Serial Verb Constructions in Dangme

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Abstract
Verb serialization in Dangme is an area which has not been studied. This paper seeks to examine the syntactic and the semantic properties of serial verb constructions in Dangme, a language that belongs to the Kwa group of family of languages. The paper describes the nature of serial verb constructions in Dangme in the Role and Reference Grammar framework (RRG) proposed by Foley and Van Valin (1984) and their associates. The properties of the expressions to be examined are in consonance with some of the characteristics proposed in the literature, i.e argument sharing, shared aspect, mood and negation, switch-function of serial verb constructions and multiple object SVCs. In addition, the paper examines different functional types of serial verb constructions such as causatives (instrumental serial verb constructions, benefactive serial verb constructions and cause and effect serial verb constructions), comparative SVC, directional SVC and question and focus SVC. Data for the study were drawn from primary sources.
Keywords: shared arguments, single event, preposed arguments, causatives, adverbials

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to describe serial verb constructions in Dangme within the framework of the Role and Reference Grammar. I will argue that the object sharing proposed is true with all serial verb constructions does not hold for all the SVC's in Dangme. The paper is structured as follows: In section one; I discuss the major characteristics of SVC's that distinguish them from other constructions in Dangme. Section 2 looks at the syntactic representation. In section three, I discuss some functional types of SVC's in Dangme. Section four summaries and concludes the paper. Unlike Akan, Ewe, Logba, Fongbe, Dagaare, Ga, etc that have a wider research on serialization, Dangme has not got enough coverage in the literature. I examine some of the properties that have been proposed in the literature: argument sharing (both subject and object) Tense, aspect, mood and negation some of which are of interest to the present study on serial verb constructions in Dangme.

Data for the paper were drawn from both primary sources. i.e from some students of the University of Education, Winneba studying Dangme. As a native speaker of Dangme, I also provided some of the data for this study. These were however, cross-checked by other native speakers of the language.

Beyond the introduction, the paper is organized as follows: section two gives a brief background of Dangme. Section three discusses the theoretical framework employed for the data analysis i.e. the Role and Reference Grammar (RRG). Some review on serial verb constructions forms the basis for the fourth section. The fifth section considers the formal properties of SVCs and examines the parameters of Dangme SVCs. The section also considers the formal types of SVCs and the role of interrogative and focus marking in Dangme SVCs. Section six summaries and concludes the paper.

2. The Genetic Affiliation of Dangme.

Dangme is a three level tone language and it belongs to the Kwa group of Niger-Congo family of languages. It is spoken in two regions of Ghana- Eastern and Greater Accra mainly in
South-Eastern Ghana. The people inhabit the coastal area of the Greater Accra Region, east of Accra, and part of the Eastern Region of Ghana. Its closest linguistic neighbours are Ga, Akan and Ewe. Dangme has seven dialects: Ada, Nugo, Kpone, Gbugblaa/Prampram, Osudoku, Sɛ, and Krobo (Yilo and Manya). There are several small communities east of the Volta Region that trace their origins to Dangmeland; most of these have shifted to Ewe as the language of daily life, but others have not (Dakubu 1966; Sprigge 1969 cited in Ameka and Dakubu 2008:215). Patches of speakers are also found in Togo- Nyetoe and Gatsi. Abbreviations[1] used are explained in the footnote below.

3. The Theoretical Framework

This paper employs the Role and Reference Grammar theory (henceforth, RRG.) in the description of the syntax

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and semantics of serial verb construction in Dangme. The Role and Reference Grammarians theory is proposed by Van Valin and Foley (1980), Jolly (1991) and their associates. RRG incorporates many of the points of views of current theories of functional grammar. RRG takes language to be a system of communicative social action, and accordingly, the communicative function of grammatical structures plays a vital role in grammatical description and theory from this perspective. It is in this sense that RRG is functional. (Van Valin, 1993). The RRG posits a single syntactic representation for each sentence which corresponds to the actual form of the sentence. That is, grammatical units and construction are analysed primarily in terms of their functional roles in a linguistic system and secondarily in terms of their formal properties (Van Valin & Foley, 1980). According to Van Valin (1993) the description of a sentence in RRG in a particular language is formulated in terms of (a) its logical (semantic) structure and communicative function, and (b) in terms of the grammatical devices that are available in the language for the expression of these meanings. Clause structure in RRG is captured in a semantically-based model known as the "layered structure of the clause". The essential components of the layered structure of the clause are:

1.   The CORE contains the nucleus plus the arguments of the predicate
2.   A PERIPHERY for each layer, contains adjunct modifiers.
        Labels used as mnemonics for the arguments positions include; (x) argument of all verbs that function as the Actor. The mnemonics for the second argument position is (y) in a two place predicate and (z) represents a three place argument structure as in ditransitive constructions. The Role and Reference Grammar assumes that there is a mapping relation between a semantic representation and a syntactic representation and the vice versa.

