

**THE MARKING OF TENSE AND ASPECT IN LEKI: THE CASE
OF FORMS AND REMOTENESS DISTINCTIONS**

Mosi Masatu

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**THE MARKING OF TENSE AND ASPECT IN LEKI: THE CASE
OF FORMS AND REMOTENESS DISTINCTIONS**

By

Mosi Masatu

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts (Linguistics) of the University of Dar es Salaam**

**University of Dar es Salaam
November, 2015**

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that he has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by the University of Dar es Salaam the dissertation entitled: “*The Marking of Tense and Aspect in Leki: The Case of Forms and Remoteness Distinctions*”, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (Linguistics) of the University of Dar es Salaam.

.....

Dr. Abel Yamwaka Mreta

(Supervisor)

Date.....

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I, **Mosi Masatu**, declare that this is my original work and that it has not been and will never be submitted to any other university for a similar or any other degree award.

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Finally, the usual disclaimers apply, and any shortcomings of the present work cannot be attributed to any of the aforementioned people.

May God bless you all!

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late father **Masatu Mlibwa** who instilled in me academic aspirations; May his soul rest in eternal peace.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

ABBREVIATIONS

A	Aspect
AFF	Affirmative
AGR	Agreement marker
ANT	Anterior
AUG	Augmentative
AUX	Auxiliary verb
COND	Conditional
COP	Copula verb
DEM	Demonstrative
F1	Future 1
F2	Future 2
F3	Future 3
FOC	Focus
FV	Final vowel
GF	Generic future
GP	Generic present
HAB	Habitual
HP	Historical past
HT	High tone
IP	Indefinite past
LOC	Locative
LOT	Languages of Tanzania project

LT-	Linguistic time
MF	Middle future
MLs	Minority languages
MP	Middle past
MV	Main verb
NCL	Noun class
NEG	Negator/negation
NF	Near future
OBJ	Object
OM	Object marker
P	Present
P1	Past 1
P2	Past 2
P3	Past 3
PASS	Passive
PER	Persistent
PERF	Perfective
PL	Plural
PROG	Progressive
REL	Relativizer
RF	Remote Future
RP	Remote past
SG	Singular
SM	Subject marker

SM-AUX	Subject marker in auxiliary verb
SM-MV	Subject marker in the main verb
SUB	Subject
T	Tense
T/A	Tense/aspect
TAM	Tense, aspect and mood
TM	Tense marker

SYMBOLS

–	Morpheme boundary
...	(Dots) forms appearing in the same word (different slots)
Ø	zero marker
()	High tone
(`)	Low tone
(^)	Rise-fall tone

ABSTRACT

This study aims at identifying tense and aspect forms of Leki, an insular language in Ukerewe district, examining the functions and morph-syntactic distribution of tense and aspect (T/A) markers, and finding out the degree of remoteness distinctions inherent in the T/A system of the language based on cognitive theory. The study employed an integrative model in which two theories (cognitive and functional theories) were brought together. This study is descriptive in nature, employing interviews (structured and unstructured), focus group discussion and introspection. The obtained data were analysed by descriptive methods used in linguistics (i.e the use of morphological parsing). The findings reveal that tense and aspect are verb inflectional categories marked either at the T-position or at the FV-position or at both. Specifically, tense is basically marked at the T-position common in simple constructions while aspect is marked by compound markers (in compound constructions). The findings reveal also a close interaction between the T/A forms and other elements such as temporal adverbials, subject markers, negative markers and tone. Lastly, there is a multiplicity of T/A forms in the language, a structure which reflects speakers' conception of time in the material universe. Conclusively, language structure reflects speakers' view of time in the material universe. Finally, this study recommends that there is a compelling need to study the roles of subject markers in expressing tense and aspect in the language.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION TO THE STUDY OF LEKI TENSE AND ASPECT SYSTEMS

1.1 Introduction

This study on tense and aspect is meant to explain two components of the T/A system, namely how tense is marked in Leki by looking at the T/A markers and examining their functions and distribution and how speakers use such systems to locate events in relation to the time of speaking (remoteness distinctions in the T/A system of the language). The two components of the T/A system are also maintained by Susanne Hackmack¹ who argues that tense encompasses two aspects, namely a morphological aspect which is a system of tense encoded in the verb's morphology, and the semantic aspect dealing with the temporal location of the event or events depicted in one or more sentences which is the meaning of the various tenses.

Therefore, this study, in the first place, strives to describe the elements that make up the T/A system of the language (i.e., formatives, periphrases). In the second level, it analyses the different degrees of remoteness distinctions in the T/A system of the language. These two components of the T/A system are explained in detail in chapter 4.

¹Reichenbach's Theory of Tense and it's Application to English was retrieved from staff.um.edu.mt/mros1/csa5006/pdf/hackmack.pdf on 18/09/2014, 12:39am

1.2 Language and the Study

1.2.1 Introduction

This section consists of two subsections, namely language of the study and background to the study. The first subsection introduces the language. It offers both historical and sociolinguistic information of the language under study. The second subsection deals with what is currently involving in the study of Bantu tense and aspect systems. It gives a brief review of the studies on tense and aspect in Bantu languages.

1.2.2 Language of the study

Leki, also called *Shileki* by native speakers, and Kara² by outsiders, is an *insular*³ and a minority Northeastern Bantu language spoken in Ukerewe Island (district) in Mwanza region, northern part in Lake Victoria. It occupies the whole island of Ukara (or *Kwileki* as referred by native speakers). It has an approximate population of 114,990 (LOT, 2009). In other literatures, the language is called ‘Regi’ (in Muzale, 1998) which is the name given by the Jita and other neighboring ethnic groups like Kerewe (or Kerebe) and Zinza. These slightly different terms referring to the same language group have arisen due to variations in pronunciation of the term “Leki” by these different ethnic groups. In this study, Leki will be used since it is the name preferred by the native speakers in this area.

²Kara (the name of the language) from Wakara (its speakers) settled on the island between 15th c to 19th c and since they were the first to settle in this insular region, they were called by the late comers (Kerewe or Silanga tribe and Jita) “*Abaakara*” to mean ancient people, but later the name came to have a negative connotation meaning backward people up to present (Lukula, 1991 and Masoko (1979).

³ Its coverage of use is limited to a single Island of Ukara in Ukerewe district.

There are some linguistic variations between inland and Lakeside Lekis. Speakers living along the Lakeshores speak modern Leki or Jita-like Leki due to language contact with Kerewe Jita, Kerewe and other ethnic groups. These variations between Inland Leki and Lakeside Leki can be traced in the vocabulary, phonology, orthography, and even at discourse level. This study involved inland Leki speakers, especially in Nyang'ombe village which was said by native speakers to be home of the original Leki.

By status, the language is among the minority languages of Tanzania which are still running out of documentation efforts, and is confronting endangerment (Muzale and Rugemalira, 2008). Masoko (1979), reports that insular Leki has been influenced by Kerewe and Jita (due to sociolinguistic factors like status) to the extent that native speakers have lost good command of their language, and they have adopted either Kerewe or Jita.

1.2.2.1 Leki linguistic affiliation

The language has been classified differently as follows: Guthrie (1971 & 1948) classified Jita (E. 25) and Kerewe (E. 24) under zone E and did not include Leki. To fill such a gap, Masoko (1979) added Leki (insular Kara) to Guthrie's zone E and classified it as E.26. More specifically, Muzale (1998), and Nurse and Philippson (1980) placed Leki in the Suguti group of Lacustrine zone (eastern Nyanza) with a different name (Regi) which shares 81.5% of its vocabularies with languages in a particular group (Jita, Kwaya and Ruri).

The most up-to-date classification was given by John Maho in his chapter entitled “A classification of Guthrie’s Referential System” in Nurse and Philippson (2003:645). He grouped Leki (Regi or Kara) in group E252.

Based on the criterion of mutual intelligibility, Leki is proximally more related to Jita than Kerewe. But in some respects, as Lukula (1991) observes that, the language shares a lot with Kerewe and Jita in terms of vocabularies sometimes due to proximal interaction between these linguistic groups.

1.2.3 Background to the study

Tense and aspect, as a special area of interest in linguistics has received more impetus in the study of human languages during the 20th century up to now. Bantu tense and aspect, among many areas of interest, has occupied space in such efforts during this century. Recently, much devotion has been placed to the study of Bantu T/A systems, as noted in Nurse, (2008), Lindfors (2003), Mreta, (1998), Muzale (1998) and Besha (1989).

This literature provides empirical data and methodological basis for comparative and descriptive purposes. Thus, the studies have become influential for the current study in terms of methodology and findings. They have made it easy for this study to strive at underpinning the general Leki T/A systems regardless of the theoretical and conceptual implications they variably spell out.

Bantu languages are reported to have more T/A formatives than Indo-European languages. It is argued that Bantu languages have considerably a large number of

TAM markers than the Indo-European language families, and that aspectual markers are especially numerous (Lindfors, 2003 & Polomé, 1967). Lindfors (ibid) sees this complexity as a result of the nature of T/A marking inherent in Bantu languages as she says Bantu languages are generally prefixing than suffixing. Basically, tense and aspect are verbal categories at least in a large number of world languages (Schmidtke, 2006). Specific to this claim, is the view that tense and aspect are inflectional categories, as it is the case in Bantu languages (Nurse, 2007 & 2008; Mreta, 1998; Muzale, 1998 etc.).

Besides, Bantu languages are reported to have verbal systems that enable speakers to locate time in multiple degrees of remoteness from the moment of speaking known as speech time (Nurse, 2008). The verbal systems of these languages diverge from the three distinctions of present, future and past tenses (Toews, 2009). Concurrently, Nurse (2008:89) came up with the report that: “Bantu languages are known for their multiplicity of past and future tense contrasts: multiple pasts (past 2, 3, 1 and 4) are common, multiple futures less so (future 1, 2 and 3) (Nurse 2008: 89)”. These are different degrees of remoteness an event or time is located relative to the time of speaking (henceforth, speech time). This time of speaking is known as the deictic centre⁴.

Tense and aspect systems cannot only be seen as verbal categories but also may be a combination of other systems such as tone variations, temporal adverbial and

⁴ A deictic centre is a point in time at which speech events are taking place from which other events can be located (usually the present). It is also known as reference point or speech time.

inherent tense verbs. Hackmack⁵ gives a supportive assertion to the point above that, tenses are not the only means available of locating events in time; an additional possibility is the use of other linguistic elements such as temporal adverbs or prepositional phrases. Therefore, there is a close interaction between T/A forms and other elements, which in this study are termed as *supportive elements* of the T/A system.

The study of tense and aspect can be looked at in two angles: the linguistic angle (how language is structured) and the speaker's worldview angle (how speakers view time in the material universe). Then, the two angles in combination can help to explain the interplay between language structure or functions and its users' cognitive abilities (i.e., how they are used to locate events within a specific time frame). Ashton (1936) as cited in Besha (1985:140) in her article "The Idea Approach to Swahili" has this to say in support of the two-angles approach above: "The speaker uses the particle (form) which best expresses the idea he wishes to convey, and in keeping with the context (p.854)".

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Most minority languages (MLs) in Africa survive out of documentation (Batibo, 2005). Eventually, this has led to most of these languages becoming endangered (Batibo, 2009). Likewise, Muzale and Rugemalira (2008) list 50 MLs (including Leki) as endangered in Tanzania, and insisted that they need urgent documentation to

⁵Hackmack "Reichenbach's Theory of Tense and its Application to English" was retrieved from staff.um.edu.mt/mros1/csa5006/pdf/hackmack.pdf on 18/09/2014, 12:39am

rescue their materials. Therefore, this was also a compelling factor in the study of Leki tense and aspect system.

Few studies have been done in the language, namely Lukula (1991)⁶ which basically uses lexicostatistics in studying the nature and extent of linguistic change among Insular Jita in Ukerewe⁷, and Masoko (1979) which looked at the morphological structure of Leki deverbal nouns. All these studies did not focus on tense and aspect systems. Thus, in the current study, more concentration is placed in the study of tense and aspect systems of the language. This is due to the fact that, although the area of tense and aspect has thrived in the literatures on Bantu structures, Leki has not occupied space in a particular literature.

1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 The main objective

The general aim of this study is to examine Tense and Aspect system in Leki.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

- i. To identify T/A forms in the language.
- ii. To examine the functions and morpho-syntactic distribution of T/A Markers in Leki language.
- iii. To find out the degrees of remoteness distinction in T/A system of the language.

⁶But the author based his study on Insular Jita rather than what he calls Insular Kara (Leki)

⁷In this study Leki (Insular Kara) is only mentioned in the historical background of these related languages.

1.5 Research Questions

The following are the research questions:

- i. How are tense and aspect marked in Leki language?
- ii. What are the functions and morpho-syntactic distribution of the T/A markers in Leki language?
- iii. How does the language mark different degrees of remoteness in the T/A system?

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study of tense and aspect in many languages of the world requires that the researcher concentrates on the verb and the adverbial domains. Due to unlimited scope of the T/A systems, this study focuses on forms or T/A markers of the language, their functions and distributions and the way they act as a means by which time is located in terms of remoteness from the speaker's reference time (usually the present). Additionally, the description and analysis of the T/A system was done basically focusing on affirmative constructions only since they have the default T/A markers.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to add more knowledge to the existing body of literature about tense and aspect in Bantu. It establishes the relationship between language structure (specifically T/A) and its speakers' mental processes with regard to temporal references. This approach of relating language structure or system to its users' mental capability gains its strength from the fact that both tense and aspect allow speakers to relate situations to time although they offer different slants on time (Saeed, 2003 and

Muzale 1998). This claim implies that there is a big relationship between how language operates and how speakers view the material universe in relation to time. This claim can be partly exemplified in the T/A systems as Muzale (1998) asserts that a language develops tense formatives depending on how the speakers' minds partition real time in the universe. This means that language offers linguistic materials for speakers to express time in the real universe.

A large scale survey of Bantu languages structure may prove some irrelevance to the study of individual languages within the Bantu group. Linguists such as Besha (1989), and Mreta (1998) emphasized that we cannot generalise Bantu languages because each language has some unique structures. More importantly, it should be noted that studying Leki as an individual language can help to avail data for large scale survey of the general Bantu T/A systems which is usually for historical and comparative purposes.

1.8 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has basically discussed the background to the problem of study. It has also shown the objectives of the study and the research questions. In addition, it has discussed the significance and scope of the study.

Generally, in this chapter we were striving to provide background information about the study, on one hand, and offer information about the language of study and its people on the other hand. The following chapter presents the literature review and the theoretical framework, which in combination give insight to the study of Tense and aspect in Bantu languages.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with literature review and theoretical framework. It is organized as follows: The first section deals with the definition of the key terms, namely tense and aspect and offers a morphological and semantic distinction of the two terms. The second section deals with the review of the previous studies; whereas, the last section reviews two important theories used in this study focusing on their relevance in the study of tense and aspect.

2.2 The Meaning and Distinction of Tense from Aspect

In Bantu languages, the concept of tense and aspect can be made clear by looking at different situations expressed by the verbal system. Based on Bantu language perspective, tense and aspect are both verbal categories since they specify temporal properties of situations, and situations are prototypically encoded by verbs (Schmidtke, 2006).

There are two approaches worth analysing in defining tense and aspect, namely functional (at morphological level) and semantic or cognitive approach (at meaning level). Based on the semantic content of the T/A systems, Comrie (1976 & 1985) defines tense as a grammaticalized expression of time, and aspect as an internal temporal constituency of an event. Comrie (1976) makes it clear that tense establishes the time framework (future or past) for the listener and aspect sets out how the situation is distributed within the timeframe (i.e., as completed, in progress or repeated).

Rieger's (2011) definition of tense and aspect can also help to make the two concepts clear. She looks at aspect as how the speaker views events as progressive or unfolding as himself (the speaker) being in the middle of it without overseeing its beginning or end (imperfective) or describes an event in its totality with defined margins (perfective). Therefore, aspect is semantically distinguished from tense since the past events or future can be viewed by the speaker as completed or in progress.

Another semantic distinction of tense from aspect is that tense is a deictic category while aspect is a non-deictic category (Dahl, 1985; Muzale, 1998). This means that tense has a reference point from which events are anchored usually the time of speaking (present). All events are located before or after the present. Muzale (1998) argues that tense categories have semantic dependence on the relation between the time when something is talked of in the utterance or sentence and the time of speech event (the moment one speaks)- which is often referred to as a deictic centre. Therefore, the semantic approach establishes its principles from the speakers' point of view (meaning component).

These semantic definitions posit some difficulties in categorizing the present within the concept of tense (Bybee et al. 1994 and Nurse, 2008). The reason behind this situation is that there is no other time at which an event can be anchored to. When we speak, we usually use the present as a point of departure in locating events whereby we point to events as subsequent or precedent to our position in time (Toews, 2009)⁸

⁸The two concepts "**precedence**" and "**subsequence**" were brought out by Carmela Toews (2009) in the article bearing the title: The Expression of Tense and Aspect in Shona, University of British Columbia.

The second approach to the distinction of tense from aspect is the functional approach given by Nurse (2008). He gives out some evidence on how Bantu T/A systems can help to draw a demarcation between tense and aspect. One of his evidence is drawn from Swahili compound construction in 1 below:

1. *Tu -li -kuwa tu -me -imba*
 1P -past -be 1P -ANT -sing

“We had sung” (p.13)

The forms here are “*li...me*” whereby “*li*” is a marker for past tense (far from the main verb) and “*me*” is a marker for anterior aspect (closer to the main verb). Nurse (ibid) concludes that aspect is encoded closer to the main verb than tense; a structure which suggests that aspect is more closely connected to the semantics of the main verb than tense.

The semantic definition by Comrie (1976) is the most cited and at least clearer than Nurse’s (2008) functional approach. The latter is language specific and may have many challenges when one wants to deal with a single language. Hence, there is a need to integrate the two approaches and see how a specific language has the verbal system that serves as a clue for distinguishing tense from aspect.

2.3 Review of Related Studies

2.3.1 Introduction

This section reviews previous studies on tense and aspect in Bantu languages. It shows how these studies have built a foundation for the current study. They are of varied scales. There are large scale studies which are mainly dealing with comparative analysis, as well as small scale studies which offer descriptions of

specific languages' grammar. Both studies in combination have a bearing on the shape and stance of the current study.

