

## The structure, meaning and function of serial verb constructions in Ughele

This paper discusses serial verb constructions (SVCs) in Ughele, an Oceanic language spoken on Rendova Island in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands. SVCs in Ughele are frequent and represent strategies for representing aspect, causality, intentionality, complex events, direction and repetition. Ughele has SVCs both on the nuclear and the core layer of the clause structure. SVCs may be symmetric or asymmetric, and exhibit different argument sharing structure. Whereas any verb can be modified in an asymmetric SVC, a limited set of verbs can modify others, their functions depending on the position within the SVC. For example, the verb *lao* 'go' may, among other functions, mark inceptive aspect when preceding the modified verb, whereas it marks direction away from a reference point if following the modified verb. Moreover, *lao* can be modified by other verbs in asymmetric SVCs meaning 'go', and combined with other verbs in symmetric SVCs denoting one of two or more simultaneous or sequential events being components in a complex event expressed by the SVC as a whole. The paper will provide valuable data on the nature of SVCs in a linguistic area of which little is known.