

**AN ANALYSIS OF TEMPORAL RELATIONS IN LANGUAGES:  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MANDARIN AND ISIXHOSA**

**A THESIS**

**Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of**

**MASTER OF ARTS  
of  
RHODES UNIVERSITY**

**By**

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**January 2013**

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## **Abstract**

This study sought to investigate how temporal relations are expressed in Mandarin and isiXhosa. The objective was to compare how two typologically distinct languages, one isolating and the other agglutinating, cope with the encoding of situations that occur at different positions on the time line. Data was drawn from questionnaire responses from, and interviews with, isiXhosa speakers who provided translations of a wide range of sentences from English into isiXhosa.

The study revealed that isiXhosa relies on the grammatical category – tense – to encode temporal relations, while Mandarin relies more on lexical and pragmatic devices – the use of temporal adverbials and the implication of aspectual markings – to locate a situation on the time line. Typically, each sentence in isiXhosa must be marked for tense: temporal adverbials are optional elements and used to more precisely locate the situation on the time line. By contrast, in Mandarin, temporal adverbials have a more central function in that they independently express different positions on the time line: without temporal adverbials, it is extremely difficult to locate a situation on the time line in some sentences.

Another important difference between the two languages was revealed in this study: isiXhosa grammar allows speakers to talk about situations in terms of their distance (past or future) from the speech time whereas Mandarin grammar allows its

speakers to talk about situations in terms of the internal properties (e.g. completed, ongoing, etc.) of those situations.

The study revealed that isiXhosa and Mandarin are similar in one important respect: both languages have no formal properties, i.e. overt tense markers (isiXhosa) and compulsory temporal adverbials or other temporal devices (Mandarin) for marking the temporal location of present situations. The study also revealed that both languages encode 'pastness' in terms of whether or not the effects of the situation in question still remain at speech time.

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## Abbreviation

CLAS: Classifier

COMPL: Completive Aspect

DCC: Descriptive Copulative Concord

DET: Determiner

DUR: Durative Aspect

EMP: Emphatic Mood Particle

EXP: Experiential Aspect

FU: Future Time

FUT: Future Tense

FV: Final Vowel

GEN: Genitive

IPFV: Imperfective Aspect

LOC: Locative

PERS: Persistentive Aspect

PM: Participial Mood

PRF: perfect

PROG: Progressive Aspect

PS: Past Time

PSP: Past Particle

PST: Past Tense

RC: Relative Concord

RS: Relative Suffix

SC: Subject Concord

VP: Verb Phrase

## **Acknowledgements**

A great many people have helped me to bring this thesis into being. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone.

To my supervisor Professor Ron Simango who has been unfailingly insightful and helpful with his questions and suggestions, and has guided, assisted and motivated me in doing this research.

To Professor Yue Ma, Professor Marius Vermaak and Professor Russell Kachula who gave me untiring encouragement and valuable advice.

To Dr. Tu Huynh, MS Alex John and Miss Bilian Zheng who willingly checked my English.

To Miss Nandi Fumbata, Dr. Pamela Maseko, Mrs Bulelwa Nosilela and Mrs Ntosh Mazwi, and all other isiXhosa participants who provided me with the needed data.

To Mrs. Angela Barberton who made me feel at home in a country that is completely different from my homeland.

And last but not the least, my gratitude goes to my loving family for spurring me on at all times to pursue my dreams to reach new academic heights.

## DECLARATION

I the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work and has not, in its entirety or part, been submitted at any university for a degree.

**SIGNED:**.....

**DATE:** .....

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background

All languages have a way of locating the time in which a situation occurs. Linguistic references to time can take multiple forms some of which are shared across languages and others are unique to a particular language (Levinson, 1983). On the one hand, temporal relations can be lexically indicated, such as by using temporal adverbials. Probably all languages have temporal adverbials that locate situations in time (Comrie, 1976). On the other hand, grammatical ways for expressing temporal relations can be achieved through tense and aspect. Tense, marked either by the verb morphology, or by grammatical words (i.e., the auxiliaries and particles) adjacent to the verb, directly shows the location of situations on the time line relative to the time of speech. Aspect, however, which indicates the internal temporal constituency of a situation (Comrie, 1976:5), can give pragmatic cues to the temporal location of situations in tenseless languages like Mandarin (Smith and Erbaugh, 2005).

The expression of temporal relations, in particular by means of tense and aspect has been well explored in Indo-European languages like English and Russian. Unlike Indo-European languages, studies on temporal relations in Sino-Tibetan languages like Mandarin are not so elaborate. While many linguists have focused their attention on aspect (Li, 1924; Dragunov; 1952; Yakhontov, 1959; Wang, 1981; Zhang, 1998; Li, 2002; Wang, 1943; Gao, 1948; Li & Thompson, 1981), there are still many disagreements. For example, the issue of whether Mandarin is a tense language has been debated for a long time and has not been resolved. In Bantu languages like

isiXhosa, studies on temporal references are far and few between. Most of the available literature dates back to the period between the 1930's and the 1960's (e.g. Doke & D. Litt, 1931; McLaren, 1936; Bennie, 1939; Louw, 1963). In the recent years, some grammar books on isiXhosa have emerged (Janet, Wilson, 1994; Beverly & Silvia, 1999; Dowling, 2006). These grammar books, however, do not provide systematic accounts on temporal expressions. More importantly, there are no studies that specifically compare Mandarin with isiXhosa with respect to the expression of temporal relations.

This study seeks to compare two languages, Mandarin and isiXhosa, that are typologically very distinct from one another so as to draw out the differences and similarities that may exist between the languages with respect to the expression of temporal relations. This study in a way falls within the domain of semantics and syntax more broadly, as it examines the categories of temporal relations as well as the meaning of these categories. It also falls within the field of comparative linguistics as it seeks to examine a single phenomenon across two linguistic systems. Such a study will fill a knowledge gap and enrich the literature on IsiXhosa and Mandarin linguistics.

## **1.2 Temporal References in Mandarin**

Mandarin belongs to the Sino-Tibetan language family that also includes Tibeto-Burman languages (Ethnologue). The Sino-Tibetan language family consists of languages that are morphologically isolating or analytic. What this means is that languages in this family do not have inflections and words tend to consist of monosyllabic units (Comrie, 1989). Mandarin is characterized by the two significant features: the lack of morphological inflection and the richness of function words like particles and auxiliaries (Ye & Xu, 1997). There are no inflections expressing

grammatical categories like person, number and case. Prefixes and suffixes are rare in Mandarin. As a result, there are a large number of functional words that fulfill the syntactic role (Wang, 1943; Gao, 1948; Chao, 1968). These features of the language have shaped the ways that Mandarin expresses temporal location of situations. Generally, Mandarin uses temporal particles, auxiliaries, adverbials and aspectual marking to locate a given situation on the time line.

In Mandarin, there are two temporal particles, that is, *de* and *láizhe*, and one auxiliary, that is, *yào*, which can be used to indicate temporal location of situations. Specifically, the temporal particles *de* and *láizhe* indicate that a situation occurred in the past, as shown in the examples (1) and (2):

(1) Wǒ zài luódésī dàxué xué de hàn yǔ.  
I LOC Rhodes University learn PSP Chinese  
'I learned Chinese at Rhodes University.'

(2) Wǒ zài kàn shū láizhe.  
I PROG read book PSP  
'I was reading a book.'

In (1) and (2), the presence of *de* and *láizhe* show that the events <I learn Chinese at Rhodes University> and <I read a book> occurred in the past. The temporal auxiliary *yào*, on the other hand, indicates that a situation will occur in the future, as illustrated below:

(3) Tiān yào rè le.  
Weather FU hot PRF  
'It will be hot.'

In (3), the presence of the auxiliary *yào* locates the state <It be hot> in future time.

Mandarin has various aspects, including the imperfective aspect that is subdivided into the progressive and durative aspects and the perfective aspect that is subdivided into the completive and experiential aspects. There are two imperfective markers *zài* and *zhe* which indicate that a situation is in progress at the reference time. In the absence of straightforward temporal references for expressing temporal location of situations, situations marked by *zài* or *zhe* are assumed to be anchored at the time of speech, as shown below:

(4) Lǐ jiàoshòu zài jiāo kǎosà yǔ.  
Li Prof. PROG teach Xhosa language  
'Prof. Li is teaching isiXhosa.'

(5) Siphō zài ménkǒu zhàn zhe.  
Siphō LOC doorway stand DUR  
'Siphō is standing in the doorway.'

In (4) and (5), no overt temporal references appears and the two situations marked by *zài* and *zhe* respectively are assumed to be located right at speech time.

The completive marker *le* indicates that a situation has been completed in its entirety - with a beginning, middle and end - before reference time. The experiential marker *guo* expresses the idea that a situation has been experienced at least once before reference time. In the absence of other temporal devices, situations marked by the perfective marker *le* or the experiential aspect *guo* are assumed to be located in the past. Consider the following two sentences:

(6) Wǒ huà le yī fú huà.  
I draw COMPL a CLAS painting  
'I drew a painting.'

(7) Wǒ bàba qù guo Zhōngguó.

I father go EXP China  
'My father has been to China.'

In (6) and (7), the presence of *le* and *guo* gives the two sentences an implication of the past meaning.

In addition to the temporal particles, auxiliaries and aspectual markers mentioned above, temporal adverbials play a significant role in expressing temporal location of situations. There are numerous sentences that just contain a specific temporal adverbial with no other temporal references or grammatical markers. In such sentences, temporal adverbials give direct information about the temporal location of situations. For example, a sentence such as (8) contains no temporal particles, temporal auxiliaries or aspectual markers, and the temporal adverbial *zuótiān* 'yesterday' locates the state described in the past.