2.3.2 Tense and aspect systems in Bantu languages

It is reported that Bantu languages contain the most complex TAM⁹ in the world (Lindfors, 2003). She maintains further that Bantu languages have considerably the larger number of TAM markers than the Indo-European language families, and that aspectual markers are particularly numerous. She sees this complexity a result of the nature of T/A marking inherent in Bantu languages, which she says Bantu languages are generally prefixing than suffixing.

The fact that Bantu languages are generally prefixing may be irrelevant to a number of Bantu languages which mark tense and aspect in the final vowel position or by post-stem formatives. A good example of these languages is given by Nurse (2008) such as Kamba (E55) and Mbuun (B87). In Mbuun, for example, T/A is marked at the T/A slot as exemplified below.

2. a) *Ba-Ø-dia* "they eat, are eating"
 b) *Ba-ye-dia* "they are eating" (PRG)
 c) *Ba-wu-toma* "they cry (regularly) (HAB)
 d) *Ba-be-toma* "they are crying again" (ITR)
 e) *Ba-bena-dia* "they have already eaten" (ANT) (Nurse, 2008:131)

In Kamba, tense and aspect are marked at the final vowel position as exemplified in 3 below:

3. a) *A-Ø-tony-a*
 "He is able"

⁹TAM stands for three related verbal categories namely tense, aspect and mood.

b) *N-u-Ø-semb-eete*
 FOC-3s-null-run-ANT
 “He has been running”

c) *N-u-Ø-koot-ie*
 FOC-3s-null-pull-PFV
 “He pulled” (-ie < *-ire)

d) *N-u-Ø-koot-aa*
 “He always pulls” (IPFV:-aa < aga)

The conclusion given here by Nurse is that, these exemplify the two ends of the morphological spectrum for most languages have a mixture of inflection at final vowel (FV) and at T/A position. Most examples here suggest the big number of Bantu languages which mark tense and aspect at both T/A slot and at FV position. However, this does not mean that many Bantu languages mark tense and aspect at the pre-stem position of the verb.

Bantu languages, therefore, express tense and aspect either by inflection either in simple constructions or in compound constructions. The above examples show tense and aspect being inflectional categories which are marked either before the verb root or after. On the other hand, examples of compound constructions are very common in Swahili in which an auxiliary verb in form of ‘be’ (*kuwa*) is used before the main verb whereby a tense marker comes before “*kuwa*” and aspect marker immediately before the main verb. The following example from Nurse (2008:132) can help to explain this point more evidently.

4. *Tu-li-kuwa tu-me-imba*
 1P-past-be 1P-ANT-sing
 “We had sung”

This is also the case in Rukerebe in Muzale (1998) as shown below.

5. *Tu-a-li-ga* *n(i)-tu-gur-a*
 1P-Past-be-A A-1P-buy-A
 “We were buying”

Tense on its own, as Bantu verb system is concerned, is not only expressed grammatically but also lexically (Nurse, 2008 and Givón, 2001). Nurse (ibid) reports that many western Niger-Congo languages closely related to Bantu, carry time reference not by inflections, but by the use of time adverbials, aspectual verb forms or some combination of the two.

Some Bantu languages mark tense by tonal variations. In this case, tone is termed as a grammatical contrast in the T/A system. Again, in such cases, two constructions may seem morpho-syntactically similar, but in order to distinguish time location, tone must play a role alongside other formatives. The big deal of these languages is on tonal languages. For example, John Goldsmith¹⁰ did a comparative study of Lacustrine languages in terms of their tonal patterns. He discovered that in each of these languages a pattern of tone is spread over the stem of the verb, a pattern which is determined in part by the lexical tone (High or Low) of the verb radical, and in part by the tense of the verb as a whole.

Another example is reported in Ruhaya by Muzale (1998) who argues that the (plural) past relative form [a-bá-guz-**ire**] ‘those who bought’ contrasts with the singular past non-relative [a-ba-guz-**îre**] ‘he/she bought them’ (p.112). This does not

¹⁰Stem tone patterns of the lacustrine Bantu languages. John Goldsmith. University of Chicago

help to explain how tone can be used to contrast one category of tense or aspect from the other.

Kihore (2003) as cited in Hamad (2011) reports that Kiswahili has eight types of prefixes (formatives) as shown below:

Table 1: Swahili T/A Formatives

Tense	Affirmative	Negative
Past	<i>-li-</i>	<i>si-</i> (1SG)and <i>ha-</i> (for other persons)
Perfect	<i>-me-</i>	<i>-ja-</i>
Present	<i>-na-</i>	Suffix <i>-i</i>
Future	<i>-ta-</i>	<i>-ta-</i>
Habitual	<i>-hu-</i>	-suffix- <i>i</i>

Hamad (2011)

Few examples can help to elucidate the Swahili data above: For example, *alilima* (he/she cultivated) can be negated as “*hakulima* (he/she did no cultivate). The two forms for past, depending on polarity, can be accounted for as a means by which the studies of languages’ T/A systems need to focus on form, function and meaning (but forms and structures need to be looked at on one angle and meaning on the other angle).

Mreta (1998) is another study on Bantu tense and aspect systems. In his study of Chasu forms and meaning in affirmative constructions, he found out that tense in Chasu is an inflectional category marked morphologically in the verb as a fused single form (it occurs in forms or in combination although in different slots). Secondly, he discovered that the distinction between tense and aspect is possible

even in instances where the given forms combine T/A specifications. He also noted that the absolute tense distinctions do not operate in Chasu. Lastly, his findings indicated that morphological markers of T/A interact in an interesting manner with time adverbials to modify further the meaning.

The results given from the above studies are either similar in Leki or dissimilar since there is a divergence in structure between Bantu languages from the Proto-Bantu; hence the need for data from a specific language.

2.3.3 Remoteness distinctions in Bantu languages

Bantu languages are reported to have multiple degrees of remoteness expressed by the T/A system. These languages are referred to as graded tense systems where the tense morphology serves to track how far into the past or future an event occurs (Cable, 2013 and del Campo, 2014).

According to Nurse *et. al*,¹¹ Bantu languages are known for their multiplicity of past and future tense contrasts. This multiplicity is quantified by Nurse (2008:21) that, over 80% of Bantu languages have more than one division of past time; over 70% have two or three past tenses, 10% have four pasts, and 17% have a single past. For future, 56% have a single or no future, 41% have two or three (the majority, two), and a very small handful have four or doubtly five. Nurse (ibid) points out further that these divisions are based on cognitive approach.

¹¹Nurse, D., Rose, S. & Hewson, J. Aspect and Tense in Niger-Congo. Retrieved from <http://www.mun.ca/linguistics/nico/index.php> on 15 May 2014, 12:43pm

Examples from specific languages can help to elucidate this point. For example, in Pimbwe (M11) in Nurse (2008:91), the degree of remoteness in the past is as follows:

6. a) P3 *tw-a-li t -g d-ile* ‘we bought’ (remote)
- b) P2 (*tw-a-li*) *t -ka-g d-ile* ‘ditto (yesterday to last month)’
- c) P1 (*tw-a-ti-*) *t -g d-ile* ‘ditto (today)’

The same language above has three futures as exemplified below.

7. a) F3 *t -l -g l-anga* (we will buy (next month to infinity)’
- b) F2 *t -l -g l-a* (we will buy (tomorrow to next month)’
- c) F1 *t -k -g l-a* (we will buy (today)’ (p.91)

This situation indicates how the language’s T/A system offers materials for pointing at events in time in terms of their distance from the time of speaking. This pointing in time may be either forward from the time of speaking (future events), or backward (past) or simultaneous to the time of speaking (present). All these possibilities are the work of the mind in relation to the view of time in the material universe.

Cable¹² did a study on remoteness distinctions in the Tense-Aspect system of Kikuyu and found that Kikuyu distinguishes four grades of past tense and two grades of future tense. She, therefore, observed that languages’ tense system may diverge from the familiar three-way distinctions between past, present and future. She argues further that in languages whose tense systems make further obligatory distinctions within the realm of past and future tense systems, allegedly track not only whether the event occurs before or during or after the time of speech but also how remote the event is in time. This human linguistic capability grammatically indicating the

¹²Remoteness Distinctions in the Tense-Aspect System of Kikuyu by Seth Cable University of Massachusetts Amherst

distance in time may be accounted for by the fact that language system and human mind have certain subtle interaction.

Likewise, Botne (2012) did a study on Remoteness Distinctions in Tense and Aspect and made this observation: “A small but significant number of world’s languages have the capacity to express grammatically not only simple tense relations of past and future, but also finer distinctions indicating the distance or degree of remoteness from the deictic centre, typically the time of utterance.” But the capacity to grammatically express remoteness distinctions is the work of the mind. Hence, the mind, language system and the material universe track together in ensuring a particular expression of time.

Another study on remoteness distinctions in Bantu T/A systems was done by Toews¹³ (2009) specifically in Shona. The study was based on Reichenbach’s (1947) theory of tense but with new concepts of showing divergence of time location from the time of speaking (henceforth, precedence and subsequence). The study revealed that Shona has distinctive forms for remote past, recent past and future as in the examples below.

8. **Remote past:** *w -aka -famb -a*
 2SG –RP –walk –FV
 “You walked (some time ago).”

Recent past: *w -a -teng -a mu-cheru*
 2SG –RECP –buy –FV CL3-fruit
 “You (just recently) bought a fruit.”

¹³The two concepts “**precedence**” and “**subsequence**” were brought out by Carmela Toews (2009) in the article bearing the title: The Expression of Tense and Aspect in Shona, University of British Columbia.

(Remote) Future: *u -cha -famb -a*
 2SG –SUBS –walk -FV
 “You will walk.”

In these examples, one can find that the remote past morpheme is *-aka-*, the recent past morpheme is *-a-* and the future morpheme is *-cha-*. This implies that the language has formatives or structure developed depending on the speakers’ worldview about time distance.

Likewise, Kanijo (2012) did a study on the formatives of tense and aspect in the verbal constructions of Kinyamwezi. He discovered three temporal perspectives, namely, past, present and future, with various subcategories which in the current study are called time points. In Kinyamwezi, the past is reported to have three time points, namely remote past, recent past and immediate past while the future is divided into near future and remote future. He also identified only five aspectual categories namely inchoative, habitual, progressive, perfective and retrospective. The formatives for these T/A categories appear as either prefixes or suffixes. However, he does not indicate the cognitive component of these formatives.

Yuka (2014) did a descriptive study of tense and aspect in Lamnso¹⁴ in which he identified multiple degrees of remoteness; seven tenses (P3, P2, P1, P0, F1, F2, F3), and three aspectual categories for different tense categories. He concludes that Lamnso exhibits multiple time reference. However, he does not tell us how the human mind plays a role in expressing such multiplicity of time reference.

¹⁴A Bantu Language spoken in Cameroon and Nigeria.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This study on tense and aspect in Leki is built on two important theories, namely the cognitive theory by Gustave Guillaume (1883-1960) and the functional theory as reviewed in Lusekelo (2007) and Muzale (1998). The rationale for such a choice is based on the relevance of such theories on the T/A systems of natural languages. Since this study is meant to describe the T/A forms and structures in the language, and the degrees of remoteness speakers are able to locate time by using particular forms, it was seen important to use “integrative model¹⁵” in achieving such a goal. Mreta (1998) considers the use of multiple theories as an eclectic model of analysing or describing tense and aspect since it integrates multiple ideas, methods and principles into one model.

The above theories are reviewed in this chapter in terms of their principles and relevance in the study of tense and aspect in Leki.

2.4.1 The Guillaume’s cognitive theory

Gustave Guillaume (1883-1960) is a French linguist who came up with a theory of tense and aspect (Muzale 1998 and Lusekelo 2007). The theory accounts for the mental processes involved in the production and perception of time of a particular speech community. It looks at how speakers view the material universe in the temporal dimensions. Looking at tense and aspect system at the speaker’s perspective can help to prove the assumption that time location is the function of the mind of the speakers. According to Muzale (1998), language develops tense formatives depending on how speakers’ minds partition real time in the universe. It is

¹⁵In this model two theories are used to seek knowledge about the phenomena.

the mind of the speakers (and their culture) that makes one language unique from others.

2.4.1.1 Fundamental principles of the cognitive theory

There are several fundamental principles of the cognitive theory. The analysis of the hereafter principles is adopted from Lusekelo (2007) and Muzale (1998) as follows: One, there is a stratified organization of a language into systems and subsystems (phonology, morphology, syntax etc). These strata are said to be composite or intertwined (Lusekelo, *ibid*). This organization is the function of the mind. Two, there are three folds of human consciousness such as perception, memory, and imagination both pertaining to time (Hewson and Bubernik, 1997) as cited in Muzale (1998) and Lusekelo (2007). The perception dimension of the mind is concerned with current events, in this case, non-past tense; whereas, memory deals with events which precede speech time, in this case past tense and completive aspects, and imagination is the projection of all events which have not taken place but will take place later (future tense). Three, linguistic time is subjective, and it is created in a successive process of *chronogenesis*¹⁶ which is a mental process that involves the movement of the mind forwards (ascending) in imagination and backward (descending) in memory (Lusekelo, 2007).

2.4.1.2 The relevance of the cognitive theory

The rationale for the choice of this theory in this study is based on its relevance. Talking about tenses and aspects presupposes the element of time in relation to

¹⁶This is a Greek word made up of two words *chrono* means time and *genesis* means mental process, henceforth *chronogenesis* meaning mental process in relation to time.

events or actions, which are recorded in, or retrieved from the mind; this constitutes cognitive processing (Muzale, 1998). Locating time in terms of time infinity or remoteness, which is the distance from which an event is said to take place, is the function of the mind. Hence, the cognitive theory can help to account for how speakers are able to point at events using the present as the point of reference. The ability to locate time is a tacit knowledge that always involves the mental process, and language avails materials which bring about such possibilities for humankind.

2.4.2 The functional approach

The functional approach treats the formatives and other periphrases of the language functionally; this reflects how they work out in the system, taking into account their forms and the ternary categorizations of the entire time reference (hereafter referred to as universe time) (Muzale, 1998).

Nurse's (2008) book is based on functional approach to Bantu T/A system. In this, he justifies the concerns of his book: "It is primarily about how T/A functions in Bantu languages, not about formal theory" (p.10). Thus, the functional approach is important to the study of Bantu tenses and aspects. It can be used to seek answers for fundamental questions such as (i) what are the T/A formatives of the language? (ii) How do they work out in the system? (iii) How do they behave with other elements in the system? Many other related questions may be easily addressed by the functional approach.

2.4.2.1 The relevance of the approach to the study of Leki

In the study of Leki T/A system, the functional approach is useful in identifying and describing the functions of Leki T/A markers and how they interact with other systems in the language. It establishes the structural foundation which in turn can help to establish the relationship between language system and its users' mental capability to indicate events in terms of their distance from speech time.

2.4.3 A synthetic remark of the two theories

This study employed both cognitive and functional theories in the analysis of tense and aspect in Leki. It shows in detail how the language encodes tense and aspect from the time of speech event or the possible degrees of remoteness expressed by formatives and other related systems.

The cognitive and the functional theories were therefore combined into an integrative model from which an argument was established on the relationship between the language system and the cognitive components of a particular system. In this sense, this study looked at tense and aspectual forms and at how they are a means by which speakers can represent time in the material universe. For instance, we can easily see how time is viewed in terms of distance from the time of speaking and how each form or expression is purposefully selected by the speaker. In short, these two theories together were quite helpful to look at the language's T/A system at two angles, namely how language works out and how speakers utilize the system in communication.

2.5 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, we have reviewed previous studies on tense and aspect in Bantu languages. These studies have been useful since they have helped us to gain insight on tense and aspect systems and the way they operate in Bantu languages.

The reviewed studies on Bantu tense and aspect systems have built a foundation for the current study in terms of methodology, approaches and findings. However, these studies have some common characteristics. The first characteristic is that, they do not describe the relationship between the T/A forms or systems and the speakers' mental capability to utilize such forms. In other words, they look at tense and aspect as mere categories and not something that has to do with the speakers' view of time in the real world. The second characteristic (just for the sake of this study) is that, these studies deal with a list of languages of which Leki is not a part of it. Hence, the current study seeks to unearth information lacking in the reviewed studies.

In this chapter, we have also reviewed two important theories, namely the cognitive theory and the functional theory. We have argued that the cognitive theory can be taken to look at how speakers are able to locate time from their temporal position (speech time), whereas the functional theory is relevant in describing the forms of the language and how they interact with other elements to represent time.

Therefore, these two theories can be integrated into one model which can best explain the relationship between the linguistic system and speakers' mental representation of time in the real world. This theoretical aspect was also not addressed in the previous studies.

The next chapter, therefore, presents the methodological plan that was used to collect, analyse and present data.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section describes the design which is relevant to this study, methods and instruments of data collection, techniques of data collection, data analysis strategies and sampling procedures. In order to achieve the objectives previously stated, this section answers an important question of how the problem pre-stated can be solved to arrive at the desired findings.

3.2 Research Design

This study is descriptive in nature. The rationale for the choice of a descriptive design was to offer an in-depth description of the T/A system of the language and establish an argument on how language system reflects the speakers' mental representation of time in the material world (see Carroll, 1956). This decision is pertinent to our major aim, which is to document a particular part of the language's system for future use.

3.3 Data Collection

In order to have valid data, this study involved native speakers, who were brought up in the language environment, and have not been away from the linguistic area for more than ten years. There was also a compelling need to consult speakers who had fluency in the language for the same reason. Due to high language interaction in lakeshores, it was seen important for this study to work with inland informants (cf. 3.7.1). Therefore, elicitation methods and techniques were used to collect enough data for testing. In order to arrive to this end, oral texts, proverbs and sayings, written

documents and observable linguistic behaviours such as daily interactions were obtained from informants through various methods and techniques. These sources of data were categorized into two major groups, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from fieldwork and secondary data were obtained from the available written documents.

3.3.1 Methods/instruments of data collection

Below are the explanations given for the instruments used in data collection:

3.3.1.1 Interview

The study used both structured¹⁷ and unstructured interviews¹⁸. Structured Interview was conducted to respondents¹⁹ who could speak Kiswahili. The researcher prepared T/A constructions in Swahili (see appendix 1). The sentences were read loudly to the respondents and they were asked to supply responses in their own language. This method was successful since it gave room for the researcher and the respondents to discuss and clarify the sentences. It enabled the researcher to discover more issues than those in the listed questions. The responses were recorded for future reference.

