SERIALISING LANGUAGES:
SATELLITE-FRAMED, VERB-FRAMED OR NEITHER

Felix K. Ameka and James Essegbey

Abstract

The diversity in the coding of the core schema of motion, i.e., Path, has led to a traditional typology of languages into verb-framed and satellite-framed languages. In the former Path is encoded in verbs and in the latter it is encoded in non-verb elements that function as sisters to co-event expressing verbs such as manner verbs. Verb serializing languages pose a challenge to this typology as they express Path as well as the Co-event of manner in finite verbs that together function as a single predicate in translational motion clause. We argue that these languages do not fit in the typology and constitute a type of their own. We draw on data from Akan and Frog story narrations in Ewe, a Kwa language, and Sranan, a Caribbean Creole with Gbe substrate, to show that in terms of discourse properties verb serializing languages behave like Verb-framed with respect to some properties and like Satellite-framed languages in terms of others. This study fed into the revision of the typology and such languages are now said to be equipollently-framed languages.

Keywords: serial verb constructions, translational motion, verb-framed, satellite-framed, equipollently-framed.

Preamble

The body of this article is a write-up of a paper we gave at the 32nd Annual Conference on African Linguistics (ACAL 32) held at the University of California, Berkeley in April 2001. It was accepted for publication in the proceedings of that conference, but the proceedings never saw the light of day. A plan to get the proceedings published in another form was aborted a couple of years ago. In the mean time the unpublished manuscript continues to be sought for and cited (see several contributions in Mietzner and Treis 2010) and the fundamental question it raised continues to be researched and is very relevant today. Because of its historical importance and influential nature, we wish to have it published in its original form. However we wish to contextualise it for the reader.

  Talmy's (1985, 2000, 2007) typology of languages with respect to how they characteristically express the core component of a translational motion event (i.e., the path) into satellite-framed and verb-framed languages continues to be very dominant in the investigation of motion descriptions. From the beginning, questions were raised as to how verb serialising languages in which such motion events were expressed in

clauses with more than one verb with none of the verbs being main or dependent fit into the typology (see Schaefer 1986 on Emai). Talmy himself classifies serialising languages, e.g. Chinese, as satellite-framing (Talmy 2000). However Slobin and Hoiting (1994) suggest that they be called serial verb framing languages. When Talmy (2000) appeared and did not offer any place to serialising languages while, in the mean time, the work of Dan Slobin and others have uncovered various correlates of the satellite-framing and verb-framing types of languages in terms of discourse preferences (see below), we decided to test these properties against the data we had from three verb serialising languages: Ewe, Akan and Sranan. Our conclusion is summed up in the title of the paper. We believe that they are a type unto themselves.

As it happens, at that time Zatlev and Yangklang (2004) were also asking the same question with respect to Thai, another verb serialising language of Southeast Asia. They also concluded that serialising languages constituted a third type. These studies and other studies fed into the revision that Dan Slobin (2004, see also 2006) proposed. He proposed three types:

Satellite-framed languages are those in which the preferred means of expressing Path (the core component of a motion event) is a nonverbal element associated with a verb. The typical construction type is MANNER VERB + PATH SATELLITE: Germanic, Slavic, and Finno-Ugric languages are of this type.

In *Verb-framed languages*, the preferred means of expressing Path is a verb, with Manner expressed in a subordinate constituent. The typical construction type is PATH VERB + SUBORDINATE MANNER VERB: Romance, Semitic, Turkic, Basque, Japanese, and Korean languages belong to this type.

Equipollently-framed languages are those in which Path and Manner are expressed by equivalent grammatical forms. The typical construction types, depending on language, are:
MANNER VERB + PATH VERB. This is the construction type found in serial-verb languages found in Niger-Congo, Hmong-Mien, Sino-Tibetan, Tai-Kadai, Mon-Khmer, and Austronesian languages.
[MANNER + PATH] VERB: bipartite verb languages. These are found among Algonquian, Athabaskan, Hokan, Klamath-Takelman languages.
MANNER PREVERB + PATH PREVERB + VERB: These occur in Jaminjungan and other languages of Australia with small closed classes of inflecting verbs.

Slobin's proposal of the equipollently-framed type has been challenged by Talmy (2009) who insists that constructions used in the serialising languages (exemplified mainly with Chinese) for the translational motion events are satellite-framing. Croft et al. (2010), who also propose a revision of Talmy's typology, suggest that the framing

type should not be used to characterise whole languages and deconstruct the various framing types into construction types.

More studies of verb serialising languages are needed: some studies, e.g., Lambert-Bretierre (2009), conclude for Fon, a sister dialect of Ewe, that it is satellite-framing. She even suggests that serialising languages should be typologised as such. On the other hand, Van Putten (2009, in press) examining narrative discourse on motion in Avatime, a Ghana-Togo Mountain language of the Kwa family, concludes that Avatime is equipollently-framed like other serialising languages but behaves more like verb-framed languages when compared to other serialising languages investigated for motion lexicalisation, like Thai and Chinese, as well as Kwa languages, like Ewe and Fon. There is thus diversity among verb serialising language types that are equipollently-framed.

