

Tense and aspect in kihavu: the language of the Nkombo Island

Kahutu, Pascal

<http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke:8080/xmlui/handle/123456789/18531>

Date: 2004

Abstract:

The study focused on the nature of tense and aspect in verbal expressions. It sought to find out whether tense and aspect systems are overtly marked, and what could be the role of tonal distinctions. It tried to make a precise description of the meanings and functions of verbal affixes and the relation between them. The language that was described was Kihavu, and the sample was composed of five hundred sentence constructions (simple and complex). Those constructions were obtained from interviews conducted on the Nkombo Island and at the National University of Rwanda. In order to ensure of the existence of high and low tones, the data were both written down and recorded on tapes. They were then analyzed within the framework of descriptive linguistics. The findings indicated that there are three possible ways in which tense and aspect in Kihavu are realized: a. through morphological inflection b. through the use of tonal distinctions, which are supra-segmental features c. through the use of modal auxiliaries and temporal adverbs, which are lexical elements. They also indicated that aspect in Kihavu is always overtly marked, whereas tense is not