Continuum of Serial Verb Construction and Nominal Clause in Seediq

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In Seediq, there is a construction that involves sentence-like complementation (henceforth complementation) and one that involves serial verb construction (henceforth SVC). Complementation is characterized as being able to insert a particle ka before it, as in example (1). In SVC it is usually not inserted between verbs, as in example (2).

- (1) me-kela=ku ka [ma'ah pa'ah tehaypaq ka kumu]. AV-know=1s.NOM CMP AV.FUT.come from Taipei NOM Kumu. I know that Kumu will come from Taipei.
- (2) h-em-en-ilaw qabaN me-taqi ka laqi. AV-PRF-cover blanket AV-sleep NOM child The child covered (himself) with blanket and slept.

As for complementation, the verb in the embedded clause can inflect fully and independently from the matrix clause predicate. There is not such a verb form that is used only in embedded clauses. Embedded clause can have its own subject, independently from the matrix clause subject.

In SVC, on the other hand, those verbs in other than the sentence initial position may stay AV Neutral form, regardless of the form of the verb in the sentence initial position, or it may change and agree with the verb in the sentence initial position. In SVC subject clitic usually appears only after the first verb, but in some occasions it may appear after the second verb also, and in that case, the subject clitic on the two verbs must refer to the same entity.

Look at the following examples. (3a) and (3b) look very similar but in (3a) there is no *ka* before the second verb but in (3b) there is a *ka* before the second verb.

(3) a.h-em-en-ilaw=ku	qabaN		
me-n-taqi(=ku)		(ka	yaku).
AV-PRF-cover=1s.NOM	blanket		
AV-PRF-sleep(=1s.NOM)		(NOM	1s)
I covered (myself) with blanket and slept.			
b. ^{*/ok} h-em-en-ilaw=ku	qabaN	ka	
me-n-taqi(=ku)		(ka	yaku).
AV-PRF-cover=1s.NOM	blanket CMP		
AV-PFR-sleep(=1s.NOM)		(NOM	1s)
i. That I slept is (while) I covered (myself) with blanket.			

ii. I covered (myself) with blanket and slept.

Sentence (3a) seems to be SVC. But what about (3b)? Should we analyze it as complementation expressing attendant circumstance (as in the interpretation i.), because ka appears in front of the second verb? That means we regard (3a) and (3b) as having a distinct constructions. Or should we regard (3a) and (3b) as having the same construction, regardless of presence or absence of ka? In the latter case, should we regard them as SVC or as complementation? It is possible for ka not to appear in complementation, and (3a) could be one of such cases.

My conclusion for the time being is that SVCs and complementation construction make a continuum and the case in question is located somewhere between them. If the sentence is closer to complementation, it becomes more natural for *ka* to appear. If the verb in the second position is perfect form or non-AV form, for example, or if the subject clitic occurs after the second verb, it is more like a complementation, and *ka* is more likely to occur and harder to omit. Sentence (4) also expresses attendant circumstance; the second verb is GV Perfect form, that is different from the matrix clause verb, and the subject is *ka tehaypaq* 'NOM Taipei', that is different from the matrix clause subject, so it is more like a clause, and *ka* is unlikely to be omitted. (4) p-en-e'apa tederuy qereNul ka [n-sa-'an=na ka tehaypaq].

AV.PRF-ride car smoke CMP PRF-go-GV=3s.GEN NOM Taipei Lit. That I went to Taipei is (while) I take locomotive train. S/He took locomotive train to go to Taipei.