1 *Introduction*

GUNTER SENFT

During my first fieldtrip to the Trobriand Islands in 1982/83 Weyei, the weather magician of Tauwema, gave me five formulae of his weather magic as a sign of his friendship (see Senft 1985, 1997). He also provided me with much information with respect to how he prepares and performs his magic. During one of our first discussions about these matters he mentioned ginger which plays a prominent role for a number of weather magical (and other magical) spells. The weather magician goes to the bush and collects ginger; he chews this ginger and then spits it out before, sometimes also during, and after he whispers his various magical formulae. Ginger is believed to increase the power of the spoken words. During this conversation Weyei produced the following sentence:

(1) *nubyeya   ba-la   o   laodila ba-ne'i   ba-kau   neya* —
     tomorrow   l.FUT-go   Loc bush   l.FUT-look.for l.FUT-take ginger
     'Tomorrow I will go to the bush - I will look for and take ginger -

     ba-ka'ita   ba-ka'ui   ba-migai   e
     l.FUT-return l.FUT-chew l.FUT-whisper eh
     I will return I will chew (it) I will whisper - eh -

     ba-ka'ita   ba-ka'ui   ba-puli   ba-migai   megwa
     l.FUT-return l.FUT-chew l.FUT-spit l.FUT-whisper magic
     I will come back I will chew (it) I will spit (it) I will whisper magic.'

In this sentence we notice three interesting things: First of all this is one of the rather rare instances where a speaker of Kilivila, the Austronesian language of the Trobriand Islanders, self-repairs his utterance (see Schegloff et al. 1977) —- the fact that the utterance needs a repair is indicated by the editing term 'e'. Second, Weyei does not start his repair by repeating just the verb that preceeded the part of the clause that needed to be repaired **('baka'ui');** on the contrary, he goes back to where the last clause of this sentence begins and repeats the two verbs **('baka'ita baka'ui')** that preceeded the instance to be repaired, inserts the verb he forgot to produce (i.e. 'bapuli') and then finishes the sentence.

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1 Abbreviations used are: A - subject of a transitive verb; excl - exclusive; DEP - dependent; FUT - future; HAB - habitual; CP - classificatoty particle (see Senft 1996); O - object of a transitive verb; obj - object; Perf - perfective; Pl/pl - plural; R/real - realis; S - subject; Seq - sequential; Sg/sg/s - singular, V - verb.

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Obviously he considers the last clause of the sentence as one construction, as one unit, and if this unit needs to be repaired he has to start with this repair at where the unit begins (see Levelt 1983a, b; 1984). Finally, we note that this sentence consists of a number of verbs that are realised so that one follows the other, in a series-like way; and we also realise that Weyei uses these serialised verbs to describe his planned actions in great detail from the beginning to the end.

However, this last observation is far from being exciting or new. The phenomenon of so-called 'serial verbs' was first described for African languages as early as the 19th century! In 1875, Christaller (1875:69-73, 143ff.) discussed this phenomenon in his grammar of Twi, and 32 years later Westermann, in his grammar of Ewe (which was published in German in 1907), pointed out:

> ... 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 .... In English these consecutive verbs are partly rendered by composite sentences. But very often several Ewe verbs may be expressed by a single verb in English. The explanation for this is that the Ewe people describe every detail of action or happening from beginning to end, and each detail has to be expressed by a special verb: they dissect every happening and present it in its several parts, whereas in English we seize on the leading event and express it by a verb, while subordinate events are either not considered or are rendered by means of a preposition, adverb, conjunction, or a prefix on the verb.   (Westermann 1930:126)

In 1914 Hugo Schuchardt noted similarities with respect to these verb constructions between Ewe on the one hand and Suriname Creole on the other hand (see also Muysken and Veenstra 1994:289), and in 1963 Stewart — another scholar of African languages — coined the term 'serial verbs' to describe this phenomenon (see Senft 2004:51). So far, most research on serial verbs and serial verb constructions (from now on abbreviated as 'SVCs') has been done on African languages and on pidgins and Creoles; however, SVCs are also to be found in Hmong-Mien, Mon-Khmer, Sino-Tibetan, Tai-Kadai, Papuan, Austronesian (especially Oceanic), Australian, Semitic, Amazonian and Central-American languages as well as in Japanese (for references see Bisang 1992; Bril 2004; Crowley 2002; Senft 2004). The honour of being the first to describe the presence of more than one verb within a sentence for an Austronesian language — namely Jabêm — is due to Otto Dempwolff (1939; see also Bisang 1986; Bradshaw 1983).

