

Serial Verb Constructions in Ilokano

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to describe the configuration of serial verb constructions in Ilokano. A serial verb construction (SVC) is formed by a sequence of verbs acting as a single predicate without any overt marker of grammatical dependency, coordination, or subordination (Aikhenvald 2006). Previous grammatical descriptions of Ilokano provided limited insight on this linguistic phenomenon. Using spoken and written data, this study features the properties of serial verb constructions in Ilokano based on cross-linguistic descriptions and properties of SVC including (i) composition, (ii) linking morpheme, (iii) argument sharing, (iv) status of transitivity, aspect, modality, and (v) negation status of verbal components. The last three criteria are used to discuss the monoclausality of Ilokano serial verb constructions. The functions of serial verb constructions in a clause are also discussed considering contemporary studies on clause combining strategies.

Keywords: Ilokano, serial verb constructions, composition, linking morpheme, monoclausality

Typological Definition and Descriptions of Serial Verb Constructions

Serial verb constructions¹ are used in many Austronesian languages in Southeast Asia (van Staden and Reesink 2008).² As a language that belongs to this language family and geographical area, Ilokano also employs this feature in its grammar. In various languages of the world, these constructions may form lexical idioms such as *tí-wá-rá* ‘shattered’ as illustrated in example (1a) which is used in Igbo of the Niger-Congo language group. They may also be used to illustrate sequence of actions such as *ak-hita* ‘get-put’ in (1b) which is used in Alambalak that belongs to the Sepik language group in Papua New Guinea. In (1c), they present an effect of an action such as *babas* ‘bite’

and *mot* ‘die’ which are used in Taba (in Indonesia) that belongs to the Austronesian languages. These examples illustrate that serial verb constructions have been grammaticalized to perform vital linguistic functions in various languages of the world.

(1a) Igbo SVC (Lord 1975, 27)

ó	<u>tí-wá-rá</u>	é-téré	á
he	hit-split.open-TENSE	plate	the

‘He shattered the plate’

(1b) Alambak SVC (Bruce 1988, 27)

wa-yarim-ak-hita-n-m-ko
 IMP-ELEV -get-put-2SG-3PL-ELEV
 ‘Get them on a level plane toward me (and) put them up there.’

(1c) Taba SVC (Bowden 2008, 81)

<i>n=babas</i>	<i>welik</i>	<i>n=mot</i>	<i>do</i>
3SG=bite	pig	3SG=die	REAL

‘It bit the pig dead.’

In various studies on serial verb constructions, scholars (e.g., Muysken and Veenstra 1994; Durie 1997; Aikhenvald 2006; Lovestrand 2018) employ some cross-linguistic criteria³ for defining these constructions. Their typological approach provided substantial notions and concepts that contextualize this grammatical feature in Ilokano, something that has not been described in previous studies on the language (e.g., Constantino 1959; Rubino 1997) and perhaps in other Philippine languages. Cross-linguistic parameters for defining serial verb constructions in this article include verbal composition; linking morpheme; transitivity, aspect, modality, and polarity status of verbs in these constructions; argument sharing; and singularity of event.

Serial verb constructions contain two verbs in sequence acting as a single predicate. They exhibit distinct morphological and syntactic properties (Lovestrand 2018). However, Lovestrand (2018) lacks typological parameters for describing a verb. Due to this inadequacy, the typological description of verbs proposed by Croft (2001) and modified by Haspelmath (2016) is used in this study. This criterion was used by Haspelmath (2016) in explaining comparative concepts and cross-linguistic generalizations about serial verb constructions. Croft (2001) defines verbs as lexical units that express dynamic actions without special coding (e.g., copula) when used in predication function. Unlike the argument of Lovestrand (2018) that independent use of verbs as a criterion is optional because the morphological and syntactic properties of (SVC) verbs are already adequate, this article argues that each verb component of an SVC must be independent when

used on their own (Aikhenvald 2006; Haspelmath 2016). Following Haspelmath (2016, 303), each verbal component⁴ of SVC “expresses a dynamic event without any special coding in predication function and that can occur in a nonelliptical utterance without another verb.” With this criterion, aspectual auxiliary verbs such as *te’* in Khwe (Khoisan language family in Africa) are excluded as verbal components of serial verbs as shown in (2). The descriptions of Ilokano SVC using these concepts are discussed in the section on Composition below.

- (2) Khwe (Kilian-Hatz 2006, 116)
- | | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|----------|-----------------|-------------------|
| <i>xà má</i> | <i>thám`</i> | <i>à</i> | <i>gà rá-ná</i> | <i>te’- é`-tè</i> |
| 3SG.M | letter | OBJ | write-II | stay-I-PRES |
- ‘He is writing a letter.’

Typologically, the absence of linking morphemes is also used to define and characterize serial verb constructions in various languages. Muysken and Veenstra (1994), Aikhenvald (2006), van Staden and Reesink (2008),⁵ Haspelmath (2016), Lovestrland (2018) agreed that verbal components in serial verb constructions must not be syntactically subordinated or coordinated. This means that linkers, junctors, or complementizers must not intervene between the series of verbs. For example, Cantonese, which belongs to the Sino-Tibetan language family, uses an overt coordination marker (i.e., *tung*) in (3b) to separate the two verbs *haang* ‘walk’ and *tai* ‘see.’ This construction is not considered as a serial verb construction. However, the verbs *haang* ‘walk’ and *tai* ‘see’ in (3a) form a serial verb construction because of the absence of an overt linking marker. This current study employs these notions to describe Ilokano SVC in the section below on the absence of linking morphemes.

- (3a) Cantonese SVC (Matthews 2006, 72)
- | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| <i>Keoidéi⁵</i> | <i>seng⁴jat⁶</i> | <i>haang⁴-gaa¹</i> | <i>tai²-hei³</i> |
| 3PL | always | walk-street | see-movie |
- ‘They’re always going out shopping and going to movies.’

- (3b) Cantonese construction with coordination marker (Matthews 2006, 72)
- | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| <i>keoidéi⁵</i> | <i>seng⁴jat⁶</i> | <i>haang⁴-gaa¹</i> | <i>tung⁴-maa¹</i> | <i>tai²-hei³</i> |
| 3PL | always | walk-street | and-also | see-movie |
- ‘They’re always going shopping and going to movies too.’

Grammatical categories such as person, modality, aspect, negation, or transitivity may mark either the predicate or other grammatical elements in a construction. These markings in a construction may be used to distinguish serial verb constructions from other multi-verb forms. There are a number of observations on sharing grammatical values in serial verb constructions. It is argued that the verbal

components of an SVC have similar tense or aspect (Foley and Olson 1985; Muysken and Veenstra 1994; Durie 1997), mood and modality (Durie 1997; Haspelmath 2016; Lovestrland 2018), or polarity (Muysken and Veenstra 1994; Durie 1997; Aikhenvald 2006). Morphological agreement may indicate these shared grammatical properties which can be observed in Austronesian languages. The Austronesian languages Paamese (in Vanuatu) in (4a) and Kéo (in Indonesia) may be used to illustrate the grammatical harmony of SVC. The Paamese serial verbs *ngan* ‘ate’ and *dal* ‘was with’ have similar person, number, and realis markings. In Kéo, Baird (2008) observed that a negator scopes over two serial verbs. The negator⁶ *mona* in Kéo precedes and scopes over the first verb *demba* ‘come’ and second verb *moni* ‘watch.’ The scope interpretation of a negator in relation to SVC by Baird (2008) is consistent with Haspelmath’s (2016) generalization on the syntactic relationship between the verbal components of an SVC and the negator of a language.