One thing we should point out is that the features against which we tested our data as properties of one or the other type have not been questioned, showing that our conclusion is still valid. The role of verb serialisation in the expression of spatial notions is further explored in Ameka & Essegbey (2006) for Ewe.

1 Introduction

Talmy (1985, 2000) distinguishes two types of languages in the lexicalisation of motion. The one lexicalises the core schema of motion, i.e., Path, in a satellite while the other lexicalises it in the verb. Talmy refers to the former type of language as a satellite-framed language (S-language) and the latter as a verb-framed language (V-language). Germanic languages belong to the group of S-languages while Romance languages belong to the V-language type. An example of the expression of the core schema with a satellite is represented below:

1. **John went out of the house**

'Out', which represents the Path (with capital P) taken by the moving entity (referred to by Talmy as Figure), is the core element of the motion event. As the Spanish equivalent in (2) illustrates, this element of meaning is expressed by the verb in V-languages:

2. **Juan sali-ó   de   la   casa**[1]
   Juan exit-3SG:PST from DEF house
   'Juan exited from the house.'

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[1] The following abbreviations are used in glossing: 3 = third person, ALL = allative, ALTRI = altrilocal, DEF = definite, HAB = habitual, IMP = imperfective, LOC = locative, NEG = negative, NPRES = non-present, PL = plural, POT = potential, PREP = preposition, PRES = present, POT = potential, PROG = progressive, PST = past, PRF = perfective, SG = singular, SPECI = specific, TP = terminal particle, VENIT = venitive,

Although English also has 'exit', the equivalent of Spanish **salió**, this is not the characteristic way in which the language expresses moving out of a location, a point which is important in Talmy's typology.

Talmy observes that languages can express other events in addition to the core schema, thereby giving rise to complex motion events. He refers to this additional event as the co-event. In the domain of motion, this co-event is either cause (i.e. cause an entity to move) or manner (i.e. move in a certain manner). The representation below captures this:
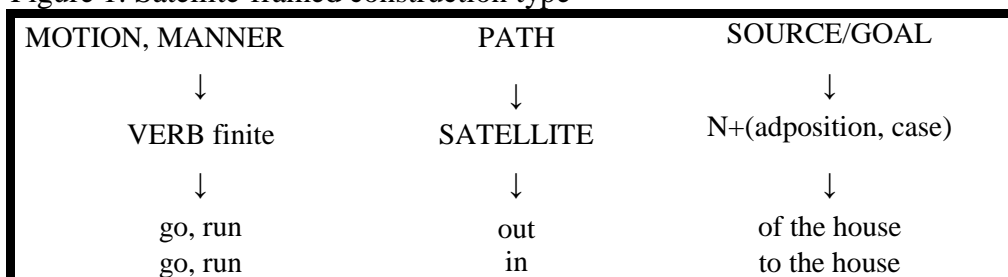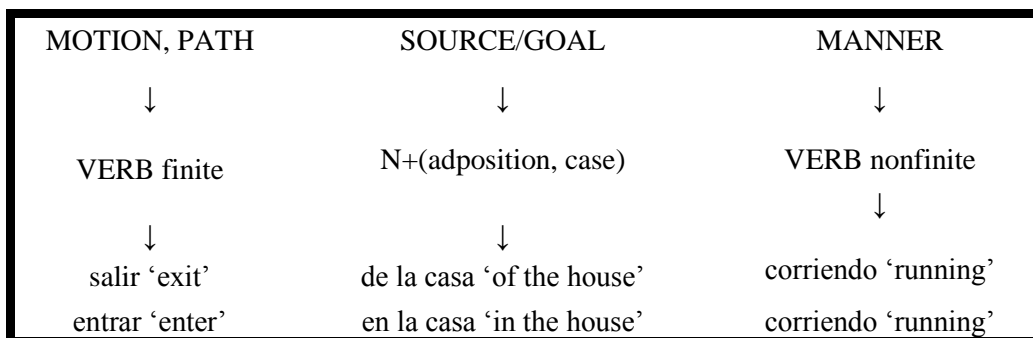
Figure 1: Satellite-framed construction type

MOTION, MANNER	PATH	SOURCE/GOAL
↓	↓	↓
VERB finite	SATELLITE	N+(adposition, case)
↓	↓	↓
go, run	out	of the house
go, run	in	to the house

Figure 2: Verb-framed construction type (Slobin 2000: 109)[2]

MOTION, PATH	SOURCE/GOAL	MANNER
↓	↓	↓
VERB finite	N+(adposition, case)	VERB nonfinite
		↓
↓	↓	
salir 'exit'	de la casa 'of the house'	corriendo 'running'
entrar 'enter'	en la casa 'in the house'	corriendo 'running'

The present paper investigates the expression of complex translational motion events in serialising languages in the light of Talmy's typology. We propose that these languages do not appear to fit properly in the typology. The main languages that we discuss in the paper are Ewe and Akan which are Kwa languages spoken in West Africa, and Sranan, a Creole language of Suriname with Gbe substrate. Schaefer and Gaines (1997) propose that all African languages are V-languages. We begin by looking at the basis for their proposal.

