TENSE AND ASPECT IN SESOTHO

by

'Malillo Morolong

B.A., University of Botswana Lesotho and Swaziland

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department

of

Languages, Literatures and Linguistics

© 'MALILLO MOROLONG 1978

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

September 1978

All rights reserved. This thesis may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or other means, without permissionof the author.

APPROVAL

Name: Malillo Morolong

Degree: Master of Arts

Title of Thesis: Tense and Aspect in Sesotho

Examining Committee:

Chairman: R. C. DeArmond

B. E. Newton
Senior Supervisor

D. W. J. Knowles

P. Stigger
External Examiner
Associate Professor
Simon Fraser University

Date Approved: Sept. 11, 1978

PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant to Simon Fraser University the right to lend my thesis or dissertation (the title of which is shown below) to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for multiple copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or the Dean of Graduate Studies. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Title of Thesis/Dissertation:

TENSE AND ASPECT IN SESOTHO

Author:

(signature)

MALILLO MOROLONG

(name)

October 18/1978

(date)

ABSTRACT

TENSE AND ASPECT IN SESOTHO

In this thesis an analysis of Tense and Aspect in Sesotho is undertaken. The framework adopted is the one introduced by Reichenbach (1947) in Elements of Symbolic Logic, with subsequent modifications and elaborations in Hornstein (1977) and Smith (1978).

Chapter 1 is introductory. It contains background information about Sesotho morphology; scope of the study and definitions.

Chapter 2 presents an analysis of the stem+ile. It is suggested that this form should be regarded as an immediate past tense instead of 'perfect'. This reclassification provides a solution to the problem of interaction with present and past time adverbials.

Chapter 3 deals with the analysis of the ile+stem. This tense is regarded as a remote tense. Cooccurrence restrictions involving this tense and the immediate tenses are outlined.

Chapter 4 contains an analysis of the ne+stem tense. The claim made is that this is the past tense corresponding to the present tense. Distinctions are made between this tense and

other tenses.

Chapter 5 examines cooccurrence restrictions between aspectual markers and different tenses. Tests are proposed in order to determine aspectual implications inherent in different tenses.

The final chapter examines the applicability of the Reichenbach/Hornstein analysis to Sesotho. The conclusion made is that the immediate/remote distiction plays an important role in the Sesotho tense system and that this must be incorporated into any theory of tense which may adequately account for Sesotho tenses.

The thesis could form the basis for encoding into appropriate formalisms the semantic and syntactic facts of Sesotho tenses.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude to the members of my Supervisory Committee, my senior supervisor, Professor Brian Newton for suggesting the topic and providing the bibliography,and for many hours of discussion and patient supervision. I am thankful to Professor John Knowles for his comments and encouragement.

My gratitude also goes to Professor Alfredo Hurtado for his insightful comments and suggestions.

I am thankful to all my friends for their encouragement. I am mostly indebted to Matseliso Moletsane, Victor Ketso,and Thabang Ramotete for their invaluable assistance in checking my sentences.

I am greatly indebted to the National University of Lesotho for granting me study leave for the duration of my study, and the Canadian International Dedvelopment Agency for financial support.

Finally I would like to say "thanks" to Matseliso for typing the thesis and EC Chondoma for his brains behind FMT.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract iii

Acknowledgements v

List of Tables ix

CHAPTER 1 1

INTRODUCTION 1

1.0 Background Information 1

1.1 Orthography 1

1.2.0 Morphology 5

1.2.1 Tense- aspect- modal Markers 6

1.2.2 Tense 7

1.2.3 Aspect 8

1.2.4 Modal 8

1.2.5 Derivational Suffixes 9

1.2.6 Inflexional Suffix 10

1.3 Problem and Purpose 10

1.4 Choice of Framework 10

1.5 Scope of the Study 13

1.6.0 Definitions 14

1.6.1 Notations used with SRE 15

1.6.2 SRE Modifications 15

1.7 Temporal adverbs 17

Tense And Aspect 20

CHAPTER 2 23

2.0 Introduction 23

2.1 Previous Studies on perfect in Sesotho 24

2.2 Comparison between -ile and non -ile present 27
2.3 The Use of -ile with Temporal Adverbs 31
2.3.1 -ile as Grammaticalized Stative 33
2.3.2 -ile As Perfective 35
2.3.4.1 -ile as Immediate Past 36
2.3.4.2 Distinction between tsca and -ile tenses 39
CHAPTER 3 49
3.1 Remote Past Tense: Ile+stem 49
3.2.0 Some Cooccurrence Restrictions Between Stem+ile And Ile+stem Tenses 56
3.2.1 The Progressive Sa Still 56
3.2.2 Immediate And Remote Tenses In Complement Sentences .58
CHAPTER 4 62
4.1.0 Ne+verb Tense 62
4.1.1 Is Ne Aspectual Or Tense Marker? 64
4.1.2 Some Correspondences Between the Present Tense and Ne+stem Tense 67
4.1.3 Differences/similarities Between Ne+stem And Other Past Tenses 71
4.2.0 Ne+past Tenses 77
4.2.1 Ne+past In Relation To Meaning And Cooccurrence Restrictions Of Simple Past Tenses 79
CHAPTER 5 86
5.1.0 Aspect 86
5.1.1 Perfective/Imperfective Opposition 87
5.1.2 Durative Vs Nondurative Opposition 90

5.1.3 Stative Vs Nonstative Opposition 95

5.2.0 Aspectual Markers 99

5.2.1 Sa still 100

5.2.2. Sa+tsoa+stem 100

5.2.3 Sa+stem+ile 100

5.2.4 Sa+ile+stem 101

5.2.5.1 Ne+sa+stem 102

5.2.5.2 Ne+sa+tsoa+stem 102

5.2.5.3 Ne+sa+stem+ile 102

5.2.5.4 *ne+sa+ile+stem 103

5.3.1 Se Already 103

5.3.2 *se+tsoa+stem 104

5.3.3. Se+stem+ile 104

5.3.4 Se+ile+stem 104

5.3.4.1 Ne+se+stem 105

5.3.4.2 *Ne+se+tsoa+stem 105

5.3.4.3 Ne+se+stem+ile 105

5.3.4.4 Ne+se+ile+stem 105

CHAPTER 6 108

6.1.0 On The Applicability of Reichenbach/Hornstein Analysis to Sesotho 108

6.1.2 On the Interaction Between Tense and Temporal Adverbs 112

6.1.3 On Aspect 115

6.2 Conclusion 116

BIBLIOGRAPHY 117

List of Tables

Table I - Sesotho Phonemes 2

Table II - Tenses in relation to aspectual features 106

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background Information

Sesotho is a Southern Bantu Language spoken by over 3 million people in Lesotho and parts of South Africa. In literature the language is often referred to as Southern Sotho in order to distinguish it from Pedi (Northern Sotho) spoken in Northern Transvaal and Tswana (Western Sotho) spoken in Botswana.

The present thesis is an examination of Tense and Aspect in spoken Sesotho. Our data does not depend on written materials such as samples from newspapers, novels, plays etc., by Sesotho writers. The analysis may, however, be applied to the written language.

1.1 Orthography

Since the present thesis will be mostly useful to language learners rather than linguists, practical orthography, as against phonetic transcription, will be used. Following is the table of Sesotho segments in phonetic transcription and a short list of the orthographic correspondences.

CONSONANTS:

	LABIALS	ALVEOLARS	PALATALS	VELARS	UVULAR	GLOTTAL	COMPOUND SOUNDS	CLICKS
STOPS	p ph b	t th d		k kh			ps pč bj	C Ch
NASALS	m	n	ɲ	ŋ				
FRICATIVES	f	s ɬ	š			h	fš	
NON-FRICATIVES		l r			R			
AFRICATES		ts tsh tɬ tɬh	č čh dz	X				
FRICTION-LESS CONTINUENTS	(w)		y	w				

TABLE I - Sesotho Phonemes

VOWELS

i	u
I	U
e	o
E	ɔ
a	

TABLE I - Sesotho Phonemes (cont.)

Notes on segments [d] belongs to [l] phoneme. It occurs when [l] is followed by high vowels [i] and [u]. and are written ny and ng respectively. It must be noted that nasals become syllabic if not followed by a vowel. A sequence of two nasals is written as apostrophe nasal (e.g. 'na for nna).

Sh	is orthographic representation of	s
J	"	Dz
hl	"	ɬ
tś	"	tsh
ch	"	č
tj	"	ch
kh	"	X
tl	"	tɬ
tlh	"	tɬh

q	"	C
qh	"	Ch
e	"	y
o	"	w

There are several complex consonant alterations in the language (see Doke & Mofokeng 1957, Guma 1971 etc.)

1.2.0 Morphology

Sesotho is prefixing and suffixing. Although a number of words are usually uninflected, a greater number are derived by morphological processes such as prefixation, suffixation, reduplication and compounding (for a detailed study of these processes see Doke and Mofokeng 1957, Guma 1971 etc.).

Noun class prefixes play an important part in determining agreement with the verb, adjective, possessive and relative stems. Verbs may incorporate a number of prefixes and suffixes. Morphophonemic changes connected with prefixation and suffixation are beyond the scope of the present study and thus not presented. The relevant affixes of verbal unit may be summarized as follows:

1. A - (M) - (OP) - verb stem - (IS) - (DS) - (IS) - a

where

A stands for subject verb agreement

M for tense-aspect -modal forms

OP for object pronoun

DS for derivational suffix(es)

IS for inflexional suffix

-a for the verb final vowel which may be replaced by either a negative, subjurctive, imperative with OP etc.

The subject verb agreement is of no immediate concern since it presents no problem for our analysis. The tense-aspect modal forms deserve an explanation since we will come across them quite often.

1.2.1 Tense- aspect- modal Markers

We assume that tense aspect and modals are constituents of the verbal unit in view of the strong degree of cohesion between these markers and the verb . Thus while it is possible in English to have an adverb between the first auxiliary and the VP as follows:

2. Mary will, probably, have spoken to John

It is not possible to have any lexical item between the tense-aspect-modal markers and the verb. e.g.

3. *Maria o-ile, hantle-ntle, a-bua le-Jchanne
   Mary A past in fact speak with John
   'Mary did, in fact, speak to John.'

While in other Bantu Languages the verbal unit is written as one word, the currently accepted system of writing Sesotho is disjunctive e.g.

4(a) ke ne ke sa ja

I past I still eat

' I was still eating'.

Compare Zulu:

(b) Bengisadla

m I still eat

'I was still eating.'

Hyphens will be used in this study to indicate bound forms.

1.2.2 Tense

The following forms are used to express tense.

5 (i) tsoa 'past'. This form which is also used as a verb 'come from' is used to express immediate past.

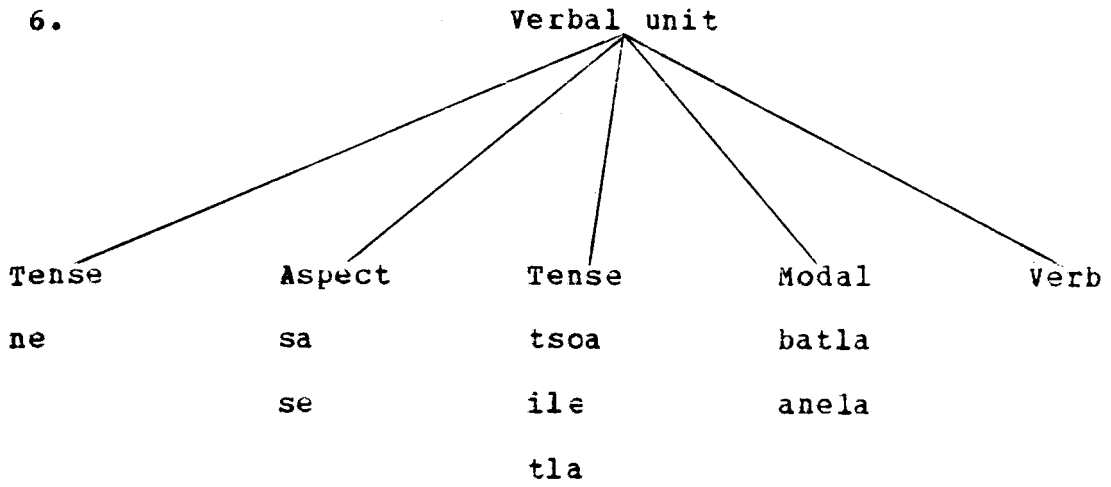
(ii) ile- (not to be confused with suffix ile) is the past of ea 'go'. It expresses remote past.[1]

(iii) ne is also used to express past. Compound tenses may be formed by using this form with tsoa and ile.

(iv) tla 'come' is used to express future.

Tense category fills two slots the first of which is filled by ne and the second by tsoa , ile and tla. We do not imply that these are definitely deep structure positions. What we have been mostly concerned with is determining the correct position of tense, aspect and modals in surface structure. The following is surface characterization of the verbal unit.

6.



The presence of the first tense position is supported by constructions such as the following:

7. Ba-ne ba-ile ba-bua le-eena
they past A past speak with him
'They had spoken to him.'
in which <u>ne</u> is used with <u>ile</u>.

1.2.3 <u>Aspect</u>

The following forms may be used to express aspectual distinctions:

8.

<u>Sa</u>	'still'
<u>se</u>	'already'
<u>ee</u>	'habitual'
<u>hle</u>	
<u>'ne</u>	
<u>ke</u>	'occasional'

These will be dealt with in Chapter 5.

1.2.4 Modal

This category together with tense and aspect, has been dealt with under the heading 'Deficient verbs' (see Doke and Mofokeng, Guma etc.). The term deficient is a syntactic notion which means that such verbs require a complementary verb to complete their predication. We have separated modals from tense/aspect markers since modals may be used with tense/aspect markers. There may, however, be some cooccurrence restrictions between tense and certain modals depending on the semantic features inherent in such modals, e.g. hlola 'always' may occur with ne but not ile.

Following is a list of some modal verbs in Sesotho:

9.	Batla	'want'
	hlola	'always'
	lala	'act t hrough the night'
	atisa	'do frequently'
	anela	'manage'
	tšoanela	'do of necessity'

example of use:

10. Barutuoa ba-ne ba-tšoanela ho-bua sekhooa
Students A past do of necessity to speak English
'The students were supposed to speak English'.

There is abundant evidence which suggests that modals form a separate constituent from ordinary verbs. This falls beyond the scope of present study, and will not be dealt with here.

1.2.5 Derivational Suffixes

The verb stem may take one or more derivational suffixes . These include:

11. Benefactive -el-
    Causative -is-
    Passive -o -, -uo-
    Reciprocal -an-

These suffixes present an interesting aspect of interaction between derivational morphology and syntax, yet to be studied. In so far as tense and aspect is concerned, these suffixes may be accounted for by the analysis used for simple sentences.

1.2.6 Inflexional Suffix

The suffix -ile which may follow a stem or stem + derivational suffix, is used to express immediate past tense. This suffix may be realized as -ele, -e, -ne, -tse, -me, -itse, -ere, and -ntse depending on phonological processes which do not concern us here.

1.3 Problem And Purpose

In many studies on Sesotho grammar tense and temporal adverbs have been treated as separate entities. No mention has been made about possible interaction between different tenses and temporal adverbs.[2] the main purpose of the study is to assess applicability of Hornstein/Reichenbach analysis to

Sesotho with special reference to such interaction.

1.4 Choice of Framework

The method of analysis followed in the present study is the one introduced by Reichenbach (1947) in Elements Of Symbolic Logic with subsequent modifications and elaboration in Hornstein (1977) 'Towards a Theory of Tense', and Smith (1978) 'The Syntax and Interpretation of Temporal Expressions in English'.