Unstructured interview, on the other hand, was conducted in the field based on situations. The researcher asked informants questions depending on some situations in order to obtain their responses on how they refer to time closer or far from or to the moment of speaking. These questions also aimed at identifying the verb patterns.

¹⁷ In this kind of interview a list of questions are designed to ask the respondents (planned)

¹⁸ It is based on instantenous questions asked by the researcher (not planned)

¹⁹ The term respondents and informants will, at times, be used interchangeably to refer to native speakers with whom the researcher interacted in the field to obtain the desired data.

In achieving this goal, the questions asked were formed by using one verb, “*kutaá*” (to tap ie. some water) (see appendix 2).

The researcher also asked the respondents to list proverbs and to narrate stories in the language (appendix 4 and 5). The proverbs and stories were recorded by using a recording device. However, in some instances, the device could go out of power, and thus, note taking became desirable. Therefore, both written and oral information was collected through interview for further analysis.

3.3.1.2 Focus group discussion

The researcher conducted group discussion with informants. The informants were brought together into a classroom of a nearby primary school. The researcher read the Swahili T/A sentences before the informants and asked them to give equivalent sentences in their own language. This technique helped the researcher to find out similarities or differences in the response of the informants and make corrections. It was also meant to reveal other information that had not been obtained during personal interviews.

3.3.1.3 The role of introspection

Since the researcher is a native speaker of Leki, introspection also mattered in dealing with data obtained from other native speakers (Mreta, 1998). Besha (1985, p.23) recognizes the importance of introspection, but with some precautions. Her stand point is maintained in this statement: “It is obvious that we cannot completely rule out the role of introspection” (p.23). Likewise, Mreta (1998) considers introspection as an added advantage in eliciting linguistic data. Hence, with great

care, the researcher employed introspection technique to crosscheck the informants' responses and his understanding of the language.

3.4 Oral Data

Researchers in language structure put much effort in eliciting oral data from conversations in the natural environment of the language under study. Oral narratives and oral literature in general should be part of linguistic fieldworks since oral texts are good reservoirs of language systems, and they give first hand data if carefully elicited. With this knowledge in mind, the researcher collected oral narratives such as folktales- the story about *Mamvumwa the ogre* (appendix 5), and 40 proverbs and sayings (appendix 4).

Oral conversations were recorded by using strategies that control exaggerations of interactions in the natural settings. Natural interaction between the researcher and the old man, who was about 87 years old, was recorded. The old man narrated stories about witchcraft and his encounter with a witch one day. Another old man of 85 years of age narrated his life history from his birth.

This information was recorded in order to study verb patterns and adverbials. These patterns were taken for further analysis of the sentences in terms of tense and aspect. The patterns or paradigms were constructed for these sentences to identify the verb structure which in turn helped to identify the T/A forms. Oral data was also significant since they provided natural and contextual use of T/A systems which in turn helped to understand the semantic and phonetic components of those forms.

3.5 Techniques of Data Collection

During interviews and group discussions, the researcher took notes of key issues from participants' responses or inputs. This technique, though difficult to apply simultaneously with researcher's participation (even time consuming), was helpful since it enabled the researcher to participate fully and record instantaneous information. It was also used as an alternative way when the recording device was out of power.

The researcher recorded responses from informants through Smartphone (samsung Galaxy Grand) through its recording programme known as voice recorder. In order to achieve this, the researcher set the device in flight mode to avoid interfering calls. The recorded data were then transcribed in order to have the written materials for further data analysis.

3.6 Data Analysis Strategies

Data in different forms representing tense and aspect were analysed by common linguistic methods including morphological parsing which enabled the researcher to see what form represents a particular tense or aspect. In so doing, the researcher established patterns or paradigms for T/A categories. The similar patterns were grouped into one category. This procedure enabled the researcher to identify tense and aspect markers of the language. It was also useful in finding out the functions and distribution of these forms in the language's verbal system.

3.7 Sampling Procedures

3.7.1 Study area

This study was conducted in Nyango'mbe village which is found at the centre of Ukara Island in Ukerewe district. This village was chosen from the ten villages of the island because it was said by native speakers to be a home of original Leki. Other areas of the island are situated along the shores of Leki Victoria where there are mixed residents who conduct fishing activities and other businesses. In such a situation, language contact is very high, and this has a bearing on how lakeside residents use Leki. As we have seen in chapter one, lakeside Leki speakers tend to speak insular-Jita²⁰ and Kerewe in their daily communications. Nyang'ombe village, on the other hand, is not a residence of people from different ethnic groups. It is a home of *Bhanyango'ombe*²¹ and when an outsider comes to live in this village, he/she is compelled to speak pure Leki due to the linguafobic nature of this group.

3.7.2 Sampling technique

The researcher used purposive sampling to get prospective informants. This method enabled him to recruit informants who could give reliable information. To make the accessibility of informants much easier, snowball case sampling was used to recruit those informants. The researcher asked his research assistant (one of the village elders) to list the names of potential informants who could provide him (researcher) with the desired information. Then, the researcher consulted each of them. Each selected informant was successively asked to help to get other informants who could

²⁰ This is the dialect of Jita spoken in Ukerewe Island. It is reported to have potential differences from the Jita spoken in Musoma, Mara region (see Lukula, 1991).

²¹ This is a name for the native dwellers of the village. These people are considered by outsiders as primitive and conservative in their use of Leki and their culture in general.

have extra information that he/she did not have. This chain went on up to the last informant. This procedure was successful since the names mentioned by the first person were recursively mentioned by the subsequent informants. In turn, this ensured reliability and validity of the data.

3.7.3 Sample size

This study involved a total number of 10 informants aged between 18 and 90 years old. This sample size was seen important in order offer an in-depth description of the language's system. The sample size was also important since it was manageable. It was easy to make follow-ups and ensure close interactions with informants.

Age was also considered important in sample selection. The rationale for this age consideration was to obtain a group of speakers who had no questionable fluency in the language.

3.8 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, our main concern was to explain the methods, instruments and techniques of data collection. It also showed the kind or nature of the data obtained, the participants (informants) involved in this study, highlighting their key qualifications. It also dealt with sampling design and sample size and how data were analysed.

The next chapter deals with presentation, analysis and discussion of the findings produced by the methodological highlights above.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings obtained through different instruments and techniques as explained in chapter three. The first section describes the T/A forms in Leki, their functions, and distribution (how they interact with other elements of the verbal system to locate events). It is divided into two major sections, section 4.2 and section 4.3. The former describes the tense categories, and their forms, functions and distributions; whereas, the latter describes aspectual forms, their functions and distributions in the language's T/A system. It also examines how the T/A forms interact with other elements responsible for T/A formation. The last section describes the degree of remoteness distinction inherent in Leki T/A system.

4.2 Tense Forms, their Functions and Distribution

The major aim of this section is to describe the tense forms, their functions and distributions in the language's T/A system. Table 2 below presents the tense forms in Leki.

Table 2: Tense Forms in Leki

Tense category	AFF	NEG
Generic Present	- ϕ -	- ϕ -
Near Future	- <i>la</i> -	- ϕ -
Middle Future	- <i>ka...e</i>	- <i>ka...e</i>
Remote Future	- <i>li</i> -	- <i>li</i> -
Near Past	- ϕ -	- ϕ -
Middle Past	- <i>ma</i> -	- <i>ma</i> -
Remote Past	- ϕ - (+ <i>HT</i>)	- ϕ - (+ <i>HT</i>)
Indefinite Past	- <i>ka</i> (<i>after -ile</i>)	- <i>ka</i> (<i>after -ile</i>)
Historical Past	- <i>akwo</i>	- <i>akwo</i>

As shown in the table above, tense forms in Leki are similar in affirmative and negative constructions except for near future in which the formative [-la-] is deleted in negative construction as we shall see later.

Most of the formatives in this language appear in the pre-root position of the verb (in the T-position), with few exceptions. For instance, the formatives for indefinite past (IP) and historical past (HP) appear in the post-root position of the verb template, and hence constitute exceptional rules.

Tense formatives in Leki play different functions apart from indicating time. They are also used to express some nuances of meaning as we shall see in this section. More details about tense forms in Leki are given in the subsequent subsections.

4.2.1 The generic present forms [-Ø-]

The formative for generic present tense does no longer exist in the language. Functionally, it conveys general facts about situations and events in the universe. For example, there is a certain group among the *Bhaleki* people (a clan) called “*abhakungu*”. This group does not eat a cow. The sentence below was uttered by one informant to describe this group.

9. *Abhakúngu bha -ta -Ø -ku -ly- a ng'a ngasi*
 People AGR-NEG-T- INF-eat- FV cow female
 “*Abhakungu* do not eat a female cow.”

The addition of “*ku*-infinitive” to the main verb implies that the formative expresses a general fact (unspecified present).

This kind of tense is also commonly used in proverbs and sayings which express general facts as well. This is the case in example 10 below.

10. a) *Omusasi ká -∅-bhoy -w -a owábho*
 Madman AGR-T-tie -PASS -FV his own
 “A madman is tied by his own relative.”
- b) *Bha-∅-siny -a omulwáe*
 3PL-T-force-FV sick person
 They force a sick person.

4.2.2 Near future tense form [-la-]

This formative is used to refer to an event, which is going to take place later on the same day. In that sense, it is sometimes referred to as today’s future formative. This is illustrated by example 11 below.

11. *Mu-la -ly -a lèlo kèkolo*
 2PL-NF -eat -FV today evening
 “You are going to eat today evening”

In this sentence, the formative [-la-] is used either to give suggestion (suggestive mood) or permission (permissive mood). Hence, it has double functions- as a tense marker and as a mood marker. However, this poses a challenge in categorizing it as either a tense marker or a mood marker since there is another way speakers can express near future without expressing mood. Near future can simply be expressed by a combination of adverbials and present tense. For instance, when the speaker does not want to make suggestion or permit somebody, he/she tends to make a different construction by using generic present and a temporal adverbial “*lelo kekolo*” (today evening) as shown in the example below.

12. a) *Omwaana ká -∅ -ly -a obhusima lèlo kèkolo.*
 Child AGR -T -eat -FV Ugali today evening
 “The child shall eat some ugali today evening.”

- b) *Awe u -∅ -ly -a obhusima*
 You (SG) AGR -T -eat -FV ugali
 “You eat/shall eat some ugali.”

There is a difference between the two sentences. In 12 a), the formative is used to refer to near future affirmative, expressed by a combination of the formative *[-∅-]* and the temporal adverbials. Contrary, in 12 b), the formative alone is used to express a general fact, hence generic present (see also Muzale, 1998).

In negative polarity, the above formative is deleted, yet the concept of near future events is remarkable. The sentence in 13 below supports this idea.

13. *Lèlo kèkolo mu -ta -∅ -ly -á*
 Today evening 2PL –NEG –T -eat -FV
 “Today evening you should not eat.”

This sentence shows a subtle representation of time. Listeners can easily tell the time at which the event of eating should take place even if the formative is omitted. This is achieved through the use of a temporal adverbial “*lèlo kèkolo*”. This situation can be taken to argue that there is a compensatory strategy in the language system, especially when one element is omitted. This compensation is important to maintain the concept which could otherwise disappear with the omission of an important element.

4.2.3 Middle future forms *[-ka-e]*

This tense category takes the form of *[-ka-]* and *[-e]*. These formatives have also multiple functions, as tense markers and as mood markers. As a tense marker, this set of formatives is used to refer to events that will take place in the next day from

speech time and up to one year in the future. On the other hand, as a mood marker it is used to suggest that the action should be done, hence suggestive mood.

These formatives interact with the temporal adverbials such as *mutóndo* (tomorrow), *sholilyá* (the day after tomorrow) and so forth to specify time. The sentences in 14 a) and b) illustrate the points above.

14. a) ***Mutóndo*** *na -ka -ly -e shînzwi*
 Tomorrow 1SG –MF –eat –FV fish
 “Tomorrow I shall eat some fish.”
- b) ***Omwáka okwo kwisha*** *ná -ka -lim -e lisámbu lyáni*
 year that comes 1SG –MF –dig –FV farm my
 “Next year I shall dig my farm.”

In these two sentences, the forms [-ka-...-e] are used to mark future (middle future), but they alone do not specify time in the future unless they are used with temporal adverbials in bold type.

4.2.4 Remote future form [-li-]

The marker for remote future is [-li-]. It is used to express an event or action that will take place after a long time from speech time, usually beyond a year to infinite time.

15. a) A ***-li*** *-twál -a omukasi* b) A *-ta -li* *-twál -a mukasi*
 3SG –RF –marry –FV wife 3SG-NEG-RF-marry-FV wife
 “He will marry a wife.” “He will not marry a wife”

Apart from expressing tense, [-li-] is used to indicate mood. For instance, in a), the speaker is optimistic that somebody shall marry a wife, while in b) the speaker is pessimistic about the marriage.

In other languages like Rutara languages, remote future form marks events that will take place any time from tomorrow to up an indefinite future (Muzale 1998:187).

4.2.5 Generic future form [-ø-]

This formative is used to refer to events, which will take place in the future, but at unspecified time. Hence, the degree of remoteness of a particular event or action is unmarked unless the temporal adverbials are used with it. The sentences below are used as examples with which to prove this claim.

16. a) **Lélo** shi -ø -ta -á amanji
 Today 1PL -T -tap -FV water
 “Today we shall tap some water.”
- b) **Mutondo** shi -ø -ta -á amanji
 Tomorrow 1PL -T -tap -FV water
 “Tomorrow we shall tap some water.”

The sentences a) and b) are marked with a specified temporal location. Hence, the temporal markers in bold type interact with generic future formative to indicate future time specificity. This kind of future in this study is referred to as Generic future, since it does not show time specificity. This kind of specificity in time reference can also be exemplified in negative polarity in which *-ku-* infinitive is added before the root. The *-ku-* infinitive carries a sense of infiniteness of the formative. This is clearly evidenced in 17 below.

17. Shi -ta -ø -**ku** -ta -á manji
 1PL -NEG -T -INF -tap -FV water
 “We shall never tap any water.”

4.2.6 The near past tense form [-ø-]

The near past formative does no longer exist in the language possibly due to language change. It appears in the same shape in both negative and affirmative

constructions. The only difference is marked at the subject position of the verb template where the subject changes shape from negative to affirmative sentence transformation. The examples below illustrate this point.

18. a) *Ná -∅ -ly -a lèlo katóndo*
 1SG –T –eat –FV today morning
 “I ate today morning.”
- b) *Ni -tá -∅ -ly -a lélo katóndo*
 1SG –NEG-T –eat –FV today morning
 “I did not eat today morning.”

In 18 a), the subject marker takes the shape- “*na*” while in 18 b) it takes the shape- “*ni*”. This rule applies also in other persons except for third persons (see appendix 3).

Functionally, the formative represented as [-∅-] is basically used to refer to two situations. One, it is used when the speaker wants to start the action (seeking for permission or notifying), similar to incipient aspect. Two, it is used to refer to the action which was done recently and it is now completed. In this latter case, the event is extended to today night. Contrary to this latter case, in Johnson (1977) as cited in Muzale (1998) near past is used to refer to yesterday’s events and immediate past for today’s events.

4.2.7 The middle past form [-ma-]

This formative is used to refer to events which took place yesterday to at least one year back to the past (see example no. 19). In other Bantu languages like Rutara language group, it is referred to as near past (see Muzale, 1998). Look at the following Leki example.

19. *Heli a -ma -twál -a mwánzya wa Bhúma*
 Heli 3SG –MP –marry -FV daughter of Bhúma
 “Heli got married to Bhuma’s daughter.”

In 19 above, the formative [-*ma*-] refers to an event whose distance from speech time back to the past is one day (yesterday). It extends to at least one year back to the past.

The middle past formative obligatorily interacts with temporal adverbials to specify time. For example, in order to mark exact time, temporal adverbials in bold type below should be obligatorily used.

20. a) *Manyama a -má -lim -a líkolo*
 Manyama 3SG –MP –dig -FV yesterday
 “Manyama cultivated yesterday.”
- b) *Manyama a -má -lim -a esholilyâ.*
 Manyama 3SG –MP –dig -FV day before yesterday
 “Manyama cultivated the day before yesterday.”

4.2.8 The remote past form [-Ø-]

In Leki structure, remote past (RP) formative does no longer exist. Instead, it is now marked by high tone in the retrospective verb structure. For that case, if not carefully uttered, it can bring some confusion with the present retrospective aspect, or what other Bantuists consider as perfective. In Leki, the contrast between present retrospective aspect and remote past is clear both morphologically and semantically. Morphologically, retrospective is basically marked by [-*ile*] formative in the aspectual position of the verb template and low tone while remote past is marked by a null formative in the tense position of the verb template, -*ile* and high tone. This is illustrated by the examples in 21 a-b).

21. *Nà -∅ -ta -ìl -e amanji*
 1SG-T -tap -PERF-FV water
 “I have tapped some water”
- b) *Ná -∅ -ta -íl -e amanji*
 1SG -T -tap -PERF -FV water
 “I tapped some water (long time ago).”

In sentence 21 a), *-ile* marks present retrospective aspect while 21 b), refers to events which took place a long time ago (usually some years) from speech time.

In negative polarity, the subject marker takes the form of ‘C+i’, “C” standing for the consonant of the subject marker (SM) and ‘i’ being its vowel (except for third persons). This change in the subject marker is triggered by the addition of a negative marker *-ta-* as in the example below.

22. *Ni -tá -∅ -ta -íl -e manji*
 1SG -NEG -T -tap -PERF -FV water
 “I did not tap some water.”

In this example, the negative marker does not only affect the shape of the subject but also it triggers changes in tone assignment whereby the negator takes high tone.

4.2.9 The indefinite past form [-ka]

The formative [-ka] behaves like a habitual marker. The only difference is that it is added to the base after retrospective (perfective) marker *-ile*, hence [-ile+ka]. In most cases, it is used to quote words said by ancient people or elders.

23. *Abhakulu bh(a)-aik -il -e -ka ati...*
 Elders 3PL -say -PERF -FV -IP REL
 “The elders said that...”

In normal usage, the temporal adverbial “*kala*” (long ago) is reduplicated to show indefiniteness of a past event. This is the case in examples in 24 below.

24. a) *Makubhi a -som -el -e -ka kalakala eyo.*
 Makubhi 3SG –study –PERF-FV –IP long long DEM 3
 “Makubhi studied that very long time ago.”
- b) *Makubhi a -tá -som -el -e -ka kalakala eyo.*
 Makubhi 3SG –NEG –study –PERF –FV –IP long long DEM3
 “Makubhi did not study that very long time ago.”

