Persistive in Luruuli/Lunyara
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This paper deals with persistive aspect in Luruuli/Lunyara. Luruuli/Lunyara is a Bantu language (Niger-Congo) spoken in the central region of Uganda by 160 000 people.

As many Bantu languages, Luruuli/Lunyara has a rich tense-aspect-system. One of the typologically interesting categories is the persistive aspect. The persistive expresses a situation that 'has held continuously since an implicit or explicit point in the past up to the time of speaking' (Nurse 2008:145). In many languages the persistive aspect is expressed lexically, for example, in English it is expressed with the adverb still, e.g. We were buying bananas and we still are (Nurse 2008:146). The persistive aspect is widespread in Bantu languages and it is expressed morphologically as a prefix on a verb, e.g. -ki- (Nurse & Philippson 2003, Nurse 2008). In the general linguistic literature, the persistive does not occur frequently, and it is rather considered as a tense category, for example, in Comrie (1985). According to Nurse (2008), the persistive has to be treated as an aspect rather than a tense category. Persistive can take its 'temporal point of reference the tense mentioned or understood elsewhere in the utterance, and this point frequently not the present.' More often, however, the persistive does not have a time reference and can be combined with different tenses, which is, according to Nurse (2008:123-124) is typical for an aspect rather than a tense category.

The persistive aspect in Luruuli/Lunyara is expressed by prefix -ku/-kya-. I will consider the persistive in Lurruli/Lunyara as an aspect rather than a tense category. As in other Bantu languages, the persistive can be combined with different tenses, for example, it is combinable with habitual (1) and also with perfective. However, most of the time the persistive is used without any specific time reference (2).

(1) a-ku-kob-a-nga e-saawa zini a-kya-li mu topu kilasi
3sgS-PERS-say-FV-HAB AUG-time(9) this 3sgS-PERS-be &-LOC top class(9)
'She says, at this time, she is still in top class'.

(2) Omwana a-iz-a ku-bba-a a-sumbirw-a a-kya-li mu-to
child(1) 3sgS-go-FV INF-be-FV 3sgS-marry-FV 3sgS-PERS-be 1-young
'The child will marry while still young.'

The persistive marker occurs with all verbs and is frequently used in the different genres, e.g. conversations, narration, etc. In this paper I will present the function and semantics of persistive aspect based on corpus. Many constructions with persistive marker are often translated by native speakers as ordinary progressive. Interestingly, the persistive -ku/-kya- can be used also with stative verbs such as 'be', 'have', 'want/need/love/like' and have only persistive meaning. The question arises here whether the persistive also take the function of progressive? How often it occurs in the corpus as progressive?

Bibliography: