



How many verbs and why? Deriving synthesis and periphrasis from their syntactic context

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In this talk, I address the question of wordhood and word-formation through the lens of multi-verbal constructions in Zimbabwean Ndebele. A careful investigation of compound tenses and various kinds of aspectual-verb constructions reveals a common mechanism regulating synthesis and periphrasis in the verbal domain. It is further shown that this general mechanism helps us understand the attested variety of multi-verb constructions without resorting to lexical idiosyncrasies of particular auxiliaries or aspectual verbs.

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