In negative polarity, change can only be observed in the assignment of high tone to the negator, but the formative remains unaffected. This is the case in 24 b) above. Also the subject changes shape to express polarity. In negative polarity, it takes the shape C+i while in affirmative, it takes the shape C+a (except for third persons).

4.2.10 The historical past form [-akwo]

This is used to express the concept of ‘ever’ or ‘once’ in affirmative constructions, and ‘never’ in negative constructions. In most cases, it is used to narrate one’s past encounters. This formative is very tricky in that one can compare it with English sentence like “I have never gone to school” which in Leki it is used to refer to remote past events. Look at the examples below.

25. a) *Ná -som -akwo i -súle kala eyo*
 1SG –study –HP AUG –school long ago DEM3
 “I once went to school.”
- b) *Ni -tá -som -akwo i -súle kala eyo.*
 1SG –NEG –study –HP AUG –school long ago DEM3
 “I did not go to school that long ago (never)”

As per these examples, the formative [-*akwo*] is a suffix. In 25 a), the formative is used to express the concept of ‘once’ or ‘ever’ but in a remote time while in 25 b), it expresses the concept of ‘never’.

4.3 Aspectual Forms, their Functions and Distributions

In Leki, there are several aspectual categories which indicate the distribution of the situation within a certain time frame. Each aspectual formative has a unique morphological system and semantic notion depending on the way the speaker views time distribution in the material universe. Thus, morphologically, there are various forms and constructions that represent aspect. Some are simple systems while others are complex systems (ie. compound markers).

4.3.1 The retrospective (perfective) form [-*ile*]

According to Muzale (1998), the term retrospective is used to refer to an aspect which in some literature is called perfect. He advances the explanations from Hewson and Bubenik (1997:13) as follows:

Hewson and Bubenik state that they used the term retrospective instead of perfect in order to eliminate the confusion that normally arises between the terms perfect versus perfective. They insist that the two terms, perfect (which replace with retrospective) and perfective, represent two different aspects, and should therefore, be distinguished (p.144).

In Leki, retrospective aspect is used to refer to an event completed a short time before speech time. This aspectual category has different forms for different categories depending on the degree of remoteness by which an event is viewed to take place. These forms are shown in table 3 below:

Table 3: Forms for Retrospective Aspects

Categories	AFF-Forms	NEG-Forms
Present Retrospective	$-\phi\text{-...ile}$ (SM= C+a)	$-\phi\text{-...ku-INF}$ (SM= C+i)
Near Past Retrospective	$-li\text{-...ile}$	$-li\text{-...ku-INF}$
Middle Past Retrospective	$-ka\text{-...ile}$	$-ka\text{-...ku-INF}$
Near Future Retrospective	$-la\text{-...ile}$	$-la\text{-...ku-INF}$
Middle Future Retrospective	$-ka\text{-e...ile}$	$-ka\text{-e...ku-INF}$
Remote Future Retrospective	$-li\text{-...ile}$	$-li\text{-...ku-INF}$
Generic Future Retrospective	$-\phi\text{-...ile}$	$-\phi\text{-...ku-INF}$

Retrospective aspect is basically marked by compound markers. These compound markers are a combination of tense markers attached either before or after the root of the auxiliary or copula verb and [-ile] attached after the root of the main verb. Exceptionally, present retrospective exhibits a special distribution since it is marked by compound markers in a single main verb, whereby the tense marker is placed in the T-position while *-ile* is placed in the verb's final position (see 4.3.1.1 hereafter).

The formatives have two variants distinguished by polarity. In negative sentences, *-ile* is deleted and *ku*-infinitive is added to the main verb. This deletion is triggered by the addition of “*shali*” which is a negative marker (lexical element) which carries the notion of incomplete action.

In future time frame, the tense markers are added before the base of “*bha*” (be) copula verb while in past time frame they are added after “*li*” (a form of “be”). For more details about retrospective aspects, read the subsequent subsections.

4.3.1.1 The present retrospective form [-ile]

In Lekki, the use of [-ile] carries the notion of “already” in affirmative constructions, but it is omitted in negative constructions. This is made clear by the examples below.

- | | Affirmative | Negative |
|-----|---|---|
| 26. | a) <i>Ná -∅ -ta -ile amanji</i>
1SG -T -tap -PERF water
“I have already tapped some water.” | b) <i>Ni- sháli²² ku -ta -a amanji</i>
1SG -NEG INF -tap -FV water
“I have not yet tapped some water.” |

In 26 a), [-ile] formative is used to refer to a completed action at the time of speech. However, in negative construction in 26 b), the use of ‘-shali’ (not yet) holds the notion of an incompleted event. The negator “-shali” triggers changes such as the disappearance of [-ile] and placing “ku-infinitive” before the root. This disappearance of [-ile] in negative constructions is a mechanism to contrast a negative sentence from an affirmative one. Likewise, the subject takes the form of “C+i” except for third persons (see appendix 3).

4.3.1.2 Near past retrospective forms [-li...ile]

These formatives bring about a compound construction that refers to an event that was completed on the same speech day. It is marked by [-li] on the auxiliary verb (-‘li’ a form of ‘be’) and [-ile] on the aspect position of the main verb. This is shown in the examples below.

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 27. | a) <i>Ná -lí -li ná -∅ -ta -ile amanji</i>
1SG -AUX -Np 1SG -T -tap -PERF water
“I had already tapped some water (today).” |
| | b) <i>Ná -lí -li ni -sháli ku -ta -a manji</i>
1SG -AUX -Np 1SG -NEG INF -tap -FV water
“I had not yet tapped some water (today).” |

In this affirmative construction, a combination between the main verb and the auxiliary verb is used to mark completed events in the same speech day. Likewise,

²²This is a negative marker which is a combination of a persistive marker [-sha-] meaning ‘still’ and a copula verb ‘li’ which is a form of ‘be’; henceforth “still be” or “not yet”.

the sentences above carry the notion of precedence whereby an event described in the sentence preceded an implicit event.

In negative constructions, several changes take place in the structure in 27 b) above. These changes are found only in the main verb whereby the subject marker takes the form of ‘C+i’ except for third persons; ‘*shali*’ (not yet) negator is placed between the auxiliary verb and the main verb as an independent word, “*ku*-infinitive is added to the root and [-*ile*] is deleted. This is shown in 27 b) above.

4.3.1.3 The middle past retrospective forms [-ka...ile]

This refers to an event that had been completed yesterday, or a year back to the past. It also refers to an event that preceded the other in the past.

As a compound construction made up of two verbs, the main verb and the auxiliary verb, middle past retrospective form requires the attachment of [-*ka*] suffix to the auxiliary verb and [-*ile*] to the main verb. This is the case in 28 a). In negative constructions, [-*ile*] disappears and *ku*-infinitive is added to the main verb. This is the case in 28 b).

28. a) *Líkolo katóndo ná -li -ka na -ø -ta -íle amanji*
 Yesterday morning 1SG –AUX –MP 1SG –T –tap –PERF water
 “Yesterday morning I had already tapped some water.”
- b) *Líkolo katóndo ná -li -ka ni -shali ku -ta -a amanji.*
 Yesterday morning 1SG –AUX –MP 1SG –NEG INF-tap –FV water
 “Yesterday morning I had not yet tapped some water.”

4.3.1.4 Near future retrospective form [-la-...ile]

The concept of retrospective is also expressed in referring to near future events (today’s future). This situation of an event is expressed by a combination of two

verbs, the main verb and the auxiliary verb. The near future formative [-*la-*] is marked on a copula verb ‘*bha*’ (be), hence carrying tense while the perfective marker [-*ile*] is marked on the main verb’s FV-position, hence carrying aspect content. This is illustrated by example in 29 below.

29. *Ni -lá -bha nà -mu -bhwíl -íe (ile)*
 1SG –NF -be 1SG -3SG (OB) –tell -PERF
 “I will have already told him/her.”

In negative polarity, the negative marker ‘-*shali*’ (not yet) is placed between the main verb and the auxiliary verb and it carries the subject marker. In so doing, several changes take place, such as the disappearance of [-*ile*] formative after the use of the negator. This is so because the negator *sháli* (not yet) and the –*ile* formative share semantic content in that they both carry the notion of a completed event (retrospective). This is exemplified in 30 below.

30. *Ni –lá -bha ni -sháli ku -mu -bhwíl -a*
 SG –NF -be 1SG –NEG INF -3SG –tell -FV
 “I should have not yet told him (today)”

4.3.1.5 Middle future retrospective forms [-*ka...ile*]

This is marked by a compound construction whereby the auxiliary verb ‘*bha*’ (be) (in future becomes ‘*bhe*’) taking the middle future formative ‘*ka*’, and the main verb taking the perfective marker [-*ile*]. This is illustrated by the aid of the sentence below.

31. *Mutóndo ná -ka -bhe ná -ta -íle amanji.*
 Tomorrow 1SG –MF -be 1SG –tap -PERF water
 “Tomorrow I shall have already tapped some water.”

In this compound construction, we can see that aspect is very closer to the semantic content of the sentence than tense (see Nurse, 2008). In the example above, tense is marked in the auxiliary verb while aspect is marked in the main verb.

In negative constructions, [-*ile*] surrenders its functions to the negator [-*shali*] (not yet) which also carries the perfectuality of an event. In this case, therefore, the negator is placed in between the auxiliary verb and the main verb and it carries the subject marker as well. To complete this compensatory mechanism, *ku*-infinitive is added before the root of the main verb as in 32 below.

32. *Ná -ka -bhe ni -sháli ku -tâ -a amanji*
 1SG –MF -be 1SG -NEG INF –tap -FV water
 “I shall have not yet tapped some water.”

Hence, the negator “-*shali*” and “-*ile*” formative are in complementary distribution since they do not co-occur in a sentence.

The middle past retrospective form is used to refer to an event which will have been completed in the middle future before speech time. The tense marker ‘*ka*’ on the auxiliary verb sets out the time frame (middle future) whereas the [-*ile*] form shows the nature of the situation (completed).

4.3.1.6 Remote future retrospective form [-*li*-...*ile*]

This is used to refer to an event that will have been completed in the remote time (in the future). In expressing this situation, the remote future marker [-*li*-] is placed before the copula verb “*bha*” (be) and [-*ile*] on the main verb in affirmative constructions (see 33 a). But, in negative constructions, few changes do take place

i.e, the negator “-*shali*” stands as an independent word in between the copula verb and the main verb, and *ku*-infinitive marker is added before the main verb’s root. The use of “*shali*” (not yet) also causes the omission of the [-*ile*] formative (see 33 b below).

33. a) *Ní -li -bha ná -ta -íle amanji*
 1SG –RF -be 1SG –tap -PERF water
 “I shall have already tapped some water.”
- b) *Ní -li -bha ni -sháli ku -tâ -a manji*
 1SG –RF -be 1SG -NEG INF –tap -FV water
 “I shall have not yet tapped some water.”

These two sentences can also be used to express the concept of precedence. In this case, speakers have in mind a sense that the event they are referring to will have been preceded by an implicit event.

4.3.2 Progressive aspect formatives

Progressive aspect refers to an event that is in progress in relation to speech time. In Lekki, it is divided into six aspectual categories depending on a specific temporal category (the degree of remoteness of an event). The forms for these aspectual categories are shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Formatives for Progressive Aspects

Categories	AFF-forms	NEG-forms
Present progressive	- <i>e</i> -	- <i>e</i> -
Near Past Progressive	- <i>li...ni</i> -	- <i>li...ø</i> -
Middle Past Progressive	- <i>ka...ni</i> -	- <i>ka...ø</i> -
Near Future Progressive	- <i>la...ni</i> -	- <i>la...ø</i> -
Middle Future Progressive	- <i>ka-e...ni</i> -	- <i>ka-e...ø</i> -
Remote Future Progressive	- <i>li...ni</i> -	- <i>li...ø</i> -
Generic Future Progressive	- <i>ø...ni</i> -	- <i>ø...ø</i> -

Except for present progressive, progressive aspect is basically marked by compound markers as well. Thus, a sentence in progressive aspect is made up of the auxiliary verb and the main verb. Tense markers are placed in the auxiliary verb while aspectual markers are attached before the base of the main verb.

In negative constructions (right column of table 4 above), the progressive marker- [ni-] is deleted, and gives a way for compensatory rules to take place, such as the use of high tone to the negator- [ta]. A detailed description of progressive aspects is offered in the following subsections.

4.3.2.1 Present progressive form [-e-]

This is used to refer to an event taking place simultaneously to speech time. It is marked by a simple construction, in which [-e-] is placed before the root. However, this formative is difficult to identify since it is in most cases blurred by some morpho-phonemic processes. In this case, the vowel of the subject marker /a/ is deleted when it is followed by the progressive marker /e/. This unacceptable vowel sequence leads also to the lengthening of the progressive marker as shown in the examples below.

34. a) *N(a) -ée -som -a eshitabho*
 1SG -PROG -read -FV book
 “I am reading a book” (now).
 b) *shi -t(a) -ée -som -a eshitabho*
 1PL -NEG -PROG -read -FV book
 “We are not reading a book” (now).

In these examples, the vowel in brackets is deleted to block an unacceptable vowel sequence. In negative polarity, the same process of deletion takes place, particularly

after the addition of the negative marker [-ta-] as in 34 b). In 34 b), the addition of a negative marker [-ta-] has blocked the deletion of the vowel of the subject. Instead, the process of deletion and vowel lengthening has shifted to the negative marker.

4.3.2.2 Near past progressive forms [-li-...ni-]

This is used to refer to an event that was in progress not a long time from speech time (the same day). It is marked on both the main verb and the auxiliary verb. The form [-li-] is added to the auxiliary verb 'li' (a form of 'be') and carries the tense content (near past). In this, it becomes "líli" (was/were) and it is also attached with the subject marker. On the part of the main verb, the situative marker is added before the subject to mark the progressiveness of event. In this case, therefore, it functions as a progressive marker (similar to *-ing* in English). This is shown by the example below.

35. *Shâ -lí -li ni -shi -som -a eshitabho*
 1PL -be -Np PROG -1PL -read -FV book
 "We were reading a book (today)".

These formatives are self-sufficient since they do not need a temporal adverbial for near past (i.e *lèlo katóndo*) to communicate a near past progressive event. If these temporal adverbials are used, they are counted as optional elements.

In negative constructions, the progressive marker [-ni-] is deleted. This situation is proved by the example below.

36. *Shâ -lí -li ø -shi -tá -som -a eshitabho*
 1PL -be -Np PROG -1PL -NEG -read -FV book
 "We were not reading a book."

In this sentence, the omission of *[ni-]* progressive marker does not go away with the concept of progressiveness. This can be taken to argue that the marker *[-li]* after the auxiliary verb remains the only representation of progressiveness. In this language, if the speaker says “*shâlîli*” (we were), the idea of near past progressive crops into the mind prior to the completion of an expression. Therefore, a clear argument should be that near past progressive is marked by compound markers *[-li...ni-]*.

4.3.2.3 Middle past progressive forms *[-ka...ni]*

This is marked by the addition of *[-ka]* after the auxiliary verb ‘*li*’ (a form of ‘be’) and *[ni-]* situative marker before the root of the main verb (see 37 a). In negative constructions, *[ni-]* progressive or situative marker is deleted after the addition of negative marker *[-ta-]* (see 37 b).

37. a) *Shâ -li -ka ni -sh(i) -èny -a o-mupîla*
 1SG –be –MP PROG –1PL –play –FV AUG-ball
 “We were playing the ball” (yesterday).
- b) *Shâ -li -ka ø -shi -t(a) -èny -a o-mupîla*
 1SG –be –MP PROG –1PL –NEG –play –FV AUG-ball
 “We were not playing a ball” (yesterday).

Middle past progressive form is used to refer to an event that was in progress in the middle past. It can also be used to refer to remote past events. In this case, the only difference between middle past progressive and remote past progressive is made by temporal adverbials like “*kalâ*” (long ago) for remote past and “*lîkolo*” (yesterday) for middle past. This is shown in 38 a) and b).

38. a) *Lîkolo shâ -li -ka ni -sh(i) -èny -a o-mupîla*
 Yesterday 1PL –be –MP PROG –1PL –play –FV AUG-ball
 “Yesterday we were playing a ball.”

- b) *Kalá shâ-li -ka ni -sh(i)-èny -a o-mupíla*
 Long ago 1PL –be –MP PROG -1PL –play -FV AUG-ball
 “Long ago, we were playing a ball.”

Therefore, the compound markers [-ka...ni-] have double functions in that they mark middle past progressive and remote past progressive aspects.

4. 3.2.4 Near future progressive forms [-la-...ni-]

This is also formed by compound markers, whereby the near future marker [-la-] is placed before the auxiliary verb “*bha*’ (be) and a situative or progressive marker [ni-] is placed before the subject of the main verb. This is commonly observed in affirmative constructions in 39 a). In negative constructions (see 39 b), the progressive marker [ni-] is deleted as exemplified below.

39. a) *Mu -lá -bha ni -mu -som -a e-shitabho*
 2PL –NF –be PROG -2PL –read -FV AUG-book
 “You shall be reading a book” (today).
 b) *Mu -lá -bha ø -mu -tâ -som -a*
 2PL –NF –be PROG -2PL –NEG –read -FV
 “You should not be reading (today)”

The near future progressive formatives are used to refer to events that will be in progress in the same day of speech. They also function as a suggestive or permissive mood. This situation can be taken to argue that mood and tense interact in some ways in the TAM system (see Kiso, 2012:53). This can also be taken to argue that, functionally, the T/A forms play multiple functions in the language, and that, this multiple function is related to human imagination ability. As in other progressive aspects, the progressive marker [ni-] is deleted in negative constructions as in 39 b) above.

4.3.2.5 Generic future progressive forms [-ø-...ni]

This is used to refer to on-going events in the general future time. As we saw in subsection 4.2.5, generic future becomes specific in terms of time reference by the use of future time adverbials. It is marked by compound markers such as tense marker [-ø-] in the auxiliary verb and [ni-] progressive in the main verb's initial position (see 40 a) below). In negative constructions, the progressive marker [ni-] is deleted as in other progressive aspects without affecting the semantic component of the sentence. This is shown by the examples in 40 b) below.

40. a) *Mu -ø -bhá ni -mu -som -a*
 2PL -T -be PROG -2PL -study -FV
 "You should be studying" (i.e tomorrow)
- b) *Mu -ø -bha mu -tâ -som -a*
 2PL -T -be 2PL -NEG -study -FV
 "You should not be studying."

