A grammar of Mundabli : a Bantoid (Yemne-Kimbi) language of Cameroon
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Serial verb constructions and verbal adverbs

This chapter presents a first inventory of Mundabli serial verb constructions (in the following referred to as SVCs). It also treats verbal adverbs,[1] which, like verbs, form part of the verbal core but are considered adverbials.

Serial verb constructions are split up into asymmetrical and symmetrical SVCs. The bulk of SVCs in Mundabli are asymmetrical but symmetrical SVCs are also attested. An integral part of my analysis are so-called coverbs. My use of the term 'coverb' is adopted from Lovegren (2013: footnote 3, 215). It describes any verb which forms part of a serial verb construction. The term 'major coverb' thus refers to the 'major verb' of an asymmetrical SVC, i.e. the verb from a semantically unrestricted class which determines the semantic core of the asymmetrical SVC, and 'minor coverb' refers to the verb from a semantically restricted class which modifies the major coverb. Thus a 'coverb' in this sense is simply a verb which forms part of a serial verb construction. An asymmetrical SVC consists of one major coverb and one or more minor coverbs. The major coverb comes from a semantically unrestricted class and determines the semantics of the whole construction. The minor coverb comes from a semantically restricted class. It semantically modifies the major coverb. Minor coverbs have a fixed place with respect to the major coverb. Depending on whether they precede or follow the major coverb, they may be referred to as right- or left-modifying coverbs. With one exception, minor coverbs in Mundabli are right-modifying. Symmetrical SVCs consist of two or more verbs from a semantically unrestricted class. Both together make up the semantics of the whole symmetric SVC. While the order of verbs in symmetrical SVCs is iconic,

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[1] Kießling (2011: 241) refers to these verbal adverbs as 'hybrid adverbials'.

the order in asymmetrical SVCs may also be counter-iconic. While asymmetrical SVCs indicate simultaneity of event-components, symmetrical SVCs rather tend to express sequentiality. For detailed definitions, see Aikhenvald (2006: 21-22) and Kießling (2011: 30-36).[2]

Verbal adverbs are also treated here because they form part of the verbal core and resemble verbs in this respect. It is very likely that they are historically derived from minor coverbs in asymmetrical SVCs. They generally occur at the end of the verbal core, and in one case at the beginning - with nothing (except another hybrid adverbial) separating the two. Grammatically they differ from verbs in at least two respects: first, they cannot occur on their own, and second they usually do not fit into any of the three verb tone classes, although there are unclear cases. Kießling (2011: 241) suggests a number of other tests for verbal adverbs. The application of these tests to Mundabli would surely be an interesting future project, but practical restrictions prevent their application in the current study.

The remainder of this chapter contains a description of asymmetrical SVCs (§9.1) and symmetrical SVCs (§9.2), a description of the expression of grammatical categories in SVCs (§9.3.2) and a description of verbal adverbs (§9.4). Within the SVC sections SVCs are organized according to their semantic function. Asymmetrical SVCs are listed by the relevant coverb. In the examples in this chapter, relevant serial verb constructions are enclosed in square brackets. Within these SVCs, verbs of interest (to be specified in the relevant section) are underlined.

9.1   Asymmetrical SVCs

Asymmetrical serial verb constructions consist of one verb from a relatively large, open, or otherwise unrestricted class and one or more verbs from a semantically or grammatically restricted (or closed) class. Thus, an asymmetrical SVC may contain several minor coverbs. Their order is discussed in the relevant sections. However, the current description focusses mainly on asymmetrical SVCs with two verbs.

In Mundabli, the verb from the restricted class, i.e. the minor coverb, generally follows the verb from the unrestricted class, i.e. the major coverb, except for the causative construction whose unusual order may be due to its recent origin in a bi-clausal construction. Thus, minor coverbs are generally right-modifying. Semantic categories expressed by asymmetrical SVCs in Mundabli are motion (§9.1.1), aspectuality or aspect-related meanings (§9.1.2), valency (§9.1.3) and manner (§9.1.4).

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[2]Kießling (2011) presents a detailed description and analysis of serial verb constructions in Isu (West-Ring), a closely related language spoken in the close vicinity of Mundabli. This chapter profits a lot from this work, as the structures of the two languages are extremely similar and of course, Kießling (2011) treats the topic at a depth which cannot be achieved in a general descriptive grammar.

9.1.1 Motion

One of the semantic fields expressed by asymmetrical SVCs in Mundabli is motion. As Aikhenvald (2006: 22) points out, this semantic field, which she refers to as "direction and orientation", "is extremely common in most productively serializing languages". Motion is understood to include deictic orientation (§9.1.1.1) and path (§9.1.1.2). Manner of motion is not usually expressed by coverbs in Mundabli because, on the one hand, many motion verbs conflate motion and manner and, on the other hand, manner is commonly expressed by clause-final manner adverbs like **ǎ mò̰~mò̰** in (279). See §10.1 for more on manner adverbs.

(279) gbɔ́   ŋgɨ̌   à wɛ́   mɨ̄ ǎ   mò̰~mò̰
      CL3/7a.body CL3;1SG.POSS P2 pain(c) 1SG ADVLZ one~RED

‘My body was hurting me very much.’

9.1.1.1 Deictic orientation

The motion verbs **tʃʉ́** ‘come’ and **gàn** ‘go’ are used as right-modifying coverbs and express spatial deixis, i.e. movement to or away from the deictic center. In this function, they co-occur with path verbs like ‘go up’, ‘go down’, ‘return’, etc., with verbs expressing a transfer of custody, such as ‘take’, ‘give’, ‘sell’ etc., and with speech verbs like ‘say’, ‘ask’, ‘call’, etc. in the function of a major coverb.

    The verb **tʃʉ́** ‘come’ encodes movement towards the deictic center when it is used as a right-modifying coverb in an asymmetrical SVC, as e.g. in (280)-(282). The right-modifying coverb is usually pronounced **ʃʉ́**, starting with a fricative rather than an affricate. This pronunciation is only attested in the coverb and not when ‘come’ is used as a main verb. However, when pronounced carefully, the minor coverb may also be pronounced **tʃʉ́**. Otherwise, the form of the verb is the same, whether it is used as minor coverb or as independent verb.

(280) *after,* à mɨ̄   [tǎn ʃʉ̄]   yán   ŋgɔ̄m
      after 2SG CONSEC cut(b) come(b) CL3/7a.leave CL1/2.plantain

‘After that, you collect plantain leaves.’

(281) n=lyǎ   ná f-án,   n=dǎ   wú   wɔ̄ yɛ̄
      1SG=go_to_bush(a).IPFV as PROX-here 1SG=F1.NEG hear(b) NEG COMP
      bɛ̄n   fɔ̌ [mù   ʃǔ]   kpē   tsyě   w-ɛ̄n
      CL2PL P1 take(a) come(b) CL3.pot CL1.father.2POSS CL1-2PL.POSS
      w-ɔ́   wú-kwɛ̌ w-ɔ́   yɛ̄   bɛ̄n lā   níŋ   dɔ̣́   tʃín
      CL3-DET CL3-home CL3-DET COMP 2PL do(a) CL7.thing certain there
      mī̠
      in

      'As I am going to the bush, I don't want to hear that you have taken
      your father's traditional pot in order to do something inside.'

(282) wù [kɛ̂   tʃú],   wù dzě   nǐ́   lā yɛ̄
      CL1 return(c) come(b) CL1 say(b) CL1.mother.3SG/PL.POSS DAT COMP

      'She returned and said to her mother:'

In (280), the use of the minor coverb 'come' implies that the banana leaves
are cut off in order to be kept rather than dropped or thrown away. In (281),
'come' is used as minor coverb to convey the meaning 'bring' rather than 'take
(away)', and in (282), the child returns into the house (to the deictic center)
after having briefly gone outside behind the house to look for her sister.

An example of the use of **tʃú** 'come' as single core verb is (283). Here, the
verb 'come' surfaces in its imperfective form.

(283) tɛ̌là mwɔ́m dzé   hǎyì, dzē   gbàn   ŋgī̠   lā yɛ̄
      T.   M.   say(b) INTERJ say(b) CL1.in-law CL1.1SG.POSS DAT COMP
      n=tɔ́   tʃú
      1SG=FOC come(b).IPFV

      '[...] Tela Mwom said: Tell my in-law that I am coming!'

The use of the right-modifying coverb **gàn** 'go' conveys direction of move-
ment away from the deictic center, as, e.g. in (284) - (286).

(284) [kwó   gǎn] tɔ́   mī̠
      enter(c) go(a) there in

      'Go in there!'

(285) dyǎ [yɔ́   gàn] tʃín, wù sé   ǎ   mɔ̣̀~mɔ̣̀
      D. climb(c) go(a) there CL1 be_hot(c) ADVLZ one~RED

      'Dya goes up there, he is really hot.'[3]

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[3]'Dya' is the short form for 'Dieudonné'.

(286) wù [bí gān] gbɔ̄   kúŋ
     CL1 exit(b) go(a) CL3.house house_backside.LOC

     'She went outside behind the house.'

The use of the right-modifying coverb 'go' in (284)-(286) shows that the subject in each of these examples moves away from the deictic center.
    Examples of 'go' as a main verb are found in (287) and (288).

(287) wān   w-ɔ̄   bí,   wù gān gbɔ̄   kúŋ
     CL1.child CL1-DET exit(b) CL1 go(a) CL3.house behind_house.LOC

     'The child went out. She went behind the house.'