The publication of Mark Durie's seminal paper on serial verb constructions in 1997 lead to a resurgence of interest in this phenomenon. But so far there are only a few studies on SVCs in Austronesian and Papuan languages and Durie (1997:291ff.) emphasises rightly that those languages are largely underrepresented in the present linguistic literature. However, this situation is slowly but gradually changing. Thus, all the grammar sketches presented in the volume 'The Oceanic languages' (Lynch et al. 2002) have a section on verb serialisation; moreover, in the same year Terry Crowley published his long awaited monograph on 'Serial verbs in Oceanic', in 2004 Isabelle Bril and Françoise Ozanne-Rivierre published their edited volume on 'Complex predicates in Oceanic languages' which provides interesting information on SVCs and other forms of complex predicates from a relatively broad range of Oceanic languages, and just recently Alexandra Aikhenvald and Robert Dixon (2006) published their edited volume on *Serial verb constructions — a cross-linguistic typology* which includes one chapter on Dumo (also Vanimo), a Papuan language (Ingram 2006) and three chapters on the Austronesian

languages Mwotlap (François 2006), Tetun Dili (Hajek 2006) and Toqabaqita (Lichtenberk 2006). The present volume that originated in a workshop on 'Serial verb constructions' organised by Miriam van Staden and me at the 9th International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics in Canberra in January 2002 is another attempt to provide more information not only with respect to theoretical and methodological approaches to researching complex predicates, but also and especially with respect to linguistic data, descriptions, and analyses of SVCs in Austronesian and in Papuan languages.

In this introduction I take it for granted that the interested reader is familiar with the phenomenon of SVCs and the technical terms that are used to describe them. The literature just mentioned asks and discusses all the questions which are relevant and central for researching these complex predicates like, for example: What are SVCs? What about the syntactic description of SVCs? Is there a comprehensive definition of SVCs? Which types of SVCs do we find? What about the functions SVCs fulfill? Which kind of verbs constitute SVCs? What about the order of verbs within SVCs? What kind of lexicalisation processes can we observe in SVCs? What is expressed as an event in a SVC and how is it expressed? Are there any language- and/or culture-specific rules for the combination of verbs in these constructions? And: Can we infer from SVCs to language- and/or culture-specific conceptualisations of events? Therefore, in what follows I will first make a few remarks on why I think this volume is an important contribution to linguistic research on SVCs in Austronesian and Papuan languages and briefly summarise the papers presented in this book.

In Senft (2004) I gave a rather personal (and therefore certainly biased) report on the state of the art with respect to research on SVCs in Austronesian and Papuan languages. I can briefly summarise this report as follows:

- There is a strong need for detailed morphosyntactic and semantic descriptions of the phenomenon in Austronesian and Papuan languages.

- Only on the basis of more such research on individual languages we can overcome the bias with respect to typological and areal-typological studies on SVCs in Austronesian and Papuan languages. There is obviously a strong need for such studies!

- Moroever, besides the detailed morphosyntactic and semantic descriptions of SVCs in Austronesian and Papuan languages we also need minute pragmatic, and thus anthropological linguistic analyses for an as comprehensive as possible understanding of the phenomenon of SVCs.

- Finally, we have to research what a speech community conventionalises verbally within the frame of a SVC as an 'event' — this implies that we have to find evidence for verifying — or for falsifying — the claim that the 'verbs in the *SVC* are interpreted as expressing a single event' (Comrie 1995:26; see also p.36ff.).

It goes without saying that these desiderata for further research also imply that we have to develop new methods — or test out well known approaches that have been neglected so far — in our research projects. This anthology presents contributions that try to meet in their own way at least some aspects of the relatively high requirements of these research desiderata. Given the number of Austronesian and Papuan languages this anthology inevitably has to face the possible criticism of an arbitrary and eclectic selection of papers.

As the editor of this volume I concede that this is so. However, the attentive reader of these papers will realise that the problems emerging and the questions raised are strikingly similar. The anthology consists of eight papers.

