Chapter 8
Serial verb constructions

8.1 Introduction

The term ‘serial verb construction’ has been used to describe a very wide range of observed phenomena in different languages, often with very few points of commonality. A discussion of how the Tukang Besi facts that are here described as ‘serial verb constructions’ fit into the different categories that have been proposed to account for the phenomenon follows a description of the forms themselves, and the morphosyntactic restrictions that apply to them.

These (very divergent) forms are all treated in this one chapter because they do share some properties as a class that separate them from other grammatical phenomena; these are, namely, that both of the two verbs in a serial verb construction:

° are not marked as being subordinate in any way to another syntactic unit;
° are not so independent as to be able to take independent aspect marking, or separate negation;
° share an argument (though see the discussion of ambient serial verb constructions).

These are the criteria that Durie (1988:3) used to define serialisation:

In simple descriptive terms, serialization is 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 bound together syntactically and/or morphologically on the basis of sharing one or more core arguments, and neither verb is subordinate to the other. Typically in a serial verb construction there is no marker of subordination or coordination, no dividing intonational or morphological mark of a clause boundary, and the verbs cannot have separate scope for tense, mood, aspect, illocutionary force, and negation. (Emphases mine [MHD])

In terms of dependence, serial verb constructions appear to fall between fully independent sequences of verbs in their own clauses (such as conjoined clauses, described in chapter 18) and fully dependent (such as relative clauses, see chapter 15) constructions, in that they display some dependency on each other (as mentioned above), yet are not morphologically marked as subordinate in any way. In terms of bondedness, a serial verb construction is more tightly bound than either of these two constructions, in the case of contiguous serialisations behaving similarly to a verb with morphology such as causatives or applicatives (chapters 9 and 10).

There are two broad categories into which the class of serial verb constructions will be
divided, for ease of explication. These are referred to as NON-CONTIGUOUS and
CONTIGUOUS constructions, following the terminology used by Durie (nd) (this
terminology corresponds in most important ways to Foley and Van Valin’s nuclear versus
core junctures (1984: 188)). An example of each of these can be seen in (1) and (2):

(1) \([\text{To-[wila]}\text{V}]_{\text{VP}} \ [\text{to-[koruo]}\text{V}]_{\text{VP}} \ kua \ wungka.\]
\begin{align*}
1\text{PL.R-go} & \quad 1\text{PL.R-many} \quad \text{ALL ridge} \\
\text{‘Lots of us went to the ridge.’} & \quad \text{(ie., ‘We went to the ridge, we were many.’)}
\end{align*}

(2) \([\text{To-[wila]}\text{V}-[\text{koruo}]\text{V}]_{\text{VP}} \ kua \ wungka.\]
\begin{align*}
1\text{PL.R-go-many} & \quad \text{ALL ridge} \\
\text{‘Lots of us went to the ridge.’}
\end{align*}

In (1) there are two separate verb phrase entities, each with its own subject marking,
whereas (2) shows only on set of subject prefixes for the whole verbal complex. With
transitive verbs and overt nominal objects the difference is even more noticeable, as seen in
(3) and (4):

(3) \([\text{No-[helo’a]}\text{V} \ \text{te} \ \text{roukau}]_{\text{VP}} \ \text{[[ako]}\text{V} \ \text{te} \ \text{ana-no}]_{\text{VP}}.\]
\begin{align*}
3\text{R-cook} & \quad \text{CORE vegetables do.for CORE child-3POSS} \\
\text{‘She cooked the vegetables for her children.’}
\end{align*}

(4) \([\text{No-[helo’a]}\text{V}-[\text{ako}]\text{V} \ \text{te} \ \text{ana-no} \ \text{te} \ \text{roukau}]_{\text{VP}}.\]
\begin{align*}
3\text{R-cook-do.for CORE child-3POSS CORE vegetables} \\
\text{‘She cooked the vegetables for her children.’}
\end{align*}

We may represent these different structures, that of the non-contiguous type, seen in (1)
and (3), and the contiguous serial type, seen in (2) and (4), with the structures proposed
below:

(5) Non-contiguous serialisation:

```
S
  / \   /
 VP  VP (KP)
    / \   /
   V'  V' (KP)
     / \   /
    V   V
```

(6) Contiguous serialisation:

```
S
  / \   /
 VP (KP) (KP)
    / \   /
   V'  V' (KP)
     / \   /
    V   V
```
In non-contiguous serialisation, each verb has its own core arguments selected, with at least one of these arguments coreferential between the two verbs. When the two verbs are contiguously joined, there can be no independent specification of arguments. In the examples presented so far, the shared argument has been the subject of both of the verbs (using ‘subject’ and ‘object’ to refer to the arguments bearing [S,A] and [O] syntactic roles in a clause, respectively, as described at the beginning of chapter 3). It is also possible, in a contiguous serial verb construction, for the object of the first verb to be coreferential with the subject of the second. An example of this is seen in (7):


3R-pound-straight-3OBJ NOM machete CORE LaMbagi
‘La Mbagi beat the machete blade straight.’ (M:20)

This is only possible if the second verb is unaccusative, and the first verb describes an action that totally affects its object. This type of serialisation is here called switch-subject serialisation (following Crowley 1987), as opposed to same-subject serialisation, which has been exemplified in (1) - (4).

A further distinction is found, depending on whether the function of the serial verb construction is to simply increase the valency of the clause (as described in 8.2.2) or to build a complex predicate in which two (or more, though this is not attested in Tukang Besi) verbs are used together to describe an action in more detail than is otherwise possible in the language (such as (2) above). This last usage is referred to here as a ‘predicate-building’ function (as per Foley and Van Valin 1984: 205): no new arguments are added to the predicate, but the semantic specification of the predicate is enhanced. Finally, there is a construction that is treated here as serialisation even though it is very different to the other forms of serialisation described here in that it does not share any arguments between the verbs: ‘ambient’ serialisation. This is described in 8.2.3, 8.2.4, 8.2.5 and 8.3.5.

The interaction of these sets of parameters, one concerned with the level of the serialisation, and the other dealing with the relationship between the arguments of each of the verbs, would logically yield eight different types of serial verb constructions. In practice, however, the full range of possibilities is not realised. The combinations that are found in Tukang Besi are shown in table 12:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Same subject</th>
<th>Switch subject</th>
<th>Multiple Object</th>
<th>Ambient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-contiguous</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contiguous</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen that switch-subject serialisation is the only form of serialisation that does not occur in both contiguous and non-contiguous forms. All the other forms have both contiguous and non-contiguous variants. These are discussed separately in the sections following.