(288) yɛ̄ gǎn, kwó kɔ́   mī
     COMP go(a) enter(c) CL7/8.forest in

     '[It said]: go into the forest!'

The verbs in (288) are interrupted by a pause and are therefore interpreted as independent verbs rather than parts of an SVC.
    The right-modifying coverbs 'come' and 'go' may also be used when the major coverb is a verb of speech, like e.g. 'call' or 'say' in (289) and (290). These examples illustrate very well how discourse participants are assigned to the deictic center or not. Each of these examples contains two asymmetrical SVCs, each of which has a different subject, the first forming part of the deictic center while the second does not. Accordingly, in both examples, the right-modifying coverb of the first asymmetrical SVC is 'go', and that of the second is 'come'.

(289) à [bɔ̀ŋ   gàn] kpé   (é), wù [dzé
     2SG call(a).IPFV go(a).IPFV CL1.woman INTERJ CL1 say(b).IPFV

     tʃú]   wá   lā yɛ̄ (o)
     come(b).IPFV 2SG.PP DAT COMP INTERJ

     'You call a woman, [and] she will tell you that [...]'

(290) bī mī   [dzě   gàn] bǒ lā, yɛ̄ nǐm ní́ ā
     1PL CONSEC speak(b) go(a) CL2PP DAT COMP sit(a) IMP.PL COM

     mɔ̀   kwɛ́   (e), bɔ́ [dzé ʃú]
     CL1.man CL3/7a.home_village INTERJ CL2 speak(b) come(b).IPFV

     bí lā yɛ̄, ɲɔ́m   kwɛ́   ā
     1PL.PP DAT COMP CL2.husbands CL3/7a.home_village NEG

     fyá   tí   wɔ̄ bī
     give(b).IPFV surprisingly NEG 1PL

     'We are telling them: Stay and get married to a local man! They are telling us: The local men do not give us [anything].'

The deictic center in (289) is the addressee. The addressee's call "goes" out to a woman, while her answer "comes" back to the addressee. In (290), the use of the deictic coverbs establishes the speaker and those he refers to by the first person plural pronoun **bɨ̄** as the deictic center.

The verbs 'come' and 'go' are also found in initial position in SVCs, such as in (291) and (292). One logical option would be that 'come' and 'go' are variable minor coverbs which may be either right- or left-modifying. However, this is unlikely, because minor coverbs in Mundabli are generally right-modifying. Andeed, when these verbs occur at the left edge of the verbal core, they do not semantically modify the other verbs within the SVC like minor coverbs in asymmetrical SVCs do, and like 'come' and 'go' do when they are at the right edge of the verbal core. Instead, the SVCs in this case have a sequential or purposive reading, which suggests that we are dealing with symmetrical serial verb constructions. Thus, the movement verb 'go', in this case, represents the initial coverb of a symmetric serial verb construction (see §9.2) rather than a left-modifying coverb in an asymmetrical SVC.

(291) yɛ̄   [gǎn tsē]   mɨ̄ ā   ntsɔ́m mū-ŋ-gɛ̄~ŋ-gɛ̄   à
       COMP go(a) search(a) 1SG COM CL6-soil CL6-N-be_red~RED 2SG
       mɨ̄   [tʃǘ   fɔ́]   ndá   lā
       CONSEC come(b) give(b) 1SG.DAT DAT

       '[She said]: go and search for some red soil for me, and then you come and give [it] to me!'

(292) bɔ́ [gān mū   ʃú]   kpɛ̀
       CL2 go(a) take(a) come(b) CL3.pot

       'They went to take the pot.'

Example (291) contains two SVCs. One starts with 'go', and the other with 'come'. Both can have a sequential or purposive reading. In (292) the verb-core initial verb 'go' co-occurs within one SVC with the verb-core final right-modifying coverb 'come'. According to the current analysis, this SVC consists of an asymmetrical SVC 'take - come' which is nested it on a larger symmetrical SVC. This analysis is supported by the fact that the verb-core initial verb 'go' co-occurs within one SVC with the verb-core final right-modifying coverb 'come'. This supports the current analysis of verb core-initial deictic motion verbs as major coverbs of symmetrical SVCs rather than left-modifying minor coverbs of asymmetrical SVCs, because, having a deictic function, 'come' and 'go', which are antonyms, cannot co-occur as minor coverbs within the same asymmetrical SVC. For more on symmetrical SVCs, see §9.2.

9.1.1.2   Path

Path is encoded by asymmetrical SVCs employing motion verbs as right-modifying coverbs. Types of path expressed by asymmetrical SVCs are vertical di-

rection, goal-bounded path and source-bounded path. Path verbs are often clustered, i.e. several path verbs co-occur as minor coverbs in an asymmetrical SVC. The order of these clusters is fixed (at least to a certain extent). Path coverbs always occur in the following order: GOAL - SOURCE - VERTICAL, as can be seen in (307).

Vertical Direction   Vertical direction is encoded by the right-modifying coverbs **yə́** 'ascend' ((293)-(294)) and **ʃ̀ì** 'descend'[4] ((295)-(297)).

(293)   à   mī̠   [wú   bí̠   yə́]   mű̄
2sg consec drain(c) exit(b) go_up(c) cl6

'You then take it [the corn] out and drain it [...].'

(294)   kə́   mū gé   à   [tǔ   fì̠   bì   yə́]   fɔ̄
cond cl6 settle(b) 2sg scoop(b) pass(b) exit(b) go_up(c) cl3.head
w-ɔ́
cl3-det

'When it has settled, you remove the head.'

(295)   wān   w-ɔ̄   [tsí̠   bí̠   ʃ̀ì]   dɔ̄   w-ɔ́
cl1.child cl1-det spit(b) exit(b) go_down(a) cl3.bean(s) cl3-det
wú   dzæ̀
cl1pp mouth.loc

'The child spit the bean out of her mouth.'

(296)   wù   [gí̠   ʃ̀ì]   tɛ̄   kí̠   gbɔ̄
cl1 put(b) go_down(a) cl7/8.walking_stick cl7;3sg.poss cl3.house
sè̠
house_front.loc

'Then she put her traveling stick down in front of the house.'

(297)   kə́   wù   [kpə̄   ʃ̀ì]   gū   w-ɔ́   tʃɔ́ŋ,
when cl1 light(a) go_down(a) cl3/7.fire cl3-det cl1/2.fireplace
ní̠   wū   [tɛ́n   bí̠   ʃ̀ì]   fì-ŋgī
cl1.mother cl1.cl1poss drip(c) exit(b) go_down(a) cl6.water
sɛ́
cl3/7a.attic

'When she lit the fire in the fire place, her mother let a little bit of water drip down from the attic.'

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[4]The verbs **yə́** 'ascend' and **ʃ̀ì** 'descend' are glossed in the examples as 'go_up' and 'go_down', respectively.

The coverbs encode the vertical direction of the action described by the main verb. The extent to which the encoding of vertical direction is obligatory is still unclear. The path coverbs **yə́** 'ascend' and **ʃî** 'descend' are often preceded by a goal or source bounded coverb such as **bî** 'exit' or **kwó** 'enter', as in (293), (294) and (295).

Examples of **yə́** 'ascend' and **ʃî** 'go_down' as main verbs are found in (298) and (299), respectively.

(298) à   dǐ yə́   ǐ   dʒɔ̄   b-ɛ́n   mɪ̄
      2SG F1 go_up(c) LOC CL8a.bridge CL8a-DEM.PROX in

    'You will go up on this bridge.'

(299) Dyǎ sé   yɛ̂, kə́ wù kán dő   nɪ̀ŋ   ŋgɔ̄
      D.   be_hot(c) COMP COND CL1 hold(c) stay(b) CL7.thing upon
      nǐ   ká ʃí
      CL1.mother.3POSS F2 descend(a)

    'Dya is very determined. If he continues like that, his mother will come down.'[5]

The minor coverb **ʃî** 'descend' may also co-occur with non-movement verbs, such as the major coverbs 'ask', 'show' and 'call' in examples (300)-(302).

(300) nǐ   [bú ʃì]   tí   wú lā, yɛ̄ mɪ̄
      CL1/2.mother ask(b) go_down(a) surprisingly CL1PP DAT COMP 1SG
      wān, ɲwɔ́m   w-ā   dǐ tí   nā (o)
      CL1.child CL1.husband CL1-2SG.POSS be(b) surprisingly where INTERJ

    'Her mother will ask her: My child, where is your husband?'

(301) n=dǐ   [tsɔ́ ʃí]   dʒī   dɛ̀   nō̱   wān
      1SG=F1 show(a) go_down(a) CL3.road CL9.place SUBORD CL1.child
      w-ā   dǐ f-ɔ́
      CL1-2SG.POSS be(b) PROX-REL

    'I will show you the way to where your child is.'

(302) wù [gān [bɔ̄ŋ ʃí]]   dzɔ̌ŋǎ tɛ̌là mwɔ́m
      CL1- go(a) call(a) go_down(a) again T.   M.

    'She went again to call Tela Mwom.'

What exactly the coverb contributes to the overall meaning is unclear. In (300) and (301), **ʃî** may be translatable as something like 'reveal'. In (302), **ʃî** is used either because she is calling down to Tela Mwɔm[6] or because she is calling him to come down from where he is.

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[5]In the given context, 'hot' means something along the lines of 'eager, determined'.
[6]Tela Mwɔm is in the bush, which is usually lower than the village, as villages are often situated on hilltops.

Goal-bounded path As stated in Kießling (2011: 112), "[g]oal bounded path verbs incorporate reference to an endpoint of the motion [...]". Attested goal-bounded path coverbs are **kwó** 'enter' and **kɛ́** 'return'.

