

Serial Verb Constructions in Sikkhanese

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Abstract—Serial verb construction (hereafter abbreviated as SVC) is a construction consisting of more than one verbs without any overt markers of coordinator or subordinator. SVC is a common phenomenon in isolating languages which lack morphological markers for syntactic processes. Sikkhanese language (Sikkhanese belongs to isolating language with SVO type and it does not have diathesis. This research attempts to analyse the typological characteristics of Sikkhanese SVCs which cover: prosodic/phonological, morpho-syntactic, and semantic features of SVCs in Sikkhanese. The theory adopted in this research is typological theory which is applied by Van Stedent and Ger Reesink (2008) in analysing SVCs in East-Nusantara languages. The prosodic characteristic shows that Sikkhanese SVCs fell under one intonation contour, similar to the intonation of a single clause and without being separated by a pause; morphosyntactically SVCs in Sikkhanese could be categorised into independent and some belong to co-dependent type without any morphological markers; and syntactically they could be analysed into: (1) motion; (2) direction, (3) manner; (4) instrument; (5) purpose; (6) progressive; (7) modality

Index Terms—SVC, typology, phonology, morpho-syntax, and semantics

I. INTRODUCTION

Sikkhanese is a regional language in Sikka District, on the island of Flores belonging to the Province of East Nusa Tenggara, in Indonesia. According to Fernandez (1996) and Sedeng, (2000) this language is grouped into Ambon-Timorese languages, and is estimated to have approximately 251 and 125 speakers. Sikkhanese is classified into two geographical dialects, namely: Sikkhanese dialect in West Sikka and Krowe / Kangae / Tna Ali dialect, in East Sikka (Fernandez, 1996, p. 36). In addition to Sikkhanese, in Sikka District, there are other minor languages: Bajo and Bugis languages used by migrants from Sulawesi, and Paluqe language used on Paluqe Island, besides Indonesian as national language. Sikkhanese is used by its speakers in everyday life, which deals with customs, agriculture, commerce, and religious matters. In addition, Sikkhanese is also used as a lingua franca during the transition of children learning Indonesian as a national language. Sikkhanese is also used as a means of disseminating information on the results of national development in rural areas as a companion of Indonesian language (Sedeng, 2000, p. 2).

In the explanation of the 1945 Constitution, Chapter XV, Article 36, it is stated that the local languages still used as a means of communication by the local community are nurtured and maintained by the state. The guidance is based on the fact that regional languages are parts of Indonesian culture. One form of guidance and preservation of regional languages is the study of all linguistic aspects of the languages in Indonesia (Halim, 1976: 21).

Associated with the preservation of Sikkhanese in the form of research, today's research on Sikkhanese has been done previously. These studies lead to the study of geographical dialects, historical linguistic studies, and several studies related to the phonological, adaptation and expression of Sikkhanese customs. In general, Sikkhanese research related to the micro aspect is based on structural theory and so far no one has specifically examined the construction of Sikkhanese verbs.

Serial verb construction (SVC) is a clause consisting of more than one verb without any markers of subordinator or coordinator. SVC is a common phenomenon in isolating languages that have no morphological markers for syntactic processes. Sedeng (2000) revealed that Sikkhanese was classified into isolating language with SVO-type, and lacked passive diathesis. This language has a very minimal morphological process, and grammatical concepts to be expressed, through separate lexicon. It is the limitations of this morphological process that gave rise to the construction of serial verbs as seen in the following examples.

- (1) a. Ina **boter** **beli** a'u apel.
 mother buy give 1 SING appel
 'mother bought me an apple.'
- (2) b. John **dena** **meluk** bilik nimu-ng. (Sedeng, 2000, p. 71)
 name make clean room 3-POSS
 'John cleaned his room.'
- (3) c. Tibo lameng ia **plari neti** ata biang me dua.
 young man DEF run bring one girl.
 'The young man eloped one's young girl'.

From the three examples (1a-c), it can be said that what is conveyed in English using one verb is expressed by two main verbs in Sikkaneese: *boter* "buy", *beli* "give", *dena* "make", *meluk* "clean", *plari* "elope", *neti* "bring". The verbs in the SVC in the examples are the main verbs and can appear independently in one clause.