2. African Languages and the Typology: a proposal

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[2] An anonymous reviewer asks why we have replaced Talmy's conflation term "Ground" with Source/Goal in figures 1 and 2. The diagrams represented here are taken from Slobin.

In this section, we undertake a brief overview of the discussion of the Niger-Kordofanian[3] phylum of African languages by Schaefer and Gaines (1997). They observe that the languages in this phylum express manner of directional motion with a variety of syntactic strategies, namely, coordination, clause-level deranking and serialization. We provide some illustrations of the three strategies as discussed in Schaefer and Gaines (1997).

The coordination strategy is found in Supyire, a Senufo language spoken in Mali. For example:

3. **u   a   nya   a   ba-nyi   jyiile**   (Supyire)
    3SG   PRF   swim   and   river-the cross
    'S/he swam across the river.'   Schaefer and Gaines (1997:ex. 27a)

This sentence consists of two clauses, with the one expressing the manner of motion and the other expressing directional motion, comparable to the two sentences, 'John swam' and 'John went across the river', respectively. The Supyire structure has the restriction that the clause containing the manner of motion always has to precede the one containing directional motion.

The next type of strategy, that involving a clause-level deranking, is instantiated by Tswana, a Bantu language spoken in Botswana.

4. **mò-símàné ó-tsw-à   mó-tlù-ng   á-tàbóg-à**   (Tswana)
    1-boy   he-exit-IMP   inside-house-LOC he-run-IMP
    'The boy is running out of the house.'
         (Schaefer and Gaines 1997:ex.33)

While this sentence also consists of two clauses with two verbs, the one containing the manner of motion verb is deranked by virtue of taking a different pronominal subject prefix **á-,** as opposed to that of the main clause verb which takes the prefix **ó-** (Schaefer and Gaines 1997: 212). This type of construction therefore differs from the Supyire type in that it is the verb that expresses directional motion (Talmy's core schema) that occurs in the main clause. The co-event, on the other hand, occurs in a subordinate clause.

Serialising languages employ verbs of equal rank in a series without any conjunction to express both manner and directional motion. The example below is from Emai, an Edoid language spoken in Nigeria:

5. **óli   ómohe la   ó   vbi   iwe**   (Emai)

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[3]We use the term Niger-Kordofanian for the family that is now generally referred to as Niger-Congo (cf. Bendor-Samuel 1989, Williamson and Blench 2000) in order to stick to the term used by Schaefer and Gaines (1997).

   the man run enter LOC house
   'The man ran into the house.'   (Schaefer and Gaines, ex. 30a)

In this construction, the verbs which express manner of motion and directional motion all occur in the same clause, without any surface indication of syntactic dependency.

 Seen from a binary opposition of lexicalising the core-schema in the verb or in a satellite (a non-verbal element invariably being a satellite), the strategies reviewed above appear to be the same since they all involve the use of the verb in the expression of directional motion. Considering the fact that the other phyla of African languages also express directional motion with the verb, Schaefer and Gaines (1997: 216) rightly conclude that "with respect to basic directional motion, our primary conclusion is that African languages tend to be verb-framing rather than satellite-framing". It should be noted from the strategies reviewed above, however, that within the Niger-Kordofonian phylum alone, the differences in the overall strategies differ enormously. We shall present further evidence to show that it is not enough to classify serialising languages as V-languages despite the fact that they express directional motion with the verb. In the next section, we discuss what we consider to be serial verb constructions as used in the expression of complex motion and distinguish them from constructions which contain verbids.

3. Multi-verbs in the Expression of Complex Translational Motion

In this section we discuss the verbal properties of the constituents which are used to express translational motion in Ewe and Akan. We show that these constituents are different from what has been referred to as verbids.[4] In order to establish the verb status of verbal constituents in SVCs, one needs to consider Tense-Mood-Aspect (TMA) and negation affixes with which they occur (Bamgboṣe 1982) as well as, for Akan, the transitivity status of the verb. We begin by looking at how some of these affixes help distinguish between verbs and verbids in Ewe.

 In Ewe, it is not possible to determine the verb properties of a constituent if the sentence in which it occurs is past. This is because verbs in such sentences are neither marked segmentally nor suprasegmentally for tense. Consider the sentences below:

6a. **ɖevi-a** **tá**   **yi** **xɔ-a**   **me**
  child-DEF crawl go room-DEF containing.region
  'The child crawled into the room.'

6b. **ɖevi-a** **tá**   **le** **xɔ-a**   **me**

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[4] 'Verbid' refers to verb-like elements which behave more like prepositions because they lack the inflectional possibilities of verbs from which they often derive (see Ansre 1966, who refers to them as "unconjugated morphemes").

    child-DEF crawl LOC   room-DEF containing.region
    'The child crawled in the room.'

