



September 13, 2024 3pm-5pm Paris time  
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Will Johnston (McGill), Causation and serialization in Hmong

In Hmong (Hmong-Mien), direct causation is expressed by a productive serial verb construction (SVC), while indirect causation is expressed using the dedicated causative light verb. This resembles the familiar “high/low” or “periphrastic/lexical” causative paradigm well-attested cross-linguistically—though it is unclear why the SVC strategy should not also be available for indirect causatives. Following Bittner (1999) and Kratzer (2005), I argue that the meanings of lexical verbs are necessarily associated with direct causation. I further claim that lexical verbs (and the SVCs they form) are constrained to only merge within the first VoiceP constituent of the verbal extended projection even in highly serializing languages.