In 40 b), the omission of the progressive marker [ni-] on the main verb does not affect the marking of a progressive aspect since the concept is still available in the auxiliary verb.

4. 3.2.6 Middle future progressive forms [-ka-e...ni-]

This is made up of a compound construction between the main verb and the auxiliary verb (a copula verb). The tense marker [-ka-e] (middle future) is placed in the auxiliary verb whereas the progressive marker [ni-] (aspect) is marked on the main verb in affirmative constructions (see 41 a). In negative constructions, the progressive marker is deleted without affecting the concept of progression (see 41 b).

41. a) *Mutóndo ná -ka -bhe ni -ni -som -a e-shitabho*
 Tomorrow 1SG -MF -be PROG -1SG -read -FV AUG-book
 "Tomorrow I will be reading a book."

- b) *Mutóndo ná -ka -bhe ø -ni -tá -som -a e-shitabho*
 Tomorrow 1SG –T -be PROG 1SG–NEG -read -FV AUG-book
 “Tomorrow I will not be reading a book.”

It should also be noted from the above examples that the final vowel of the auxiliary verb should take the form of ‘e’ in order to mark middle future events.

The middle future formatives carry also the notion of precedence in which the expressed event is said to precede another event.

4.3.2.7 Remote future progressive forms [-li...ni-]

These are in the form of [-li...ni-]. The remote future marker is placed before the auxiliary verb, and the progressive marker [ni-] is placed before the root of the main verb in affirmative constructions. In negative constructions, the progressive marker [ni-] is deleted after the negator [-ta-].

42. a) *Ni -li -bha ni -ni -ly -a shínzwi*
 1SG –RF -be PROG -1SG –eat -FV fish (PL)
 “I shall be eating some fish.”
- b) *Ni -li -bha ø -ni -tá -ly -a shínzwi*
 1SG –RF -be PROG -1SG -NEG –eat -FV fish
 “I shall not be eating some fish.”

As we can see in the examples in 42 b), the progressive marker [ni-] has been omitted without affecting the semantic content of the sentence.

The remote future progressive formatives are used to refer to events that will be in progress in the remote time in the future.

4.3.3 Persistent aspect formatives

Persistent aspect refers to an event that takes place before speech time and holds continuously to the present (see Muzale, 1998; Nurse, 2008 and Walker, 2013). In Lekki, the formative for a persistent event is *[-sha-]*, but the constructions vary depending on the time frame at which an event is said to persist. Therefore, there are seven categories of persistent aspect, as explained in detail in the proceeding subsections. These categories differ both morphologically and semantically. For instance, morpho-syntactically, some are simple constructions while others are compound constructions. This is shown in table 5 below.

Table 5: Forms for Persistent Aspects

Categories	AFF-form	NEG-form
Present persistent	<i>-sha-</i>	<i>-sha-</i>
Near Past Persistent	<i>-li...-sha-</i>	<i>-li...-sha-</i>
Middle past persistent	<i>-ka...-sha-</i>	<i>-ka...-sha-</i>
Near Future Persistent	<i>-la-...-sha-</i>	<i>la-...-sha-</i>
Middle Future Persistent	<i>-ka-e...-sha-</i>	<i>-ka-e...-sha-</i>
Remote Future persistent	<i>-li-...-sha-</i>	<i>-li-...-sha-</i>
Generic Future Persistent	<i>-ø-...-sha-</i>	<i>-ø-...-sha-</i>

Except for present persistent aspect, other persistent aspects are marked by compound markers in two different ways: one, involves the addition of tense markers before the copula verb (as it is the case for future time frame), and two involves the addition of tense markers after the copula verb (as it is the case for past time frame).

In negative polarity, the addition of *[ta]*, a negative marker does not affect the A-marker since the two elements of the verb template are mutually inclusive. For more details, read the following subsections.

4.3.3.1 Present persistive form [-sha-]

This is used to refer to an event that is continuing from a short time before the time of speaking to the present time. It indicates the notion of “still” in affirmative constructions and “no longer” in negative constructions. This is exemplified below.

43. a) *Ni -shá -ta -á amanji*
 1SG –PER –tap –FV water
 “I am still tapping some water.”
- b) *Ni -ta -shá -ta -á amanji*
 1SG –NEG –PER –tap –FV water
 “I am no longer tapping some water”

In a simple construction such as in 43 a), the act of tapping is still taking place at the speech time but a short time has elapsed since its commencement. Something puzzling in negative construction as in 43 b) is the fact that it can also be used to express future commitment of the speaker. In this situation, the speaker pleads to never repeat the action apart from just affirming. This implies that the T/A markers are flexible in terms of temporal reference, and that flexibility is the work of the human mind.

4.3.3.2 Near past persistive forms [-li...-sha-]

This takes the form of [-li] attached after the auxiliary verb and [-sha-], persistive marker attached on the main verb. For that case, it is expressed by compound construction (compound markers). In order to have this compound construction, the pronominal elements (usually the subject of the main verb) should take the form of ‘C+a’ (except for third persons) in affirmative constructions, and C+i” in negative

constructions. ‘C’ here is the consonant segment of SM and ‘a/i’ is the vowel. This is exemplified in 44 a) below.

44. a) *Ná -lí -lí ni -shá -ta -á amanji*
 1SG –be –T 1SG –PER –tap –FV water
 “I was still tapping some water” (today).
- b) *Nâ -lí -lí ni -ta -shá -ta -á manji*
 1SG –be –T 1SG –NEG –PER –tap –FV water
 “I was no longer tapping some water.”

These examples can be taken to precisely argue that polarity also plays a role in modifying further the meanings of the T/A forms. In affirmative sentence 44 a) above, the notion of incompleted action is remarkable while in negative sentence 44 b) above, the action is described as completed.

4.3.3.3 Middle past persistive forms [-ka...-sha-]

As in other middle past aspects, the formative [-ka] referring to middle past events is attached to the copula verb as a suffix. On the other hand, the persistive marker [-sha-] appears in the main verb as a pre-root element (in T-position). Hence, middle past persistive constitutes a compound construction which amalgamates the auxiliary or copula verb and the main verb into a single sentence. This is shown in the examples below.

45. a) *Líkolo ná -lí -ka ni -shá -ta -á amanji*
 Yesterday 1SG –be –MP 1SG –PER –tap –FV water
 “Yesterday I was still tapping some water.”
- b) *Líkolo ná -lí -ka ni -ta -shá -ta -á manji*
 Yesterday 1SG –be –MP 1SG –NEG –PER –tap –FV water
 “Yesterday I was no longer tapping some water.”

As observed in the sentences above, the tense marker for middle past takes the form of [-*ka*] suffixed to the auxiliary verb, whereas the persistive marker is prefixed to the main verb in the tense position (T-position). In negative polarity, the addition of the negator [-*ta*-] does not trigger changes in the verb.

Middle past formatives are used to refer to events that were holding on at least yesterday when the conversation was taking place.

4.3.3.4 Near future persistive forms [-*la*-...-*sha*-]

This takes the form of [-*la*-], near future marker attached before the auxiliary verb “bha”. In this case, it sets out the time frame in which the situation of persistence can take place. The persistive marker [-*sha*-] is placed before the root of the main verb. Therefore, near future persistive forms constitute compound constructions. This is exemplified in 46 a)-b) below.

46. a) *Ni -lá -bha ni -shá -ta -á amanji*
 1SG –NF -be 1SG –PER –tap -FV water
 “I will still be tapping some water (today).”
- b) *Ni -lá -bha ni -ta -shá -ta -á amanji*
 1SG –NF -be 1SG –NEG –PER –tap -FV water
 “I will no longer be tapping some water.”

These sentences express the notion of “suggestion” in which the speaker is just suggesting the event or action to be done. However, if it is a normal affirmation, the speaker uses generic future plus a near future temporal adverbial “*lèlo kèkolo*” (today evening) as in 47 below.

47. *Lèlo kèkolo ni -∅ -bha ni -shá -ta -á amanji*
 Today evening 1SG –T -be 1SG –PER –tap -FV water
 “Today evening I shall still be tapping some water.”

In negative constructions as in 47 above, the negator *[-ta-]* does not affect the position of these formatives.

Functionally, near future persistive forms are used to refer to events that will persist in the same speech day, but it is basically used to suggest an event.

4.3.3.5 Generic future persistive form *[-ø-...-sha-]*

Basically, this aspectual category does not specify time in the future unless a temporal adverbial is used with generic future persistive formatives. Therefore, generic future persistive indicates the event that will hold on in the general future immediately from speech time.

Generic future persistive aspect is formed by a combination of generic future tense marker *[-ø-]* marked on the auxiliary verb and the persistive marker *[-sha-]* marked on the main verb (see 48 a). In negative constructions, the negator *[-ta-]* is added to the main verb, but it does not bring about morphological or phonological changes. It only changes the meaning from “still” to “no longer”. The following examples are illustrative of this point.

48. a) *Bha -ø -bhá bha -shá -ta -á amanji*
 3PL -T -be 3PL -PER -tap -FV water
 “‘They will be still tapping some water”
- b) *Bha -ø -bhá bha -ta -shá -ta -á amanji*
 3PL -T -be 3PL -NEG -PER -tap -FV water
 “‘They will no longer be tapping some water”

4.3.3.6 Middle future persistive forms [-ka-...-sha-]

In this aspectual category, the middle future form [-ka-] is placed before the auxiliary verb in the form of “*bhe*” (future ‘be’); whereas, the persistive marker [-sha-] is placed before the root of the main verb. Therefore, as in other aspectual categories, it is formed by compound markers, in which futurity is carried out by the auxiliary verb and aspectuality by the main verb (see 49 a).

49. *Mutóndo katóndo shá -ka -bhe shi -shá -ta -á amanji*
 Tomorrow morning 1PL –MF -be 1PL –PER –tap -FV water
 “Tomorrow morning, we shall still be tapping some water.”

It is also important to note that the subject marker changes shape when it is used in the auxiliary verb, especially in first and second persons. For instance, in 49 above, the second person plural of the auxiliary verb is “*sha*” while in the main verb it takes the form “*shi*”. This change is triggered by the addition of a persistive marker. Hence, the general rule is “C+a” (default), and “C+i” after the addition of persistive marker.

4.3.3.7 Remote future persistive forms [-li-...-sha-]

This is used to express events that shall persistently take place in the remote future. It is formed by compound markers such as [-li-], remote future (representing tense) which is placed before the auxiliary verb “*bha*”; whereas, [-sha-] (representing aspect) is placed in the main verb’s pre-root position. In negative polarity, the negative marker [-ta-] is added in the main verb and it does not trigger changes in the structure of the verb. The examples below can be taken to prove the points above.

50. a) *Myáka esho shisha ni -li -bha ni -shá -kol -a e-milimu*
 Years those come 1SG –RF -be 1SG –PER –do -FV AUG-job
 “Those next years, I will still be doing a job.”

b) *Myáka esho shísha ni -li -bha ni -ta -shá -kol -a e-
mílimu*
Years those come 1SG –RF -be 1SG –NEG –PER –do -FV AUG-job
“Those next years, I will no longer be doing a job.”

Apart from indicating time, these sentences reveal the speaker’s future expectations. In 50 a), the speaker is hopeful that he/she will still be doing a job while in 50 b), the speaker is hopeless that he/she will no longer be doing a job.

4.3.4 Habitual (HAB) aspect formatives

Habitual aspect refers to an action that is performed in a regular basis (Walker, 2013). In Lekwi, habitual aspect is marked by “-aka” instead of “-aga/-anga” which are habitual markers common in Bantu languages. This formative is used to refer to an event that is done in a repeated manner. It can be said to repeat at present, future or past time frames. Hence, the habitual aspect has several categories depending on time frames and time points. These can be described by the aid of the table below.

Table 6: Forms for Habitual Aspects

Categories	AFF-forms	NEG-forms
Habitual present	- ϕ -aka	- ϕ -ku-INF-aka
Past habitual	- ϕ -aka	- ϕ -aka
Near Future iterative	-la-aka	- ϕ -aka
Near future iterative	-ka-eka	-ka-eka
Remote Future habitual	-li-aka	-li-aka

Habitual aspect is basically marked by compound markers both appearing in the main verb. Except for near future (in which a tense marker is deleted after the addition of a negative marker), the addition of a negative marker [ta] does not affect

the distribution of the elements in the verb. A detailed description is offered in the subsections that follow.

4.3.4.1 Habitual present forms [-aka]

This takes the form of generic present (vast present) marker [- ϕ -] and habitual marker [-aka]. In negative constructions, the negative marker [-ta-] is used. In this case, however, it requires an infinitive marker [ku-]. Habitual present form interacts with the temporal adverbial “*bhuli*” (every) to mark a repeated action. This is illustrated by the examples below.

51. a) *sh(i) – ϕ –èny -aka omupíla bhuli lunakú*
 1PL –T –play –HAB ball every day
 “We play football every day.”

b) *shi –ta – ϕ – ku –èny -aka omupíla bhuli lunaku*
 1PL –NEG –T –INF –play –HAB ball every day
 “We do not play football every day.”

In the above examples, the formative [-aka] is self-sufficient since it does not necessarily require a temporal adverbial to complete the meaning. In that case, the temporal adverbial “*bhuli lunaku*” (every day) is optional element.

In negative polarity as in 51 b) above, the negator [-ta-] has necessitated the placing of infinitive marker before the root.

4.3.4.2 Remote past habitual form [-aka]

In this subcategory, the [-aka] formative is supported by other elements such as tone and change in shape of the pronominal elements (i.e personal pronouns functioning as subject markers). This is clear by the aid of the table below.

Table 7: Variants of Personal Pronouns in Habitual Aspect

Habitual present	Remote past habitual
ni- ‘I’	ná-
shi- ‘we’	shá-
u- ‘you’ (SG)	wá-
mu- ‘you’ (PL)	mwá
ka- ‘he/she’ (+human)	á-
bha- ‘they’ (+human)	bhá-

As shown in this table, in habitual present the vowel of SM is unpredictable unless the kind of person is known (see appendix 3).

The subject markers in table 7 above are contextualized by the aid of large units (i.e sentences) for both habitual present and habitual past. Look at the following examples.

Habitual Present	Past Habitual
52. <i>Nì -∅- som -àka</i>	<i>Ná -∅ - som -àka</i>
1SG –T –study -HAB	1SG –T –study -HAB
“I study (always)”	“I used to study (in the remote past)”

The data above show a good example of how the subject behaves with the T/A markers to express different situations. Without the change in shape of the subject markers, the sentences in two columns above could otherwise sound alike. In order to avoid further collision, high tone is assigned to subject markers in remote past habitual aspect.

In negative constructions, few changes can be observed i.e the first persons take the form of “C+i” while the second persons end in ‘u’. The third persons, on the other hand, remain in their basic form. Another change after the negator has been added is the shift of high tone to the negator itself. This is shown in the examples below.

53. a) *Ni -tá -∅ -som -aka* b) *U -tá -∅ -som -aka*
 1SG –NEG –T –study –HAB 2SG –NEG –T –study –HAB
 “I was not used to studying.” “You were not used to studying.”

In these sentences, we can see how the negator behaves with various kinds of personal pronouns. The negator, therefore, has attracted high tone to itself similar to English non-neutral suffixes which undergo auto-stress (see Katamba, 1993).

4.3.4.3 Near future habitual forms [-la-...aka]

This aspectual category uses [-la-] formative to represent near future time, and it occupies the tense position of the verb template, and [-aka] at the final vowel position to express a regular event or action. In negative constructions, the near future formative is deleted but it does not affect the meaning. This is clear by the examples below.

54. a) *Mu -lá -som -aka*
 2PL –NF –study –HAB
 “You will keep on studying (i.e as I come)
- b) *Mu -ta -∅ -som -aka*
 2PL –NEG –T –study –HAB
 “You will not keep on studying”

In these sentences, near future habitual markers are used to refer to events that show continuity. This has become a challenge in classifying it since it takes the same form for habitual, but it carries a different semantic meaning, not habitual. For instance, if

the sentence in 54 a) above is extended to include a relative clause the concept of continuity can be made clear. Look at the example below.

55. *Ni -ka -shèlèlw -a mu -lá -som -aka*
 1SG –COND –delay -FV 2PL -NF –study -HAB
 “If I come late, you should be studying.”

In uttering such a sentence, the speaker is expressing suggestion or permission. He /she is either suggesting or permitting the listeners to continue doing the action in his/her absence. Therefore, near future habitual form, apart from indicating modality, is specifically used to express a continuative event.

4.3.4.4 Middle future habitual forms [-ka-...aka]

Middle future habitual forms are used to refer to events which shall iterate in the middle future. It is marked by a combination of middle future formative [-ka-] placed at the tense position of the verb template and habitual [-aka] at the final vowel position. In middle future, the habitual marker takes the form “-eka”. This is shown in 56 a) below.

In negative constructions, the middle future formative [-ka-] is maintained. This demands another strategy such as changing the shape of the subject marker. This change in shape of the subject marker indicates that, elements in the verb template interact in some respects. This is exemplified in 56 b).

56. a) *Mwá -ka -som -eka*
 2PL –MF –study -HAB
 “You should be studying” (again and again)
- b) *Mu -tá -ka -som -eka*
 2PL –NEG –MF –study –HAB
 “You won’t be studying (again and again).”

In 56 a), the personal pronoun takes the form “*mwa*” while in b) it takes the form “*mu*”. Thus, these two subject markers are variants of the morpheme for second person plural.

On the other hand, meaning also changes from affirmative to negative transformation. For instance, in 56 a) above, the speaker may be suggesting but in 56 b), the speaker is just affirming. This shows good evidence in explaining the interaction between tense, mood and aspect in Bantu languages.

4.3.4.5 Remote future habitual forms [-li-...eka]

Remote future habitual forms are used to refer to events that will be done in a repeated manner in the remote future. It takes the forms [-*li*-] (remote future formative) placed at the tense position of the verb template and [-*aka*] (habitual marker) at the final vowel position. In negative constructions, the addition of a negative marker does not trigger morphological change in the verb. This is exemplified below.

57. a) *Mu -li -som -aka*
 2P L -RF -study -HAB
 “You will be studying” (again and again).
- b) *Mu -ta -li -som -aka*
 2PL -NEG -RF -study -HAB
 “You will not be studying (again and again).”

