

## **“An Asymmetric Analysis of Serial Verb Constructions in Maare Fulfulde”**

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**Abstract:** This paper examines asymmetric analysis of serial verb constructions in Maare Fulfulde which operates under three headings i.e. Directional/Locative constructions, Manner constructions and Purposive constructions. The researchers used native speakers’ intuition and unstructured interview in collecting the data. The paper confirms that an asymmetric serial verb constructions also operates in Maare Fulfulde which has been identified in many African languages more especially sister language families of Fulfulde such as Yoruba, Nupe, Akan, Ewe etc. which are under Niger-Congo family. This family of languages is rich in Serial Verb Construction, verbal extensions and in nominal class markers. These three features are productive and robust features in African languages especially Niger-Congo languages family. It also confirms the richness of ASVC in Maare Fulfulde and its importance in the communicative competence that involved both forms and objectives.

**Keywords:** Asymmetric, Serial Verb Constructions, Fulfulde

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### **ABBREVIATIONS**

SVCs	=	Serial Verb Constructions
ASVCs	=	Asymmetric Serial Verb Constructions
MF	=	Maare Fulfulde
Cop	=	Copular
CS	=	Conjugational Suffixes
VR	=	Verb Root
VAP	=	Voice Aspect Polarity
VE	=	Verbal Extension
S	=	Subject
P	=	Predicator
C	=	Complement
O	=	Object
A	=	Adjunct
DO	=	Direct Object
IO	=	Indirect Object
OC	=	Object Complement
N	=	Noun
Pro	=	Pronoun
V	=	Verb
Adj	=	Adjective
Adv	=	Adverb
Prep	=	Preposition
Conj	=	Conjunction
NCM	=	Nominal Class Marker
PT	=	Past Tense
AUX	=	Auxiliary
NEG	=	Negation Suffix
PROG	=	Progressive Marker

## I. INTRODUCTION

This paper is on Asymmetric Serial Verb Constructions (henceforth ASVCs) in Fulfulde. Serial verb constructions are different from complex predicates and other multi-verb sequences which are syntactically combined, but neither component can function on its own, especially if one of them is a dependent or a nominalized form. For this reason, complex verb forms like perfect or continuous in English are not serial verb constructions (see further arguments in Zwicky 1990: 9).

Fulfulde is the language spoken by the Fulbe. The speakers of the language call themselves Fulbe (plural), Pullo (singular) and Fulfulde for their language. It belongs to West-Atlantic group of Niger-Congo sub-phylum of the Niger-Kordofanian phylum. The language is related closely with Serer, Wolof, and Joola, (Greenberg, 1963). It is spoken by an estimated fifteen million people, throughout the Savannah Belt of Africa, that is, from West African Coast to the Nile comprising about fifteen countries. These include Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Northern Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon. It has spread to southern part of Mauritania, northern part of Sierra Leone, Ghana, Benin Republic and parts of Sudan.

The origin of the Fulbe up till today has no clear answer; their origin is described as that of mystery, (Daudu, *ibid*). Arnott, (*Op. Cit*), refers to Fulbe as people of “un-known origin”. Delafosse in (Greenberg 1970) considers them as Judeo-Syrians from Cyrenaica who entered Africa about 200 AD. Arnott, (*Op. Cit.*: 3) Adds that they are linked “to people as diverse as the ancient Egyptians, the biblical phut, the Basques and the Dravidians of India”. On the contrary, theories linking the Fulbe to people outside Africa are dismissed by Mohammad (1998) as ridiculously farfetched because of linguistic evidence, (Daudu *Op. Cit.*). The Fulbe themselves have their own oral tradition about their origin. The tradition traces their root to an Arab called Uqba bin Nafi, who was an apostle of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him). He was said to have been sent on a mission to Africa to spread the religion of Islam. Consequently he married a princess called Bajjo Mango, whose parents were Negroes. His progeny were said to be the descendants of the Fulbe.