8.2 Non-contiguous serialisation

In a non-contiguous serial verb construction there is argument sharing between the verbs,
with the subject the same for both verbs. Importantly, however, both verbs have their own array of grammatical functions; one of these arguments is linked with an argument of the other verb in the construction, but the verbs are each in their own VP in the same clause.

8.2.1 Same-subject

Same subject serialisations are common at the core level, usually involving motion or posture verbs, and another verb that specifies the manner in which that motion or posture verb is carried out.

Despite their frequency, non-contiguous same subject serialisations are also the most difficult to establish unambiguously as serial verb constructions. An example of the difficulty is presented as a discussion of this form of serialisation. With a basic movement verb preceding the manner verb, there are two different interpretations allowed. The basic meaning is the same, but an alternative (clearly biclausal) interpretation of purpose is also allowed:

(8) Te anabou iso α no-wila β no-kee-ngkee γ kua wunua.

CORE child yon 3R-go 3R-RED-hop ALL house

‘The child went hopping to the house.’ (M:20)

(or: ‘The child went to the house in order to hop.’)

(The verb kee only indicates a single hop, and so must be reduplicated if it appears in a clearly extended activity (assuming that the house is more than one hop away))

Adding mbeaka ‘not’ in the positions indicated by the Greek letters α, β and γ changes the meaning of the sentences, and shows that interpretations with both a biclausal reading and a single-clause reading are grammatical. The different interpretations for the different positions of mbeaka are:

α  ‘The child didn’t go hopping to the house.’

OR  ‘The child didn’t go to the house to hop.’

*  ‘The child didn’t go, but did hop to the house.’

β  ‘The child didn’t hop to the house (but DID go, in some other way.)’

With the negator inserted in the β position there is a biclausal interpretation. Inserting mbeaka before both the verbs, at the point marked by α, can cause it to negate both of the verbs, clearly indicating that they are part of the same clause, or negate the first of the verbs, if the sentence is interpreted biclausally (as in the second reading). The two grammatical interpretations of the sentence with a negator in the α position are represented structurally as seen below in (8)’, representing a monoclausal interpretation with negation applying to both verbs, and (8)”, which is a biclausal interpretation of the same string.
As it stands, without a negator or obligatory intonational clues indicated, the sentence in (8) is morphosyntactically ambiguous between a monoclausal serial verb reading, and a biclausal reading. Aspect marking is another clue to the mono- or biclausal nature of the sentence. Aspect cannot be marked in the $\alpha$ position. Applying an aspectual marker (the perfective suffix -$\text{-mo}$) to the $\beta$ position produces a biclausal interpretation; with aspect marked at the position marked by $\gamma$, the clause is likely to be interpreted as a serial verb construction.

$\beta$ 'The child had gone, and (then) hopped to the house.'

$\gamma$ 'The child had gone and hopped to the house.'

OR 'The child went, and had hopped to the house.'

An example of an unambiguously biclausal sentence can now be given. The sentence in (8) appears initially to satisfy the requirements for being classified as a serial verb construction, two verbs functioning as a complex predicate with no morphological intrusions, no intonation break, and necessary agreement between the two verbs in terms of subject marking. However, this appearance is deceptive:

(9) *Te anabou* iso $\alpha$ *no-kee-ngkee* $\beta$ *no-wila* kua wunua.

CORE child yon 3R-RED-hop 3R-go ALL house

'The child went hopping to the house.' (M:20)

Trying to add a negator to the sentence in different positions, in the same manner as was done in (8), produces the following interpretations, and serves as evidence that the sentence is not a monoclausal serial verb construction, but is actually biclausal:
In order for *mbeaka* to be inserted in either of the positions indicated with the readings shown, there must be a pause after *nokeengkee*, clearly delineating the two clauses. Note that in the basic sentence, without *mbeaka* inserted, there is *not* a noticeable intonation break between *nokeengkee* and *nowila*. Furthermore, the requirement that the two verbs share the same subject is *not* a product of the serial verb construction alone, but of general restrictions on cross-clausal anaphora (see chapters 3 and 20 for more details).

A still closer juncture between the two verbs can be seen in 8.3.1, in which the two verbs are contiguously serialised.

We have seen that in order to be interpreted as a non-contiguous serial verb construction, the following conditions must be met by the two verbs involved:

- scope of negators must include both verbs;
- aspect may be marked only once;
- no intonation break may be present (even when negators are used)

(Given that no intonation break is necessary for even biclausal sentences, this is a necessary but not a sufficient criterion for determining that a given sentence involves a serial verb construction.)

### 8.2.2 Multiple object

Multiple object serial verb constructions are found in Tukang Besi in non-contiguous structures with the verb *ako* ‘do for’. The use of *ako* in this position is interpreted as verbal in that it governs a core KP, a trait shared only by verbs, and not prepositions. On the other hand, it is not affixed with subject prefixes, the presence of which is another trait universally shared by verbs. The most logical interpretation of this inconsistent behaviour is that *ako* does not fit completely into either the class of verbs or prepositions; we might speculate that there is a process of regrammaticalisation taking place at the current time, in which *ako* is caught between two classes, simultaneously displaying some of the characteristics of both (it is interesting to note that all of the verbal morphology that occurs following the verb shows evidence of being less closely bound to the verb than the verbal prefixes, and that it is all more transparently relatable to free morphology; the evidence suggests that the post-verbal verbal morphology is in fact a collection of V'-level enclitics, as opposed to the preverbal prefixes). Regardless of the formal approach taken, the use of *ako* + KP in a clause is to increase the valency of that clause through the addition of extra arguments. Indeed, Foley and Van Valin (1984: 207) mention that, in their examination of serial verb constructions:

In one sense the functions of serial verbs and prepositions/oblique case markers are similar in that they mark NPs which are *not normally* core arguments of the main verb of the clause.