The verb **kwó** 'enter' denotes movement into a container and acts as the antonym of **bí** 'exit'. As minor coverb in asymmetrical SVCs, **kwó** 'enter' adds its meaning of 'movement into a hollow object' to the meaning of the core-verb, as in (305), (303) and (304).

(303) wān kpé w-ɔ̄ wù kè dī w-ɔ̄
CL1.child CL1.woman CL1-DET CL1 P3 be(b) CL1-REL
bwé~bwé wù kè mɔ́m w-ɔ̄ byàn, wù mū
CL1.toddler~RED CL1 P3 suck(b) CL1-REL CL3/7a.breast CL1 take(a)
dɔ̄ w-ɔ́, wù [báŋ kwō] wú dzǽ
CL3.beans CL3-DET CL1 lock(b) enter(c) CL1PP CL7.mouth

'The baby girl, who was nursing, took the bean and put [it] into her mouth.'

(304) ká à dʒyē kpɛ̄ mɛ́ à mī̄ mū ʃú
COND 2SG cook(a) complete(a/c?) CL6 2SG CONSEC take(a) come(b)
ŋkā mū-nkɔ̄n mɔ́ à mī̄ [nūŋ
CL6.corn_beer CL6-strong_corn_beer CL6-DET 2SG CONSEC add(a?)
kwó ʃī] tʃín ŋgɔ́
enter(c) go_down(a) there upon

'When you have completed cooking, you then take the strong corn beer and you mix it in there.'

(305) tsə̄m b-ɔ́ [tʃú kwɔ̄] gbɔ́, tsɛ́
CL7/8.python CL8-DET come(b) enter(c) house.LOC hit(b)
kpè w-ɔ̄ áná tsɛ́ wù áná tsɛ́ wù áná,
CL1.woman CL1.DET like_that hit(b) CL1 like_that hit(b) CL1 like_that
lyím wù, kù wù
wrap_around(b) CL1 tie(a) CL1

'The pythons came into the house, they beat the woman like that, beat her like that, beat her like that, wrapped around her and tied her.'

All attested SVCs with the minor coverb **kwó** 'enter' take a locative object, i.e. a locative phrase consisting of a noun plus a postposition, or the locative form of a noun, as in (305), just like the independent verb. An example of the independent use of **kwó** 'enter' is in (306).

(306) wù kwɔ̄ gbɔ́
CL1 enter(c) house.LOC

'She entered the house.'

The verb **kɛ́** 'return' denotes movement back to a place which was visited earlier. It is used as a minor coverb in an asymmetrical SVC when movement back to a certain location is involved, as in (307) and may also be used when an event or action is repeated, as in (308).[7]

(307) kə́   mū bɨ́   sɨ́   yí-ǹdē   *or* yī-kpɔ̄n, à
       COND CL6 germinate(b) CL9/10.day CL10-four or CL10-five 2SG
       mɨ̄   [mū kɛ́   bɨ́   yə́]   mū́, ā mɨ̄   gwɔ̀
       CONSEC take(a) return(c) exit(b) go_up(c) CL6 2SG CONSEC grind(a)

       'After germinating for four or five days, you then take it out again and
       grind [it].'

(308) bɔ́ yíŋ   yə́   gbɔ̄,   bɔ́ [yíŋ   kɛ̄   yə́]
       CL2 build(c) go_up(c) CL3.house CL2 build(c) return(c) go_up(c)
       t-ɔ́   tʃì tɔ́
       DIST-there up DIST-DET

       'They build the house upwards. They build and go up again, up there.'

In example (308), the speaker explains how, in Europe, houses have several floors. In this case, **tɔ́ tʃì tɔ́** 'up there' refers to Europe.

The verb 'return' is attested as major coverb, as e.g. in (309) and as independent verb in elicited sentences.

(309) wù [kɛ̄   tʃú],   wù dzé   nɨ́   lā yē
       CL1 return(c) come(b) CL1 say(b) mother.3SG/PL.POSS DAT COMP

       'She returned and told her mother: ...'

In (309), **kɛ́** heads an asymmetric verb construction. The girl, who had left the house and gone behind it, returns into the house, and thus into the deictic center. This explains the use of the minor coverb **tʃú**.

Source-bounded path   Source-bounded path coverbs incorporate a reference to the initial point of a motion. The source-bounded path coverbs attested in Mundabli are **bɨ́** 'exit' and **tɔ́** 'away, off'.

The verb **bɨ́** 'exit' denotes movement out of a container. It is commonly used as path-specifying coverb, as e.g. in (310)-(313).

(310) wān   wɔ̄   [tsɨ́   bɨ́   ʃì]   dɔ̄   w-ɔ́
       CL1.child CL1-DET spit(b) exit(b) go_down(a) CL3.bean(s) CL3-DET
       wú   dzǽ
       CL1PP CL7.mouth

       'The child spit out the bean from her mouth.'

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[7]While a repeated action or event may be marked by the minor coverb **kɛ́** 'return', it is more commonly expressed by the hybrid adverbial **dzɔ́ŋǎ** 'again'; see §9.4.1.4.

(311) dɔ̄   [gbū b́ɪ́   ʃī]   wɫ́-mwó
      CL3.beans fall(a) exit(b) go_down(a) CL3-one

'One of the beans fell down.'

(312) kə́ wù kpə̄   ʃī   gū   w-ɔ́   tʃɔ́ŋ,
      when CL1 light(a) go_down(a) CL3-7a.fire CL3-DET CL1/2.fireplace
      ńɪ́   wū   [tɛ́n b́ɪ́   ʃī]   fì-ŋgī
      CL1.mother CL1;3SG.POSS drip(c) exit(b) go_down(a) CL6-water
      sɛ́
      CL3/7a.attic

'When she lit the fire in the fire place, her mother let a little bit of water drop down from the attic.'

(313) kə́ mū bɪ́   sɪ̌   yí-ǹdē   *or* yī-kpɔ̄n
      COND CL6 germinate(b).COND CL9/10.day CL10-four or CL10-five
      à mɪ̄ [mū kɛ́   b́ɪ́   yɔ́] mɫ́ ā mɪ̄
      2SG CONSEC take(a) return(c) exit(b) go_up(c) CL6 2SG CONSEC
      gwɔ̄
      grind(a)

'After germinating for four or five days, you then remove it and grind.'

In all these examples, **b́ɪ́** is understood in its literal sense as movement out of a container. Note also that, in all these examples, 'exit' co-occurs with a vertical coverb (see 9.1.1.2).

The coverb **b́ɪ́** 'exit' can also be used in a figurative sense, as in (314) and (315).

(314) kə́ wù [nī   b́ɪ́] wú ŋgɔ̄ tʃɪ́n, dɛ̀   nɔ̱   wù
      COND CL1 shake(a) exit(b) CL1PP upon there CL9.place SUBORD CL1
      kə̀ dī f-ɔ́,   kpé   w-ɔ̄ gbɔ́,   gbɔ̄
      P3 be(b) PROX-REL CL1.woman CL1-DET house.LOC CL3/7a.body
      wɫ́   sɛ́,   gbɔ̄   wɫ́   yē
      CL3;3SG.POSS be_hot(c) CL3/7a.body CL3;3SG.POSS start(a)
      n-sɛ̄
      INF-be.hot(c)

'When he shook his body where he was, the woman in the house felt hot, she started feeling hot.' (lit.:...the woman in the house, her body was hot, her body started being hot.)

(315) ắnā   wù kɜ̀ [fɔ̰̀ b̠ī   gān] áná,   kpé   w-ɔ̄
       like_that CL1 P3 tell(a) exit(b) go(a) like_that CL1.woman CL1-DET
       kpī̠   mɜ̌ ŋ-kpɪ̰̀-n
       die(b) only INF-die(b)-INF

       'Immediately when she was reporting like that, the woman died on
       the spot.'

In (314), **bɪ́** is used together with the major coverb **bɪ̀** 'shake'. The exact
function of **bɪ́** here is unclear. In (315), where **bɪ́** co-occurs with the major
coverb **fɔ̰̀** 'tell', it probably means something like 'reveal'.

An example of **bɪ́** 'exit' as an independent verb is found in (316)

(316) w-ɔ̄   wān   b̠ǐ,   wù gān mū̀ ʃǔ
       CL1-DET CL1.child exit(b) CL1 go(a) take(a) come(b)
       kpű́   bɔ̌   gbɜ̀
       CL3/7a.wooden_pot 3PL.POSS house.LOC

       'Each child went out and brought a wooden pot from the house.'

The verb **tɔ́** which means 'kick' when used as an independent verb, func-
tions as a sort of centrifugal marker when used as a right-modifying coverb
in an asymmetrical SVC. In this case, it is translatable as something along the
lines of 'away, off', see e.g. (317) and (318).

(317) wù bʊ́ŋ   tɛ̄   k-ɔ́,   wù [yɔ̄   t̠ɔ̄]
       CL1 pick(b) CL7.walking_stick CL7-DET CL1 throw(a) away(b)

       'Then she picked up the stick and threw [it] away [from herself].'

(318) yɛ̄   wù kwɔ́   gbɔ́,   wù dɔ̄   bɔ̄   kɜ̀ [ʃyā   t̠ɔ̄]
       COMP CL1 enter(c) house.LOC CL1 see(a) IMPERS P3 sweep(a) away(b)
       gbɔ̄   wű́
       CL3.house CL3;3SG.POSS

       'When she was about to enter the house, she saw [that] someone had
       swept her house.'