Miriam van Staden's and Ger Reesink's paper 'Serial verb constructions in a linguistic area' gives a first typology of SVCs in a linguistic area labelled 'East Nusantara', covering parts of eastern Indonesia and East Timor. The question is whether serialisation in languages can be related to genealogical classification or to areal proximity and the more generally shared typologies of the languages in this area. After an outline of the sample languages for which data are presented, the authors define SVCs as 'all constructions in which two or more verbs occur in a single clause and none of the verbs is apparently formally subordinated to the other'. On the basis of this definition they distinguish, describe and illustrate the following four different morphosyntactic types of SVCs:

- independent serialisation,
- dependent serialisation,
- co-dependent serialisation, and
- complex verb serialisation.

van Staden and Reesink then address the discourse function of SVCs in relation to the notion of SVCs as single event expressions. They propose two functions that serial verb constructions fulfil in discourse: SVCs either serve to link verbs in a single event representation — van Staden and Reesink call this strategy for communicative packaging 'component serialisation', or they link multiple events into a larger single clause narrative — the authors call this strategy for communicative packaging 'narrative serialisation'. van Staden and Reesink then discuss the semantic contribution of fixed verbs in SVCs in their language sample, linking the semantic relations that are expressed in component serialisation — in which one of the verbs in the sequence typically is from a restricted class of verbs — to the four different morphsyntactic types of SVCs distinguished before. They list the semantic relations that can be expressed and show for each of these relations which morphosyntactic structures are used in the different language types researched. Considering the distribution of the different types of serialisation in a linguistically complex area where Austronesian and Papuan languages have a long history of language contact the authors conclude that in terms of morphosyntax and semantics some weak patterns can be described, but in terms of discourse function, a clear difference between the Austronesian and Papuan languages of the East Nusantara region is found:

- 'Serialisation on the whole is more characteristic of the Papuan languages than of the Austronesian languages'.
- Narrative serialisation is 'typically Papuan'.
- Component serialisation is found more frequently in the Papuan languages than in in the Austronesian languages.
- Frequent serialisation in the Austronesian languages can be 'contributed to prolonged contact with the Papuan languages.
- Papuan speakers generally prefer 'to distribute information in smaller packages'.

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Louise Baird discusses SVCs, especially 'Motion serialisation in Kéo'. Kéo is one of the seven or so Austronesian languages spoken in the central Flores dialect chain on Flores in eastern Indonesia. After a brief summary of the general features of Kéo SVCs — that follow Durie's key characteristics for defining SVCs (see above) — the author describes and illustrates the following six types of SVCs that can be distinguished in this language:

> benefactive/purposive serialisation,
>
> causative serialisation,
>
> cause-effect serialisation,
>
> synonymic serialisation
> (which she defines as 'a construction type where two verbs are closely related in meaning, being either synonyms or antonyms with identical argument structure and which are not ordered causally or temporally),

- manner serialisation, and
- motion serialisation.

Louise Baird then focuses on describing three motion serialisation types that can be identified in Kéo, namely:

- constructions consisting of only motion verbs,
- constructions containing a motion verb and a non-motion verb, and
- constructions consisting of a motion verb and a directional.

Pointing out that motion serialisation is the most commonly occurring type in Kéo, the author emphasises that this reflects not only the salience of the concepts of place and space in Kéo discourse, but also the way in which Kéo speakers construe their world. Thus she concludes that the 'frequency with which the type of motion serialisation compared to the others is used highlights the importance of the concepts of place and space, and understanding the spatial setting of discourse'.

John Bowden explores nuclear and core verb serialisation in Taba, an Austronesian languages from the South Halmahera which belongs to the West New Guinea subgroup. Taba is spoken in the eastern part of Indonesia, on Makian Island and some nearby areas of the North Maluku province. After a brief overview of the Taba language that covers basic sociolinguistic and historical matters and provides the reader with a short overview of the morphosyntax that is relevant for his discussion of serialisation, Bowden presents a fairly wide variety of types of Taba SVCs that are highly productive. He illustrates sequences of Actor intransitive verbs, sequences where a transitive verb is followed by an Actor intransitive verb, co-occurrence of two transitive verbs, sequences where a ditransitive verb is followed by a transitive verb, sequences where an Actor oriented intransitive verb is followed by an Undergoer oriented intransitive verb, and sequences of two Undergoer intransitive verbs. Running through Mark Durie's (1997:291) checklist of key cross-linguistic characteristics of SVCs (quoted above) Bowden justifies and further supports his analyses of the presented constructions as SVCs. He then presents a semantically based functional typology of Taba SVCs in which he differentiates between motion serialisation, cause-effect serialisation, causative serialisation, instrumental serialisation, modal serialisation, aspectual serialisation, and manner serialisation. The paper ends with a discussion of the distintion between core and nuclear serialisation and its ramifications for