Another important observation for remote future habitual formative is its interaction with the temporal adverbial. These forms are self-sufficient in that they do not necessarily require the temporal adverbials to complete meaning.

4.3.5 Tone as a tense contrastive marker

As we have seen in the previous sections, tone plays a significant role in the T/A system of Leki and some Bantu languages. In Leki, this can be observed on the use of either high tone or low tone on different elements of the verb template. A good example is on how speakers are capable of distinguishing present retrospective from remote past tense. The sentences below can be taken to elucidate this point.

58. a) *Ná -∅ -ta -ile amanji*
 1SG -T -tap -PERF water
 “I have already tapped some water.”
- b) *Nà -∅ -ta -ile amanji*
 1SG -T -tap -PERF water
 “I tapped some water (remote past)”.

In sentence 58 a), high tone is assigned to some syllables to mark present retrospective aspect while in 58 b) low tone is used to mark remote past.

Tone is also used to recover a sense which could otherwise get lost by the deletion of a tense marker. We saw this situation prevailing in present progressive aspect whereby the deletion of SM-vowel was said to be triggered by the addition of *-e-* progressive marker after forming unacceptable vowel sequence (i.e /ae/). This can be illustrated by the following example.

59. *N(a) -é -ku -ly -a*
 1SG -PROG -INF-eat -FV
 “I am eating.”

In this sentence, /a/ in bracket is deleted before /e/ to avoid unacceptable vowel sequence. Alternatively, high tone is assigned to the progressive marker.

Tone also interacts with T/A forms to make contrast between habitual present and past habitual. This is marked on pronominal elements (personal pronouns) whereby high tone is assigned to past habitual personal pronouns while in habitual present, low tone is used (see subsection 4.3.4.2). In other Bantu languages, this is also a common case. For instance, Yuka (2012) has this to note: “Tense and aspect forms combine with distinctive tones...to derive a time reference structure whose cut-off points are sometimes fluid and non-rigid (p.251)”.

Therefore, there is a close interaction between a T/A system and the tonal system of the language. The tonal system functions as T/A contrastive element. In other words, tone can be considered as playing grammatical roles. Tone shift is opted for by speakers to recover the systems affected by morph-phonological processes (i.e. deletion).

4.4 Remoteness Distinctions in the T/A System

The mainstay of this section is on finding out how T/A system is used to locate temporal distance using the present as a point of departure to which other events can be anchored. In this section, T/A system is not looked at as mere tense-aspect categories (as it is in previous studies in chapter 2), but also as something that has to do with the speakers’ mental capabilities to express time in the material universe. This is shown in table 8 below.

Table 8: Tense Categories and the Degree of Remoteness Distinctions

Tense Category	Degree of Remoteness	TR-direction
Generic Present	At speech time (zero distance)	Around speech moment
Near Past Tense	The same speech day	Backward to the past

Middle Past Tense	Yesterday to 1 year	Backward to the past
Remote Past Tense	2 years and above	Backward to the past
Indefinite Past Tense	Infinite past (ancient past)	Backward to the past
Historical Past Tense	Immemorial time	Backward to the past
Near Future Tense	The same speech day	Forward to the future
Middle Future Tense	Tomorrow to 1 year	Forward to the future
Remote Future	2 years to infinite time	Forward to the future
Generic Future	Unspecified time	Forward to the future

As shown in the table above, Leki speakers view events or actions as occurring either at speech time (present), or before speech time (past tenses) or after speech time (future tenses). In this case, there are three folds of the human mind, namely perception, in which the human mind moves simultaneous to speech moment; memory, in which the human mind represents past and completed events, and imagination, in which the human mind represents unactualized events (future tense).

This situation can also be looked at on the way in which each tense category has its own forms and structures that distinguish it from other tense categories (no overlapping reference between the formatives, and if it happens, some morphological interventions should apply). These formatives and systems are developed depending on how speakers view time in the material universe.

The column in the middle (in table 8 above) indicates the time distance of an event from the present, while the left-most column indicates how the human mind moves with regard to temporal reference (henceforth, TR-direction). This direction is measured from speech moment.

It can also be observed that the temporal demarcation from one time point to another is sometimes fuzzy or loose since there is unclear marginal point from one time point

to another. We can only find it clearly in middle past and middle future as well as in near past and near future (more details about the degrees of remoteness are given in the subsequent sections).

As we saw in 4.2 and 4.3, tense is basically formed by single formatives while aspects are basically formed by compound markers. Single formatives, which appear either in the T-position or FV-position of the verb template reflect simple mental processes, while compound markers produce constructions that reflect complex mental processes to time reference.

4.4.1 The present as a deictic centre

As we saw in other studies, namely Dahl (1985), Comrie (1976), Mreta (1998) and Lindfors (2003), it is difficult to classify the “present” within the tense categories both morphologically and semantically since there is no other point in time from which an event can be located. In Leki, for instance, only the generic present (vast present) can be marked. Leki lacks formatives for specific tense to be referred to as “present tense”. This is also true in Chasu as Mreta (1998, p.146) observes that, “it is difficult to view the so called present tense in Chasu as a real tense, that is, as having to do primarily with deictic reference.” This difficulty exists also in Leki as it is illustrated by the example below.

60. a) *Lélo shi -ø -ly -á* b) *ímbwa i -ø -ly -a obhusima*
 Today 1PL -T-eat -FV Dog AGR(NCL9)-T -eat -FV ugali
 “Today we eat (later).” “A dog eats ugali.”

Sentence 60 a) is translated in English as near future tense due to the adverb “*lélo*”.

Without this adverb it is referred to as generic future. On the other hand, 60 b) refers

to general events in the present time. Likewise, Kiso (2012), referring to Comrie's (1995) definition of the present tense, has the following to say:

Comrie (1995) assumes a time line in his definition of tense as the grammaticalization of location in time. The present moment (or moment of speech) is marked in the middle of this time line and typically (at least for absolute, as opposed to relative tenses) constitutes the deictic centre that time reference in language refers to.

Therefore, it is important to note that the present tense is the universal (common in many languages) deictic centre from which events can be located. Speakers view events in the real universe by using speech time (present) as a point to which other events can be anchored (see also Lindfors, 2003). The speaker's mind moves either backward (to the past) or forward (to the future), or simultaneous to speech time.

Leki speakers are capable of indicating the distance from speech time when an event is said to take place. They do this by the use of formatives and periphrases that form a rule in their mind. Since some formatives are not self-sufficient in showing temporal distance, temporal adverbials are obligatorily used in place to specify time distance from speech time (present).

4.4.2 Remoteness distinctions through tense forms

4.4.2.1 Near past forms

Near past form interacts with the subject markers and the temporal adverbial “*lélo katóndo*” (today morning) to indicate two time distances prior to speech time: one is when the speaker is about to do the action, and two is when the speaker has done the

action some hours before speech time (the same speech day). In the first instance, near past formative is used to refer to a completed action, while in the second instance, an action is viewed as incompleted. Look at the examples below.

61. *Ná -ø -ly -a obhusima*
 1SG -T-eat -FV ugali
 “I eat/ate ugali” (today).

Therefore, the speaker uses this sentence to refer to an action which is about to take place at speech time (termed as incipient aspect). In this case, it is, therefore, used to express modality (i.e, permissive mood). On the other hand, the speaker can use it to refer to an event which has been completed few hours (the same speech day) from speech time. In this case, it can be equated to anterior aspect which is common in Bantu languages (see Nurse, 2008), but in Leki it has no aspectual characteristics. The two instances in common, can be taken to argue that a single formative can represent multiple temporal situations in the universe.

Therefore, speakers view the concept of near as not necessarily taking place the day before today, unlike in Swahili sentence below.

62. *Ni -li -kwend -a shule -ni jana*
 1SG -past -go -FV school -LOC yesterday
 “I went to school yesterday.”

In Swahili, therefore, past tense begins from yesterday back to the past time. In Leki, there is another time point before yesterday called near past tense. For Leki speakers, past begins from today back to the past. For instance, near past formative in Leki is also used to refer to events which took place last night. This possibility is achieved by the use of temporal adverbial as in 63 below.

63. *Ná -ø -sh -a ku -sule lélo mú-ngeta*
 1SG -T -go -FV LOC -school today LOC-night
 “I went to school today night.”

Thus, in this language any event that took place from yesterday and sometimes back in the past is no longer near past, but it can be either middle past tense or remote past tense. In the example below, the act of eating ugali is said to take place today night after the omission of “*lélo*” (today).

64. *Mú -ngeta shá -ø -ly -a obhusima*
 LOC -night 1PL -T -eat -FV ugali
 “We ate ugali at night (today).”

This event is viewed to take place today even when the adverbial for today is not mentioned. Therefore, near past event is viewed as a past event closer to the speech time. This functional system can be taken to argue that, the human mind plays certain calculation of time distance prior to utterance.

4.4.2.2 Middle past tense

The formative *[-ma-]*, as we saw in the previous section is used to refer to middle past events. The concept of middle past reflects how Leki speakers view this time. It represents all events that span from yesterday to sometimes in the past and it precedes remote past events. Look at the example below.

65. *Heli a -má -twal -a mwanzia wa Bhúma*
 Heli 3SG -MP -marry -FV daughter of Bhúma
 “Heli got married to Bhuma’s daughter.”

In this sentence, the formative *[-ma-]* refers to an event which took place not a long time in the past from yesterday. Here, the speaker implies that the event is still memorable at speech time. In this situation, we can find that the distance of an event

from speech time back to the past is measured by the criterion of memory-whether an event is still memorable in the speaker's mind, or it has faded out and seems far from the present. This subconscious knowledge is common to Leki speakers.

In order to refer to the exact point in time, the speaker uses temporal adverbials as shown in the example below.

66. **Líkolo** *Heli a -ma -twál -a mwanzia wa Bhúma*
 Yesterday Heli 3SG –MP –marry –FV daughter of Bhuma
 “Yesterday Heli got married to Bhuma’s daughter.”

In sentence 66 above, the temporal adverbial in bold type specifies the middle past event, in which an event is viewed to take place one day from speech time. This situation indicates how the mental system works out in relation to temporal reference. The speaker has multiple options to make prior to communication.

4.4.2.3 Remote past tense

As we saw earlier, the remote past formative is used to refer to events which took place a long time in the past (at least from two years), but the event is no longer memorable in the speaker's mind. In other words, the event has ceased for a long period of time in the speaker's mind.

In this case, the event is viewed to take place in the remote time in the past, hence very far from speech time. In order to refer to this kind of event, the speaker uses a low tone on a sentence which would otherwise be regarded as present retrospective, as in the example below:

67. *Nà -ø -ta -ile amanji kalá*
 1SG –T –tap –PERF water long ago
 “Long ago I tapped some water.”

In this sentence, there is no exact time when water was tapped. The speaker bothers only to indicate how remote the event is in relation to speech time. Therefore, the distance from when the event is said to have taken place and when the conversations are taking place is a couple of years. This event seems to be too far from speech time such that it is no longer memorable.

4.4.2.4 Indefinite past tense (IP)

As we saw in the previous section, the form *[-ka]* added after perfective “-ile” is used to refer to an event which took place in a more remote past and it has remained a historical fact. Hence it spans from remote past to infinite time (it can also be regarded as ancient past).

Therefore, this tense category is mostly used to refer to what ancient people said which is still factual to the present. This is shown in the following relative clause.

68. *Abhakulu bhá kala bha -(a)ik -íle -ka ati...*
 Old of long ago 3PL –say –PERF –IP that
 “The ancestors said that...”

In this sentence, reference is made to an infinite time in the past. The speaker implies that he/she was not yet born when the action was done, and that the one who said is no longer on earth at the conversing time.

Thus, indefinite past formatives in Leki involves a complex use of the formatives such as “-ile” perfective and “-ka”. Leki speakers have an idea of a more remote event prior to uttering a particular structure. In view of this, one can argue that language system is related to the worldview of the speakers of a particular speech community (Carroll, 1956).

4.4.2.5 Historical past tense

This refers to events which took place once in the past (not in a regular basis). This means that the speaker uses this form to refer to the past experience. The distance from speech time to the past for this tense is somewhat shorter than indefinite past. Hence, it follows somewhere between indefinite past and remote past. This is exemplified in the sentence below.

69. *Ná -som -akwo isúle*
 1SG –study -HP school
 “I once schooled.”

In this sentence, the speaker wanted to say that he/she once went to school but time not specified. It has remained a history in the speaker’s mind.

4.4.2.6 Near future tense

In this tense category, the speaker uses the formative *[-la-]* to suggest the occurrence of an event or action the same day of speech. Hence, it carries the notion of mood apart from indicating time. Time distance from the conversing time is measured in hours (the same day), or any time before tomorrow. In other words, it expresses the concept of “soon” and “later” as in 70 below;

70. *Mu -lá -ly -a ebhilyó*
 2PL –NF –eat -FV food
 “You should eat some food.”

In this sentence, the speaker is suggesting the action to be done later; hence, the event is viewed to be near to speech time. In this case, the speaker’s mind moves forward from the present to an event that shall take place the same speech day.

4.4.2.7 Middle future tense

In this future tense category, the speaker uses the formative [-ka-] to refer to an event that shall take place tomorrow to at least one year. Observe the example below.

71. *Mutóndo mu -ka -ly -é shínzwi*
 Tomorrow 2PL –MF –eat –FV fish
 “Tomorrow you should eat some fish.”

Prior to uttering this sentence, the speaker has an idea of tomorrow. He/she implies that an event has not taken place (unactualized), and it is likely to take place tomorrow (next day). Hence, the time distance of this event from speech time is one day.

On the other hand, this distance in time can be extended to the maximum of one year. This is achieved by the use of temporal adverbial “*omwáka okwo kwisha*” (the coming year) in the sentence below.

72. ***Omwáka okwo ku*** *-isha shá -ka -ly -é íng’a*
 Year that AGR(NCL3) -come 1PL –MF –eat –FV cow
 “Next year we shall eat a cow.”

In this sentence, the temporal adverbial in bold type carries the concept of “come” which expresses a future event, and hence reflects the speakers’ worldview about time. It is used to specify that an action of eating will take place one year from speech time.

4.4.2.8 Remote future tense

The formative [-li-] is used to refer to an event that is very distant (very far) from speech time. Mental reference moves forward from speech time to an event whose occurrence will be beyond one year to an infinite time. For instance, in uttering the

sentence in 73 below, the speaker has in mind an event expected to take place at a long period of time from the conversing time.

73. *Ni -li -bhá mu-níibhi*
 1SG –RF -be NCL1-rich
 “I shall become rich.”

In most cases, remote future tense is used to express future expectations or hopes, but those which represent long term plans.

4.4.2.9 Generic future tense

As we saw in section 4.3.1, this expresses the general future. This means that it does not specify time distance in the future when an event is purported to take place. It becomes specific only when future temporal adverbials are used with the formative (see 74 below).

Hence, in terms of temporal distance from speech time to the predicted event, generic future (vast future) tense has its default reference in that it refers to any event that will take place immediately after speech time (including near future) and few days to the future. Consider the following examples.

74. a) *Shi -ø -ly -á* b) *Lélo shi -ø -ly -á*
 2PL –T –eat -FV Today 1PL –T –eat -FV
 “We eat (any time from now). “Today we shall eat”
- c) *Mutóndo shi -ø -ly -á*
 Tomorrow 1PL –T –eat -FV
 “Tomorrow we shall eat.”

In 74 a), an event is expected to take place any time from the present, hence unspecified time point in the future ; whereas, in 74 b) an event is said to take place

later (the same day), hence similar to near future tense. Contrary, in 74 c), generic future formative refers to an event that will take place the next day.

All these possibilities are the product of the mind in regard to temporal deixis. The speaker is capable of choosing formatives and structures that will best suit his/her communicative demands. Hence, the formatives and systems are the reflection of how the human mind partitions time in the material universe (see Muzale, 1998).

4.4.3 Remoteness distinctions through aspectual formatives

As we saw in the previous section, most aspectual categories in Leki are made up of compound constructions whereby aspect is marked on the main verb and tense is marked on the auxiliary verb or copula verb. Therefore, within the same sentence, we have tense and aspect. This situation represents how the human mind works out in a complex way with regard to temporal reference. The speaker has more than one concept about events, the first one is the time point or time frame in which an event is said to take place and the second one is the nature of an event (i.e completed, repeated, in progress etc). This situation is explained in detail in the following subsections.

4.4.3.1 Retrospective aspect and remoteness distinctions

As we saw in the previous section, retrospective aspect in Leki is used to refer to completed events at the time of speaking, and that this has various categories depending on how remote is the event when it is said to be completed. For instance, in present retrospective, an event is viewed as completed a short time before the conversing time (see 75).

75. *Ná -ø -ta -íle amanji*
 1SG –T –tap –PERF water
 “I have already tapped some water.”

Contrary, in near past retrospective, an event is viewed to take place the same day, was completed at speech time. This concept is already built in the speaker prior to the choice of the formatives or structure. Look at the following example.

76. *Anye ná -li -li ná -som -éle eshitabhó*
 I 1SG –be –Np 1SG –study –PERF book
 “I had already read a book (today)”

In uttering this sentence, the speaker has in mind a completed situation, completed the same speech day.

On the other hand, in middle past retrospective, the speaker has in mind an event that took place yesterday or sometimes in the past, meanwhile representing a completed situation. This can be observed in the example below;

77. *Líkolo ná -li -ka ná -ta -íle amanji*
 Yesterday 1SG –be –MP 1SG –tap –PERF water
 “Yesterday I had already tapped some water.”

The speaker has also the concept of precedence of an event prior to uttering this sentence. For instance, in the example above the act of tapping some water preceded an implied event. This implied event is contextually known by the interlocutors.

In future retrospective, on the other hand, the reference moves forward from speech time. In this category, there are three temporal points referred to by the verbal system, namely near future, middle future and remote future. In near future retrospective, an event is said to be completed later from speech time (the same day) (see 78 a) while in middle future retrospective, an event is viewed as completed at

least one day from speech time (see 78 b). Unlike the above future categories, in remote future retrospective, an event is said to be completed many imaginable years to an infinite future (see 78 c).