The constituents **tá** 'crawl', **yi** 'go' and **le** 'be located' can all occur as verbs in other constructions in Ewe. One might therefore want to treat the two sentences above as SVCs. There is evidence, however, that **le** 'be located' in (6b) is not functioning as a verb. This is shown by the fact that while the other two can occur with the habitual morpheme, **le**[5] cannot, as the sentences below illustrate:

7a.   **ɖeví-á**   **tá-ná**   **yi-na**   **xɔ-a**   **me**
        child-DEF crawl-HAB   go-HAB room-DEF containing.region
        'The child crawls into the room.'

7b.   **ɖeví-á**   **tá-ná**   **le**   **xɔ-a**   **me**
        child-DEF crawl-HAB LOC room-DEF   containing.region
        'The child crawls in the room.'

  If we assume that the habitual needs to be marked on all true verbs in a clause, the inability of **le** to occur with **-na** will be explained by the fact that it is not functioning as a verb. This will mean that (7b), unlike (7a), is not an SVC. Note that it is only (7a) that expresses a complex directional motion.

  It should be pointed out here that the potential affix **-a** (future for some) is also inconclusive in this regard. This is because while the first verb obligatorily occurs with the affix, the second verb is not required to, as the examples below illustrate:

8a.   **ɖeví-á**   **a-tá**   **(a)-yi**   **xɔ-a**   **me**
        child-DEF POT-crawl (POT)-go room-DEF containing.region
        'The child may crawl into the room.'

8b.   **ɖevi-a**   **a-tá**   **(*a-)le**   **xɔ-a**   **me**
        child-DEF POT-crawl (POT)-LOC room-DEF containing.region
        'The child may crawl in the room.'

Note that unlike **le** 'LOC', **yi** 'go' can optionally occur with the potential morpheme. The fact that it does not need to occur with it is, therefore, no indication that it is less of a verb. To sum up the discussion so far, TMA affixes with which verbs occur in Ewe and negation enable us to determine whether one is dealing with a series of verbs in an SVC or a construction containing a verb and a verbid. While the potential and aorist expression might lead one to think that one of the constituents in an SVC is more of a verb than the other, the habitual establishes without doubt that the constituents involved in the expression of complex translational motion are all verbs.

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[5] **Le** has a suppletive form **nɔ** which occurs in non-present and the habitual context but not in (6b).

In Akan, the situation is slightly complicated by the fact that the transitivity of V1 in an SVC determines whether it is marked with the past tense affix or not. Consider the sentences below:

9a. **akwadaa no wea kɔ-ɔ dan no mu**
  child DEF crawl go-PST room DEF containing.region
  'The child crawled into the room.'

9b. **akwadaa no tu-u mirika kɔ-ɔ dan no mu**
  child DEF move-PST course go-PST room DEF containing.region
  'The child ran into the room.'

In (9a), **wea** 'crawl' does not have a complement. It does not, therefore, occur with the past tense affix. This does not mean that V1 in Akan SVCs is a verbid, since **tu** 'move' which takes a complement in (9b) does occur with the past tense morpheme. Note further that in the habitual, all verbs are marked with the high tone (i.e. the habitual morpheme), be they transitive or otherwise.

10a. **akwadaa no weá kɔ́ dan no mu**
  child DEF crawl:HAB go-HAB room DEF containing.region
  'The child crawls into the room'

10b. **akwadaa no tú mirika kɔ́ dan no mu**
  child DEF move-HAB course go-HAB room DEF containing.region
  'The child runs into the room.'

It should also be noted that in expressing the future in Akan, it is V1 that takes the future affix **bɛ-** while V2 takes the potential affix (traditionally referred to as the consecutive). This, like the habitual, is irrespective of whether the verb is transitive or otherwise, as we illustrate below:

11a. **akwadaa no bɛ-weá a-kɔ dan no mu**
  child DEF FUT-crawl POT-go room DEF containing.region
  'The child will crawl into the room.'

11b. **akwadaa no bɛ-tú mirika a-kɔ dan no mu**
  child DEF FUT-move course POT-go room DEF containing.region
  'The child will run into the room.'

What this discussion suggests is that when TMA morphemes with which the verbs in Akan can occur are taken into consideration, there is no principled reason for saying that in the expression of complex translational motion, either the first or second verb is a verbid. Instead, they all possess inflectional capabilities and are, therefore, full verbs. We can therefore conclude that the construction which is used to

express this type of motion is an SVC. The construction can be represented as in the figure below (Sranan has been added for completeness):

Figure 3: Verb serializing framed languages construction[6]

	MANNER	MOTION, PATH	SOURCE/GOAL
	↓	↓	↓
	VERB -finite	VERB-finite	N + (Adposition)
Ewe	**tá**	**yi**	**(ɖé)** **xɔ** **me**
Akan	**wea**	**kɔ**	**dan** **mu**
Sranan	**kroipi**	**go** **na**	**oso** **ini**
	crawl	go PREP (ALL)	room inside
	'crawl into a room'		

Before concluding this section, we will just point out that the SVC is not limited to the expression of agentive motion; it is also used when the entity engaged in the motion event is not volitional. This is shown by the sentences below:

12a. **kpé-á   mli yi do-a   me**   (Ewe)
    stone-DEF roll go hole-DEF containing.region
    'The stone rolled into the hole.'