The SVC phenomenon seen in examples 1(a-c) is very interesting to study and has been widely discussed in the literature (cf. Senft (2008), Aihkenvald (2006), Kroeger (2004), and Indrawati (2014)). However, until now the concept of SVC is still interesting to be analyzed, because its characteristics are specific, depending on the language under study. Seeing this opportunity, on this occasion the researcher raised the topic of SVCs in Sikkaneese, seen from its typological perspective and analysed their characteristics involving phonological, syntactic, and semantic characteristics.

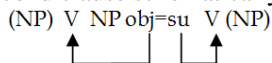
II. THEORY AND CONCEPT

The theory applied in discussing Sikkaneese SVC is the language typological approach proposed by Van Staden and Ger Reesink in Senft, eds. (2008) in their research entitled "Serial verb constructions in a linguistic area". They state that what is included in the criteria of serial verbs are all forms or constructions in which two or more verbs occur in a clause and none of the verbs is clearly and formally subordinate to the other. SVC often called as a complex predicate is essentially two terms syntactically and semantically similar, since the complex predicate refers to the notion of predicate which may be morphologically composed of a verb but its semantic impression is complex or composed of several verbs that are also complex in meaning. Baker (1997, p. 247) suggests that the term complex predicate refers to any complex predicate, semantically, syntactically, and morphologically. This means that the serialization of verbs is an integral part of the complex predicate.

Van Staden and Ger Reesink in Senft, eds.(2008, p. 22), stress that in SVC there is no conjunction, linkage, or "non-finite" marker between the two verbs in the SVC, both verbs can stand alone in clauses outside SVC, the serial verbs form a single predicate in a clause, and they have the characteristic of sharing arguments. Phonologically SVCs have single intonation, the verbs in series cannot be separated by a pause.

Morphosyntactically, Van Staden and Ger Reesink differentiate SVCs into four, groups namely: independent SVC, dependent, co-dependent SVC, and complex SVC.

Independent SVC refers to SVCs of which all verbs in the constructions are morphologically inflected, as those of a single verb in a simple clause.; **dependent SVC** is defined as a construction that is only one of its verbs being inflected, while the other is in the form with no affixes. **Co-dependent SVC**, in this SVC the serial verbs have the characteristics of argument sharing and parts of the constructions are interdependent. The first clause's Object is the Subject of the second clause schematically, the co-dependent SVC can be described as follows:



Van Staden noted that in East Nusantara languages, co-dependent constructions involve fully inflected verbs. For example, consider the following Taba language.

- (1) N=**babas** welik n=**mot** do
 3SG=bite pig 3SG=dieREAL
 'It bit the pig dead.' (Bowden ,2001a, p.311 in Senft, eds, 2008,p.25).

Complex SVC: in this type, two or more verbs have a set of affixes: the prefix is attached to the first verb and the suffix to the last verb in the series. This type of SVC is very similar to composition. For example, consider the Inanwatan language quoted from Van Staden and Ger Reesink (Senft, eds., 2008, p. 27) below.

- (2) Me-de-wo-re
 3:SU-go:across-come-PAST
 'They came across'.

Seen from the meaning of SVCs, Van Staden Ger Reesink finds meanings: motion , direction , changing conditions, and instrument, manner, aspects and moods.

III. METHODOLOGY

The method applied in this study involved four steps they were; data source, methods and techniques of providing data, methods and techniques of analyzing data, and methods and techniques of presenting the results of data analysis. Data source; The Sikkaneese used as a population of data sources was the Sikkaneese spoken throughout Sikka District. Data source in this research consisted of primary and secondary data source. Primary data sources were from native

speakers obtained both from speakers used as informants and people who were not used as informants. The data sought were in the forms of sentences used in folklores, customs, beliefs, and aspects of social and cultural life of the community. Secondary data were obtained from the results of existing research, and these data were used as comparisons.