The existence of regular cooccurrence between tense-forms and temporal adverbs has long been noted. In a footnote to Aspects (1965: 216) Chomsky notes the suggestion by Barbara Hall which proposes that " ... Each element of the auxiliary has associated with it certain characteristic adverbials that may (or in the case of present tense, must) cooccur with this auxiliary element .."

Kiparsky (1968) proposes that tense and adverb be treated as a single category in underlying structure (see also McCawley , 1971 Gallagher, 1970). This analysis regards present adverbials as source for present tense and past adverbials as source for past tense. The problem arises with future sentences which have future adverb with present tense. The future adverbial cannot be regarded as source of present tense in these cases. The analysis encounters a similar problem in the case of Sesotho tsoa+stem and ile+stem tenses. As will be noted later, these tenses may occur with either present or past adverb. It

will be difficult to decide which adverb is the source of tense in such cases.

Huddleston's analysis (1969) which appeals to deep tense would encounter more or less the same problem. In classifying the verbs according to restrictions they impose on the tense selection -ile would have to be classified as taking both present and past tenses.

An analysis which divides tense into past and non-past distinctions is likely to run into problem in dealing with stem+ile tense as it occurs with both past and present adverbs (for this analysis see Hirtle (1975) and references therein)).

Our study is essentially semantically based. A semantic approach to the subject has been found necessary in view of the fact that different syntactic expressions may have the same semantic realization. Consider the case of present used with future adverbial, and the auxiliary tla used to express future in the following sentences:

11. Sello o-chakela Maseru hosasa
    Sello A visit Maseru tomorrow
    'Sello visits Maseru tomorrow'
12. Sello o-tla-chakela Maseru
    Sello A M visit Maseru
    'Sello will visit Maseru'

In the above sentences both tla and hosasa indicate that

the event referred to takes place at a time later than the moment of speaking. But tla is syntactically an auxiliary while hosasa is an adverb. This shows that future is not realized on the surface with the same syntactic means. We hope that semantic approach may provide generalizations about some aspects of different temporal constructions.

1.5 Scope of the Study

As the title of the thesis indicates, we are concerned with the semantics of Tense and Aspect with particular reference to their interaction with temporal adverbials. The study is on Sesotho. Reference will, however, be made to English and other languages where deemed necessary.

Although our study is semantically based, we may resort to syntactic aspects where these provide better understanding of semantic behaviour.

It will be noticed that our analysis is limited to the indicative mood though reference has been made in literature to subjunctive mood. Similarly, the imperative and the so called potential mood will be excluded since they are restricted in the range of tenses used.

While the analysis of past tense alone would provide sufficient material for a thesis, it has become necessary to examine the present tense in view of the discussion on

'perfect'.

It will also be necessary to examine cooccurrence restrictions between the different tenses.

As indicated in 1.2.5, there is no difference in temporal functions between the simple forms on the one hand and the passive, benefactive, reciprocal causative etc. On the other hand. We are, therefore, going to draw examples from any of these constructions.

1.6.0 Definitions

Reichenbach's temporal specification involves three theoretical entities which define basic tenses in terms of linear combinations:

(a) S-point of speech- is the time at which a given sentence is uttered. This is the keystone of the system in that the other times are oriented to it. The relations of sequence and simultaneity are basic to the system. This results in tenses anterior, simultaneous and posterior to S. The various positions in relation to S correspond to the traditional labels, past, present and future.

(b) E-point of event- refers to the time at which an event or state occurs.

(c) R-point of reference- is the time indicated by a sentence, sometimes specified by an overt adverbial

sometimes derivable from the context.

In sentences such as:

13. Re-ile ra-fuoa chelete maobane

we past we given money yesterday

'We were given money yesterday'

the point of event and the point of reference are anterior to the moment of speech as follows: E, R---S. The sentence is thus past. While in sentence 13 the point of event and the point of reference are simultaneous, it is possible to have sentences in which they are not e.g.

14. Ke-ne ke-se ke-buile le-eena maobane

I past I already spoke with him yesterday

'I had already spoken to him yesterday'

In sentence 14 the reference point is <u>maobane</u> 'yesterday' and the moment at which I spoke to him may have been the day before yesterday. The tense representation in such cases is E---R---S.

1.6.1 <u>Notations used with SRE</u>

The following interpretations connected with our notations must be noted. Points separated by a comma are interpreted as contemporaneous, those separated by a line are interpreted as further in the future or the past depending on whether they are to the right or left respectively. A diacritic above E is interpreted as 'progressive'.

1.6.2 SRE Modifications

Various views have been expressed in connection with the use of sentences with different adverbials. Reichenbach claims that when a time determination such as 'now' or 'yesterday' is used it is referred to the reference point and not the event. An adverbial may, however, refer to the event in cases where points of reference and of event coincide.

Hornstein (1977) suggests that time adverbials are mapped onto R or E and that this may result in shifting of R or E towards or away from S. The main motivation for Hornstein's rules mapping adverbials onto R or E instead of R only appears to be need for accounting for ambiguity in English sentences such as the following:

15. The secretary had eaten at 3 p.m.

Which is two-ways ambigious as follows:

16 (a) the time that the secretary actually ate was 3 p.m.

(b) the secretary had already eaten by the time 3 p.m. rolled around.

Horstein further postulates constraints on SRE movement as follows:

17. Rules shifting SRE to yield derived Tense structure (TS) must maintain basic TS.

The constraint in 17 leads to the following stipulations:

18 (a) none of SRE are associated in derived TS that were not

associated in basic TS.

(b) the linear order of SRE in basic TS is maintained in derived TS.

(c) x associates with y iff x is separated from y by only a comma.

Smith (1978) regards the combination of tense and adverbial as responsible for establishing the point of reference. She proceeds to divide adverbs into those which establish reference time and those which do not. She mentions that combinations of tense and adverbial that establish RT have compatible relational values, whereas combinations that do not, have contradictory relational values.

Reference will often be made to these views in our discussion about interaction between tense and adverbs in Sesotho.

1.7 Temporal adverbs

The working definition of temporal adverb/adverbial accepted in the present study includes all words and phrases which could be elicited as possible answers to the question neng ? 'when?' Adverbs will then be divided into three classes according to whether they indicate simultaneity, anteriority or posteriority with moment of speech. Let us call these indexical adverbs:

19(a) Anterior: maobane 'yesterday', bekeng e fetileng 'last

week', khoeling e-fetileng 'last month' selemong se-fetileng 'last year', mariheng a-fetileng last winter' etc. Such adverbials will sometimes be referred to as past adverbs in our discussion.

(b) Simultaneous: hona joale 'right now' joale 'now'. These adverbs will be referred to as present adverbs.

(c) Posterior: hosasa[3] 'tomorrow' ka-moso 'day after tomorrow' ka-beke- e-tlang 'in the coming week' khoeling e-tlang 'coming month' selemong se-tlang 'coming year'.

In addition to the above three classes, there are several non-indexical adverbs which may indicate a period that might precede or follow the moment of speech. These include hoseng 'morning' motseare 'day time' mantsiboea 'afternoon' ka-la bobeli 'on Tuesday' ka-'Mesa 'in April' mariha 'in winter' bekeng e-latelang 'the following week' khoeling e-latelang 'the following month' etc.

There are also certain indexical adverbs such as kajeno 'today' bekeng ena 'this week' khoeling ena 'this month' etc., which indicate a span of time which includes the moment of speech.

The last group of adverbs may be used with present , past or future sentences as follows:

20(i) Ke-chakela Maseru kajeno

I visit Maseru today

'Today I visit Maseru'

(ii) Ke-ile ka-chakela Maseru kajeno

I past visit Maseru

'Today I visited Maseru'

(iii) Ke-tla chakela Maseru kajeno

I Fut visit Maseru

'Today I will visit Maseru'

It must be noted that while one sentence may have two adverbs (an indexical one belonging to 19(a) and the other nonindexical belonging to those adverbs which may indicate a time that precedes or follows the moment of speech), it is not possible to have two adverbs from the different sections in 19, e.g.

21. Lisebo o-pheh-ile nama maobane hoseng

Lisebo A cock past meat yesterday morning

'Lisebo cooked meat yesterday morning'

but not

22 *Lisebo o-pheh-ile nama hona joale maobane

Lisebo A cock past meat right now yesterday

'Lisebo cooked meat right now yesterday'

. Although it is possible to use <u>-ile</u> tense with either <u>hona joale</u> or <u>maobane</u> alone, the sentence in 22 is unacceptable. This unacceptability can be accounted for on the basis of constraints which are definable in terms of semantic classification of temporal adverbials.

The sentence in 21 is acceptable on the basis of hierarchic system of 'units of time' (see Leech 1970:114-118). Such adverbials are regarded as constituting one temporal adverbial.

1.8 Tense And Aspect

1.8.0 Tense

It has been indicated above (1.6.0)that tense relates the time of the event to the moment of speaking. Tenses which relate the time of event to the present moment are often referred to as absolute tenses (Comrie 1976:2). It is also possible to have the point of event related to the time of some other event; in such cases we speak of relative time reference.

1.8.1 Aspect

Aspect has been defined as "different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation" (Comrie 1976:5). This definition may be illustrated by the following sentences from Sesotho:

23(a) Ke-ile ka-ngola lengolo
I past write letter
'I wrote a letter'

(b) Ke-ne ke-sa-ngola lengolo
I past still write letter
'I was still writing a letter'

in uttering 23(a) the speaker views the act of writing a letter in its totality. No reference is made to the internal constituency of the event (e.g. Writing the address, date, greetings etc.). The sentence in 23(b) indicates that some phases of writing the letter had been undertaken.

1.8.2 Relationship Between Tense And Aspect

The definitions of tense and aspect given above may give the reader an impression that there is no connection between tense and aspect. It must be noted, however, that the two categories are concerned with time, though in different ways. While tense locates an event to the moment of speaking, aspect relates the time of the event with the internal constituents of the event. These time distinctions have been referred to as situation-external-time (tense) and situation-internal-time(aspect) (see Comrie 1976).

The relationship between tense and aspect may also be noted in cases where certain aspectual distinctions are restricted to one or more tenses. This is an indication that there are ways in which tense and aspect impinge on one another. This will be dealt with in chapter 5.

Notes To Chapter 1

1. There is a localist view expressed by Trugott(1975:215) that locative deictics equivalent to 'come' and 'go' express past and future respectively (see also Givon 1973). It is interesting to note how tense interacts with some locative deictics in Sesotho. Thus while *ea* 'go' may express future, the past tense of this verb *ile* expresses past tense.

2. Jacottet(1968:19) mentions that 'perfect' in Sesotho may be followed by an adjunct of time. He does not, however, say what makes this possible.

3. Sometimes *hosane* or *hosasane* 'tomorrow' .

CHAPTER 2

THE PERFECT: STEM+ILE

2.0 Introduction

The question of whether 'perfect' (as it is conventionally used in accounts of tense systems) should be regarded as an aspect or tense has been dealt with in great detail in literature (see Comrie 1976:52 and references therein). It has been noted that perfect is different from aspect in that it tells us nothing about the internal structure of the event, but rather expresses a relation between two time-points namely, the time of the state resulting from a prior event and the time of the event itself. This relation can easily be expressed in terms of S, R and E within the framework adopted here, and thus qualify as a tense like other tenses.

It is important to note that 'perfect' is often used in purely formal sense for structures with 'have'+participle so that what has been referred to as 'perfect' in grammar books may have different meanings in different languages. In some languages it covers both perfect and past tense meaning. In others it has taken over the past tense meaning. Different languages may thus show different behaviour as regards the use of time specification with the perfect form.

2.1 Previous Studies on 'perfect' in Sesotho

Although reference has been made to 'perfect' in Sesotho grammars no explanation has been given for its idiosyncratic behaviour. Reference has often been made to idiomatic use whenever explanation cannot be found. Jacottet (1965:18) notes that:

"the perfect has exactly the same meaning as English; it expresses an action which is finished at the present time and has been done in the past, or a state which has been entered into in the past ..."

The above grammarian further notes that:

"... In contradistinction to English grammar, it may be followed by an adjunct of time e.g. Ke buile le-ntate maobane , 'I spoke with my father yesterday.'

Doke and Mofokeng (1957:176) have the following to say about the perfect stem:

"with ordinary verbs in Sotho the perfect stem is used in the formation of past tenses e.g. Ke-u-bon-e[1] maobane (I saw thee yesterday); but with stative verbs (i.e. verbs which indicate a state already completed and still persisting)[2], the perfect stem is used in present tense formation also, e.g. Ke luts-e (I am sitting) ho-futhumetse (it is warm)".

The two grammarians later note that:

"certain non-stative verbs may be used idiomatically with present perfect signification e.g.

Re-j-el e (we have eaten; we have had our meal)

ba-tl-ile (they have come and are here)

ke-fihl-ile (I have arrived and am here)

it is also noted that:

"each of these verbs may, however, be used with ordinary past significance. Note the following:

ke-fihl-ile maobane (I arrived yesterday)

ke-jele bohobe (I ate bread)

Guma (1971:173) lists the uses of perfect as follows: "the perfect is used as one of the tenses of the indicative and conditional mood. With inchoative radicals i.e. Radicals which indicate entry into a state, the perfect tense indicates an action that has been completed, resulting in a state that exists now, at the time of speaking e.g. Ke-luts-e (I am seated) o-nyetso-e (she is married) ke-lap-ile (I am hungry) ngoana o-robets-e (the child is asleep).

With most radicals the perfect tense indicates an action that took place in the immediate past - a few hours ago or yesterday, e.g. Ke- mo-bon-e hoseng (I saw him this morning) o-li-rekis-itse maobane (he sold them yesterday).

The uses of perfect mentioned by the above grammarians reveal the amount of doubt that has existed about the exact use of this form.

Jacottet merely mention the similarity between English and

Sesotho perfect but does not show ways in which these meanings are the same. The exact use of perfect in English is still debatable. It is thus difficult to deduce, from a statement such as above what the exact meaning of perfect in Sesotho is. The present study does not attempt to compare the use of perfect in Sesotho and English. Reference will, however, be made in the course of our discussion to differences and/or similarities when deemed necessary.

Jacottet further mentions that it is possible to use perfect with adverbs such as 'yesterday'. He doesn't, however, say what makes this combination possible in Sesotho but not English. The use of 'perfect' with temporal adverbs will be considered later in this chapter.

Doke and Mofokeng have noted three uses of the <u>ile</u> suffix: (i) formation of present tenses (ii) formation of past tenses (iii) idiomatic uses with present perfect signification.

The use of the same suffix to indicate both present and past tenses has never, as far as I know, been recorded in languages although languages that have tense appear to treat the distinction of past and non-past (present and future) as being of basic importance. Although use of <u>-ile</u> in the formation of present and past could suggest that there is a broad concept of present which steps into the past or vice versa, it is doubtful that this could be the case, since the present cannot in general occur with adverbials which refer to the past, nor the past with

those referring to the present. E.g.

24(a) *Barutuoa ba-reka libuka selemong se-fetileng
students a buy books year A past
*'students buy books last year'

(b) *Barutuoa ba-ile ba-reka libuka hona joale
students A past buy books right now
*'students bought books right now.'

An attempt will be made in the following section to compare the -ile and non-ile present forms. Similarly comparison will be made between -ile past tense and other past tense forms.

Doke and Mofokeng make reference to idiomatic use of the perfect. There doesn't appear to be anything idiomatic about the use of perfect in sentences quoted above. This confusion derives from the fact that these grammarians regard -ile as the present and past tense formative. Any meaning which falls outside these two tenses had to be regarded as idiomatic. The choice of the term 'idiomatic' instead of 'exception' is significant in that it shows that the two grammarians were aware that the meaning referred to is quite regular.