12b. **bo-ɔ   no   muni kɔ-ɔ   tokuro no   mu**   (Akan)
    stone DEF   roll go-PST hole   DEF containing.region
    'The stone rolled into the hole.'

The only reason why **muni** 'roll' is not marked with the past tense in Akan is, as we have already shown, because it is intransitive. Having shown that the constituents are verbs, we now go on to show that there is no evidence of dependency of the one upon the other.

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[6] Sranan requires the general-meaning preposition **na** to express the Ground information (referred to as Source/Goal) while Ewe can optionally take the allative preposition **ɖe**. Since the discussion here is mainly about the expression of the core component of motion, we shall not dwell on these elements.

4. Evidence that the Verbs have Equal Rank

An important point in Talmy's two-way typology is whether the constituent which expresses the core-schema is the verb root or not. In the serial constructions that we have discussed so far, both Manner and Path verbs occur in a construction where they can both be considered to be roots. There is no evidence, semantically or syntactically, to suggest that one is dependent on the other. In this section, we show with evidence from Ewe that negation can have scope over either or both verbs.

Negation in Ewe is expressed by the discontinuous morphemes **mé...o**. **Mé** occurs immediately before the verb while **o** occurs at the end of the sentence. In SVCs, even though **mé** is placed before V1, it can have scope over either V1 or V2, or both. This is illustrated below:

13a. **ɖeví-á   mé-tá   yi   xɔ-a   me   o.**
      child-DEF NEG-crawl go   room-DEF containing.region   NEG
      É-ƒú   du   yi
      3SG-move.limbs   course[7] go
      'The child didn't crawl into the room. It ran in.'

13a. **ɖeví-á   mé-tá   yi   xɔ-a   me   o.**
      child-DEF NEG-crawl go   room-DEF containing.region   NEG
      É-tá   do
      3SG-move.limbs   exit
      'The child didn't crawl into the room. It crawled out.'

13c. **ɖeví-á   mé-tá   yi   xɔ-a   me   o.**
      child-DEF NEG-crawl go   room-DEF containing.region   NEG.
      É-ƒú   du   do
      3SG-move.limbs   course   exit
      'The child didn't crawl into the room. It ran out.'

All three sentences contain the verbs **tá** 'crawl' and **yi** 'go', with the negative morpheme **mé-** prefixed to the first verb while **o** occurs at the end of the sentence. (13a) shows that negation can have scope over the first verb alone, giving the interpretation that the child did not crawl. (13b) shows that it can have scope over the second verb **yi** 'go' thus yielding the interpretation that the child crawled but did not go into the room. Finally, (13c) shows that the negation can have scope over both

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[7] **Du** 'course' here refers to the ground covered in the process of running, and is an obligatory complement of **ƒu**. It can be replaced with specific types of races/distance such as 100 meters, relay, etc. For more information on such elements, including evidence that it is a full NP, see Essegbey (1999).

verbs. The sentence therefore means that the child neither crawled nor went into the room. Faced with these three interpretations, we might say that the sequences of verbs have three different structures. In the one case, V1 is the head while in the other V2 is the head and, yet in the third both verbs are heads. Such an analysis would however, unnecessarily complicate the grammar of Ewe. It appears that a proper account would be one that sees both verbs as heads within a single construction which are co-dependent on each other both semantically and syntactically. Observe, from the sentence below, that when there is clear evidence of syntactic dependency, the negative morpheme **mé-** can only have scope over the clause in which it occurs:

14 **ɖeví-á   mé-tá   háfí   yi   xɔ-a   me   o**
   child-DEF NEG-crawl before go room-DEF containing.region NEG
   'The child didn't crawl before going into the room.'

This sentence entails that the child went into the room, thereby showing that the only verb that is negated is **tá** 'crawl'. This is in spite of the fact that the second part of the negation morpheme *o* occurs at the end of the sentence. What this shows then is that where there is syntactic evidence of a dependency, negation can only have scope over the verb to which **mé-** is prefixed. The facts in Akan are similar to those in Ewe, with the only difference that negation is morphologically copied on all verbs in the former. This is represented by the example below:

15. **akwadaa no n-wea   n-kɔ   dan no   mu**
    child   DEF NEG-crawl NEG-go room DEF containing.region
    'The child doesn't crawl into the room.'

  The obligatory marking of negation on all the verbs in Akan is merely a language specific morphosyntactic restriction on an SVC. The important thing, for our purposes, is that the differences in scope of the negation are the same as those in Ewe, where **mé-** only occurs on the first verb.

  It should be stressed that our claim that the construction which expresses complex translational motion in Ewe and Akan consists of multiple-headed verbs which are co-dependent upon each other is meant to apply to all serialising languages. In this regard, we should point out that Bodomo (1997) arrives at the same conclusion with regards to the construction in Dagaare, a Gur language spoken in north-western parts of Ghana and adjoining areas in Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast. He distinguishes this multiple-headed verb construction from inceptive/terminative serial verb constructions which are not.