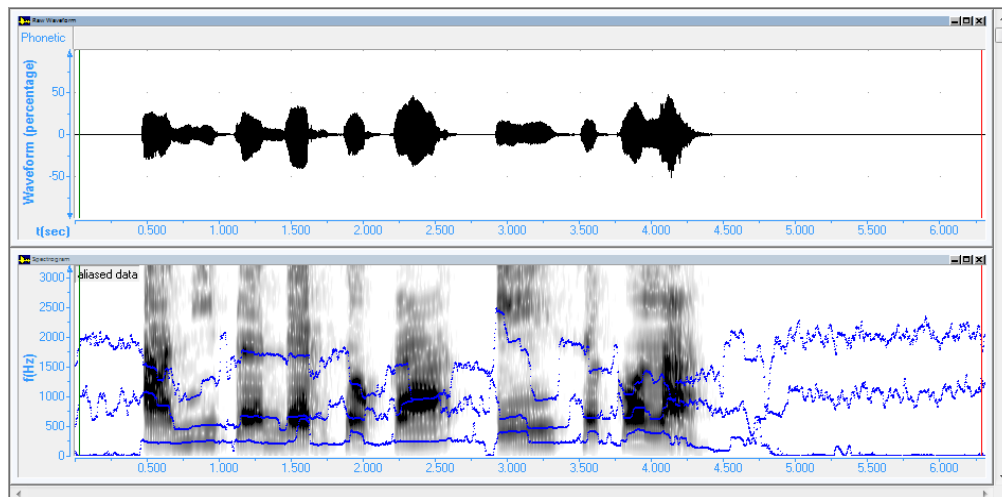
Methods and techniques of providing data; this research is considered as field research, it means that the researchers directly went into the field to obtain data. This method is considered higher in academic degrees; in addition researchers could also directly ask the things that were considered important. The methods applied in collecting the data were observation and interview by means of recording and note-taking. Methods and techniques of analyzing data; the data that had been collected were descriptive-qualitatively analysed based on the theory of language typology. Methods and techniques of presenting the results of data analysis; the data that had been analysed were informally presented based on the characteristics of the Sikkhese SVCs

IV. DISCUSSION

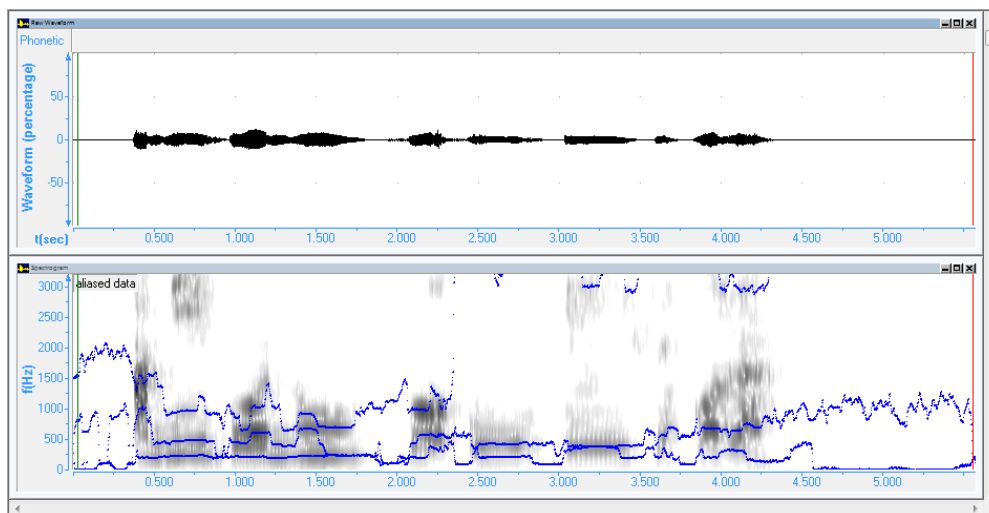
The language typology approach is an approach which aims at grouping language according to its structural features. This approach assumes that languages can be compared to each other according to their structure, and the other assumption is that there are differences between languages. In other words, language has universal features and specific characteristics that distinguish one language from another.