However, Sa’ad (1977) dismisses the oral tradition as being like most legends of origin of say the Hausa or Yoruba. He acknowledges the link with Uqba bin Nafi, but his argument is that the said Uqba bin Nafi was known to be associated with the conquest of North Africa, except that he had never visited the western Sudan (Africa). He argues that the origin of the Fulbe should be seen in the light of the consequences of Uqba’s activities in North Africa. Precisely, sequel to the warring activities of Uqba, the general number of barber groups migrated to the interior (south), probably to escape Arab conquest and they came into contact with the ‘black people’, (Daudu, *Op. Cit.*). All legends believe that the initial settlement of the Fulbe is somewhere around FutaTooro in Senegambia, (Arnott, *Op. Cit.*).

Fulfulde Maare is a sub-dialect of Fulfulde spoken in Borno State and its surroundings, (Mohammadou 1997). Arnott, (*Op. Cit.*) in his classification of Fulfulde dialects mentioned Borno Fulbe as part of Central Northern Nigerian dialect. Although his classification was challenged by Girei (2009), where he reveals many aspects of Fulfulde dialects that were not mentioned by the previous scholars on the language. He identifies fifteen different individual dialectal features found operating in the area of his research. Some dialects are recorded for the first time while others have been peripherally mentioned in other dialectological works on Fulfulde. Thus, Girei *ibid*, maintains that there is no clearly stated practical geographical dialects boundary within the area covered by his research. He calls Fulfulde Maare as Keesu/MaareGulumba. He then mentions some Local Government Areas where the dialect is spoken. These includes; Ngala, Dikwa and Maiduguri.

The FulbeMaare are said to have acquired the name ‘Mare’ only during the last hundred years and the separate sections state that they have nothing in common except the long residence together in Bornu, (Reed, 1932), cited in Mohammadou, (*Op. Cit*). Mare or (F. Maare) considered by some writers as synonym to Dilaara. The name has an equivalent in the Kanuri word *máré*, an emphatic particle meaning approximately ‘of course’ (Cyffer and Hutchison 1990: 119). The etymology given nowadays in Borno of ‘FulbeMaare’ is that some Fulbe groups were named so because of their frequent use of the Kanuri term *mare*. Such a superficial explanation does not have a ground. A possible origin of the nickname could be related to the town Marte, Mare being an older variant or an alternation of this place-name, an ancient Sao city on the south western shore of Lake Chad, which has survived up to present. The town was much known to Fulbe pastoralists who used to spend the dry season in its environs, (Mohammadou, *Op. Cit.*).

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Westermann, (1930) was one of the early linguists who hinted about the notion of SVCs. He wrote:

“A peculiarity of Ewe is that we often find a row of verbs one after the other. The chief features of this are that all the verbs stand next to each other without being connected, that all have the same tense or mood, and that in the event of their having a common subject and object, these stand with the first, the others remaining bare”, (Westermann 1930: 126) cited in Agbedor, (1994:1).

Stahlke (1970), comments on a very perplexing type of surface structure found in many West African languages. In the first part of his paper, he presents a number of examples of the phenomena mentioned in the

title. The second part examines the notions ‘causative’ and ‘inchoative’ and their function in the two languages being discussed. The third and the last part are devoted to a few speculations as to what preceding sections may mean. He uses two languages, members of the Kwa group, a sub-group of Niger-Congo: Yoruba and Yatye. Examples;

0. Mo múìwéwáilé. (Yoruba)  
I took book came house.  
‘I brought a book home’.
1. Ámíawáòkítíadyúòtsi. (yatye)  
I took machete cut tree  
‘I cut the tree with a Machete’.