(4a) Paamese SVC (Crowley 1987, 50)

<i>kai</i>	<i>ngan</i>	<i>kuman</i>	<i>dal</i>	<i>tinviis</i>
3SG	3SG.REAL.eat	sweet potato	3SG.REAL-be with	tinned fish
‘He ate potato with tinned fish.’				

(4b) Kéo SVC (Baird 2008, 57)

<i>Nga’o</i>	<i>mona</i>	<i>demba</i>	<i>moni</i>	<i>’imu-ko’o</i>
1SG	NEG	come	watch	3PL
‘I did not come and watch them.’				

Aside from the shared grammatical values, one of the defining characteristics of serial verb constructions evident in the literature is the argument sharing.⁷ Many studies on serial verb constructions (e.g., Muysken & Veenstra 1994; Durie 1997; Aikhenvald 2006; Bowden 2008; Haspelmath 2016; Lovestrland 2020) agreed with the notion that all verbs in a serial verb construction share at least one argument (e.g., subject or object). In fact, Aikhenvald (2006) argued that this is a characteristic of a prototypical SVC. The concept of argument sharing is based on Sebba’s (1987) view on argument sharing from his literature review. Sebba (1987) presented that (i) “either the semantic subject of V_i [the first verb of a two-verb SVC] is the semantic subject of V_{i+1} [the second verb] (ii) or the object of V_i is the semantic subject of V_{i+1} .” The former, according to Lovestrland (2020), refers to subject sharing. The latter refers to switch subject. In example (5) from Taba (an Austronesian language spoken in Indonesia), the actor of the first transitive verb *pun* ‘kill’ is coreferential with the actor of the transitive

verb *pake* ‘use.’ This suggests that the thong was used by the same agent who killed the mosquito.

- (5) Taba SVC (Bowden 2008, 79)
- | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>n=pun</i> | <i>bobay</i> | <i>n=pake</i> | <i>sandal</i> |
| 3SG=kill | mosquito | 3SG=use | thong |
- ‘He killed the mosquito with a thong.’

Monoclausality or the singularity of event is a debated domain of serial verb constructions. Durie (1997) and Aikhenvald (2006) agreed that it is a criterion in describing and determining a serial verb construction. However, they use different approaches to analyze the criterion. Durie (1997) used a cultural construct in explaining complex events and serial verb constructions. Durie (1997) argued that the idea of event type or a series of events is predicated on what speakers typically consider to be unmarked complex events. Using this paradigm, Durie (1997) explained that understanding the semantics and discourse properties is needed when investigating these constructions. Aikhenvald (2006) used morphological markings in constructions (e.g., overt linker) to distinguish serial verb constructions from other consecutive constructions (e.g., coordinated structure). In (6a), Durie (1997) explained that the combination of the two verbs *j̄eun* ‘ate’ and *pad̄a* ‘sleep’ is a marked complex sentence that does not form a unified event-type in Yorùbá (Niger-Congo language spoken in Africa) because this series of actions is not typical event-type in the language. Aikhenvald (2006) explained that the series of events in (6b) (e.g., bite and death) is analyzed as one event. However, the events in (6c) are analyzed as coordinated actions. The meaning of (6b) is different from (6b) because of the coded morphological marking.

- (6a) Yorùbá (Bamgbose 1974, 31)
- | | | |
|----|--------------|--------------|
| *ó | <i>j̄eun</i> | <i>pad̄a</i> |
| he | ate | sleep |
- *‘He ate return.’

- (6b) Taba SVC (Bowden 2008, 79)
- | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| <i>n=babas</i> | <i>welik</i> | <i>n=mot</i> | <i>do</i> |
| 3SG=bite | pig | 3SG=die | REAL |
- ‘It bit the pig dead.’

- (6c) Taba coordinated structure (Bowden 2001, 297-8)
- | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|----------|
| <i>n=babas</i> | <i>welik</i> | <i>n=ha-mot</i> | <i>i</i> |
| 3SG=bite | pig | 3SG=CAUS-die | 3SG |
- ‘It bit the pig and killed it.’

Serial verb construction may not form a coherent grammatical phenomenon or concept across languages; however, this phenomenon may help us unravel morphosyntactic, semantic, or pragmatic issues. In a cross-linguistic perspective, the well-documented properties of serial verb constructions in various languages of the world include verbal composition; linking morpheme; transitivity, aspect, modality, and polarity status of verbs in these constructions; argument sharing; and singularity of event. These properties are used in this study to describe the serial verb construction in Ilokano in the section below on the monoclausality of Ilokano SVCs.

Overview of Literature on Serial Verb Constructions in Philippine Languages

The grammatical descriptions of some Philippine languages used in this study offer limited insight on serial verb constructions. In this section, some Philippine languages from different language subgroups are reviewed to reveal how previous works define or treat serial verb constructions. The Philippine languages⁸ in this study include the languages that belong to the Greater Central Philippines (Cebuano), Central Luzon (Kapampangan), and Northern Luzon (Dupanigan Agta and Ilokano).

Tanangkingsing's (2009) reference grammar of Cebuano, which belongs to the Greater Central Philippine languages, does not provide a definition of serial verb constructions because these constructions are not allowed in the language. However, there are grammatical instances in Cebuano where two verbs merge after the omission of a complement marker as illustrated in example (7). Tanangkingsing (2009) called this type of construction a verb complex. In the illustrated example,⁹ the matrix verb *mahadlok* 'be afraid' becomes an auxiliary verb and the complement verb *mogawas* 'to go out' becomes the main verb when *nga* marker is omitted.

- (7) Cebuano Verb Complex (Tanangkingsing 2009, 205)
- | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| <i>mahadlok=kuno=sila</i> | (<i>nga</i>) | <i>mo-gawas</i> | (*= <i>sila</i>) |
| be afraid=EVID=3PL.NOM | (COMP) | AV.INF-outside | |
| <i>sa gabi?i</i> | | | |
| LOC night | | | |
- 'They said they are afraid to go out at night.'

Forman's (1971) grammar notes on Kapampangan, which belongs to the Central Luzon languages, does not also provide a definition of serial verb constructions. Moreover, Forman (1971) did not use serial verb construction similar to Tanangkingsing (2009). The only context that provides a discussion of two consecutive verbs in a construction

is the two-verb phrase. It is formed by verb-like elements of the language. In example (8), *bisang* ‘want’ and *maniwalaq* ‘to believe’ are joined by the linker *ng*. In the current study, this type of construction is not considered a serial verb construction.

(8) Kapampangan two-verb phrase (Forman 1971, 50)

E ko bisang maniwalaq
 NEG 1SG want to believe
 ‘I don’t want to believe (it).’

Robinson’s (2008) grammar of Dupanangan Agta, which belongs to the Philippine Northeastern Luzon languages, does not provide a definition of serial verb constructions. Similar to Tanangkingsing (2009) and Forman (1971), Robinson (2008) did not also use the term serial verb construction to refer to two consecutive verbs with the same aspect inflection. In example (9), the auxiliary verb *inumangay* ‘went’ precedes the main verb *nagtanggad* ‘pruned.’ These verbs may be separated by enclitics or even full noun phrases, and they are not joined by any linker or complementizer (e.g., *a*). In the current study, this is a possible serial verb construction.