Taba grammar. Revising his 2001 analyses where he came to the conclusion that this distinction was of little relevance to Taba (Bowden 2001), Bowden now shows that this is not the case: Only in cases of nuclear serialisation a human argument 'may co-occur with underived Undergoer oriented intransitive verb … because the SVC complex taken as a whole does have an overt Actor'. Moreover, he also finds some evidence for the fact that 'nuclear serialisation may arise from core serialisation by a simple process of deletion of pronominal cross-referencing in fast or casual speech'. Finally, contrary to the claim that nuclear serialisation only occurs in verb final languages, Bowden — like Durie (1997), Crowley (2002) and Bril (2004) — can show that nuclear serialisation can also occur in languages with other basic word order patterns.

Tetun Dili is an Austronesian language — with strong Portugese influence — that is spoken in and around Dili, the capital of East Timor. In her paper on 'Boundaries of serialisation: non-serialised verb sequences in Tetun Dili' Catharina Williams-van Klinken addresses the general question 'What characterises serial verb constructions in Austronesian languages?' especially by investigating verb sequences in Tetun Dili which lie beyond the boundaries of verb serialisation. Williams-van Klinken begins by providing a general characterisation of SVCs in Tetun Dili. She points out that we find same-subject serialisation and switch-subject or causative serialisation in this language, that most serialisation patterns have one slot which is highly restricted lexically, and that serialisation can be either at the 'nuclear' or the 'core' layer. Following this, the author presents and discusses verb sequences that differ from prototypical serial verb constructions both syntactically and semantically. The result is that, for Tetun Dili, serial verb constructions are restricted syntactically to those in which the subject of the second verb corresponds to one of the arguments of the first verb, while semantically the second verb phrase always represents in some sense a further development, result, or goal of the first. That is, Tetun Dili provides no support for syntactically extending the concept of serial verb to 'ambient serialisation', in which the subject of the second verb does not correspond to an argument of the first. In tandem with this, Catharina Williams-van Klinken's analyses do not support a serial verb analysis for multi-verb expressions of concepts such as tense-aspect, modality and manner.

David Mead and Scott Youngman discuss 'Verb serialisation in Tolaki'. Tolaki is a Western Malayo-Polynesian language that is spoken in South-Eastern Sulawesi, Indonesia. So far descriptions of SVCs are largely lacking for Sulawesi languages. Thus, the detailed description of core layer and nuclear layer serialisation constructions in Tolaki are highly interesting especially for cross-linguistic research on the fascinating topic that is in the focus of this anthology. After a brief description of the Tolaki agreement marking system, the authors first describe core layer serialisation which is ubiquitous in all genres of Tolaki discourse. The verbs in this construction must all have the same subject — which is indexed pronominally only on the first verb. The main content verb appears last in the construction, and the verbs preceding it may be drawn from four different subclasses of intransitives, namely motion verbs, temporal relator verbs, aspectual verbs, and the verbs *'tekeno'* (hit) and *'alee'* (take it) that have developed uses in SVCs which depart from their literal meanings. However, many of these preceding verbs have developed grammaticalised functions which are now distinct from their meanings when used as independent verbs. This observation confirms the general tendency that SVCs provide a rich context for verbs to grammaricalise into other parts of speech. In nuclear layer serialisation two verbs occur adjacent to each other and share a set of clausal arguments.