Matisoff, (1969:71), cited in Ejele (1992) puts it as:

*“SVCs serve to provide in a uniform way the sort of information that in surface grammar of languages like English is handled by a formally desperate array of subordinating devices; complementary infinitives, -ing complements, modal auxiliaries, adverbs, prepositional phrases, even ‘who’ subordinate clauses”.*

Baker (1989) defines SVCs as: “Construction in which a sequence of verbs occurs in what seems to be a single clause”. Usually, there is only one tense/aspect specification for the whole chain of verbs; the verbs have a single structural subject and share logical argument. *Ibid* ascertains that SVCs behave differently in different languages with respect to coordination, embedded clauses, or adjectival predicate (small clauses), and that the key difference between serializing language and non-serializing languages can be expressed as a parameter. If V1 of an SVC takes an object, V2 must theta-mark this object as well. Current versions of theta-criterion can allow an argument to receive more than one theta-role assigned to the same structural position.

Durie (1997:291) puts it that:

“A single serial verb complex describes what is conceptualized as a single event: this is repeatedly reported to be a clear intuition of native speakers, and can be demonstrated through semantic analysis. A serial verb complex can often be best translated into a nonserializing language using a single, mono-verbal clause”.

Fannami, (2001) examines some of the characteristic features of the SVCs in Kanuri where he maintains that some SVCs in Kanuri are similar to what Lawal, (1989) and others call Purposive, Resultative, Circumstantial and Temporality SVCs. The SVCs in Kanuri have indeed exhibited unique features in SVCs which may be different from those in other Languages. This is attributed to the agglutinative nature of Kanuri verbs and the fact that Kanuri is a strictly verb final language.

2. Shifàtòrògàgələ́cîn. (Purposive)  
He/she home to enter he/shi will sleep  
‘He/she will enter (the) house to sleep’.
3. Shímòlsàsàgàràngátà. (Resultative)  
He/she wine drink he/she intoxicated  
‘He /she drunk wine and became intoxicated’.
4. Aúdùdààtánjúwò. (Circumstantial)  
Audu as standing he ate.  
‘Audu ate while standing up’.
5. Shízəwùlétkòndò (Temporaneity)  
He/she ate he/she slept  
‘He/she ate and slept’

Fannami, *Op. Cit.* concludes that Kanuri SVCs go with that of Yoruba, where all the types of verbs in Yoruba are applicable to Kanuri language. Only in some instances in the verbal construction, especially the purposive construction where in Yoruba, the second verb denotes the purpose. But in case of Kanuri, it is the first verb that denotes the purpose. Although looking at the structure of SVC in the example (5) under purposive construction in Kanuri, the second verb ‘létcîn’ ‘sleep’ denotes the purpose of entering the house.

Lin (2004) asserts that, serializing languages refer to those demonstrating serial verb constructions (SVCs), while non-serializing languages are those having secondary predicates. Taiwanese is a language that has both constructions and thus hardly can be clearly defined as one or the other type of language. It is argued that they appear to have similar structures in that the non-head phrase is either a (pseudo) complement or adjunct. However, they still differ in several aspects. To illustrate, either V1 or V2 can be the head verb in SVCs, while only V1 can be the head in secondary predication. The adjunct in SVCs is positioned pre-verbally, while that in secondary predication occurs post-verbally. These two constructions also differ in several ways, including the status of the covert NP, and the candidature of the verbs.

Aikhenvald (2006:1) integrates in her work the ideas of some linguist such as (Foley and Olson 1985, Durie 1997, Crowley 2002, etc.) and came up with the following definition:

*“An SVC is a sequence of verbs which act together as a single predicate, without any overt marker of coordination, subordination, or syntactic dependency of any other sort. They are monoclausal; their intonation*

*properties are the same as those of a monoverbal clause and they just have one also share core and other arguments. Each component of an SVC must be able to occur on its own right”.*

She also mentions that properties of SVCs in an individual language are expected to have most characteristics, but not necessarily all, which suggest that a language can be more or less like the prototype construction. In addition to this, Aikhenvald (2006:3) proposes four parameters to classify SVCs, which capture the main characteristics of this type of construction. The first parameter is composition, which divides SVCs with respect to the semantic composition of the verbs into ‘symmetrical’ and ‘asymmetrical’. She continues that in the first one, SVCs consist of sequence of verbs that have the same status in that, none of them determines the semantic or syntactic properties of the construction. While ‘asymmetrical’ consists of one verb from an unrestricted-open class and another from semantically restricted-closed class such as motion or posture verb. The second parameter is ‘contiguity’ versus ‘non-contiguity’ of the verb mailing up the SVCs.