5 On the Characteristics of V-languages vs S-languages

The above discussion has shown that complex translational motion is expressed in Ewe and Akan by what one may call a verbal complex. This consists of an initial verb

which expresses the manner of motion and a following verb which expresses the Path of motion. We now return to the issue of whether such languages can be placed within Talmy's typology. Schaefer (1986) discusses the expression of motion in Emai, a serialising language spoken in Nigeria which belongs to the Edoid family. He concludes that the "lexicalisation pattern places Emai directional expressions in the typological set of Romance languages like Spanish, as well as Samoan and Semitic" (Schaefer 1986:197). He observes, however, that there is a principal difference between the two types of languages, in that Emai places the manner constituent to the left of the path-expressing verb. He notes further that while there are verb-framed languages that also place the manner constituent before the path-expressing verb, e.g., Nez Perce, such manner constituents are not verbs, as is the case in the serialising Emai language. In this section, we argue that this difference has major implications that argue against putting the two kinds of languages in the same typology.

Following an extensive survey of discourse patterns in a wide variety of languages, Slobin proposes characteristic ways in which motion events are put together in different kinds of languages. These patterns correlate with the status of the language as an S-language or V-language. One such characteristic is the expression of manner which, according to him, has a distinctly different status in the content and organization of narrative in the two types of languages. This point is stated by Talmy (1985: 69) thus:

> Independent constituents expressing manner in verb-framed languages can be stylistically awkward, so that information about manner ... is often either established in surrounding discourse or omitted altogether.

Slobin (1997:437) shows as a way of illustration that it is not possible in a V-language to string a number of path expressions with a single manner expression. Thus it is not possible to translate "I ran out the kitchen, past the animals, towards Jasón's house" with a single clause in Spanish. Note that there are three path components in this sentence, i.e., movement out of the kitchen, movement past the animals and movement towards Jasón's house. Spanish will need to represent all these Path components with a verb. Because of that, if the manner verb is placed before any of the verbs, it would lead to the foregrounding of the manner verb in relation to that Path component alone. Since it is stylistically impossible to repeat the manner verb with all the path verbs, it is left out of the translation. Observe, however, that serialising languages do not have this kind of problem. All that is required for the expression of complex translational motion is for the manner of motion verb to occur as the first verb. Any other Path verb that comes after it will be within its scope. This is illustrated by the Ewe sentence below:

16. **Kofi tá   tó   ʋe-a   me   do yi kpó-á   dzí**

Kofi crawl pass ditch-DEF containing.region exit go hill-DEF top
'Kofi crawled through the ditch and emerged at the top of the hill'

Observe that the sub-events expressed by **tó** 'pass', **do** 'exit', and **yi** 'go' are all within the scope of the manner verb. Since serialising languages have this possibility to express manner of motion together with different kinds of Path, they would not be compelled to leave out the manner expressions the way V-languages do. Thus if anything at all, this property rather makes them look like S-languages.

Slobin also makes a distinction between two kinds of Paths, viz path-focus and boundary focus. Path-focus is one which simply refers to a non-interrupted Path while boundary focus refers to a Path that, as the name suggests refers to the crossing of a spatial boundary, e.g. enter/exit. This distinction is important for V-languages because, unlike S-languages, only Path-focus verbs can occur with adjuncts expressing both source and goal within a clause in a V-language. Consider the sentence below:

17. **Camin-ó   desde la   casa hasta la   estación**
    walk-3SG:PST   from DEF house up.to DEF station
     'He walked from the house to the station.'

Moving from the house to the station does not require the crossing of any spatial boundary. This is why it is possible to express both grounds (i.e. source and goal) in the same clause. When the movement crosses a boundary, however, a verb is needed to express the extra ground argument, as we represent below:

18. **Entr-ó   a   la   casa corriendo desde la   estación**
    Enter-3SG PREP DEF house running   from   DEF station
     'He entered the house running from the station (i.e., he ran from the station into the house)'

Observe that because the movement expressed here crosses a boundary, the Path verb is used as the main verb of the clause while the manner verb is adjoined to it. The Path verb then takes the Goal argument while manner adjunct takes the source. Slobin notes that this distinction is not important for S-languages since the two types of Path can be expressed in the same way. Thus it is possible to say in English 'he walked from the station to the house' and 'he ran from the station into the house'.

Serialising languages are like S-languages in that they do not distinguish between the two types of Path. However, they differ from the S-languages in that they do not allow the expression of two ground arguments per verb with any type of Path. Consider the sentences below from Ewe and Akan:

"Path focus"

19a **é-zɔ**   tsó afé   me   yi station-a   (Ewe)
     3SG-move from house containing.region go station-DEF
     'She walked from home to the station.'

19b. **ɔ-nanté**   **firi-i**   fíé   kɔ-ɔ   station nó   (Akan)
     3SG-walked exit-PST house go-PST station DEF
     'She walked from home to the station.'