(8) Zuótiān tiānqì hěn rè.  
Yesterday weather very hot  
'It was very hot yesterday.'

In this sentence, the past interpretation arises from the presence of the temporal adverbial *zuótiān* 'yesterday'. If this temporal adverbial is absent, the sentence would mean that it is hot at the time of speech or that it is always hot.

### **1.3 Temporal References in IsiXhosa**

IsiXhosa, in contrast to Mandarin, is an agglutinating language. It belongs to the Nguni group (S.40) of the Bantu language family, which includes isiNdebele, siSwati and isiZulu as well (Ethnologue). Bantu languages have a high degree of synthesis in forming words. The morphemes of a word are joined in a manner which usually

clearly shows their grammatical functions (Encyclopedia Britannica, 3:135-7). Syntactic functions are primarily expressed by making use of prefixes and suffixes. A noun usually contains a prefix that changes according to noun classes. A verb in Bantu languages is made of a stem to which prefixes and suffixes are attached. Grammatical categories, such as tense, aspect, negation, and mood are either prefixed or suffixed to the verb stem (Encyclopedia Britannica, 3:135-7). In Bantu languages, tense does not merely indicate that a situation is located before, after or at the time of speech, but it also indicates the remoteness and recentness of the situations in relation to the time of speech (Nurse & Philippson, 2003).

In isiXhosa, tense is reflected in the variety of affixes attached to the verb or is marked by auxiliaries. The tenses reveal the time at which an event or state occurs. For example,

- (9) Ndi-fik-e                    e-Rhini.  
SC-arrive-PST    LOC-Grahamstown  
'I arrived/have arrived in Grahamstown.'
- (10) Ndi-za ku-fik-a            e-Rhini.  
SC-FUT-arrive-FV    LOC-Grahamstown  
'I will arrive in Grahamstown.'

In (9), the suffix *-e* attached to the verb stem *fik-* 'arrive' indicates that the speaker arrived in Grahamstown in the past, whereas in (10), *-za ku-* locates the event of arriving in Grahamstown in the future. While the tense system is rather complicated and rich, the aspectual system is seemingly not as rich. For instance, there is no particular grammatical form for expressing the ongoing nature of present situations in isiXhosa – a feature which is illustrated in section 4.1.2 below.

## 1.4 Research Questions

As noted above, Mandarin and isiXhosa are two typologically distinct languages, one being an isolating language, and the other an agglutinative language. It is clear that expressions of temporal relations in Mandarin are different from those used in isiXhosa in syntax and morphology. It seems that the temporal relations in isiXhosa are more grammaticalized than in Mandarin which relies heavily on the lexicon to locate situations in the time line. The interesting question is whether there is much variation in the two languages from a semantic point of view. That is, how is the same situation such as (11) expressed in Mandarin and isiXhosa respectively?

(11) <Sipho eat his meal at the time of speech>

In the two languages, how is the 'present' location of this ongoing event expressed? In other words, whether is the 'present location' formally marked and is the ongoing nature of an event grammatically encoded in both languages? This thesis thus aims to answer the following questions:

- (i) How are temporal relations in isiXhosa and Mandarin expressed?
- (ii) To what extent are the ways of expressing temporal relations in the two languages different from or similar to each other?

To answer these questions it was necessary to collect a variety of sentences in IsiXhosa and Mandarin covering a range of temporal relations and to compare them in order to draw out the devices that express temporal relations in the two languages.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Previous Studies on Temporal Expressions**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a survey of previous studies on the ways in which temporal relations are expressed in Mandarin and isiXhosa. In particular, it focuses on descriptions of grammatical (e.g. tense, aspect, temporal particles and auxiliaries) and lexical devices (e.g. temporal adverbials) for indicating temporal relations in these languages and how they have been characterized by researchers. The purpose of discussing these studies is to bring them together, so that an informed comparison between the two languages can be made. Before doing that, it is necessary to first review how the subject of temporal relations has been examined by linguists generally.

#### **2.2 Studies on Temporal References**

As it has already been indicated, linguistic provision for expressing time is reflected partly at the lexical level and partly at the grammatical (i.e morphological and syntactic) level. The main linguistic forms with temporal values are tense and time adverbial (Smith, 1981). At the grammatical level, tense locates situations either at speech time, or prior to or subsequent to speech time (Comrie, 1985) and temporal adverbials lexically specify the time of a situation (Klein, 1992). In addition to tense and temporal adverbials, aspect can give an implication for the temporal location of situations in tenseless languages like Mandarin (Smith and Erbaugh, 2005) and situation type “suggests the particular way in which that verb presupposes and involves the notion of time” (Vendler, 1957:143). However, the approach to express

temporal relations varies from one language to another. For instance, tense is obligatory in an English sentences and temporal adverbials occur optionally (Smith, 1981:215), while in Mandarin temporal adverbial is obligatory in some circumstances. Most of the literature on temporal relations focuses on tense and aspect. This is perhaps because tense and aspect seem to be more complex, and, therefore, more interesting for linguistic analysis than temporal adverbials.

### **2.2.1 Tense**

Comrie (1985:9-12) defines tense as the 'grammaticalisation of the location in time', and he points out that tense is indicated either by the verb morphology or by grammatical words adjacent to the verb. Tense is deictic in nature; the deictic centre (or the reference point) is usually the time of speech. That is, tense indicates situation-external time (Comrie, 1976:5); tense is thus a grammaticalized mechanism that relates speech time to the time at which a situation occurs. Comrie (1985:36) claims that there are three basic tenses that are referred to as the present, past and future tense. Present tense indicates that a situation occurs at speech time; past tense a situation occurs before speech time and future tense a situation occurs after speech time. These temporal relations are abstract notions and different languages may cluster them in different ways by the use of tense markings, the result of which may be the occurrence of different tense forms in different languages, or specific tense forms conveying different meanings in different languages (Comrie, 1985; Simango, 2003).

Some linguists disagree with Comrie's viewpoint regarding the reference time for tense. For example, Klein (1992, 2000) disputes that tense indicates a relationship between speech time and situation time. Klein asserts that tense indicates the relationship between the time of utterance (or speech time) and the topic time for

which an assertion is made, rather than the relationship between speech time and situation time. Although Klein offers an alternative to Comrie's view, he does not point out what topic time clearly is. This study will adopt Comrie's definition of tense. In the languages that have tense, a situation must be marked by a specific tense in a sentence. Tense markers tend to be obligatory and all tense markers in one language fit into a coherent system.

Different languages divide up time differently; different languages therefore have a different number of tenses. Taking the Bantu languages as an example, there are five typical tenses, namely remote past, immediate past, present, immediate future and remote future (Doke, 1954:52). Some languages may have more than five tenses. Haya, for example, has a tense system with six varieties of tense that are referred to as the far past tense that represents a situation that occurred before yesterday, middle past tense that represents a situation that occurred yesterday, near past tense that represents a situation that occurred very recently (so recently that it forms an extension of the present), present tense that represents a situation that occurs at the speech time, near future tense that represents a situation which is going to occur today or tomorrow and remote future tense that represents a situation that will occur after tomorrow (Nurse & Muzale, 1999: 517-544). On the other hand, some languages, such as Mandarin, lack tense markings: that is, they do not have overt tense morphology (Wang, 1943: 311).

### **2.2.2 Aspect**

In contrast to tense, aspect shows situation-internal time, that is, "different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency" (Comrie, 1976:3). Aspect is indicated by inflectional affixes on verbs or grammatical words that serve as grammatically required aspectual markers (Binnick, 1991). Aspect is non-deictic since the internal

temporal constituency of a situation is independent of the relation to any other point in time (Comrie, 1985:14). Comrie (1976:16-25) divides aspect into perfective and imperfective aspect; the latter is further subdivided into habitual and continuous aspects. Perfective aspect indicates “the view of a situation as a single whole, without distinction of the various separate phases that make up that situation”, whereas, imperfective aspect “pays essential attention to the internal structure of the situation” (Comrie, 1976:16). Therefore, perfective aspect very frequently indicates a completed situation with beginning, middle and end. The imperfective on the other hand refers to a situation that is in progress (Comrie, 1976:18-19). While Comrie holds this view, Klein (2000) asserts that aspect expresses a relation between situation time (T-SIT) and topic time (TT). For Klein, in the imperfective aspect, topic time is fully included in situation time while in the perfective aspect, topic time includes situation time. Although Comrie and Klein present different notions of aspect, in essence, they both share the view that the imperfective aspect expresses a situation from its interior, not as a whole, and the perfective aspect expresses a situation as a single whole, from the outside.

The distinction between perfective and imperfective aspect is fundamental to many languages, especially Slavic languages (Richardson, 2007). More importantly, in different languages, there may be different aspects, and the same aspect can have different meanings in different languages (see Comrie, 1976). Examples can be observed through K'iche and Mandarin. K'iche which is spoken in Guatemala has the inflectional prefixes *k-* and *x-* to indicate the incompletive and completive aspects (Binnick, 1991). Mandarin has the perfective, experiential, durative stative and durative progressive aspects marked by *le*, *guo*, *zhe* and *zài* respectively (Li and Sandra, 1981:184-237). There are, however, some languages that do not have aspect, and distinctions that are equivalent to aspect are indicated by the use of adverbs or other syntactic constructions (Gabriele, 2008).