A. Phonological Characteristics of Sikkhese SVC

As described above, phonologically SVCs have single intonations without being separated by pauses. Sikkhese SVC can be said to fall into one intonation similar to the intonations in single clauses, there is no pause between one verb to the other. This supports what is expressed by Aikhenvald and Dixon (2006) and other linguists who argue that SVC has the intonation characteristic of a single-verb clause and not the intonation of a series of clauses. It is also explained that in many languages the clause boundary is marked by the separation of intonation or pause whereas in SVC there is no pause between verbs forming SVC. It can be seen in the following data proved by using speech analyzer and spectrograph.



- (3)a. *Ani* *plender* *Soka* *e'i* *Sekolah*
 Name learn dance Prep. school
 'Ani learns dancing at school.



(3)b. *Nimu bo'u bano e'i sekolah*
 3T come go Prep. school
 'He came from and went back to school.'

If the speech analyzer and its spectrophotograph are concerned, it appears that the verb *bo'u bano* 'come and go', between them there is a long distance indicating that there is a pause between *bo'u* and *bano*. This is in contrast with data 4a. *splender Soka* 'learn dancing', there is no pause between *splender* and *Soka*, and in the spectrograph there is no long distantance.

B. Morphosyntactic Characteristics of Sikkinese SVC

Morphosyntactically Sikkinese SVCs consist of two types, namely (1) independent type and (2) co-dependent type. Both are outlined as follows.

The independent SVCs of Sikkinese

Sikkinese independent SVCs can be illustrated based on the following Sikkinese data;

- (4)a. *Robert gEra tutur nora Floren*
 Name Stand speak prep Name
 'Robert stood speaking with Floren'.
- (4)b. *Ani plender Soka E sEkola*
 Name learn dance Prep. School
 'Ani learns dancing at school'.
- (4)c. *Petrus Bano Plari e Sekolah*
 Name go run Prep. school
 'Petrus went running to school'

Data 5a consists of serial verbs, *gEra tutur* 'stand up speaking' (V1: *gEra* 'stand' and V2: *tutur* 'speak'); data 3b, serial verbs *plender soka* 'learn to dance' (V1: *plender* 'learn' and V2; *soka* 'dance'); the verbs *bano plari* 'go run' (V1: *bano* 'go' and V2: *plar i* 'run'). Data 5(a-c) are said to be independent types because each verb can stand alone when used as a single-verb in a clause. It can be proved by the following data:

- (5)a. *Robert gEra nora Floren*
 Name stand Prep. Name
 'Robert stood up with Floren'.
- (5)b. *Robert tutur Nora Floren.*
 Name speak Prep. Name
 'Robert spoke with Floren'.

2.Co-dependent Sikkinese SVCs.

Co-dependent type of Sikkinese SVCs can be seen in the following data.

(6)a.	<i>Matiu</i> Name	tung take	<i>inan</i> mother	Obat check up	<i>e'i</i> prep	<i>Doctor</i> doctor
	'Matius took mother to check up to the doctor'.					
(6)b.	<i>Au</i> 2 T	dEna make	<i>a'u</i> 1 T	Ela fall	<i>e'i</i> prep	<i>Ai</i> tree
	'you made me fall down from the tree'.					
(6)c.	<i>A'u</i> 1 T	pano go	<i>sekola</i> school	pake use	<i>sepeda</i> bike	
	'I go to school by bike'.					

The SVC in data 7a, are *tung* 'take' (V1) and *obat* 'check up' (V2). Between these two verbs there is a noun 'mother'. The serial verbs in data 7b are *dEna* 'make' (V1) and *Ela* 'fall' (V2). Both verbs are interrupted by the pronoun, *a'u* 'me'. The SVC in data 7c is *pano* 'go' (V1) and *Pake* 'use' (V2). Both verbs are interrupted by a noun, *sekolah* 'school'. The three SVCs in 7 (a-c) are said to be co-dependent because the two verbs are related to each other, and the Object argument of the first verb is co-referenced to the Subject argument of the second verb.