4.   Some Review on Serial Verb Constructions

The aim of this section is to delve into the nature of serial verb constructions as described in the literature. Serial verb constructions (SVCs) have been explored extensively in many languages of the world. A serial verb construction is a sequence of verbs which act together as a single predicate, without any overt maker of co-ordination, subordination or syntactic dependency of any sort. It is conceptualized as a single event and therefore is monoclausal. (Aikhenvald & Dixon, 2006), i.e. Serial verbs constructions always contain two or more predicates. Some other literature on SVCs as presented by Foley and Olson (1985:18) Larson (1991), Durie (1988:3), Osam (1994a:193), Ndimele, (1996: 127), Williamson, (1989: 30), etc, are discussed below:

Foley and Olson (1985:18) see serial verb construction as the type of construction in which verbs sharing a common subject or object are merely juxtaposed, with no intervening conjunction. Larson (1991) added that SVCs are considered as clause types in which a shared noun phrase subject is followed by a sequence of verbs or verb phrases. Boadi (1969) view SVCs as strings of two or more verb phrases which form a single internally coherent structure. They observe that the constituent verb phrases are governed by one noun phrase and are separated neither by a comma nor coordinators. In simple descriptive terms, Durie (1988:3) describes serialization as what happens when two or more verbs are juxtaposed in such a way that they act as a single predicate, taking a unitary complex of direct arguments. The verbs are found together syntactically and or morphological on the basis of sharing one or more core arguments, and neither verb is subordinate to the other. Furthermore, verbs in an SVC, which are not linked by a conjunction, are claimed to "share a common surface subject and one or more common aspectual/tense/polarity markers" (Williamson, 1989: 30).

Williamson (1989) agrees with Durie and Boadi that in SVCs, there is no marker of subordination or co-ordination, no dividing intonational or morphological mark of a clause boundary and the verbs cannot have a separate scope for tense, mood, aspect, illocutionary force and negation. Osam (2004:17-18) also describes the structure of serial verb construction as a clause which has concatenation of verbs having a progression of events. "… a type of construction in which two or more verbs are strung together without an overt connective morpheme" (Ndimele, 1996: 127).

I agree with these researchers that SVCs share a number of grammatical as well as semantic characteristics that were established cross-linguistically (Boadi 1969; Foley and Olson, 1985; Williamson, 1989; Osam 1994a; Ndimele, 1996; Durie, 1997; Pawley and Lane, 1998; Aikhenvald and Dixon, 2005).

Serial verb construction (SVCs) are said to be a real feature in West African languages (Dimmendaal 2001, Creissels 2000 cited in Dorvlo, 2008). (Kari, 2003:1) argues however, that these types of constructions are by no means restricted to languages of Africa According to Aikhenvald & Dixon (2006:1), languages from West Africa, East Asia and Oceania are known to have serial verbs construction. In the non-African countries, SVC's are found in Languages such as Mandarin Chinese (Li & Thompson, 1973) Lahu-Burmese (Matisoff, 1973), Chinese and in many of the languages of New Guinea (Tallerman, 1998:87), etc. This phenomenon, SVC is one of the linguistic structures that has been described in many West African languages (Dorvlo, 2008:2). Contributors include: Boadi (1968), Williamson (1965; 1989), Ansre (1966), Bamgbose (1974; 1982), Awobuluyi (1973), Lord (1975 : 1993), Agbedor (1994), Carlson (1994), Kari (1997b; 2000; 2003) Creissels (2000), Lefebvre and Brousseau (2002), Osam (2005), Ameka (2006), and Dorvlo among others. It is hoped this

study on Dangme serial verbs constructions would add to the ongoing studies on the typology of serial verbs constructions universal.

5. Formal Properties of SVC's In Dangme
The formal properties of serial verb constructions identified in Dangme are:
1. The verbs are not linked overtly by coordination or subordination.
2. The subject is expressed once on V_1.
3. There can be multiple objects. Where object is shared, it is expressed once with V_1.
4. Two or more independent verbs follow another within the same clause.
5. The verbs express one complex event composed by two or more single events. The single events happen simultaneously at the same location and are logically related.
6. The verbs share the same aspect and mood expressed by V_1.
7. Negation is expressed in either V_1 or V_2 in a two sequence construction and in two verbs of more than a two sequence verb construction.
8. Constituents in a SVC construction can be questioned and focus marked.

5.1 Parameters of Dangme SVC's
I examine the parameters of serial verb constructions in Dangme in this section. These include monoclausality of SVC's, shared argument, shared aspect, mood and negation, switch-function serialization and the functional types of serial verb constructions.
*5.1.1 SVC'S as a Single Event*
'A serial verb construction considered as a single event is a type of construction in which the verbs all refer to sub-parts or aspects of a single overall event. The action or state denoted by the second verb is in terms of the real world an outgrowth of the action denoted by the first verb-the second verb represent a further development, consequence, result, goal or culmination of the action by the first verb' (Lord (1994). i.e. serial verb constructions are monoclausal and allow no markers of syntactic dependency on their components. This is critical in distinguishing SVC's from coordination, complement clauses, sub ordinate clauses and other multiclausal structures (Bradshaw, 1993). (Aikhenvald& Dixon, 2006:1, Ameka, 2006, Creissels, 2000, Osam, 1994:1997: Agbedor, 1994) Boadi, 1969, Durie 1988, Foley and Olson, 1985, Ndimele, 1996) among others. SVC's in Dangme are monoclausal as in other languages of the world. Consider the following examples:

(1a). Ogboo   te   du   ya   jua   lo   ɔ   ngɛ
        Ogboo   get up bath   go   sell   fish/meat DEF in
        jua   a   mi.
        market DEF inside.
        'Ogboo got up, bath, went and sold the fish/meat in the market.'
(1b). Tsatsu   ya   nu   julɔ   ɔ.
        Tsatsu   go AOR   catch   thief   DEF
        'Tsatsu went and caught the thief.'

(1c).   Kaki_j   ye   ni   nɛ   e_{j/k}   du.
        Kaki   eat AOR thing   CONJ   35G   balt
        'Kaki ate and bath'.