Linguists have also been interested in cases whereby a situation is described as consisting of more than one point or time span. The perfect is one such example. Some linguists consider the perfect as aspect and others consider it as tense. Comrie (1976:52-6) regards the perfect as aspect and he asserts that “the perfect expresses the continuing present relevance of a past situation” illustrated by contrasting the English sentences *I have lost my penknife* (Perfect) which implies that the penknife is still lost and *I lost my penknife* which does not have such implication. Comrie (1976:51) points out that the perfect expresses a relation between the time of the resulting state of a prior situation and the time of that prior situation; thus, it simultaneously encodes the present and the past. Other linguists like Bennett & Partee (1972), Dowty (1979), and Richards & Heny (1982) share the similar opinion that “the perfect serves to locate an event within a period of time that belongs in the past and extends up to the present moment” (Dowty, 1979:341).

### **2.2.3 Situation Type**

The temporal properties of a verb phrase, according to Vendler (1957) and Dowty (1979), include the dynamicity, durativity and telicity. Dynamicity involves whether a situation consists of a series of heterogeneous stages or a situation is homogeneous from the start to the endpoint. For instance, <eat an apple> is dynamic since eating an apple consists of various acts like biting, chewing and swallowing while <Mary love Siphos> is stative since it does not concern changes in process. A situation that occurs over a time span is durative, while a situation that occurs at a moment is instantaneous. For instance, <Siphos sleep> is durative since sleeping can hold for some period while <Siphos break a vase> is instantaneous since the beginning and the end of breaking a vase happen at once. Telicity, also called boundedness, refers to whether or not a situation has a built-in endpoint. For instance, <Mary sing one song> is telic as it has built-in endpoint regardless of the length of time, while a

situation that does not have any built-in endpoint is atelic, such as the example <Mary run> that can be ended at any time.

Based on these temporal properties, Vendler (1957) proposes the important fourfold classification of situation types, which is further developed by Kenny (1963) and Dowty (1979), as presented in Table1:

Table1: Situation Types

	[stative]	[durative]	[telic]
State	+	+	-
Activity	-	+	-
Accomplishment	-	+	+
Achievement	-	-	+

As indicated in the above table, Vendler’s model contains four situation types (i.e., state, activity, accomplishment and achievement) that correspond with the temporal properties of verbs. Kenny (1963) recognizes accomplishment and achievement as the same type which is named as performance.

However, Klein (2000) points out that Vendler’s schemata, which just talks about the time of a situation merely from verbs is a gross oversimplification. In Klein’s view, some properties, such as the qualitative and spatial properties, assigned to by the arguments are relative to temporal intervals. This critique is not entirely true since Vendler in fact does consider the effect of argument in terms of situation type. For

example, Vendler regards <run> as an activity, whereas if an argument like *one mile* appears, then <run a mile> is classified as an accomplishment.

Verb properties and situation type as discussed here are connected to aspect and tense in two ways: first, the verb's properties and situation types are important in instances when aspectual and tense markers are absent; and, second, the verb's properties and situation types must be compatible with aspectual and tense markers when they are present. For example, in Yoruba, in the absence of overt aspectual markers, stative verbs have an imperfective meaning while non-stative verbs have a perfective meaning (Comrie, 1976:82). In Mandarin, different situation types combined with the sentence-final *le* have different interpretations. Ljungqvist (2003) states that when the sentence-final *le* occurs with stative verbs, it often has an inchoative reading; when it occurs with an activity verb, it indicates that an activity has been terminated but its result still holds at the speech time.

These studies show that the temporal properties of a verb phrase and situations types need to be subsumed in terms of temporal expression. A detailed discussion about situation type in Mandarin and isiXhosa is beyond the scope of this study; therefore, I will only highlight the areas that seem to affect the temporal expression, especially aspect. For the purposes of this study, I will adopt Vendler's (1957) and Dowty's (1979) characterization of situation types with the caveat that adjuncts should not be taken into account when situation types are examined.

#### **2.2.4 Temporal Adverbials**

Comrie (1976) asserts that most languages can lexicalize time reference, that is, have temporal adverbials that locate situation in time. Combinations of tense and time adverbial form temporal expressions (Smith, 1981:217). Temporal adverbials may be formed by prepositional phrases, noun phrases, temporal adverbs or temporal

clauses (Lü, 1943). Most of these mechanisms, particularly temporal clauses, are potentially open-end. Speakers may create a variety of temporal adverbials according to the requirement of communications. Klein (1992) claims that temporal adverbials easily specify the time of a situation. Temporal adverbials like *yesterday* serve to specify the position of a time span on the time axis; temporal adverbials like *for a week* specify the duration of a time span, and temporal adverbials like *every day* specify the frequency of time spans. In order to compare expressions of temporal relations in Mandarin and isiXhosa, it is impossible not to discuss or, at least, mention temporal adverbials as it is widely accepted that Mandarin relies heavily on temporal adverbials to express time (e.g. Wang, 1943 and Gao, 1948). However, this study only focuses on the function of temporal adverbials in the expression of temporal relations and “the relative weight assigned to the lexicon and to the grammar in establishing location in time” (Comrie, 1985:7) in the two languages.

With these general observations, let me turn my attention to the specific studies on the temporal mechanisms that exist in Mandarin and isiXhosa.

### **2.3 ‘Tense’, Aspect and Other Temporal References in Mandarin**

Studies on temporal relations in Mandarin have primarily focused on aspect and ‘tense’. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the primary debate in these studies has been whether or not Mandarin has tense. Some linguists assert that Mandarin does have tense (Li, 1924; Dragunov; 1952; Yakhontov, 1959; Wang, 1981; Zhang, 1998; Li, 2002), while others argue that Mandarin is tenseless (e.g. Wang, 1943; Gao, 1948; Li & Thompson, 1981). However, as I shall discuss later in this section, there are other temporal considerations beyond this dominant debate – e.g., the function

of *láizhe* and *de*, as well as the auxiliary *yào* – that one should consider in discussing whether or not a language has tense.

### 2.3.1 ‘Tense’/Aspect in Mandarin

The two main assertions made by those linguists who claim that there is tense in Mandarin are: (i) that temporal adverbials are the markers of tense and (ii) that *zhe*, *le* and *guo* are the markers of tense. Li (1924), Wang (1981) and Gong (1995) take temporal adverbials as tense markers. Specifically, Wang (1981) asserts that there are five tenses that are referred to as the indefinite past, near past, present, near future and indefinite future tense, which are all marked by temporal adverbs. Others who also maintain that Mandarin is a tense language consider particles like *le* and *guo* as tense markers (Dragunov, 1952; Zhang, 1957; Yakhontov, 1959; Zhang, 1998 and Li, 2002). Most of these linguists share the basic idea that *le* and *guo* are not merely aspect markers, but are also markers of past tense. Ross (1995), for example, views the verbal *le* as a marker of past tense. Zhang (1957:155-160) claims that Mandarin has the indefinite tense marked by a zero morph, the perfect marked by *le* indicating that an event has been completed before the reference time, the present progressive marked by *ne* indicating that an event is ongoing at the reference time and the past progressive tense indicating that an event was ongoing before the reference time. These scholars have noted that the three particles *zhe*, *le* and *guo* play a role in expressing temporal location in Mandarin; however, they do not clearly distinguish aspect from tense. As mentioned earlier in this section, aspectual markers can give pragmatic cues to temporal location of situations, but they differ from tense markers that directly locate the location of situations on the time line.

As for those linguists who argue that Mandarin is tenseless, they have two arguments: (i) though temporal adverbials may play an important role in expressing

temporal location, adverbials are lexical in nature and cannot be linked to the 'grammaticalization of time'; and (ii) grammatically, Mandarin focuses on aspect, rather than tense. Lü (1943) says that temporal location of situations in Mandarin is largely expressed by temporal adverbials, covering temporal adverbs and temporal phrases which include the prepositional phrase and noun phrase. Among those temporal adverbials, there are at least 120 principal temporal adverbs in Mandarin (Zhou, 2010). Gao (1948: 29-31) classifies the temporal adverb into four categories that are referred to as the present, past, future and indefinite temporal adverbs. Temporal adverbials play an important role in expressing temporal location in Mandarin; however all the three scholars (Lü, 1943; Gao, 1948 and Zhou, 2010) do not regard temporal adverbials as tense markers because they are not the 'grammaticalization of time'.

Those who assert that Mandarin does not have tense further point out that the particles *zhe*, *le* and *guo* are aspectual markers, rather than tense makers. There are no grammaticalized references for expressing temporal location of situations in Mandarin (Wang, 1943: 311; Gao, 1948:371; Li & Thompson, 1981:12). Specifically, *zhe* is considered as an imperfective aspect marker indicating that a situation is in progress (Lü, 1980; Zhu, 1982; Liu, 1983; Chen, 1980; Dai, 1991; Lu, 2000). The verbal *le* is accepted as a perfective marker, which indicates that a situation is viewed as a whole, that is, a situation is bounded at the beginning and at the end, without considering its internal structure (Li and Thompson, 1981; Mangione & Li, 1993; Smith, 1997). Chao (1968), Li and Thompson (1981), Smith (1991) and Dai (1997) assert that *guo* is an experiential aspect marker which indicates that an event has been experienced or a state has existed at least at once before reference time. In addition to *zhe*, *le* and *guo* mentioned above, there is another imperfective marker *zài* usually called a progressive marker indicating that events are taking place at the reference time (Li & Thompson, 1981).

Here, we should note that the debate about whether or not the three particles, i.e. *zhe*, *le*, and *guo* are tense markers is mainly centered on the fact that temporal location of situations containing one of the three particles can be determined without any other temporal references. In the absence of any other temporal references, such as temporal adverbials, a situation marked by *zhe* or *zài* is often assumed to be located at speech time; however, a situation marked by *le* or *guo* is usually assumed to be located before speech time. This consequently gives people a strong illusion that the three particles are also tense markers. However, Smith and Erbaugh (2005) claim that the default interpretation locates ongoing events and states in the present, and telic events in the past; the other possibilities are constrained and require additional explicit information. In other words, in a sentence where there is only one of the four markers, the recognition of temporal location of a situation derives from the interrelation between the temporal-internal time and temporal-external time, rather than the meaning of the marker itself. This point will be further discussed later in this study.