78. a) *Ni -lá -bha ná -mu -bwíl -íe (ile)*
 1SG –NF -be 1SG -3SG(OBJ) –tell -PERF (imbricated form)
 “I shall have already told him/her (today).
- b) *Ná -ka -bhe ná -mu -bhwíl -ie*
 1SG –MF -be 1SG -3SG(OBJ) –tell -PERF
 “I shall have already told him (i.e tomorrow)
- c) *Ni -li -bhá na -mu -bhwíl -ie*
 1SG –RF -be 1SG -3SG(OBJ) –tell -PERF
 “I shall have already told him/her (i.e two years)

The formatives for the above sentences differ, and this difference can be taken to argue that each T/A category has its own formatives and structures that represent a specific location of time in the material universe. These temporal systems are stored and retrieved from the mind (see Muzale, 1998).

4.4.3.2 Progressive aspect and remoteness distinctions

In progressive aspect, the human mind moves either forward (ascending) or backward (descending) in a complex way. The speaker has two basic concepts simultaneously, one being the time frame in which an event is said to progress, and two being the progressiveness of a particular event. This mental system is reflected by the language’s structure.

In present progressive, the formative is used to refer to an event that is in progress simultaneous to speech time. Hence, an event is said to co-occur with speech time (see 79 a). On the other hand, in near past progressive aspect, the speaker views an

event to be in progress some hours (not beyond speech day). In English, it can be translated equally to past progressive (see glossing in 79 b). In middle past progressive, the formative refers to an event which was in progress at least one day before speech (see 79 c) and extends to remote time (see 79 d).

79. a) *Sh (a) –é -som -a eshitabho*
 1PL -PROG –read -FV book
 “We are reading a book.”
- b) *Shá –lí -li ni -shi -som -a ebhitabho*
 1PL –be -Np PROG -1PL –read -FV book
 “We were reading a book (today).”
- c) *Líkolo shá –li -ka ni -shi -som -a eshitabho*
 Yesterday 1PL –be -MP PROG -1PL –read -FV book
 “Yesterday we were reading a book.”
- d) *Kalá hao shá -li -ka ni -shi -som -a ebhitabho*
 Long ago DEM 1PL –be -MP PROG -1PL –read –FV book
 “In the long past we were reading a book.”

In these sentences, the progressiveness of an event is viewed at different time points in relation to speech time. These different time points are structurally and mentally distinguishable.

On the other hand, the situation of progression of an event can be viewed forward from speech time (future). This direction of time reference has three time points, namely near future progressive, middle future progressive and remote future progressive aspects. In near future progressive, an event is expected to take place today and it will be in progress (see 80 a). Any event in progress at least one day from speech time is considered as middle future (see 80 b), while the event viewed to be in progress at least two years from speech time is referred to as remote future progressive (see 80 c).

80. a) *Shi -lá -bha ni -shi -ly -á*
 1PL –NF -be PROG -1PL –eat -FV
 “We shall be eating (today future)”
- b) *Shá -ka -bhe ni -shi -ly -á*
 1PL –MF -be PROG -1PL –eat -FV
 “We shall be eating (i.e tomorrow).”
- c) *Shi -li -bhá ni -shi -ly -á*
 1PL –RF -be PROG -1PL –eat -FV
 “We shall be eating (in remote time).”

Prior to uttering these sentences, the speaker’s mind moves forward in a complex manner. The speaker has the concept of a specific time point (measured from the present) and the progressiveness of a particular event reflected in the T/A system.

4.4.3.3 Persistent aspect and remoteness distinctions

This aspectual category expresses a sense of imperfection of an event to the present. An event is viewed to hold on from a non-present time to the present time (see also Muzale, 1998). Hence, persistent aspect in Leki involves a complex mental movement (in referring to time) either forward or backward from speech time, but the event is said to take place in a persisting manner. The persisting nature of the event is related to the perception ability of the speakers’ mind.

In present persistent, an event is viewed as persisting at present (see 81 a). In other words, the speaker sees an event continuing at speech time, but it started a short time before speech. Whereas, in near past persistent, the speaker views a completed event the same day of speech but it was in persistence (see 81 b). On the other hand, in middle past persistent an event is said to hold on at least one day before speech time

(see 81 c). Lastly, in remote past persistive an event is viewed to persist in the remote past (see 81 d).

81. a) *Ni -shá -som -a eshitabho*
 1SG –PER –read –FV book
 “I am still reading a book”
- b) *Ná -lí -li ni -sha -som -a eshitabho*
 1SG –be -Np 1SG –PER –read -FV book
 “I was still reading a book (today).”
- c) *Ná -li -ka ni -shá -som -a eshitabho*
 1SG –be -MP 1SG –PER –read -FV book
 “I was still reading a book (i.e yesterday)”
- d) *Kala hao ná -li -ka ni -shá -som -a eshitabho*
 Long ago DEM 1SG –be -MP 1SG –PER –read -FV book
 “That long past I was still reading a book”

As per 81 d), middle past persistive formative has been extended to refer to remote past events. This is possible by the use of temporal adverbial and demonstrative “*kalá hao*”.

Apart from moving backward or simultaneously to speech time, the speaker’s mind can move forward to refer to events subsequent to speech time. The distance by which the speaker’s mind moves forward is measured at three time points, namely near future, middle future and remote future. In near future persistive, the formative is used to refer to an event that will occur persistently few hours from speech time (see 82 a), whereas in middle future persistive an event is said to hold on at least one day from speech day (see 82 b). Lastly, in remote future an event is viewed as persistive a long time from speech time (above a year) (see 82 c).

82. a) *Shi -lá -bha shi -shá -som -a eshitabho*
 1PL-NF-be 1PL –PER –read -FV book

“We should be still reading a book (today)

b) *Shá -ka -bhe shi-shá -som -a eshitabho*
 1PL-MF-be 1PL-PER-read -FV book
 “We shall still be reading a book (i.e tomorrow)”

c) *Shi -li -bhá shi -shá -som -a eshitabho*
 1PL-RF-be 1PL-PER-read -FV book
 “We shall still be reading a book (i.e two years)”

Therefore, in future persistive, speakers see three degrees of remoteness in regard to temporal reference. This is a complex mental partition of time inherent in Leki speech community.

4.4.3.4 Habitual aspects and temporal remoteness distinctions

In habitual aspect, an event is viewed as repetitive or iterative either at speech time, or before speech time, or after speech time. For instance, in habitual present an action is viewed as being done severally at the present time (see 83 a) while in past habitual (as in 83 b), an event is viewed as repeated in the remote past. In this case, near past and middle past are excluded. This exclusion is due to the fact that these time points are viewed as short durations; hence it is impossible for an event to take place severally.

83.	a) <i>Shi -ø -ly -aka</i> 1PL -T -eat -HAB “We eat (always)”	b) <i>shá -ø -ly -aka</i> 1PL -T -eat -HAB “We used to eat” (in remote past)
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In 83 a), an event occurs in a repeated manner at the time of speaking while in 83 b), an event is viewed to take place as a routine in a remote past but it is no longer taking place at present.

When the speaker's mind moves forward, three time points are marked, namely near future, middle future and remote future. In near future, an event is looked at as iterating a short time from speech time (see 84 a) while in middle future, an event is looked at as either iterative (to show precedence) or occurring severally at least one day from speech time (see 84 b). But, in remote future habitual, an event is viewed as repeating in the remote time in the future (above two years) (see 84 c).

84. a) *Shi -lá -ly -aka* b) *Shá -ka -ly -eka*
 1PL -NF -eat -HAB 1PL -MF -eat -HAB
 “We should be eating” “We shall be eating” (tomorrow)
- c) *Shi -li -ly -áka*
 1PL -RF -eat -HAB
 “We shall be eating” (again and again)

The English translation of these sentences produces a progressive event. However, in Lekwi it refers to an event that occurs now and again. But, in terms of temporal distance, these sentences refer to different time points such as the same day, tomorrow to one year and above two years.

4.5 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, our major concern was on identifying the tense and aspect forms of the language, their functions and distributions in the T/A system. It was found out that tense is marked basically by single markers placed either in the T-position or in the FV-position of the verb template (cf section 4.2). Aspect, on the other hand, is formed by compound markers placed in copula verbs and/or in main verbs (cf 4.3).

Additionally, we saw that, these forms interact with other elements (i.e., subject markers, tone, negative markers and temporal adverbials) to mark events or situations in the material universe.

In 4.4, the major concern was on how these forms and systems are used to indicate how far the events are viewed to take place from the conversing time, and how the human mind works out with regard to temporal reference. We have argued that there is a subtle relationship between the language's T/A system and the speakers' view of time in the real universe.

Therefore, the mainstay of the next chapter shall be on giving the summary and recommendations of the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

5.2 Summary of the Major Findings

The findings of the study indicate that there is a multiplicity of T/A formatives in Leki. Each tense/ aspect category has its own formatives or system, a situation which indicates that there is no overlap between T/A categories.

In all the tense categories, the findings revealed that some categories use null morphemes marked in the T-position (i.e near Past, Near Future and Generic present and Future), while others are marked at the final vowel position (i.e historical past and indefinite past). Thus, basically, tense in Leki is marked at the T-position of the verb template as simple constructions. Aspect, on the other hand, is basically marked in the compound constructions, whereby the tense markers appear in the auxiliary or copula verbs while aspectual markers are placed in the main verb.

The findings revealed also that, the T/A system interacts with other elements in referring to time. These elements in this study are termed as *supportive elements* of the T/A system. These are such as subject markers, negative markers, temporal adverbials, and the tonal system.

Based on the degree of remoteness in the T/A system, it was discovered that Leki speakers view events or actions as occurring either at speech time (generic present),

or before speech time (past tenses) or after speech time (future tenses). These formatives are developed depending on how speakers view time in the material universe. The multiplicity of T/A forms implies that Leki speakers view time in the universe as having multiple points.

The speakers' mind moves forward from speech time (the present) in referring to future events, backward in referring to past events and around speech time in referring to present events.

In aspectual system of the language, it was discovered that there is a complex mental process involved in producing aspectual constructions. It was reported that morphologically aspect carries tense markers (setting out the time frame) marked in the auxiliary or copula verbs and aspectual markers (distributing time within a given time frame) marked in the main verb. This double marking (marking tense and aspect at the same time) reflects the mental process regarding time reference. The speaker has in mind the situation type (aspect) and the time frame (i.e future or past).

The four major categories of aspect in the language indicates that Leki speakers have four ideas related to the nature of the event such as persisting events, repeated events, progressive events and completed events.

5.3 Conclusions

From the findings in chapter four, it can be concluded as follows:

One, tense and aspect are inflectional categories marked either at the T-position or at the FV-position of the verb template. Two, there is a multiplicity of T/A forms in Leki which reflects the speakers' worldview regarding time in the material universe.

Three, there is a close interaction between T/A forms and other elements of the T/A system such as temporal adverbials, subject markers, negative markers and the tonal system.

Four, the T/A systems reflect the speakers' conception of time in the material universe. For instance, the T/A categories in the language reflect how the speaker's mind partition time in the real world. Thus, language time (LT) or mental time (MT) is the representation of the material universe time (MUT), a situation which shows that language system is related to speakers' worldview. In other words, language avails its speakers with materials that enable them to communicate variably in all contexts.

Five, tense is basically marked at the T-position of the verb template, and it is common in simple constructions (or single-verb constructions) while aspect is basically marked by compound constructions. In the latter case, the tense marker is placed either before the auxiliary verb "*bha*" (be) in future tenses or after the auxiliary verb "*li*" (a form of "be") in past tenses. On the other hand, aspectual markers are placed in the main verb.

Six, T/A forms do not overlap in referring to events. In this case, it is impossible to find different formatives referring to the same event. If this happens, as we have said, certain recovery strategies must take place to block temporal referential overlapping (TRO). Thus, each formative has its own T/A category or functions in the language's T/A system (meaning also differ). In other words, a single formative is equivalent to a single T/A category.

5.4 Recommendations for Further Research

It is quite impossible to exhaust everything related to tense and aspect systems of any human language. The current study, in its scope, has tried to specifically identify the T/A forms, showing their functions and distribution in the verbal system. This objective has been arrived at functionally. It has also found out the degrees of remoteness that the above systems are taken to represent. This constitutes the cognitive component of the T/A system. Integrating the functional theory and the cognitive theory has helped to establish an argument of the relationship between language structure and the speakers' view of temporal reality.

This study put much concentration on affirmative constructions, but did not ignore the negative ones. There is a pressing need for further studies to compare the negative and affirmative constructions since the T/A forms can be blurred by some morpho-phonological and morpho-syntactic processes. Future studies should also get in-depth to explain the interaction between the T/A forms and subject markers in Bantu languages. This could be done by describing the different shapes of the subject markers in expressing events. Furthermore, a detailed description of tone as a grammatical contrast is important in order to establish an argument on the relationship between the tonal systems and the T/A systems.

Additionally, there is close relationship between the tense aspect and mood. This is more prevalent in different tense categories whereby tense markers, apart from locating time, they indicate mood and modality. Therefore, further investigations can be directed to this possibility.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Structured Interview for Literate Informants

No.	Kiswahili	Kileki (Kikara)
1	Ninakula chakula	Nékulya ebhilyó
2	Nilikula chakula jana	Námalya ebhilyó líkolo
3	Zamani nilikula samaki	Kala náliye shínzwi
4	Leo jioni nitakula chakula	Lélo kékolo nilyá ebhilyó
5	Kesho nitakula samaki	Mutóndo nákalye shínzwi
6	Tutakula samaki (siku nyingi zijazo)	Shílilya shínzwi (kala heyó)
7	Leo tumekula samaki	Lélo shálya/sháliye shínzwi
8	Jana tulicheza mpira	Líkolo shámenya omupíla
9	Tunacheza mpira	Shékwenya omupíla
10	Leo jioni tutacheza mpira	Lélo kékolo shénya omupíla
11	Tumecheza mpira asubuhi	Shénya omupíla katóndo
12	Bado tunacheza mpira	Bado shishénya omupíla
13	Leo tulikuwa tunacheza mpira	Lélo shálili nishénya omupíla
14	Jana tulikuwa tunacheza mpira	Líkolo shálíka nishénya omupíla
15	Zamani tulikuwa tukicheza mpira	Kala shényaka omupíla
16	Huwa tunacheza mpira	Shènyaka omupía
17	Jana tulikuwa tumecheza mpira	Líkolo shálíka shényele omupíla
18	Kesho tutakuwa tumecheza mpira	Mutóndo shákabhe shényele omupíla
19	Leo tutakuwa tumecheza mpira	Lélo shibhá shényele omupíla
20	Kesho tutakuwa tunacheza mpira	Mutóndo shákabhe nishénya omupíla

21	Nimewahi kuwa mwalimu	Nábhakwo mwálimu
22	Nimewahi kuchota maji	Nátayakwo amánji
23	Mtoto alilala jana	Omwána amamáma líkolo
24	Mtoto alilala zamani za kale	Omwana amámileka kala
25	Mtoto atalala leo	Omwána kâamáma lelo
26	Mtoto huwa analala	Omwána kâmamaka
27	Manyama analima	Manyama élima
28	Manyama amelima leo asubuhi	Manayama alima lélo katóndo
29	Manyama alikuwa amelima leo	Manayama alíli alimile lélo
30	Manyama alikuwa amelima jana	Manayama álika alimile líkolo
31	Manyama alilima jana	Manayama amálima líkolo
32	Inabidi Manyama alime leo jioni	Manyama alálima lélo kékolo
33	Manyama atalima wiki ijayo	Manyama akalime obhwóó obhwo bhwísha
34	Manyama atakuwa analima kesho	Manyama akabhe nálima mutóndo
35	Manyama atakuwa amelima kesho	Manyama akabhe alimile mutóndo
36	Manyama alilima zamani	Manyama alimileka kala heyo
37	Mnaona	mwélola
38	Mtaona kesho	Mwakalole mutóndo
39	Mtaona siku moja	Lunaku lumwi mwákalole
40	Mliona jana	Mwamálola líkolo
41	Mliona zamani	Mwálolele kala
42	Mmeona leo	Mwálola lélo
43	Mlikuwa mmeona jana	Mwálika mwálolele
44	Mlikuwa mmeona leo	Mwalíli mwálolele lélo

45	Mlikuwa mnaona leo	Mwálíli nimulola lélo
46	Mtakuwa munaona (kesho)	Mwákabhe nímulola (mutóndo)
47	Mtakuwa mmeona (kesho)	Mwákabhe mwálolele (mutóndo)
48	Wakija tutaondoka	Bhakéssha shikénda
49	Wangekuja tungeondoka	Shibha bhéshile shákakendele
50	Mimi ni mwalimu	Anye nili mwálimu
51	Mimi nitakuwa mwalimu	Anye nákabhe mwálimu
54	Siku moja nitakuwa mwalimu	Anye nilibha mwálimu lunaku lumwí
55	Endeleeni kula	Mulyeká
56	Mutaendelea kula (leo)	Mulályaka (lélo)

Appendix 2: Data from Situation-based Interview (i.e the verb *taa* “tap”)