The overall transitivity of the construction is determined by the main verb, the head (initial) verb (and not the second verb in the series). In these constructions ambient serialisation rather than same subject serialisation is the rule. However, the analyses of nuclear SVCs reveal that in Tolaki the second verb in the series can be negated, and once negated, the second verb can even appear with its own argument (so long as this argument is realised as a noun or a noun phrase). This observation shows that Tolaki nuclear SVCs violate the general maxim that in these constructions the serialised verbs should not exhibit independence in regard to the expression of nominal arguments! The authors outline a diachronic scenario to explain this typologically rather odd finding in regard to verb serialisation: they provide interesting data to support their hypothesis that second-verb negation may have developed within nuclear layer ambient serialisation. Thus, — contrary to Catharina Williams-van Klinken, who describes a similar situation in Tetun Dili but does not regard her examples as constituting SVCs — David Mead and Scott Youngman, on the basis of the plausible diachronic pathway provided, suggest that second-verb negation is indeed an appropriate phenomenon to study within the general field of verb serialisation. In Tolaki all SVCs are monoclausal and therefore clearly distinct from juxtaposed clauses — which are biclausal. However, in Tolaki we also find constructions that the authors label 'compressed clauses'. These compressed clauses occupy a grammatical position in between clause juxtaposition and verb serialisation. The authors show that the four construction types — clause juxtaposition, clause compression, core layer serialisation and nuclear layer serialisation — form a cline from least to tightest integration of events. With respect to juxtaposed clauses the events desribed are clearly distinct; in clause compression events are presented as more integrated — as 'a series of events in a kind of stream action' — as the authors have it At the level of core layer serialisation the first verbs in the series either provide a 'temporal contouring' or specify the 'path contour' of the main event In nuclear layer serialisation we observe the tightest verbal integration: the two verbs do not represent distinguishable events, instead, the seond verb indicates the manner in which the action or event of the first verb is carried out However, the authors emphasise that nuclear layer serialisation distinguishes itself formally — with respect to word order, argument coreference, clitic placement, and nasal ligature — from the other three constructions. Thus, it may well be that nuclear layer SVCs have a diachronic source separate from that of core layer SVCs.

Volker Heeschen describes and analyses 'Verb serialisation in Eipo and Yale (especially in children's narratives)'. Eipo and Yale are members of the Papuan Mek language family spoken in the eastern, central mountains of Papua Barat (formerly: West New Guinea, Irian Jaya), Indonesia. After a brief characterisation of the specific features of SVCs that can be found in Eipo and Yale — features that partly deviate from how SVCs are generally defined — the author points out that much alternation and stylistically conditioned variability can be observed with SVCs in these languages. These variations observed are the theme of this contribution. The aim of the paper is to illustrate alternations between discourse, grammar and the lexicon, to show how 'successive pieces of information aligned in clause-chaining structures develop into cohesive serialised structures or into systematically interdependent grammatical units, and serialised structures develop into fixed formulas for routines or into compounds'.These serialised structures are taken as descriptions of everyday routines and events, representing preferred ways of speaking and demonstrating the interplay between discourse, clause structure, and word formation. The description of the morphology and syntax of verb serialisation in Eipo and

Yale shows that clause chaining and verb serialisation on the one hand and verb serialisation and compounding on the other hand can be kept distinct on clearly definable formal grounds (although alternations between chaining and serialisation and compounding are well attested). The inventory of serial verb constructions to be found in these two Mek languages is presented in form of the following five patterns:

- serialised (intransitive) verb referring to manner of movement or bodily activities + finite verb referring to movement or position in space;

- serialised (transitive) verb referring to human activities + finite verb referring to movement or position in space;

- serialised (transitive) verb referring to human activities + finite intransitive verb referring to human activties of transfer;

- one object or class of objects + serialised transitive verb referring to that object and to human activity + finite transitive verb referring to that object and to human activity; and

- object related to the finite verb + serialised verb + finite verb.

These patterns are illustrated, their functions and semantics are described and analysed and emerging patterns of grammaticalisation and some most probably culture-specific ways of conjoining stems are discussed. On the basis of children's 'accounts of everyday walks and doings' that constitute small pieces of narratives the author illustrates that 'children's words and worlds do not display the riches of adults' speech'. However, Volker Heeschen takes this as a starting point that may shed some light on 'why and where verb serialisation in these languages comes into being'. The author points out that what 'children narrate in apparently not yet stylistically varied wordings and communicative genres, is later differentiated into backgrounding recapitulations and accounts of event sequences. Background information, then, the constructions in the head of tail-head-linkages and piecing together previous information in summarising acts call into being serialised structures'. With this philological approach the author illustrates that it is style that mediates between chaining, serialisation, and compounding. The philological approach is also taken as a possible means for clarifying the relationship between SVCs and 'event' description — a relationship that is explicitly or implicitly assumed by almost all linguists dealing with this phenomenon. Volker Heeschen argues that 'to define an event one cannot … start from the linguistic findings concerning the number of verbs and their underlying concepts. Verb serialisation is a matter of surface grammar, it does not give hints at what constitutes an event. The number of possible events could be reduced by looking for what can be backgrounded, for what can be summarised and for what is always important information and, accordingly, never, backgrounded'. And if the philological approach is combined with the ethnographic-ethological approach, it may become clear what speakers of a language take as 'events'. Thus, the author argues that 'structures' like serialisation, chaining and compounding 'and correlating events' should be tied to 'basic human needs, rules of social life, and persistent cultural peculiarities. Thus moving around, giving, adventures, warding off, missing etc. represent events. Speakers refer to them making creative use of the grammatical forms, thus 'events' emerge, oscillate, disappear and flash up following the strain of words and forms which evoke, excite or lull into sleep or inattentiveness'.

