it you that I am talking to? Where is your husband?". Yáníbo did not respond. Then Pig got mad. He then took Yáníbo's grinding stone and threw it out. That she should go fetch her husband for him. Tortoise quickly got up. He entered the house via the back door. They then took the case to.... Yáníbo then started to cry that he (Pig) must go find her grinding stone for her. The tortoise too then came out that if he did not fetch his wife's grinding stone, he would not pay him. They then took the matter to the king's palace that that was how the case would be judged. The day the Pig found Yáníbo's grinding stone, he should come back for his money. It's from that day that the Pig has been digging all over with his nose.

Yínká Olárewájú.

ii. Written Narrative.

Ogbójú Ọdẹ Nínú Igbó Irúnmalẹ

O pẹ púpọ kí N tó dé ibẹ, ilẹ ti ń sù lẹ.
3sg late plenty before I reach arrive there ground COMPL CONT dark go

Agbára káká ni èèyàn fi ń rí ilà ọwọ pẹlú.
strength IDEO be person INSTR ASP see mark hand too

O rẹ mí díẹ lálẹ ọjọ tí mo dé ọhún. N kò sì lẹ tanná
it tire me small at-night day REL I arrive there I not and can light

ọdẹ ní ọòru ọjọ náà. Mo dá iná sínú igò igi kan báyii
hunter at night day the I make fire inside branch tree one like-this

mo sì mú iṣu nínú àpò ọdẹ mi, mo sun ún jẹ. Lẹhin èyíí mo
I and take yam inside bag hunter my I roast it eat after this I

kó àwọn ewé igi tí ó rẹ sílẹ jọ, mo sì
gather they leave tree REL 3sg fall SI-ground be:together I and

fi wọn ẹ ibùsùn. Mo fi àpò ọdẹ mi ẹ iròrí; Mo sì ki
INSTR they do bed I INSTR bag hunter my do pillow I and load

ibon mi dáadáa, mo gbé e sí igbèrí mi. Lẹhin tí mo ẹ nńkan
gun my well I carry it be:at head:side me after REL I do thing

wònyíí tán, mo fi ẹhin lé ilẹ, mo sùn lẹ. Kò pẹ púpọ
these finish I INSTR back be:on ground I slept go. not long plenty

tí mo sùn nígbà tí mo jí, àsé igbe àwọn iwin ló ji mi
REL I sleep time REL I wake indeed noise they gnome be-it wake me

Wọn ń ta ọjà lóru: nítorí bí ó tilẹ jẹ pé tọsán
they ASP sell market at-night because if it in:fact be that and-day

tòru ni wọn fi máa ń jáde nínú igbó yíí, síbèsíbẹ
and-night be they INSTR HABIT come:out inside forest this yet

ooru ni wọn máa ń lo fún iṣe, síṣe: àkókò náà sì ni wọn máa ń
night be they HABIT use for work doing period the and be they HABIT

kó ẹjọ wá sí ọdọ ọba wọn orúkọ ẹni tí ń jẹ Olori-igbó
take dispute come SI place king they name person REL ASP bear

Aánú ẹ mi láti sọ fún ọ pé igi tí mo dáná sí idi
pity do me to say BENEf you that tree REL I make-fire be:at bottom

rẹ ni, inú rẹ ni ọba wọn ń gbé. Títí mo fi sùn nítèmi
it be inside it be king their ASP live till I FI sleep as:for:me

N kò mọ nńkankan, àfi ìgbà tí mo ta jí tí mo ń gbọ tí
I not know thing-one except time REL I start wake REL I ASP hear REL

àwọn iwin bèrè sí íké igbe ọjà tí wọn ń tà ni ẹrù bà
they gnome start to HTS-cry noise market REL they ASP sell be fear ?

mí
me

tí mo gbé ìbọn mi tí mo so ó kọ èjìká tí mo fi àpò
that I carry gun my that I sling it hang shoulder that I INSTR bag

