

Expressions of caused accompanied motion events in Yali

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Predicates expressing caused accompanied motion (CAM) events such as BRING and TAKE show a high degree of cross-linguistic variation. In some languages they are expressed by simple verbs, such as *bring* and *take* in English, where MOTION, ACCOMPANIMENT and DIRECTEDNESS are lexicalized in the verb root, while MANNER is not implied. In many other languages these concepts are not lexicalized in a simple verb but are morphologically and/or syntactically compositional.

In Yali, a Trans New-Guinea language spoken in the West Papuan highlands, the most frequent CAM events are expressed by complex constructions. The simplest way to talk about concepts like, e.g., BRING and TAKE is by using the manner specific, though in this context semantically bleached verb for CARRY and a motion verb, both distributed over two ‘mini-clauses’ (cf. Heeschen 1998, de Vries 2005; 2006). The motion verb can either express deictic (COME and GO), or non-deictic directedness (GO UP, GO DOWN, ENTER). See the example in (1) for illustration of the former.

- (1) a. *ap itnoen horiyeruk angge walug waha-ruk*
ap itno=en horiye-tuk angge wa-lug waha-tuk
man DET=AGT sit-PROG THING carry-SEQ come-PROG
‘the man is bringing a chair’
- b. *at wam walug laha*
at wam wa-lug laha
3s pig carry-SEQ go:3s.IM.PST
‘he took the pig (there/away)’

As manner of causation, manner of motion and directedness in Yali can be, and often are expressed by multi-lexeme strings involving different kinds of dependencies, the expression of CAM events can become severely more complex than in the ‘simple’ examples shown in (1).

This paper investigates the different strategies (and their functions) available for forming CAM expressions in Yali, which include typical ‘Papuan’ features such as coverb constructions, clause chaining, and the use of object verbs. It will also provide a brief comparison with strategies found in other Austronesian and Papuan languages, such as the use of deictic morphology or verb serialization.

References

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AGT = agent; DET = determiner; IM.PST = immediate past; PROG = progressive; s = singular; SEQ = sequential linker