

GIVE serial verbs and prepositions in Haitian and Martinican

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Serial verb constructions involving a second verb *give* can introduce recipients or beneficiaries, similar to datives marked by prepositions. The present talk examines the syntax and semantics of Haitian Creole BAY 'give' introducing a DP complement in a doubly comparative perspective, comparing Haitian BAY with its cognate BA in Martinican Creole and with core and non-core datives.

I show that Haitian BAY 'give' + DP shows hybrid syntactic behaviour allowing both patterns characteristic of prepositions and of verbs for a range of syntactic tests. The data from Haitian and Martinican show that grammaticalisation from a verb to a preposition does not preserve argument structure in that it may result in different selectional patterns for the full verb and the serial verb use. The Haitian second verb BAY 'give' + DP is limited to animate recipients, differing both from full verb BAY in Haitian and from its cognate BA in Martinican Creole.

Haitian has two semantically different BAY 'give' + DP constructions, one specifying the recipient of transfer verbs, the other adding a coercing beneficiary. While recipient-BAY resembles core datives insofar as it is linked to the argument structure of the main verb, command-BAY is different from better studied instances of benefactive datives in that it has additional semantic content and - for some speakers - additional syntactic restrictions.