Languages & Literatures

Research Article

Section: Literature, Languages and Criticism

Aspectual forms in Lutsotso

Hellen Odera[1] & **David Barasa**[2]
[1–2]Department of Languages and Literature Education, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kenya
Correspondence: hellenselah@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper analyses the inflectional category of aspect in Lutsotso, a dialect of the Oluluhya macro-language. Using descriptive approach, the paper establishes that there are a number of inflectional morphemes affixed on the verb root to express, e.g. person, number, tense, aspect and mood. Among these affixes, tense and aspect categories interact largely, hence, it is difficult to study one category without referring to the other. While tense and aspect are profoundly connected in Lutsotso, this paper only identifies and describes the inflectional form of aspect. Generally, aspect in Lutsotso relates to the grammatical viewpoints such as the perfective, imperfective and iterative forms. This includes the temporal properties of situations and the situation types as well. Aspect just like other grammatical categories such as tense, mood, person, agreement and number are important in understanding the grammar of Lutsotso.

Keywords: aspect, Bantu, Lutsotso verb

Public Interest Statement

Lutsotso is used as a medium of instruction in the formative stages of learning of the children who speak Lutsotso (Murasi, 2000). For this reason, it is important that aspectual forms be well mastered by learners to understand the grammar of Lutsotso.

Introduction

Lutsotso is a dialect of the Oluluhya language which belongs to the Bantu, Masaba (E.32) family of the Niger Congo (Eberhard et al., 2020). The language is spoken by the Batsotso people who live in Kakamega County. Within Kakamega county, there are five areas populated by the Batsotso: Butsotso North, Butsotso South, Butsotso East, Butsotso West and Butsotso Central (where data used in this paper was collected). In the 2020 report of the Kenya National Population Census conducted in 2019, the population of Lutsotso speakers found in Kakamega County was estimated to be 162,822. Comrie (1976, p. 3) describes aspect as 'the different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation. This can be viewed in the present, past or future time. The paper presents the aspectual forms in Lutsotso as follows: Imperfective (Progressive), Perfective, Habitual and the Iterative.

The perfective aspect

The perfective aspect of a verb expresses an action or event denoted by the verb as being completed. According to Givon (1984, p. 276), 'an event is perfective if at the time –axis it has been completed, terminated accomplished'. This aspect expresses completed situations that occur in the past at the time of reference. It views situations as whole and not as distinct parts that form a situation. In the perfective aspect, the situation is viewed in its entirety independent of tense (Payne 1997; Barasa, 2015). The perfective marker in Lutsotso is -re or -je. In addition to the perfective markers, for the perfective in the past, the prefix li- affixed on the verb stem is used to mark the past tense.

1(a) nda-li-ne-nzi-re
    1SG-PST-AGR-go-PRF
    'I had gone'
 (b) wa-li-nc-tsi-re
    2SG-PST-AGR-go-PRF
    'You had gone'
 (c) ɔmu-xana   ja-li-ni-jɔsi-je   eʃikɔmße
    SG-girl   3SG-PST-AGR-wash-PRF   cup
    'The girl had washed the cup'
 (d) xɔtsa   ja-li-na-kusi-je   likɔndi
    uncle   3SG-PST-AGR-sell-PRF   sheep
    'Uncle had sold the sheep'

The morphemes -re and -je are bound morphemes in complementary distribution. According to (Fromkin, 2013), complementary distribution entails a relationship between two separate elements of the same kind, one of which is contained in one set of environments and the other in a non-intersecting (complementary) set of environments. The occurrence of -re and -je is both syntactically and morphologically determined. They are syntactically determined due to the aspect of past tense on the VP, and morphologically determined

by the form of the main verb although it is not clear under which conditions. An analysis on VPs on Oluluhya languages seem not to establish specific morphological factors which determine the choice between the variants. This observation is in tandem with (Appleby, 1961; Angogo, 1983) who also report that an overview of VPs in Oluluhya languages does not appear to reveal any clear morphological factors that influence the choice between -re and -je. Like the perfective aspect in the past tense, the suffixes -re or -je express the perfective aspect as illustrated in (2). The prefix re- is used to mark the present tense.