In Tukang Besi the boundary of the class ‘preposition’ is at best ambiguous with many ‘prepositional’ roles being carried out by verbs, either in or out of serial constructions, but
serial verb constructions that look less verb-like than other constructions, ones in which
the valency of the clause is not raised. These constructions are always multiple-object type
serial verb constructions, one subject serving as the same for both verbs. The
characterisation of this form of serialisation is as set out below:

\[
x \text{ does } V_1 \text{ (to } y), \text{ performing the action and also doing } V_2 \text{ to } z.
\]

The verb *ako* ‘do for’ appears in either a contiguous constructions or non-contiguous
constructions, the second of these functioning similarly to the ‘prepositional’ role,
introducing new arguments into the clause:

Non-contiguous serialisation:

(10) *No-wila kua daoə ako te ina-no.*
  3R-go ALL market do.for CORE mother-3POSS
  ‘They went to the market for their mother.’

Biclausal:

(11) *No-wila kua daoə, no-ako te ina-no.*
  3R-go ALL market 3R-do.for CORE mother-3POSS
  ‘They went to the market, all the while doing it for their mother.’

The difference between (10) and the non-contiguous serialisation examples seen earlier in
(8) and (9) is that in (10) the second verb in the series does not use subject prefixes.
Sentence (11) shows a biclausal sentence, the oblique prepositional phrase *kua daoə*
and the (optional) pause breaking up the series of subject-inflected verbs. A non-
contiguous serial verb construction with subject prefixes on *ako* is not possible:

(12) *No-wila no-ako te ina-no kua daoə.*
  3R-go 3R-do.for CORE mother-3POSS ALL market
  ‘They went doing it for their mother.’

Unlike the predicate-building constructions, valency-increasing non-contiguous serial verb
constructions only allow aspect to be marked on the first verb in the core series. The
second verb, which is not affixed to indicate the subject, may not take aspect markers:

(13) *No-helo’a-ke-mo ako te ina-no.*
  3R-cook-3OBJ-PF BEN CORE mother-3POSS
  ‘They cooked it for their mother.’

(14) *No-helo’a-ke ako-mo te ina-no.*
  3R-cook-3OBJ BEN-PF CORE mother-3POSS

The set of verbs that exhibit this kind of behaviour in serial verb constructions is extremely
restricted. Elsewhere (chapter 10) *ako* and some other morphemes are treated as applicative
suffixes (and glossed as APPL), to which they are functionally equivalent (see section 8.5
for a discussion on the difficulties in meaningfully separating serial verbs and some other
processes that are traditionally regarded as bound morphemes). Regardless of the analysis,
the next most verb-like is the verb *kene* ‘accompany’, which in a non-contiguous
serialisation serves to introduce an extra argument participating in the verbal state or action:
(preposition-like function):

(15) No-wila kene ina-no.
3R-go accompany mother-3POSS
‘She went with her mother.’

In this construction kene is less verb-like than ako in the equivalent structure. Here it differs in that the object of kene is not in a core KP, thus arguing for a prepositional interpretation of kene. Diachronically this too is best described as a process of grammaticalisation, a root changing categories and becoming a member of an evolving preposition / conjunction class, with kene further down this track than ako. Chapters 10 and 18 present alternative analyses of the constructions involving kene. One feature unites kene with ako: they are both capable of expressing their object by means of object suffixes, a trait that prepositions do not share. Compare (16) - (20):

(16) No-wila kua daoa ako-‘e.
3R-go ALL market do.for-3OBJ
‘They went to the market for her.’
(In this construction the verb ako may take EITHER object suffixes, OR a nominal object, but NOT both. See chapter 5 for further discussion of this restriction.)

(17) No-wila kene-‘e.
3R-go accompany-3OBJ
‘She went with her.’

(18) * No-wila apa-‘e.
3R-go ENDPOINT-3OBJ
‘She went up to it.’

(19) * No-wila kua-‘e.
3R-go ALL-3OBJ
‘She went to her.’

(20) * No-rato mina-‘e.
3R-arrive from-3OBJ
‘She arrived from it.’

As a main verb, kene has the meaning ‘accompany’:

Independent Verb:

(21) No-kene te ina-no.
3R-accompany CORE mother-3POSS
‘She accompanied her mother.’

More details on the constraints that apply to the use of kene can be found in chapter 18.

8.2.3 ‘Ambient’ serialisation: predicates with no arguments

Ambient serialisation is a term used by Crowley (1987: 40) to refer to a situation in which
it is neither the subject of the first verb,…nor the object…that is marked on the second verb. Rather, the second verb refers to the general act…, with no particular participants in mind.

This sort of serial verb construction is also found in Tukang Besi, except that, perhaps predictably, the ordering of the two verbs is the other way around, with the first verb commenting on the general action denoted by the second verb (Paamese, which Crowley was discussing, is an SVO language, whereas Tukang Besi is basically a VOS language). This is exemplified in (22):

(22) \[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ambient:} \\
&[O-tantu]\_v \ [[no-rato]_v \ sabentara]. \\
&3R\text{-certain} \ 3R\text{-arrive} \ \text{in.a.moment} \\
\text{‘They’ll be here in a moment for certain.’} \\
\text{(ie., ‘It is certain they will arrive in a moment.’)}
\end{align*}
\]

These constructions appear to violate the otherwise firm restriction that there must be some argument-sharing between the two verbs in the serial verb construction, one of the defining characteristics introduced at the start of this chapter. It is clear, however, that the sort of predicates that enter into this sort of construction are precisely the sort that are used in raising constructions in languages like English. A similar solution is proposed to the apparent contradiction that arises in calling these serial verb constructions when there is no shared argument: one of the verbs, \textit{o-mura} in the example below, does not assign any arguments, and so has no argument to share. The subcategorisation frame for \textit{mura} is as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{‘mura} &\langle \text{[semantics of likely]} \rangle \\
\end{align*}
\]

and so for the serial verb construction in (23):

(23) \[
\begin{align*}
&[O-mura-mura]_v \ [[no-pa-muru]_v \ na \ Joni \ di \ iko'o]. \\
&3R\text{-RED-likely} \ 3R\text{-OCC-bald} \ 2SG \ 3R\text{-OCC-bald} \\
\text{‘John is likely to be angry at you.’} \\
\text{(ie., ‘It is likely (that) John will be angry at you.’)}
\end{align*}
\]

the combined predicate structure is as shown in (23)’:

(23)’ \text{‘likely} \langle \text{[semantics of likely]} \ \text{be angry} \langle \text{[Dative]} \ \text{[Locative]} \rangle \rangle \text{’}

There are two different sorts of ambient serialisation, divided on the need for the subject prefixes of the two verbs to agree or not, a division that also corresponds to the ability of any aspectual marking to appear on the second verb or not. These two sorts of serialisation are discussed separately below in sections 8.2.4 and 8.2.5.

