

Serial verb constructions in Amazonian languages

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Serial verb constructions are a sequence of verbs which act together as a single predicate without any overt marker of coordination, subordination or syntactic dependency of any sort. Serial verb constructions can be symmetrical, consisting of two or more verbs each chosen from a semantically and grammatically unrestricted class. Or they may be asymmetrical, and include a verb from a grammatically or semantically restricted class. Serial verbs can form one or more than one grammatical word. We focus on the distribution of asymmetrical and symmetrical serial verb constructions of single-word and of multi-word types in the languages of Lowland Amazonia, and discuss their functions, meanings, and origins.