ọdẹ mi kọ ọrùn, tí mo rọra fà mọ itàkùn tí ó
hunter my hang neck that I carefully hang stick:to creeper REL it

di mọ igi tí mo dana sí idi rẹ yí, tí mo
wind stick:to tree REL I make-fire be:at bottom it this. that I

gun orí rẹ lẹ, láimọ pé orí ọba àwọn iwin ni mo ti ń
climb head it go not:knowing that head king they gnome be I be ASP

şeré. O wá jẹ pé mo túbò dá ọràn mọ ọràn
play it DP be that I in:addition cause trouble add:to trouble

Mo dúró ní ìdí kò tó, mo gun orí ẹni ẹlẹni
I stand at bottom not enough I climb head (innocent).

'It took a while before I got there, it was dark. Hardly could one see the lines of one's palm too. I was a little tired the night I got there. I could not hunt by my hunter's lamp this day. I made fire in the bough of a tree and I took yams from my hunting bag. I roasted and ate it. After this, I gathered fallen leaves together, I used them for my bed. I used my hunting bag as pillow. I then loaded my gun well. I put it at the headside of my bed. After doing all these things, I laid me down and slept. Before I had slept for some time, I suddenly woke up. Indeed it was the noise of the gnomes that woke me. They were at the night market, because, even if they come out both day and night from this forest, it is night time that they devote for working. It is that time too that they bring their disputes to their king whose name is Olori-igbó (Head of the forest). I regret to tell you that the tree under which I made fire, it is inside it that their king lives. Until I slept, I knew nothing, not until I woke up and heard the gnomes making a noise, advertising their wares. I was frightened. I took my gun. I hung on a creeper. I slung on my hunting bag, and swung by the creeper that hung on the tree which I made fire under. I climbed on to the top of the tree without knowing that it was on top of their king that I was playing. It boiled down

to the fact that I had added trouble onto trouble. Staying at the base was not enough, I had climbed on top of an innocent person.

B. Conversation (Christmas Dinner, 1982)

(The participants in this extract are Dr. Kola Oladipupo (O), Ore Yusuf (R), Segun Oyekunle (S), Funmi Oyekunle (F) and Charles Somade (C))

O: Gbogbo ariwo tá wá ñ pa, kò wá níí bá a báun
all noise REL-we DP ASP make not DP FUT ? like-that

'All the noise that we are making, won't it affect it this way?'

R: Ariwo tá ñ pa'un gan lèmi ñ fẹ.
noise REL-we ASP make-that exactly be-I ASP want

'It's the noise that we are making that I want'.

O: Lórí ẹ?
NI-head it

'On it?'

R: Ki ẹe tiyín. Tiyín nìyíí (talking about some recording)
not be yours yours be-this

'It's not yours. This is yours'.

S: Internal ni. Jẹ ká gbọ ẹ.
be let that-we hear

'It's internal (recording). Let's hear it'.

R: Emi ñ rí nńkan ọtọ ni.
I ASP see thing different be

Mo ñ ẹe nńkan mí'ín ni
I ASP do thing another be

'I am seeing something different. I am doing something else'.

S: Kí lo ñ fẹ ẹ.....? Wà á sọ pé o fẹ ẹ record
what be-you ASP want you FUT say that you want HTS

ohun mi tálẹ̀ ni
voice my before EMPH

'What do you want? You have to say you wanted to record me before'.

O: Ọrọ̀ tí mo tiẹ̀ sọ yẹn, ó mean pé ó effective
word REL I in:fact say that it that it

Nàkan témi ń sọ ni pé àbí ariwo yí kò fẹ́ ní disturb díẹ̀
thing REL-I ASP say be that or noise this not ? FUT little

'What I said, it means it is effective. What I am saying is that will the noise that we are making not affect it?'.

F: Uncle Ọrẹ̀ fẹ́ kí N sue wọn ni....Láì sanwó fún mi
want that I them be without pay BENEf me

'Uncle Ore wants me to sue him... Without paying me...'.