In (317), the centrifugal meaning is straightforward. In (318), the coverb
illustrates the dirt being swept away. It seems that some kind of movement
away from the body is implied. The same coverb **tɔ́** is commonly used in a non-
literal sense, meaning something like 'cease to exist' or 'be(come) useless', as
in (319) and (320), respectively.

(319) wù dzé āy,   n=dɨ́ yɔ́   tʃín sɛ́,   n=gān
      CL1 say(b) INTERJ 1SG=F1 go_up(c) there CL3/7a.attic 1SG=go(a)
      də̄ níŋ   kī [lǽ   ɲīm   tō̱]
      see(a) CL7.thing CL7 make(a).IPFV stop_burning(c).IPFV away(b).IPFV
      k-ɔ́   gū   w-ɔ́
      CL7-REL CL3/7a.fire CL3-DET

      'She said: Shiish! I will go up into the attic and find out myself what is putting out the fire.' (lit.: '[...] the thing which is putting out the fire.')

(320) *but* bī mɨ́ kán   mbē   kī-dʒīn ǎ   bɔ̄-dʒwē bɔ́
      but 1PL CONSEC have(c) CL2.people ADJVZ-?? ADVLZ CL2-many CL2
      níŋ   b-ɔ́   yē   bɔ́ [lā bō   tɔ́]   ndʒɔ́m
      want(c) CL2-REL SUBORD CL2 do(a) be_bad(a) away(b) CL8.things
      b-ɨ̌
      CL8-1PL.POSS

      'But we have so many people who are hating us, who want to spoil our things.'

In (319), the coverb **tɔ́** accompanies the major verb **ɲím** 'stop burning'; in (320), it implies that the things referred to will be useless once they have been spoiled. The function of **tɔ́** 'kick, away' resembles that of **fɨ́** 'pass', which is often translatable as 'disappear' or 'cease to exist' (see below). I cannot provide a spontaneous example of the independent use of **tɔ́** 'kick', but it is attested in elicitation.

Center-bounded path Center-bounded path coverbs integrate a reference point along their path which is neither its beginning nor its end (Kießling 2011: 150). Center-bounded path verbs in Mundabli are **fɨ́** 'pass', **tsɔ́** 'surpass' (but is only attested in combination with **fɨ́**) and **dàŋ** 'cross'.

The semantics of the verb **fɨ́** 'pass' are somewhat blurred when the verb is used as a minor coverb; see (329). The coverb can often be translated as 'disappear' or 'cease to exist', as in (321) and (322).

(321) ɨ́ nsɔ̄lā   mī wān   mī [lɛ̂   fɨ́]
      LOC CL1/2.afternoon 1SG CL1.child CONSEC get_lost(a) pass(b)

      'And in the afternoon, my child went missing.'

(322) sǐ   yì-mwò áná   mbē   bɔ̌-tɔ́ [bǐ fɨ́
      CL9/10.day CL9-one like_that CL2.people CL2-three exit(b) pass(b)
      gàn]
      go(a)

      'On one day, three people pass away.'

In (321), the use of **fɨ̌** implies that the child is gone. The same holds for (322). The same coverb is also used in a figurative sense, implying that something is 'lost', i.e. that it is either gone or useless beyond repair, as in (323) and (324).

(323) mɔ̀   nō̞   ń=kə̀ mǔ   w-ɔ́   wān   wū
       CL1.man SUBORD 1SG=P3 marry(a) CL1-REL CL1.child CL1.CL1POSS
       kə̀ [fɛ̂l   fɨ̌]
       P3 be_blind(a?) pass(b)

       'The man whose daughter I married was blind.'

(324) ndʒɔ́myīn (nō̞)   wù kə̀ ʃɛ̄   b-ɔ́   yɛ̄   wū yī   kə̀
       CL8.food SUBORD CL1 P3 want(a) CL8-REL COMP CL1 eat(b) P3
       [bɔ̀   fɨ̌]
       be(come)_bad(a) pass(b)

       'The food which he wanted to eat was spoiled.'

The minor coverb **fɨ̌** is also used to express comparative, as in (325) and (326).

(325) bī dzé   gàn   bǔ   lā   yɛ̄, [tō   fɨ̌]   ā
       1PL speak(b) go(a) CL2PP DAT COMP be_smart(b) pass(b) COM
       yū   y-ā   (ò)
       CL9/10.buttock CL9-2SG.POSS INTERJ

       'We always tell them that they should be more careful with their sex-life.'

(326) pítà dzé   yɛ̄   wù ā   fyá   wɔ̄ fì-mbɨ́
       P.   say(b) COMP CL1 NEG give(b).IPFV NEG CL19-palm_wine
       f-ɔ́   mí   lā, yɛ̄ fī [sìŋ   fɨ̌]
       CL19-DET 1SG.PP DAT COMP CL19 be_small(a) pass(b)

       'Peter said that he is not giving me that bit of wine, that it is too little.'

The verb **tsɔ́** 'surpass' is only attested together with **fɨ̌**, which suggests that **tsɔ́ fɨ̌** is a fixed expression rather than a combination of verbal adverb and verb. In combination with the coverb **fɨ̌** 'pass', **tsɔ́** expresses comparative semantics, see e.g. (327).

(327) gbɔ̄   ŋgɨ́   [gɑ̌   tsɔ́   fɨ̌]   gbɔ̄
       CL3.house CL3;1SG.POSS be_fat(b) surpass(b) pass(b) CL3.house
       w-ɑ́   lā
       CL3-2SG.POSS DAT

       ◇'My house is bigger than yours.'

(328) wù [yə́m tsɔ́ fɨ́]
CL1 sing(c) surpass(b) pass(b)

◇'She sings most [of all].'

An example for the independent use of **fɨ́** 'pass' is found in (329).

(329) ń=tʃyé dɛ̀ nɔ̱̄ wù fɨ́ f-ɔ́
1SG=know(c) CL9.place SUBORD CL1 pass(b) PROX-REL

'I know the place which she had passed [through].'

The right-modifying minor coverb **dàŋ** 'cross' may specify the direction of a movement verb, as in (330).

(330) wù fǎ ā [ŋ-wɛ̄ dàŋ]
CL1 be_occupied(b) COM INF-smuggle(c) cross(a)

◇'He is crossing secretly.'

Like **fɨ́** 'pass', the coverb **dàŋ** 'cross' may also express comparative semantics (331).

(331) kpɨ̄ tʃám y-ɔ́ f-ɔ́ à [lɨ̀ dàŋ
CL9/10.death Tsham CL10-DET PROX-DET P2 be_strong(a) cross(a)
bɨ̌], hɛ́y
exit(b) INTERJ

'Death in Tsham is really strong, hey!'

An elicited example of the independent use of **dàŋ** 'cross' is found in (332).

(332) mɔ̀ w-ɔ̄ fǎ ā n-dàŋ mbūŋ ɨ̌
CL1.person CL1-DET be_occupied(b) COM INF-cross(a) CL1/2.river LOC
dʒɔ̄ mɨ̄
CL8a.bridge in

◇'The man is crossing the river via the bridge.'

9.1.2 Aspectuality or aspect-related

Asymmetrical serial verb constructions in Mundabli may also encode aspectuality or aspect-related meanings, which is cross-linguistically common for asymmetrical SVCs (Aikhenvald 2006: 23). Among the meanings expressed by asymmetrical SVCs are continuative (§9.1.2.1), completive (§9.1.2.2) and persistive (§9.1.2.3). Just like in other languages, posture verbs ('stay', 'sit') and verbs of termination ('finish') surface as coverbs in the relevant constructions (Aikhenvald 2006: 23).

9.1.2.1 dő 'stay, remain'

When it is used as a right-modifying coverb in an ASVC, the verb **dő** 'stay, remain' conveys continuative semantics, meaning roughly 'to keep on doing something', as in (333) (repeated here from (299)) and (334).

(333) dyǎ sé   yɛ̀, kə́ wù [kán <u>dő</u>] nɨ̀ŋ   ŋgɔ̄
       D. be_hot(c) COMP COND CL1 hold(c) stay(b) CL7.thing upon
       nɨ́   ká ʃí
       CL1.mother.3POSS F2 descend(a)

'Dya is very determined. If he keeps on like this, his mother will come down.'.

(334) m = [bɨ́   yə́   <u>dő</u>] ɲwɛ́n *sɨ́tɛ́ee* tʃɨ̀n ɲwɛ́n, kɛ̌
       1SG = exit(b) go_up(c) stay(b) now   so_much   there now   even
       n = kə́   yə́   bɨ́   bɔ̀   t-ɔ̃   wū   t-ɔ́
       1SG = P3 go_up(c) exit(b) FRUST DIST-there CL1? DIST-DET

'I've gotten up and stayed here for so long today, I did not even reach up there.'

Examples of **dő** 'stay' as a main verb are found in (335) and (336) .

(335) wān   w-ɔ̄   mɨ̄   <u>dǒ</u>   ɛ̌   wɔ̄m
       CL1.child CL1-DET CONSEC stay(b) ADVLZ alive?

'The child stayed alive.'

(336) <u>dō</u>   kɨ̄-dzɔ́ŋ
       stay(b) ADVLZ-good(b)

'Stay well!'

The phrase in (336) is a greeting often used upon departure.

9.1.2.2 mɛ̃̀ 'finish'

The verb **mɛ̃̀** 'finish', when used as a right-modifying coverb, expresses completive aspect, as in (337)-(340). As Aikhenvald: 23 points out, this is cross-linguistically common for coverbs with similar semantics (Aikhenvald 2006: 23).