Omachonu (2011), states that SVCs are clearly recognisable and highly productive grammatical constructions in Igala. It is robust and productive syntactic process in the language. It is different from other closely related multi-verb constructions because they are mono-clausal and the VPs in SVCs are construed as occurring within the same temporal frame. The verbs share a common subject and object, expressing a single overall event, argument and grammatical categories such as aspect, expressing a single over all events, argument and grammatical categories such as aspect, mood and modality from a unit with the first verb, with the exception of negation, which in most cases follows the last verb in the series. He continues that SVCs in Igala serve to convey a broad range of semantic notions which are tandem with the culturally recognisable activities and world view of the people. This versatility in function is related to the productiveness of SVCs in Igala which correlates with the scarcity of conjunctions and prepositions in the language. He gave the examples (8) and (9) on SVCs in Igala below:

6.     Áudu a   la    oje   je.  
       Audu Asp buy   food eat  
       ‘Audu buys/buying food to eat’.
7.     I       cheomigweeju  
       3sg scoop water wash eye  
       ‘He/She fetched water to wash his/her face’.

According to Anderson (2011), the SVC is one of the three major source constructions from which mono-clausal constructions with auxiliary verbs have developed in African languages (the other two being embedded/nominalized and clause chained structures). This may explain why the “doubled inflection” pattern, in which inflectional features such as subject agreement are morphologically encoded on both the auxiliary and the lexical verb, is relatively common in auxiliary-verb constructions in African languages, particularly in Bantu.

Yang, (2013) states the characteristics of SVCs as; 1) when two verbs function as predicates and share the same object, there is no empty predicate position in the syntactic structure; 2) when a noun intervenes between the two verbs and function as the object of V1 and the semantic subject of V2, there is no empty predicate position in the syntactic structure; V1 represents instrument or manner and its object can function as a circumstantial argument and hence VP1 is equal to a prepositional phrase, similar to SVCs in Chinese; 3) when the two verbs share the same noun, V1 assigning accusative case to the noun, the relationship between V1 and the noun is VO (verb, object) while the relationship between V2 and the noun is subject-predicate which in underlying structure is VO (verb, object) as a result of that there is no empty predicate position in the syntactic structure; 4) V1 c-commands V2 asymmetrically; 5) the verbs in SVCs do not necessarily share the same object, but they must share the same subject, i. e the action or behaviour of the verbs is made by the same agent; 6) the phrase structure can be VO, OV, manner-goal, adjunction-action, positive-negative and the syntactic-semantic relationship can be a combination, modifier-head and subject-predicate.

Aikhenvald, (2006) states that in terms of the composition, serial verb constructions fall into two broad classes. They may consist of one verb from a relatively large, open, or otherwise unrestricted class, and another from a semantically or grammatically restricted (or closed) class. These are asymmetrical serial constructions (see also, Aikhenvald 1999a; this roughly corresponds to what Durie 1995, 1997 called ‘unbalanced’ constructions). Asymmetrical SVCs denote a single event described by the verb from a non-restricted class. The verb from a closed class provides a modificational specification: it is often a motion or posture verb expressing direction, or imparting a tense–aspect meaning to the whole construction.

Along similar lines, converb constructions in Khwe and in Wolaitta are not serial verb constructions. There can be further, language-specific ways of distinguishing serial verb constructions from multi-verb structures of other kinds. A mono-predicative reading of SVCs is often corroborated by intuitions of native speakers.

SVCs in Typological Perspective question containing a single-verb predicate involves the repetition of just the first verb; an answer to a question containing an SVC involves repeating a whole construction or part of

it, but never just one word (see Aikhenvald 1999a). In Goemai (§2 of Chapter 3), addressees insert interjections such as ‘yes’ only following the whole SVC. In other multi-verb structures, a ‘yes’ can follow each individual verb.