C. The Semantic Characteristics of Sikkinese SVCs

Kroeger (2004, p. 227) reveals that the verbs in the SVCs usually express single events, however since both verbs contribute to the meaning of the clauses therefore the resulting meaning will be more complex than the meaning of each individual verb. The diversity of meanings formed by the verbs in series such as: the meaning of instrument, manner, direction, and aspects.

an Staden and Ger Reesink in Senft, eds.(2008, p. 36) suggest that the meaning of SVCs is determined by a small group of verbs whose meanings can be generally identified and the overall constructions are categorized according to the group of these verbs. By following this way the meanings of Sikkinese SVCs can be described in the following data.

1 Motion

Verb movements such as: *mai* 'come', *balong* 'walk', *belung* 'leave' are mostly found as V1 in Sikkinese followed by another action performed by the same Agent expressed by V2. This construction indicates that the Agent moves in a certain direction to perform the event expressed by V2 (as the destination). Cross-linguistically, SVCs expressing motion is very common as noted by Durie (1997, p. 310):

"Every serializing languages I have encountered includes a category of motion serialisation, where a verb of motion is combined with some other verbs in such a way that the motion verb comes first and the moving argument is the Agent of the second verb". Sikkinese SVCs expressing motion can be seen in the following data:

(7)a.	<i>Wue</i> Elder brother /sister	mai come	tota Look for	<i>A'u</i> 1Sing
	'Elder brother /sister came to look for me'			
(7)b.	<i>Ina</i> mother	mai come	neti bring	<i>mu'u</i> bananas
	'mother came to bring bananas'			

Data 8a and b showed that V1 *mai* 'come' (intransitive) is a motion verb. *Mai*, indicated that the Agent moved toward the speaker to show or perform the action expressed by V2, *tota* (as the purpose).

V2, *tota* 'looking for' (transitive) requires an Agent that is the person looking for and Patient or something to look for. In clauses 8a and b, *wue* 'elder brother /sister' as an Agent of *mai* (movement action), and also Agent for *mai* movement action with the aim of doing *tota*. In the data 8b, the agent of *mai* 'come' is the 'mother' who is also the Agent of *neti* 'take', V2 *neti* requires two arguments ie; Agent and Patient, Agent of *neti* action is *ina* 'mother' while the Patient is *mu'u* 'banana'. The agent moves toward the speaker with the purpose to perform the action expressed by V2 (*neti*) as the goal, or the Agent performs *tota* and *neti* actions by way (manner) of *mai* 'come'.

Data (8a-b), indicated that motion verbs as V1 of Sikkinese SVC had a relationship of purpose meaning or of manner. SVCs with motion V1 are very productive in Sikkinese

2. Sikkinese SVCs with direction meanings

Bair in Senft eds.(2008, p.68) reveals that words indicating direction and space, such as seawards (direction otowards the sea), inland, above, and below are commonly found, both in Austronesian and non-Austronesian languages in the East Nusantara and Pacific. Van Staden and Ger Reesink in Senft, eds. (2008) suggest that a construction that reveals the direction semantic relationship is defined by V2 (direction verb) that indicates the direction or location of the movement or action event. Manners are shown by V1. SVCs expressing direction in Sikkiness are presented below:

(8)a.	<i>Robert</i> Name	Bano walk	<i>le</i> Prep.	<i>Na.</i> east
	'Robert walked to the east'.			
(8)b.	<i>Wair</i> Water	<i>E</i> Def	<i>kran</i> tap	beta drip
	'water dripped out'.			

In data (9a-b) V2 *le na* 'to the east', and *wira sensei* 'exit' are verbs showing directions. These verbs are the main verbs in the SVC, while the other verbs are *bano* 'walking', and *beta* 'drip' are motion verbs which in the SVCs show manners semantic relation. The meaning of the relationship is *bano le na* 'le na by means of *bano*' , and *beta sira werang* 'sira werang by *beta* 'dripping way'.

Data (9a) shows that, V1 *bano* 'run' is an intransitive verb that requires a subject's argument, Robert, and *le na* is an intransitive verb that requires a subject argument. Subjects of V1 and V2 refer to the same noun, namely Robert. In data (9b), V1, *beta* 'drip' is an intransitive verb which requires a Subject argument, *Wair* 'water', and *sira-wirang* 'exit' is an intransitive verb that requires one subject argument which is in the clause referring to the subject of V1. So V1 and V2 also share the subject.