(337) yɛ̄ n = [ɲwɔ̃́m <u>mɛ̀</u>]   ɲām   b-ɔ́
       COMP 1SG = stir(b) finish(a) CL8.fufu CL8-DET

'[Tell her] that I've finished stirring the fufu!'

(338) bɔ̌ yí dɔ̄ w-ɔ́, bɔ̌ yí bɔ̌ yí bɔ̌ yí bɔ̌
CL2 eat(b) CL3.beans CL3-DET CL2 eat(b) CL2 eat(b) CL2 eat(b) CL2
yí, bɔ̌ [yí mɛ̄]
eat(b) CL2 eat(b) finish(a)

'They ate the beans. They ate and ate and ate until they had finished.'

(339) ká à [wɔ̄ŋ mɛ̄], kə́ m̀=mú, mɪ̄ n=tsɔ̀
COND 2SG squish(a) finish(a) COND 1SG=drink(b) 1SG 1SG=show(a)
dɛ̀ nə̄ wān w-ɔ̀ kə̀ fɪ̄ f-ɔ́
place SUBORD CL1.child CL1-DET P3 pass(b) PROX-REL

'After you have finished squishing, after I have drunk, I will show you where your child has gone.'

(340) yɛ̄ gbìŋ dɪ̌ [kɔ́ yí mɛ́] bēn
COMP CL9.leopard F1 catch(b) eat(b) finish(a) 2PL

'[...] that the leopard will catch and eat all of you.'

The use of this coverb implies that the action described by the main verb is not carried on, i.e. it is either completed or interrupted. The verb **mɛ̄** 'finish' is also attested as an intransitive main verb.

9.1.2.3 nɪ̀m 'sit'

The right-modifying coverb **nɪ̀m** 'sit' when used as a main verb, conveys persistive meaning, i.e. it shows that an action has been ongoing for a while and is still ongoing at the time of reference, as e.g. in (341) and (342).

(341) wù [kū nɪ̄m mɛ̌] ŋ-kʊ̀
CL1 cry(a) sit(a) only INF-cry(a)

'She was still only crying.'

(342) à [læ̀ nìm] mān
2SG do(a).IPFV sit(a).IPFV what

'What are you still doing [here]?'

Examples of **nɪ̀m** as a main verb are (343) and (344).

(343) bɔ̌ nɪ̄m *sɯ́tɛ́ee*, bɔ̌ tʃú ɲwɛ́n nswēn
3PL sit(a) extensively 3PL come(b) now CL2.friends

'They stayed [together] for a long time, they now have become friends.'

(344) à   mɨ̄   [nɨ̀m ʃì]   bǎ   dɛ̀   nə̄   bɔ̄
       2sɢ consec sit(a) go_down(a) exactly cl9.place subord impers
       kpā   f-ɔ́   gù,   ā   fì-ŋgī   wá   kàn
       light_fire(a) prox-rel cl3/7.fire com cl19-water 2sɢ.pp hands.loc

       'Then (you will) sit down exactly where they make fire, with a bit of
       water in your hand.'

While in example (343), **nɨ̀m** is the only verb, in (344), it forms the major
verb of an asymmetrical SVC.

9.1.3 Valency

9.1.3.1 Causative SVCs with lə̀ 'do, make'

The only attested verb of causation in causative SVCs is **lə̀** 'do, make', which
means that the initial coverb of a causative SVCs is extremely restricted. The
second coverb in a causative SVC with **lə̀** 'make' is always intransitive; see
e.g. (345)-(347). Causation of transitive verbs is expressed by multi-clausal
constructions; see (350).

(345) *why* wù [lə̀   bwān]   mɨ̄ yɛ̄
       why   cl1 make(a) be_wounded(a) 1sɢ quot.q

       'Why has he injured me?'

(346) kwẽ́   b-ɛ́n   ŋà   t-án   sɛ́
       cl7/8.rat cl8-dem.prox boast(a) dist-here cl3/7a.attic
       t-ání,   n=dɨ̆   [lə̆   kpɨ́   mɛ́]   kwẽ́
       dist-this_way 1sɢ=f1 make(a) die(b) finish(a) cl7/8.rat
       b-ɛ́n   t-án   sɛ́   ō
       cl8-dem.prox dist-here cl3/7a.attic emph

       'These rats which are showing off in this attic - I will kill all of them!'

(347) ŋgī   m-ɔ́   [lə̀   ɲím   tɔ́]   gū
       cl6.water cl6-det make(a) stop_burning(c) away(c) cl3.fire
       w-ɔ́   yà
       cl3-det interj

       'The water will put out the fire.'

The verb **lə̀** 'do, make' in causative asymmetrical SVCs represents the only
attested case of a left-modifying coverb.
      The verb 'do, make' is also attested as an independent main verb; see e.g.
(348), which contains the imperfective form of the verb.

(348) kpé   w-ɛ̄n,   à   kə̌ l<u>æ̀</u>   mān
       CL1.woman CL1-DEM.PROX 2SG HAB do(a).IPFV what

       'Woman, what are you doing?'

As already pointed out, causation may also be expressed by a multi-clause construction involving the verb **lə̂** 'make' in the first clause, see e.g. (349) and (350).

(349) wān   w-ɛ̄n,   dǐ   wà nǭ   à   l<u>ə̄</u>   w-ɔ̄   nǫ́ mī
       CL1.child CL1-DEM.PROX be(b) 2SG SUBORD 2SG do(a) CL1-REL as 1SG
       wān   w-ɔ̄   lɛ̄   f-án   gbɔ̄
       CL1.child CL1-DET get_lost(a).IPFV PROX-here CL3.house
       kúŋ
       backside_of_house.LOC

       'Child, you are the one who made my child get lost behind this house.'

(350) mī wān   kə̀ lə̌   mī   n=tsǔ   wù
       1SG CL1.child P3 make(a) 1SG 1SG=beat(b) CL1SG

       'My child$_i$ made me beat her$_j$.'

In (349), cause and effect clauses are linked by the connective **nǫ́** which translates roughly as 'as'. In (350), cause and effect clauses are simply juxtaposed to each other. In the latter example, a multi-clause construction is the only possible solution because the effect verb **tsǔ** is transitive and causative SVCs only allow intransitive second verbs. However, the use of a multi-clause construction is also possible when the second verb is intransitive.

9.1.4 Manner

Manner may be expressed by clause-final manner adverbs (see §10.1) or by manner SVCs. Manner SVCs involve minor coverbs which describe the way in which the action referred to by the main verb is performed. However, adverbs are much more common. Only a very restricted inventory of manners can be expressed by manner SVCs. These are described in the current section.

9.1.4.1 dzɨ́ 'travel; aimlessly'

The use of the right-modifying coverb **dzɨ́** 'travel' implies that something is done aimlessly, as in (351)-(353).

(351) bì   bú   gàn bǒ   lā, yɛ̄ bɛ̄n [læ̀   <u>dzɨ́</u>]
       1PL ask(b) go(a) CL2PP DAT COMP 2PL do(a).IPFV walk_around(b).IPFV
       tí   mān
       surprisingly what

       'We are asking them: What are you doing [aimlessly]?'

(352) bɔ̌ fò̰   tʃṹ   bí   lā   yɛ̄   bɔ̌ [tsὲ
       CL2 tell(a).IPFV come(b).IPFV 1PL.PP DAT COMP CL2 search(a)
       dzɪ̰́   gàn] kpɔ̋
       walk_around(b) go(a) CL3/7a.money

       'They are telling us that they are searching around for money.'

(353) Pɛ̋ kɘ̌   sɛ́   gán   mɔ̀   w-ɔ̄   yɛ̄
       Petrus P3;HAB insult(c).IPFV go(a).IPFV CL1.man CL1-DET COMP
       mὲ   mɔ̀   w-ɔ̄   kɔ̌   nàm   tʃyé   wɔ̄   ná wù
       NCS.QUOT.Q CL1.man CL1-DET HAB work(a) know(c) NEG as CL1
       [táŋ   dzɪ̰́]   tsṵ́   yɛ̄
       buy(b) travel(b) CL7/8.banana QUOT.Q

       'Petrus was insulting the man [asking] whether the man doesn't know
       how to work as he [aimlessly] buys banana?'

In all these examples, the coverb **dzɪ̰́** adds a meaning of aimlessness to the
meaning of the major verb. The verb **dzɪ̰́** 'travel' is also frequently used as
main verb, as in (354).

(354) bɔ̌ dzɪ̰́   mɘ̌   mṹntù   mɪ̄ mṹntù   mɪ̄
       CL2 travel(b).IPFV only   CL7/8.car in   CL7/8.car in

       'They only ever travel by car.'

9.1.4.2   **bɑ̋n 'be clean; be white; shine; clearly'**

The verb **bɑ̋n**, which may mean 'shine', 'be white' or 'be clean' when used as
a main verb, means as much as 'clearly, really' when used as right-modifying
coverb in an asymmetrical SVC; see e.g. (355). and (356). It can also have
evidential meaning, as in (356).

(355) n = [gān dɘ̄   bān]   níŋ   kī   læ   ɲīm
       1SG = go(a) see(a) be_clean(b) CL7.thing CL7 do(a).IPFV exit(c)
       tọ̄   k-ɔ́   gū   w-ɔ́
       away(b)   CL7-REL   CL3/7.fire CL3-DET

       'I will go to see clearly what is putting out this my fire.'