8.2.4 Ambient serialisation with no subject agreement

There are two types of ambient serialisation, the (more common) case of third-person
marking on the first verb (all ambient serialisation is non-contiguous), and ambient serialisation with the semi-verb *ane*, which does not take subject prefixes at all. In both cases, the first verb is a comment on the whole clause that is headed by the second verb. The third person subject prefix on the ambient serialised verb can be thought of as indexing the whole following clause. This would explain why it is invariably third person (the same as is found with impersonal, subjectless weather verbs (see chapter 20), and optionally with passive verbs), and displays no agreement with the following subject prefix. The relationship between the two verbs can be characterised as follows:

\[ x \text{ does } V_2 \text{ (to } y) , \text{ and the whole event is } V_1. \]

For instance, the ambient serialisation in (44) adds information about the whole clause, and is not confined to just one of the arguments in it:

(24) \[ O_i-[\text{jari}]_V \ [nu-[\text{ada}]_V \ te \ sipeda-su]_i \ la-i! \]
\[
\begin{array}{llllllll}
3R & \text{become} & 2SG.R & \text{borrow} & \text{CORE} & \text{bicycle-1SG.POSS} & \text{ILL.FORCE-FAMILIAR} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘Sure you can borrow my bike!’

There is a limited set of verbs that has been observed in ambient serial verb constructions. Prominent in this list are the following (listed with *o-* ‘third person realis subject prefix’ attached):

- *o-jari* become, happen
- *o-membali* become, permit
- *o-tantu* certain
- *o-ha’a* why, how
- *o-mura* likely
- *o-leama* good
- *o-mamuda* easy, convenient
- *o-marasai* difficult

The verbs above all appear with third person subject prefixes, invariant for the person or number of the subject of the second verb, which is prefixed to indicate the person and number of the subject.

Examples of ambient serial verb constructions are presented in (25) - (28):

(25) \[ O-mura \ ku-rato \ 'uka \ ilange. \]
\[
\begin{array}{llllllllll}
3R & \text{maybe} & 1SG & \text{arrive also} & \text{tomorrow} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘I might come over tomorrow as well.’

(26) \[ O-marasai \ ku-gande-ko \ i \ honda-su. \]
\[
\begin{array}{llllllllllllllll}
3R & \text{become} & 1SG & \text{give.a.lift-2SG.OBJ} & \text{OBL} & \text{motorbike-1SG.POSS} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘I probably can’t give you a lift on my motorbike.’

(27) \[ O-ha’a \ tabeda \ to-wila \ loeloe? \]
\[
\begin{array}{llllllllll}
3R & \text{why} & \text{necessary} & 1PL.R & \text{go} & \text{slowly} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘Why will we have to go slowly?’
Serial verb constructions

(28) *O-leama no-pogau Wanse da.*
3R-good 3R-speak Wanci ILL.FORCE
‘He can speak Wanci well.’

The semi-verb *ane* ‘be, exist’, consistent with its irregular ‘semi-verbal’ behaviour, appears without subject prefixes, yet is the first verb in the series. In a serial construction it gives a progressive aspect to the sentence, and often appears with the aspect suffix -ho ‘yet’ or -do ‘emphatically yet’:

(29) *Ane-ho no-wande.*
exist-yet 3R-rain
‘It’s still raining.’

(30) a. Question: *Ane-h(o) o-mohoo?* b. Answer: *Ane-do!*
exist-yet 3R-sick exist-EMPH
‘Is he still sick?’ ‘Sure is (of course)!’

8.2.5 Ambient serialisation with subject agreement

The use of serialisation as a means of expressing modal distinctions is found with the verbs *agori* ‘immediately’ and *po’oli* ‘finish’, *parahuu* and *hematu* ‘begin, start’, and the semi-verb *ane* ‘exist’. These form non-contiguous serial verb constructions, always appearing as the first verb in the series, and generally satisfying the conditions placed on non-contiguous serial constructions as regards the placement and scope of negatives, as described for example (8) earlier. The two verbs combine to produce a modal interpretation and an action as seen below:

\[ x \text{ does a } V_1 \text{ kind of } V_2 \text{ (to } y). \]

In addition to these verbs serving in clearly modal roles in the clause, the verb *soba* ‘try’ is included here because of its morphosyntactic behaviour, which is identical to these other modal verbs.

\[
\begin{align*}
o-agori & \quad \text{immediately} \\
o-harai & \quad \text{extremely} \\
o-hematuu & \quad \text{begin to} \\
o-parahuu & \quad \text{start} \\
o-po’oli & \quad \text{finish} \\
o-saori & \quad \text{very} \\
o-soba & \quad \text{try}
\end{align*}
\]

Examples of modal serialisations are:

(31) *Te tukatutu no-agori no-tode...*  
CORE blacksmith 3R-immediate 3R-flee
‘The blacksmith fled without delay...’ (G:7)
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(32) ‘U-po’oli-mo ‘u-po-’awa ke iai-su?
2SG.R-finish-PF 2SG.R-REC-obtain and younger.sibling-1SG.POSS
‘Have you met my younger sister already?’

(33) La’a-m(o) meana’e ku-para-huu ku-buri i boku.
just-PF now 1SG-ITER-begin 1SG-write OBL book
‘I have just now begun to write in the book.’

(34) Ku-hematuu-mo ku-henahenai te pogau Wanse.
1SG-begin-PF 1SG-learn CORE language Wanici
‘I have begun to learn Wanci.’

Note that in (32) and (34) the first verb in each serial construction has an aspect suffix, yet the sentence is still interpreted monoclausally (contrary to the discussion following example (8) earlier, and see (36) below). Indeed, the second verb CANNOT be marked for aspect, as seen in (35):

(35) * Ku-hematuu ku-henahenai-mo te pogau Wanse.
1SG-begin 1SG-learn-PF CORE language Wanici

This is completely the opposite case to the restrictions on aspect marking on predicate building non-contiguous serialisations, or ambient serialisation, shown by the following examples:

(36) * Te anabou iso no-wila-mo no-kee-ngkee kua wunua.
CORE child yon 3R-go-PF 3R-RED-hop ALL house
(Good with a biclausal interpretation: ‘The child had already gone, then he hopped to the house.’)