In his paper 'Compact versus narrative serial verb constructions in Kalam' Andrew Pawley describes these syntactic and functional types of SVCs that can be found in the Papuan language Kalam which is spoken on the northern fringes of the central highlands of Papua New Guinea. A compact SVC is a construction that 'expresses a sequence of conceptual events that are tightly integrated, grammatically and semantically', they are 'strictly V-serialising', and generally contain two or three verb roots, but are not limited to this range. Narrative SVCs 'express a sequence of more loosely integrated events which together make up an episodic event sequence'; they 'provide a means for packaging episodic reports into a single clause structure without omitting mention of any of the component events that Kalam discourse structure requires of minimal well-formed event reports'. After a brief sketch of the language and its specific grammatical features that are relevant for the discussion of SVCs, Andrew Pawley defines the grammatical, semantic and phonological characteristics of what he calls 'canonical' SVCs and then describes the distinctive features of various types of SVCs which depart from this. These subtypes include cause-effect SVCs with V1 and V2 having different logical subjects, do-support SVCs, a type of SVCs where a negative marker negates only the final verb (or verb phrase) in a series, aspectual SVCs, iteration of verb roots, SVCs that denote acts by the same actor that are more or less simultaneous or overlapping in time, and multi-phrasal SVCs with internal intonation juncture. The author then distinguishes several types of compact SVCs by semantic features. Here he describes and illustrates cause-effect SVCs, SVCs of testing or discovering, SVCs of actor's movement along a path, SVCs of transport, manipulative-positioning SVCs, SVCs of transfer and connection, SVCs of process, and SVCs of food-getting. Finally, he discusses the lexical status of compact SVCs, pointing out that a strong case can be made for saying that most compact SVCs are lexicalised, although some compact SVCs appear to be less fully lexicalised than others. Pawley then deals at some length with the structure and discourse functions of narrative SVCs. Here he illustrates that Kalam narrative SVCs can be understood as schemas for constructing well-formed narratives and exemplifies this in some detail with Kalam reports of gathering events. In discussing the levels of structure in narrative SVCs Andrew Pawley points out that 'narrative SVCs have at least three levels of constituent structure, represented respectively by the whole SVC, its first order constituents and the individual verbs within these. Each primary constituent may itself consist of a verb series. Usually such a verb series is a compact SVC although it may consist of more than one compact SVC'. In his contribution the author is particularly concerned with the following two questions:

- When can a speaker use a SVC to encode a sequence of combination of conceptual events?
- When must a speaker use a SVC, i.e., what conditions require it?

The paper concludes with a critical discussion of the questions whether or not SVCs encode single events and whether or not their main function is to augment the verbal lexicon. With respect to the first question the author points out that there 'is no question that each SVC denotes *a semantically coherent unit of some sort'*. But at the same time he emphasises that 'SVCs vary enormously in the complexity of their internal event structure' and critically asks '[w]hat is gained by saying all these diverse kinds of units represent a single event'? Discussing this issue in some detail he concludes with the suggestion 'that rather than argue about when a series of verbs might be considered to denote a single event

linguists studying verb serialisation would do better to deal with a more fundamental task: defining the conditions that must be met in order for a sequence of events (each represented by a verb root) to be eligible for serialisation, or to require serialisation'. With respect to the second question Andrew Pawley points out that in a rather 'broad sense of 'lexicalised expression' most verb series ... attested in Kalam can be considered to be lexicalised. But this is very different from saying that they are like words. Narrative SVCs in Kalam rather fall into 'a category of productive and semi-productive phrase- and clause-sized constructions or formulae whose lexical content is partly fixed and partly variable' and these 'constructions are a much more complex bundle of elements than typical lexical units'.