### **2.3.2 The Puzzle of the Particle *Le***

Through a review of previous studies on the particle *le* (e.g., Wang, 1943; Chao, 1968; Kwan-Terry, 1979; Lü, 1980; Li and Thompson, 1981; Mangione & Li, 1993 and Smith, 1997), we can obtain two different points of view from Mandarin linguists: (i) there are two different kinds of *le*, the verbal *le* and the sentence-final *le*, which are different from each other syntactically and semantically; and (ii) Mandarin just has one kind of *le* that may occur at different syntactic positions.

Among those who assert that Mandarin has two different kinds of *le*, some regard the verbal *le* as a perfective marker which indicates that a situation is bounded at the beginning and at the end (Li and Thompson, 1981; Mangione & Li, 1993; Smith,

1997); however, others maintain that the verbal *le* is a maker of ‘perfect’ indicating the completion of a situation (Wang, 1943; Gao, 1948; Chao, 1968; Kwan-Terry, 1979; Lü, 1980; Wang, 1981 and Klein, 2000). With regards to the sentence-final *le*, some claim that it indicates the change of a state or the inchoative nature of an event (Chao, 1968; Chan, 1980; Lü, 1980; Melchert, 1980), while Li & Thompson (1981) and Mochizuki (2000) assert that it is a marker of the perfect.

Those who assert that there is only one *le* argue that the same *le* may occur at different syntactic positions — the sentence-final *le* encompasses the whole sentence, while the verbal *le* just the verb. Lin (2003) proposes that the sentence-final *le* is identical to the verbal *le* except that the former implies that the result still holds at the reference time. Ljungqvist (2003) proposes that *le* has a double meaning: a perfective and perfect meaning.

These disagreements are due in part to the ambiguity of *le*, and also to the confusion of concepts, for example, as Mochizuki (2000) has pointed out, the term “*wánchéngshì*” that is used to describe the meaning of the verbal *le* sometimes has the meaning of “perfect”, sometimes the meaning “perfective (or completive)”. Instead of entering the debate, this study will focus on how *le* functions in expressing temporal location of situations. For ease of reference, the terms ‘verbal *le*’ and ‘sentence-final *le*’ are adopted in this study to examine the role that they play in the system of temporal expression in Mandarin.

### **2.3.3 The Particles *Láizhe* and *De***

In addition to the particles *zhe*, *le* and *guo*, Mandarin has the two other particles: *láizhe* and *de*, which are involved in expressing temporal location of situations (Lü, 1980 and Zhang, 2002). While a number of linguists have acknowledged that the temporal particle *láizhe* indicates that a situation occurred in a fairly recent past

(Wang, 1943; Lü, 1980; Chao, 1968; Huang & Liao, 1997; Zhang, 2002), some linguists (e.g. Chen, 2005 and Yang & Wang, 2006) argue that *láizhe* locates a situation in past time without any nuances of recentness. The particle *de* indicates that an event took place in the past (Lü, 1980; Song, 1981 and Zhang, 2002). While many scholars tend to believe *láizhe* and *de* express temporal location of situation, only few linguists regard the two particles as past tense markers (e.g. Li, 1924 and Song, 1981). Linguists, such as Dragunov (1952), Yakhontov (1959), Chao (1968) and Li & Thompson (1981), do not take *láizhe* and *de* into account when they examine whether or not tense exists in Mandarin. This is mainly because *láizhe* and *de* are only used in very specific contexts which will be further discussed in Chapter 4 (2).

#### **2.3.4 The Auxiliary *Yào***

With regard to the auxiliary *yào*, as alluded to at the beginning of this section, some linguists assert that it expresses a situation that will occur in the future (Zhang, 1998; Bai & Shi, 2008 and Zhang & Shi, 2008), but many others disagree (Dragunov, 1952; Yakhontov, 1959; Chao, 1968 and Li and Thompson, 1981). Lü (1980), Ma (1988), and Li & Thompson (1981) claim that *yào* is a modal auxiliary verb that expresses the volition, intention, capability or predication of speakers, meaning ‘want to’ or ‘need to’. The controversy between the future temporal reference and modal construction does not only exist in discussions of Mandarin, but it also exists in general debates on linguistic theory, primarily due to the fact that future situations, in contrast to past and present ones, are more speculative and can be changed by intervening events (Comrie, 1985:41). A sophisticated analysis which is required to reveal whether or not *yào* is a future temporal reference marker will be undertaken in Chapter 4(3).

## **2.4 Tense, Aspect and Other Temporal Devices in IsiXhosa**

It is commonly accepted that isiXhosa has a variety of tenses that are referred to as the remote past, recent past/perfect, present, near future and remote future tense (e.g., McLaren, 1936: 81 and Bennie, 1939: 99), though it is relatively impoverished in contrast to other languages in this family, such as Bamileke which is considered to have no less than ten tenses (Anderson, 1983) and ciCewa which is said to have at least eight tenses (Mtenje, 1987). In addition to the five tenses, the grammatical form marked by *be-* also indicates temporal location of situations while it simultaneously has an imperfective meaning (McLaren, 1936), which makes tense and aspect difficult to distinguish from each other in the language. Lexically, in addition to temporal adverbials, isiXhosa has a special part of speech, the deficient verb, which can indicate the temporal information of a situation.

### **2.4.1 Tense**

Important studies on tense in isiXhosa were conducted by McLaren (1936) and Bennie (1939) and later followed by Mncube (1957), Louw (1963), Riordan et al (1969), Davey (1973) and Du Plessis (1986). These linguists have shown the variety of the tense system found in isiXhosa, including remote past, recent past/perfect, present, near future and remote future tense.

#### **2.4.1.1 Present Tense**

McLaren (1936:82) and Bennie (1939:104) claim that the present tense in isiXhosa indicates that an action is ongoing at the present moment; an action usually takes place, or a state exists at the present. A number of linguists assert that present tense in isiXhosa has two forms -- the short form that is unmarked and the long form that is marked by *-ya-* (McLaren,1936:82; Bennie, 1939:104; Riordan et al, 1969: 91; Louw ,1963: 39; Du Plessis,1986:71-3 and Dowling, 2006: 27). McLaren (1936:82) asserts that the short form is used only when the verb is followed by an object or

“adverbial adjunct”<sup>1</sup>, and that the long form always occurs when the verb appears at the end of a sentence, or when the emphasis is upon the verb even when followed by an “adjunct”. Bennie (1939:104) argues that the short form in isiXhosa is used whenever the emphasis of a sentence is upon the object, and the long form is used whenever the emphasis is on the verb. Riordan et al (1969:91) claim that the long form *-ya-* in isiXhosa generally marks the final word of an utterance; however, for the purpose of throwing special emphasis on the verb or emphasizing the continuous present as against the habitual, it is used with an adverb following, and also it occurs commonly with an object following when an object concord is included. However, Louw (1963: 39) and Dowling (2006: 27) state that the long form and short form of the present tense in isiXhosa are not really distinct in meaning. From the above, we can say that *-ya-* does not refer to temporal location, but the emphatic mood.

#### 2.4.1.2 Past Tense

Nurse and Philippon (2003:99) claim that “statements about past tenses are clearer than statements about ‘present’ and future. Past time and past tenses are generally easier to characterize than non-pasts.” Tense in isiXhosa is one of the typical examples. Past tense is more complex than present and future tenses. It is commonly accepted that there are recent past and remote past tense in isiXhosa (McLaren, 1936:83; Bennie, 1939:104; Riordan et al, 1969: 91; Louw, 1963: 39; Du Plessis, 1986:71-3 and Dowling, 2006: 27). In addition to the two past tenses, the prefix *-be-* can also locate a situation in the past.

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<sup>1</sup> Here it should note that it is the complement rather than the adjunct. The auxiliary *-ya-* is adopted even if the verb is followed by an adjunct such as *ngoku* ‘now’. For example:

(1) Ndi-*ya*-theth-a ngoku. (Long form)

I-*ya*-talk-FV now

‘I talks/am talking now.’

(2) \* Ndi-theth-a ngoku. (Short form)

I-talk-FV now

Some linguists regard the tense characterized by the marker *-e/-ile* as recent/near/immediate past tense (McLaren, 1936:83; Mncube, 1957); while others regard the marker *-e/-ile* as perfect tense (Bennie, 1939:105-6; Davey, 1973). The differences between *-ile* (i.e the long form) and *-e* (the short form) are exactly the same as those between the long form *-ya-* and the short form of the present tense; that is, *-ile* occurs at the end of a sentence, or occurs with an object when the object concord is used, while *-e* occurs when the sentence contains an object or other “adjunct” (McLaren, 1936:84; Mncube, 1957). With regard to the meaning of *-e/-ile*, McLaren (1936:83) and Bennie (1939:105-6) assert that *-e/-ile* in some circumstances corresponds to the perfect in English and in other circumstances to the simple past in English. That is, the one form has double meanings: the ‘perfect’ and ‘simple past’ meaning. However, Mncube (1957) argues that *e/ile* indicates an action has happened either today, yesterday or in the near past (i.e. a simple recent past tense), while Davey (1973) and Du Plessis (1978) maintain that it indicates that an action was completed in the near past and the result of the action still exists in the present(i.e. the perfect). Among these linguists, most point out that when *-e/ile* occurs with stative verbs, it refers to a present state (Mncube, 1957; Riordan et al, 1969:227; Davey, 1973 and Dowling, 2006:138). This study will further discuss whether or not the prefix *-e/ile* expresses a past situation with a current effect and why it refers to a present state when used with stative verbs.