(37) * O-mura-mo ku-rato ’uka ilange.
3R-maybe-PF 1SG-arrive also tomorrow
‘It is already a possibility that I might come over tomorrow as well.’

Notice that although ane has been listed as a verb that occurs in both ambient serialisations and modal serialisations, the morphosyntactic restrictions on aspectual affix placement (almost inevitably found in modal serialisations, and very common with ambient serialisations) make the particular reading unambiguous. Compare (38) and (39):

Ambient serialisation: aspect marked on V₂:

(38) Ane no-‘eka-do i Tindoi.
exist 3R-climb-EMPH OBL Tindoi
‘They really are going up to Tindoi.’
* ‘They are going to Tindoi right now.’

Modal serialisation: aspect marked on V₁:

(39) Ane-do no-‘eka i Tindoi.
exist-EMPH 3R-climb OBL Tindoi
‘They are going up to Tindoi right now.’
* ‘They really are going up to Tindoi.’

The morphosyntactic difference between this type of serialisation and the sort discussed in
8.2.4 becomes obvious when we try to combine the two verbs of this class without identical subject indexing:

(40) * O-saori ku-mele ku-po-’awa-ngkene-ko.
     3R-very 1SG-happy 1SG-REC-get-COM-2SG.OBJ
     ‘I’m very happy to have met you.’

Similar ungrammaticality is found is we try to combine two verbs of the sort seen in 8.2.4, yet have them show subject concord:

(41) * Ku-marasai ku-ala-’e na kau pe’esa-su saba’ane.
     1SG-difficult 1SG-fetch-3OBJ NOM wood own-1SG.POSS all
     ‘I won’t be able to fetch all the wood by myself.’

8.3 Contiguous serialisation

8.3.1 Same-subject

A basic example of a contiguous serial verb construction, paralleling those seen already in 8.2.1, is given in (42), where the subject marking is absent from the second verb, and the two verbs are bound as one phonological word. They are not able to be split up by pauses or negators, without detracting from their status as ‘good’ language:

(42) Te anabou iso α no-wila-β-kee-ngkee-γ kua wunua.
     CORE child yon 3R-go-RED-hop ALL house
     ‘The child went hopping to the house.’ (M:20)

Inserting negators in the positions marked with α and β, as in 8.2.1, yields the following interpretations:

α ‘The child didn’t hop to the house.’
β (not possible)

The structure representing the sentence in (42) is as seen in (42)’ (compare with the trees given for (8) in 8.2.1):

(42)’

Assuming that these are now verbs joined contiguously within the VP, we would expect them to take the same marking for aspect, and not be able to independently specify it. This is in fact exactly what happens. Attempting to attach the perfective clitic -mo to the verbal complex at the positions marked β and γ yields only one grammatical reading:
β (not possible)

γ ‘The child has already gone hopping to the house.’

* ‘The child is going and has already hopped to the house.’

If -mo (or either of the other aspect markers, -ho or -do (see chapter 7)) is inserted in the position marked by β, the second verb must take independent subject prefixes, and agree with the first verb for aspect marking. The sentence must also have a biclausal interpretation, and cannot be interpreted as a serial verb construction, as in (43):

(43) Te anabou iso no-wila-mo, no-kee-ngkee-mo
CORE child yon 3R-PF 3R-PF
kua wunua.
ALL house
‘The child has gone and has hopped to the house.’ (M:20)

There is a fourth requirement for contiguous serialisations of predicate-building constructions: the second verb in the construction may not DISPLAY a higher valency than the first, and if the verb is of a higher transitivity than the first, then the valency of that verb is reduced in the serial verb construction. Attempting to serialise a transitive verb with the intransitive wila at a contiguous level leads to a decrease in valency of the transitive verb (different from the common process of unspecified object deletion, in that the occurrence of an object is judged ungrammatical in this sort of serial verb construction). Sentence (44) is an acceptable non-contiguous serial verb construction:

(44) No-wila no-lolaha te ana t[um]okabi.
3R-go 3R-search CORE child lost.SI
‘They went and looked for the lost child.’

Negators follow the pattern in (8). The sentence may be interpreted as either two clauses without overt conjunction, or as one clause with a serial verb construction. Imitating (42), and combining the two verbs contiguously renders the sentence ungrammatical if the object is overtly retained either in a KP or as an object suffix:

(45) a. * No-wila-lolaha te ana t[um]okabi.
3R-go-search CORE child lost.SI
‘They went searching for the lost child.’

The verb sequence is acceptable if lolaha is taken as indicating the manner in which the party went, not as specifying an additional action:

b. No-wila-lolaha.
3R-go-search
‘They went searching.’

This behaviour, the inability of a transitive verb serialised with an intransitive verb to appear with an object (as in (45a)) contradicts a widespread cross-linguistic generalisation that states that the displayed transitivity of a serial verb construction will be at least equal to that of the transitivity of its highest member. This is in clear contrast with the
grammaticality of the following very similar example from Yimas (Foley 1991:283):

(46) Yimas:

\[ \text{Marj} \text{i} \text{kia-ka-nana,\text{-kamal-kula-ntut.} } \]
leaf.stem.VII.PL VII.PL.O-1SG.A-DUR-search-walk-RM.PAST
‘I walked around looking for leaf stems.’

Here, as Foley explains it,

one verb root \textit{kamal} – ‘search’ is bivalent while the other, \textit{kula} – ‘walk’, is monovalent. The bivalent verb root licenses the whole verb theme to be inflected as transitive.

As seen in (45), the reverse is the case in Tukang Besi, when the verbs are functioning to build a semantically more complex predicate. This is not the case in serial verb constructions which function basically as valency-increasing devices; see the discussion in 8.2.2 and the examples in that section.