Example (1a) accounts for three events in a sequence without any overt linker. These autonomous events are expressed by V_1, *te* 'get up', V_2 *du* 'bath' and V_3 *ya* 'go'. The three VPs share a common subject '*Ogboo*' object *lo* 'fish/meat' and location, *jua a mi* 'in the market'. The three verbs act together as one core functional slot in a clause. As Aikhenvald and Dixon (2006:1-2) put it, the verbs which form a SVC, act together as a syntactic whole. (1b.) also has two events in the clause. These are expressed in V_1 *ya* 'go' and V_2 *nu* 'catch'. The two verbs account for a single whole. In (1c) however, is a bi-clausal construction. It has the coordinating conjunction, *nɛ* 'and' linking the two clauses. *Nɛ* is used to link V_1 *ya* 'go' and V_2 *nu* 'catch'. The verbs are now considered as separate actions performed. The impression given here is that *Kaki* did eat and bath as indicated by the index.

The first clause, '*Kaki ye ni*' 'Kaki ate food' has *Kaki* as the subject and *ni* 'food' as the direct object. The second clause however, is an intransitive one which has the 'he/she' as its subject. The subject of the second clause may have a co-referential attribute with the subject of clause one. The coordinative construction in (c) is grammatical but a non-serial verb construction. The example (1b) involves a transitive verb with a shared NP. The shared subject NP, *Tsatsu* and the V_2 *nu* 'catch' takes an additional argument *julɔ* 'thief'.
Example (1b) on argument sharing is represented on a tree diagram (i) below:

(i).

Tsatsu	ya	nu	julɔ	ɔ
Tsatsu	go	catch	thief	DEF

'Tsatsu went and caught a thief'.
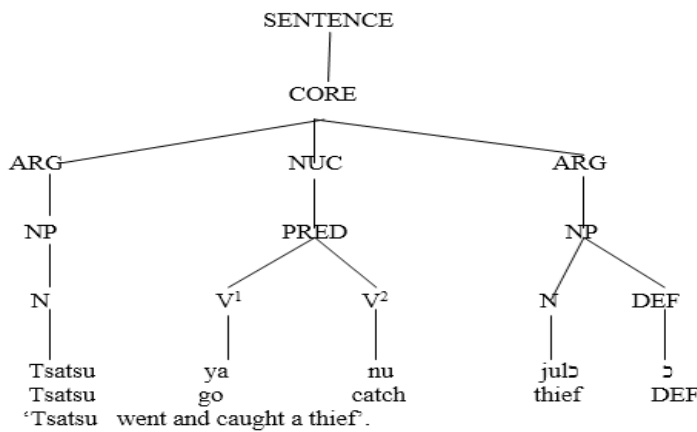
In tree diagram (i), the predicate *ya* "go" and *nu* 'catch' have shared the subject argument, *Tsatsu* and the object, *julɔ ɔ* "the thief" The object has occurred at the clause final position. The verbs, *ya* and *nu* in diagram (i) are not intervened by any other element.

In Dangme, some SVC's have up to four verbs as exemplified below in (2a) and (2b).

(2a).   Padi   ya   he   na   gbe   jua.
           Padi   go AOR   buy. AOR   cow   kill   sell
           'Padi went bought a cow, killed it and sold it'.

(2b).   Amate hɛli si,   te si   kpa   ngmala a   ya   kuɔ.
           Amate wake up suddenly get up AOR blow   shout   DEF go AOR climb

           okplɔ   ke   e   na   sinɔ   agbo   ko.
           table   that   35G   see   snake   big   INDEF

           'Amate woke up suddenly, got up, shouted and climbed a table that he saw
             a big snake'.

The actions in (2b) *hɛli si* 'wake up suddenly' *te si* 'get up', *kpa ngamla* 'shout' and are complemented with *ya* 'go' to indicate movement. This is followed by *kuɔ* 'climb'. Example (2a) has four actions expressed by four independent verbs. V_1 *ya* 'go', V_2 *he* 'buy', V_3 *gbe* 'kill' and V_4 *jua* 'sell'. These verbs are strung together to express a single idea or eventhood that occurs in a chain. The tree diagram (ii) a sentence with an object intervening the V_2 and V_3.

5.1.2 Object intervening in V_2 and V_3 of a 4 place predicate

(ii).

Padi	ya	he	na	a	gbe	jua
Padi	go	buy	cow	the	kill	sell

'Padi went and bought a cow, killed and sold it'.
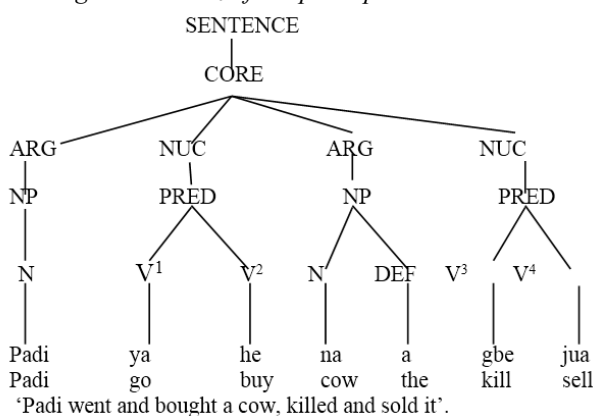
In diagram (ii), the NP, *na a* 'the cow' has intervened V_2 and V_3 in a four verb serials.

5.2 Shared Argument in SVC's in Dangme

In Dangme as in other West African languages, the verbs of a serial verb construction share a single subject regardless of the number of verbs in a series. That is, there is a single subject which occurs before V_1 as illustrated below in (3a).

(3a).   Ati   ɔ   tu,   gblɔ   lo   ɔ   kpe.
           Cat   DEF   jump   snatch, AOR fish/meat   DEF   chew AOR

'The cat jumped, snatched the fish/meat and chewed it'.   (jump-snatch-chew)

In (3a), *ati* ɔ 'the cat' is the subject of V₁ *tu* 'jump', V₂ *gblɔ*'snatch' and V₃ 'chew'. *ati* proceeds the V₁.