Mono-clausality of SVCs are mono-clausal and allows no markers of syntactic dependency on their components. This is one of the criteria in distinguishing SVCs from coordination, consecutivization, complement clauses, subordinate clauses, and other multi-clausal structures (see, for instance, Bradshaw (1993),

SVCs also known as verb serialisation or verb stacking, is a syntactic phenomenon in which two or more verbs or verb phrases are strung together in a single clause. They are widespread in Creole languages, in the languages of West Africa, Southeast Asia, Amazonia, Oceania and New Guinea (cf. Dixon, 2006). It is a common feature in African languages; particularly Niger-Congo languages such as Yoruba, Edo, Nupe, Akan, Ewe, Ibibio, Igbo, Igala, Yimas, Yatye and Degema (cf. Heine & Leyew 2008).

The phenomenon of SVCs has been a subject of interest among linguists for some time (since Christaller 1875). Thus, many grammatical descriptions of serial verb constructions have appeared in the literature.

### III. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Fulfulde language being a Niger-Congo language under West Atlantic sub-family may have some features which many of its language family members have. More so, verbal extensions, SVCs and Nominal Class Markers are productive and robust features of Niger-Congo languages. SVCs are particularly common in African languages and especially in Niger-Congo phylum (Heine and Leyew 2008). Here, ASVCs are classified into three. This classification is based on asymmetric function the construction performs. These include Directional/Locative, Manner and Purposive constructions in Fulfulde.

#### Locative/Directional Constructions

In this construction the verbs that show the location in SVCs do not occur as first verb in the series but rather are preceded by the verb(s) of the main event which are usually verbs of action. The first verb is from a closed or restricted class while the second verb is from open or unrestricted class verb which can also be found in mono-verbal clauses. Aikhenvald (2006) calls these “asymmetrical”, also known as “unbalanced” serial verb constructions (Durie 1997). Let us consider the following examples under this type:

8. Hamman            umm-a            dill-u            saare.  
VR-CS            VR-CS  
Hamman            stand            go            home  
‘Hamman get up and go home’.

Sentence (10) has two main verbs that is, ‘*umm-a*’ ‘stand’, ‘*dill-u*’ ‘go’. All of them are intransitive verbs because they take no object in the sentence. The first verb express action or main event while the second verb ‘*dill-u*’ ‘go’ show the location/direction. The Noun ‘*saare*’ ‘house’ functions as adjunct and it is the final location/destination of the subject. The verbs share the same subject ‘Hamman’, tense which is present tense, incompletive aspect and affirmative polarity. The verbs differ in only voice where the first verb ‘*umm-a*’ ‘stand’ with a suffix ‘-a’ marks middle voice imperative singular. More so, the complete form of the verb is ‘*umm-ake*’ ‘stood’. The suffix ‘-ake’ indicates the underlying form of a middle voice suffix. The second verbs with a suffix ‘-u’ is in active voice also imperative singular.

11. Ali janng-id-ii            dill-ii            luumo.  
VR-Ext-CS            VR-CS  
Ali read            go            market  
‘Ali read and went to the market’.

Sentence (11) has two main verbs i.e. ‘*janng-id-ii*’ ‘read’ and ‘*dill-ii*’ ‘go’. The suffix –id- in the first verb ‘*janng-id-ii*’ is a verbal extension. While the suffixes -ii- of the first verb and that of the second verb mark voice, aspect and polarity. All the verbs share the same subject ‘Ali’, tense (past tense), active voice, completive aspect and affirmative polarity. The first verb indicates the main event and the second verb show location/direction of the subject. The noun ‘*luumo*’ ‘market’ functions as adjunct.

12. Bulama            nang-ii            mo            liinyan-ii            hukuuma.  
VR-CS            VR-CS  
Bulama            caught            him            handed to            government  
‘Bulama caught him and handed him to police’.