There is another (small) set of serial verb constructions, ones that can appear either as contiguous-level juncts, or as biclausal complement constructions (not, thus, serial verbs), but do not allow non-contiguous serialisation. This is the case with the verbs \textit{hada} ‘be about to’, which is specialised to mean ‘will, shall, want’ in serial verb constructions, and \textit{pande} ‘be good at, do often’. When the subject of \textit{hada} is coreferential with the subject of the second verb the following verb is unmarked by subject prefixes.

(47) \text{‘U-hada-bal} \text{u te wurai?} 2SG.R-want-buy CORE sarong
‘Will you buy the sarong?’ ‘Do you want to buy the sarong?’ (G:47)

(48) \text{Te iaku ku-hada-nangu-nangu.} CORE 1SG 1SG-want-RED-swim
‘I want to (go) swimming.’ (G:39)

When the two subjects are not coreferential, subject marking must be used on the second verb, and a complement construction used:

(49) \text{Mbeaka ku-had(a) o-mohoo.} not 1SG-want 3R-sick
‘I don’t want him to be sick.’ (T1:29)

(50) \text{No-hada no-wila.} 3R-want 3R-go
‘S/he\text{\textsubscript{i}} wants her/him\textsubscript{\textbf{s\textsubscript{i}f\textsubscript{j}}} to go.’

Unlike (48), (50) is a coordinate biclausal construction. Whilst the serial verb construction can only be negated as a whole, either of the clauses in the biclausal construction composing (50) may be negated. Negation of the first clause has already been illustrated, negation of the second clause is shown in (51):
(51) Ku-hada mbeak(a) o-mohoo.
    1SG-want not 3R-sick
    ‘I want him not to be sick.’

Compare this with the ungrammatical (52), attempting to negate only the second verb in a serial verb construction version of (50):

(52) * Ku-hada-mbeaka-mohoo.
    1SG-want-not-sick
    ‘I want to be not sick.’

The use of pande ‘frequently, often, be good at’ as a contiguous serial verb is illustrated in (53):

(53) Te kene-su no-pande-wila di Kendari.
    CORE friend-1SG.POSS 3R-often-go OBL Kendari
    ‘My friend often goes to Kendari.’

8.3.2 Same-subject with numeral verbs

Another quirk of same-subject serialisation is the behaviour of intransitive verbs serialised with the numerals, actually ambitransitive verbs meaning ‘be in a group of NUM’. Compare (45b) with (54)

(54) * No-wila-dodua na amai.
    3R-go-be.two NOM 3PL
    ‘Both of them went.’

The grammaticality of (54) can be rescued if we add an object suffix to the verb, agreeing in person and number with the subject prefix:

(55) No-wila-dodua-'e na amai.
    3R-go-be.two-3OBJ NOM 3PL
    ‘Both of them went.’

With first and second person subjects, the object suffix is slightly different to the typical object suffix, and more similar to the dative object suffixes in that they are prenasalised (see chapter 5):

(56) Ko-mai-gana-ngkami.
    1PA.R-come-be.four-1PA.OBJ
    ‘Four of us came.’

(57) To-langke-non'o-ngkita.
    1PL.R-sail-be.six-1PL.OBJ
    ‘Six of us went sailing.’

(58) Ki-w[um]lila-popia-ngkomiu?
    2PL.I-go.SI-be.how.many-2PL.OBJ
    ‘How many of you lot are going?’
This may be used with transitive verbs showing unspecified object deletion, but not if the verb displays an overt object, nominally or by verbal affix:

(59) a. *To-manga-nono'o-ngkita.
   1PL.R-eat-be.six-1PL.OBJ
   ‘Six of us ate.’

b. *To-manga-nono'o-ngkita te mandara.
   1PL.R-eat-be.six-1PL.OBJ CORE sweet.potato
   ‘Six of us ate sweet potatoes.’

c. *To-manga-nono'o-ngkita na mandara.
   1PL.R-eat-be.six-1PL.OBJ NOM sweet.potato
   ‘Six of us ate sweet potatoes.’

d. *To-manga-nono'o-'e.
   1PL.R-eat-be.six-3OBJ
   ‘Six of us ate it.’

Compare the plural object suffixes in their standard and dative forms, with the forms found in this construction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1PA</th>
<th>1PL</th>
<th>2PL</th>
<th>3(SG/PL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>-kami</td>
<td>-kita</td>
<td>-komiu</td>
<td>'-e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative</td>
<td>-nsami</td>
<td>-nggita</td>
<td>-ngkomiu</td>
<td>'-e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intradirective</td>
<td>-ngkami</td>
<td>-ngkita</td>
<td>-ngkomiu</td>
<td>'-e</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the first verb in a contiguous serial verb construction involving numeral verbs is transitive, then the numeral verb must be made transitive as well, by the addition of causative prefixes. In this way the two verbs remain a same-subject construction, but both may now additionally subcategorise for the same object. Compare the grammatical (60) with the ungrammatical (61):

(60) To-sangka-pa-dodua-'e na kie.
    1PL.R-weave.mat-CAUS-be.two-3OBJ NOM mat
    ‘We wove two mats.’
    (Lit., ‘We wove mats, we made them be two.’)

(61) *To-sangka-dodua-'e na kie.
    1PL.R-weave.mat-be.two-3OBJ NOM mat
    ‘We wove two mats.’

The constituent and argument structures of the verb phrases representing (60) and (61) are as displayed in (60)' and (61)' (compare with the argument structure templates for different serial verb construction types presented in 8.5):
It appears to be a constraint that in contiguous serialisations involving numeral verbs that all subcategorised-for arguments must be shared for the construction to be grammatical. Sentence (60), with the numeral verb made transitive by the addition of causative morphology, can share both the subject and the object of the first verb in the sequence, whereas (61), with an intransitive numeral verb, may not take a transitive verb in a contiguous serialisation. This restriction holds even if the object of the verb is not explicitly mentioned, as seen by (62), in which the numeral verb cannot be taken to refer to the number of weavers:

(62) * To-sangka-dodua.
    1PL.R-weave.mat-be.two
    ‘Two of us wove mats.’

This is evidence that the process of unspecified object deletion is not detransitivisation (further syntactic tests are given in chapter 9). The restraints on contiguous serialisation with numeral verbs are different from the pattern found with the class of ‘switch-subject’ verbs, described in the following section.

This use of an object suffix as well as a subject prefix to show agreement with the same argument is similar to the intradirective forms that have been reported for some Oceanic and eastern Indonesian languages (Ezard 1991, Grimes 1992, 1993), and for Chadic and Benue-Congo (Gerhardt 1989: 373–374).