R: Nígbo ó bá já sówó ẹyin náà ó rí i
time it COND ? SI-money you too FUT see it

'When it brings in big bucks, you'll all see'.

S: That's not in the spirit of business

F: Ngbà tó bá ti record, ọgá tà, ọgá ọ tà,
time REL-3sg COND COMPL master sell master not sell

owó alááàrù á pé
money porter FUT complete

'After he's recorded, gain or loss, the porter must have his fare'.

S: Sé Fúnké ló gbé scotch whisky àti beer pọ̀?
QUES be-3sg carry and be:together

'Is it Fúnké, who put Scotch Whisky and beer together'.

C: Ẹ tiẹ̀ tí mọ ẹni..... Ọkọ 'ẹ ló gbé e wá
you in:fact ASP know person husband her be-3sg carry it come

lọtẹ̀ 'i
NI-time this

'You've in fact known the person..... Her husband is the one who brought it this time'.

R: In'ín, ẹ máa gbọ. Jẹjẹ mi ni mo jókódó
(EXCLAMATION) you continue hear IDEO my be I sit

kí í jẹbi ẹjọ. Mo kó beer wá. Mo gbé whisky wá.
not HABIT guilty case I gather come I bring come.

Mo kan kó o pọ ni. Emi ọ sọrọ.
I just gather it be:together EMPH I not say-word

Mo dẹ tún wá cup lẹ. N ni Charlie wá sọ pé
I DP again find go it be DP say that

Madam ni kó wá á serve ọun. Bí ó bá di ti
be that-3sg come HTS him if it COND become GEN

pé madam ni kó serve rẹ, mo sùgbọ́n tí tí dígba
that be that-3sg him I but till become-time

náà, mo kó wọ́n pọ ni.
the I gather then be:together EMPH.

'Oh yeah! Listen. The one who sits quietly is never guilty. I brought beer. I brought whisky. I just put them together. I did not say anything. I then went to look for a cup. Then Charlie said it is madam who should serve him. If it is a case of Madam serving you, I....but untill that time, I just put them together....'

O: O ọ dẹ mọ ohun tí ẹnì kòkan ní mu
you not DP know thing REL person each ASP drink

'And you don't know what anyone drinks'.

F: Nígba tí bià wà kí ni Unclel Charlie challenge wọ́n fún
time REL beer exist what be them for

pé kí Madam wá serve wọ́n?
that SUBJUNC come them

'When there is beer, what is Uncle Charlie challenging him for that it is Madam who should serve him'.

C: Nígba tó jẹ pé Madam ló ní gbé Scotch wá.
time REL-it be that be-3sg ASP carry come

tó máa gbé bià wá. Tá á pa á pọ
REL-he FUT carry beer come that-she FUT ? it be:together

'When it is Madam who brings Scotch, brings beer and puts them together!'

S: Sé o ti n mu méjèèjì papò?
QUES you COMPL CONT drink the:two be:together

'Have you been drinking both together?'

C: Mi ò n mu ún ún!
I not ASP drink it EMPH

'No, I don't drink it (that way)!'

F: Nígbà tẹ ẹ ẹ fẹ ẹ ẹ wọn n'wàhá là ni
time REL you SE want HTS do them NI-worry be

wọn ẹ sọ pé kí wọn gbé e wá.
they SE say that SUBJUN they carry it come

'It's because you were worrying him that she put them together'.

R: Látètè kọ ẹ ni ọrọ yíí. O kó bíà fún Charlie
NI-NOM-quick first do be matter this 3sg gather beer give C

nígbà tí Charlie dé. Mo wá sọ pé Whisky tó wà
at-time REL arrive I DP say that REL-it exist

ńlẹ níjọsí, Kò mà sẹni tí ó mu ún.
at-house NI-other:day not EMPH exist-person REL 3sg drink it

Olú tí i máa a mu ún mà ti lọ. O wá sọ pé kí
REL 3sg HABIT drink it EMPH ASP go. He come say that SUBJUN

ó wá gbé whisky yẹn ti bíà. O fẹ ẹ kó bíà.
3sg come carry that be:with beer 3sg want HTS gather beer

O ní kó fi bíà náà 'lẹ. Bí Charlie bá ti
3sg say SUBJUN-3sg leave beer too on:ground as COND ASP

wá dé, yóò wá kó méjèèjì ti i. Bí ó ti rìn
DP arrive FUT DP gather both be:with him as it ASP walk

niyẹn. O ti wá sọ ó dība
be-that 3sg ASP DP make it become-ritual.