2 (a) e-nzi-re-ingɔ
    1SG:PRS-go-PRF-home
     'I have gone home'
  (b) mama   a-kasi-je   ingara
      mother   3SG:PRS-make-PRF ring
      'Mother has made a ring'

The suffixes -re in (2a) and -je in (2b) are bound morphemes in complementary distribution which express perfective aspect. The perfective aspect in the future tense is expressed by use of the tense marker la- prefixed to the verb stem and the suffix -re or -je for aspect. The sentences in example (3) below illustrates the perfective aspect in the future tense in Lutsotso.

3 (a) aβa-ana   βa-la-βa-βa-tsi-re   jɔ
3PL-children 3PL-FUT-AuxV-SM-go-PRF   ADV
        The children will have gone there'
   (b) βa-la-βa-βa-kasi-je   eβi-fumβi
        3PL-FUT-AuxV-SM-make-PRF   PL-chairs
        'They will have made chairs'
   (c) a-la-βa   na-fwi-re
        3SG-FUT-AUXV   SM-die¬-PRF
        'He/she will have died'
   (d) nda-la-βa   ni-li-re
        1SG-FUT-AUXV   SM-eat¬-PRF
         'I will have eaten'

In example (3) above, the suffixes -re and -je occur on the VP as bound morpheme in complementary distribution. The perfective aspect in the future tense has the AuxV -ba. The AuxV -ba is prefixed with the SM and future tense morphemes la-.
Imperfective Aspect (the progressive)
        Imperfective aspect is a grammatical notion which indicates that an action is not complete, is in progress or developing (Payne, 1997). The major focus is in the middle phase. Within the continuing process, the end and the beginning of the process is not specified. Lutsotso has the present, past and future forms of the imperfect aspect.

Imperfective aspect in the present explains an ongoing activity within the present moment at the time of speaking (Payne, 1997). In Lutsotso, this aspect is marked by suffixes -nga   or   -nɟia   as bound morpheme as illustrated in (4) below:

  4 (a) a-Ø-sɔm-a-nga
        3SG-PRS-read-FV-IPFV
        'He/she is reading'
    (b) ɔmu-sjani   a-liːts-a-nga   ɔmukate
        SG-boy   3SG[PRS]-eat-FV-IPFV   bread
        'The boy is eating rice'
    (c) a-liːsi-nɟia   ɔmwana
        3SG[PRS]feed-IPFV   baby
        'He/she is feeding the baby'
    (d) βa-kasi-nɟia   eβi-mwerɔ
        3PL[PRS]-make-IPFV   PL-baskets
        'They are making baskets'

The markers for the imperfective aspect are -nga as in (4a and 4b) and -nɟia as in (4c and 4d). The imperfective markers -nga and -nɟia are in complementary distribution with their occurrence morphologically determined. The occurrence of -nga or -nɟia is influenced by the environment. This is what is happening in the occurrence of -nga and -nɟia in (4a), (4b), (4c) and (4d). The morpheme -nga appears where the preceding sound is the low open vowel /a/ as in (4a and 4b) while -nɟia appears where the preceding sound is /i/ as in (4c and 4d) above. Imperfective aspect in the past explains an on-going process that took place in the past and continued within an unspecified time in the past (Crystal, 1997). In Lutsotso, the suffix -nga and -nɟia are   the imperfective morphemes with the SAM marking the past tense. Consider (5) below:

5 (a) ja-sɔma-nga   eβajiβɔ
      3SG[PST]-read-IPFV   bible
      'He/she was reading a bible'
  (b) papa   ja-kusi-nɟia   emikɔje
      father   3SG[PT]-sell-IPFV   ropes
      'Father was selling ropes'
  (c) aβa-ana   βa-recheresi-nɟia   tsinganɔ
      3PL-children   3PL[PT]-listen-IPFV   stories
      'Children listened to stories'
  (d) ja-imba-nga   tsi-ɲinβɔ
      3SG[PT]song-1PFV   PL-songs
      'He/She was singing songs'