As far as the remote past tense, which is formed by the prefix *-a-* in isiXhosa, is concerned, linguists seem to share the same view that it indicates that a situation took place at a time far away from the present moment, or at least in the indefinite past (McLaren, 1936, pp.85-6; Bennie, 1939, pp.105; Louw, 1976, pp.46; Davey, 1973; Du Plessis, 1978).

A number of studies have shown that there is a very clear cut-off point between past tenses in many Bantu family languages. For example, past tenses in Haya precisely show a situation in question either occurred today, yesterday or before yesterday (Nurse & Muzale, 1999). In isiZulu, Doke (1931) claims that the remote past tense commonly indicates that an action occurred at least two days ago; however, some speakers even use remote past tense when talking about actions performed on the day before yesterday. They further point out that the temporal division between the recent and remote past tense will be broken if it is desired to lay some special emphasis upon comparative remoteness or comparative proximity of time. However, very few linguists specifically focus on the boundary between the 'recent' and 'remote' past in isiXhosa. The only known study is that by Mncube (1957) which briefly mentions that the remote past tense indicates that an action took place at a time prior to yesterday. This point will be further analyzed in Chapter 4.2.

In addition to *-e/ile* and *-a-*, *-be-* is also used to indicate past situations. *-Be-* is regarded as 'the near-past-progressive tense' by McLaren (1936:124-6), and 'continuous perfect tense' by Zotwana (1994:137-8). McLaren (1936:124-6) and Bennie (1939:99, 108-9) claim that *-be-* indicates an action was in progress in the recent past. That is, the prefix *-be-* conveys a recent past meaning as well as a continuous meaning, which will be further explored later in Chapter 4.

### **2.4.1.3 Future Tense**

There are two future tenses marked by *-ya ku-* and *-za ku-* respectively in isiXhosa. The formative *-ya ku-* is commonly regarded as the 'remote' future tense marker and expresses that a state or an event will occur in a remote future and *-za ku-* as the 'near' future tense marker and indicates that a state or an event will occur soon (McLaren, 1936:86-8; Bennie, 1939:107; Mncube, 1957:48-9; Riordan et al, 1969:91

and Davey, 1973:30-1). In addition to *-za ku-* and *-ya ku-*, McLaren (1936:86-8) and Bennie (1939:107) assert that there is a short form characterized by the insertion *-o-* after the subject concord. McLaren (1936:87) posits that the short form is probably derived by contraction from *-ya ku-* and the difference between *-ya ku-* and the short form as shown below:

(1) Ndi-ya ku-ngena. (Long form)

SC-FUT-enter

'I am going to enter /I shall enter.'

(2) Nd-o-ngena ke. (Short form)

SC-FUT-enter EMP

'I shall enter' (emphatic)

McLaren (1936: 87) claims that the long form of the future simply foretells what will happen, whereas the short form is conditional in meaning and has always a reference to the person spoken to. Besides the shortened form *-o-*, Nxopo (1993:42-43) claims that *-za ku-* and *-ya ku-* can also be contracted into *-zo-* and *-yo-*, respectively, and that these contracted forms are freely used in isiXhosa.

Compared with the remote past and recent past, the boundary between remote future and recent future seems to be more ambiguous. Zotwana (1994, pp.54) asserts that the formative *-za ku-* and *-ya ku-* may be used interchangeably, though *-ya ku-* is commonly used for denoting a very distant future in isiXhosa. This study will further discuss the degree of remoteness conveyed by these two markers in Chapter 4.3.

## 2.4.2 Aspect

Previous studies on aspect in isiXhosa are not as many in number as those on tense, partly because the aspectual system is not as sophisticated as tense. There are two grammatical forms that are widely known as imperfective markers; those are *-be-* mentioned above, and *-ye-*. McLaren (1936: 90) and Bennie (1939:108-9) claim that *-ye-* indicates that a remote past event was in progress.

Nurse and Philippson (2003:99) claim that Bantu languages have “persistive aspect which denotes an activity that started in the past and it is still ongoing at the time of reference”. In isiXhosa, the auxiliary *-sa-* indicates that an action still occurs and it may be used with present tense, future tense, and recent past tense (McLaren, 1936:131; Bennie, 1939:126; Zotwana, 1994:121).

### **2.4.3 Temporal Adverbials and Deficient Verbs**

McLaren (1936:142-4) claims that there are two kinds of temporal adverbials in isiXhosa: the “proper” time adverbs, such as *futhi* ‘often’ and *kamva* ‘after’ and nouns used adverbially, such as *ebusuku* ‘at night’ and *izolo* ‘yesterday’. Bennie (1939:139) argues that the primary temporal adverbs in isiXhosa are very few and there are many derivatives formed with *ka-* like *phakade* ‘forever’ and *kamsinya* ‘soon’, and nouns or pronouns used with the prepositional particle *nga-* like *ngomso* ‘tomorrow’ and *ngoku* ‘now’. Compared with Mandarin, in isiXhosa, the number of the primary temporal adverbs is much smaller.

IsiXhosa has a number of deficient verbs that may have an ordinary substantive meaning, but can appear before other verbs in sentences for expressing a particular meaning like the temporal information of a situation. McLaren (1936:124,136) states that deficient verbs can indicate the temporal location of a situation, or the temporal relations between two situations. McLaren (1936:136-8) and Bennie (1939:128-130) give a detailed description of deficient verbs that are involved in expressing the

temporal information of a situation, such as *-andula* that indicates an action took place just at the time referred to in the sentence meaning ‘just’ or ‘just then’, and – *fudula* that expresses a past habitual action meaning ‘used to do’ or ‘was in the habit of doing’.

## **2.5 Summary**

Although time can be categorized into past, present and future, the ways that different languages deal with time grammatically differ. The literature suggests that Mandarin grammatically focuses more on aspect whereas isiXhosa has a tense system which tends to locate situations on the time line relative to the time of speech. At the lexically level, both Mandarin and isiXhosa use lexical devices like temporal adverbials to specify the temporal relations. However, it seems that Mandarin relies more on lexical devices to indicate temporal location of situations.

Based on these previous studies on temporal references in the two languages, the following chapter will discuss how Mandarin and isiXhosa encode temporal relations through these temporal references, and the differences and similarities of the ways that the two languages use to express temporal relations.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In order to compare the ways in which Mandarin and isiXhosa express temporal relations, it was necessary to examine a variety of sentences in both Mandarin and isiXhosa. A range of Mandarin sentences were drawn from researcher's own intuitions (being a native speaker of the language) and these sentences were translated into English. The translated sentences were then given to isiXhosa speakers so that they should translate them (from English) into isiXhosa. In the study then, the isiXhosa data was obtained through (i) questionnaire responses from five speakers and (ii) interviews with five speakers.

#### **3.2 Questionnaire**

In order to collect sufficient data from a number of people in a relatively cost effective way, a questionnaire was used in this study. A questionnaire has the advantage of allowing subjects to complete it in their own time. The questionnaire used in the study (see Appendix) consists of 88 questions divided into three parts: Part I containing 25 sentences in which present situations are described, Part II containing 45 sentences in which past situations are described and Part III containing 18 sentences in which future situations are referred to.

In order to draw out the ways that temporal relations are expressed in various cases, each part was divided into subsections according to situation type (i.e. whether a

situation is stative or non-stative, telic or atelic and durative or non-durative)<sup>2</sup>, the situation-internal time (i.e. whether a situation is ongoing or habitual, completed or non-completed) and the degree of remoteness (past and future) from the time of speech. The sentences contained in the questionnaire were presented in English, and the participants were asked to translate them into isiXhosa.

This questionnaire was administered in September and October, 2011. Five subjects completed the questionnaire; they included two Rhodes University students in Grahamstown, one isiXhosa lecturer from Rhodes University and two isiXhosa teachers from the Diocesan School for Girls in Grahamstown. All the subjects were highly proficient in English in addition to isiXhosa, their L1.

Note that in studies like the one done here, one respondent could have sufficed to provide the data given the fact that the person knows the grammar of the language and it is standard practice within formal linguistics to rely on the intuitions of only one native speaker. Dahl (1985), for example, used one informant from each language under investigation in his study. However, the present study sought to include up to five participants just in case there was variation or flexibility in how the tenses and other temporal expressions were expressed.

### **3.3 Interviews**

In order to make sure that the various ways of expressing temporal relation in the questionnaire are acceptable and adequate, five additional interviews were conducted among different participants. The five interviewees consisted of two students and two isiXhosa lectures at Rhodes University and one isiXhosa teacher at the Diocesan School for Girls. The interviewees, like those who completed the

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<sup>2</sup> In case situation type affects the expression of temporal relations of a situation, the questionnaire includes all kinds of verbs in Vendler's classification.

questionnaire were highly proficient in English and isiXhosa, their L1. The subjects who were interviewed were not the same ones who completed the questionnaire. Thus, in total, 10 subjects participated in providing the isiXhosa data, which, in a way, enhanced the reliability of the data.

During the interviews, interviewees were asked to answer whether or not the different versions of sentences presented in the questionnaire were acceptable and to provide explanations as to whether there were any differences in meaning between/among those sentences. Interviews were also used to solicit additional example sentences not solicited by the questionnaire. In addition, the interviewees were asked to provide the isiXhosa equivalents of some particular temporal references of Mandarin that were not included in the questionnaire or could not be adequately translated into English. For example, the temporal particle *de* in Mandarin was not in the questionnaire, as there was no way of conveying it in a questionnaire in English, because it would require very specific contexts.