My paper on 'Event conceptualisation and event report in serial verb constructions in Kilivila: Towards a new approach to research an old phenomenon' presents the types of SVCs in the Austronesian language of the Trobriand Islanders. Some of these constructions are documented in my overall corpus of Kilivila speech data; however, most constructions presented in this paper were especially elicited during a field trip in 2001. After a brief definition of the notion 'verb' in Kilivila I point out that verb serialisation in this language takes place at the core layer only. We find the following three types of serialisation:

- same subject serialisation, same TAM marking,
- same subject serialisation, different TAM marking, and
- switch subject serialisation — serial causative verbs.

On the basis of van Staden's and Reesink's new approach towards a typology of SVCs (presented in this volume) and after a brief discussion of the methodology used to not only elicit such constructions but also to get an idea of what Trobriand Islanders conceptualise as an 'event' I analyse examples of Kilivila SVCs and re-define this concept for Kilivila as follows:

Kilivila is a language with multi-verb constructions (MVCs). These MVCs are differentiated into SVCs and 'contiguous serial verb constructions' (CSVCs). Verbs constituting CSVCs have to be contiguous. We find three types of verb serialisation: narrative independent serialisation, component independent serialisation and, though rather rarely, component co-dependent (or: switch subject) serialisation (see van Staden and Reesink this volume). Verbs constituting MVCs have shared polarity, but they need not have shared tense, aspect and modality, and they need not all refer to the same subject, either. MVCs are produced under a single intonation contour without internal pauses. MVCs are used not only to describe what is conceptualised as a single event but also what is conceptualised as a complex event or as an episode which may consist of both macro- and subevents. This classification is not only based on morphosyntactic criteria but also on semantic and pragmatic considerations that are important for both the conceptualisation and the report of 'events' in and for this speech community.

After this redefinition of MVCs I briefly illustrate how we can empirically test whether languages with MVCs really segment events with finer granularity than languages without these constructions, and if so, how and where they do this. Comparing Kilivila and English descriptions of a number of identical 'staged events' scenarios I found that it is an overgeneralisation to state that 'events are segmented with finer granularity in serialising languages than in non-serialising languages'. With respect to Kilivila this observation

holds only for some of the reported events. And these events seem to include motion events, take events, and events that are marked with respect to an action and its end. Here we have to find out which events are 'segmented with finer granularity', why this is so, and how the serialised verbs establish this 'finer granularity'. I also observed that Kilivila uses verbs, CSVCs and SVCs to link certain, but not all, macro-events in reports of scenarios. Here we have to find out which of these events are linked, why they are linked, and why other events are not linked in this way. Finally, it seems that event reports in Kilivila need a minimum of 'framing' or 'contextualisation' of the most important part of the report — and the CSVCs and SVCs meet this requirement for producing well-formed, acceptable and minimally situation adequate event reports. I finish my paper with a critical evaluation of the new approach to research such complex constructions presented and illustrated with data from Kilivila and with an outline of my future research on this fascinating topic.

All but one of the proceeding papers (i.e. John Bowden's contribution on verb serialisation in Taba) refer to the notion of 'event' and its relationship to SVCs. William Foley (in press) takes up this topic in his paper 'The notion of 'event' and serial verb constructions: arguments from New Guinea'. In Yimas — a Papuan language belonging to the Lower Sepik family — some SVCs are permitted in non-finite nominalisations and some are not — although there are no formal differences whatsover between the respective constructions. All these SVCs have the same structure and fit the general diagnostic tests proposed in the literature for SVCs. So why do we find this difference with respect to their derivational possibilities? To answer this question the author first discusses the distinction between component and narrative serialisation made by van Staden and Reesink (this volume) and the notion of 'event', or rather the notions of 'macro-event' and 'sub-event' that is crucial for this distinction (see also my paper in this volume). The distinction between component and narrative serialisation obviously 'capture something about the contrast between the Yimas constructions in question. Further analyses show that the SVCs that are permitted in non-finite nominalisations are fixed, lexicalised forms, whereas those SVCs that are not permitted in these nominalisations are generated by productive grammatical rules of Yimas. For Foley this finding shows that in a language like Yimas 'lexicon and grammar and conventionality and creativity interpenetrate each other in complex ways' (Foley in press). This observed flexibility precludes the predetermination of any interrelationship between lexicalisation and componential serialisation and production by rule and narrative serialisation. Then the author discusses in some more detail the notion of 'event' — with examples from Watam, a Sepik-Ramu Papuan language, and from Yabem, the Austronesian language spoken in the Morobe Province of Papua New Guinea. He shows that 'the mapping between the semantic notion of the event and the structural notion of the clause is crosslinguistically variable and complex' (Foley in press). With this 'paradigmatic approach to syntax' Foley discards the notions of component and narrative serialisation as (probably interesting but actually) 'not particluarly important' (Foley in press). What is crucial for him and his analyses is 'where such structures fit in the overall system of [what he calls the system of] expressive space [of a language], ranging from lexicalised forms, through SVCs as realisations of semantic events, then SVCs as the result of clause integration, through textual reasons for clause chaining, and finally to full clausal coordination and subordination' (Foley in press). Thus, central for his approach to understanding SVCs in a comparative perspective 'is the range and type of syntactic structures to which they are in opposition' (Foley in press). He