(356) yɛ̄   ń̰ = [nɪ́ŋ   bɑ̋n]   yɛ̄   n = dɘ̄   wú   lā
       COMP 1SG = want(c) be_clean(b) COMP 1SG = see(a) CL1PP DAT

       '[She said]: I really want to see him.'

The verb **bɑ̋n** 'clean; white' is also used as a main verb, as e.g. in (357).

(357) dʒŭ   nō̠ bɔ́ kə̀ lǎ   kpɪ̄ y-ɔ̄   tō   k-ɔ́
      CL9.goat REL CL2 P3 make(a) die(b) CL9-REL CL7/8.day CL7-DET
      ŋgɔ̄ kə̀ <u>bān</u>   áná   būbūbūbū
      upon P3 be_white(b) like_that IDEO

      ◇'The goat which was killed on that day was completely white.'

9.2 Symmetrical SVCs

Following Aikhenvald (2006: 22), a serial verb construction is classified as a symmetrical serial verb construction (or symmetrical SVC) if all its components come from unrestricted classes. Unlike in asymmetrical SVCs, the order of components in symmetrical SVCs tends to be iconic, reflecting the temporal sequence of subevents. As Aikhenvald points out, symmetrical serial verb constructions are not 'headed' in the way asymmetrical ones are: all their components have equal status in that none of them determines the semantic or syntactic properties of the construction as a whole. A symmetrical SVC may contain an embedded asymmetrical SVC, as in (358), (359) or (360). Note that, in this case, the symmetrical SVC, strictly speaking, contains verbs from a restricted class, namely the minor coverbs in the embedded asymmetric SVCs. In Mundabli, symmetrical SVCs are rare as compared to asymmetrical SVCs. Only sequential events are expressed by symmetrical SVCs (§9.2.1). Fixed expressions which have the structure of symmetrical SVCs are described in §9.2.2.

Boundaries of symmetrical SVCs and embedded asymmetrical SVCs in the examples in this section are marked by square brackets. In asymmetrical SVCs, the major coverb is underlined.

9.2.1 Sequential events

Symmetrical serial verb constructions in Mundabli generally encode sequential events, i.e. they refer to a sequence of actions; see e.g. (358)-(360). In some cases, such as in (358), they may also have a purpose reading.

(358) yɛ̄ gbìŋ   dɪ̆ [kɔ́ [<u>yí</u>   mɛ́]] bɛ̄n, [...]
      COMP CL9.leopard F1 catch(b) eat(b) finish(a) 2PL

      '...that the leopard will catch and eat all of you, [...]'

(359) m̀, bə̄   kə̀ tém   kɪ́ áná,   bə̄   mɪ̄   [tɛ̌m
       yes IMPERS P1 shoot(b) CL7 like_that IMPERS CONSEC shoot(b)
       [kwé   ʃǘ]]   ā fì-wān fɪ́   ɑ̋
       return_from_bush(c) come(b) COM CL19-child CL19;3SG.POSS ADVLZ
       fì-bwé
       CL19-infant

       'Yes. They shot it [the baboon] like that. They shot it and returned
       home with its little baby.'

(360) ā n=tʃyé   wɔ̄, ń=kə̀ nɪ̌m yɪ̀ŋ,   ń=kə̀
       NEG 1SG=know(c) NEG 1SG=P3 sit(a) CL1/2.bush 1SG=P3
       [[kwé   ʃū] də̄] mū n-də̄-n,   ń=kə̀
       return_from_bush(c) come(b) see(a) CL18 INF-see(a)-INF 1SG=P3
       tsɪ́   t-ɔ́   yɪ̀ŋ,   m=mɪ̄
       spend_night(b) DIST-DET CL1/2.bush 1SG=CONSEC
       [[kwé   ʃǘ] də̀] mù n-də̄-n
       return_from_bush(c) come(b) see(a) CL18 INF-see(a)-INF

       'I don't know. I stayed in the bush. I came home just to see them. I
       used to sleep there in the bush, and I came home just to see them.'

The symmetrical SVCs in (358) and (359) consist of major coverbs (**kɔ́**
'catch' and **tɛ̌m** 'shoot', respectively)[8] followed by asymmetrical SVCs with
right-modifying coverbs (**yí mɛ́** 'eat - finish' and **kwé ʃǘ** 'return home from
the bush - come', respectively). In (360), the asymmetrical SVC **kwé ʃǘ** 'return
home from the bush - come', also with a right-modifying coverb, precedes the
second major coverb **də̀** 'see'.

9.2.2 Fixed expressions

This section deals with fixed expressions which have their origin in lexicalized
symmetrical serial verb constructions. The verbs that make up these SVCs
frequently co-occur. I am aware that it is problematic to assume that these
are all symmetric SVCs. When one of the verbs does not occur on its own, it
is hard to determine whether the whole SVC is symmetrical or not. I classify
them here as symmetric SVCs because none of the verbs they consist of belongs
to a closed class; however, the criteria which distinguish asymmetric from
symmetric SVCs are somewhat problematic. The fixed expressions are listed
in (361)-(364). In the headings they are provided without tone.

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[8]In this paragraph, verbs are given with the tone patterns they bear in the relevant examples.

(361) **nɨm kɔm** 'wait':

Pɛ́ dzé yɛ̄ bī [nɨ̄m kɔ́m] ɑ́yɑ́n, yɛ̄ mɔ̀
Petrus say(b) COMP 1PL sit(a) wait(?) like_that COMP CL1.person
ɲàm, dʒíbrì ʃɛ̄ wū tāŋ tsṹ
CL9.animal Gabriel want(a) CL1 buy(b) CL7/8.banana

'Pe said that we should wait, that animal man, Gabriel, wants to buy banana.'

(362) **fʊŋ mu** 'help':

hɛ̌, yɛ̄ gbàm [fʊ̄ŋ mū] mɨ̄
INTERJ COMP CL7.God ?? take(a) 1SG.NPBV

'Hey! God has helped me.'

(363) **bi ya** 'get up':

bī à [bī yɔ́] ntōntō yɛ̄ bī lɔ̄
1PL P2 exit(b) go_up(c) CL1/2.morning COMP 1PL go_to_bush(a)
fwɛ�́n
clear(b)

'We got up in the morning in order to go to the bush and clear [the field].'

(364) **bɔŋ wu** 'pray':

kɔ́ ŋ=kɔ́ kán kpő ɑ̌ wū-dʒwē *first* níŋ
COND 1SG=COND have(c) CL3.money ADVLZ CL3-much first CL7.thing
ŋ=kɑ̄ lá k-ɔ́ kɨ́ dɨ̌ yɛ̄ ŋ=kɑ̄ [bɔ́ŋ wú]
1SG=F2 do(a) CL7-REL CL7 be(b) COMP 1SG=F2 call(a) hear(b)
gbàm
CL7a.God

'If I had a lot of money, the first thing I would do, I would pray to God.'

Fixed expressions derived from SVCs may contain verbs which are not attested on their own, such as **kɔ́m** in (361) and **fʊ̄ŋ** in (362). However, it may also be the case that all verbs within a fixed expression are attested on their own, as in (363) and (364). In any case, the meaning of a fixed expression cannot be readily derived from the meaning of their parts. The meaning of **bi ya** in (363), for example, is 'get up', not just 'go out upwards'.

9.3   Expression of grammatical categories in SVCs

While some grammatical categories are only expressed once for the entire SVC, others are marked on each verb individually. Some categories also involve a combination of both.

9.3.1   Tone and mood in SVCs

Under certain circumstances, verbs which occur in non-initial position within a sequence of verbs may undergo sandhi phenomena. In particular, this is the case for imperative Class A verbs. For a detailed description of tone sandhi in imperatives, see §3.2.2.4. Declarative verbs are not subject to tone sandhi - at least not perfective verbs in the present/immediate past tense (P0). Other tenses and imperfective verbs have not been checked for tone sandhi. The tone pattern of perfective verbs in P0 declaratives is not altered when they occur within a sequence of verbs (see §8.5.1.8 for an overview of perfective verb tone patterns). Only phonetic effects can be observed, which are caused by adjacent tones and phrase boundaries (low tone spread is described in §3.4.2 and phrase-final vs. non-final tone patterns are described in §3.2.2.2). Due to a process referred to as low tone spread, perfective Class B verbs, which bear a superhigh tone in their canonical form, bear a rising tone when they are preceded by a low tone subject or by a Class A verb. In the case of Class A verbs, their position influences their tonal realization.

9.3.2   Perfective/imperfective aspect marking in SVCs

Verbs within an SVC may be perfective or imperfective. Perfective verbs, which represent the unmarked case, take the canonical stem form and are not explicitly marked in the gloss. In the unmarked case, all verbs within an SVC are in the perfective, as in (365). In imperfective aspect SVCs, the imperfective is marked on all verbs within SVC by specific tonal patterns, as in (366), and often by ablaut as well, as in the second verb in sequence in (366). For more on tone changes and ablaut in imperfective verbs, see §3.2.2.3 and §3.3.5, respectively.

(365)   wù [tsē   də̄]   wān   wū   bɔ̀
        CL1 search(a) see(a) CL1.child CL1;3SG.POSS FRUST

        'She did not find her child.'

(366)   wù kə̌   [tsé   dyá]   bɔ̀   tsṹ   b-ɔ́
        CL1 P3.HAB search(a).IPFV see(a).IPFV FRUST CL7/8.banana CL8-DET

        'He was searching for the bananas but couldn't find them.'

It is unclear whether aspect may also switch from imperfective to perfective (or the other way around) within an SVC, as reported for Isu (Kießling 2011: 77-79).