'This matter has a long story. She gave Charlie beer when he arrived. I then said that the beer that was at home the other time nobody has taken it. Olú who normally takes it has gone. He

then said that she should bring the whisky alongside the beer. She wanted to take the beer back, but he said she should leave them. Any time Charlie came, she would just give him both drinks. That is the history of the matter. It's become a ritual now.

C. Play.

Wọn Rò pé Wèrè ni.

(BR = Bàbá Rámá, OJ = Ojó, AR = Arẹmú and AS = Aṣàbí)

BR: Kèé kèé kèé! Orí tìrẹ ni, tẹmì kọ! Opònú
(LAUGHTER) head yours be, mine not idiot

'You have the bad luck, not me. Idiot!'

OJ: Ẹnì kan l'ó dé nísinyí, ló....ló....
person one be-3sg come now be-he....be-he

'Someone has just come now, and he.... and he'

GB: F'ọkàn balẹ! L'ó ẹe kìnì?
(be calm) be-he do what

'Be calm. He did what?'

OJ: O wá sọ fún wa nílẹ pé, mọtò yín méjì,
3sg come say BENEf us at-home that truck your two

ọkàn ń t'Ibàdàn bọ, ọkàn ń t'Ilọrin bọ
one ASP be:from-Ibàdàn come one ASP be:from-Ilọrin come

ni wọn bá f'orí gb'ára wọn l'Odò Ọnà.
be they DP INSTR-head hit-body their at-Odò Ọnà

Mọtò méjèjì ló ti rún wómúwómú! Oun n'Iyá Rámá ní
vehicle the:two be-it ASP spoil IDEO it be-Iyá Rámá say

kí N pè yín wá fún
that I call you come for

'He came to tell us at home that two cars of yours, one was coming from Ibàdàn, one was coming from Ilọrin, they then colided at Odò Ọnà. The two vehicles are ruined completely! That is what Rámá's mother asked me to come and call you for'.

AR: Ẹe kò sẹyàn nínú wọn? Hànín?
QUES not be-person inside them What?

\$'enikan 'ò fara pa?
QUES--person-one NEG INSTR-body hurt

'Was there anybody in them? What?
'Was anybody hurt?'

OJ: Awon tí wọn kú níbẹ̀ ju ogójì lọ
they REL they die be:at-there surpass forty go

'Those who died there were more than forty'.

AS: Háyà!

BR: Awon mọtò náà bàjẹ?
they vehicle the spoil

'And the vehicles are ruined?'

OJ: Pátápátá. èèyàn kò lè rí igi-ṣáná ẹyọ kan mú
IDEO person NEG can see stick-match single one take

lára mọtò méjèèjì!. Abẹ ẹ gbó'hun tí mo wi ni?
at-body vehicle the:two or-you NEG hear-thing REL I say EMPH

A l'ó rún wómúwómú
we say-it ruin IDEO

'Completely. One cannot fashion a match stick from the two vehicles. Or you did not hear what I said?. I say it's completely ruined.

BR: Tèmi sì ni méjèjì?
mine and be both

'And both are mine?'

OJ: Ẹran baba ló jẹkọ baba
animal father be-it eat-eko father

'It's father's goat that ate father's meal

AR: Kò burú, ẹ jẹ ká lọ síbẹ, ká lọ wò ó
NEG bad you let that-we go SI-there that-we go see it

'O.k. let's go there to see it'.