(9) Dupanangan Agta Auxiliary Construction (Robinson 2008, 180)

<in><um>angay=dan hidi nag-tanggad
 <CMPL><AV >go=already 3PL.NOM CMPL.AV-prune
ha malinganay
 OBL malinganay
 ‘They went and pruned the branches of the *malinganay* tree (to get fruit).’

Constantino (1959) and Rubino (1997) substantially contributed to the discussion of Ilokano grammar. However, both did not use the term serial verb constructions. In this study, *mapan* ‘will go’ may be used to form serial verb constructions. In examples (10a) and (10b), on the other hand, Constantino (1959) and Rubino (1997) analyzed the verb *mapan* ‘will go’ as an auxiliary verb. Constantino (1959) described *agitlug* ‘lay an egg’ in example (10a) as a verb with an active affix, and Rubino (1997) analyzed *alaen* ‘to get’ as an infinitive verb. Beyond Constantino’s (1959) and Rubino’s (1997) works on Ilokano grammar, there are no substantial descriptions of serial verb constructions in the language.

(10a) Ilokano auxiliary verb (Constantino 1959, 66)

Ti kalapati ti mapan agitlug
 the dove will go lay an egg
 ‘The dove will go lay an egg.’

(10b) Ilokano auxiliary construction	(Rubino 1997, 308)
<i>Mapanka</i>	<i>ala-en</i>
Ma-pan=ko=ka	ala-en
INT-go=1SG.ERG=2SG.ABS	get-TRA
‘I’ll go get you.’	

Grammatical descriptions of selected Philippine languages presented in this study do not have discussions on serial verb constructions. Most of these studies only analyzed the syntactic or semantic characteristics of lexical elements that may be used to form serial verb constructions. In order to address the lack of understanding of this linguistic feature in Ilokano, this article presents the characteristics of serial verb constructions based on cross-linguistic concepts and comparative notions. These criteria include linking morpheme; transitivity, aspect, modality, and polarity status of verbs in these constructions; argument sharing; and singularity of event. This study also includes contiguity or non-contiguity that concerns the order of verbs that form serial verb constructions and the grammatical elements that may occur between these verbs. This study accounts for the relationship between serial verb constructions in Ilokano and these cross-linguistic parameters that may help us understand such constructions.

Method

This study uses spoken data from recorded informal conversations of three Ilokano native speakers who provided their written consent to participate in the study after listening to the recordings and discussing the purpose, methods, data privacy and protection, demands, risks, and future use of the data. The conversations, conducted face-to-face or via calls over *Facebook Messenger*, were recorded from December 2021–April 2022 using the Voice Memo application. There are five recordings that vary from 20–40 minutes in length. The use of the discourse-based method in describing a linguistic phenomenon is consistent with the view that language structures and elements are formed through speakers’ communicative experience of the language and discourse contexts (Tanangkingsing 2009). Aside from these recordings, this study also uses three publicly available media interviews. Anonymization of primary information (e.g., names, address, etc.) traceable to the identity of the participants in the recorded conversation and interviews is employed to safeguard the identity of the participants. As supplementary materials, the study uses written data from online public portals in Ilokano (e.g., government websites and online magazines in Ilokano). Two of the native speakers who participated in the conversation were also consulted to verify the grammaticality and acceptability of structures included in this study.

Morphosyntactic Description of Ilokano

Ilokano is an Austronesian language spoken mostly in the northern region of the Philippines including Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte, Abra, and La Union. Roots, stems, affixes, and clitics are the basic morphological units of the language. As a predicate-initial language, it may be headed by roots that cannot be reduced to more meaningful elements with predication properties (e.g., the verb *ikkan* ‘to give’) or roots with modification properties (e.g., the adjective *dakkel* ‘big’). Moreover, affixes are elements that are phonologically and morphologically dependent on their hosts. For example, the affix *-in* may be attached to a root verb like *ikkan* to form a stem like *inikkan* ‘gave (something to somebody).’ Meanwhile, adverbial or pronominal clitics (e.g., *ak* ‘I’ in *inikkak* ‘I gave [something to somebody]’) appear on the right side of the host. They form phonological units with the elements attached to them (Matthews 1997).

In understanding the basic clause structure of Ilokano, this study follows the ergative framework that accounts for transitivity¹⁰ in describing the Philippine languages used by Liao (2004) and Nolasco and Saclot (2006). This analysis was also employed by Gerdtz (1988) and Rubino (1997) in describing the clause structure of Ilokano. It is argued that the ergative analysis accounts for the syntactic and semantic nuances of some structures in the language. Ergative analysis, according to Liao (2004), can clearly explain the morphosyntactic differences between the dyadic *-in-* (as in 11a) and *-um-* (as in 11b) clauses. The patient of dyadic *-um-* construction (e.g., *iti kotsemon* ‘your car already’) is marked oblique, while the patient of dyadic *-in-* constructions (e.g., *ti annakko* ‘my child’) is marked nominative or absolutive. Moreover, ergative analysis may also explain their difference using the sensitivity of pivot or nominative/absolutive argument to relativization. Liao (2004) and Bondoc (2020)¹¹ claimed that pivot or nominative/absolutive arguments of Philippine-type languages are sensitive to this phenomenon. Relativization is possible for the patient NP of *-in-* constructions but not for the patient NP of *-um-* constructions. In discussing transitivity, this study uses the semantic and pragmatic notions of Nolasco and Saclot (2006)¹² in describing transitivity in Ilokano since they account for the nuances of *-in-* and *-um-* constructions that were not addressed in previous studies on Ilokano.

(11a) Ilokano *-in-* construction (Rubino 1997, 229)

Binastosna	ti	anakko.
< <i>in</i> > <i>bastos=na</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>anak=ko</i>
<PF> <i>rude=3SE</i>	ART (ABS)	child=1SE
‘He treated my child rudely.’		

(11b) Ilokano *-um-* constructionGumatangka iti kotse mon.¹³

< <i>um</i> >	<i>gatang=ka</i>	<i>iti</i>	<i>kotse=mo=n</i>
<INR.IRR>	buy=1SG.ABS	SG.OBL	car=2SG. POSS=already

'Buy your car already.'

A syntactically transitive construction¹⁴ in Ilokano takes an absolutive patient argument and an ergative agent argument. In (12a), the patient argument *ti saok* 'my statement' is introduced by the non-personal absolutive marker *ti*. In the same example, the agent argument *ni A* is introduced by the personal ergative marker *ni*.

(12a) Canonical transitive construction in Ilokano

Patien ni A ti saok.

<i>pati-en</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>ti</i>
belief-TRA.IRR	SG.PER.ERG	A	SG.NPER.ABS

sao=k

speech=1SG.POSS

'A believes my statement.'

Meanwhile, a prototypical intransitive construction in the language takes only an absolutive argument which is introduced by a personal or non-personal nominal marker. In (12b), the agent argument *ni C* is introduced by the personal absolutive marker *ni*. A semantically transitive and syntactically intransitive construction or extended intransitive construction¹⁵ in the language takes a semantic agent that has an absolutive marking and a semantic patient that has an oblique marking. In (12c), the semantic agent argument *ni K* is introduced by the personal absolutive marker *ni*. The semantic patient/extended argument, on the other hand, is introduced by the non-personal oblique marker *iti*.

(12b) Canonical intransitive construction in Ilokano

Nadungpar ni C idi kalman.