9.3.3 Tense and polarity in SVCs

Tense is marked by a preverbal segmental tense marker (§8.2.1) and by specific verb tone patterns (§8.5.1.1). In the case of SVCs, a preverbal segmental tense marker precedes the complete verbal core, as in (367), and all verbs within the SVC take the appropriate tone pattern. Verbs within an SVC cannot take different tense markers.

(367) yɛ̄   gbìŋ   dɨ̌ kɔ́   yí   mɛ́   bɛ̄n, [...]
       COMP CL9.leopard F1 catch(b) eat(b) finish(a) 2PL

       '...that the leopard will catch and eat all of you, [...]'

Polarity is marked by the discontinuative marker **ā ... wɔ̄**, which embraces the verbal core. In the case of serial verb constructions, the marker **ā** precedes the initial element of the verbal core, which may be either the first verb of the sequence or a verb-core-initial adverbial. The marker **wɔ̄** follows the verbal core. To the best of my knowledge, verbs within SVCs cannot be individually marked for polarity. Thus, all verbs within an SVC take the same polarity value.

(368) tɔ́m   ǎ   bí-lō fán ā bɔ́m   mú̧
       CL7/8.palm_village ADVLZ CL8-all here NEG agree(c).IPFV take(a).IPFV
       wɔ̄ mɨ̄   kɛ̌ kɨ́-mó̧
       NEG 1SG.NPVB even CL7-one

       'None of the villages here agree with me – not a single one.'

9.3.4 Nominalization in SVCs

When SVCs are nominalized, only the first verb in the sequence takes a segmental marker. SVCs in infinitive constructions and in the ability construction are treated in §9.3.4.1 and §9.3.4.2.

9.3.4.1 Infinitive constructions involving SVCs

When an SVC occurs in the infinitive, as e.g. in the progressive construction[9] in (369), the segmental infinitive marker is affixed to the first verb of the sequence. All verbs within the SVC take the tone patterns characteristic for infinitives; see Table 8.9 in §8.4.1 for an overview of infinitive verb tone patterns.

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[9]For more on progressive constructions, see §8.4.1.3.

(369) wù   fǎ   ā   [n-kyɛ̄   kwō   ʃì]
       CL1.PVB be_occupied(b) COM INF-look(c) enter(c) go_down(a)
       níŋ   wù   lɛ̄   k-ɔ́   kɪ́
       CL7.thing CL1.PVB make(a).IPFV CL7-DET CL7.NPVB

       'It [the owl] was looking down on what he [the child] was doing.'

9.3.4.2 Ability constructions involving SVCs

In the ability construction (see §8.4.2), the first verb of a verb sequence also
hosts the nominalizing prefix characteristic of the ability construction, as in
(370). All verbs of the sequence bear the tone pattern characteristic for nom-
inalized verbs in ability constructions.

(370) mɔ́   kpə̄   ŋgɪ̄   lɔ̄   ɲī   fɪ̌,
       CS.QUOT CL1.wife CL1;1SG.POSS go_to_bush(a) leave(a) pass(b)
       mɔ́   ā   n=dɪ́   wɔ̄ [kə̄-gān   mū]   ɐ́   mɪ́ ndʒɛ̄n
       CS.QUOT NEG 1SG=be(b) NEG ABIL-go(a) take(a) ADVLZ 1SG alone

       '[I said]: my wife has gone to the bush, [I said] that I cannot go and
       take [the corn] on my own.'

9.4 Verbal adverbs

Verbal adverbs form part of the verbal core, as in (371), as opposed to manner
adverbs (see §10.1) and adverbial clauses, which are generally found at the
end of an utterance. The verbal adverb **mě** 'only' in (371) occurs at the right
edge of the verbal core, preceding the post-core negative marker **wɔ̄**. In (371),
the proximate future (F1) marker **dɪ́** and the pre-core negative marker **ā** are
fused. The inner brackets mark the boundaries of the verbal core, the outer
brackets mark those of the verbal complex.

(371) n=[dɐ̃   [yí   mě] wɔ̄] ɲām
       1SG=F1;NEG eat(b)   only NEG CL8.fufu

       ◇'I will not only eat fufu.'

Table 9.1 contains a non-exhaustive list of verbal adverbs. While the great
majority occur at the right edge of the verbal core, I also found one verbal ad-
verb which occurs in core-initial position. First the verb-core-final verbal ad-
verbs are treated (§9.4.1), and then the verb-core-initial adverb **sén** (§9.4.2).
    In analogy with Kießling's (2011) analysis of what he refers to as 'hybrid
adverbials'[10] in Isu (West-Ring), I assume that at least part of the verbal ad-
verbs have their origin in the minor coverbs which they have developed out of

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[10]I use the term 'verbal adverbs' for the equivalent of Kießling's 'hybrid adverbials' in Mundabli
in order to stress their similarity to verbs.

simplex (perfective)	position
tí 'surprisingly'	core-final
fúbɔ̌, bɔ̌ 'also'	core-final
mě 'only'	core-final
dzɔ̃ŋɑ̃́, **dzɔ̄ŋ** 'again'	core-final
bɑ̃́ 'exactly'	core-final
tá 'only'	core-final
sén 'then, subsequently'	core-initial

Table 9.1: Verbal adverbs

through grammaticalization. However, this assumption is highly speculative with regard to Mundabli.[11]

In order for a verb-like word which forms part of a complex verbal core to be assigned to the group of verbal adverbs rather than being analyzed as coverb in an asymmetrical SVC, it must meet at least one of the following two criteria:[12] The first criterion concerns the tonal pattern of the verb. While verb stems inflect tonally, depending on their tense/mood/aspect, adverbials do not exhibit comparable tone changes. The second criterion is syntactic independence, i.e. the ability to occur without another verb. Unlike adverbials, verbs can stand alone, as the main and only verb of a clause.

I have chosen to apply two criteria rather than just one, because neither criterion suffices on its own. Although they are analyzed as verbs, I have no evidence that some of the coverbs listed in the previous sections are attested as independent main verbs. On the other hand, coverbs of tone class c do not inflect tonally and thus do not pass the test for tonal inflection. The distinction between coverbs and verbal adverbs is not always clear-cut. More detailed research would probably result in a more fine-grained distinction, although a fuzzy boundary between the two is likely to remain (see Kießling (2011: 241) for a comparable situation in the Ring languages).

The remainder of this section describes verb-core-final (§9.4.1) and verb-core-initial adverbials (§9.4.2).

9.4.1 Verb-core-final verbal adverbs

As Table 9.1 shows, the majority of verbal adverbs occur in verb-core final position. The current section treats the listed verb-core final verbal adverbs in turn. They are listed by form and semantics.

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[11] For a detailed account of the origin of verbal adverbs or 'hybrid adverbials' in Isu, which this assumption is based on, see Kießling (2011: 241).

[12] An additional criterion for verbal status may be the existence of perfective forms involving ablaut as described in §8.1.3. However, for the current study, the two listed criteria should be sufficient.

9.4.1.1 tí 'surprisingly'

While the verbal adverb **tí** bears a high tone and is thus tonally not distinguishable from a verb of the tonal class c, **tí** does not exist as an independent verb and is therefore analyzed as an adverbial. In all attested examples, i.e. (372)-(375), **tí** occurs at the end of the verbal core. In (375), it further precedes the postverbal negation marker **wɔ̄**. The adverb **tí** is used to express astonishment or counter-expectancy.

(372) mɨ̄ wān   [gàn fɨ́   <u>tí</u>]   nə̄, mɨ̄ wān   [gàn
      1SG CL1.child go(a) pass(b) surprisingly where 1SG CL1.child go(a)
      fɨ́   <u>tí</u>]   nə̄
      pass(b) surprisingly where

'Where is my child going? Where is my child going?'

(373) bɨ̄ bú   gàn wú   lā, yɛ̄ nɨ̋,   à [gwàn
      1PL ask(b) go(a) CL1PP DAT COMP CL1/2.mother 2SG be_sick(a)
      <u>tí</u>]   mān yɛ̄
      surprisingly what QUOT.Q

'We ask her: mother, why are you ill?'

(374) bì bú   gàn bɔ̌   lā, yɛ̄ bɛ̄n [læ̀   dzɨ́
      1PL ask(b) go(a) CL2PP DAT COMP 2PL do(a).IPFV walk_around(b).IPFV
      <u>tí</u>]   mān
      surprisingly what

'We are asking them: What are you doing [aimlessly]?'

(375) bɔ̌ dzé   ʃú   bí   lā yɛ̄, ɲwɔ́m
      CL2 speak(b) come(b).IPFV 1PL.PP DAT COMP CL2.husbands
      kwɛ̋   ā [fyá   <u>tí</u>]   wɔ̄ bɨ̄
      CL3/7a.home_village NEG give(b).IPFV surprisingly NEG 1PL

'They are telling us: The local men do not give us [anything].'

9.4.1.2 fúbɔ̌, bɔ̌ 'also'

The adverb **fúbɔ̌** (see (376)-(378)) translates as 'also'. It has a tone pattern which does not fit in with any of the verb tone classes. Its tone pattern never changes either, unlike those of verbs of Class A and B. This and the fact that it is not attested as an independent verb support its status as an adverb.