Sentence (12) has two main verbs i.e. ‘*nang-ii*’ ‘caught’ and ‘*liinyan-ii*’ ‘handed to’. Both the first and second verbs are transitive verbs with an object ‘*mo*’. Although the object of the second verb is implied but the indirect object ‘*hukuuma*’ ‘security personnel’ is visible. The first verb expresses the main action. While the second verb

shows location. The verbs share the same subject ‘*Bulama*’, the same tense (past), active voice, completive aspect and affirmative polarity.

13. Hassan                            oor-oy                            war-t-ii                            saare  
 VR-CS                                VR-Ext-CS  
 Hassan                                went to graze (cows) came back     home  
 ‘Hassan went to graze cows and came back’.

Sentence (13) has two main verbs, i.e. ‘*ooroy*’ ‘went to graze’ and ‘*wart-ii*’ ‘come back’. In this sentence the first verb is a transitive verb with an implied object ‘cows’. The second verb is an intransitive verb because it takes no object in the sentence. The first verb expresses the event or process while the second verb shows location. All the verbs share the same subject ‘Hassan’ and the same tense (past), active voice, completive aspect and affirmative polarity. The suffix ‘-oy’ attached to the first verb is distansive extension. It indicates that the action takes place at a distance or originates from a distance in the dialect.

From sentences (10-13) above, each of the sentences has two or more verbs in its predicate position without any coordinating conjunction or subordination linking the verbs. The second lines that follow each sentence are a literal translation of the words in the sentences into English. The third lines in every sentence are the English equivalent meaning of the sentences. In the third line which is the contextual meaning of the sentences in English, it can be noticed that each meaning of the sentence in English has coordinating conjunction ‘and’ or comma (,).

### Manner Constructions

These are sentences that express the manner in which an action or process is carried out or perceived. In manner constructions, the first verbs usually describe the manner while the second verb indicates the main action or process. Manner constructions simply answer the question how the action took place. Let us examine this in the examples below:

14. Hassan                            don                                dar-ii     saan-a                            esum.  
 VR-CS     VR-CS  
 Hassan                                is                                stand     greet                                in-law his  
 ‘Hassan is greeting his in-law while standing’.

Sentence (14) has two main verbs, i.e. ‘*dar-ii*’ ‘stood’ and ‘*saan-a*’ ‘condoling’. The first verb is an intransitive verb because it has no any object in the sentence. The second verb is a transitive verb with an object ‘*esum*’ ‘his in-law’. The first verb ‘*dar-ii*’ ‘stood’ describes the manner of how the action of condoling was performed. The second verb ‘*saan-a*’ ‘condoling’ indicates the main action or event. Both the verbs in the sentence share the same subject ‘Hassan’ and the same tense (present) and affirmative polarity. The first verb ‘*dar-ii*’ ‘stood’ is in middle voice completive aspect while the second verb ‘*saan-a*’ ‘condoling’ is in active voice incomplete aspect. ‘*Don*’ is a present continuous marker. The suffix –*ii* attached to the first verb marks middle voice relative completive while the suffix –*a* attached to the second verb marks active subjunctive incomplete.

15. Alii don                            tur-ii                                loot-a                                limce.  
 VR-CS VR-CS  
 Ali     is                                bowing                                washing cloth  
 ‘Ali is bowing and washing cloth’.

Sentence (15) has two main verbs, i.e. ‘*dontur-ii*’ ‘is bowing’ and ‘*loot-a*’ ‘washing’. Both the verbs are intransitive verbs. The first verb ‘*tur-ii*’ ‘bowed’ describes the manner of how the action of washing was performed. The second verb ‘*loot-a*’ ‘washing’ indicates the main action or event. Both the verbs in the sentence share the same subject ‘Eemad’ and the same tense (present) and affirmative polarity. The first verb ‘*tur-ii*’ ‘bowed’ is in middle voice completive aspect while the second verb ‘*loota-a*’ ‘washing’ is in active voice incomplete aspect. ‘*Don*’ is a present continuous marker morpheme. The suffix –*ii* attached to the first verb marks middle voice relative completive while the suffix –*a* attached to the second verb marks active subjunctive incomplete.