The Sesotho grammarians referred to above have mentioned that with inchoative verbs (Guma) or stative verbs (Doke and Mofokeng) -ile mean 'present'. This view derives from the fact that verbs such as lutse 'sit' indicate that the person referred to is still seated. It will be found however, that even verbs such as pheh-ile 'cooked' bes-itse 'grill, make fire' which do

not qualify as statives according to definitions given by these grammarians may indicate that the action is still continuing. Further examination of Sesotho verbs may suggest that durative situations (in the sense defined by Lyons, 1977:711) may indicate a continuing state or process.[4]

2.2 Comparison between -ile And Non-ile Present

In assigning the same tense and aspect interpretation to -ile and non-ile forms we commit ourselves to regarding such sentences as semantically equivalent. The question that one asks oneself is whether such sentences can be used interchangeably. The following pairs of sentences are worth considering:

25 (a) mosali o-lula setulong
woman A sit on chair
'the woman sits on the chair'

(b) mosali o-luts-e setulong
woman A sit past on chair
'the woman is sitting on the chair'

26 (a) ngoanana o-ema monyako
girl A stand door
'the girl stands by the door'

(b) Ngoanana o-eme monyako
girl A stand perfect door
'the girl is standing by the door'

the (a) and (b) sentences in 25 and 26 can never be used interchangeably. Consider a case of a husband suspecting that

the wife intends to sit on his chair and ordering her not to do so. The appropriate answer from the wife who has no such intention will be:

27(a) ha ke-lule setulong ke lula fatse

neg I sit on chair I sit down

'I am not sitting on the chair I am sitting on the floor'

but not:

(b) ha ke-a^{5}-lula setulong ke lula fatse

neg I sit on chair I sit down

'I am not sitting on the chair I sit down'

consider again the case of a doctor who may have instructed his patient to sit on the chair asking:

28. Na u-ntse u-lutse setulong?

Question you still you sit perfect on chair

'are you still sitting on the chair?'

for which the answer from the loyal patient will be:

29(a) E, ke-ntse ke-luts-e setulong

yes I still I sit past on chair

'yes, I am still sitting on the chair'

but not

(b) E, ke-ntse ke-lula setulong

yes I still sit on chair

'yes I still sit on the chair'

if the patient uttered 29(b) the doctor might ask the question again suspecting that his patient did not understand the first

question. The doctor could also suspect that the patient did not follow the instructions as given previously in which he may have to instruct his patient to sit down.

The reader may wonder if there is, in fact, any difference between the use of -ile and non-ile present since the two may be used as an answer asked in the present (see sentence 27(a) for non-ile answer[6] and 29(a) for -ile answer). Further distinction between ile and non-ile present must be made. Let us consider the following sentences:

30(a) Ha ke-a-bua le-Maria hobane o-bona bana hona jcale
Neg I speak with Mary because she see children right now
'I have not spoken to Mary because she is going to see the
children now'

(b) Ha ke-a-bua le-Maria hobane o-bon-e bana hona jcale
Neg I speak with Mary because she see past children right now
'I have not spoken to Mary because she has seen the children'

The sentence in 30(a) depicts Mary's seeing the children As simultaneous with the moment of speaking. Thus her seeing the children causes my failure to speak to her. The sentence in 30(b), on the other hand depicts Mary's seeing the children as prior to the moment of speech. My decision not to speak to her follows from the fact that she has seen the children. The

sentences in 30 characterize non-ile form as a 'cause' and the -ile form as a 'result'.

There is an additional difference of meaning between -ile and non-ile forms which must be noted. The sentences such as 25(a) and 26(a) may have habitual[7] meaning while 25(b) and 26(b) sentences do not. The habitual reading in (a) sentences makes the use of adverbial expression of frequency with these sentences possible. E.g.

31. Mosali o-lula setulong kamehla
Woman A sit on chair everytime
'A woman sits on the chair everytime'

Adverbial expressions of frequency cannot be used with -ile forms as may be noted in the following example:

32. *Mosali o-luts-e setulong kamehla
Woman A sit past on chair everytime
'A woman is sitting on the chair everytime'

Summary

Most Sesotho grammarians regard -ile with stative verbs as present. The discussion above indicates that there are at least three ways in which non-ile and -ile 'present' sentences differ. Firstly, the non-ile sentences imply that the state referred to by the verb is coming into being, while -ile sentences indicate that the state has already come into being. (see sentence 27 (a)). Secondly, non-ile forms may be used to indicate a 'cause' while -ile forms indicate a result (see sentences 30(a) and

(b)). Thirdly, non-ile sentences may have habitual meaning while -ile sentences can never (see sentences 31 and 32).

2.3 The use of -ile with temporal adverbs

Although Sesotho grammarians have attributed present meaning specifically to the stative verbs used with -ile, the use of temporal adverbials with -ile forms suggest that most verbs may be used with -ile to refer to the present time. Let us consider the following sentences:

33(a)i Banna ba-fihl-ile hona joale
Men A arrive past right now
The men have arrived this moment'

ii Lisebo obon-e bana hona joale
Lisebo A see past children right now
'Lisebo has seen the children now'

iii Banana ba-pheh-ile nama hona joale
girls A cook past meat right now
'The girls have cooked now'

(b)i Banna ba-fihl-ile maobane
Men A arrive past yesterday
'The men arrived yesterday'

ii Lisebo A-bon-e bana maobane
Lisebo A see past children yesterday
'Lisebo saw the children yesterday'

iii banana ba-pheh-ile nama maobane
Girls A cook past meat yesterday

'The girls cooked meat yesterday'

(c) i *Banna ba-fihl-ile hosasa

Men A arrive past tomorrow

*'The men arrived tomorrow'

ii *Lisebo o-bon-e bana hosasa

Lisebo A see past children tomorrow

*'Lisebo saw the children tomorrow'

iii *Banana ba-pheh-ile nama hosasa

Girls A cook past meat tomorrow

*'The girls cooked meat tomorrow'

the cooccurrence restrictions linking -ile forms with temporal expressions referring to past, present and future pose a number of problems. The acceptability of -ile with hona joale 'right now' suggests that -ile is present, while the acceptability of this form with maobane 'yesterday' suggests that -ile is past. The unacceptability of -ile with hosasa 'tomorrow' rules out the possibility of regarding this form as present since it is possible to use present with adverbs referring to future time as follows:

34. Banna ba-fihla hosasa

Men A arrive tomorrow

'Men arrive tomorrow'

The unacceptability of -ile sentences used with hosasa 'tomorrow' supports the view expressed earlier that the event expressed by -ile is evoked as prior to the present and thus implied to be in the past. If -ile expresses past, how can we

account for the acceptability of this form with present adverbials?

A number of analyses which account for the cooccurrence restrictions between tense and adverbs in languages such as English are likely to fall short of adequate description of Sesotho facts. An analysis which views tense from the point of view of past vs non-past distinction would predict that sentences in 33(a) are unacceptable. Even if the Sesotho -ile forms could be regarded as corresponding to English perfect the problem remains unsolved since the English perfect is incompatible with adverbs such as yesterday.

2.3.1 -ile as grammaticalized stative

There are a number of possibilities for accounting for the sentences in 33. We could, for instance, hypothesize that -ile is a form of grammaticalized stative. In languages such as Zulu stems distinguish themselves as statives from the ones that use the same suffix but are not stative in their negatives (see Westphal 1950:126; Beauchat 1966:75) e.g.

35(a) Ba-lamb-ile
They hunger state
'They are hungry'

(b) A-ba-lamb-ile
Neg they hunger state
'They are not hungry'

36(a) Ba-hamb-ile

They walk past

'They walked'

(b) A-ba-hamba-anga

Neg they walk neg

they did not walk'

The negative test used for Zulu cannot be applied in Sesotho since there are no distinct forms for stative and non-stative negative forms e.g.

37(a) Ba-lap-ile

They hunger

'They are hungry'

(b) Ha-ba-a-lapa

Neg they hunger

'They are not hungry'

38(a) Ba-tsama-ile

They walk

'They left'

(b) Ha-ba-a-tsamaea

Neg they walk

'They did not leave'

The hypothesis that -ile is grammaticalized stative might, perhaps, be valid if we could find a group of nonstative verbs which do not occur with it. We might then assume that with lexically stative verbs it is a redundant specification of stativity. It must be noted, however, that -ile occurs with both

stative and nonstative verbs.

If arguments could be found to support the view that -ile is grammaticalized stative a number of problems would easily be solved. The question of perfect significance which Doke and Mofokeng have noted could be accounted for. For as Lyons (1977:415) notes, "... Perfect is commonly and perhaps always in origin, a stative aspect with the more specific feature that it is used to represent the state that it denotes as being consequent upon the completion of the process which the verb denotes."

We could also explain the use of past adverbs as due to the tendency of aspect to develop into past tenses or tenses referring to the recent past as noted by Anderson(1973:42).

2.3.2 -ile as perfective

A second possibility would be regarding -ile as a form of present perfective (in the sense defined by Comrie 1976:16)[8]. This analysis would provide a balanced system for present and past tenses. We could view the simple form of present as imperfective --being also habitual. Progressivity would be expressed by sa 'still' and perfectivity by -ile. Correspondingly the imperfective past would also be habitual; progressivity would be expressed by sa 'still' and perfectivity by ile+stem (an account of this tense will be given later). 39 is schematic representation of such an analysis:

39.

	IMPERFECTIVE	PROGRESSIVE	PERFECTIVE
Present	stem	sa+stem	stem+ile
Past	ne+stem	ne+sa+stem	ile+stem

While the above analysis may be plausible in that it establishes relationship between stem+ile on the one hand, and ile+stem on the other hand, it fails to account for the occurence of -ile with past adverbials.

2.3.4.1 -ile as immediate past

The claim made in this section is that stem+ile is an immediate past tense. The distinction between remote and immediate tense has been noted for other Bantu languages, Doke and Mofokeng (1957:187) give the following example from Lamba- a central Bantu Language:

40(a) Nalicitile

'I did (before today)

(b) Nacita

'I did (today)'

the same immediate/remote distinction has been noted for Zulu by Doke (1927:169) Westphal (1950:132) and Beauchat (1966:76) e.g.

41(a) Sithenge izingubu kuthangi

'We bought clothes the day before yesterday'

(b) Abelusi basenge izingomo izolo

'The herdboys milked the cows yesterday'

Westphal further notes "... Although sihambile (we walked - recently) is usually immediate it can also be used with adverbs such as 'last year' while saahamba (we walked-long ago) is rarely used with recent adverbs ..."

The exact definition of immediate tense does not appear clear cut. As Beauchat notes "what constitutes an immediate past varies to a great extent from one speaker to another. For many people an action which tock place more than a week ago is expressed in the remote past, whereas for others, the time limit between these tenses is as much as six months ..."

Doke and Mofokeng (1957:187) observe that: "the Southern Sotho tense division according to time is not so clear and balanced as that of many other Bantu Languages."

We claim that Sesotho, like other Bantu Laguages, has remote and immediate tenses; and that the boundary between remote and immediate tenses is not clear cut so that the earlier grammarians concluded that there is no such distinction.

One possible source of confusion may be the fact that -ile may be used with adverbs which range from today to remote past. Following are examples of such uses:

42.	Ba-fihl-ile	hoseng
	they arrive past	maobane
		maoba
		bekeng e-fetiileng
		selemong se-fetileng
	they arrived	yesterday
		day before yesterday
		last week, month, year.

-ile can extend as far back as a century. The following historical fact may be expressed by using -ile

43. Morena Moshoeshoe o-fall-etse Thaba Bosiu ka-1824
Chief Moshoeshoe A move to past Thaba-Bosiu in 1824
'Chief moshoeshoe moved to Thaba-Bosiu in 1824'

There are other constructions in Sesotho which express immediacy. It must be noted that such constructions may be used with present and past adverbials as follows:

44. Johanne o-tsoa-fihla hona-joale
John A past arrive right now
'John has just arrived now'

45. Johanne o-tsoa-fihla maobane mona
John A past arrive yesterday here
'John arrived this mere yesterday'

The tsoa+stem construction above cannot be used with removed non-specific adverbs such as khale 'a long time ago' e.g.

46. *Johanne o-tsoa-fihla khale

John A past arrive long time ago

*'John just arrived a long time ago'

the tsoa+stem construction may, however, be used with adverbs which refer to the day before yesterday, last week, last month etc. A person who considers a year too short a time for a woman to have divorced her husband could easily say:

47. ... Empa o-tsoa-nyaloa selemong se-fetileng sena

but she past be-married year passed this

'... But she was married this mere last year'

Similarly an aunt who has not been home for five years may express surprise at the rate at which her nephew has grown:

48. Ha a-ts'oº-hlaha ka-1973 ha ke-le moo?

Neg he past appear in 1973 when I be here

'Wasn't he born in 1973 when I was here?

The sentences above indicate that immediacy is a subjective term which may extend as far as the speaker wishes. This subjectivity has led to relaxation on the degree of recentness required for -ile so that -ile has tended to be used interchangeably with remote past tenses.[10]

2.3.4.2 Distinction betweenn tsoa and -ile tenses

The claim made in 2.3.4.1 is that both tsoa and -ile tenses are immediate past tenses. We have noted that the two tenses may be used with present and past adverbs. It was further noted that the two tenses may be used with adverbs such as last year and five years ago, depending on the speaker's attitude towards the

time mentioned. We may also note that the two tenses cannot be used with future adverbials as noted in the following sentences:

49(a) *Banana ba-pheh-ile nama hosasa
girls A cook past meat tomorrow
*'The girls cooked meat tomorrow'

(b) Banana ba-tsoa-pheha nama hosasa
girls A past cook meat tomorrow
'The girls have just cooked meat tomorrow'

The reader may wonder whether there is any distinction between the two forms <u>-ile</u> and <u>tsoa</u> since they seem to appear in the same environments. There is some evidence to suggest that the two tenses may not be used interchangeably.

In an attempt to find the distinction between the two tenses a number of pairs of sentences were given to native speakers so that they might choose that sentence of each pair which they found more natural.

50(a) Ke-tsoa-ja metsotsong e-mehlano e-fetileng[11]
past eat minutes five passed
'I have just eaten five minutes ago'

(b) Ke-j-ele metsotsong e-mehlano e-fetileng
I eat past minute five passed
'I ate five minutes ago'

51(a) o-tsoa-feta metsotsong e-mashome a-mararo e-fetileng
He past pass minutes tens three passed
'He has just gone past thirty minutes ago'

(b) o-fet-ile metsotsong e-mashome a-mararo e-fetileng

He pass past minutes tens three passed

'He went past thirty minutes ago'

52(a) Ba-tsoa-pheha nama horeng tse-peli tse-fetileng

They past cook meat hour two passed

'They have just cooked meat two hours ago'

(b) Ba-pheh-ile nama horeng tse-peli tse-fetileng

They cook past meat hour two passed

'They cooked meat two hours ago'

While all the speakers regarded the (a) and (b) sentences acceptable, there was a strong indication for the preference of one against the other. For instance, when asked which of the sentences in 50 they would use if invited to eat but they cannot eat since they have eaten five minutes ago, they strongly indicated that they would use the (a) sentence.

Similarly, when asked which of the sentences in 51 they would use as an answer to the question about the time at which someone went past, they emphatically said they would use the sentence in (a).

When asked which of the sentences in 52 they would use as an answer to the question about the time at which some people cooked meat, they said they would use the sentence in (b).