<i>na-dungpar</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>idi</i>	<i>kalman</i>
INT.R-hit	SG.PER.ABS	C	PST	yesterday

'C was (accidentally) hit (by something) yesterday.'

(12c) Syntactically intransitive but semantically transitive construction in Ilokano

Gumatang ni K iti tinubong.

<um>gatang	ni	K	iti
<INT.IRR>buy	SG.PER.ABS	K	SG.NPER.OBL

tinubong

tinubong

'K will buy *tinubong*.'

The overview of verbal constructions helps us understand how a single verbal event is expressed through the interaction of words and/or affixes that determine argument structure, modality, or aspect in the language. This grammatical information will help us understand the interaction between and among the features of serial verb constructions in the language.

Morphosyntactic Configuration of Serial Verb Constructions in Ilokano

The typological parameters for describing and defining serial verb constructions discussed in the introduction are employed to describe the serial verb constructions in the language. These parameters include composition that highlights the status and semantic type of serial verbs in the language, linking morpheme, and monoclausality that focuses on the transitivity, aspect, modality, and polarity of serial verbs.

Composition

Verb composition is a criterion in defining and describing serial verb constructions in Ilokano. In many cases, there are two verbs in series that form a monoclausal predicate. Similar to the Sebba's (1987) and Haspelmath's (2016) definition of verb¹⁶ as a comparative concept, this study argues that an independent verb is a form that can express a dynamic event without any special coding when it functions as a predicate and that it can occur without another verb in a non-SVC construction. With this definition, the words *mapan* 'will go' and *agluto* 'will cook' that form a serial verb in (13a) can occur as independent verbs as illustrated in (13b) and (13c) respectively. In this study, verbs like *mabalin* 'may' in (13d) are excluded because they belong to modality verbs. In Ilokano, the restrictive definition adopted in this study also rules out property-concept words such as *nasakit* 'painful' in (13e) and position verb such as *nakatakder* 'standing' in (13f) due to a syntactic limitation that is discussed in the next section.

(13a) SVC in Ilokano

Mapanka agluto diay skwela?

mapan=ka *ag-luto* *diay* *skwela*
 INT.IRR.GO=2SG.ABS DEL.IRR-cook SG.DIS school
 'You will go cook in school?'

(13b) Component 1: *Mapan* 'will go'

Mapanda diay kabakiran.

mapan=da *diay* *kabakiran*
 INT.IRR=3PL.ABS SG.DIS forest
 'They will go to the forest.'

(13c) Component 2: *Agluto* 'cook'

Agluto kami ti dinengdeng.

ag-luto=kami *ti* *dinengdeng*
 DEL.IRR-cook=1PL.EXCL SG.ERG vegetable stew
 'We will cook vegetable stew.'

(13d) Ilokano construction with a modality verb

Mabalin rumuaren.

mabalin <*um*>*ruar=en*
 PO <INT.IRR>outside=already
 'Going outside is allowed already.'

(13e) Ilokano construction with a property-concept words

Narigat agtest.

na-rigat *ag-test*
 INT.ADJF-difficulty DEL.IRR-test
 'Taking tests is difficult.'

(13f) Ilokano construction with a position verb

Nakatakder nga agur-uray ni K diay waiting shed.

naka-takder *nga* *nag-uray* *ni* *K*
 INT.R-standing LKR INT.DEL.R-wait SG.PER.ABS K

diay *waiting shed*
 SG.DIS waiting shed
 'K is standing while waiting in the waiting shed.'

Semantic Types of Serial Verbs

After discussing the status of the verbal components of SVC in the language, we delve into the type of serial verb constructions in Ilokano based on composition. Aikhenvald (2006) used two terminologies¹⁷ in describing serial verb constructions—asymmetrical and symmetrical SVC.

Cross-linguistically, an asymmetrical serial verb construction is composed of “one verb from a relatively large, open or otherwise unrestricted class, and another from a semantically or grammatically restricted (or closed) class” (Aikhenvald 2006, 21). The unrestricted verb is also called the major verb. On the other hand, the minor verb is referred to as the restricted verb. The verb from the restricted class, which illustrates a motion or posture indicating a direction, is the action specification. The major verb in a serial verb construction is the verb from an open class. Asymmetrical SVC are found in Austronesian languages. For example, Bowden (2008) investigated Taba (an Austronesian language). The description of the language included asymmetrical serial verb constructions such as in example(14a). In this instance, the dependent SVC contains the motion verb *han* ‘go’ (V₁) which provides action specification.

- (14a) Taba SVC (Bowden 2008, 87)
N=han tuli.
 3SG=go sleep
 ‘S/he is going to sleep.’

As an affiliate of the Austronesian language family, Ilokano also demonstrates this grammatical pattern. This study argues that all serial verbs in the language are limited to and fall in this classification. In this study, there are only two types of prototypical serial verb constructions in Ilokano – *umay*-type in (14b) and *mapan*-type in (14c). The first verbs (e.g., *umay* ‘will come’ and *mapan* ‘will go’) provide directional specification to *makiayayam* ‘will play with (somebody)’ and *agluto* ‘will cook’ respectively. *Makiayayam* ‘will play with (somebody)’ and *agluto* ‘will cook’ are the second verbs (V₂) of the SVC. The syntactic properties of this type of serial verb constructions are discussed in the section on the monoclausality of Ilokano SVCs.

- (14b) Asymmetrical *umay*-type SVC in Ilokano
 Umay makiay-ayam da Manang S.
umay *maki-ay-ayam* *da* *Manang S*
 INT.IRR. will come INT.IRR.SOC-toy 3PL.ABS sister S
 ‘They, including Siping, will come to play.’

- (14c) Asymmetrical *mapan*-type SVC in Ilokano
 Mapanka agluto diay skwela?
mapan=ka *ag-luto* *diay* *skwela*
 INT.IRR.GO=2SG.ABS DEL.IRR-cook SG.DIS school
 ‘You will go cook in school?’

In this study, it is also argued that other possible verbal candidates of asymmetrical classification such as beginning-type *nangrugi* ‘started’ as in (14d), finish-type *nalpas* ‘finished’ in (14e), complement-taking *kayat* ‘like’ in (14f), and simultaneous-type *aggigiddan* ‘be simultaneous’ in (14g), are not classified as serial verbs in Ilokano because they are ruled out by the no linking element criterion that will be discussed in §5.2.

(14d) Ilokano construction with a beginning-type verb

Nangrugika nagluton?

nang-rugi=ka *nag-luto=n*
 INT.R.start=2SG.ABS INT.DEL.R-cook=EMPH
 ‘Have started cooking?’

(14e) Ilokano construction with a finish-type verb

Nalpas nangan ni K.

nalpas *nangan ni* K
 INT.R.finish INT.R.eatSG.PER.ABS K
 ‘K has finished eating.’

(14f) Ilokano construction with a complement-taking verb

Kayat ko’t makisarita kaniana.

kayat=ko *ti* *maki-sarita*
 like=1SG.ERG SG.NPER.ABS INT.IRR-conversation

kaniana
 3SG.OBL
 ‘I want to talk to him/her.’

(14g) Ilokano construction with a simultaneous-type verb

Aggigiddanda met nga agsaon.

ag-gi-giddan=da *met*
 DEL.IRR~CONT-simultaneous=3PL.ABS also

nga *ag-sao=n*
 LKR DEL.IRR-speak=EMPH
 ‘They are speaking simultaneously.’