16. Godwin                            don                                dar-ii                                sill-a.  
 VR-CS                                VR-CS  
 Godwin is                                standing                                urinating  
 ‘Godwin is urinating while standing’.

Sentence (16) has two main verbs, i.e. ‘*dar-ii*’ ‘stood’ and ‘*sill-a*’ ‘urinating’. Both the first and the second verbs are intransitive verb because they have no any object in the sentence. The first verb ‘*dar-ii*’ ‘stood’ describes the manner of how the action of urinating was performed. The second verb ‘*sill-a*’ ‘urinating’ indicates the main action or event. Both the verbs in the sentence share the same subject ‘Godwin’ and the same tense (present) and affirmative polarity. The first verb ‘*dar-ii*’ ‘stood’ is in middle voice completive aspect while the second verb ‘*sill-a*’ ‘urinating’ is in active voice incomplete aspect. ‘*Don*’ is a present continuous marker.

The suffix *-ii* attached to the first verb marks middle voice relative completive while the suffix *-a* attached to the second verb marks active subjunctive incomplete.

17. Ali *don* *jood-ii* *janng-a*.  
 VR-CS VR-CS  
 Ali is sit read

‘Ali is sitting and reading’.

Sentence (17) has two main verbs, i.e. ‘*jood-ii*’ ‘seated’ and ‘*janng-a*’ ‘read’. Both the first and the second verbs are intransitive verbs because they take no object in the sentence. The first verb ‘*jood-ii*’ ‘seated’ describes the manner of how the action of reading was performed. The second verb ‘*janng-a*’ ‘reading’ indicates the main action or event. Both the verbs in the sentence share the same subject ‘Ali’ and the same tense (present) and affirmative polarity. The first verb ‘*jood-ii*’ ‘seated’ is in middle voice completive aspect while the second verb ‘*janng-a*’ ‘reading’ is in active voice incomplete aspect. ‘*Don*’ is a present continuous marker. The suffix *-ii* attached to the first verb marks middle voice relative completive while the suffix *-a* attached to the second verb marks active subjunctive incomplete.

18. Buubadon *jood-ii* dow korowal *juul-a*.  
 VR-CS VR-CS  
 Buubais sit on chair pray  
 ‘Buuba is sitting on the chair and praying’.

Sentence (18) has two main verbs, i.e. ‘*jood-ii*’ ‘sit’ and ‘*juul-a*’ ‘pray’. Both the first and the second verbs are intransitive because they take no any object in the sentence. The first verb ‘*jood-ii*’ ‘seated’ describes how the action of praying was performed. The second verb ‘*juul-a*’ ‘pray’ indicates the main action or event. Both the verbs in the sentence share the same subject ‘Buuba’, the same tense (present) and affirmative polarity. The first verb ‘*jood-ii*’ ‘seated’ is in middle voice completive aspect while the second verb ‘*juul-a*’ ‘pray’ is in active voice incomplete aspect. ‘*Don*’ is a present continuous marker. The suffix *-ii* attached to the first verb marks middle voice relative completive while the suffix *-a* attached to the second verb marks active subjunctive incomplete.

19. Ayse *haft-ake* *dofl-ii* binngel am.  
 VR-CS VR-CS  
 Ayse leaped hit baby my  
 ‘Ayse leaped up and hit my baby’.

Sentence (19) has two main verbs, i.e. ‘*haft-ake*’ ‘leaped’ and ‘*dofl-ii*’ ‘hit’. The first verb is an intransitive verb because it has no object in the sentence. The second verb is a transitive verb with an object ‘*binngel*’ ‘baby’. The first verb ‘*haft-ake*’ ‘leaped up’ describes how the action of knocking was performed. The second verb ‘*dofl-ii*’ ‘hit’ indicates the main action or event. Both the verbs in the sentence share the same subject ‘Ayse’, tense (past), completive aspect and polarity (affirmative). The first verb is in middle voice completive and the second verb is in active voice completive.