8.3.3 Switch subject

The contiguous constructions considered so far are clearly same-subject constructions functioning to build a complex predicate. A second type of serialisation is found, which for convenience I shall label ‘switch-subject’, since in a biclausal paraphrase of the serial verb construction clauses with two different subjects would have to be used; reductionistically, the subject of the second verb is coreferential with the object of the first verb. Verbs
Serial verb constructions

participating in this construction must necessarily be one transitive verb that has a patient/theme object, and a non-active verb sharing that patient/theme (i.e., an unaccusative second verb). These show a cause-effect relationship between the two verbs and the common undergoer:

\[
x \text{ does } V_1 \text{ to } y, \text{ and so } y \text{ is } V_2 \text{ as a result of } x \text{'s actions.}
\]

In the case of these ‘resulting state’ serial verb constructions, only a juncture at the contiguous level is allowed:

(63) \textit{No-kamalo-meha te bangka.}  
\hspace{1cm} 3R-paint-red CORE ship  
‘They painted the ship red.’

This may be paraphrased biclausally, but not in a non-contiguous serial verb construction:

(64) \textit{No-kamalo te bangka ka‘ano no-meha.}  
\hspace{1cm} 3R-paint CORE ship such.that 3R-red  
‘They painted the ship so that it would be red.’

(65) * \textit{No-kamalo no-meha te bangka.}  
\hspace{1cm} 3R-paint 3R-red CORE ship

For this sort of serialisation to occur there must necessarily be a transitive verb as the first verb in the series, and an unaccusative intransitive verb as the second verb. Additionally, there is a semantic distinction such that the patient must be TOTALLY affected; the boat referred to in (63) must end up being painted COMPLETELY red all over, and not just have a runner line around the water mark that is red, for instance. In other words, it must be true to say that the boat IS red, after painting, and not just exhibiting some features of redness. Object suffixes are quite acceptable with this sort of construction:

(66) \textit{No-tobo-mate-‘e na sanggila.}  
\hspace{1cm} 3R-stab-die-3OBJ NOM pirate  
‘He stabbed the pirate dead.’

The use of this kind of construction implies that there was one action involved - in (66), a quick stab, and the pirate dies - and that the two events, stabbing and dying, are nearly simultaneous; there is no space of time between the cause predicate occurring and the effect predicate taking place. Sentence (66) could not be uttered referring to the death of a pirate as the result of a drawn out series of feints, slashes and stabbings, in which the victim slowly bled to death. A death as the result of multiple stab wounds, in which the several acts of stabbing and the act of dying are temporally separable events, would be described in a biclausal manner as in (67). Again, non-contiguous serialisation is inadequate for expressing the sense of (66):

(67) \textit{No-tobo-‘e (na sanggila ka‘ano) no-mate.}  
\hspace{1cm} 3R-stab-3OBJ NOM pirate such.that 3R-die  
‘He stabbed (the pirate until) he died.’
Unlike (66), (67) does not imply that the action and its results were so linked. There may have been a fight, and after a series of striking and stabbing at each other, the pirate died of accumulated wounds, perhaps not alone from the stab wound. Other examples of this switch-subject form of serialisation include:

(68) No-sai-ja'o te bangka na mia kombeo.
\hspace{1cm}3R-make-bad\hspace{1cm}CORE\hspace{1cm}ship\hspace{1cm}NOM\hspace{1cm}person\hspace{1cm}mad
\hspace{1cm}‘The crazy person made the ship such that it was ruined/useless.’

(69) No-helo'a-mombaka te imanga na ina-su.
\hspace{1cm}3R-cook-delicious\hspace{1cm}CORE\hspace{1cm}food\hspace{1cm}NOM\hspace{1cm}mother-1SG.POSS
\hspace{1cm}‘My mother cooked the food so that it was delicious.’

As mentioned, this form of serialisation cannot appear with patients that are not TOTALLY affected. Compare the grammatical (66) with the ungrammatical (70):

(70) * Ku-busuki-mobela te sanggila.
\hspace{1cm}1SG-punch-wound\hspace{1cm}CORE\hspace{1cm}pirate
\hspace{1cm}‘I punched the pirate so that he was hurt.’

Intransitive verbs with resulting states are also unable to appear in this cause-result construction:

(71) * No-karajaa-kalu.
\hspace{1cm}3R-work-tired

This would be expressed in Tukang Besi with the preposition apa ‘endpoint’ or the discourse connective sampe ‘until’ (<Malay sampe):

(71)' No-karajaa sampe no-kalu.
\hspace{1cm}3R-work\hspace{1cm}until\hspace{1cm}3R-tired
\hspace{1cm}‘They worked until they were tired.’

This is quite easily explained through the switch-subject constraint: two serialised intransitive verbs cannot have a second argument to be a new subject for the second predicate not coreferential with the subject of the first predicate. Furthermore, the one argument that they do share would have to function as both an agent (of the first verb) and a patient/theme (of the second verb), in the one clausal nucleus, which is impossible given that the first verb is unergative and the second one unaccusative (see also the discussion of ‘forced-interpretations’ that agentive applicative constructions can give to some verbs, in chapter 10.2). Similarly, the constructions presented in (70) and (71) are not permissible as examples of complex predicates showing same-subject agreement (with the putative meanings ‘I woundedly punched the pirate (I was wounded)’, and ‘They worked tiredly.’), since that is a form that in Tukang Besi is used only to elaborate the semantic content of a predicate, and not to describe the result of that action. In order to express the senses on the English translations of (70) and (71), a biclausal sentence similar to (67) must be used.
8.3.4 Multiple object

Multiple object contiguous serialisations are found with the verbs ako ‘do for’ and kene ‘accompany’ (which appears as ngkene in this construction). Owing to the great amount of variation that these forms display, and the similarity (identity!) that they bear to the well-described applicative constructions, they have been dealt with in more detail in chapter 10.

As with all transitive or ambitransitive verbs, ako can take object suffixes if it is used in a construction analogous to either (72) or (73):

(72) No-wila-ako te ina-no kua daoa.
    3R-go-do.for CORE mother-3POSS ALL market
    ‘They went for their mother to the market.’