(3b).   Atɛ   ba   pee   ngmɔ   jeha   nɛ ɔ.

        Atɛ   come PERF   do   farm   year   this

        'Atɛ has come to do farming this year'.

        In (3b) Atɛ is the subject of V₁ and V₂ ba "come and pee "do".

As mentioned earlier in the characteristics of Dangme serial verb constructions, there can be multiple objects and where an object is shared, the object may intervene the VPs or be proposed in Dangme. Objects intervening the VP. In Dangme, where the object is shared, the direct object can occur in between the independent verb. Consider example (4a-c) below:

(4a).   Kwami   ba   gbe   jokuɛ.   ɔ.

        Kwame   come.PERF   beat   child   DEF

        'Kwame has come to beat the child'. (come –beat).

(4b).   Adeta   hoo   madaa   jua.

        Adeta   cook   plantain   sell

        'Adeta has cooked plaintain and sold out' (cook-sell).   Objects Preposed in SVCs

(4c).   Tsaatsɛ   tsua   gigɛ   sa   kpe.

        Tsaatsɛ   dig AOR   groundnut   roast   chew

        'Tsaatsɛ dug groundnuts, roasted and chew' (dig-roast-chew)

(4d).   Object interfering VPs in Ewe:

        Kofi   da   nu   du,

        Kofi   cook   thing   eat

        'Kofi cooked and ate'.   (Agbedor 1993:22)

In (4a), there are too activities in a single events expressed in V₁ *ba* 'come' and *gbe* 'beat' in V₂. The shared object, *jokuɛ* ɔ 'the child' occurs at its syntactic slot. (4b) as (4a) has two activities culminated into a single event by how 'cook' in V₁

and *jua* 'sell' in V₂. (4c) however, has three activities in a single event expressed by *tsua* 'dig', *sa* 'roast' and *kpe* 'chew'. The direct object of (4b) and (4c) have however been proposed .*madaa* 'plantain' in (4b), occurs in between V₁ *hoo* 'cook' and V₂*jua* 'sell'. And in (4c), *gigɛ* 'groundnut' has also occurred in between V₁ *tsua* 'dig' and V2 *sa* 'roast'. (4d) presents an example on an object intervening the V₁ and V₂ in Ewe.

(5a).   Ati   ɔ   fie   kɔkue   ɔ   wo   muɔ   mi.

        Cat   DEF   chase AOR   mouse   DEF   put   hole   inside

        'The cat chased the mouse into a hole' (chase-put)

(5b).   Apetɔgbɔ   tsu   ni   he   bo   ba   ke   maku.

        Apetɔgbɔ   work   thing   buy   cloth   come   give   maku

        'Apetɔgbɔ worked and bought a piece of cloth for Maku'   (work –buy-give)

(5c).   Adede   ya   ngmɔ   mi,   ya   tsua   agbeli   gbee   fufui   ye.

        Adede   go   farm   inside   go   uproot   cassava   pound   fufu   eat

        'Adede went to the farm, uprooted cassava, pounded fufu and ate'   (go-uproot-pound-eat)

(5a.) has *kɔkue* 'mouse' as the direct object and *muɔ* 'hole' is the NP of *wo* 'put' functioning as a locative NP for V₂. Bo 'cloth' is the direct object of the sequence of two verbs, *tsu ni* 'work' and *he* 'buy'. *Maku* is object recipient of *ba* ke 'come give'. It is also possible to have a serial verb construction in which each verb has its own object in Dangme as in Ewe (see Dorvlo, 2008:6).

(5d).   Kofi   wo   tɔ   nya   nɔ   ɔ   bu   tɔ   ɔ   nya.

        Kofi   put/take   bottle   mouth   top   DEF   cover   bottle   DEF   mouth

        'Kofi took the bottle cook to cover the bottle' (take-cover).

In (5d) *tɔ nya nɔ* "bottle (cover) is the object of *wo* "take" and *tɔ   ɔ   nya* "the bottle top" is also a locative noun as in (5a). According to Dorvlo (2008:9). The greater number of SVC's has two verbs. However, there are other SVC's which make use of three to four verbs to express related actions. The other related verbs are identified in the meanings of the verbs. Cross-linguistically instrument SVC's involve a verb which translates as "take" (Sebba (1987:162). An interesting feature in Dangme SVC is that, the direct object of the initial verb may be an instrument of cause of the second verb in the series. Consider example (6a-6c).

(6a).   Abla   kɛ   klaate   plaa   nyumu   . ɔ

        Abla   take   cutlass   hurt   man   DEF

        'Abla hurt the man with a cutlass' (take-hurt)

(6b).   Ofoe   kɛ   sileti   bu   tsu   ɔ   yi.

        Ofoe   take   slates   roof   building   DEF   top

        'Ofoe roofed the building with asbertos sheets'. (take-roof)

(6c).   Soja   a   fia   nyumu   ɔ   tso   gbe   lɛ.
           Soldier DEF   hit   man   DEF   stick   kill AOR   3SG.OBJ
           'The soldier killed the man with a stick' (take-hit-kill)

In (6a) the object of V₁*klaate* 'cutlass' is an instrument of cause for the action expressed in V₂ *plaa* 'hurt' and *nyumu* ɔ 'the man' is the target of *plaa* 'hit'. Also in (6b), the object *sileti* 'asbestos sheet' the object of V₁ *kɛ* 'take' is the instrument of cause for the action of *bu-yi* 'roofed', the V₂. In (6c) however the instrument of cause although precedes the V₂ *gbe* 'kill' as in (6a & 6b),*tso* 'stick', the instrument of *gbe* 'kill' follows the direct object of V₁ *fia* 'hit'.