Aside from asymmetrical serial verb constructions, Aikhelvald (2006) used the term symmetrical SVC, as shown in example (15) from Cantonese given by Matthews (2006). In these constructions, all verbs hold equal value in the sense that none of them dictates the semantic or syntactic characteristics of constructions. The verbs that form symmetrical serial verb constructions come from unrestricted classes. Matthews (2006) argued that the verbs *pui* ‘accompany’ and

tai 'watch' form symmetrical serial verb construction in Cantonese. Ilokano does not use this semantic type of SVC.

(15) Symmetrical serial verb construction in Cantonese

(Matthews 2006, 78)

ngo pui-gwo keoi tai hei
 I accompany-EXP 3SG watch show
 'I have been to a movie with her before.'

No Linking Morpheme

Before delving into the relationship between the marking of coordination or complementation and the serial verb constructions in Ilokano, it is imperative to take a closer look at the complementation and coordination elements in the language.

Grammatical elements in the language may be linked together using *ken* 'and,' *ket* 'and,' *ngem* 'but,' and *wenno* 'or.' These lexemes may function as connectors of words, phrases, or clauses. For example, the lexeme *ken* 'and' in (16a) serves as the connector between *aso* 'dog' and *pusa* 'cat.' The other coordinating elements in the language include *ket* 'and' in (16b), and *wenno* 'or' in (16c).

(16a) *ken* 'and'

Nasingpet diay aso ken pusa na.
na-singpet diay aso ken pusa na
 INT.ADJF-behave SG.DIS.ABS dog and cat 3SG.POSS
 'His/her cat and dog are well-behaved.'

(16b) *ket* 'and'

sangapulo ket walo nga tawen
 ten and eight LKR year
 '18 years'

(16c) *wenno* 'or'

Nia ti naimas nga inumen, danom wenno sopdrinks?
nia ti na-imas nga
 what SG.NPER.ABS INT.ADJF-delicious LKR
inum-en danom wenno sopdrinks
 drink-TRA.IRR water or soft drinks
 'What's good to drink, water or soft drinks?'

Aside from their linking functions above, these elements may also be used in combining clauses. In (17a), *ngem* 'but' introduces the contrastive clause *haan nga praktikal dayta* 'that is not practical.' Moreover, *ket* 'and' in (17b) introduces the reason clause *ket masapul nga ageffort ka* 'then you need to exert effort.'

(17a) *ngem* 'but'

Mayat dayta ngem haan nga praktikal dayta.

mayat *dayta* *ngem* *haan*

good SG.MED.ABS but NEG

nga *praktikal* *dayta*

LKR practical SG.MED.ABS

'That is good, but that is not practical.'

(17b) *ket* 'and'

Nu kayatmo daytoy ket masapul nga ageffort ka.

nu *kayat=mo* *daytoy* *ket*

if like=2SG.ERG SG.PROX.ABS then

masapul *nga* *ag-effort* *ka*

need LKR DEL.IRR.-effort 2SG.ABS

'If you want this, then you need to exert effort.'

According to Tanangkingsing (2009), complementation is a clause combining strategy in which a complement clause becomes an argument of a predicate. This complement clause is introduced by a complementizer. Rubino (1997) identified three complementation strategies in Ilokano—nominal marker *ti*, *ta*, and *nga* complementation. Similar to Rubino (1997), this study considers *ta* and *(ng)a* as elements of complementation. In addition, this current study also includes *nu* as a clause combining marker. In (18a), the modality verb *mabalin* 'may' takes two arguments (i.e., pronominal element *ko* 'I' which has an ergative marking and a complement clause *nga alaen diay kwartakon* 'will get my money'). The complement clause is introduced by the complementizer *nga*. Aside from *nga*, *nu* and *ta* also introduce complement clauses *kayatna ti kaasim* 's/he wants your mercy' in (18b) and *makagraduar isuna* 's/he will be able to graduate' respectively in (18c). In (18d), the predicate *kayat* 'like' takes the nominalized argument *mabaut* 'to be whipped' which is introduced by the nominal marker *ti*. This nominalized argument has an absolutive marking.

(18a) *(ng)a* complementation in Ilokano

Mabalinko nga alaen diay kwartakon.

mabalin=ko *nga* *ala-en*
 may=1SG.ERG LKR get-TRA.IRR

diay *kwarta=ko=n*
 SG.DIS.ABS money=1SG.POSS=already

'I may already get my money.'

(18b) *nu* complementation in Ilokano

Diak ammo nu kayatna ti kaasim.

di=ak *ammo* *nu*
 NEG=1SG.ABS know COMP

kayat=na *ti* *kaasi=m*
 want=3SG.ERG SG.NPER.ABS mercy=2SG.POSS

'I don't know if s/he wants your mercy.'

(18c) *ta* complementation in Ilokano

Sapay kuma ta makagreduar isuna.

sapay kuma *ta* *maka-greduar* *isuna*
 It is hoped that INT.IRR.ABIL-graduate 3SG.ABS

'It is hoped that s/he will be able to graduate.'

(18d) *ti* nominalization in Ilokano

Kayatnansa ti mabaut.

kayat-na=nsa *ti* *ma-baut*
 like-3SG.ERG=PO SG.NPER.ABS INT.IRR-whip

'S/he may want to be whipped.'

Scholars (e.g., Muysken and Veenstra 1994; Aikhenvald 2006; van Staden and Reesink 2008; Haspelmath 2016; Lovestrand 2018) have a common claim that serial verb constructions lack overt coordination or complementation marker. However, this condition has been treated more leniently. For example, Aikhevald (2006) recognized the presence of a 'special marker' that is neither a coordinator nor marker of dependency. However, no syntactic or pragmatic justifications have been offered. Although this study subscribes to Haspelmath's (2016) criterion for no linking morpheme, it is imperative to note that a few languages use linking elements. Using example (19), Shibatani (2009) argued that converb constructions in Japanese (of the Altaic language family) are similar to serial verb constructions based on the extraction possibilities and negation criterion. However, the converbial element *te* between the verbs *kai* 'write' and *it* 'go' may be

used as an argument against the status of example (19) as a serial verb construction.

(19) Japanese converbial complex predicates (Shibatani 2009, 258)

Taroo=wa tegami=o kai-te it-ta.

Taro=TOP letter=ACC write-CVB go-PST

‘Taro wrote a letter and went away / Taro went away having written a letter.’

Unterladstetter’s (2020) description based on the typological concept of the no linking criterion is employed in this study. In Unterladstetter’s (2020) schematic representation, $V_x V_y$ is serial verb construction. V_x *junctor* V_y represents multi-clause construction, and V_x (*junctor*) V_y shows covert clause-linking construction. In the first schema, SVC do not have any linking element. In the second schema, multi-clause constructions contain linking elements that form coordinated structures. In addition, the insertion of a linking element changes the meaning of the clauses. In the third schema, the linking element is optional. In this case, speakers may allow the use of a linking element between verbs in sequence without a change in meaning. The last schema, according to Unterladstetter (2020), is referred to as a covert clause-linking construction. In this study, the last schema leads to the argument that constructions (14d) and (14e) and repeated as (20a) and (20c) below are not serial verb constructions since the Ilokano linking element (*ng*)*a* may be inserted between the verbal components. Examples (20b) and (20d) illustrate similar constructions with the linking element (*ng*)*a*. In these cases, the structure with the linking element and the one without it have similar meanings. Aside from Ilokano, Cebuano also illustrates this grammatical phenomenon. Tanangkingsing (2009) found out that Cebuano speakers omit the complementizer *nga* in spoken discourse, especially during rapid speech. The verbs in sequence after the omission of the complementizer form a verb complex construction.

