

Tense and aspect in Lamnso'

Lenzemo Constantine Yuka

Abstract: Yuka (1997) has identified three broad tenses in Lamnso'. A closer look at these tenses and their specification of time reference will reveal a more complex tense structure of multiple past and future time allusions that distinguish different degrees of remoteness to the past and future tense categories. This paper seeks to determine the various degrees of remoteness to a given tense category exhibited in Lamnso'. The paper investigates the relative relationship(s) between a tense marker that denotes the time of an action and the time reference preceding or following that action within the clause. It also examines aspect, interpreted as the way of conceiving the flow of an event (Comrie, 1975). This study identifies seven tense forms for Lamnso' (P₃, P₂, P₁, P₀, F₁, F₂ and F₃), which specify time distinctions from the remote past (P₃) to the remote future (F₃) and three aspect forms. These ten tense and aspect forms combine with distinctive tones and time adverbials to derive a time reference structure whose cut-off points are sometimes fluid and non-rigid.

Key words: Lamnso', tense and aspect, tone, clauses, temporal distance