5.2.1 The Mapping of the Syntactic units on to the Semantics units

'The soldier killed the man with a stick'.
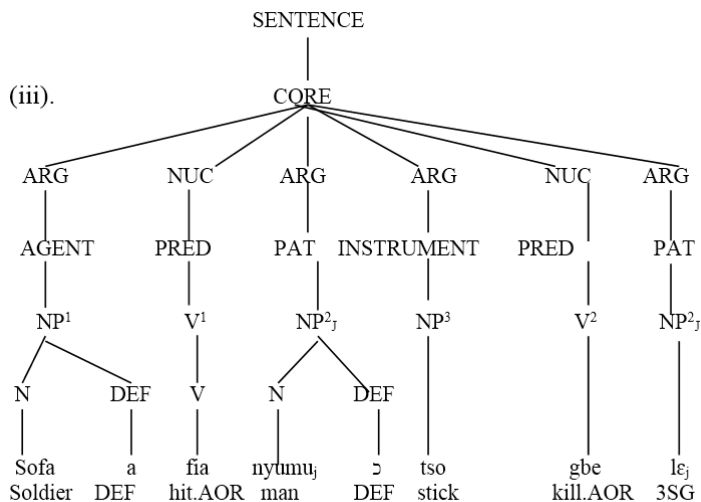
There are three NPs *soja a* 'the soldier', *nyumu* ɔ' the man' and *tso* 'stick' in example (16).

   The subject, *soja a,* is the agent of *gbe* 'kill' and is the object and the patient undergoer of the action of *gbe* 'kill' initiated by the subject-Agent, *soja a* NP₃, *tso* 'stick', functions as the instrument of cause – which completed the action of *gbe* 'kill' initiated by *soja a. lɛ* 'him' has a co-referential attribute with the object patient of cause, *nyumu ɔ* 'the man'.

   The Agent, *soja a* used the instrument, *tso* 'stick' to 'hit' *fia nyumu* 'man' which resulted in the death of *nyumu* ɔ be 'kill' V₂ *gbe,* is decomposed into cause to die. Hence, the stick aided the soldier to make the man *nyumu* change state from being alive to being dead.

5.3 Shared Aspect, Mood and Negation / Polarity

Shared aspect, mood and negation as noted by Katamba (2006) imply that no contrast in any of the categories above is possible for the individual components of a serial verb construction. In SVC in Dangme, aspect marker occurs on both V₁ and V₂ with the exception of the progressive in a two verb series, the aspectual marker occurs on the V₁ and in a three verb series, where the progressive aspectual marker occurs on V₁ and V₃ as in (7b). It can also occur on V₁, V₂, and V₃. Consider the examples in (7a-e).

(7a).   I   ye-ɔ   ngma   tɔ–ɔ   kaa   sikatsɛ.
           ISG   eat-HAB   food   full-HAB   like   rich man
            'I cook and eat like a rich person' (takes-eats).

(7b).   Yo   ɔ   ngɛ   hla-e   nɛ   e   he   tokota   ya   hi   jua-e.
        woman DEF   is   want-PROG   that 3SG buy sandals   go   be   sell-PROG.
         'The woman wants to be buying and selling sandals' (go-buying-selling)

(7c).   Yo   ɔ   ngɛ   hla-e   nɛ   e   hi   tokota   he-e
        woman   DEF is   want-PROG   that 3SG be   sandals   buy.PROG
        ya   hi   jua-e.
        go   be   sell PROG.
         'The woman wants to be buying and selling sandals'   (going-buying-selling)

(7d).   Agbeko ma   he   gɔji   (ma)   ya   jua   ngɛ Togo.
        Agbeko FUT   buy   corn mill FUT   go   sell   at   Togo
         'Agbeko will buy a corn mill and go and sell it at Togo'
          (will buy-will go-will sell).

(7e).   Tɛkpɛki   kpɛ   tade   he   wo   kɛ   ya   yo
        Tɛkpɛki   sew.PERF   dress   new   put on.PERF   get   go   woman
         kpeemi   he   ɔ .

weeding   place   DEF
'Tɛkpɛki has put on a newly sewn dress to the wedding grounds'
(sew-put on-go).

It is realized from the examples above that in (7a) *ye* 'eat' and *tɔ* 'be full' have been suffixed with the habitual marker /-ɔ/ to become *yeɔ* 'eats' and *tɔɔ* becomes satisfied'. The future marker precedes the verbs in Dangme, and may be optional for V₂ as illustrated in (7d). The perfective is not morphologically marked. It has a zero morpheme as in (7e).

5.3.1 Polarity in SVC

The contrast between the positive and the negative sentences in Dangme, is seen in two main ways i.e., (1) focuses on tone contrast (low and a high tone assignment), (2) by suffixation. In the former, a verb in the affirmative form, bears the low tone and a verb in the negative bears the high tone as exemplified in (8a-c). (8b) however, has the V2 in the affirmative. This is due to the introduction of *kὲ* 'get' in (8b).

(8a).   E   hi   si   ye   ni   .ɔ
         3SG   sit   down.PERF   eat.AOR   food   DEF
         He/she/it sat down ate food the
         "He/she/it sat and ate the food" (sit-eat)

(8b).   E   hi   si   kɛ   ye   ni   ɔ
         3SG   sit   down.NEG   get   eat   food   DEF
         "He/she/it did not sit down to eat the food" (not sit-eat)

(8c).   E   hi   si   yi   ni   ɔ
         3SG   sit NEG.   down   eat.NEG   food   DEF
         "He/she/it did not sit down to eat the food" (not sit-not eat)

Negation is expressed with a high tone in V₁ *hi* but V₂ maintains its affirmative form in (8b). By contrast, (8c) expressed negation in both V₁ and V₂.

