

Serial verbs

'give' as a Recipient or Benefactive

Thai

Lord (1993:44) notes that “the Thai verb *háj* ‘give’ is used as a preposition to indicate intentional benefaction, and in Vietnamese *cho* is used as main verb ‘give’ and as a benefactive preposition and postposition Matisoff (1991:429, 437).”

Yao Samsao

Lord (1993:44) notes that “In the Southeast Asian language Yao Samsao the verb *pun* ‘give’ also occurs as a Benefactive preposition (cited in Matisoff 1991:428):

1. *nín pun pəw yìə*
3sg MV axe 1sg
'He gave me an axe.'
2. *yìə tsiáʔ nəm daan pun nín*
1sg weave CLF basket BEN 3sg
'I wove a basket for him.'
3. *maa cáp bùdòʔ-gwây pun fuʔ-cúəy*
mother cut fingernails BEN child
'The mother cuts the child's fingernails for him.' ('cut the nails for the child')

“In the latter example, the semantic content of ‘give’ has been bleached.” Lord (1993:44)

Vietnamese

“In other instances of the same general phenomenon, the Thai verb *háj* ‘give’ is used as a preposition to indicate intentional benefaction, and in Vietnamese *cho* is used as a main verb ‘give’ and as a benefactive preposition (Matisoff 1991:429, 437).” Lord (1993:44)

Conclusions

“Many languages with serial verbs use a verb ‘give’ to introduce Recipient and/or Benefactive nouns. In its case-marking function the morpheme often exhibits a range of verb characteristics. However, when functioning as a case marker it sometimes betrays a lack of robustness, as indicated by [the] inability to take affixes, restriction to certain contexts, replacement by irregular allomorphs, and harmonizing with the other (“principal”) verb. In some languages the shift in form and function of verbs of giving is less dramatic than that observed for locative verbs. However, the context and mechanisms in the two instances are parallel.” Lord (1993:44-45)

Coverbs in Southeast Asia

“Languages of Southeast Asia such as Thai, Khmer, Mandarin and Vietnamese show a range of serial constructions and verbs with prepositional functions. The prepositional homophone is called a coverb.

Speakers typically use coverbs to mark “favorite” case-roles such as Locative and Benefactive, as well as other functions; a number of directional coverbs are homophonous with verbs of motion. Clark (1975:255) has identified prepositional functions with motion verb homophones in Khmer, Thai, and Vietnamese:

VERB SENSE	COVERB SENSE (= PREPOSITION/POSTPOSITION < VERBS)
go	to (away)
go across	across (to)
go in	into
go up	up (to)
go down	down to
arrive at	reaching

Clark notes that Vietnamese has a category *preposition* for words which have no corresponding verb functions. She argues for prepositional status for coverbs such as *vào* ‘into, in’, despite the existence of the homophonous verb *vào* ‘enter’ (examples from Clark 1975):” Lord (1993:147)

4. *chị may vào mỹ-tho tuần rồi* (Lord 1993:147 (261))
elder-sister May go-in My-Tho week already
‘Elder Sister May went to My-Tho last week.’
5. *lan chạy vào vườn* (Lord 1993:147 (262))
Lan ran (go)into garden
‘Lan ran into the garden.’
6. *lan nhìn vào cửa-so* (Lord 1993:148 (263a)) Note: the last two syllables are not properly marked
Lan look into window
‘Lan looked into the window.’
7. *lan đi vào tháng năm* (Lord 1993:148 (263b))
Lan go in month five
‘Lan is going in May.’