The choice of (a) sentences in 50 and 51 as against the choice of (b) sentence in 52 suggests that <u>tsoa</u> tense is much

more immediate than the -ile tense so that whenever the time referred to is less than thirty minutes preference is for the tsoa -tense.

The distinction between the two immediate tenses becomes evident in constructions involving the complement of coercive verbs (when not reduced to subjunctive or infinitive forms). In such constructions there seem to be a restriction that the immediate tense in the complement verb must be the same as the one in the main sentence, e.g.

53(a) Ke-mo-laets-e hore a-tsamaee 'me o-tsama-ile
I him order past that he go and he go past
'I ordered him to go and he went.'

but not

(b) *Ke mo-laets-e hore a-tsamaee 'me o-sa-tsoa tsamaea[12]
I him order past that he go and he past go
'I ordered him to go and he has just gone'

54(a) Ke-sa-tsoa-mo-laela hore a-tsamaee 'me o-sa tsoa-tsamaea
past him order that he go and he past go
'I have just ordered him to go and he has just left'

but not

(b) *ke-sa-tsoa-mo-laela hore a-tsamaee 'me o-tsama-ile
I past him order that he go and he go past
'I have just ordered him to go and he left'

55(a)

ke-mo-gobeletse ho-ja, 'me o-jele

I him force past to eat and he eat past

'I forced him to eat and he ate.'

but not

(b) *ke-mo- qobeletse ho-ja 'me o-sa tsoa-ja

I him force past to eat and he past eat

'I forced him to eat and he has just eaten'

56(a) ke-sa-tsoa-mo-qobella ho-ja, 'me o-sa-tsoa ja

I past him force to eat and he past eat

'I have just forced him to eat and he has just eaten'

but not:

(b) *ke-sa-tsoa-mo qobella ho-ja 'me o-jele

I past him force to eat and he eat past

'I have just forced him to eat and he ate'

The (b) sentences in 53-56 above are unacceptable because different immediate tenses have been used in the main sentences and surbordinate sentences. This suggests that there is need to distinguish the two immediate tenses.

2.3.5 Some advantages of analysing -ile as immediate past tense

The analysis of -ile as immediate past explains why it behaves differently from the English perfect though it has often been compared with it. Thus the characteristic aspectual nature of perfect which is manifested by the restriction that govern combination of perfect and past time adverbials is not found in Sesotho e.g.

57. English: *he has left yesterday

Sesotho: o-tsama-ile maobane

He walk past yesterday

'He left yesterday'

The present analysis further explains why persistence of the result is not a necessary condition for the use of -ile. Thus we may have

58. Johanne o-fihl-ile

John A arrive past

'John has arrived'

indicating that John is still here. It is also possible, however, to specify that John is no longer here:

59. Johanne o-fihl-ile ka-laobeli a-tsoha a-tsamaea

John A arrive past on Tuesday he wakes he walk

ka-laboraro

on Wednesday

*'John has arrived on Tuesday and left on Wednesday'

The use of -ile as immediate past bridges the gap between past and present and thus explains the lack of habitual meaning in sentences such as 25(b) and 26(b) (repeated here for convenience as 60 and 61).

60. Mosali o-lutse setulong

Woman A sit past on chair

'The woman is sitting on the chair'

61. Ngoanana o-eme monyako

girl A stand past door

'The girl is standing by the door'

Given that -ile is immediate past, it is possible to regard it as present depending on how past the event or state referred to is. This accounts for the present use of the perfect which Doke and Mofokeng make reference to (see 2.1. Above).

Notes to Chapter 2

1. See 1.2.6 for different realization of -ile

2. The definition of stativity given here appears contradictory. It is difficult to think of a state 'completed' and 'still persisting'. What these grammarians want to express is that the state has been entered into in the past and is still persisting.

3. Doke and Mofekeng's account is quite obscure. One might think that perfect significance in the sentences given is similar to what Comrie (1976:56) refers to as 'perfect of result' in that 'we have eaten' implies that we are satisfied and do not immediately need food; and 'they have come' imply that they are still here. This does not seem to be the case since ke i-ele bohobe 'I ate bread' could imply that I don't immediately need bread.

4. Professor Newton suggests that 'sit' and 'cook' might both be terminative the rule being that with terminatives stem+ile indicates continuation of terminal state. The following frame for terminatives suggests that pheha 'cook' but not lula 'sit' is a terminative e.g.

I) re-nk-ile hora tse-peli ho-pheha nama
we take past hour two to cook meat
'we took two hours to cook meat'

ii) *Re-nk-ile hora tse-peli ho-lula setulong

we take past hour two to sit on chair

'we took two hours to sit on the chair'

5. The -a- in this construction is often referred to as indefinite. It appears when no adjunct in the form of object or adverb is used with the verb, e.g.

I) a. Ngoanana o-ema monyako

'The girl stands by the door'

b. Ngoanana o-a-ema

'The girl is standing'

it is also used with the negative forms of <u>-ile</u> suffix

6. The question/prohibition may be something like:

u etsa'ng haeka u-lula setulong sa-ka tje?

You do what as if you sit on chair of mine like this

'why are you sitting on my chair?'

7. The term 'habitual' will be used in a broad sense to a related set of terms such as customary, frequent, regular ,usual, normal etc.

8. "perfectivity indicates the view of a situation as a single whole, without distinction of the various separate phases that make up that situation."

9. This is a contracted form of <u>tsoe+no</u> 'Neg come+to'.

10. Some historical facts such as those expresses by sentence 43 are probably not subject to subjectivity. It may be interesting to make a survey of conversational style and determine which of the two past tenses <u>ile+stem</u> and <u>stem+ile</u> is commonly used. It

is possible that a form that is frequently used may easily replace the one that is not.

11. The verbal force of 'come from' is strongly felt in tsoa- tenses. For this reason the progressive form sa is commonly used to distinguish the immediate tense from the 'come from meaning'.

12. The corresponding English sentence for this sentence is acceptable. It seems possible that in Sesotho an action following from the order must be undertaken within the same time span as the order. The sentence would be acceptable if the connective used indicate something contrary to expectation. Thus: ke-mo-laetse hore a-tsamaee empa o-sa-tsoa tsamaea 'I ordered him to go but he has just left' imply that the speaker expected the other person to have left earlier.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 REMOTE PAST TENSE: ILE+STEM

The remote tense consists of the subject prefix+ile+subject prefix followed by a verb, e.g.

62. Ke - ile ka - reka

I past I buy

'I bought'

There seem to be similarity between this form and the immediate past suffix -ile, which could suggest some tranformational derivation of one from the other. It must be noted, however, that this would be an isolated case in the grammar of Sesotho Language. There are no other processes which involve either the suffix fronting or verbal postposing.

The difference between -ile and ile- past tenses has never been clearly defined. Doke and Mofokeng (1957:202 fn ii) regard the latter tense as more emphatic than the former. We cannot accept emphasis as the primary distinctive feature between the two tenses since there is no practical means of proving that one form is more emphatic than the other.

When asked about the difference between the two tenses most speakers mention that one may use one or the other depending on

how the question is framed. Where the question is framed on ile+stem the answer will be framed in the same way; and where the question is framed on stem+ile the answer will also be framed on stem+ile. It will be noticed, however, that there seem to be nothing absurd in answering one with the other as may be noticed in the following sentences:

63. Na u - ile ua - reka libuka ?
Question you past buy books
'Did you buy books?'

for which the answer may be:

64(a) E, ke - ile ka - li reka
Yes I past them buy
'Yes I bought them.'

or

(b) E, ke - li - rekile
Yes I them buy past
'Yes, I bought them '

It has been suggested in the preceding chapter that the difference between the ile- and -ile tenses is one of remoteness and proximity to the present. This suggestion derives from the fact that one may be used with adverbs which refer to present while the other cannot. E.g.

64(a) Johanne o-fihl-ile hona joale
John A arrive past right now
'John has arrived now'

(b) *Johanne o-ile a-fihla hona joale

John A past arrive right now

'John arrived now'

66(a) Banana ba-pheh-ile nama hona joale

girls A past cook meat now

'The girls cooked meat now'

(b) *Banana ba-ile ba-pheha nama hona joale

girls A past cook meat right now

'The girls cooked meat now'

In an attempt to further pursue the proximity/remoteness distinction the following sentences were given to Sesotho speakers so that they could choose the one they found most natural.

67(a) Ke - 'mon - e hautsoanyane mona

I him see past shortwhile here

'I saw him a shortwhile ago'

(b) Ke - ile ka-'mona hautsoanyane mona

I past see shortwhile here

'I saw him a shortwhile ago'

68(a) Re-rek -ile libuka hautscanyane mona

We buy past books shortwhile here

'We bought books a shortwhile ago'

(b) Re-ile ra-reka libuka hautsoanyane mona

we past buy books shortwhile here

'We bought books a shortwhile ago'

The (a) and (b) sentences in 67 and 68 represent immediate and remote tenses respectively. The two tenses are used with a

phrase which refers to a shortwhile ago. All the speakers consulted chose the (a) sentences (immediate past) as the most natural. This choice supports our view that ile+stem is a remote tense.

It has been noted in the preceding chapter (2.3.4.1) that it is possible to use immediate tense with adverbs which refer to yesterday, day before yesterday, last week month, year etc. It may be mentioned that it is also possible to use the remote tense with adverbs which refer to this morning as may be noted in the following sentences.

69. Re-ile ra 'mona hoseng tjena
we past him see morning this
'We saw him this morning'

70. O-ile a -li- fumana hoseng tjena
he past them find morning this
'He found them this morning'

One may view these sentences as a counterargument to our claim, but this does not seem to be the case. It has already been noted that proximity is a subjective term, so that it may be influenced by the speaker's attitude. Although different speakers may use one or the other tense in similar situations depending on the speakers' attitude, there seem to be reason to believe that the distinction between immediate and remote tenses exists in Sesotho. This is supported by the fact that when native speakers are given sentences with both tenses and different adverbs, one recent, the other remote, most speakers

prefer the sentences in which an immediate tense is used with a recent adverb. The following sentences were given to native speakers.

71(a) Kajeno Maria o-sebelitse ho-feta kamoo
today Mary A work past to pass in there
a-ileng a- sebetsa khoeling e-fetileng
past work month passed
'Today Mary worked more much more than she did last month'

(b) Kajeno Maria o-ile a-sebetsa ho-feta ka-moo
Today Mary past work to pass in there
a-sebelitseng khoeling e-fetileng.
She work past month passed
'Today Mary worked much more than she did last month'

72(a) Selemong se-fetileng re fumane mekotla e-mengata
year past we find past bags many
ho-feta eo re-ileng ra-e-fumana lilemong tse-tharo tse-fetileng
to pass that we past we it find year three passed
'Last year we got more bags than we did three years ago'

(b) Selemong se-fetileng re-ile ra-fumana mekotla e-mengata
year passed we past find bags many
hofeta eo re- e-fumaneng lilemong tse-tharo tse-fetileng
to pass that we them find years three passed

'Last year we got more bags than we did three years ago'

73(a) Monghali Ntsane o-tsoile botichereng maobane athe mofumahali

Mr Ntsane A leave past teaching yesterday while wife

oa-hae o-ile a-tsoa lilemong tse-hlano tse-fetileng

of his past leave years five passed

'Mr Ntsane retired from teaching yesterday, while his wife retired five years ago'

(b) Monghali Ntsane o-ile atsoa botichereng maobane, athe

mr Ntsane A past leave teaching, yesterday while

mofumahali oa-hae o-tsoile lilemong tse-hlano tse-fetileng

wife of his left past years five passed

'Mr Ntsane retired from teaching yesterday while his wife retired five years ago'

74(a) Haeba palo ea-batho baileng ba-phekoloa selemong se-fetileng

if number of people past cure-passive year passed

e-tsejoa, ho-bobebe ho-fumana palo ea-batho ba-phekotsoeng

know-passive it easy to find number of people A cure-passive past bekeng e-fetileng

week passed

'If the number of people cured last year is known,it is easy to find the number of people cured last week'

(b) Haeba palo ea batho ba-phekotsoeng selemong se-fetileng
if number of people cure-passive past year passed
e-tsejoa ho-bobebe ho-fumana palo ea-batho baileng ba-phekoloa
know passive it is easy to find number of people past cure-passive
bekeng e-fetileng
week passed
'If the number of people cured last year is known, it is easy to find the number of people cured last week'

For all the sentences given in 71-74, the native speakers preferred the (a) sentences. As may be noted, the (a) sentence in 71 is used with adverbs <u>kajeno</u> 'today' and <u>khoeling</u> <u>e-feting</u> 'last month'. The first adverb is used with immediate tense and the latter with remote tense. In the (b) sentence the adverb <u>kajeno</u> 'today' is used with remote tense and <u>khoeling</u> <u>e-fetileng</u> 'last month' is used with immediate tense. The sentences in 72 and 73 follow the same pattern i.e immediate tense+recent adverb, remote tense+remote adverb for (a): immediate tense+remote adverb for (b). In 74 the order is sightly changed. We thus have remote tense+remote adverb, immediate tense +recent adverb for (a) and immediate tense+remote adverb, remote tense+recent adverb for (b).

The response given by the native speakers for the sentences in 71-74 is consistent with our hypothesis that <u>stem+ile</u> tense

is an immediate tense while ile+stem is a remote tense.

We may note, at this point, that a number of studies dealing with Bantu multiple[1] past systems divide tenses into today, yesterday, and before yesterday tenses (see Givon 1972, Wald 1976). We have avoided the use of such divisions since the degree of pastness in tsoa-, -ile and ile- tenses does not coincide with them. The terms immediate and remote have been found approriate in that they do not denote a fixed length of time from the moment of speech.[2]

3.2.0 Some cooccurrence restrictions between stem+ile and ile+stem tenses.

It has been noted in 3.1 above that stem+ile may be used with an adverb which refer to the present while ile+stem cannot. This will not be repeated in this section.

3.2.1 The progressive sa 'still'

Although the analysis of aspect will be dealt with in chapter 5, it is necessary, at this point, to consider the occurrence of sa with stem+ile and its non-occurrence with ile+stem. Consider the following sentences:

75(a) Thabo o - sa[3] - qal-ile mosebetsi ka-5

Thabo A still begin past work at 5

' Thabo has still begun work at 5'

(b) * Thabo o - sa - ile a-qala mosebetsi ka-5

Thabo A still past begin work at 5

' Thabo still began work at 5'

76 (a) Banana ba - sa pheh-ile nama

girls A still cook meat

' The girls have still cooked meat'

(b) Banana ba - sa - ile ba-pheha nama

girls A still past cook meat

' The girls still cooked meat'

77 (a) Le-khoeling e-fetileng barutuoa ba-sa-rekile libuka tse- ling

with month passed students A still buy past books others

' Even last month students bought additional books'

(b) *Le-khoeling e-fetileng barutuoa ba-sa-ile ba-reka libuka tse- ling

with month passed students A still past buy books others

' Even last month students bought additional books'

One may be tempted to regard the distinction between <u>ile-</u> and <u>-ile</u> tenses as one of perfective vs imperfective respectively. The cooccurrence restriction against <u>sa</u> and <u>ile-</u> tense will thus be attributed to perfectivity, while occurrence with <u>-ile</u> tense will be attributed to imperfectivity. This could be in accordance with an observation made by Morissey (1973:65) that 'still' is related to progressivity. We will notice in 5.1.1

that both tenses are perfective.