I examine other negative SVC constructions with independent ingressive verbs in (9a-d):

(9a).   E   ho   ya   yὲ   nyu   ɔ.
         3SG   go.AOR   go.AOR   fetch   water   DEF
         'He/she went and fetched water'. (go-fetch)

(9b).   E   hui   ya   yέ   nyu   ɔ.
         3SG   NEG.go.AOR   go.AOR   fetch.NEG   water   DEF
         'He/she did not go to fetch water'. (not go-not fetch)

(9c).   Adimɛ   ba   be   ya   he   lo   mumu.
         Adimɛ   come pass.AOR   go.AOR buy.AOR   fish/meat   fresh
         'Adimɛ came, passed-by and went to buy fresh fish/meat'. (pass-by-go-buy)

(9d).   Adimɛ   ba   bi   ya   he   we   lo   mumu.
         Adimɛ   come pass.AOR.NEG INGR   buy.AOR   NEG   fish/meat   fresh
         'Adimɛ did not pass-by to go and buy fresh fish/meat'.
         (not pass-by-not go-not buy)

It is observed that the independent ingressive verbs, *ya* 'go' and *ba* 'come' in (9a-c) have maintained their affirmative forms in the negative serial verb constructions. There is some form of vowel raising in certain verbs. The final [o] vowel of certain monosyllabic verbs with low tones in Dangme, are raised as high vowels [ui] in their negative formation. The negative morpheme /i/ assimilates a vowel of the verb stem. This results in a mid-rounded vowel, becoming high vowel /u/. The negative marker maintained the high tone as it is in example V₁ of (9b), *ho* 'went' becoming *hu-i* 'did not go'. And also in (9c), *be* 'passed by' has become *bi* 'did not pass-by' in (9d). *He* 'buy' in (9d) by contrast, has its negative morpheme we occurring after the verb.

I discuss another form of negative constructions in SVC's in Dangme which is characterized by progressive assimilation. Progressive assimilation influences the form a negative morpheme takes in Dangme. When [i] is attached to verb stems which end in the back mid vowel [ɔ] and bear the low tone, progressive assimilation occurs. As a result, there is a shift in tongue height and the front high vowel [i] changes to [ɛ].

(10a).   Sabuki   kpɔ   blɛfo   pɔ.
         Sabuki   harvest.PERF   maise   sock.PERF
         'Sabuki has harvested maize and socked it'. (harvest-sock)

(10b).   Sabuki   kpɔ-ɛ   blɛfo   pɔ-ɛ.
         Sabuki   harvest.PERF.NEG   maize   sock.PERF.NEG
         'Sabuki has harvested maize and socked it'. (harvest-sock)

(10c).   Ayongo hoo   otimi   jua   ha Dodowa sukuu bi.
         Ayongo cook.AOR   kenkey   sell.AOR   give Dodowa school child.PL
         'Ayongo prepared kenkey and sold it to school children at Dodowa'. (cook-sell-give)

(10d).   Ayongo hoo   we   otimi jɔɛ   ha Dodowa
         Ayongo cook.AOR   NEG   kenkey sell.AOR.NEG   give Dodowa
         sukuu   bi.
         school child.PL
         'Ayongo did not prepare kenkey to sell to school children at Dodowa'.
          (not cook-not sell-not give)

The V$_2$ of (10a) has undergone the process of progressive assimilation *pɔ-i* and has become, *pɔ-ɛ* 'not socked'.

5.4 Switch-Function Serialization

Some types of switch-function serialization include a number of constructions with causative semantics. I examine causative serialization in the next section. In causative serialization, V$_2$ may be dynamic as in (11a) and stative as in example (11b). The V$_1$ and V$_2$ complex can take two objects, the causee and the direct object e.g.

11a.   Afua   ha   Lamisi   ya   jua   tomatosi.
        Afua   make.AOR   Lamisi   go   sell   tomatoes
        'Afua made Lamisi went and sold tomatoes'. (make-go-sell)
11b.   Padi   ha   Amanate   suɔ   Maamle.
        Padi   make.AOR   Amanate   love   Maamle
        'Padi made Amanate love Maamle'. (make-love)

Lamisi goes to sell tomatoes' is the complement clause in (11a), *Lamisi* is the patient of *ha* 'make' and the subject of the complement clause. In (11b) *Padi* is the subject agent who initiated the process of *suɔ* 'love' and Amanate is the intermediate Agent of cause and the experiencer of love. Maamle, the object of *ha* 'make' is the source of the experience of *suɔ* 'love'.

The logical structure for (11a) and (11b) are expressed as below:

(11a)   **dò** [(x), *Afua* [CAUSE (y), *Lamisi* **move** & BECOME *jua* (sold) [(z),
        tomatosi (tomatoes]]]

(11b)   **dò** [(x), *Padi* [CAUSE (y), *Amate* BECOME **suɔ** (love) [(z), *Maamle*]]]

5.5 Functional Types of Dangme SVC's

I discuss the semantic types of serial verb constructions in Dangme. These include benefactive, comparative, instrumental, locative and manner circumstantial serial verb constructions. I begin with benefactive.

5.5.1 Benefactive SVC

In a benefactive serial verb construction, the subject is the agent (the benefactor) and the object is the recipient (the beneficiary) V$_2$ is a verb of "give". Thus, a benefactive SVC introduces an argument which is usually the beneficiary.