3. Sikkanese SVCs expressing manners

In SVCs expressing manners, one of their verbs reveals the manners of the actions expressed by the other verbs. Generally the verbs expressing manners follow their main verbs. Van Staden in Senft eds. (2008, p. 44). In Sikkanese SVCs expressing manner with intransitive verbs as V1, the manner was generally expressed by V2, except for the purpose of stressing the manners. It was also found in Sikkanese that SVCs with manner meanings could be constructed by intransitive V1 and V2, and V1 Intransitive and V2 transitive. These could be presented in the following data:

- (9)a. *Rimu pano hama-hama*
3pl. walk Together
'They walked together'
- (9)b. *Tatik plari ropo-ropo*
Name run Rush
'Tatik ran hurriedly'

In data 10a., V1, *pano* 'walk' is an intransitive verb, and V2, *hama hama* 'together' is also an intransitive verb. As intransitive verbs both require subject arguments that semantically act as Agents. In clause 10a, *rimu* 'they' is the subject of V1 and also the subject of V2. In other words, the subject of V2 is coreferenced with the subject of V1, *pano hama hama* 'walked together' means walking by means of *hama hama* 'together'. Thus, V1 is the main verb expressing action, whereas V2 expresses the way how the action expressed by V1 is done. In data 10b., V1, *plari* 'run' is an intransitive verb, V2, *ropo-ropo* 'rush' is also an intransitive verbs. As intransitive verbs both require subject arguments that semantically act as Agents. In clause 10b., *Tatik* is the subject of V1 and also the subject of V2. Therefore, the subject of V2 is co-referenced with the Subject of V1. *Plari ropo-ropo* means running by way of *ropo-ropo*. Thus, V1 is the main verb expressing action, whereas V2 expresses the way how the action expressed by V1 is carried out.

Sikkanese SVCs of which meaning expresses manners with V1 intransitive verbs and V2 transitive verbs can be presented in the following data:

- (10)a. *Wair ba daa bak benu*
water flow fill Water container
'the water flowed filling over the water container'
- (10)b. *Wari mai gapu Ina*
Younger sister come hug mother
'younger sister came hugging mother'.

In data 11a and 11b, V1, *ba* 'flow', and *mai* 'come' are intransitive verbs. Meanwhile, *daa* 'fill', and *gapu* 'hug' are transitive verbs. As an intransitive verb V1 needs a subject argument that acts as an Agent. In data 11(a-b), the subject argument of *ba* 'flow' is *wair* 'water', and *mai, wari* 'sister'. Meanwhile, the V2 of the two SVCs are transitive verbs which require two arguments, namely the Subject argument as Agent and the Object argument as Patient. The Subject Argument of V2 is aligned with the Subject argument of V1. The Object argument of V2 in 11a is *bak benu* 'water container' and in 11b, the Object argument is *ina* 'mother'. In both data the manner meanings are expressed by V2. Semantically, *baa daa* has the meaning of *ba* 'flowing' by means of *daa* 'fill', and *mai gapu* 'come by hugging'.

4. Sikkanese SVCs with instrument meaning

SVCs with instrument meaning are the SVCs of which one of their verbs requires the instrument used to perform the actions expressed by the other verb. In Sikkanese SVC there is one verb that is the verb *paket* 'use' which is used as V2 to convey instrument of doing the action denoted by V1. This can be seen in the following data:

- (11)a. *Wari pesiar paket Bis*
younger travel use Bus
Younger sister traveled by bus
- (11)b. *Ina bano Paket Dokar*
Mother exit use horse cart
Mother went out by horse cart.

Data 12a-b show that the verb, *paket* 'use', V2, have instrument meaning with transitive verbs that are collocated with verbs occupying V1 which behave as the main verbs. V2, *paket* on these SVCs behave like adverbial of instruments and the canonical structure of the adverb in the Sikkanese clause is after the verb. As an intransitive verb, V1 requires subject argument that acts as an Agent. In 12a-b, subject arguments of the verb *pesiar* is *wari*, and from

bano, ina. Meanwhile, V2, the transitive verbs require two arguments, namely the Subject argument as Agent and the Object's argument as Patient. The Subject Argument of V2 is co-referenced with the Subject arguments of V1, whereas the Object argument of V2, *paket* is *bis* 'bus (12a) and *dokar* data (12b). In data 12a-b the meaning of the instrument is expressed by V2. Semantically, *pesiar paket* has the meaning of *pesiar* 'traveling' and *bano paket* means *bano* by instrument; horse cart.