20. Binngel *lad-ii* *sor-ii* lelleeso.  
 VR-CS VR-CS  
 Child crawled entered under bed  
 ‘A child crawled and went under the bed’.

Sentence (20) has two main verbs, i.e. ‘*lad-ii*’ ‘crawled’ and ‘*sor-ii*’ ‘entered’. Both the verbs are intransitive verbs because they have no any object in the sentence. The first verb ‘*lad-ii*’ ‘crawled’ describes how the action of entering was performed. The second verb ‘*sor-ii*’ ‘entered’ indicates the main action or event. Both the verbs in the sentence share one subject ‘*Binngel*’ and the same tense (past), active voice, completive aspect and affirmative polarity.

21. Binngel *don* *jood-ii* *laar-a* yaasi.  
 VR-CS VR-CS  
 Child is sitting looking outside

‘A child sat down, looking outside’.

Sentence (21) has two main verbs, i.e. ‘*jood-ii*’ ‘seated’ and ‘*laar-a*’ ‘look’. Both the first and the second verbs are intransitive verb because they have no any object in the sentence. The first verb ‘*jood-ii*’ ‘seated’ describes the main action. The second verb ‘*laar-a*’ ‘look’ shows location/direction. Both the verbs in the sentence share the same subject ‘*Binngel*’, the same tense (present) and affirmative polarity. The first verb ‘*jood-ii*’ ‘seated’ is in middle voice completive aspect while the second verb ‘*laar-a*’ ‘looking’ is in active voice incomplete aspect. ‘*Don*’ is a present continuous marker. It precedes the verbs in the sentence and usually before the first verb which indicates bodily position. The suffix *-ii* attached to the first verb marks middle voice relative completive. It is a stative tense of a middle voice which is used more frequently while the suffix *-a* attached to the second verb marks active subjunctive incomplete. In the examples (6-12) above, the first verbs in the sentences show how the subject performs the main action.

### Purposive Constructions

This is a construction that denotes purpose. In this construction it is the second verb that denotes the purpose. Let us examine this in examples below:

22. Umaru            umm-ake            tagg-ii            daago.  
VR-CS            VR-CS  
Umaru            stood            rolled            mat  
'Umaru stood and rolled the mat'.

Sentence (22) has two main verbs i.e. '*umm-ake*' 'stood' and '*tagg-ii*' 'rolled'. The first verb is an intransitive verb because it takes no object in the sentence. The second verb is a transitive verb with an object '*daago*' 'mat'. The verb '*umm-ake*' 'stand' describes the main action, process or event. The second verb '*tagg-ii*' 'rolled' denotes purpose. The verbs share the same subject '*Umaru*', the same tense (past) and affirmative polarity. The first verb '*umm-ake*' 'stood' is in middle completive aspect and the second verb '*tagg-ii*' is in active voice completive aspect.

23. Aysatu            nast-ii            suudu            daan-ake.  
VR-CS            VR-CS  
Aysatu            entered            room            slept.

'Aysatu entered the room and slept'.

Sentence (23) has two main verbs i.e. '*nast-ii*' 'entered' and '*daan-ake*' 'slept'. The first verb is transitive while the second verb is intransitive because it takes no object in the sentence. The first verb, '*nast-ii*' 'entered' describe the main action, process or event. The second verb '*daan-ake*' 'slept' denotes purpose. The verbs share the same subject '*Aysatu*', the same tense (past) and polarity (affirmative). The first verb '*nast-ii*' is active voice completive aspect and the second verb '*daan-ake*' 'slept' middle voice relative completive aspect.

### IV. CONCLUSION

This paper discussed asymmetric serial verb constructions under three constructions viz, directional, manner and purposive construction. It reveals that the serialized verbs constructed asymmetrically perform specific adverbial functions particularly in Maare Fulfulde unlike other languages where an asymmetric serial verb performs causative or benefactive functions. Further studies on serial verb construction in Fulfulde from different angles will reveal a lot of features linguistically.

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