### **3.4 Problems**

At present, there are no isiXhosa speakers who are highly proficient in Mandarin or Mandarin speakers whose isiXhosa proficiencies are good enough to provide the data used in this study. Ideally, the study would have required direct translation from Mandarin to isiXhosa and vice versa because these are the two languages being compared in the study. The absence of speakers who were proficient in both languages proved to be problematic for the research project and thus the use of a 'third language' (English) was deemed necessary.

The problem arising from the use of a 'third language' is that some of the translations may not have retained the original Mandarin meanings for which this study was seeking isiXhosa equivalents. A sentence in English such as "Sipho is

wearing a red shirt” is expressed by two different sentences in Mandarin: (i) meaning that Sipho is in the act of wearing the shirt and (ii) meaning that Sipho is in a red shirt. In English, the sentence is ambiguous and yet it is this ambiguous sentence which would have to be translated into isiXhosa - and not the distinct Mandarin sentences. In order to obtain a more accurate isiXhosa representation, in the interviews, the interviewees were provided fuller contexts or explanations for the Mandarin sentences. For instance, the interviewees were solicited to provide the isiXhosa equivalents of the sentence “Sipho is wearing a red shirt” in the two different contexts: in one context the interviewees are required to visualize a situation whereby Sipho is in his room carrying out the act of wearing a red shirt; and in another context the interviewees are asked to visualize a situation whereby Sipho is walking in the street dressed in a red shirt. These two situations are expressed by distinct sentences in Mandarin but there is only one translation in English.

### **3.5 Organization of Data**

The data collected from the questionnaire and interviews were put into a chart, along with Mandarin equivalent sentences provided by myself, the researcher who is a Mandarin native speaker. Afterward, the ways of expressing temporal relations in Mandarin and isiXhosa presented in the data were compared and analyzed.

### **3.6 Corpus-based Data**

Recall from section 2.2.3 that Mandarin linguists disagree on the status of the temporal particle *láizhe*: some claim that this particle indicates that a situation occurred in a recent past (Wang, 1943; Lü, 1980; Chao, 1968; Huang & Liao, 1997 and Zhang, 2002) while others believe *láizhe* just conveys the meaning that a situation occurred in past time without any nuances of recentness (e.g. Chen, 2005

and Yang & Wang, 2006). In order to examine whether or not the particle *láizhe* indicates that a situation occurred in the recent past in Mandarin, this study searched all sentences that contain the particle *láizhe* through the Modern Chinese Corpus of Center for Chinese Linguistics PKU by using the brute-force search. The Modern Chinese Corpus of Center for Chinese Linguistics PKU (PKUMCC) is one of the biggest Chinese corpuses. It contains 307,317,060 Chinese Characters. There were 394 sentences drawn out, which were further analyzed based on whether situations being said occurred in the recent past.

## Chapter 4

### A Comparison of Mandarin and IsiXhosa

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the major findings of the study. It focuses on making a comparison between Mandarin and isiXhosa in terms of the strategies that are used to convey temporal relations of different situations, such as present, past and future. This chapter contains three main sections, each section respectively looking at present, past and future situations, and further divided into subsections to provide clearer understanding. The discussion about present situations looks at how present location and the 'ongoingness' and 'persitiveness' of such situations are expressed in Mandarin and isiXhosa. Following that, past situations are discussed, specifically considering the ways that past location, the effect of past situations, degree of remoteness and the 'ongoingness' and 'completiveness' of past situations are expressed in the two languages. Lastly, future situations are explored, specifically concerning future location, the degree of remoteness and the ongoing nature of future events.

As will become clearer below, the study reveals that isiXhosa and Mandarin are similar in one important respect: both languages have no formal properties – i.e. overt tense markers (isiXhosa) and compulsory temporal adverbials or other temporal devices (Mandarin) – for marking present location of situations. The study also reveals that both languages encode 'pastness' in terms of whether or not the effects of the situation in question still remain at speech time. However, the study also reveals some interesting differences between the two languages: principally isiXhosa grammar allows its speakers to talk about situations in terms of their

distance (past or future) from speech time whereas Mandarin grammar allows its speakers to talk about situations in terms of the internal properties (e.g. completed, ongoing, etc.) of those situations.

## 4.2 Present Situations

### 4.2.1 Temporal Location of Present Situations

Present situations include states that exist and events that occur at the time of speaking, or at least in a time slot that overlaps with speech time. Present situations can occur right at the time of speaking, exist regularly over a period that includes the present moment, or exist permanently.

Recall from Chapter 2 that isiXhosa has tense affixes that attach to the verb to indicate the location of a situation on the time line in relation to the time of speaking, and that the tense marker appears either as a prefix or as a suffix attached to the verb. When expressing a present situation, however, no tense marker appears on the verb. Examples (1) and (2) illustrate this:

(1) Ezi      ziApile    zi-muncu kakhulu.

DET   Apples   SC-sour   very

‘These apples are very sour.’

(2) Unjinglwazi Cata    u-fundis-a      isiXhosa.

Professor    Cata    SC-teach -FV    isiXhosa

‘Professor Cata teaches/is teaching isiXhosa.’

In both (1) and (2), there is no affix to mark present tense, yet in each case, the sentence is interpreted as being in the present tense. This shows that isiXhosa does not have an overt grammatical feature to mark the present location of situations.

Likewise, Mandarin, as noted in Chapter 1 and 2, has various particles and auxiliaries that denote certain temporal properties of a situation. When it comes to expressing present situations, however, there are no particles or auxiliaries in the sentence to indicate that the situation is located in the present time. This is illustrated by the following examples (3) and (4):

(3) Zhè xiē píngguǒ hěn suān.

DET some apple very sour

'These apples are very sour.'

(4) Cāta jiàoshòu jiāo kǎosà yǔ.

Cāta Professor teach Xhosa language

'Professor Cāta teaches isiXhosa.'

Despite of the absence of particles or auxiliaries to indicate the present location of the situations in the above sentences, the state <these apples be very sour> described in (3) and the event <Professor Cāta teach isiXhosa> in (4) are interpreted as existing at speech time. Thus Mandarin, like isiXhosa, has no formal properties for marking the location of situations in the present.

This similarity may lead one to conclude that the two languages are identical in every respect as far as expressing present situations is concerned, but as the following section shows, this is not always the case: the two languages show some interesting differences.

#### **4.2.2 Ongoingness of Present Situations**

Although Mandarin and isiXhosa are similar in terms of how they encode present situations, this similarity is limited to those cases where there is no reference to the internal structure of the situations. The two languages differ when it comes to

making distinction between situations that are occurring in the present time and those that occur regularly in a time span that includes the present moment.

To begin with, isiXhosa does not have markers to indicate that a situation is ongoing at the time of speech. Let us return to the sentence *Unjinglwazi Cata ufundisa isiXhosa* 'Professor Cata teaches/is teaching isiXhosa' in (2) to put this point in clearer perspective. This sentence is, in fact, ambiguous. The sentence can be interpreted as meaning that Professor Cata teaches isiXhosa as his profession. This statement would still be true even if at the time of speaking Professor Cata was watching soccer in a stadium or having a drink in a bar. The other meaning of the same sentence is that Professor Cata is carrying out the act of teaching isiXhosa at the time of speaking.

In Mandarin, by contrast, different syntactic structures are required to distinguish ongoing situations from the non-ongoing ones. Here, it should be recalled from Chapter 2 that states differ from events in terms of the inherent temporal features. That is, events are non-stative while states are stative, so that events and states differ when it comes to encoding the internal-temporal time. Specifically, in Mandarin, the aspectual marker *zài* is used to indicate that an event is happening. *Zài* represents what has been widely regarded as the progressive aspect (e.g. Li & Thompson, 1981) and means that an event is taking place at a certain reference time or during a specific time span. Thus, this particle can only be used to describe events that have certain duration, that is, activities and accomplishments in terms of Vendler's (1957) and Dowty's (1979) classification of verb types. As a result, the sentence *Cata jiàoshòu jiāo kǎosà yǔ* 'Professor Cata teaches isixhosa' given in (4) only refers to the fact that Professor Cata is an isiXhosa teacher by profession. The sentence would be appropriate to use if the speaker was introducing Professor Cata to a friend and was telling that friend what Professor Cata does and it would be

inappropriate to use to convey the meaning that Professor Cata was, at the time of speaking, carrying out the act of teaching. Instead, to convey the idea that Professor Cata is teaching isiXhosa right at the present moment, sentence (5) would be used:

(5) Cata jiàoshòu zài jiāo kǎosà yǔ.

Cata Professor PROG teach Xhosa language

‘Prof. Cata is teaching isiXhosa.’

In (5), the appearance of *zài* indicates that Professor Cata is carrying out the act of teaching at speech time. However, in Mandarin the progressive aspect has a quite wide range. It not only refers to events that are taking place right at the time of speech, but also refers to events that are assumed to be ongoing during a time span that includes the present moment (even if events are temporarily not happening right at the present moment). Taking the sentence given in (5) as an example, it would be true to say *Cata jiàoshòu zài jiāo kǎosà yǔ* ‘Prof. Cata is teaching isiXhosa’ (that is, during a time span including the speech moment like *jīnnián* ‘this year’) even if he was not teaching at the present moment.

In Mandarin, the progressive marker *zài* cannot be used to describe states due to the stativity of states that conflicts with the non-stative feature of the progressive aspect (Comrie, 1976:35). In order to express a state that is ongoing or obtains at the time of speech, the particle *zhe*, generally regarded as the durative aspect marker (e.g., Lü, 1943; Zhu, 1982; Liu, 1983; Chen, 1980; Dai, 1991) can be used. When the particle *zhe* is used to describe states, it expresses the idea that a state is in progress or obtains at the time of reference. Consider the sentence given in (6):

(6) Siphó chuān zhe yīfu.