The imperfective in the future indicates a process that will go on in the future. The future

is based on the present moment of speaking (Crystal, 1997). The imperfective future in Lutsotso uses the morphemes -nga and -nɟia together with the future time marker li- as (6a) and (6b) illustrate:

6 (a) a-li-saja-nga
        3SG-FUT-pray-IPFV
        'He/she will (be) praying'
   (b) aβa-xaːna   βa-li-ɔsi-nɟia   tsisiɔngɔ
        PL-girl   3PL-FUT-wash-IPFV   pots
        'The girls will be washing pots'
   (c) m-li-texa-nga   amapwɔni
        2PL-FUT-cook-1PFV   potatoes
        'You will be cooking potatoes'
   (d) βa-xa-kusi-nɟie   tsi-ngɔxɔ
        3PL-INTFUT-sell-IPFV   PL-chicken
        'They will be selling chicken'

Habitual
According to Crystal (1997), habitual aspect indicates a regular occurrence of a situation either in the past, present or future. In this case, the situation or act takes place over a stretch of time. Crystal defines habitual as a situation in which an action is viewed as lasting for an extended period of time. In this regard, it is not considered as an accident but a characteristic feature of a whole period. The habitual Aspect functions to indicate that an action is a habit (that it takes place repeatedly or always). Apart from marking the daily present, the habitual marker is also used to mark past and future habitual. The habitual marker in Lutsotso is -nga/nge.

Habitual in the present according to Crystal (ibid), indicates a situation which occurs over an extended period of time in the present. The habitual present in Lutsotso is marked by the morpheme -nga, a habitual marker, together with the zero morpheme marking for present tense. The immediate past is marked by the morpheme -xa while the present is marked by the zero morpheme. The habitual present is indicated in (7a) and (7b) below:

7 (a) a-Ø-kɔn-a-nga
        3SG-PRS-sleep-FV-HB
        'He/she sleeps' (always)
   (b) li-puːsi   li-Ø-nɟwets-a-nga   amaβeːle
        SM-cat   SM-PRS-drink-FV-HB   milk
        'The cat drinks milk'
   (c) ɔmwa-na   a-nun-a-nga
        SM-baby   3SG-suckle-FV-HB
        'Baby suckles'
   (d) βa-ɲwets-a-nga   amalua

      3SG-drink-FV-HB   wine
      'They drink wine'

The habitual past indicates situations that took place in the past regularly (Comrie, 1976, Barasa, 2015). The situation indicated took place over an extended period of time. The habitual marker -ang/-eng/-nɟe (with -xa marking the immediate past tense) is used in Lutsotso to indicate habitual past. See (8) below for illustration:

8 (a) aβa-ana   βa-xa-kɔn-a-nga
      3PL-child   3PL-IM.PT-sleep-FV-HB
      'The children have always slept'
   (b) βa-tsile-nge   mukanisa   ɔmwaka   kwali
       3PL[RPT]-go-HB   church   year   last
       'They used to go to church last year'
   (c) ja-lɔnga-nga   tsisiɔngɔ
       3SG[RPT]-model-HB   pots
       'He/she used to model pots'

The habitual marker -nga/-nge/-nɟe is suffixed on the verb as illustrated in the above examples (with -xa marking the immediate past tense) to indicate habitual past. On the other hand, the habitual future is used to indicate events that are expected to take place regularly in the future. The habitual occurrence is marked by the morpheme -nga/nge/nɟe which indicates that the situation is a habit together with the future tense marker as 9 illustrates:

  9 (a) aβa-ana   na-βa-sɔme-nge
       PL-children   N.FUT-3SG-read-HB
      'The children will be reading' (near future)
    (b) βa-li-lima-nga   ɔmukunda
       3PL-R.FUT-dig-HB   farm
      'They will dig far' (remote future)
    (c) aβa-sɔmi   na-βa-xɔle-nɟe   amareβɔ
       PL-learners N.FUT-do-HB   examinations
      'Learners will be doing examinations' (near future)

Notably, the habitual aspect in Lutsotso is marked by -nga/-nge/-nɟe which are suffixed on the verb as shown in (9a), (9b) and (9c) above. The habitual marker -nga/nge is used with both the present tense, future and past form of the verb to express the habitual nature of the action. The habitual marker -nɟe is used to indicate that the activity will be done regularly.