(73) No-wila-ako-e (na ina-no) kua daoa.
    3R-go-do-for-3OBJ NOM mother-3POSS ALL market
    ‘They went for their mother to the market.’

The verb kene ‘accompany’ is also used in contiguous serial verb constructions, such as seen in (74):

(74) No-wila-ngkene te ina-no.
    3R-go-accompany CORE mother-3POSS
    ‘She went with her mother.’

This can also be expressed with a construction that is, like (9) in 8.2.1, ambiguously either biclausal or an example of non-contiguous serialisation:

(75) No-wila no-kene te ina-no.
    3R-go 3R-accompany CORE mother-3POSS
    ‘She went, accompanying her mother.’

Unlike ako, kene does not appear in non-contiguous serial verb constructions. It has been seen that kene displays significantly less verbal behaviour than does ako, and the view taken here is that it is more like a conjunction or preposition. This is elaborated on in chapters 12 and 18.

8.3.5 Ambient serialisation

Ambient serialisation is found, to a limited extent, with contiguous constructions as well. The following verbs have been observed in contiguous serial verb constructions as well as in non-contiguous serial verb constructions:

- o-agori  immediately
- o-saori   very
- o-sumbere immediately

The only addition to the list presented earlier in 8.2 is sumbere, which has not been observed outside contiguous serial verb constructions. An example of these verbs used in contiguous constructions are given in (76) - (78):
8.4 Summary of morphosyntactic differences

As has been seen from the individual discussions, serial verb constructions in Tukang Besi exhibit four different patterns, with grammaticality judgements of the same morphosyntactic form dependent on the function that the serial verb construction carries out in the sentence. For instance, when two verbs appear together in a contiguous serial construction, the second verb may only be transitive and maintain a bivalent interpretation in a valency-increasing construction, but not in a predicate-building construction. Similarly, aspect marking may occur on the first verb in a serial verb construction only if the construction is serving as a modal or valency increasing one. Predicate building and ambient serial verb constructions do not allow aspect marking to occur on the first verb in non-contiguous serial verbs constructions. A summary of the differences in acceptability of different morphosyntactic patterns for the different constructions is presented in table 13:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Predicate building</th>
<th>Multiple Object</th>
<th>Ambient serialisation</th>
<th>Modal serialisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NON-CONTINUOUS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJ on $V_1$?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+†</td>
<td>+†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJ on $V_2$?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJ ($V_1$) = SUBJ ($V_2$)?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-aspect on $V_1$?</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>-aspect on $V_2$?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>–</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Predicate building</th>
<th>Multiple Object</th>
<th>Ambient serialisation</th>
<th>Modal serialisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONTINUOUS</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SUBJ ($V_1$) = SUBJ ($V_2$)?</td>
<td>+ / –*</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$V_1$ (trans) is bivalent?</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES:** + indicates grammaticality, – indicates ungrammaticality. † Subject prefixes are not used with the semi-verb *ane*; non-referential third person prefixes are used with the other verbs. Ambient and modal constructions do
not occur in contiguous constructions. * If V₁ is intransitive, there is a same-subject constraint. If V₂ is transitive, either same subject or switch subject constraints may operate.

8.5 Serial verbs and other grammatical categories

The different types of linking that are found between the arguments of serial verb constructions can be described as being same-subject, in which the subject of both verbs is the same, switch-subject, in which the object of one verb is the same as the subject of the next, identical, in which there is a requirement that both subject and object be shared by both verbs, and ambient, in which there are no shared arguments because one of the predicates assigns no arguments. In terms of subcategorisation frames, these different sorts of serialisation may be represented as seen in (77) - (80):

(79) Same-Subject:
\[
\langle \text{PRED}_1 \ [\text{[ ]}, (\text{[ ]}) \text{PRED}_2 \ [\text{[ ]}, (\text{[ ]})] \rangle
\]

(80) Switch-subject:
\[
\langle \text{PRED}_1 \ [\text{[ ]}, (\text{[ ]}) \text{PRED}_2 \ [\text{[Thm/Pt]}] \rangle
\]

(81) Identical:
\[
\langle \text{PRED}_1 \ [\text{[ ]}, (\text{[ ]}) \text{PRED}_2 \ [\text{[ ]}, (\text{[ ]})] \rangle
\]

(82) Ambient:
\[
\langle \text{[semantics of PRED}_1 \text{PRED}_2 \ [\text{[ ]}, (\text{[ ]})] \rangle
\]

Two things are notable about these representations: firstly, there is a great diversity present in the restrictions, so great that the unity of the group as 'serial verb constructions' becomes somewhat dubious. Secondly, the similarity of two of these linkages to the sort found in causative (chapter 9) and applicative (chapter 10) constructions leads us to consider the real differences between these constructions (a point that was also raised in chapter 4). In both causative (particularly the factitive causative involving the prefix hoko-) and switch-subject serialisations the requirement on linking is that the single argument of an unaccusative verb with a theme or patient semantic role is linked with the object of the affect predicate.
Conceivably more than one verb can appear, preferably at different layers of the cause. For instance, (i) has a contiguous serial verb construction, as well as an additional non-contiguous one:

(i) [[No-[tu'o]V-[ngkene]V theft-te kene-su core friend-1SG.POSS CORE tree]]VP

3R-chop-accompany CORE friend-1SG.POSS CORE tree

[[ako]V INSTR CORE axe sharp

‘He, with my friend, chopped the tree with sharp axes.’

This can be shown to be a complement, and not a serial verb construction, by the placement of the negator mbeaka, which may appear in a complement clause, as in (ii), but may not intrude in a serial verb construction:

(ii) Ku-hada [mbeaka(a) o-mohoo]Complement

not 1SG-want 3R-sick

‘I want her to not be sick.’

The sentiment is expressible either in a serial verb construction or a complement construction:

(iii) Mbeaka ku-[hada]-[mohoo]. or (iv) Ku-hada [mbeaka ku-mohoo].

not 1SG-want-sick 1SG-want not 1SG-sick

‘I don’t want to be sick.’ ‘I want that I am not sick.’

Object suffixes on the verb of the second clause in (11) would leave a nonsensical reading of ‘Their mother went to the market and they did (it) for her’, under the rules of cross-clausal deletion. See Chapter 3 for an introduction to the constraints on cross-clausal zero-anaphora.