Siphó wear DUR clothes

‘Siphó is in the state of wearing clothes.’

In (6), *zhe* indicates that at speech time Siphó is in the state of wearing clothes. This sentence would be appropriate to use if the speaker saw that Siphó's body was covered in clothes and he was not naked. It would not be appropriate to use if Siphó was carrying out the act of putting on clothes. In order to express the ongoing event that Siphó is dressing himself, the sentence below would be used:

(7) Siphó zài chuān yīfu.

Siphó PROG wear clothes

'Siphó is carrying out the action of wearing clothes.'

In (7), *zài* indicates that the act of Siphó putting on clothes is taking place at speech time. It shows here that *zài* indicates the ongoing nature of an event while *zhe* indicates the durative nature of a state. When the particle *zhe* is used to describe an event, it indicates that an action happens simultaneously with another situation. In such sentences, *zhe* appears in the first VP of a serial verb construction and the event marked by *zhe* is the background of some foregrounded situation. Consider the sentence below:

(8) Siphó tīng zhe yīnyuè chī fàn.

Siphó listen DUR music eat food

Event1                  Event2

'Listening to music, Siphó is eating.'

In (8), the particle *zhe* indicates that Event 1 <Siphó listen to music> is the background for Event 2 eating food.

Let us return to isiXhosa: although isiXhosa does not have particular forms to indicate the 'ongoingness' of present states or events, there is a clear distinction between the state of wearing clothes and the act of wearing clothes. The equivalents of (6) and (7) are shown in the followings:

(9) USipho u-nxib-e impahla.

Sipho SC-wear-PST clothes

‘Sipho is in the state of wearing clothes.’

(10) USipho u-nxib-a impahla.

Sipho SC-wear-FV clothes

‘Sipho is carrying out the action of wearing clothes/has the habit of wearing clothes.’

In (9), the suffix *-e* indicates that the act of wearing clothes happened in the past and the effect of this act still holds at speech time (this point will be further discussed in 4.2), and consequently this sentence is interpreted as meaning that Sipho is in clothes at the time of speech. It should be noted here that both (6) and (9) refer to a present state, but the Mandarin sentence in (6) emphasizes the continuity of the state, while the isiXhosa one in (9) indicates the relations between the present state and the previous action. The sentence (10) would be used if Sipho was carrying out the act of wearing clothes; however, this isiXhosa sentence is itself ambiguous between ‘ongoing’ and ‘habitual’ activity, that is, it can also mean that Sipho has the habit of wearing clothes.

What has been shown here is that Mandarin uses two different grammatical forms to distinguish ongoing situations from non-ongoing ones; whereas isiXhosa employs the same grammatical structure to describe the two different scenarios. As a result, in order to distinguish a situation that occurs at the present moment from the one that happens or exists regularly, isiXhosa speakers rely on the use of lexical items (as opposed to grammatical affixes or particles). These include temporal adverbials and deficient verbs. For example, the presence of temporal adverbials, such as *ngoku* ‘now’ usually denotes that the event in question is in progress. Similarly, when a temporal adverbial with a habitual meaning appears, such as *qho* ‘always’ and *futhi*

'often', the event in question has a habitual reading. Consider the two sentences given in (11) and (12):

(11) Umama wam u-hlamb-a iimpahla ngoku.

Mother my SC-wash-FV clothes now

'My mother is washing clothes now.'

(12) Umama wam u-phek-a ipapa yonke imihla.

Mother my SC-cook-FV porridge every day

'My mother cooks porridge every day.'

The appearance of the temporal adverbial *ngoku* in (11) can often exclude the habitual interpretation and give the event being described an ongoing reading whereas the event described in (12) is interpreted as a habit since the temporal adverbial *yonke imihla* 'every day' already clearly points out the frequency of the event.

Deficient verbs, also called auxiliary verbs (see McLaren, 1936:136-8; Bennie, 1939:128-130), can also be used to indicate whether or not a present event is in progress. For example, the deficient verb *-soloko* indicates that a situation always happens and *-dla* indicates that a situation happens regularly. A sentence will be interpreted as having a habitual reading if one of the two deficient verbs appears, as illustrated in (13):

(13) UAmanda u-soloko e-ya e-Rhini nge-moto.

Amanda SC-*soloko* PM-go LOC- Grahamstown by-car

'Amanda always goes to Grahamstown by car.'

In (13), the appearance of *-soloko* gives the event <Amanda go to Grahamstown> a habitual reading. Without *-soloko*, the sentence *UAmanda uya eRhini ngemoto* can

also be interpreted as meaning that Amanda is driving a car on the way to Grahamstown.

In addition to lexical references, context can give pragmatic cues for determining if a present situation is ongoing at speech time. For example, in the context that someone is looking for Professor Cata on the phone, the sentence *Unjinglwazi Cata ufundisa isiXhosa* given in (2) definitely indicates that Professor Cata is carrying out the act of teaching isiXhosa at speech time, and therefore the ambiguity around the event no longer exists. To some extent, knowledge of the world can also tell people which meaning is referred to. Consider the following sentence given in (14):

(14) Usipho u-ty-a        ukutya.

Sipho SC-eat-FV food

‘Sipho eats/is eating food.’

In (14), grammatically the sentence has a double reading as there are no temporal adverbials or deficient verbs for pointing out whether or not the event <Sipho eat food> is occurring; however, except in a specific context, it generally denotes that Sipho is carrying out the act of eating food since it is common knowledge that all human beings eat food and the habitual reading of <Sipho eat food> does not convey any new information. By contrast, even in such cases like (14), Mandarin would still make the formal distinction in the grammar: the particle *zài* is obligatory to indicate that Sipho is carrying out the act of eating food at the time of speaking.

From the above, we can see that Mandarin is different from isiXhosa to the extent that it has grammatical forms to express the ongoingness of present situations while isiXhosa does not grammatically distinguish ongoing present situations from non-ongoing ones.

### 4.2.3 Persistiveness of Situations

Although it does not have grammatical forms to express the ongoing nature of situations located at the present, isiXhosa has an auxiliary *-sa-* indicating that situations have happened or existed before and still happen or exist at the time of reference, which is called the ‘persistive’ aspect in this study. In the present tense, the auxiliary *-sa-* refers to situations that started in the past and still occur at the present moment. The persistent nature of situations expressed by *-sa-* is different from the ongoingness conveyed by progressive markers. Situations marked by *-sa-* have a double reading as regards whether or not a situation is ongoing at the moment of speaking. In one reading, the situations are assumed to be still occurring at the time of speech; in the other reading, situations are assumed to happen regularly. Consider the two sentences in (15) and (16):

(15) Ndi-sa-phil-a.

I-PERS-healthy-FV

‘I am still well.’

(16) USipho u-sa-fund-a            isiXhosa

Sipho SC-PERS-study-FV    isiXhosa.

‘Sipho is still studying/still studies isiXhosa.’

In (15), the presence of *-sa-* not only indicates that the state < I be well > exists at the time of speaking, but also denotes that the state has been in existence before speech time. Hence, this sentence would be true only if the speaker was well and s/he is still in the state of good health. In (16), the sentence has two meanings. This sentence could be interpreted as meaning that Sipho used to study isiXhosa and he still keeps the habit of learning isiXhosa; alternatively, the sentence could be interpreted to mean that Sipho was not only carrying out the act of studying isiXhosa

in past time, but that he is also performing the same act (i.e. studying isiXhosa) at the present moment.

Mandarin is different from isiXhosa when it comes to encoding the persistiveness of events or states. Mandarin does not have grammatical devices to express the persistent nature of situations. In order to convey the meaning that a situation still occurs or exists, lexical items in the form of temporal adverbials like *hái* and *réngrán*, can be used, as illustrated by examples given in (17) and (18):

(17) Zhèlǐ rén hái hěn duō.

Here people still very many

‘There are still many people here.’

(18) Siphó réngrán zài xué kǎosà yǔ.

Siphó still PROG study Xhosa language

‘Siphó is still studying isiXhosa.’

In (17), no particles or auxiliaries appear and the adverb *hái* indicates that the state of many people being here has existed before speech time and it still holds. The adverb *réngrán* in (18) implies that the event <Siphó study isiXhosa> started before speech time and it is still taking place at speech time.

To recap, the comparison so far has shown that the way that present location of situations is expressed in Mandarin is similar to that used in isiXhosa. Both languages do not have overt grammatical features to mark the location of situations in the present. Both languages use what we might call ‘bare’ sentences (i.e. sentences without temporal markers, including grammatical and lexical devices) to refer to situations located in the present. In other words, situations referred to in ‘bare’ sentences are automatically located at the present time. However, as has been shown, those ‘bare’ sentences in Mandarin are interpreted differently from those in

isiXhosa in terms of the situation-internal temporal relations. Mandarin has the particles *zài* to mark the ongoingness events and *zhe* to mark the durative of states. In contrast, isiXhosa has no grammatical differences between ongoing and non-ongoing situations that located in the present; thus, a given ‘bare’ sentence actually has a double reading. It has also been noted that isiXhosa has the auxiliary *-sa-* to mark that an event still occurs or a state still exists, which is expressed through the use of temporal adverbials in Mandarin. This shows that Mandarin and isiXhosa differ when it comes to encoding the situation-internal temporal relations of present situations.

### 4.3 Past Situations

Past situations refer to situations that are located in the time preceding, but not including, the time of speaking. IsiXhosa, just like many other languages, has the grammatical feature “past tense” that is primarily used to locate situations in past time. A language such as Mandarin, which has no recognizable tense form, relies on its aspectual system and lexical devices to describe situations that occurred in the past. This section provides a detailed comparison of the ways that past situations are expressed in Mandarin and isiXhosa.