6. Iterative Aspect (Frequentive)

Iterative aspect indicates situations that are repeated or are done over and over again (Comrie 1976). The events or situations repeated occur one after the other. In Lutsotso, the repeated situation is indicated by complete reduplication of the verb. The repeated situation may take place both in the present, past and the future. The iterative aspect (frequentive) is formed by reduplication of the verb. Time adverbials may also be used alongside the iterative aspect frequentive. The following examples (10), (11), and (12) indicate the Iterative aspect in the present, past and future (frequentive):

10 (a) ɔmu-xana   aØ-tʃing-a-tʃing-a-nga   ɔmwana   βulanɔ
     SG-girl   3SG-PRS-carry-FV-carry-FV-IMP   baby /ACC   now
     'Girl is carrying the baby repeatedly now.'
    (b) a-Ø-kɔn-a-kɔn-a   βuliʃise
      3SG-PRS-sleep-FV-sleep-FV   every time
      'He/ she sleeps every time repeatedly.'
    (c) βa-Ø-rem-a-rem-a   emisa:la   βulanɔ
      3PL-PRS-cut-FV-cut-FV   trees/ACC   now
      'They are cutting trees repeatedly now'

The iterative aspect in the past is illustrated in sentence (11).

11 (a) ɔmu-xana   ja-tʃing-a-tʃing-a   ɔmwana   ɔmwaka   kwali
     3SG-girl   3SG[PST]-carry-FV-carry-FV   baby   last   year
     'Girl carried the baby repeatedly last year.'
    (b) ja-kɔn-a-kɔn-a   iɲanga   jali
      3SG[PST]-sleep-FV-sleep-FV   day   previous
      'He/she slept repeatedly the previous day'
    (c) βa-rem-a-rem-a   emisa:la   ɔmwaka   kwali
      3PL[PST]-cut-FV-cut-FV   trees   year   previous
      'They cut trees repeatedly the previous year'

The examples above demonstrate that the past is marked on the SAM and the present by a zero morpheme alongside the time adverbials. Reduplication occurs in both the past and present forms to show iterative aspect. Lutsotso uses the iterative aspect in the future to indicate events that are expected to take place several times in the future. Just like the past and present, the iterative aspect in the future is marked through reduplication of the verb in the verbal form that express a repeated situation. The following examples illustrate the occurrence of the iterative aspect in the immediate, near and remote (distant) future.

12 (a) aβa-siani   βa-la-rem-a-rem-a   emi–sa:la   iɲanga.jinɔ
     3PL-boy   3PL-IM.FUT-cut-FV-cut-FV SM–trees   today
     'Boys will cut trees repeatedly today'(immediate)

   (b) aβa-siani   na   βa-rem-e-rem-e   emi-sa:la
     3PL-boy   N.FUT 3PL-cut-FV-cut-FV PL-tree
      'Boys will cut trees repeatedly' (near)
   (c) aβa-siani   βa-li-rem-a-rem-a   emi-sa:la
     3PL-boy   SM-R.FUT-cut-FV-cut-FV PL-tree
      'Boys will cut trees repeatedly' (distant)

In examples above, the iterative aspect in the future is marked through reduplication of the verbs -rema and –reme in the verbal form. The examples illustrate the occurrence of the iterative aspect in the immediate, near and remote (distant) future.

Co-occurrence of Aspects
This section discusses a combination of the iterative aspect with the habitual, perfective and imperfective aspect in Lutsotso.

Iterative and Habitual Aspect in the Present
The iterative and habitual aspect in the present explains a situation within the present moment. The habitual marker –nga/-nge/-nɟe with a zero morpheme marks the present habitual. The reduplication of the verb marks the combination of the iterative and habitual aspect as (13a) and (13b) illustrates.