(376) lòŋ   b-ɔ́   yí   nìm tí   bǐ (e), bī
CL8.suffering CL8-that eat(b).IPFV sit(a) surprisingly CL8 INTERJ CL8
[yí   <u>fúbǒ</u>] bī (o)
eat(b).IPFV also 1PL INTERJ

'Suffering is eating them up and it is also eating us up.'[13]

(377) à kyɛ́ wān ně   yū   (e),
2SG look(c) CL1.child CL1/2.mother;2SG.POSS CL9/10.buttock INTERJ
mɔ̀   dzō   [kyɛ́ <u>fúbǒ</u>] á   yū
CL1.person CL1.other look(c) also 2SG.PP CL9/10.buttock

'If you look at your siblings buttocks, somebody will also look at your buttocks.' (meaning: "If you talk against your brother or your sister, somebody will also talk against you.")

(378) tɔ́ kà dī tǐ   wū   kà [kwɛ̂   <u>fúbǒ</u>],
there P3 be(b) CL1.father CL1.POSS P1 return_from_bush(c) also
tǐ   wū   [tʃú tsú <u>bǒ</u>] wān w-ɔ̄
CL1.father CL1POSS come(b) beat(b) also CL1.child CL1-DET

'When her father had also returned from the bush, her father came and also beat the child.'

The first syllable of the adverbial may be dropped so that the adverb is shortened to **bǒ**, see e.g. (378).

9.4.1.3 mě 'only'

The adverb **mě** translates into English as 'only' or 'just'. Although it is segmentally identical with the verb **mɛ̌** 'finish', I do not think that the two are related. Whereas the verb **mɛ̌** 'finish' exhibits the characteristic tonal inflections of a Class A verb, the adverb **mě** 'only' always retains the same tone pattern. Furthermore, **mě** 'only' is not attested as main verb. Therefore, it is analyzed as an adverb.

(379) bɔ̌ [dzɨ́   <u>mě</u>] mɨ́ntù mɨ̄ mɨ́ntù mɨ̄
CL2 travel(b).IPFV only CL7/8.car in CL7/8.car in

'They only ever travel by car.'

(380) à [mū mū   <u>mě</u>] ŋgī
2SG take(a) drink(b) only CL6.water

'You should only drink water.'

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[13]The Class 8 pronoun is used to refer to groups of people in an abusive way.

(381)   n=[dɔ̄   mɛ̌] Pɛ́   kə̀ kwɓ   gbə́   áná   mwàŋ
        1SG=see(a) only Petrus P3 enter(c) house.LOC like_that IDEO

'I just saw Pe entering into the house'

9.4.1.4   dzɔ̋ŋá̋~dzɔ̄ŋ 'again'

The adverb **dzɔ̋ŋá̋~dzɔ̄ŋ** (see (382)-(384)) marks repetition of an action that
has been carried out earlier and can be translated into English as 'again'. It
does not fulfill the test for syntactic independence as it always co-occurs with
another verb. It also always has the same tone pattern, which consists of a
superhigh tone on both syllables (rather than a high tone, like a Class C verb).
Therefore, it clearly qualifies as an adverb rather than a verb.

(382)   wù [gān bɔ̄ŋ   ʃí   dzɔ̋ŋá̋] tɛ̋là mwɔ́m
        CL1 go(a) call(a) go_down(a) again   Tela Mwom

'She went to call Tela Mwom again.'

(383)   bɔ̌ [gān mū   ʃú   dzɔ̋ŋá̋] kpɛ̀
        CL2 go(a) take(a) come(b) again   CL3.pot

'They went again to take a pot.'

(384)   dɔ̄   w-ɔ́   [ʃɨ̄ŋ   fɨ́   dzɔ̋ŋá̋]
        CL3.beans CL3-DET fill/be_full(c) pass(b) again

'The beans were again more than the pot.'

Note that this adverb has an alternative monosyllabic form **dzɔ̄ŋ**, which
bears a mid tone, instead of a superhigh tone like the bisyllabic form; see
(385)-(386).

(385)   à ʃá   [dzē dzɔ̄ŋ]
        2SG PROHIB say(b) again

'Don't say [that] again!'

(386)   dɨ̌ kì-mān   nō̱   à   [yē   kɛ̄   dzɔ̄ŋ] k-ɔ́   kɨ́ ɨ̌
        be(b) CL7-what SUBORD 2SG start(a) return(c) again CL7-REL CL7 LOC
        t-ɛ̋n   mɨ̄
        DIST-here in

'What is it that you are starting again in here?'

It is still unclear what exactly determines the choice between the bisyllabic
and the monosyllabic form of the adverbial and why the tonal patterns of the
two are different.

9.4.1.5 **bǎ** 'exactly'

The adverb **bǎ** (see (387)-(389)) roughly translates into English as 'exactly'. It always bears a superhigh tone, whereas verbs of Class C always bear a high tone. Verbs of other classes change their tonal pattern. Furthermore, **bǎ** never stands alone but always accompanies a verb. In all examples, it occurs at the end of the verbal core.

(387) à   mī   [nìm ʃì   bǎ]   dὲ   nǭ   bə̄
      2SG CONSEC sit(a) go_down(a) exactly CL9.place SUBORD IMPERS
      kpā   f-ɔ́   gū,   ā   fì-ŋgī   wá
      light_fire(a) PROX-REL CL3/7a.fire COM CL19-CL6.water 2SG.PP
      kā̀n
      hands.LOC

      'Then (you will) sit down exactly where they make fire, with a bit of water in your hand.'

(388) kpé   w-ɛ̄n,   [dǐ   bǎ]   mān à   mwē   k-ɔ́
      CL1.woman CL1-DEM.PROX be(b) exactly what 2SG be_sad(a) CL7-REL
      tō   ǎ   bí-lō   yɛ̄
      CL7/8.day ADVLZ CL8-all QUOT.Q

      'Woman, why are you sad every day?' (literally: This woman, what exactly is it that you grieve everyday?)

(389) n=tɔ́   kə̀ mɨ́ ʃū,   m=[bí   yə̄   bǎ]
      1SG=VER.FOC P3 take(a) come(b) 1SG=exit(b) go_up(c) exactly
      tʃî,   n=tú   yə̄   ŋgī   m-ɔ́
      on_top 1SG=scoop(b) go_up(c) CL19.water CL19-DET
      sūŋ   mī̄
      CL9/10.calabash in

      'I then brought, I got up, I carried up the water in a bowl.'

9.4.1.6 **tá** 'really'

The adverbial **tá** roughly translates as 'really'. It bears a high tone just like a Class C verb. However, it cannot occur without another verb, which gives reason to believe that it has adverbial status. Examples for the use of **tá** are found in (390) and (391).

(390) bɛ̄n nɛ́n láŋ   *because* bɛ̄n níŋ   yɛ̄   bɛ̄n [yī   tá]
      2PL maybe be_happy(c) because 2PL want(c) COMP 2PL eat(b) really
      ǎ   bɛ́n ndʒɛ̄n
      ADVLZ 2PL.PP alone

      'Maybe you guys are happy because you just want to eat alone.'

(391) bī   mɪ́   nìm fɑ́nɪ́ (ē),   bī   dzé   nìm tí   mɛ̌
       1PL CONSEC sit(a) here?   INTERJ 1PL speak(b) sit(a) surprisingly only

       yɛ̄,   lʊ̀ŋ   bɔ́   [dɪ̌   tá   mɛ̌] yɛ́n lā, bī   kwó
       COMP CL8.suffering CL8-DET be(b) really only Y.   DAT CL8 enter(c)

       fúbɔ̌ bɪ́   ŋgɔ̄̀
       also 1PL.PP upon

       'And we are sitting here, saying that only Yain is suffering, but the
       suffering has also attacked some of us.'

   In (390), **tá** stands at the right edge of the verbal core, while in (391), it is
followed by the verbal adverb **mɛ̌** 'only'.

9.4.2 The verb core-initial adverb sɛ́n 'then'

My data contain only one verbal adverb which stands at the beginning rather
than at the end of the verbal core, namely **sɛ́n** 'then' (see (392)-(394)). The
adverbial **sɛ́n** translates into English as 'then, subsequently'. It always bears
a high tone and, on first glance, it would appear to be a verb of tone class C.
However, it cannot stand on its own without a subsequent verb and is therefore
analyzed as an adverb.

(392) n = [sɛ́n   bú] mɔ́   à, dɪ̌   nɪ́ŋ   dɔ́m à fɔ̌ *plan*
       1SG = then ask(b) CS.QUOT Q, be(b) CL7.thing some 2SG P1 plan
       ɛ̄
       QUOT.Q

       'I then asked [him]: Is it something that you planned?'

(393) m-mù-n   nǭ   mɑ́nfrɛ̀ kɛ̀ mǔ   fɪ̄   bī   w-ɔ̄
       INF-take(a)-INF SUBORD M.   P3 take(a) pass(b) exit(b) CL1-REL

       tʃɔ̌m   w-ɔ́   ɲwɛ́n, dǎn ā   ntʊ̌ŋ [sɛ́n tʃú   kɔ́]   pɛ́
       CL3/7a.axe CL3-DET now   D.   COM N.   then come(b) hold(c) P.
       ɲwɛ́n
       now

       'Just as Manfred took out the axe now, Dan of Ntung then came and
       held Pe, now.'

(394) w-ɔ̄   *time*   nǭ   kpɔ̄   ŋgɪ̄   [sɛ́n tʃú
       CL1-DEM CL1/2.time SUBORD CL1.wife CL1;1SG.POSS then come(b)

       kɔ́   kān   kwō   mɛ̌] mɪ̄ sɑ́m   ɲwɛ́n áná
       catch(b) hold(c) enter(c) only 1SG heart/middle.LOC now like_that

       'That was the time that my wife came and held me in the middle now,
       like this.'