The cooccurrence restriction between sa and ile- tense appear to support our view that this tense is remote while -ile tense is an immediate tense. Givon (1969:172-213) has fully demonstrated in the case of ChiBemba, a Bantu Language, that there is an increase of markedness* with the increase of remoteness from the moment of speech. Givcn notes that a more marked tense/aspect imposes more restrictions on its envircment than a corresponding less marked one. While the analysis of the markedness hypothesis will not be provided in present study, it seems plausible to conclude (using facts from another Bantu Language) that the cooccurrence restriction between sa and ile- tense is due to its remoteness while its occurrence with -ile is due to immediacy of this tense. This view may be supported by the fact that the other immediate past tense tsoa- may be used with sa e.g.

78. Re-sa-tsoa - 'mona bekeng e-fetileng
we still past him see week passed
' We have just seen him last week'

3.2.2 Immediate and remote tenses in complement sentences

There is a group of verbs which function in twc different syntactic capacities: as regular verbs not requiring complementation and as modal verbs taking sentential complements, with the complement verb taking tensed form. A

number of these constructions show restrictions on the occurrence of the remote tense with the complement verb. We thus have the following acceptable (a) sentences but not (b):

79(a) Re -fihl-ile a-robets-e

we arrive past he sleep past

' We found him asleep'

but not

(b) * Re -fihl- ile a-ile a-robala

we arrive past he past sleep

' We found him asleep'

80(a) Re -fuman-e a-pheh-ile nama

we find past he cook past meat

' We found him cooking meat'

but not

(b) * Re fuman-e a-ile a-pheha

we find past he past cook meat

' We found him having cooked meat'

One may think that the above restriction is due to the difference of form of the tenses used with the modal verb and that with the complement verb. It will be noticed, however, that this restriction does not hold when other immediate tenses are used as may be noted by the acceptability of the following <u>tsoa-</u> tense:

81. Re -fuman-e a-sa-tsoa-pheha nama

we find past he still cook meat

' We found that he had just cooked meat'

82. Re - fihl-ile a-sa-tsoa robala

we arrive past he still past sleep

' We arrived just after he slept'

The above examples suggest that the statement of blocking conventions which bar certain tenses from occuring with complement verbs will make reference to remoteness or immediacy of tenses.

Summary

The distinction made between stem+ile and ile+stem is one of proximity and remoteness respectively. It has been noted that an immediate tense may be used with adverbs which refer to the present and the past while the remote tense can only be used with adverbs referring to the past. We have also noted that although immediate past tense may be used with remote adverbs, and remote past tense with recent adverbs, most speakers prefer to use remote tenses with remote adverbs and immediate tenses with recent adverbs. We have also noted that the immediate past tense may occur with progressive sa 'still' while the remote past cannot. This has been attributed to the markedness on the part of remote tenses.

Notes to chapter 3

1. The term is borrowed from Wald (1976). It refers to a tense system expressing more than one degree of pastness.

2. The meaning of these terms may be compared with that of implicit comparatives such as 'many' which assert a comparison between some observed instance and an average value (see John Robert Ross ' A note on implicit comparatives' in Linguistic Inquiry 1, 3, 1970:363-366).

3. This should not be confused with contracted form of se 'already' +a.

4. The use of this term in Givon's analysis does not seem to imply that the meaning of the unmarked category encompasses that of its marked counterpart.

Chapter 4

4.1.0 Ne+verb tense

Constructions with ne+verb have been referred to as 'imperfect tense' by Jacottet (1965:118); and as 'past continuous tense' by Guma (1971:175). Doke and Mofokeng (1957:252) refer to ne as 'a perfect form used in past time'. The different tenses formed with ne are described as (a) past continuous for ne+present (b) past perfect for ne+perfect and (c) pluperfect for ne+ile+ stem the three tenses in a-c are illustrated by the following sentences:

83. Sello o-ne a-reka libuka
    Sello A continuous buy books
    'Sello was buying books'

84. Sello o-ne a-rek-ile libuka
    Sello A past buy past books
    'Sello had bought books'

85. Sello o-ne a-ile a-reka libuka
    Sello A pluperfect past buy books
    'Sello had bought books'

The meaning of the term 'imperfect' as used by Jacottet cannot be deduced from his analysis. In dealing with 'present imperfect' (ne+present) Jacottet say it means that the action of

the verb was being done at a certain time. Although Jacottet uses the term 'tense' with imperfect (which we assume refers to imperfective in the sense defined by Comrie (1976:16) his use of 'being done' suggests that he regards ne as an aspectual marker.

The meaning becomes even more complicated in the analysis of 'imperfect of the perfect' (ne+stem+ile). Jacottet says it means that the action of the verb had already been done at a certain time. One would expect that such constructions would be regarded as perfective, but the presence of the aspectual marker ne persuades this grammarian to regard such constructions as imperfect.

Guma uses the term 'past continuous', the term whose definition is not apparent in his analysis. As he states, this tense indicates that an action was in process at some time in the past. It is not clear whether the term 'continuous' has the same meaning as 'progressive' in English or whether it has a different meaning. Continuousness is defined by Comrie (1976:33) as imperfectivity that is not occasioned by habituality. It will be noted later in our discussion that the ne- tense, though unmarked[1] for habituality, may have a habitual meaning. Whatever the meaning of continuous as used by Guma may be, it seems possible that he regards ne as an aspectual marker.

Doke and Mofokeng's analysis appears to be as confusing as the analyses above. It is not clear in the first place what they mean by 'a perfect form used in the past'. The term 'perfect'

has often been used interchangeably with 'perfective' in traditional grammars. Assuming that this term is used to mean 'perfective' by Doke and Mofokeng, it would be contradictory to regard perfective form as used in the formation of continuous tense.

One could also assume that ne is a 'perfect' form for which there is a corresponding non-perfect na (i.e. Stem without -ile). This could be possible since a number of verbs ending in -na take -e as perfect (our immediate past) e.g. bona >bon-e 'see' fana > fan-e 'give' kena > ken-e 'enter'. One will notice, however, that there is no corresponding tense/aspect in na for which ne may be regarded as perfect. We thus have:

86. Ke-ne ke-reka
I past I buy
'I was buying'

but not

87. *ke-na ke-reka
I present I buy
for 'I am buying'

An inconsistency similar to that found in Jacottet's analysis is also found in Doke and Mofokeng's analysis. Thus ne is regarded as aspectual marker before the simple form (present), and as tense marker before past tenses.

4.1.1 Is ne an aspectual or tense marker?

The question that the reader may ask himself is whether the difference between ne and other past tenses is one of aspect or tense. It is clear from the above discussion that the problem has not been resolved. It is doubtful that this can be easily resolved since there is no clear-cut boundary between tense and aspect. Aspect is often regarded as more basic than tense in that children whose native language has both master aspect more quickly than they do tense (see Lyons 1977:705). The case of ne appears to be different in that it may express imperfectivity and tense. It is thus unclear to me whether in cases where one form has both aspectual and tense meaning the children will master aspectual meaning first, so that we can regard aspectual meaning as more basic. This problem will not apply to Sesotho only, but other languages in which there are different past tense forms which may express certain aspectual distinctions.

The claim made in the discussion which follows is that ne is a past tense form. In as far as tense relates the time of the event to the moment of speaking the ne form, like the past tenses examined before, refers to the time prior to the moment of speech and thus qualifies as a past tense. Thus the sentence:

88. Bana ba-ne ba-ja lebese
children A past eat milk
'The children were eating milk'

refers to an event which took place before the moment of speaking. Compare the following past tense:

89. Bana ba-ile ba-ja lebese

children A past eat milk

'The children ate milk'

The translation given for the sentence in 88 suggests that ne+stem tense is progressive. It must be noted that the meaning of progressive in languages where it has been studied is so extended that it is impossible to speak of basic progressive meaning. Scheffer (1975:17-40) has noted (and thoroughly criticized) the following meanings attributed to progressive in English: the progressive expresses duration; denotes action in progress; forms a time- frame; it is used descriptively and subjectively; has an imperfective character; expresses temporary validity or heighten temporary relevance etc. Criticisms on the traditional definitions of progressive are also in Comrie (1976:33-40) Woisetschlaeger (1976:28-35) and Lyons (1977:713-19); all of which point to the need for a general meaning which may include progressivity and various other meanings.

In regarding tense as basic to ne forms we may list the various meanings found in this tense. This classification is consistent with the analysis of the past tenses examined earlier. There does not appear to be any sound reason for giving the semantic label 'progressive' to ne forms but not 'perfective' to ile- form examined earlier. We will indicate in the next chapter the tenses which have perfective and imperfective meanings.

4.1.2. Some correspondences between the present tense and ne+stem tense

There are some semantic and syntactic correspondences between the present tense and the past tense in ne which suggest that the tense in ne is the past tense corresponding to the present tense. In addition to the characteristic present/past tense meaning, the two tense forms are unmarked for habitual meaning. Thus although the sentences in 90 and 91 have no overt habitual marker, they may have habitual meaning:

90. Malimo a-bolaea batho
cannibals A kill people
'Cannibals kill people'

91. Malimo a-ne a-bolaea batho
cannibals A past kill people
'Cannibals used to kill people'

The two tenses may be used with habitual marker as follows:

92. Malimo a-ee a-bolaee batho
cannibals A habitually kill people
'Cannibals used to kill people'

93. Malimo a-ne a-ee a-bolaee batho
cannibals A past habitually kill people
'Cannibals used to kill people'

When the unmarked sentences in 90 and 91 are used with indexical adverbs such as hona joale 'right now' and maobane 'yesterday' respectively, the habitual meaning is neutralized. This is understandable since habitual has no specific time reference.

But the used of indexical adverbs with the sentences marked for habituality results in unacceptable sentences as follows:

94. *Malimo a-ee a-bolaee batho hona joale
cannibals habitually kill people this moment
*'Cannibals habitually kill people this moment'

95. *Malimo a-ne a-ee a-bolaee batho machane
cannibals past habitually kill people yesterday
*'Cannibals used to kill people yesterday'

It is important, at this point, to note the meaning difference the marked and the unmarked habitual sentences above (repeated here as 96 and 97).

96. Malimo a-ne a-bolaea batho
cannibals past kill people
'Cannibals used to kill people'

97. Malimo a-ne a-ee a-bolaee batho
cannibals past habitually kill people
'Cannibals used to kill people'

The sentences in 96 and 97 cannot be used interchangeably. Imagine a case of a child who has often heard about the cannibals but has never been able to find the exact meaning of the word <u>malimo</u> 'cannibals' since the word is often used to refer to people who like meat to such an extent that they may fight over it. The implication is that these people like meat to such an extent that in the absence of meat they may kill and eat other people. The child may ask the mother what the cannibals

are, for which the mother will answer:

98. Malimo ke-batho ba-neng ba-ja nama ea-batho
cannibals it is people past eat meat of people
'Cannibals are people who ate human flesh'

but not:

99. Malimo ke-batho ba-neng ba-ee ba-je nama ea-batho
cannibals it is people past habitually eat meat of people
'Cannibals are people who used to eat human flesh'

The sentence in 98 is appropriate in that it characterizes cannibals as 'people eaters' whereas sentence in 99 refer to frequency of human-flesh eating.[2]

Consider again a case of a child who has noticed that a number of men in his home-village go to work in the mines and asking his mother about his dead father:

100. 'Me, na ntate o-ne a-ee a-ee gauteng?
Mother question father past habitually go to the gold
'Mother, was my father used to going to the mines?

For which the mother's answer will be:

101. Che, ngoanaka o-ne a-ruta sekolong se-phahameng
no my child past teach school high
'No, my child, he was teaching at high school'

but not:

102. Che, ngoanaka o-ne a-ee a-rute sekolong se-phahameng
No my child past habitually teach school high
'No my child, he used to teach at high school'

The sentence in 101 suggests that the child's father was a professional teacher whereas 102 tells us that he frequently taught at high school though he might have been a qualified doctor. Thus to 102 but not 101 one may add:

103. ... Lehoja a-ne a-sena lengolo la- botichere
although past Neg have letter of teaching
'... Although he had no teachers certificate'

A similar 'characterizing' feature has been noted by Woitshlaeger (1976:36) in the case of English non-progressive forms. While the meaning of progressive may differ in different languages, we could say that the examples such as above indicate that <u>ne+stem</u> sentences are not basically progressive.

We may note at this point that both the present and the <u>ne+stem</u> sentences may be used with progressive forms as follows:

104. Bana ba-sa-ja lebese
children A still eat milk
'The children as still eating milk'

105. Bana ba-ne ba-sa-ja lebese
children A past still eat milk
'The children were still eating milk'

The use of progressive <u>sa</u> 'still' with <u>ne-tense</u> appears to be counter argument against the view that <u>ne</u> is in itself a progressive marker. It may be argued, however, that <u>sa</u> is redundant in <u>ne</u> sentences. It will be noticed, however, that there is a difference in meaning between the sentences with and those without progressive <u>sa</u>. Consider the following sentences:

106. Ha ke-fihla bana ba-ne ba-ja lebese
when I arrive children past eat milk
'When I arrived the children were eating milk'

107. Ha ke-fihla bana ba-ne ba-sa-ja lebese
when I arrive children past still eat milk
'When I arrived, the children were still eating milk'

The difference between the two sentences above is that sentence 107 presuppose that the children were eating milk before I came whereas sentence 106 has no such presupposition.

4.1.3 Differences/similarities between ne+stem and other past tenses

We have already mentioned that the ne+stem like other past tenses, refers to the event that took place before the moment of speaking. Like other past tenses ne+stem may be found in complement sentences as follows:

108(a) Ba- utlo-ile hore morena o-ne a-kula
they hear past that chief past be-ill
'They heard that the chief was ill'

(b) Ba-utlo-ile hore morena o-ile a-kula
they hear past that chief past be-ill
'They heard that the chief was ill'

109(a) Ke kholoa hore o-ile a-tsamaea
I think that past go
'I think that he left'

(b) Ke kholoa hore o-ne a-tsamaea

I think that past go

'I think that he was leaving'

The meaning difference between the senteces with <u>ne+stem</u> above is rather difficult to characterize, though every speaker of the language knows when to use one and not the other. The difference will for the moment be characterized in terms of Grice's conversational maxims, (Grice 1975:46) quality being the specific maxim in this case. It is possible that an account which characterize the difference in terms of tense and aspect will be found later.

The maxim required to account for the meaning difference between (a) and (b) sentences in 109 reads: "Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence". In uttering 109(a) the speaker does not commit himself to having witnessed the actual 'going away', while 109(b) could not be uttered unless the speaker has seen x leave. This view is supported by the fact that it is possible to add the phrase 'before I came' to 109(a) but not (b) as follows:

110(a) Ke kholoa hore o-ile a-tsamaea pele ke-fihla

I think that he past go before I arrive

'I think that he left before I arrived'

(b) *Ke kholoa hore o-ne a-tsamaea pele ke-fihla

I think that he past go before I arrive

*'I think that he was leaving before I arrived'

(Habitual reading possible)

The type of complexity which may involve the use of Grice's maxims should not be underestimated. The sentences in 109 have been easier to handle since they involve conversation between A and B about a third person C. Sentences such as 108 which involve conversation between A and B about what a third person C has heard about a fourth person D may not be as easy to characterize.

The sentences in 108 and 109 have the <u>ne+stem</u> and <u>ile+stem</u> tenses as complements. It is also possible to have these tenses in the main sentences as follows:

111. Ke-ne ke-bona hore o-halefile leha a-ne
I past I see that he be-angry although he past
a-leka ho-iphapanya
he try to pretend
*'I was seeing that he is angry although he pretended not to be'

112. Ke-ile ka-bona hore o-halefile leha a-ne
I past I see that he be-angry although he-past
a-leka ho-iphapanya
he try to pretend
'I noticed that he was angry although he pretended not to be.'