5. Sikkinese SVCs with purpose meaning

SVC with meaning relation of purpose is an SVC of which one of its verbs indicates a goal to achieve the objective of the action expressed by the other verbs. In Sikkinese there is a verb that can be used to express the meaning, ie *dena* 'make'. It can be seen in the following data.

(12)a.	<i>Ina</i> mother	<i>hena</i> make	<i>Jajan</i> cake	<i>dena</i> make	<i>tea</i> sell
	Mother made cake to sell.				
(12)b.	<i>Karti</i> Name	<i>hena</i> make	<i>Muu</i> fried banana	<i>dena</i> make	<i>ga</i> eat
	Karti made fried banana to eat				

Data 13a-b indicate that V1, *hena* 'make' is a transitive verb requiring an object argument in this case *jajan* 'cake', data 13a, and *muu* 'fried banana' for data 13b. V2, *dena* (with the actual meaning make) which is in non-serialized language equal to preposition **to** or **for** is specifically used to express the purpose of the action denoted by V1.

6. Sikkinese SVCs with progressive meaning

The progressive meaning can be expressed through Sikkinese SVCs with V1 of posture or motion verbs. This supports what is expressed by Aikhenvald and Dixon (2006, p. 23) that the verb of motion or posture verb can be used to express the meaning of progressive or continuous. In Sikkinese SVCs, these motion verbs usually fill V1, as seen in data 14a-b;

(13)a.	<i>Rimu</i> 3Pl	<i>Era</i> stand	<i>himo</i> look	<i>a'u</i> 1Sing
	'They stood looking at me'.			
(13)b.	<i>Pino</i> Name	<i>jano</i> walk	<i>boter</i> buy	<i>Buku</i> Book
	'Pino walked buying a book'			

Data 14a-b indicate that the V1 *era* 'stand', and *jano* 'walk' have meaning relations that the activities expressed by V2 (*himo* 'look/see', *boter* 'buy') are in progress. Both activities in V2s are still in process and have not been finished.

7. Sikkinese SVCs with modal meaning

Some verbs such as *mogang* 'ask' and *ga?i* 'want or will' can be the V1 in Sikkinese SVCs and form a meaningful relationship of modalities to the activities expressed by V2. The data in 15a. and 15b illustrate this;

(14)a.	<i>Rimu</i> 3Pl	<i>mogang</i> will	<i>hantar hama-hama</i> Sing		
	'He would sing together'.				
(14)b.	<i>Riko</i> Name	<i>ga?i</i> want	<i>tata</i> know	<i>raita</i> house	<i>Oring</i> 1Sing
	'Riko wanted to know my house'.				

In data 15a., V1 *mogang* 'will' and V2 *hantar hama-hama* 'sing' are both active-intransitive form so that their subject arguments functioning as Agents are co-referenced. Meanwhile, in data 15b, V1 *ga?i* 'want' and V2 *tata* 'know' are in the active-transitive forms. They both have two arguments, namely Subject arguments and Object arguments. The subject arguments of V2 is co-referenced with the Subject arguments of V1 that is *Riko*, meanwhile the Object argument of V1 is the complement clause,

tata raita Oring 'know my house' and the Object argument of V2 is *raita oring* 'rumah saya'.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis on the phonological, morphosyntactic, and semantic features of the Sikkinese SVCs it could be concluded that: The phonological characteristics of Sikkinese SVCs showed that Sikkinese SVCs had single intonations, similar to the intonation in single clauses and were inseparable by pause. Morphosyntactically, SVCs in Sikkinese could be classified into independent types and some could be classified as co-dependent types. Semantically, Sikkinese SVCs had meaning relations of motion, purpose, direction, instrument, progressive, and modal.

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