"Boundary focus"
20a. **é-tá**   tsó tsileƒé   yi xɔ-gá̃   me   (Ewe)
     3SG-crawl from bathroom go room-big containing.region
     'S/he crawled from the bathroom and into the bedroom.'

20b **ɔ-weá**   **fri-i**   dwareyɛ kɔ-ɔ   dan   no   mu   (Akan)
     3SG-crawl exit-PST bathroom go-PST room DEF containing.region
     'S/he crawled from the bathroom and into the bedroom.'

In the Path focus construction in (19a), the source component is introduced with a verbid, **tsó** in Ewe, while in (19b) it is represented with a verb **firi** 'exit' in Akan. The goal component is, however, expressed by a verb in both languages. The same strategy is used by both languages in the boundary focus constructions as well; thus in (20a), the source is introduced by a verbid and the goal by a verb in Ewe, while in (20b), both source and goal are introduced with verbs in Akan. The generalisation that one draws from the above is that serialising languages typically express one ground per verb. As such, the expression of source and goal in one complex motion requires the use of two verbs.

A final difference that we note between serialising languages and conventional V-languages is in the domain of event representation. According to Slobin (1997:448):

> Although speakers of both types of languages are able to relate the event at any degree of granularity, the proposal is that speakers of S-languages are more likely to break up the event into a larger number of components, based on "narrative habits" of compacting several Path components into a single clause. Speakers of V-languages, by contrast, have developed a narrative style that makes more sparing use of individual motion verbs to encode Path components.

It should be clear from the discussions in the previous sections that serialising languages do not shy away from using a good number of motion verbs. While the examples we have encountered so far have involved combinations of manner and directional verbs, it is also possible for one to encounter two or more Path verbs. The Ewe collocations such as **trɔ́ gbɔ** 'turn come back', **trɔ́ yi** 'turn go', **dzó yi** 'leave go' **tsó vá** 'rise up come', etc., are common occurrences in all serialising languages. When this factor is taken into consideration, therefore, serialising languages show a

marked difference from V-languages.

   The difference is also shown in discourse behaviour. This is shown by the results of elicitation done with the wordless frog story picture book (Mayer 1969). This is a picture story about a boy who loses his pet frog and sets out with his dog to look for it. In the story, they come to a place where the boy climbs on a rock and inadvertently ends up on a deer. The deer runs with the boy to the edge of a cliff below which is a river and throws the boy into the river, and the dog also falls into the river. Speakers are given the book and asked to narrate the story to another speaker of the language. Slobin divides the events in the scene referred to as the cliff scene, which involves the boy, the deer and the dog, into four components. These are provided below:

1. Change of location: deer moves, runs at cliff
2. Negative change of location: deer stops at cliff
3. Change of location: deer throws boy, makes boy/dog fall
4. Change of location: boy/dog falls into water.

From his survey of a good number of languages, he observes that "the habitual use of an S-language may predispose speakers to pay more linguistic attention to components of events" (Slobin 1997: 448). This is because speakers of S-languages mention more components on average–about 3 segments, versus 2 for V-languages, and a greater portion of speakers of S-languages mention 3 or more segments. In an elicitation with 5 Ewe speakers and 4 Sranan[8] speakers, all the Ewe speakers mentioned at least 3 components while, of the 4 Sranan speakers, just one mentioned only 2 components. Below is an Ewe speaker's account of the scene:

21a **é-tsɔ́-e   le   du   dzí   sésĩe ko lá,**
    3SG-take-3SG be.at:PRES course upper.surface hard only TP

21b **avu lá   hã   kpɔ́-e**
    dog DEF also see-3SG

21c **éye éya hã   ƒú   du   lá**
    and 3SG also move.limbs course DEF

21d **hé-<u>kplɔ</u>   wó   ɖó   ʋuu...   kékéké ..**
    ITIVE-accompany 3PL reach long.time much
    'He carried him running hard and just then the dog also saw it and he too ran and chased them for a very looooong time'

---

[8] Sranan is a creole language spoken in Surinam, with substantial speakers also in the Netherlands. It is a serialising language with some West African substrate influences. The data used here were collected from adult speakers in the Netherlands who spoke Sranan at home and maintained regular contact with Suriname.

21e. **Nukútɔe   lá, wó-vá   ɖó tɔ   áɖé   tó**
Surprisingly TP 3PL-VENIT reach river SPECI edge

21f. **gaké tɔ lá   le   bali   me   [mm]**
but   river DEF be.at:PRES valley containing.region
'Unexpectedly, they eventually came to the bank of a river, but the river was in a valley.'

21g. **álé bé éyi lã   lá vá-ɖó   kpó lá dzí   ko lá,**
so that when animal DEF VENIT-reach mound DEF upper.surface only TP

21h. **é-tsɔ   ɖeví lá fú   gbe ɖé tsi lá   me.**
3SG-take child DEF move.limbs bush ALL water DEF containing.region
'When the animal got to the higher ground on the edge of the river he took the child and threw him away into the water'

21i. **Ké ési   avu-a   hã mé-nyá   o   ta   lá**,
But when dog-DEF also NEG-know NEG reason TP

21j. **éya   hã nɔ   du   lá dzí   ʋuu   kéké**
3SG   also be.at:NPRES course DEF upper.surface long.time much

21k. **éye wò-yi ɖa-gé   hé-kplɔ   ɖeví lá ɖó.**
and   3SG-go ALTRI-drop ITIVE-accompany child DEF reach
'But since the dog also did not realise this he continued running for a long time and he went and fell and followed the child.'