It is difficult to decide whether unacceptability of the English translation for sentences such as 111 is due to incompatibility of progressivity with the verbs of inert

cognition (Leech 1971:21) or due to a restriction that sentences which are progressive cannot occur as main sentences in complement sentences. If the latter is the case it may be an indication that Sesotho ne+stem is not basically progressive.

It must also be noted that ne+stem like other past tenses may be used with when clauses as follows:

113(a) Moshoeshoe o-ne a-fallela Thaba-Bosiu ha ntata'e
Moshoeshoe A past move to ThabaBosiu when his father
a-bolaoa ke-malimo
be-killed by cannibals
'Moshoeshoe was moving to Thaba-Bosiu when his father was killed by the cannibals'

(b) Moshoeshoe o-ile a-fallela Thaba-Bosiu ha ntata'e
Moshoeshoe A past move to Thaba-Bosiu when his father
a-bolaoa ke-malimo
be-killed by cannibals
Moshoeshoe moved to Thaba-Bosiu when his father was killed by the cannibals'

The (a) sentence in 113 suggests that moshoeshoe's father was killed by the cannibals during his movement to Thaba-Bosiu. The sentence in (b) suggest that the movement to Thaba-Bosiu followed the death of Moshoeshoe's father.

Leech (1971:17) gives a similar contrast for the English progressive and non-progressive sentences. He observes that progressive aspect has the effect of surrounding a particular

event by a 'temporal frame'. This account, though accurate, has been criticized by Woisetschlaeger (1976:30) who mentions that examples such as those mentioned do not primarily illustrate a point about neighbouring tense forms, but rather, something about the semantic properties of the temporal connective when.

Until a study of Sesotho temporal connectives has been undertaken, we regard overlap and succession as characteristic meaning of ne+stem and ile+stem tenses respectively.

Reference has already been made to occurrence of ne and progressive sa. Mention has also been made of occurrence of sa with immediate past tenses, and its non-occurrence with ile+stem tense. More discussion on this will be found in the next chapter.

We have already noted that ne may appear with habitual ee while the other past tenses do not. This question too will be considered in the next chapter.

The use of progressive sa with ne+stem groups this tense with the immediate tenses in tsoa- and -ile on the one side and ile+stem on the opposite side. The use of ne+stem with ee 'do habitually' separates ne+stem from the rest of past tenses. The cooccurrence restriction with temporal adverbials referring to the present groups ne+stem tense with the tense in ile+stem. Note the following examples:

114(a) *Banana ba-ne ba-pheha nama hona joale

girls A past cook meat right now

'The girls were cooking meat this moment'

114(b) *Banana ba-ile ba-pheha nama hona joale

girls A past cock meat right now

'The girls cooked meat right now'

The use of <u>ne+stem</u> constructions with temporal adverbs referring to future time must be noted. Consider the following examples:

115. Johanne o-ne a-fihla hosasa hoseng empa

John A past arrive tomorrow morning but

joale ntata'e o-itse a-tle kamoso

now his father said he come day after tomorrow

'John had planned to come tomorrow morning but his father has ordered him to come day after tomorrow'

116. Re-ne re-ea Maseru hosasa, joale rakhali

we past go Maseru tomorrow now aunt

o-se a-tla koano

she already come here

'We intended going to Maseru but now our aunt is coming over'

Sentences such as 115 and 116 express plans, intentions, wishes, hopes etc., and should not be confused with the temporal use of <u>ne+stem</u> in which reference is made to an event that took place. The occurence of <u>ne+stem</u> with future adverbials should not be regarded as an argument against the use of <u>ne+stem</u> as past tense marker.

4.2.0 Ne+past Tenses

The term 'Past Perfect' which has been used by earlier Sesotho grammarians appear to be inappropriate since it derives from the change of tense of the 'perfect form' for languages such as English i.e. has > had. The reader will notice that the three tenses tsoa+stem, stem+ile and ile+stem may be used with the ne morpheme so that it is difficult to find a term which covers three of them. Following are examples in which the three tenses are used with ne:

117(a) Ha letsatsi le-likela re-ne re-tsoa tlcha Maseru
when sun A disappers we past leave Maseru
'At sunset we had just left Maseru'

(b) Ha letsatsi le-likela re-ne re-tloh-ile Maseru
when sun A disappear we past we leave past Maseru
'At sunset we had left Maseru'

(c) Ha letsatsi le-likela re-ne re-se re-ile
when sun A disappear we past we already we past
ra-tloha Maseru
we leave Maseru
'At sunset we had already left Maseru'

118(a) Ba-ne ba-sa-tsoa-utloa hore Lerata o-tsoeroe
they past they past hear that Lerata be-imprisoned
'They had just heard that Lerata was imprisoned'

(b) Ba-ne ba-utlo-ile hore Lerata o-tsoeroe
they past they hear past that Lerata be-imprisoned
'They had heard that Lerata is imprisoned'

For reasons not yet clear to me ile+stem tense requires an obligatory use of se 'already' as may be noted in sentence 117(c). One may think that the optional use of se with stem+ile is due to redundant use of 'already' with 'perfect' as noted by Traugott and Waterhouse (1969:298) in the case of English (see also Hirtle 1977). We could assume for the time being that this is the case since we have noted some similarities between the immediate tense in stem+ile and the English perfect (2.3.5).

The ne+past tense indicates that the event referred to took place before another event in the past. Thus in sentences such as 117, the 'departure' took place before sunset. That the event referred to by ne+past precedes the time of another event in the past may be indicated by its incompatibility with temporal connectives which indicate time after, and its compatibility with those that indicate time before. E.g.

119(a) Letsatsi le-ne le-sa-tsoa-likela pele re-tloha
sun A past it past disappear before we leave
Maseru
Maseru
'The sun had just set before we left maseru'

(b) Letsatsi le-ne le-liketse pele re-tloha Maseru
sun A past it disappear past before we leave Maseru
'The sun had set before we left Maseru'

(c) Letsatsi le-ne le-ile la-likela pele re-tloha Maseru
sun A past it past it disappear before we leave Maseru

'The sun had set before we left Maseru'

compare

120(a) *Letsatsi le-ne le-sa-tsoa-likela
kamora re-tloha Maseru
after we leave Maseru
'The sun had set after we left Maseru'

(b) * Letsatsi le-ne le-liketse kamora re-tloha Maseru
sun A past it disappear past after we leave Maseru
' The sun had set after we left Maseru'

(c) * Letsatsi le-ne le-ile la-likela kamora re-tloha Maseru
sun A past it past it disappear after we leave Maseru
'The sun had set after we left Maseru'

4.2.1 <u>ne+past in relation to meaning and cooccurrence restrictions of simple past tenses</u>

<u>Immediacy</u>

The sense of immediacy is still felt even when the immediate tenses are used with <u>ne</u> tense. Thus the <u>ne+tsoa</u> sentences such as 117(a) are felt to be nearer to the reference point than it is the case with <u>ne+stem+ile</u> sentence in 117(b).

Although immediacy may not be as strongly felt with <u>ne+stem+ile</u> tense as it is with <u>ne+tsoa</u> tense, most speakers prefer the use of the immediate tense compounds with recent adverbials and remote tense compounds with remote adverbials. Thus given

sentence 121 in which a recent adverbial is used with ne+immediate tense and remote adverbial with ne+remote tense; and sentence 122 in which recent adverbial is used with ne+remote tense and remote adverbial with ne+immediate tense most speakers prefer 121.

121. Selemong se-fetileng re-ne re-fuman-e mekotla e-mengata
year passed we past we find past bags many
ho-feta eo re-neng re-ile ra-e-fumana
to pass that past we past them find
lilemong tse-tharc tse-fetileng
we past them find years three passed
'Last year we had found more bags than we had three years ago'

122. Selemong se-fetileng re-ne re-ile ra-fumana mekotla
year passed past past we find bags
e-mengata ho feta eo re-neng re-e-fumane
many to pass that we past them find
lilemong tse-tharc tse-fetileng
years three passed
'Last year we had found more bags than we had three years ago'

<u>Progressive Sa 'still'</u>

Ne-compound tenses whose simple counterparts can be used with <u>sa</u> may themselves be used with <u>sa</u> too; and the ones whose simple tenses cannot be used with <u>sa</u> cannot e.g.

123. Re-ne re-sa-tsoa feta Maseru

we past past pass Maseru

'We had just passed Maseru'

(b) Re-ne re-sa-fet-ile Maseru

we past pass past Maseru

'We had only passed Maseru'

(c) *Re-ne re-sa-ile ra-feta Maseru

we past past pass Masseru

'We still passed Maseru'

Temporal adverbs

Although immediate tenses may, on their own, be used with an adverb which refer to the present, ne+immediate tenses cannot be used with such adverbs, e.g.

124(a) *O-ne a-tsoa-bua le-rona hona joale

he past past speak with us right now

'He had just spoken to us this moment'

(b) *O-ne a-buile le-rona hona joale

he past speak past with us right now

'He had spoken with us this moment'

The use of ne+past with temporal adverbs deserves further note. Hornstein (1977:530) notes ambiguity in the following tense-cum-adverb English sentence:

125. The secretary had eaten at 3 p.m. which may be paraphrased into:

(a) The time that the secretary actually ate was 3 p.m.

(b) The secretary had already eaten by the time 3 p.m. rolled around.

There seem to be no ambiguity with ne+stem+ile and ne+ile+stem tenses in Sesotho. Let us consider the following sentences:

126. Theko o-ne a-no-ele likala tse-tharo ka-3
Theko A past drink past cans three at 3
'Theko had drunk three cans of beer at three'

127. Theko o-ne a-ile a-noa likala tse-tharo ka-3
Theko A past past drink cans three at 3
'Theko had drunk three cans of beer at three'

The sentences in 126 and 127 tell us that the time at which Theko drank beer was 3 o'clock. In order to express the meaning that the drinking took place before three we have to use se 'already' as follows:

128. Theko o-ne a-se a-no-ele likala tse-tharo ka-3
Theko A past already drink past cans three at 3
'Theko had already drunk three cans of beer at 3'

129. Theko o-ne a-se a-ile a-noa likala tse- tharo ka 3
Theko past already past drink cans three at 3
'Theko had already three cans of beer at three'

The sentences such as 126 and 127 should not be regarded as a counterargument to our earlier view that ne+past indicates that the event referred to took place before another event in the past. Sentences such as these are semantically dependent on other sentences (see Smith 1978:51 for the analysis of corresponding English sentences). Let us consider a sentence in which the time specified by the adverbial is the time at which

the other past event took place:

130. *Ha re-fihla ka-3, Theko o-ne a-ile a-noa
when we arrive at 3 Thekc past past drink
likala tse-tharo
cans three
'At three when we arrived Thako had drunk three cans of beer'

compare

131. Ha re-fihla ka-3, Theko c-ne a-se a-ile a-noa
when we arrive at 3 Thekc past already past drink
likala tse-tharo
cans three
'At three when we arrived Theko had already drunk three cans of beer'

The sentence in 130 is unacceptable because it identifies the time of the other past event as the same as that of ne+past tense. When the overt marker se 'already' is used, the sentence is acceptable.

Summary

Ne is regarded as past tense marker instead of aspectual marker as earlier grammarians suggest. Like ile+stem tense, ne+stem cooccurs with adverbs which refer to the past time but not the ones referring to the present time. Unlike other past tenses, ne+stem may have habitual meaning in isolation, and at the same time cooccur with habitual marker. In 'when' sentences

ne+stem expresses time overlap while the other tenses express succession. When ne is used with other past tenses it indicates that the event referred to by ne+past took place before another event in the past. As a result, this tense cannot be used with temporal connectives which refer to time after.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. Unmarked here means absence of overt marking.

2. A sentence such as this may be appropriate, for instance, where someone knows that during Lifaqane some people (say Zulu) frequently ate human flesh; and in speakers opinion they are not to be characterized as 'people eating'.

CHAPTER 5

5.1.0 Aspect

We have given a list of some aspectual markers in 1.2.3. Before examining some cooccurrence restrictions between these markers and past tenses we have to determine some secondary aspectual implications inherent in different tenses. Our analysis will be based on the oppositions established by Friedrich (1974:35). Friedrich suggests that the three most basic oppositions in terms of which a variety of aspectual systems can be analyzed are durative vs nondurative, completive vs noncompletive, and stative vs nonstative. In order to be consistent with our terminology we will use perfective/imperfective instead of completive/noncompletive opposition (we ignore the distinction made between completive and perfective aspect (see Woisetshlaeger 1976:28).

A number of works on aspect have made it clear that the examination of aspect must be carried out in terms of intra-sentential relations not by looking at the verb in isolation (see Verkuyl 1972, Friedrich 1974). A more detailed treatment of aspect would require us to go into the question of interdependence that holds between aspect on the one hand and number, countability, specificity of reference and negation on the other hand. Our treatment will be selective rather than comprehensive; we will examine a relatively small number of

points than it would be case with an elaborate study on aspect as such.

5.1.1 Perfective/Imperfective opposition

An exact definition of perfective/ imperfective opposition is difficult to find. Comrie (1976:16) notes that perfectivity indicates the view of a situation as a single whole without distinction of the various separate phases that make up that situation, while imperfectivity pays essential attention to the internal structure of the situation. As Macaulay (1978:417) correctly observes, the above distinction is rather opaque. Comrie later expands the definition of perfectivity to include 'situations that are internally complex' such as those that last for a considerable period of time, or include a number of distinct internal phases provided that the whole situation is subsumed as a single whole. We will regard completion as an essential characterization of perfectivity and assume that a tense which may be used with the form getella 'end by' is perfective while the one that cannot be used with this form is imperfective. Let us consider the following sentences:

132(a) * Ke geteletse ke sa-tsoa- pheha
I ended I past cook
'I have ended up cooking'

(b) *Ke-geteletse ke sa-tsoa-tsamaea
I ended I past walk
'I ended going'

133(a) Ke-qeteletse ke-pheh-ile

' I ended I cook past

' I ended cooking'

(b) ke qeteletse ke-tsama-ile

I ended I walk past

'I ended going'

134(a) Ke-qeteletse ke-ile ka-pheha

I ended I past cook

' I ended cooking'

(b) Ke-qeteletse ke-ile ka-tsamaea

I ended I walk

I ended going'

135(a) * Ke qeteletse ke-ne ke-pheha

I ended I past cook

' I ended cooking'

(b) * Ke-qeteletse ke-ne ke-tsamaea

I ended I past walk

'I ended going'

136(a) * Ke-qeteletse ke-ne ke- sa- tsoa-pheha

I ended I past still cook

' I ended just cocking'

(b) * Ke- qeteletse ke-ne ke-sa-tsoa-tsamaea

I ended I past I still walk

'I ended just going'

137(a) *Ke-qeteletse ke-ne ke-pheh-ile

I ended I past I cook past

' I ended having cooked'

(b) * Ke-qeteletse ke-ne ke-tsamaile

I ended I past walk past

* I ended having gone'

138(a) *Ke-qeteletse ke-ne ke-ile ka-pheha

I ended I past I past cock

' I ended having cooked'

(b) * Ke-qeteletse ke-ne ke-ile ka-tsamaea

I ended I past past walk

'I ended having gone'

The sentences in 132 are examples of <u>tsoa</u> past tense; 133 <u>stem+ile</u> past tense; 134 <u>ile+stem</u> past tense ; and sentences 135 examples of <u>ne+stem</u> past tense. Sentences 136-138 are examples of <u>ne+past tenses</u> . We may conclude from the acceptability of sentences 133 and 134 that <u>stem+ile</u> and <u>ile+stem</u> tenses are perfective; while unacceptability of sentences 132, 135, 136, 137 and 138 suggest that <u>tsoa+stem, ne+stem</u> , and <u>ne+past tenses</u> are imperfective.