13 (a) a-Ø-sɔm-a-sɔm-a-nga   eβajiβɔ
    3SG-PRS-read-FV-read-FV-HB   bible
     'He/she reads a bible repeatedly.'
  (b) a-Ø-tsex-a-tsex-a-nga
      3SG-PRS-laugh-FV-laugh-FV-HB
      'He/she laughs repeatedly.'
  (c) βa-Ø-lil-a-lil-a-nga
      3SG-PRS-cry-FV-cry-FV-HB
     'He/she cries repeatedly'.

With the zero-morpheme marking the present, the habitual marker –nga is suffixed on the verb root –soma–, –tsexa– and –lila– which are reduplicated to capture the combination of the iterative and habitual aspect.

Iterative and Habitual Aspects in the Past
The combination of the iterative and habitual aspects in the past with the immediate past marked by the prefix /-xa-/ and remote (distant) past tense marked by /-ja-/ or /βa-/ to indicate the iterative and habitual aspect in the past. The habitual marker is -nga/-nge/-nɟe while the iterative marker involves the reduplication of the verb root as (14) illustrates:

14 (a) aβa-xaːna   βa-xa-hɔm-a-hɔm-a-nga   i-nzu
     SG-girl/NOM   3PL-IMPST-smear-FV-smear-FV-HB   SG-house/ACC
     'Girls used to smear the house frequently' (immediate past)
     (b) aβa-xaːna   βa-hɔm-a-hɔm-a-nga   i-nzu
     3PL-girl/NOM   3PL[RPST]-smear-smear-HB   SG-house/ACC
     'Girls used to smear the house repeatedly' (remote past)

In the above examples, the iterative and habitual aspects in the past combine with the immediate past marked by the prefix [-xa-] and remote (distant) past tense marked by [-ja-] or [βa-] to indicate the iterative and habitual aspect in the past. The habitual marker is -nga/-nge/-nɟe while the iterative marker involves the reduplication of the verb root -homa-.

Iterative and Habitual Aspect in the Future
In explaining the combination of the iterative and habitual aspect in the future, there is reduplication of the verb root to mark the iterative form. The habitual marker in Lutsotso is -nga/-nge.

15 (a) a-la-xup-a-xup-a-nga   ɔmwa-na
     3SG-IM.FUT-beat-FV-beat-FV-HB   SG-child
     'He/she will beat the child repeatedly'
     (b) na-βa-xup-a-xup-e-nɟe   ɔmwa-na
     NFT-3PL-beat-FV-beat-FV-HB   SG-child
     'They will beat the child repeatedly'
     (c) βa-lixup-a-xup-a-nga   ɔmwa-na
     3PL-R.FUT-beat-FV-beat-FV-HB   SG-child
     'They will beat the child frequently'

The reduplication of the verb root marks the iterative, tense is marked by future tense markers while the habitual aspect is marked by -nga/nge.

Co-occurrence of the Iterative and the Perfective Aspect
The combination of the iterative and the perfective can be expressed in the present, past and future tenses. Verb reduplication and the suffixes -re-/ -je-/ -ja-/ -ra- mark the combination of the iterative and perfective aspect. The Iterative aspect and the perfective aspect indicate completed action in the past that was done repeatedly. The combination of the iterative and perfective aspect is marked by verb reduplication and the suffixes -re-/ -je-/-ja-/-ra-. This combination occurs in the immediate, near (recent) and remote (distant) past distinctions as illustrated in (16) below:

16 (a) aβa-siani   βa-rem-e-rem-e-re   emisaːla
      SM-boy   3PL-cut-FV-cut-FV-PRF   trees
      'The boys have cut trees repeatedly' (immediate past)

  (b) aβa-siani   βa-li-βa-rem-e-rem-e-re   emisaːla
      PL–boys   3PL-AuxV-SM-cut-FV-cut-FV-PRF   trees
      'The boys had cut trees repeatedly' (near past)

  (c) βa-kusia-kus-i-ja   eβitaβu   ɔmwaka   kwali
      3PL-sold-FV-sold-FV-PRF books   last   year
      'They sold books frequently' (remote/distant past)

  (d) ja-tsex-a-tsex-e-re
      3SG-laugh-FV-laugh-FV-PRF
      'He/she laughed repeatedly' (remote past)

The reduplication of the Lutsotso verb (16a, b, c and d) indicates iterative aspect. Past tense is marked by the subject marker, while the perfective aspect is marked by 're' as indicated in (16a, b and d), and 'ja' in (16c). The variants of the perfective aspect markers are dependent on the morpho-structural form of the verb which is outside the scope of this paper.