(20a) Ilokano construction with a beginning-type verb

Nangrugika nagluton?

nang-rugi=ka nag-luto=n

INT.R-start=2SG.ABS INT.DEL.R-cook=EMPH

‘Have you started cooking?’

(20b) Ilokano construction with a beginning-type verb

Nangrugika nga nagluton?

nang-rugi=ka nga nag-luto=n

INT.R-start=2SG.ABS LKR INT.DEL.R-cook=EMPH

‘Have you started cooking?’

(20c) Ilokano construction with a finish-type verb

Nalpas nangan ni K.

<i>nalpas</i>	<i>nangan</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>K</i>
---------------	---------------	-----------	----------

INT.R.finish	INT.R.eat	SG.PER.ABS	K
--------------	-----------	------------	---

'K has finished eating.'

(20d) Ilokano construction with a finish-type verb

Nalpas nga nangan ni K.

<i>nalpas</i>	<i>nangan</i>	<i>nga</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>K</i>
---------------	---------------	------------	-----------	----------

INT.R.finish	INT.R.eat	LKR	SG.PER.ABS	K
--------------	-----------	-----	------------	---

'K has finished eating.'

Ilokano serial verb constructions in examples (21a) and (21b) lack both overt and covert linking elements. The presence of the complementizer and linker (*nga*) in (21c) and the coordinating element *ken* in (21d) results in ungrammatical constructions.

(21a) *Mapan*-type SVC in Ilokano

Mapan makiraep ni S.

<i>mapan</i>	<i>maki-raep</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>S</i>
--------------	------------------	-----------	----------

INT.IRR.go	INT.IRR.SOC-select rice seedling	SG.PER.ABS	S
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'S will go (somewhere) to select rice seedling.'

(21b) *Umay*-type SVC in Ilokano

Immay naturog dagidiay addim.

<i>imm-ay</i>	<i>na-turog</i>	<i>dagidiay</i>
---------------	-----------------	-----------------

INT.R-come	INT.ADJF-sleep	PL.DIS.ABS
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<d>~adim=m

<PL>younger sibling=2SG.POSS

'Your younger siblings came to sleep.'

(21c) **Mapan nga makiraep ni S.*

<i>mapan</i>	<i>nga</i>	<i>maki-raep</i>
--------------	------------	------------------

INT.IRR.go	COMP	INT.IRR.SOC-select rice seedling
------------	------	----------------------------------

<i>ni</i>	<i>S</i>
-----------	----------

SG.PER.ABS	S
------------	---

'S will go (somewhere) to select rice seedling.'

(21d) *Immay naturog dagidiay addim.

<i>imm-ay</i>	<i>ken</i>	<i>na-turog</i>	<i>dagidiay</i>
INT.R-come	and	INT.ADJF-sleep	PL.DIS.ABS

<d>~adim=m

<PL>younger sibling=2SG.POSS

'Your younger siblings came to sleep.'

It is argued that a linking element may not intervene between two verbs in serial verb constructions in Ilokano. However, there are elements that may be permitted to occur between the sequence of verbs in serial verb constructions in the language. Contiguity is a concept used by Aikhenvald (2006) to describe the integration of verbs in SVC. Aikhenvald (2006, 4) argued that "the more contiguous the components of an SVC are in their surface realization, the more bound together they are, and the closer the whole construction comes to a prototypical SVC."

Contiguity is based on the occurrence of grammatical elements (e.g., core argument such as pronominal, adverbial elements, or negator) that may occur between SVC verbal components. If SVC components do not permit the occurrence of grammatical elements, it is classified as a contiguous SVC. Conversely, an SVC is non-contiguous if grammatical elements are allowed to intervene between the series of verbs. Ingram (2006) asserted that a serializing language like Dumo, a language spoken in New Guinea, has a contiguous SVC as shown in (22a). Moreover, Bowden (2001) posited that Taba, an Austronesian language, has a non-contiguous SVC (e.g., nominal element *welik* 'pig' occurs between the serial verbs *babas* 'bite' and *mot* 'die' in [22b]).

(22a) Contiguous SVC in Dumo (Ingram 2006, 210)

<i>bih</i>	<i>egho</i>	<i>le</i>	<i>a-me</i>	<i>te</i>
house 2PL	2NSGSU.make	3SGFSU.go-thus	south	

'You make your house to the south.'

(22b) Non-contiguous SVC in Taba (Bowden 2008:79)

<i>n=babas</i>	<i>welik</i>	<i>n=mot</i>	<i>do</i>
3SG=bite	pig	3SG=die	REAL

'It bit the pig dead.'

Unlike Dumo, Ilokano does not have contiguous SVC constructions. However, Ilokano as a language that belongs to the Austronesian language family also has a non-contiguous SVC like Taba. This means that Ilokano serial verbs allow grammatical elements to occur between them. These grammatical elements may include pronominal

domains including argument structure, negation, and transitivity-aspect-modality marking. This claim in this study is consistent with Lovestrand's (2020) argument that the monoclausal nature of SVCs is tested using these three domains. Haspelmath (2016) asserted that language-specific measures in identifying monoclausal structures are fatal. He suggested that those who wish to test the clausehood of serial verb constructions must employ Bohnemeyer et al.'s (2007) proposal to only use the single negatability criterion. This criterion, as explained by Haspelmath (2016), contextualizes an instance in which a serial verb construction has only one way of forming negation that scopes over all the verbal components. In this instance, there is a multiple scope interpretation. For example, Haspelmath (2016) explained that the sentence *The children are not playing in the garden* has two negation scope (i.e., 'are not playing' or 'not in the garden'). However, this clausehood test is insufficient in terms of describing Ilokano serial verb constructions, hence the use of three parameters for clausehood by Lovestrand (2020). The approach in this study may help scholars to create more data in comparing SVC.

Argument Structure

As discussed in the introduction, argument sharing between verbal components of a serial verb construction is a criterion for monoclausality. There are two patterns of argument sharing based on the work of Sebba (1987)—same subject and switch subject. In this study, both *umay*-type and *mapan*-type serial verb constructions in Ilokano employ argument sharing. The types of arguments (e.g., NPs and pronominals) that serial verbs in Ilokano share appear to be unrestricted. Argument selection in serial verb constructions is aligned with the transitivity features of the verbs. Examples (24a) and (24c) illustrate grammatical and accepted serial verb constructions in the language, while examples (24b) and (24d) illustrate ungrammatical constructions. In (24a), the verbs *immay* 'came' and *nagsaosao* 'continuously spoke angrily' share the agent argument (i.e., A). In (24c), the agent pronominal *kami* 'we' is the common argument of the verbs *mapan* 'will go' and *makifuds* 'will join a gathering/party.' Sharing of argument in these instances suggests that the agent in a construction is the only entity doing the actions. Example (24a) means that A is the one who came and continuously spoke angrily unlike its ungrammatical counterpart in (24b) that conveys two different agents for two actions. B was the one who came, and A who spoke continuously. Moreover, example (24c) is interpreted as *we go* and *we join a gathering/party*. Inserting another agent argument in the same construction as illustrated in (24d) results in ungrammatical structure.

(24a) *Umay*-type SVC in Ilokano

Immay nagsaosao ni A.