postulates that within the New Guinea context we can distinguish two basic typological profiles, which he calls 'the Papuan type' and 'the Austronesian type'. He discusses and illustrates these two types in detail, referring to examples from Watam and Yimas to illustrate the Papuan type and examples from Erromangan (a southern Vanuatu language), Yabem and Mangap-Mbula (both members of the North New Guinea sub-group of Oceanic) to illustrate the Austronesian type. In the conclusion to this paper Foley emphasises once more that 'the range of what we would define as SVCs on language internal grounds is very variable across languages' (Foley in press). Therefore he questions the overall usefulness of the notion of SVC as a theoretical concept. He understands SVCs as being 'the result of various pressures, both semantic and pragmatic/discoursal, to express complex information in a single clausal unit' (Foley in press). Moreover, in the same provoking vein, he 'put[s] to bed permanently the old chestnut that SVCs express a single event' because 'our knowledge in this area is woefully insufficient to allow us to read off from the formal crosslinguistic variation in the data, semantic and perhaps ultimately conceptual notions like single or multiple eventhood' (Foley in press; see also Heeschen (this volume) who argues that 'serialisation is a matter of surface grammar, it does not give hints at what constitutes an event', and also Pawley (this volume) who refers to Givon's caveat that 'event' is a cognitive construct and we should be wary of using grammatical testing to determine whether speakers conceptually bind a sequence of events into a single complex event').

More than ten years ago Bernard Comrie already pointed out the following: 'The claim that serial verb constructions encode a single event is made with great regularity in the literature on serial verbs but is a claim that I find difficult to test in critical cases' (Comrie 1995:36). Louise Baird (this volume) also points out that the 'characteristic ... that serial verbs are conceptualised as representing single events ... is somewhat difficult to confirm or disconfirm for any language due to inconsistent ways in which 'conceptualisation' is judged'. This problem brings us back to the last of my desiderata for further research that I listed above. Baird attempts to solve the problem by taking up Andrew Pawley's argument that SVCs can only be considered to represent single events if they are single predicates. And in my paper I refer to research by Bohnemeyer and his notions of a 'macro-event' and 'macro-event expressions' that may entail multiple 'subevents' of particular kinds (see e.g. Bohnemeyer 1999, Bohnemeyer, Calen 2001). In a more recent paper Bohnemeyer and others have introduced the so-called 'macro-event property (MEP)' and they argue that 'an expression has the MEP iff any time-positional operator denoted by a time-positional adverbial, temporal clause, or tense which 'locates' a subevent entailed by the expression in time also locates all other subevents in time' (Bohnemeyer et al. 2007:505). They claim that this 'measure of event segmentation' can be used to decide whether a 'serial verb' or 'multi verb construction' can be regarded as a construction that has the property of a macro-event. This is an interesting proposal that may help us decide (— if we want to —) whether or not the claim is true that the verbs in SVCs are interpreted as expressing a single event. I am sure that this controversy will continue. However, be that as it may I agree with William Foley's remark: 'While SVCs may not constitute a theoretically and typologically coherent notion, whatever they are, their continued detailed study will pay rich dividends in unraveling the role of lexical, semantic and pragmatic constraints on the formal structure of language' (Foley in press). I hope this anthology may contribute its share to this endeavor.

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