Co-occurrence of iterative and perfective aspect in the future
The combined iterative and perfective aspect in the future is marked by reduplication of the verb. The suffix -ra, or -re further marks the perfective aspect. This combination of iterative and perfective in the future indicates a completed action that repeatedly takes place in the future. The co-occurrence matches the perfective aspect, the future tense form and the iterative. Examples in (17) illustrate the co-occurrence of the iterative and perfective in immediate future, near future, intermediate future and remote future using the verb rem–a 'cut'.

17 (a) a-la-rem-a-rem-e-ra   mama   ɔmusaːla
      3SG-FUT-cut-FV-cut-FV-PRF   mother   tree
      'He/she will cut a tree for mother frequently' (immediate future)

  (b) aβa-siani   na-βa-rem-a-rem-e-re   mama   ɔmusaːla
      SM–boys   FUT–3PL–cut–FV–cut–FV–PRF   mother   tree
      'Boys will cut a tree for mother frequently' (near future)

  (c) ja-xa-rem-a-rem-e-re   mama   ɔmusaːla
      3SG-FUT-cut-FV-cut-FV-PRF   mother   tree
      'He/she will cut a tree for mother frequently' (intermediate future)

  (d) a-li-rem-a-rem-e-ra   mama   ɔmusaːla
      3SG-FUT-cut-FV-cut-FV-PRF   mother   tree
      'He/she will cut a tree for mother frequently' (remote future)

There is co-occurrence of iterative and perfective in immediate future example (17a). In

these instances, the future tense marker is -la while the perfective marker is -ra. Example (17b) is the cooccurrence iterative and perfective in the near future and the future tense marker is na- and the perfective marker is -re. As illustrated in (17c) the co-occurrence of iterative and perfective in intermediate future and the future tense marker here is -xa- and perfective marker is -re. In (17d) is the cooccurrence of iterative and perfective in remote future where the future tense marker is –li- and the perfective marker is -ra. In all the cases above, verb reduplication marks the iterative.

Co-occurrence of the iterative and the imperfective Aspect
The combination of the iterative and the imperfective can be expressed in the present, past and future tenses. The iterative and the imperfective in the present is marked by verb reduplication for the iterative aspect, and the morpheme -nga and -nɟia for imperfective aspect with a zero-morpheme marking the present time. This is exemplified in (18) below:

18 (a) a-βaj-a-βaj-a-nga   ɔmupira
      3SG-play-FV-play-FV-IPFV   ball
      'He/she is playing ball repeatedly'
   (b) βa-tex-a-tex-a-nga   amapwɔni
       3PL-cook-FV-cook-FV-IPFV-FV   potatoes
       'They are cooking potatoes repeatedly'

In the above examples, the iterative and imperfective aspect in the present are formed by the present tense marked by a zero morpheme and the verbs -βaya- and -texa- reduplicated to mark the iterative. The morpheme -nga which is an imperfective aspect marker is suffixed on the verb.

The imperfective morpheme -nga/-nge/-nɟe- with the SAM marking the past combines with the iterative which is formed by the reduplication of the verb root to mark the iterative and the imperfective in the past. This is exemplified in (19) below:

19 (a) ja-xa-lɔl-a-lɔl-a-nga   eβiʃienɔ
      3SG-IPT-see-FV-see-FV-IPFV   ghosts
      'He/she has been seeing devils repeatedly' (immediate past)
   (b) ja-lɔl-a-lɔlil-e-nɟe   eβiʃienɔ
       3SG-see-FV-see-FV-IPFV   ghosts
       'He/she was seeing ghosts repeatedly' (near past)
   (c) βa-lɔl-a-lɔ-la-nga   eβiʃienɔ
     3PL-see-FV-see-FV-IPFV   ghosts
     'They were seeing ghosts repeatedly' (remote past)