Observe that (21a-d) express the first change of location involving the deer carrying the boy, and the dog running after them. In (21e) we have the verb **ɖó** 'reach' which, one could argue, involves a negative change of location. However, since this is not explicitly expressed with **tɔ́** 'stop', we leave this issue open. (21e) expresses a caused change of location involving the deer and boy, hence component 3, while (21k) expresses a change of location involving the dog, i.e. component 4. Thus, while it is debatable whether this speaker mentions the negative change of location component, what is undeniable is that she expresses all other three components. It should be stated here that all the speakers made use of this controversial **ɖó** 'arrive' word. Interestingly, similar results were obtained with Sranan speakers. In this case we only produce the sentences that represent the various components:

22a. **a   dia   e   lon gowe   nanga a   boi** [..]
DEF animal PROG run go.away with   DEF boy [..]
'The animal is running away with the boy'

22b. **Den doro na   wan   presi, pe   wan   dipi de**
3PL reach PREP INDEF place where INDEF hole be.located

'They got to a place where a hole was.'

22c. **A   dia   lusu   a   boi fadon**
     DEF   animal let.go DEF   boy fall.down
     'The animal let go of the boy and he fell down.'

22d. **A   dagu srefi fadon   gowe   na   ini   a   dipi** [..]
     DEF   dog   even fall.down go.away PREP   in   DEF   hole
     'The dog too fell into the hole'

Sentences (22a, c and d) represent event segments (1, 3 and 4) respectively. What is most interesting here is that all our Sranan speakers, like the Ewe speakers, also use **doro** 'arrive/reach', which is the Ewe equivalent of **ɖó** 'arrive'. Thus in this language too, it is possible to claim that the speakers expressed the four segments. What is not controversial is that they all expressed 3 segments. It should not be surprising that these languages should segment the events into more components. One thing about the possibility within the serialising parameter to put more than one independent verb into a clause is that events are segmented with finer granularity in serialising languages than they are in non-serialising languages. This was illustrated with the collocations involving motion verbs presented above. This property shows, once more, that in terms of their characteristic behaviour, serialising languages seem to behave more like S-languages.

Slobin also reports that S-languages differ from V-languages in the description of scenes: V-languages present static descriptions of scenes while S-languages make use of dynamic descriptions. On static description, he notes, "here is suggestive evidence that V-languages which are as culturally different as Spanish and Japanese show a predilection for such description, perhaps determined by their linguistic typology" (Slobin 1997: 452). The Ewe sentence (21f) and the Sranan sentence (22b) seem to suggest that these languages also lean towards a static representation of scenes.

5. Conclusion

The above comparisons can be summed up in the table below:

Table 1: Comparing the three language types

Language type	Core Schema	Co-event (Manner)	Relevance of path type distinction	Grounds per verb	Grounds per clause	Compo-nents of cliff scene	Scene-setting
V-language	verb	subordinate	yes	max. 2	max. 2	less than 3	static
S-language	satellite	verb	no	multiple	multiple	3 or more	dynamic
Serialising language	verb	verb	no	generally 1	multiple	3 or more	static

It can be seen from table 1 that although serialising languages express the core component of motion with a verb, their properties differ greatly from V-languages. To begin with, they do not subordinate manner expressions as V-languages do. Further, they do not distinguish between path focus and boundary focus types of Paths. While some of the differences have been noted in one way or the other by Schaefer (1986) and Slobin and Hoiting (1994), these authors, notwithstanding, still strive to situate the languages in Talmy's two types. For example, Slobin and Hoiting suggest that they be termed complex verb-framed languages, to distinguish them from simplex verb-framed types like Spanish. However, the two properties we have just discussed rather make the serialising languages appear more like S-languages. Still, it should be noted that where the latter property is concerned, serialising languages differ from S-languages in that they have the tendency to express one ground per verb. We use "generally 1" ground per verb to indicate that it is not impossible for some SVCs to have more than one argument. Note that when it comes to the clause, however, serialising languages, like S-languages can express several grounds per clause. This is because, as we have stated, the languages have the possibility of stringing a number of verbs together in a single clause. The latter property also means that these languages inevitably divide scenes into more components than V-languages. Finally, the static scene description property of serialising languages makes them appear to be like V-languages. When the properties are tallied, we find that serialising languages share more properties with S-languages than the V-languages to which they are supposed to belong while still possessing a unique property. What this shows is that they cannot be said to belong to either type. Instead, they appear to belong to a class of their own. In this regard, it is interesting that while Talmy analyses Chinese as an S-language, Slobin (2000) after noting the properties of the language prefers to place it somewhere between S-languages and V-languages.

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