“According to Clark, the structures in (262)-(263) do not imply two actions or states. The interpretation of (263a) cannot be ‘Lan looked, entering the window’. Clark considers the category preposition appropriate for (262)-(263).” (Lord 1993:148)

Quotatives from verbal sources

pp 206-208 quotatives in Thai, Khmer, Lahu, Tamang, Japanese
Japanese 208, 209

Material not yet extracted from Lord

Notes: Thai has been extracted from Lord1993
Tamang has been extracted

Hmong 17 only

Mandarin Chinese

Locative prepositions from locative verbs:

"In Mandarin *zài* functions as a verb, a preposition, and a marker of progressive aspect (Matisoff 1991:415):" (Lord 1993:16)

1. 他现在在不在家?
tā xiànzài zài bù zài jiā (Lord 1993:16)
3sg now be-at NEG be-at home
'Is he at home now?'
2. 他在家里看杂志。
tā zài jiā lǐ kàn zhe zázhǐ (Lord 1993:16)
3sg PREP house interior read PROG magazine
'He's reading magazines in the house.'
3. 他在浮浅水。
tā zài fúshuǐ. (Lord 1993:17)
3sg ASP swim
'She is swimming.'

(Lord1993:19) In Mandarin Chinese and Khmer, "evidence suggests that the locative preposition has developed historically from a homophonous locative verb in a serial construction."

Benefactive prepositions from verbs:

(Lord1993:43) "In Mandarin, the verb *gěi* 'give' can occur as a main verb or as a Dative/Benefactive preposition, with the prepositional phrase either following or preceding the verb (Matisoff 1991:430):"

4. 我们应该给他一个兴期的假。
wǒmen yīnggāi gěi yí ge xīngqī de jià (Lord 1993:43)
1pl ought give 3sg one CL GEN vacation
'We ought to give him a week's vacation.'
5. 信已经交给他了。
xìn yǐjīng jiāo gěi tā le. (Lord 1993:44)
letter already hand-over BEN 3sg PART
'(I've) already handed over the letter to him.'
6. 她给路客送水倒茶。
tā gěi lùkè sòng shuǐ dào chá. (Lord 1993:44)
3sg BEN passenger bring water serve tea
'She brought water and served tea for the passengers.'

Direct object markers from verbs meaning 'take':

(Lord 1993:95) "...the effects of the verb's meaning, 'take', are evident. Since *de* marks the Agent-Patient transaction, it is interpreted as a marker of causality. This direction of development for a verb mean-

ing 'take' is paralleled in languages such as Ga, Dagbani, Idoma, and Mandarin Chinese...is some cases it is eventually generalized as a marker of syntactic direct objects where no semantic agency is involved. The course of historical development is paralleled by the progression of successive generalizations about object marking made by children learning to speak." Lord 1993:113: "The same sentence configuration options exist in Mandarin Chinese, with parallel historical development, and there objects in pre-verb position must be definite (Li and Thompson 1976)." (more notes in Lord)

7. 她给路客送水倒茶。xxx
 yu qīng bǎ tiān zhǐ ruǐ-líng yǐ zhēn you miao. (Lord 1993:115)
 Yu himself take heave POSS mandate to conquer PART Miao
 'She brought water and served tea for the passengers.'

bǎ (Li and Thompson 1974a, 1974b, 1981, 1974c, 1976a, 1976b)

Lord 1993:238: "Mandarin serial verbs formerly were used to encode action-result relationships, but this usage is now archaic. Mandarin now employs verb compounds of expressing action-result relations, and serial verb constructions can express sequential, purposive, simultaneous, or alternating actions (Li and Thompson 1973, 1974)."

all on ba Mandarin 113-120, 245

Old Chinese

8. 左手把其袖。(Zhanguoce)
 zuo-shou ba qi xiu. (Sun 1996:61)
 left-hand hold his sleeve
 'The left hand holds his sleeve.'

Middle Chinese

9. 醉把花看益自伤。(Bai Juyi)
 zuo-shou ba qi xiu. (Sun 1996:62)
 drunk hold flower watch more self hurt
 'Drunk, I look at the flower by holding it, even more broken-hearted.'

Vietnamese 17, 44, 147-148

Cantonese 243

Burmese 208

English 95, 141, 216, 217, 252, 256, 257, 258

Khmer 17, 19, 147, 206, 208

Lahu 207-209, 211

Lhasa 229-231

Newari 212, 213

Nepali 180, 208, 211, 213

Sherpa 92

Tibetan 229-231

Yao Samsao 17