Affirmative constructions	Negative constructions
<i>Namátaa amanji líkolo</i> “I tapped some water yesterday”	<i>Nitamátaa amanji líkolo</i> “I did not tap some water yesterday”
<i>Nátaa amanji lelo katondo</i> “I tapped some water today morning”	<i>Nitátaa amanji lelo katondo</i> “I did not tap some water today morning”
<i>Nétaa amanji</i> “I am tapping some water”	<i>Nitétaa amanji</i> “I am not tapping some water”
<i>Nátaíle amanji</i> “I have already tapped some water”	<i>Nisháli kutáa amanji</i> “I have not yet tapped some water”
<i>Nátaileka amanji</i> “I tapped some water” (unspecific time)	<i>Nitátaileka amanji</i> “I did not tap some water”
<i>Nátaile amanji kala</i> “I tapped some water long ago”	<i>Nitátaile amanji</i> “I did not tap some water”
<i>Nátaakwo amanji</i> “I once tapped some water”	<i>Nitátaakwo amanji</i> “I have never tapped some water”
<i>Nákatae amanji mutóndo</i> “I shall tap some water tomorrow”	<i>Nitákatae amanji mutóndo</i> “I shall not tap some water tomorrow”
<i>Nilataa amanji lelo</i> “today I shall tap some water”	<i>Nitakutaa amanji lelo</i> “today I shall not tap some water”
<i>Nilitáa amanji</i> “I shall tap some water” (remote future)	<i>Nitalitáa amanji</i> “I shall not tap some water”
<i>Nalíli nátaíle amanji</i> “I had already tapped some water (today)”	<i>Nalíli nisháli kutaa amanji</i> “I had not yet tapped some water (today).”
<i>Nálíka nataile amanji</i> “I had already tapped some water”	<i>Nálíka nishali kutaa amanji</i> “I had not yet tapped some water”
<i>Nilábha/nibhá nátaíle amanji</i> “I shall have already tapped some water (today)”	<i>Nilábha/nibhá nisháli kutaa amanji</i> “I shall have not yet tapped some water”
<i>Nákabhe nataile amanji mutóndo</i> “I shall have already tapped some water”	<i>Nákabhe nisháli kutaa amanji mutóndo</i> “I shall have not yet tapped some water tomorrow”
<i>Nálíka ninitaa amanji líkolo</i> “I was tapping some water yesterday”	<i>Nálíka nitátaa amanji líkolo</i> “I was not tapping some water yesterday”
<i>Nalíli ninitaa amanji lélo katóndo</i> “I was tapping some water today morning”	<i>Nalíli nitataa amanji lélo katóndo</i> “I was not tapping some water today morning”
<i>Nilábha ninitaa amanji lálo kékolo</i> “I shall be tapping some water today evening”	<i>Nilábha nitataa amanji lélo kékolo</i> “I shall not be tapping some water today evening”
<i>Nilibhá ninitaa amanji</i> “I shall be tapping some water (remote future)”	<i>Nilibhá nitátaa amanji</i> “I shall not be tapping some water”
<i>Nishátaa amanji</i> “I am still tapping some water”	<i>Nitashátaa amanji</i> “I am no longer tapping some water”
<i>Nálíka nishátaa amanji</i> “I was still tapping some water” (i.e yesterday)	<i>Nálíka nitashátaa amanji</i> “I was no longer tapping some water”
<i>Nalíli nishátaa amanji</i> “I was still	<i>Nalíli nitashátaa amanji</i> “I was no

tapping some water” (today)	longer tapping some water”
<i>Nilábha/nibhá nishátaa amanji</i> “I shall be still tapping some water (today	<i>Nilábha/nibhá nitashátaa amanji</i> “I shall no longer be tapping some water”
<i>Nákabhe nishátaa amanji</i> “I shall be still tapping some water (i.e tomorrow)	<i>Nákabhe nitashátaa amanji</i> “I shall no longer be tapping some water.”
<i>Nilibhá nishátaa amanji</i> “ I shall be still tapping some water (remote future)”	<i>Nilibhá nitashátaa amanji</i> “I shall no longer be tapping some water”
<i>Nitáaka amanji</i> “I tap some water (always)”	<i>Nitakutáaka amanji</i> “I do not tap some water”
<i>Nataaka amanji</i> “I used to tap some water”	<i>Nitataaka amanji</i> “I used not to tap some water
<i>Nilátaaka amanji</i> “I shall be tapping some water”	<i>Nitatáaka amanji</i> “I shall not be tapping some water”
<i>Nákataéka amanji</i> “I shall be tapping some water (i.e as you come)	<i>Nitákataèka amanji</i> “I shall not be tapping some water”
<i>Nilitáaka amanji</i> “I shall be tapping some water (again and again)	<i>Nitalitaáaka amanji</i> “I shall not be tapping some water (again and again)

Appendix 3: Shapes of the Subject Markers for Different Tenses

SM/T	GP	NF	MF	RF	NP	MP	RP	HP	IP
1SG	ni-/ni-	ni-/ni	na- /ni-	ni- /ni-	na-/ni-	na- /ni-	na-/ni-	na-/ni-	na-/ni-
1PL	shi-/shi	shi- /shi-	sha- /shi-	shi- /shi-	sha- /shi-	sha- /shi-	sha- /shi-	sha- /shi-	sha-shi-
2SG	u-/u-	u-/u	wa- /u-	u- /u-	wa-/u-	wa- /u-	wa-/u-	wa-/u-	wa-/u-
2PL	mu-/mu-	mu- /mu-	mwa - /mu-	mu- /mu -	mwa- /mu-	mwa- /mu-	mwa- /mu-	mwa- mu-	mwa- /mu-
3SG	ka-/a-	a-/a-	a-/a-	a-/a-	a-/a-	a-/a-	a-/a-	a-/a-	a-/a-
3PL	bha- /bha-	bha- /bha-	bha- /bha-	bha- /bha -	bha- /bha-	bha- /bha-	bha- /bha-	bha- /bha-	bha- /bha-

Note: The morphemes in the left for each tense and person precede the negative marker while those in the right appear in affirmative constructions.

Appendix 4: Proverbs and Sayings from Leki Community

1. Akaana koko kalya kubhatwangi
2. Akasínzi kakulula libhungi
3. Akéuto kamalile abhanyabwilo
4. Amaana ka makulye katakukwatibhwa kóne.
5. Bhakwenda unabhyo
6. Bhasinya omulwae
7. Bhubhíko bhwa undi bhutakumenyibhwa
8. Bhuli kuundi bhuli kwiti
9. Eshiima shitaibhulwamo mbangala
10. Eya mulwanja iseka eya mulubhika
11. Hao utali niyo bhili
12. Imbusi ye(ya) ebhinenwe ibhula eye(ya) ebhinenwe
13. Imbwa yalemele ebya bhandi ikalya amafwi
14. Inamba ikuleta amanyembe ka Bhukindo
15. Ing'a inyilafi inywa ameelu
16. Ingoko inu inya mwa bhandi niyo ililwa amaki
17. Inumbu ni kwisya
18. Kusaaka niwe atungile
19. Libhusi lya abhandi likonda okunyika
20. Linda linda afúwe atatwáe
21. Mamao ukamenye
22. Munda bhatakulolamwo
23. Mwene kwenda atana hasala
24. Nyandemenya akaundu kali kulumye
25. Okutanya inda ngumweka(nikumweka) olutuubhwi
26. Omukulu atashwe
27. Omulema atakubhulwa bhwenge
28. Omusasi kabhoywa owabho
29. Omutaka atakwenenya
30. Omutangasi kalibhwa
31. Omutao kutakutaa mukúndi
32. Omututubhe atakuyabha mwabho
33. Omwibhusi atakukanywa
34. Omwibhusi kásisimukwa ila atakutanaka
35. Sangwa nimenya isokaka inyuma
36. Tandikaka wábhonja
37. Ukabhisa obhulwae olufu lukusúlula
38. Ukatwala wananuka
39. Ukenda eshaama wenda amayo.
40. Unu ataliwo liti litakumukwila

English Translation

1. The chick feeds from food processors.
2. A small ant drags a maggot.
3. Hurry consumed people of Bwiro.
4. The chicks (of a wild bird) cannot be caught at once.
5. They love you when you have.
6. They force the sick person (i.e., to eat).
7. Another person's keeping-place cannot be known.
8. When it is on others, it is on a tree (a problem or disease).
9. The forest lacks no lizards.
10. That of the hanging vessel laughs that of the pot.
11. Where you are absent is where problems occurs (you cannot know them).
12. A goat gives birth to its kind.
13. A dog rejected other's (advice) and ate faeces.
14. Greedy shall bring you back, the Bukindo sweet mango.
15. The earlier cow drinks clean water (the early the better).
16. A hen that lays in the neighbourhood is the one whose eggs are eaten.
17. A potato is from a potato plant.
18. Excessiveness is the one who kept.
19. The neighbour's goat is sweeter to slaughter.
20. A wait-wait man died unmarried.
21. Sleep there, you shall know them (problems).
22. They don't see inside the stomach.
23. A self-sending person has no loss.
24. The self-unknowing person had a hole on the buttocks.
25. To defeat a louse is to shave your head bald.
26. The elder cannot be pinched (even if he/she mistakes).
27. A lame cannot lack creativity.
28. The madman is tied by his own relatives.
29. A poor man cannot hang something.
30. The leader is eaten.
31. A gourd cannot draw water from another.
32. The crazy (zombie) person cannot forget his home.
33. A parent cannot be scorned.
34. A parent feels bad but cannot vomit.
35. Had I known comes later.
36. Taste before (you use).
37. If you hide your sickness, death shall reveal you.
38. When you marry, you become straight (no longer bending like wood).
39. When you join a party, you have accepted penalties.
40. The tree cannot fall onto the absent.

Appendix 5: Mamvumwa the Ogre (An Ogre Story from The Bhaleki Tribe)

Alika aliwo mkwekulu umwi mushalo shimwi natokwa Nyabhele. Nyabhele alika ebhuwe omwana umwi owe (owa) eshilume natokwa Makubhi. Makubhi nakula natwaala omukasi, ne (na) ebhula bhaana bhana; abhaala bhabhili na abhasikashi one bhabhili.

Eshaalo sheebhwe shalika ne(na) eliinu nilitokwa mamvumwa. Eliinu linu lyalika ndilya (nililya) abhaana na abhaanu bhone mshalo bhanu bhalika nibhétemanya ayei ne(na) eshisaka shinu lyalika likaemwo. Eliinu i(e)lyo lyakwataka abhaana lyámila bhulala.

Lunaku lumwi inju yo(ya) omukwekulu Nyabhele yabhumilwe no(na) omuyaka niikwa anzi olukuta olubhala lumwi olwe(a) esiiko. Mbe omukwekulu nábhilikila makubhi, omwana wae omwendwa no(na) owa nyabhali, namubhwiila: “Makubhi mwaana wani mwendwa, lola inju yani yafuma, ka anye nakokoe, ndashána (nitashana) manaka. Mbe kenda mwisaka ushe okutema amati no(na) omukasi wao na abhaana bhao mwishe musibhe inju yani yasikala abhwelu.” Nyabhele amabhatuma obhaile koleéleki alika nóbhaya limamvumwa.

Makubhi one alika mûbha wa limamvumwa, lakini kulwokubha alika amwendele nyilamwene, nalamula okusha mwisaka. Namba nabhilikila abhana bhae abhasikashi na nyila, abhe(bha) eshaala mbasikala(nibhasikala) na kaka wabho mwitekelo (mbatekaka>nibhatekaka). Makubhi nayoola limalo. Eshile akamala nabhakeka abhaana bhae abhe(bha) eshilume abhabhili na nyila mbakenda (nibhakenda). Bheshile bhambuka lilango, omukasi wa makubhi nábhwiila omulume wae: “mulume wani, shilinde kekolo kwokubha katondo kaliyo amaanu, abhaana bheswe bhatula okukwatibhwa na limamvumwa.”

Makubhi eshile akoongwa kutyo namuínda kwo(kwa) obhukali: “subha linyabhuubha awe!” kubhunu omukasi wae alika obhaile omulume nabhoya omunwa. Mbakenda (nibhakenda) mpaka mwisaka. Bhefue ela limamvumwa ndilyo! Kubhunu lyalika lina injala katondo ako, ndibhatembanya (nilibhatembanya), omukasi na abhaana mbakuunga (nibhakuunga). Kubhunu makubhi alika na lipanga nekola shilume. Limamvumwa lyamulukiye ndimukwisa (nilimkwisya) anzi ndimumila bhulala. omukasi wae na abhaana bhae mbabhilima ika mbalilaka. Nyabhele eshile akongwa ati omwana wae wenyele, makubhi aliibhwa na limamvumwa nalasa eyo akasímbo, nafwa.

Abhaanu mbeesha (nibheesha) bhone mushalo okukola eshaálamó. Beshile bhakamala eshaálamó, omukasi wo(wa) omufu makubhi nakenda lunaku lumwi okusenya shing'wi mwisaka kekolo. Efuwe ela limamvumwa lyamulukie, nilimumila. Abhaanu mbalinda (nibhalinda) kekolo eyo alasubha nangu. Mbabhuma (nibhabhuma) akasuka koleeleki bhashe okumulonda. Eshalo shone nshisha (nishisha) mwisaka. Bsheshile bhakinga ayei na lisaka, mbongwa (nibhongwa) limamvumwa ndilila (nililila) mwisaka kuti lyekwimba:

Emwe bhanyashalo, bhanyashalo ebhilyo bhyani

Libhui lyailingita musosye abhana munjilax2

Makubhi náliye musosye abhana munjila

Mukae naliye msosye abhaana munjila

Abhamvu naliye msosye abhana munjila

Emwone nisha okubhalya musoke emwone munjila.

Bsheshile bhakongwa kutyo, mbefula ela lyeshile. Bhona mbabhilima (nibhabhilima) bhakasi na bhalume; abhandi mbakwa (nibhakwa) mbakabha (nibhakabha). Kulwokubha olusiku oloyo lyalika likutile, litalie muunu. Ndimala (nilimala) ndisubha (nilisubha) mwisaka.

Limamvumwa lyalika lyanyasisye eshalo. Abhasilikale bhakendaka, lyeta bhone lyamila. Lunaku lumwi lyeshileka múngeta ewa Nyabhele, omukasi wa Makubhi atolokele ashiye ewábho mushalo shá kabhili. Olunaku oloyo abhaanu bhone mushalo mbeikalila(nibheikalila) munju. Nilinyanja mumusi kwa Nyabhele, tali litalolele muunu nolu umwi.

Lunaku lumwi omukwekulu Nyabhele nawelwa amanzi. Nátuma Kezukulú ewa maalumi wae abhélekesye okutaa amanzi mwishibha lya mwisaka. Kezukulú alika mwishukuru wae wo (wa) okwamba. Kezukulú alika msisimbae wo(wa) omwoyo kutâmya. Nâkeka inyungu no(na) omutayo nâsha mwisaka. Okukinga munjila nabhonana na limamvumwa. Eshile akalilola ne(na) etímba asaile (asayile). Limamvumwa ndimubhuusya: “ushaki Kezukulú?”

“Nisha ewa maalumi” Kezukulú naliinda kwo (kwa) obhululu. Kubhunu lyalika eyangwe na kubhunu lyalika lyendele amanzi, Kezukulú nalishika nalibhwila ati ndola una lilo. Shikende ngusile (nikusile) ushe okunywa amanzi. “wakondya Kezukulú”, ndimuinda. Kezukulú nalisila mwishibha. Lyeshile likanwa amanzi ndimwenda obhusaani. Kezukulú nalibwila ati labha unyenda obhusaani nyîmbila olwímbo uongee. Nilimba nilimba liongee. Kezukulú nataa amanzi bhwangubhwangu nabhilima ika.

Lyeshile likalafyá ndisánga (nilisanga) Kezukulú atashaliwo. Nilimba tena olwimba koleeleki eshe:

Usha aki kezukulú,

Nisha ewa maalumi

Mbe nyabhele alebhuye nzeléle kunda

Alébhuye mwaana musikashi nzelele kundax2

Lyeshile likamala okwimba ndilila ndilila. Ndilasa (nililasa) ameso hei ne(na) hei okumulola Kezukululu kata. Ndilamula (nililamula) okusubha mwibhanga.

English Translation

There was an old woman in one village known as Nyabhele. Nyabhele had only one child, a son called Makubhi. Makubhi grew up and got married to a wife, and they gave birth to four children, two daughters and two sons.

Their village had a horrifying monster called Mamvumwa. This monster always ate children and all people in the village that appeared nearby the bush in which it resided. That monster used to catch people and swallow (without chewing).

One day, old Nyabhele's house was stormed by dragging wind, and fell down one side of the wall, in the bedroom. Therefore, the old woman called Makubhi, her firstborn and beloved son and told him: "Makubhi, my beloved son, see my house has fallen down; but, I'm now old, I'm now weak. Therefore, just go in the bush, with your wife and children, to cut trees to fill it, because it is now open." Nyabhele sent them doubtfully because she was afraid of Mamvumwa.

Makubhi was also afraid of Mamvumwa. But, because he loved his mother, he decided to leave to the bush. First of all, he called his sons and their mother, the daughters remained with their grandmother in the kitchen. Makubhi sharpened his bush knife. When he finished, he took his two sons and their mother, and they left. When they staggered outside the courtyard, Makubhi's wife told her husband: "My husband, let us wait in the evening, because in the morning, there are monsters; our children can be captured by Mamvumwa."

Hearing that, Makubhi replied angrily: "Get back home you coward!" Since the wife was weak before her husband, she shut up (closed the mouth). They went into the bush. Abruptly, Mamvumwa appeared! Since he was hungry that morning, he chased them. The wife and the children screamed. Since Makubhi had a bush knife, he pretended manly (he did not run away). Mamvumwa jumped onto him and took him down, and swallowed him (without chewing). His wife and the children ran back home crying. When Nyabhele came to know that her begotten son had been swallowed by Mamvumwa, she threw down a stick and died.

All people in the village gathered for burial ceremony. Having been done with the burial ceremony, the wife of the late Makubhi went into the bush one day to hew some firewood in the evening. Behold, Mamvumwa jumped onto her, and swallowed her. People waited for her that evening, but nothing promised. They rang a bell in order to go and look for her. The whole village went into the bush. Near the bush, they heard Mamvumwa crying in the bush as if he was singing:

You villagers, villagers my food
 The stone is rolling, take away the children
 I've eaten Makubhi, take away the children
 I've eaten his wife, take away the children
 I've eaten many, take away the children
 You also I'll eat, take yourselves away.

When they heard so, abruptly, he appeared. All of them ran away, men and women. Others fell down and fainted. Since that day he was fed up, he ate none of them. One day, he came at night at Nyabhele's house. Makubhi's wife had escaped to her motherland in the next village. That day, all people in the village locked themselves in houses. He sat at Nyabhele's courtyard, without seeing even a single person.

One day, the old woman, Nyabhele had no water. She sent Kezukulu to her uncle to escort them to tap some water in the well, in the bush. Kezukulu was her first granddaughter. She had a very bold heart. She took a pot and a gourd and left to the bush. On the way, she met Mamvumwa. When she saw him, she stood angrily. Mamvumwa asked her: "Where are you going Kezukulu?"

"I'm going to my uncle." Kezukulu replied harshly. Since it was very droughty, and because he was thirsty, Kezukulu tricked him and told him that, "I see you are thirsty!" let me send you to drink water.

"Thank you Kezukulu!" he replied. Kezukulu took him to the well. When he drank water, he requested for friendship. Kezukulu told him that, "if you want friendship with me, sing for me a song with eyes closed." He sang and sang his eyes closed. Kezukulu tapped some water very quickly and ran back home.

When he opened his eyes, he found nobody (Kezukulu had left). He kept on singing to call for Kezukulu:

Where are you going Kezukulu?

I'm going to my uncle.

Nyabhele has given birth *nzeleele kunda*

She has got a baby boy *nzeleele kunda* x2

When he was done with singing, he cried. He threw eyes here and there, but Kezukulu was nowhere to be seen. He decided to go back into the bush.