Example (19a) illustrates a combination of iterative and imperfective in the immediate past, (19b) shows the near past while (19c) shows the same combination in remote past (Distant past). The iterative and the imperfective in the future are marked by a combination

of the future marker, verb reduplication for iterative aspect and the imperfective marker nga/-nɟia/-nɟe. This can be illustrated in (20) below:

20 (a) mama   a-la-ʃin-a-ʃin-a-nga
       mother   3SG-IMF-dance-FV-dance-FV-IPFV
     'Mother will be dancing repeatedly' (immediate future)
     (b) aβa-ndu   na-βa-ʃin-a-ʃin-e-nɟe
       PL-person   N.FUT-AuxV-dance-FV-dance-FV-IPFV
     'People will be dancing repeatedly' (near future)
     (c) βa-li-ʃin-a-ʃin-a-nga
       3PL-RFUT-dance-FV-dance-FV-IPFV
     'They will be dancing repeatedly' (remote future)

The sentences in (20a), (20b) and (20c) illustrate the co-occurrence of the iterative and the imperfective aspects in the immediate, near and remote future, respectively.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed the aspectual categories in Lutsotso. The aspects that have been discussed include the perfective, imperfective, habitual and iterative. The discussion has revealed that the perfectives and the imperfectives are morphologically marked. The imperfective is marked by the morpheme -nga/-nɟia while the perfective is marked by the morpheme -re/-je. The analysis in this paper has also revealed that habitual in Lutsotso is marked by the morpheme -nga/-nge. The iterative is marked by reduplication of the verb root. The iterative can co-occur with the habitual, iterative perfective and imperfective aspects.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Disclaimer Statement

This paper data from a thesis titled 'A Morpho-Syntactic Analysis of Tense and Aspect in Lutsotso' submitted to Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Department of Language and Literature Education for the award of Master's degree in Applied Linguistics. Supervisors: Dr. David Barasa and Dr. Atichi Alati.

Author Bionote

Hellen Odera, MA Applied Linguistics, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. David Barasa is a Lecturer and Coordinator for Research and Publications at the Department of Language and Literature Education, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. He has a PhD in Linguistics from the University of Cape Town. His research is on the fields of Linguistics and Communication Studies, with special reference to phonology, morphology, language documentation, language policy analysis, language contact and variation, and multilingualism.

References

Angogo, R. (1983). *Unity in diversity: A linguistic survey of the Abaluyia of Western Province.* Afro-Publishers.

Appleby, L. L. (1961). *First Luya Grammar with Exercises*. The East African Literature Bureau.

Barasa, D. (2015). The Inflectional forms of tense and aspect in Ateso. *The University of Nairobi journal of Language and Linguistics, 4,* 82-102.

Comrie, B. (1985). *Tense.* Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. (1997). *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics* (Vol. 30). John Wiley & Sons.

DeCarrico, J. S. (2000). The Structure of English: Studies in Form and Language Teaching. The University of Michigan Press.

Eberhard, D. M., Simons, G. F., & Fennig, C. D. (Eds.). (2019). Ethnologue: Languages of the World. (Twenty-second edition). *SIL International.* Retrieved from http://www. ethnologue.com

Fromkin V. (2013). *An introduction to language.* (JM Flaherty, Ed.). Boston: Cengage Learning.

Givon T. (2001). *Syntax: An Introduction.* John Benjamins Publishing Company

Okombo, D. O (2000). "Building Techniques in African Languages", in V. Webb and S. Kembo (Eds.). *African Voices: An Introduction to the Languages and Linguistics of Africa.* (pp. 197- 219). New York: Oxford University Press.

Payne, T.E. (1997). *Describing Morphosyntax: A guide for field Linguistics.* Cambridge University Press.

Sikuku, J. (1998). The morphosyntactic structure of Lubukusu anaphoric relations. Government and Binding Approach. Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Moi University.