<i>immay</i>	<i>nag-sao~sao</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>A</i>
INT.R.come	INT.DEL.R-CONT~speech	SG.PER.ABS	A

'A came and continuously spoke (angrily).'

(24b) *Umay*-type SVC in Ilokano

*Immay ni B nagsaosao ni A.

<i>immay</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>nag-sao~sao</i>
INT.R.come	SG.PER.ABS	B	INT.DEL.R-CONT~speech

<i>ni</i>	<i>A</i>
SG.PER.ABS	A

'Lit. B came A continuously spoke (angrily).'

(24c) *Mapan*-type SVC in Ilokano

Mapankamsa makifuds nu bigat.

<i>mapan=kami=nsa</i>	<i>maki-fuds</i>	<i>nu</i>	<i>bigat</i>
INT.IRR.go=1PL.EXCL.ABS=PO	INT.IRR.SOC-food	FUT	morning

'Perhaps, we will join a gathering/ party tomorrow.'

(24d) *Mapan*-type SVC in Ilokano

*Mapankamsa makifudsda nu bigat.

<i>mapan=kami=nsa</i>			
INT.IRR.go=1PL.EXCL.ABS=PO			

<i>maki-fuds=da</i>	<i>nu</i>	<i>bigat</i>
INT.IRR.SOC-food=3PL.ABS	FUT	morning

'Perhaps, we will join a (food) party tomorrow.'

Transitivity, Aspect, and Modality Marking

Aside from argument structure, the sharing of grammatical markings is another indication of event singularity in Ilokano SVC. Ross (2021, 556-557) provided three classifications of sharing pattern in SVC. The verbal components of SVC are said to be "agreeing" if each verb has similar and repeated marking (e.g., inflection). They are "sharing" if either the first verb or the final verb is marked with inflection. On the other hand, the pattern is "isolating" if verbal components of SVC do not have relevant verbal inflection.

Transitivity marking of serial verbs in Ilokano follows the "sharing" pattern of Ross (2021). The verbal components of serial verb constructions have similar transitivity value. Example (25a) shows the *umay*-type SVC. Both the serial verbs *umay* 'will come' and *kumagaten* 'will take a bite' contain the intransitive-forming affix

(25d) *Napan naalilaw

napan na-alilaw

INT.R INT.ADJF-confuse

'went confused'

Negation

The last parameter that supports the clausehood of a serial verb construction is negation. Lovstrand (2020) argued that one adequate but not required parameter for monoclausality is the inability to negate a verb in a serial verb construction. In this study, this typological generalization is construed in two ways. The first interpretation is that there is only one element of negation that scopes over the serial verbs in question. The second interpretation is that both verbs in an SVC are negated using only one formative. These interpretations are similar to the negation contexts of serial verbs observed by Mead and Youngman (2008) in Tolaki (an Austronesian language in Indonesia) and observed by Baird (2008) in Kéo (an Austronesian language in Indonesia). There are three negative elements used in Ilokano. According to Rubino (1997), the negative marker *awan* is used to negate existence or possession as in (26a). The negative markers *haan/saan* and *di* are used to negate assertions, responses, desire, or knowledge as shown in (26b) and (26c).

(26a) *Awan*

Awan kwartakon.

awan kwarta=ko=n

N.EXIST money=1SG.ERG=already

'I do not have money already.'

(26b) *Haan / Saan*

Saan met gayam nga napintas.

saan met gayam nga na-pintas

NEG EMPH MIR LKR INT.ADJF-beauty

'Oh, it is not beautiful.'

(26c) *Di*

Dika makalaban?

di=ka maka-laba=n

NEG=2SG.ABS INT.IRR.ABIL-wash (clothes)=already

'You cannot wash (clothes) already?'

Haan/saan in example (27a) or *di* in example (27b) may be used to negate *umay*-type and *mapan*-type serial verbs in the language. The negator occurs before the serial verbs. Moreover, it precedes the first

verb. The position of Ilokano negator in a serial verb construction adheres to Haspelmath's argument that a negation marker may precede the first verb. For example, *haan* in (27a) comes before the verbs *umay* 'will come' and *agsagad* 'will sweep.' In (27b), *di* occurs before the verbs *napan* 'went' and *nagpadait* 'had a cloth sewn.' In these instances, the negative element has a scope over the serial verbs. In these examples, the negator and the serial verbs also form a non-contiguous relationship due to the presence of the formative (*ng*) *a*. In addition, adverbials (e.g., *kuma* 'hopefully') and/or pronominal clitics (e.g., *ka* 'you') may also occur between the negator and the serial verbs as shown in (27c).

(27a) *Umay*-type SVC in Ilokano

Haan umay agsagad ni Manang?

haan nga umay ag-sagad ni Manang

NEG LKR INT.IRR.COME DEL.IRR-broom SG.NPER.ABS sister

'Will Manang not come to sweep?'

(27b) *Mapan*-type SVC in Ilokano

Di nga napan nagpadait diay nagaget.

di nga napan nag-pa-dait

NEG LKR INT.R.GO INT.DEL.R-CAUS-sew

diay na-gaget

SG.DIS.ABS INT.ADJF-industrious

'That industrious (person) did not go have (a cloth) be sewn.'

(27c) *Umay*-type SVC in Ilokano

Haanka koma nga mapan makimisan?

haan=ka kuma nga mapan maki-misa=n

NEG=2SGABS OPT LKR INT.IRR.GO INT.IRR.SOC-MASS=EMPH

'What if you do not go join the mass?'

Functions of SVC in Ilokano

After dealing with the configuration of serial verb constructions in Ilokano, this study also illustrates the syntactic functions of these structures in a clause. In Ilokano, a serial verb construction may be used as an argument of a clause (e.g., nominalized or complement argument).

SVCs as Nominalized Arguments

A serial verb construction in Ilokano may serve as an argument of a clause as in (28). It is preceded by the non-personal nominal marker *ti*. When a verbal structure such as a serial verb becomes a nominalized argument,¹⁸ some of its properties are lost (e.g., illocutionary force,

relationality of the predicate verb, etc.). This analysis is consistent with Kimoto's (2017) observation on another Northern Luzon language (i.e., Arta). Lehmann (1988) used the term desententialization to describe this phenomenon. In this context, the structure becomes more nominal that takes the case marker and turns into a constituent of a predicate. In (28a), the complement-taking desiderative verb *kayat* 'like' takes two arguments. The pronominal argument *ko* 'I' assumes the ergative marking. The other argument is the nominalized serial verb structure *ti mapan agbuya* 'to go watch.' The nominalized serial verbs do not have an overt agent that is supposed to assume the absolutive case because it is the entire nominalized serial verb construction that assumes the absolutive marking. Aside from the example in (28a), a serial verb construction may also be used as a nominalized argument of an adjectival construction as in (28b), and an existential construction as in (28c). The nominalized SVC may also function as a noun phrase that complements the nominal predicate of identificational construction as in (28d).

(28a) Verbal construction

Kayat ko ti mapan agbuya.

kayat ko

TRA.like 1SG.ERG

ti mapan ag-buya

SG.NPER.ABS INT.IRR.go DEL.IRR-watch

'I like to go watch (something).'

(28b) Adjectival construction

Narigat ti mapan agsikka nu napudot.

na-rigat ti mapan

INT.ADJF-difficulty SG.NPER.ABS INT.IRR.go

ag-sikka nu na-pudot

DEL.IRR- (rice) seedling selection if INT.ADJF-hot

'It is difficult to go and select rice seedling if it is hot.'