The perfective/imperfective distinction noted above may be further demonstrated by the use of the frame ' he was ... but did not finish'. Tenses which do not fit into this frame will be regarded as perfective.

139(a) O-tsoa-fiela 'me ha a qeta '

he past sweep and Neg finish

' He has just swept and has not finished'

(b) * O-fietse 'me ha a qeta

he sweep past and Neg finish

'He swept and did not finish'

(c) * O-ile a-fiela 'me ha a qeta

he past sweep and Neg finish

' He swept and did not finish'

(d) O- ne a-fiela 'me ha a qeta

he past sweep and Neg finish

' He was sweeping and did not finish'

(e) O-ne a-tsoa-fiela 'me a sa qeta

he past past sweep and Neg finish

'He had just swept and had not finished'

(f) O-ne a-fietse 'me a-sa- qeta

he past sweep past and Neg finish

' He had swept and had not finished'

(g) O- ne a-ile a-fiela 'me a-sa-qeta

he past past sweep and Neg finish

' He had swept and had not finished'

As may be noted from the sentences in 139, <u>tsoa+stem</u> , <u>ne+stem</u> and <u>ne+past</u> are imperfective while <u>stem+ile</u> and <u>ile+stem</u> are perfective.

5.1.2 <u>Durative Vs nondurative opposition</u>

The distinction between durative and nondurative aspect examined in this section primarily concerns the possibility of sentences in different tenses to contain durational adverbials

such as nako e-telele 'for along time' letsatsi lohle 'for the whole day' etc. We will indicate that there is a relation of cohesion between certain tenses and durational adverbials similar to that between tense and temporal adverbials. We do not deny that durational features may be inherent in lexical items as such rather than their grammatical form. Note the following examples:

140 * Johanne o-fihl-ile nako e- telele
John arrive past time long
' John arrived for a long time'

141 * Sello o-qal- ile mosebetsi ho-fihlela mantsiboea[2]
Sello begin past work until afternoon'
' Sello began work until afternoon'

compare

142 Thabo o-bu-ile nako e-telele
Thabo speak past time long
' Thabo spoke for a long time'

143 Pekisi o-luts-e moo ho-fihlela mantsiboea
Pekisi sit past there until afternoon
'Pekisi sat there until afternoon'

The unacceptability of sentences 140 and 141 cannot be attributed to cooccurrence restrictions between stem+ile tense and duratinal adverbial nako e-telele 'for a long time' and ho-fihlela mantsiboea 'until afternoon' since the acceptable sentences 142 and 143 in stem+ile tense are also used with the same durational adverbials. The unacceptability of 140 and 141

reflect lack of durational features in verbs such as fihla 'arrive' qala 'begin' choatla 'break' etc.

We are aware that durational adverbials have a selectional relationship to a configuration of categories rather than one lexical item as proposed by Lakoff and Ross (see Verkuyl 1971:18).

We are also aware that verbs such as chcatla 'break' may be durational or nondurational depending on whether the object NP is singular or plural. We thus have:

144. Maria o-choatl-ile liipone letsatsi lohle
Mary break past mirrors day whole
'Mary broke the mirrors for the whole day'

but not

145. *Maria o-choatl-ile seipone letsatsi lohle
Mary break past mirror day whole
'Mary broke a mirror for a long time'

The sentence in 144 does not necessarily express frequency. It may have a single event reading. Thus if Mary went on a rampage against mirrors she might decide to go on breaking until all are broken.

There are several other factors which may affect duration. One of these is the difference between the constituents occurring as subject. E.g.

146(a) *Moeti o-fihl-ile hofihlela mantsiboea
visitor arrive past until afternoon

'The visitor arrived until afternoon'

(b) Baeti ba-fihl-ile hofihlela mantsiboea

visitors arrive past until afternoon

'Visitors arrived until afternoon'

As the reader may notice, we are left with a rather limited choice of 'neutral' lexical items. An attempt will be made to find sentences which may not be strongly affected by the factors mentioned above, so that it should be possible to claim that tense is the only contributing factor to the cooccurrence restriction between the verb and the durational adverb.

147(a) *Banana ba-sa-tsoa pheha nama nako e-telele

girls A past cook meat time long

'The girls just cooked meat for a long time'

(b) *Banna ba-sa-tsoa sebetsa nako e-telele

men A past work time long

'The men just worked for a long time'

148(a) Banana ba-pheh-ile nama nako e-telele

girls A cook past meat time long

'The girls cooked meat for a long time'

(b) Banna ba-sebel-itse nako e-telele

men A work past time long

'The men worked for a long time'

149(a) Banana ba-ile ba-pheha nama nako e-telele

girls A past cook meat time long

'The girls cooked meat for a long time'

(b) Banna ba-ile ba-sebetsa nako e-telele

men A past work time long

'Men worked for a long time'

150(a) *Maobane banana ba-ne ba-pheha nama nako e-telele

yesterday girls past cook meat time long

'Yesterday the girls cooked meat for a long time'

(b) *Maobane banna ba-ne ba-sebetsa nako e-telele

yesterday men past work time long

'Yesterday the men worked for a long time'

151(a) Banana ba-ne ba-sa-tsoa pheha nama nako e-telele

girls A past past cook meat time long

'The girls had just cooked meat for a long time'

(b) Banna ba-ne ba-sa-tsoa-sebetsa nako e-telele

men past past work time long

'Men had just worked for a long time'

152(a) Banana ba-ne ba-pheh-ile nama nako e-telele

girls past cook past meat time long

'The girls had cooked meat for a long time'

(b) Banna ba-ne ba-sebel-itse nako e-telele

men past work past time long

'The men had worked for a long time'

153(a) banana ba-ne ba-ile ba-pheha nama nako e telele

girls past past cook meat time long

'The girls had cooked meat for a long time'

(b) Banna ba-ne ba-ile ba-pheha nama nako e-telele

men past past work time long

'The men had worked for a long time'

The sentences in 147 are examples of tsoa+stem past tense used with durative adverbial. As may be noted from unacceptability of these sentences, this tense is nondurative. The stem+ile and ile+stem tenses on the other hand are durative. We have used an adverb maobane 'yesterday' with sentences in 150 in order to exclude habitual reading. The ne+stem like tsoa+stem tense is nondurative. The ne+past tense sentences in 151-153 suggest that these tenses are durative.

It is interesting to note that most tenses regarded as perfective (133-136) may also be durative (148-149); and most tenses which are imperfective (134 and 137) are also nondurative (147 and 150). This suggests a possible objection to the 'either or' opposition between durative/nondurative and completive/noncompletive suggested by Friedrich (1974:35) and Macaulay 1971(see Macaulay 1978:419).

The sentences with ne+past tense seem to follow a different pattern from the other past tenses. These tenses are both imperfective (138-140) and durative (151-153).

5.1.3 Stative Vs nonstative opposition

The distinction between stative and nonstative verbs in Sesotho is not clear. Although certain verbs have been referred to as stative, the criterion used for such classification has never been stated (see Doke and Mofokeng 1957, Guma 1971). Some grammarians have doubted the need for distinction between

stative and nonstative verbs (Westphal 1950). Most grammarians have, however, noted an overt stative marker -eh-. Note the following examples.

154.	Rata 'like'	> rateha	'be likeable'
	ruta 'teach'	> ruteha	'be educated'
	roba 'break'	> robeha	'be broken'
	lebala 'forget'	> lebaleha	'be forgotten'

These constructions are different from passive constructions in that the agent is only implied but can never be specified.

We will regard incompatibility of -eh- with any verbs as an indication of stativity. Some of the verbs which do not take -eh- are the following:

155.	Makala	'be surprised'	*makaleha
	hlonama	'sulk'	*hlonameha
	tsoana	'resemble'	*tsoaneha
	inama	'stoop'	*inameha
	phahama	'rise up'	*phahameha
	khothala	'be cheerful'	*khothaleha
	khathala	'get tired'	*khathaleha
	shoa	'die'	*shoeha

The above examples may suggest some relationship between stativity and intransitivity.

Let us now consider the use of both lexical and derived stative verbs with different tenses:

156(a) *Teboho o-sa-tsoa ruteha ho-feta thaka tsa-hae
Teboho A past educated to pass age-mate of his
'Teboho has been much more educated than his age mates'

(b) *ke-sa-tsoa makala ho utloa taba tseo
I past be surprised to hear news those
'I have been surprised to hear that news'

157(a) Teboho o-ruteh-ile ho-feta thaka tsa-hae
Teboho A educated past to pass age-mates of his
'Teboho is much more educated than his age mates'

(b) Ke maketse ho utloa taba tseo
I be surprised to hear news those
'I am surprised to hear that news'

158(a) Teboho o-ile a-ruteha ho-feta thaka tsa-hae
Teboho past educated to pass age-mates of his
'Teboho was much more educated than his age mates'

(b) Ke-ile ka-makala ho-utloa litaba tseo
I past surprised to hear news those
'I was surprised to hear that news'

159(a) *Teboho o-ne a-ruteha hofeta thaka tsa-hae
Teboho past educated to pass age mates of his
'Teboho was much more educated than his age mates'

(b) *Ke-ne ke-makala ho-utloa litaba tseo
I past I surprised to hear news those
'I was surprised to hear that news'

160(a) Teboho o-ne a-sa-tsoa-ruteha ho-feta thaka tsa-hae
Teboho past past educated to pass age mates of his
'Teboho had just been educated much more than his age mates'

(b) Ke-ne ke-sa tsoa makala ho-utloa taba tseo
I past past surprised to hear news those
'I had been just surprised to hear that news'

161(a) Teboho o-ne a-ruteh-ile ho-feta thaka tsa-hae
Teboho past educated past to pass age-mates of his
'Teboho was much more educated than his age mates'

(b) Ke-ne ke-maketse ho utloa taba tseo
I past I surprised to hear news that
'I was surprised to hear that news'

162(a) Teboho o-ne a-ile a-ruteha ho-feta thaka tsa-hae
Teboho past past educated to pass age-mates of his
'Teboho had been much more educated than his friends'

(b) Ke-ne ke-ile ka-makala ho-utloa taba tseo
I past past surprised to hear news those
'I had been surprised to hear that news'

As may be noticed from the above sentences, tenses which resist use of stative verbs are <u>tsoa+stem</u> and <u>ne+stem</u>. These tenses may therefore, be regarded as nonstative. The <u>stem+ile</u> <u>ile+stem</u> and <u>ne+past</u> tenses on the other hand are stative.

For reasons not yet clear the stative verb <u>rateha</u> 'be likeable' shows a different behaviour from other stative verbs. With <u>stem+ile</u> and <u>ile+stem</u> tenses the sentences with <u>rateha</u> are

unacceptable while with ne+rateha the sentence is acceptable.

5.2.0 Aspectual Markers

The following list of aspectual markers was given in 1.2:

sa	'still'
se	'already'
ee	'habitual'
hle	
'ne	
ke	'occassional

Of these markers only sa 'still' and se 'already' may be used with a number of past tenses. Habitual markers may be used with ne+stem tense only. We have noted use of ee with this tense in 4.1.2. The other habitual markers behave in the same way as ee and may (like ee) be characterized by the fact that they cannot specify a particular moment in time. This characteristic feature is also found with ke 'do occasionally'.

Analysis of sa 'still' and se 'already' is of particular interest since observations have been made about the restrictions of 'still' and 'already' to certain tenses and aspects in languages such as English (see Trungott and Waterhouse (1969), Morrisey (1973), Hirtle, 1977).

5.2.1 Sa 'still'

The label 'progressive' used in grammars for sa+stem will be retained. The form sa 'still' gives to the verb the notion of continuity. Thus a sentence such as re-sa- reka 'we are still buying' presuppose that the event referred to 'reka' has been going on before the moment of speech and is being continued.

The meaning of progressive given above requires that the verb used be durative (i.e. last for a certain period of time). It is possible, however, to use sa with punctual verb (not lasting in time) such as fihla 'arrive', tloha 'leave' etc. In such cases the meaning expressed may be 'just' or 'only'. The sentence o-sa-fihla mean 'he has just arrived'.

5.2.2 Sa+tsoa+stem

The meaning of sa is redundant in this tense. The progressive form is frequently used in order to neutralize the verbal force of tsoa 'come from'.

5.2.3 Sa+stem+ile

The form sa with stem + ile expresses the meaning 'again' e.g.

163. Banana ba-sa-rek-ile libuka
girls A still buy past books
'The girls have bought books again'

The 'again' meaning with the stem + ile tense appear to derive from the fact that this tense is perfective so that the continuous meaning of the progressive forces a repetitive reading onto the verb.

Although it is possible to use the simple form of stative verbs such as tseba 'know' with sa, the past tense of this verb cannot be used with sa. While we may say, (of a boy who learnt Sesotho and went to a place where he could not use the language for some time):

164. Teboho o-sa-tseba Sesotho
Teboho A still know Sesotho
'Teboho still knows Sesotho'

we cannot say:

165. *Teboho o-sa-tseb-ile Sesotho
Teboho A still know past Sesotho
'Teboho still knew Sesotho'

An explanation for this appears to be that it is not possible to express the 'again' meaning noted for stem+ile. We normally speak of someone 'learning again' but not 'knowing again'.

5.2.4 *Sa+ile+stem

The sa form cannot be used with ile+stem tense. Several reasons for this cooccurrence restriction come to mind. One might assume that sa expresses imperfectivity while ile+stem express perfectiity. This cannot be a valid reason for this

restriction since we have indicated in 5.1.1 that stem + ile is a perfective tense. In fact the meaning 'again' expressed by sa+ stem+ile appears to support the view that this tense is perfective. There seem to be no reason why one perfective tense should occur with sa and the other should not.

One could also suggest that syntactically sa and ile fill the same position so that once one has been used the other cannot. This seems plausible since the ne form cannot be regarded as filling the same position as ile for the two may appear in the same construction. It is doubtful, however, that this could be a valid claim since tsoa (which we assume fill the same position as ile) may occur with sa. The question of markedness expressed in 3.2.1 remains the valid claim.

5.2.5.1 ne+sa+stem

The meaning of sa in this tense is the same as that mentioned in 5.2.1.

5.2.5.2 ne+sa+tsoa+stem

The sequence above expresses the meaning 'had just'. As may be noted, the meaning of sa is still redundant.

5.2.5.3 ne+sa+stem+ile

The meaning expressed by this sequence is 'had only'.

5.2.5.4 *ne+sa+ile+stem

5.3.1 se 'already'

Unlike sa 'still', se 'already' does not presuppose existence of the event, cooccurring with it, before the moment of speech, but rather presuppose its nonexistence before the moment of speech and its 'coming into being'.

It must be noted that while a sentence with sa implies that another event follows that expressed by sa+stem a sentence with se implies that another event preceded the one expressed with se. Thus the sentence:

166(a) Re-sa-reka libuka

we still buy books

'We are still buying books'

may be completed thus:

(b) ... Re tla reka liphahlo ha re-qeta

we Fut buy clothes when we finish

'... We will buy clothes thereafter'

while the sentence:

167(a) Re-se re-reka libuka

we already buy books

'We are already buying books'

may be preceded by:

(b) Re rek-ile liphahlo joale ....

We buy past clothes now ....

'We bought clothes now we are buying books'

5.3.2 *Se+tsoa+stem

The only reading we get with this tense is 'already come from'. With verbs that are incompatible with 'coming' e.g. Tloha 'leave' the sentence is unacceptable.