(12a).   Ajo   wo   blodo   ɔ   ha   mi.
         Ajo   take   bread   DEF   give   ISG.OBJ
         'Ajo gave me bread' (take – give).
(12b).   Siadeyo   he   lɔle   ha   Oforiwa.
         Siadeyo   buy.AOR   lorry   give   Oforiwa
         'Siadeyo bought a car for Oforiwaa' (buy-give).
(12c).   Kate   lè   kungwɔhi   gbe   ha   e   tsɛ   ye.
         Kate   rear.AOR   fowl.PL   kill   give 3SG.POSS   father eat
         'Kate reared fowls, killed them for his father to eat'. (rear-kill-give-eat)

(12a) and (12b) suggest that the oblique objects: mi '*me*' and *Oforiwa* 'a personal name', have benefited from the action of *wo* 'take' expressed in V$_1$ in (12a) and *he* 'buy' in (12b) and *gbe* 'kill' in (12c) by the subjects *Ajo*, *Siadeyo* and *Kate*.

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(iv)

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                              SENTENCES
                                 |
                               CORE
        _____/____|_____
       ARG         NUC        ARG        NUC         ARG
   BENEFACTOR      PRED       THEME       PRED      RECIPIENT
       |            |          |           |           |
      NP₁          V¹         NP₂          V²          NP₃
       |            |         / \          |           |
       N            |        N   DEF       |           |
       |            |        |    |        |           |
      Ajo          wo      blodo  ɔ        ha          mi.
      Ajo         take     bread  DEF      give         me.
   'Ajo gave me bread'.
```
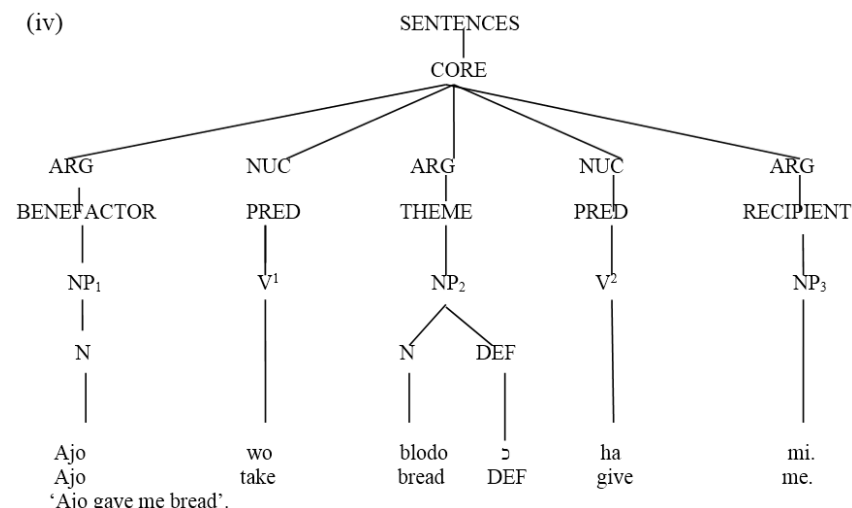
Tree diagram (iv) presents a syntactic and a semantic interface. The argument positions map onto the subject and object (direct and indirect). The subject is mapped onto the semantics as Agent, Benefactor, Theme, Experiencer and Instrument of Cause. And at the Object position, the NP maps onto Patient, Source of the Experience, Theme and the Recipient. The Periphery houses the Locative elements and the Adjunct. In the above, the first argument mapped onto the Benefactor, who functions as the Subject of the sentence. The Theme mapped onto NP2 and the Recipient, *mi* 'me'.

5.5.2 Comparative SVC

In this type of SVC, two Noun phrases are compared to determine which one has more attributes than the other. The initial verb compares with the quality that is being compared. The comparative marker occurs in the object of V_1 and V_2. The initial verb can be a dynamic or a stative verb. Consider examples (13a-c).

(13a).   Dede   Ayew   fia   a   bɔɔlu   pe   Musa.
         Dede   Ayew   play   HAB   ball   exceed   Musa
         'Dede Ayew plays better football than Musa'.

(13b).   Kpodo   niye   ni   ɔ   hiɛ   pe   Awudu   nɔ   ɔ.
         Kpodo   food   thing DEF more   exceed Awudu.POSS   one   DEF
         'Kpodo's food is more than that of Awudu's.'

(13c).   Agbeko   bo   ɔ   pɔ   pe   Asuma
         Agbeko.POSS cloth DEF   wet   exceed Asuma.POSS

         nɔ   ɔ.
         one   DEF

         'Agbeko's cloth has become more wet that of Asuma's.'

5.5.3 Manner SVC

Manner serialization expresses the manner in which an action or a process is carried out by the subject NP. The first verb may describe an action or a process and the manner is expressed with an adverbial marker or a comparative clause marker considers (14a) and (14b) below:

(14a).   Ata   pee-ɔ   hwonyu   jua-a   kaa   e   mami
         Ata   prepare-HAB soup   sell-HAB   like   3SG.POSS   mother
         'Ata prepares soup and sells as her mother'.

(14b).   Saki   te si   blɛuu   nga   sinya   a.
         Saki   get up   slowly   close   door   DEF
         'Saki got up slowly and closed the door'.

(14c).   Saakua   bi   ɔ   waa   gidigidi   te si   nyɛɛ.
         Saakua.POSS child DEF   crawl.AOR hurridly   got up   walk
         'Saakua's child crawled hurriedly, got up and walk'.

Example (14a) denotes that Ata prepares soup and sells the same way as her mother does. *Kaa* 'like' is used to express an equal performance in the process of preparing and selling soup. In (14b) however, an adverbial, *blɛuu* 'slowly' has been used to indicate the manner in which the subject, *Saki* stood up in V_1. In the same way, *gidigidi* 'hurriedly' in (14c) is used to express the manner in which *Saakua's* son crawled before getting up to walk.

5.5.4   Locative/Directional SVC's

The locative marker may either follow the subject NP or be at the periphery of a clause. It ndicates a particular setting of an event or a pronoun is used when the location is indicated in an earlier expression. Directional SVC's express the manner of movement. Consider examples (15a-c):

(15a)   I   ngε   lejε   ɔ   ngε   nihi   a   he fɔe   ngε
         ISG   be   there DEF   be   thing 3PL.OBJ.   side wash PROG   be
         kae.
         hang.PROG.
         "I am there washing and hanging cloths.'

(15b).   Wa te   ya   ngε   ni   `kasee   ngε sukuu   tsu
         2PL get up   go   be   things   learn.PROG   be   school   room
         ɔ   mi.
         DEF inside
         'We got up, went and were studying in a classroom.'