(28c) Existential construction

Adda met ti napan nakimisa tattay.

adda met ti napan

EXIST EMPH SG.NPER.ABS INT.R.went

naki-misa tattay

INT.R.SOC-mass a while ago

'There is (somebody) who attended mass a while ago.'

(28d) Identificational construction

Ni Toni kanu ti umay bumisita.

ni *Toni* *kanu*

SG.PER.ABS Toni EVID

ti *umay* <*um*>*bisita*

SG.NPER.ABS INT.IRR.come <INT.IRR>visit

'It is said that Tony will come to visit.'

SVCs as Complement Arguments

In Ilokano, there are complement-taking predicates (e.g., cognition, desiderative, and modality verbs). According to Noonan (1985) some of these predicates may take clauses as arguments. These clauses are referred to as complement clauses. In Ilokano, serial verb constructions may function as complement clauses. Serial verb constructions in the language may be introduced by the formatives (*ng*)*a* or *ta*. For example, the predicate *pudno* 'true' in (29a) takes the serial verb complement *napan gimmatang ni G iti suka* 'Gigi went to buy vinegar' as an argument. It is introduced by the complementizer (*ng*)*a*. In (29b), the predicate *naimbag* 'good' takes the serial verb complement *mapan agdigos isunan* 's/he will go and take a bath' that is introduced by the *ta*. Unlike in (28), some of the features (e.g., argument, temporality sharing, etc.) of serial verbs are retained in serial verb complements. As an argument, the component verbs of an SVC cannot be embedded individually. This characteristic is a noteworthy criterion that may support the monoclausality of an SVC.

(29a) (*ng*)*a* serial verb complement in Ilokano

Pudno nga napan gimmatang ni G iti suka.

pudno *nga* *napan* <*imm*>*gatang*

ASS COMP INT.R.go <INT.R.>buy

ni *G* *iti* *suka*

SG.PER.ABS G SG.NPER.OBL vinegar

'It is true that Gigi went (out) to buy vinegar.'

(29b) *ta* serial verb complement in Ilokano

Naimbag ta mapan agdigos isunan.

naimbag *ta* *mapan* *ag-digos*

good COMP INT.IRR.go DEL.IRR-bathe

isuna=n

3SG.ABS=EMPH

'It is good that s/he will go and take a bath.'

Conclusion

In this study, the characteristics of serial verb constructions in Ilokano are discussed. Based on cross-linguistic criteria for describing serial verb constructions (composition, no linking morpheme, and monoclausality), serial verb constructions in Ilokano from the data are formed by two independent verbs without any overt coordination or subordination marking. They illustrate asymmetrical relationships. The first verb provides the action modification, and the second verb expresses a dynamic action. Similar to the comparative characteristics of serial verb constructions, SVC in the language indicates a single event by taking one core argument and expressing one transitivity and modality value of the verbal components. In addition, the serial verbs in the language cannot be individually negated or embedded. Finally, an SVC construction may be used as a nominalized argument introduced by the nominal marker *ti* and a complement argument introduced either by *(ng)a* or *ta*.

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Notes

1. I would like to acknowledge the three speakers from Magsingal, Ilocos Sur who participated in the discussion of the data presented in this article and the anonymous reviewers of my manuscript for the comments and suggestions.
2. This publication includes SVC in Kéo (Eastern Indonesia), Taba (Eastern Indonesia), Tetun Dili (East Timor), and Tolaki (South-Eastern Sulawesi, Indonesia).
3. These scholars discussed or explained verbal composition; linking morpheme; transitivity, aspect, modality, and polarity status of verbs in these constructions; argument sharing; and singularity of event; and intonation contour to describe serial verb constructions. However, Muysken and Veenstra (1994) did not address singular event as a criterion, and Durie (1997) did not resolve linking morpheme as a criterion.

4. Due to this criterion, auxiliary verbs will not be considered in the study of serial verb constructions.
5. van Staden and Reesink (2008) only mentioned the word subordinated (formally) which may not include coordinated lexemes.
6. Haspelmath (2016) argued that the single marker of tense, mood, or negation occurs either before the first verb or following the last verb of serial verbs.
7. In consonance with Aikhenvald (2006), this study also identifies two classifications of arguments—core arguments (conceptually required argument/s of verbs as marked or specified by any grammatical means, e.g., morphology) and peripheral arguments (obliques and other optionally included elements that are not dependent on a predicate, e.g., verb).
8. This study only provides one study of a language from one Philippine language subgroup that has two or more grammar references or studies.
9. Tanangkingsing (2009) did not provide clear parameters (based on cross-linguistic notions) on excluding this example as a serial verb construction.
10. Ergativity, in its common usage, is the actancy structure when S and O share grammatical connection coding, while A has a distinct grammatical relation coding. S is assigned the nominative/ absolutive case of an intransitive clause. A of transitive clause is assigned to ergative case, and O of transitive clause is assigned to nominative/ absolutive case.
11. Bondoc (2020) investigated the relativization of pivot in Philippine languages including Pangasinan, Western Subanon, Blaan, Akeanon, and Cebuano.
12. Nolasco and Saclot (2006) used data from Tagalog, Sebwano, and Ilokano to describe transitivity.
13. Data of the author in this study is presented in interlinear format. The first line provides the spoken or written data. The second line provides morphological parsing and analyses. The third line provides the morpheme-by-morpheme glosses. The last last/ fourth line presents the free English translation.
14. To Rubino (1997), this clause is a canonical transitive construction.
15. To Rubino (1997), this clause is an antipassive construction that allows the morphological detransitivization of verbs.
16. Haspelmath (2016) builds on the concept of verb proposed by Croft (2001).

17. These distinctions are consistent with the classifications of Sebba (1987) who contrasted fixed verbs with free verbs.
18. Rubino (1997) identified this structure as nominal *ti* complementation.

Appendix: Abbreviations and Symbols Used in this Description

=	Clitic boundary	INF	Infinitive
< >	Infix	INFER	Inferred
-	Morpheme separator	INT	Intransitive
~	Reduplication	IRR	Irrealis
*	Ungrammatical	LKR	Linker
1	First Person	LOC	Locative
2	Second Person	M	Masculine
3	Third Person	MED	Medial
I	Active (non-past)	MIR	Mirative
II	Active (past)	NEG	Negator
ABIL	Abilitative	NEXIST	Non-exist
ABS	Absolutive	NLR	Nominalizer
ADJF	Adjective-forming	NOM	Nominative Marker
AV	Actor voice	NPER	Non-personal
ART	Study	NSG	Non-singular
CAUS	Causative	OBJ	Object
CL	Classifier	OBL	Oblique
CM	Confirmation marker	PER	Personal
CMPL	Completive	PF	Perfective
COMP	Complementizer	PL	Plural
CONT	Continuous	PO	Possibility
DEL	Deliberate	POSS	Possessive
DEM	Demonstrative	PRES	Present
DIS	Distal	PROX	Proximal
ELEV	Elevational	PST	Past
EMPH	Emphatic	REAL	Realis

ERG	Ergative	REC	Recent
EXCL	Exclusive	SG	Singular
EVID	Evidential	SOC	Sociative
EXIST	Existential	SU	Subject
EXP	Experiential Aspect	T O P .	Topical non-subject
		NON.A/S	
F	Feminine	TRA	Transitive
FUT	Future		
HAB	Habitual		
IMP	Imperative		

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