168. *Ba-se ba-sa-tsoa-tloha
they already past leave
*'They have already just left'

5.3.3 Se+stem+ile

When used with temporal adverb se+stem+ile express change of plan expectation etc. Thus the sentence:

169. Ba-se ba-tsama-ile maobane
they already walk past yesterday
'They already left yesterday'

imply that the people referred to were expected to go at a time different from the one expressed by adverb.

5.3.4 Se+ile+stem

This sequence conveys the same meaning as that in 5.3.2 above.

5.3.4.1 Ne+se+stem

The meaning in this sequence is similar to that mentioned in 5.3.1.

5.3.4.2 *Ne+se+tsoa+stem

This sequence is unacceptable.

5.3.4.3 ne+se+stem+ile

The meaning expressed is 'had already'

5.3.4.4 ne+se+ile+stem

The meaning is the same as in 5.3.4.3 above.

Summary

The following chart represent the various tenses in relation to aspectual features and cooccurrence restrictions with different aspectual markers.

	PERFECTIVE	DURATIVE	STATIVE	HABITUAL	sa	se
tsoa+stem	-	-	-	-	+	-
stem+ile	+	+	+	-	+	+
ile+stem	+	+	+	-	-	+
ne+stem	-	-	-	+	+	+
ne+tsoa+stem	-	+	+	-	+	-
ne+stem+ile	-	+	+	-	+	+
ne+ile+stem	-	+	+	-	-	+

TABLE II -Tenses in Relaticn to Aspectual Features

Notes to Chapter 5

1. Some speakers prefer the use of verb gala 'begin' with this sentence, e.g.

   O-tsoa-qala ho fiela 'me ha a qeta

   'He has just started sweeping and has not finished'

2. Note that negative construction with the same adverbial is possible. e.g. Sello ha a-ka a qala mosebetsi ho fihlela mantsiboea 'Sello did not begin work until afternoon'.

CHAPTER 6

6.1.0 On the applicability of Reichenbach/Hornstein analysis to Sesotho.

In the preceding chapters we have given the description of Tense and Aspect in Sesotho. We have demonstrated that the stem+ile form which has been referred to as 'perfect' in the literature should be regarded as an immediate past tense. Comparison between this tense and the immediate past tense in tsoa+stem is made. We have also indicated some similarities/differences between immediate and remote past tenses. We have suggested that ne+stem should be regarded as past tense instead of aspectual distinction. Finally we have indicated some aspectual features inherent in different past tenses.

In this chapter we set out to indicate the extent to which Reichenbach/Hornstein analysis can account for the facts mentioned above. We offer no solution to the problems that the theory based on this analysis is likely to encounter in dealing with Tense and Aspect in Sesotho. We merely wish to point out some of the facts that must be considered in the formulation of a tense theory which may adequately describe the facts and perhaps make appropriate predictions.

6.1.1 Immediate/Remote distinction

One of the main tasks which any theory of tense based on Reichenbach's analysis will encounter in dealing with Sesotho tenses is to draw the distinction between immediate and remote tenses. We have already noted that as far as the relationship between the point of event (E) and the moment of speech (S) is concerned, E is anterior to S in both immediate and remote tenses. Thus in the sentences:

170(a) Johanne c-tsoa-fihla
John A past arrive
' John has just arrived'

(b) Johanne o-fihl-ile
John A arrive past
' John arrived'

(c) Johanne o-ile a-fihla
John A past arrive
' John arrived'

John's arrival is viewed as prior to the moment of speaking. Without time specification one may be inclined to think that the point of reference in immediate tenses should be viewed as simultaneous with the moment of speech while with the remote tense it should be regarded as simultaneous with the point of event. We would then have the following 171(a) as tense representation for sentences 170(a) and (b) and 171(b) as tense representation for sentence 170(c)

171(a) E ----------S,R

(b) E,R ---------- S

The representation of 170(a) and (b) as 171(a) would be supported by the fact that these tenses may be used with temporal adverb <u>hona</u> <u>jcale</u> 'right now' while sentence 170(c) cannot. It must be noted that the tense structure in 171(a) corresponds to the English perfect, whcse differences with Sesotho immediate tenses are noted in 2.3.5. It should also be noted that the three sentences in 170 may be used with adverbs referring to the past as follows:

172(a) Johanne c-tsoa fihla maobane
John A past arrive yesterday
'John just arrived yesterday'

(b) Johanne o-fihl-ile maobane
John A arrive past yesterday
'John arrived yesterday'

(c) Johanne o-ile a-fihla maobane
John A past arrive yesterday
'John arrived yesterday'

In all these sentences the point of event is simultaneous with the point of reference. The tense representation for the three tenses thus become 172(b).

While one could probably manipulate the three theoretical entities S R and E and finally come out with some sclution, there appears to be another problem closely bound up with the question of immediacy and remoteness which may be difficult tc incorporate within SRE. This is the question of subjectivity.

Thus although in all the sentences in 172, yesterday is identified as the point of reference, the speaker may choose one sentence instead of the other depending on how he views the occurrence of the event in relation to his expectations. Thus sentences 172(a) and (b) may be an appropriate answer where the speaker had expected that John should have arrived earlier.

Several other interrelationships between the actual time of occurrence of events with the involvement of the speaker, hearer and other participants in the events have been noted by Lakoff (1970). It is necessary that such facts be considered in the formulation of tense theory.

One of the ways in which Hornstein related the quasi-Reichenbach framework he proposed to language acquisition, was that it would provide the child with a rather tight system with which to work in deciphering the tense phenomena and their corresponding temporal interpretation. One may view exclusion of the distinctions such as immediate/remote as an attempt at providing such a tight system. It is doubtful, however, that exclusion of certain facts about a language would provide a unified account. One may note in this connection that the claim made about degree of markedness in immediate/remote tenses suggests a possibility of acquisition of some tenses before others.

It may be argued that the distinction between immediate and remote tenses should be regarded as aspectual. One could expand

the definition of aspect given in 1.8.1 to include external constituency of event (e.g. Manner, repetition etc.). In regarding the distinction expressed by tsoa+stem (immediate) ile+stem (remote) as aspectual, we claim that tsoa and ile forms fill the same position as aspectual markers. We have noted in the previous chapter that tsoa+stem and ile+stem may be used with such aspectual markers as sa 'still' and se 'already' This indicate that tsoa and ile fill a different position from that filled by aspectual markers. We could also mention that while it is possible for aspectual markers to be used with several tenses, tsoa and ile forms can never be used with other tenses. We thus, never find any of the following sequences:

173(a) *Johanne o-tsoa tsama-ile
John A past walk past
for 'John just left'

(b) *Johanne o-tsoa ile a-tsamaea
John A past past walk
for 'John just left'

but we have the following sequence:

174. Johanne o-se a-ile a-tsamaea
John A already past walk
'John has already left'

6.1.2 On the interraction between tense and temporal adverbs

Reichenbach notes that there may be certain deviations from the original meaning as a result of combination with certain

adverbs "... In the sentence 'Now I shall go' the simple future has the meaning S, R-----E, ... However, in the sentence 'I shall go tomorrow' the future tense has the meaning S-----R,E. It is out of this observation that Hornstein developed rules of adverbs which account for acceptability and unacceptability of certain adverb/tense combinations. Let us consider the following sentences:

175(a) Thabo o-tsoa fumana lengolo hona joale
Thabo A past find letter right now
'Thabo has just got a letter now'

(b) Thabo o-fumane lengolo hona joale
Thabo A find past letter right now
'Thabo got a letter now'

(c) *Thabo o-ile a-fumana lengolo hona joale
Thabo A past find letter right now
*'Thabo got a letter now'

176(a) Thabo o-sa tsoa fumana lengolo maobane
Thabo A past find letter yesterday
'Thabo just got a letter yesterday'

(b) Thabo o-fuman-e lengolo maobane
Thabo A find past letter yesterday
'Thabo got a letter yesterday'

(c) Thabo o-ile a-fumana lengolo maobane
Thabo A past find letter, yesterday
'Thabo got a letter yesterday'

177(a) *Thabo o-tsoa fumana lengolo hosasa

Thabo A past find letter tomorrow

*'Thabo just got a letter tomorrow'

(b) *Thabo o-fuman-e lengolo hosasa

Thabo A find past letter tomorrow

*Thabo got a letter tomorrow'

(c) *Thabo o-ile a-fumana lengolo hosasa

Thabo past find letter tomorrow

*'Thabo got a letter tomorrow'

We have mentioned earlier that tense representation for past tenses is E,R----S,. According to Hornstein's analysis all the sentences in 175 should be unacceptable since the combination of tense and adverb violates the principle on associativity which disallows the association of S R and E in derived structures if they were not associated in basic tense structure. The use of adverb <u>hona joale</u> 'now' with E, R----S changes this structure into E----S,R. We note however, that although the principle on associativity is violated the sentences in 175(a) and (b) are acceptable. If sentence 175 (c) was acceptable too, it would probably be necessary to ignore the above principle.

Another possibility would be to assume that all the past tenses have the structure E----S,R and that past adverbs are mapped into E (and R where they are simultaneous) where E is anterior to S; while present adverbs are mapped into R or E when they are simultaneous with S. The acceptability of (a) and (b)

sentences in 175 would then be due to association of the adverb hona joale with R; and the acceptability of sentences in 176 due to the association of maobane 'yesterday' with E. While this may appear to be a plausible solution, it does not account for the unacceptability of sentence 175(c).

We are not able to come out with any solution to the problem of the interaction between adverbs and Tense within Reichenbach's analysis. It is possible that the analysis cannot be adapted to relative tenses, or different constraints may be required in order to account for the above facts. Until such time that a solution is found one cannot understand what is taking place in compound tenses.

6.1.3 On Aspect

The only aspectual feature which has been incorporated into Reichenbach's analysis is progressivity. Progressivity is but one of the semantic notions of aspect. Others are stativity, duration, completion, habituality etc. Smith (1978:69) has indicated a possibility of incorporating habitual sentences into Reichenbach's scheme for temporal specification. While I do not in principle accept Smith's analysis, it suggests some possible modifications on Reichenbach's analysis.

It is possible that a number of aspectual features can easily be accounted for by redundancy rules. We notice in table II for instance, that all tenses that are durative are also

stative. Binnick (1976:44) notes an unpublished analysis, by McGilvray based on Reichenbach which suggests that the "definitional" function of asserting the (aspectual) relatonship between E and R pertain to all verbs within a sentence. This is understood to suggest a possibility of eliminating even more aspectual features by more redundancy rules.

6.2 Conclusion

Our analysis has indicated the importance of maintaining the distinction between immediate and remote tenses in Sesotho; and the need to consider necessary constraints to be intergrated into an explanatory and well- constrained theory of Tense.

Our presentation is by no means definitive. There are a number of topics which have not been examined because of lack of time and space. Some of these are temporal connectives and their interaction with different tenses; serial verb constructions etc. We hope that this study will serve as a stimulus for research into syntax and semantics of Sesotho since no detailed description in any topic has been carried out.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allen, R. L. 1966. The verb system of present day American English. The Hague: Mouton.

Anderson, J. 1973. An essay concerning aspect. The Hague: Mouton.

Beauchat, P-D. 1966. The verb in Zulu. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Binnick, R. I. 1976. How aspect languages get tense. Chicago Linguistic Society 12 40-50.

Bull, W. E. 1960. Time, tense and the verb. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Chomsky, N. 1965. Aspects of the theory of syntax. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Comrie. B. 1976. Aspect. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. 1966. Specification and English tenses. Journal of Linguistics 2 1-34.

Dillon, G. L. 1973. Perfect and other aspects in a case grammar of English. Journal of Linguistics 9 271-279.

Diver, W. 1963. The chronological system of the English verb. Word 19 141-181.

Doke, C. M. 1927. Textbook of Zulu grammar. Cape Town: Longmans.

Doke, C. M. and Mofokeng S. M. 1957. Textbook of Southern Sotho grammar. Cape Town: Longmans.

Dowty, D. R. 1977. Toward a semantic analysis of verb aspect and the English 'Imperfective' progressive. Linguistics and Philosophy 1 45-77.

Friedrich. P. 1974. On aspect and Homeric aspect. Internstional Journal of American Linguistics 40 Memoir 28.

Givon, T. 1972. Forward implications, backward presuppositions, and the time-axis of the verbs. In Kimbal, J. Syntaxs and semantics 1.

----------1972. Studies in ChiBemba and Bantu grammar. Studies in African Linguistics supplement 3. Chapter 4.

----------1973. The time-axis phenomenon. Language 49 890-925.

Grice, P. 1975. Logic and conversation. In Cole, P/ Morgan J. Syntaxs and semantics 3.

Guma, S. M. 1971. An outline structure of Southern Sotho. Pietermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter.

Hirtle, W. H. 1977. Already, still and yet. Archivum Linguisticum 8 28-45.

----------1967. The simple and progressive forms: an analytical approach. Quebec: Les Presses de l'Universite Laval.

----------1975. Time, aspect and the verb. Quebec: Les Presses de l'Universite Laval.

Hornstein, N. 1977. Toward a theory of tense. Linguistic Inquiry 8 521-557.

Huddleston, R. 1969. Some observations on tense and deixis. Language 45 777-806.

Jacottet, E. 1965. A practical method to learn Sesuto. Morija: Sesuto Book Depot.

Kirpasky, P. 1968. Tense and mood in Indo-European syntax. Foundations of Language 4 30-57.

Kucera, H. and Trnka, K. 1975. Time in Language: temporal adverbial constructions in Czech, Russian and English. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.

Lakoff, R. 1969. Tense and its relation to participants. Language 46 838-49.

Leech, G. N. 1971 meaning and the English verb. London: Longman.

Lyons, J. 1977. Semantics 2. London: Cambridge Press.

Macaulay, R. K. S. 1978. Review of Comrie B. Aspect, and Friedrich P. On aspect theory and Homeric aspect. Language 54 416-420.

Mccawley, J. D. 1971. Tense and time reference in English. In Fillmore and Langendon (eds), Studies in linguistic semantics.

Morissey, M. D. 1973. The English perfective and still/a nymore. Journal of Linguistics 9 65-69.

Mufwene, S. 1978. A reconsideration of Lingala temporal inflections. Studies in African Linguistics 9 91-105.

Palmer, F. R. 1974. The English verb. London: Longman.

Reichenbach, H. 1947. Elements of symbolic logic. New York: Free Press.

Scheffer, J. 1975. The progressive in English. Amsterdam: North Holland.

Smith, C. 1976. Present curiosities. Chicago Linguistic Society 12 supplement 568-581.

----------1978. The syntax and interpretation of temporal expressions in English. Linguistics and Philosophy 2 43-99.

Taylor, B. 1977. Tense and continuity. Linguistics and Philosophy 1 199-220.

Traugott, E. C. 1975. Spatial expressions of tense and temporal sequency: a contribution to the study of semantic fields. Semiotica 15 207-230.

Traugott, E. C. and Waterhouse, J. 1969. 'Already' and 'yet': a suppletive set of aspect markers? Journal of Linguistics 5 287-304.

Vendler, Z. 1967. Verbs and times. In Vendler, Linguistics in philosophy. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Verkuyl, H. J. 1972. On the compositional nature of aspects. Dordrecht: Reidel.

Wald, B. 1976. Comparative notes on past tenses in Kenyan Northeast Bantu Languages. Studies in African linguistics supplement 6 267-281.

Westphal, E. 1950. The stative conjugation in Zulu, Sotho and Venda. African Studies 9 125-137.

Woisetschlaeger, E. F. 1976. A semantic theory of the English auxiliary system. Bloomington: Indiana University Linguistics Club.