(15c).   Kojo   tsitsεε   tlɔke   kε   ba   we   mi.
         Kojo   push.AOR   truck   to   come   house   inside.
         "Kojo pushed the truck to the house".

It is observed that *ngε lejɔ* 'be there' in (15a) follows the subject NP, I 'I' and in (15b), *ngε sukuu tsu ɔmi* 'inside the classroom' occupies the periphery of the clause to indicate the locations of the action of V$_2$, *ngε fɔe* in (15a) and *ni kasee* in (15b). In (15c), the V$_1$ denotes the manner of movement of the object undergoer, *tlɔke* 'truck' and *we*, 'house' indicates the destination of the direct object, *tlɔɔke*.

5.5.5 Interrogative and Focus Marking SVCs

Serial verb constructions can be questioned and focus marked in Dangme. The affirmative sentences of (2b) and (4a) have been repeated in (16a) and (17a).

(16a).   Padi   ya   he   na   gbe   jua.
         Padi   go AOR   buy. AOR   cow   kill   sell
         'Padi went bought a cow, killed it and sold it'.

(16b).   Padi   ya   he   na   gbe   jua   lo?.
         Padi   go AOR   buy. AOR   cow   kill   sell   INT
         'Did Padi go to buy a cow, killd and sold ?'.

(16c).   Padi   lε   ya   he   na   gbe   jua.
         Padi   FOC   go AOR   buy. AOR   cow   kill   sell
         'It was Padi who went and bought a cow, killed and sold it'.

(17a)   Adeta   si   madaa   jua.
         Adeta   fry.AOR   plantain`   sell
         'Adeta has fried plantains and sold out' (fry-sell).
         Objects pre-posed in SVCs

(17b)   Anε   Adeta   si   madaa   jua   lo?
         INT   Adeta   fry.AOR   plantain   sell   INT
         'Has Adeta fried plantains to sold out' (fry-sell).

(17c).   Adeta   lε   si   madaa   jua.
         Adeta   FOC   fry.AOR plantain   sell
         'It was Adeta who fried plantains and sold out' (fry-sell).

The question markers, *anε…* and*.... lo* in (16b) and (17b) have turned the indicative sentences in (16a) and (17a) into interrogative ones. Example (16c) and (17c) are however, focused marked sentences. The subjects, *Padi* and *Adeta* are made prominent with the introduction of the focus marker *lε* after the subject argument *Padi* in (16c) and *Adeta* in (17c).

6.   Conclusion

This paper attempted to describe the nature of serial verb constructions in Dangme in the Role and Reference Grammar's (RRG) theory, a framework proposed by Foley and Van Valin (1984) and their associates. The paper identified eight formal properties of SVCs and examined the parameters of Dangme SVCs. It looked at the structure, aspect and polarity and the role of interrogative and focus marking devices in Dangme SVCs. It further considers the mapping of the syntactic units on to the semantic units.

On the discussions of the parameters of Dangme serial verb constructions, I have noted that the Dangme data do not follow the strict argument sharing proposed by (Baker, 1989, etc.) That is, as in Akan and Ewe (See Osam 1994 and Agbedor 1993), Dangme data make room for object-sharing and non-object sharing in serial verb constructions. The subject is expressed once on V1. There can be multiple objects. Where object is shared, it is expressed once with V1. The verbs express one complex event composed by two or more single

events. The single events happen simultaneously at the same location and are logically related. In the marking of Aspect and Negation in SVC's, it was realized that in a two verb series, the aspectual markers occur on all the verbs except in the progressive where the marker is optional in V_2. It was observed also that in a three verb series, the V_1 and V_3 take the aspectual marker in the progressive. By contrast to the habitual and the future, a serial verb construction with three verb series may take all the aspectual markers.

I demonstrated that in Dangme SVCs, the verbs share the same aspect and mood expressed by V_1. Negation is expressed in either V_1 or V_2 in a two sequence construction and in two verbs of more than a two sequence verb construction. It was noted also that constituents in a serial verb construction can be questioned and focus marked as discussed in example (16ac) and (17a-c). Focus marked arguments are followed by a focus marker *lɛ* and its variants. It was observed that an interrogative sentence could have ...*lo* at sentence final position as in (16b) or have *anɛ...* at sentence initial position as well as …*lo* at sentence final position as in (17b).

In the discussion of the mapping relationship between the syntactic units and the semantics units, I showed that the NP maps on to the argument and occurs at subject and object (direct and indirect) positions and functions as the Agent, Patient, Theme, Recipient, Benefactor, Experiencer, the Source of the Experience and the Instrument in a clause. The VP maps on to the Predicate in the Nucleus and expresses the action, process and state of affairs mentioned in the clause, and finally, the Adjunct maps on to the adverbs which may function as adverb of location, degree, reason, manner, time, goal and path as in other languages.

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