#### 4.3.1 Temporal Location of Past Situations

Past time in isiXhosa is marked by tense affixes attached to the verb. IsiXhosa has three affixes, the suffix *-e/ile* and the prefixes *-be-* and *-a-*, which can locate situation in the past. Consider the three examples shown below:

(19) Abafundi ba-fik-ile e-Rhini.

Students SC-arrive-PST LOC-Grahamstown

‘Students arrived in Grahamstown.’

(20) Abafundi *be*-be-fik-a e-Rhini.

Students PST-SC-arrive-FV LOC-Grahamstown

‘Students arrived in Grahamstown.’

(21) Abafundi *a*-fik-a e-Rhini.

Students SC-PST-arrive-FV LOC-Grahamstown

‘Students arrived in Grahamstown.’

In (19), the suffix *-ile* is added to the verb. The verbs in (20) and (21) are prefixed with *be-* and *-a-* respectively. In each case, the sentence is interpreted as being in the past tense and the situation being described is located at the time before speech time. This shows that past location of situations in isiXhosa is expressed by tense markings. The differences among the three past markers will be further discussed later in this section.

Mandarin differs from isiXhosa when it comes to expressing past situations. It does not have tense markers, as has already been pointed out, and as a result it relies on aspectual markings and the use of temporal adverbials to indicate past location of situations. Here, it should be noted that aspect indicates the situation-internal temporal relations and does not give straightforward information about temporal location of situations. However, the situation-internal temporal relations of a situation are strongly linked to its situation-external relations (i.e. the temporal location). More specifically, imperfective aspects indicate that a situation is in progress at the time of reference and perfective aspects view an event as a whole. In most languages, the default reference time is the time of speech. As a result, when there are no overt grammatical or lexical devices for indicating temporal location at which situations occur, situations marked with imperfective aspect markers are assumed to be located in the present; whereas, situations marked by perfective aspect markers are assumed to be located in the past (Comrie, 1976; Smith &

Erbaugh, 2005). In Mandarin, when there are no overt temporal devices to give the clear information about temporal location of situations, the situations marked by the verbal *le* and *guo* are interpreted as being located in the past. Consider the two sentences below:

- (22) Siphō xiě le yì fēng xìn.  
Siphō write COMPL one CLAS letter  
'Siphō wrote a letter.'
- (23) Siphō xué guo kǎo sà yǔ.  
Siphō study EXP Xhosa language  
'Siphō studied isiXhosa.'

In (22), verbal *le*, called the 'completive' aspect marker in this study, indicates the event <Siphō write a letter> has been completed by the speech time; hence, this event is interpreted as happening in the past. In (23), the particle *guo*, called the experiential marker (e.g., Chao, 1968; Li and Thompson, 1981; Smith, 1991 and Dai, 1997), expresses the idea that the subject Siphō has had the experience of studying isiXhosa at least once before the time of speaking; thus the event <Siphō study isiXhosa> is interpreted as being located in the past.

What has been shown here is that in the absence of overt temporal references, situations marked by verbal *le* or *guo* are assumed to be located in the past. For this reason, some Mandarin linguists claim that verbal *le* and *guo* are past tense markers (e.g., Dragunov, 1952; Yakhontov, 1959; Zhang, 1998; Li, 2002). However, the past interpretation comes from the interrelations between aspectual information and temporal location, but not the meaning of these particles. The aspectual information conveyed by verbal *le* or *guo* gives clues to temporal location of situations, but verbal *le* and *guo* do not mean that situations occurred or existed in the past. The past interpretation of situations marked by verbal *le* and *guo* would be cancelled if a

certain temporal device, such as a temporal adverbial, appeared in the sentence to locate the reference time at a time subsequent to the speech time. Examples are offered in (24) and (25) to illustrate this point:

(24) Wǒ chī le wǎnfàn, jiù yào shuìjiào.

I eat COMPL supper, then FU sleep

'I will sleep after I eat my supper.'

(25) Míngnián zhè ge shíhou, Siphó yǐ jīng qù guo měiguó.

Next year DET CLAS time, Siphó already go EXP America

'Siphó will have already been to America by this time next year.'

In (24), the verbal *le* indicates that by the time at which the event <I sleep> occurs, the event <I eat supper> has finished. The auxiliary *yào* locates the event <I sleep> in the future. Thus, this statement would be true even if the event <I eat supper> happened in the future. In such cases, the verbal *le* usually appears in the first clause of a complex sentence and the whole sentence is assumed to denote a future situation by the main clause. Similarly, in (25), the reference time is located in the future by the temporal adverbial *míngnián zhè ge shíhou* 'this time next year'. *Guo* indicates that the subject Siphó will have had the experience of going to America by the reference time, that is, the event <Siphó go to America> is located after speech time. It shows here that the presence of temporal adverbials override aspectual information in terms of expressing temporal location of situations.

Further evidence for the argument that the verbal *le* and *guo* are aspect markers, rather than tense markers comes from the fact that a large number of events that took place or states that existed in the past cannot be referred to by the verbal *le* or *guo*, as their inherent temporal features are incompatible with the aspectual value conveyed by *le* or *guo*. For example, the past state <Siphó love his wife> and the past

event <Sipho graduate> cannot be described by using verbal *le* and *guo* respectively, as shown by the ungrammaticality of the sentences given in (26) and (27):

(26) \* Siphō ài le tā de qīzi.

Siphō love COMPL he GEN wife

‘Siphō loved his wife.’

(27)\* Siphō bìyè guo.

Siphō graduate EXP

‘Siphō graduated.’

Both (26) and (27) are unacceptable in Mandarin for reason that the event <Siphō love his wife> described in (26) is atelic, which conflicts with the completiveness conveyed by the verbal *le* and the event <Siphō graduate> described in (27) can only happen once during a certain period, so it is incompatible with the experiential reading of *guo* which indicates that an event happened at least once before the reference time.

In addition, when the particle *le* appears at the end of sentences, situations described in those sentences are also interpreted as being located in the past. Consider the sentence given in (28):

(28) Siphō chī fàn le.

Siphō eat food PRF

‘Siphō ate /has eaten food.’

In (28), the sentence-final *le*, conventionally considered as the perfect marker (Wang, 1943; Gao, 1948; Chao, 1968; Kwan-Terry, 1979; Lü, 1980; Wang, 1981; Klein, 2000), locates the event <Siphō eat food> before the time of speech. Without the sentence-final *le*, the sentence *siphō chī fàn* can only be interpreted as meaning that Siphō has the habit of eating food. The significant differences between situations marked by

the sentence-final *le* and those marked by the verbal *le* or the particle *guo* will be shown later in this section. Like verbal *le* and *guo*, sentence-final *le* can also be used to express situations that will occur in future time, which will be discussed in section 4.3.

What has been shown here is that the three markers can give some implication of the position of situations on the time line. However, this is only limited to those situations (i) that are complete in their entirety, or (ii) that have been experienced at least once, or (iii) that occurred in the past and their effects are still in force at the time of speaking. In order to specifically express the location of situations that simply occurred or were taking place at a particular time before speech time, temporal adverbials must be used. In such sentences, the use of a temporal adverbial is the only way to locate a given situation in the past. The absence of the temporal adverbial would give the sentence a present reading, as the two sentences (29) and (30) illustrate:

(29) Zuótiān tiān hěn rè.  
Yesterday weather very hot  
'It was very hot yesterday.'

(30) Gāngcái Cata jiàoshòu zài jiāo kǎosà yǔ.  
Just now Cata Professor PROG teach Xhosa language  
'Professor Cata was just teaching isiXhosa.'

In (29), no temporal particles appear and the temporal adverbial *zuótiān* 'yesterday' gives the direct information about the location of the state <the weather be hot>. Without *zuótiān*, the sentence *tiān hěn rè* is interpreted as having a present reading. Likewise, the temporal adverbial *gāngcái* in (30) locates the ongoing event <Professor Cata teach isiXhosa> in the past.

Here, we should note that while isiXhosa has temporal adverbials, they are used differently from Mandarin. In isiXhosa, the temporal adverbial only complements tense markings to further specify temporal location of situations. A given situation will be still located in the past even if temporal adverbials do not appear in the sentence as a past tense marker already locates the situation before the time of speaking. Consider the sentence given in (31):

(31) *Be*-ku-shushu    *izolo*.  
PST-it-hot            yesterday  
'It was hot yesterday.'

In (31), the appearance of the prefix *-be-* indicates that the state <it be hot> existed in the past and the temporal adverbial *izolo* points out the precise location in the past of the state in question. The state would be still located in the past even if the temporal adverbial *izolo* did not appear. Suffice to say that temporal adverbials can be used to refer to past location of situations in both Mandarin and isiXhosa, but they are assigned different values in the system of temporal expression in the two languages.

Returning to our discussion of the ways that Mandarin expresses temporal location of past situations, it should be pointed out that in addition to aspectual markings and temporal adverbials, Mandarin has two other particles, *láizhe* and *de* which indicate past time. The particle *láizhe* simultaneously indicates that an event occurred or a state existed in the past, and expresses the emphatic mood, whereby the speaker tries to remind himself/herself or the hearer to recall what was being talked about or what happened before the time of speech. In order to make this point clearer, consider the three sentences given in (32) - (34):

(32) Fēng    hěn    dà    láizhe.

Wind very big PSP

‘The wind was strong.’

(33) Fēng hěn dà .

Wind very big

‘The wind is very strong.’

(34) Fēng gānɡcái hěn dà.

Wind just how very big.

‘Just now the wind was very strong.’

In (32), the particle *láizhe* indicates that the state <the wind be strong> existed at the time before speech time. Without *láizhe*, the sentence shown in (33) is interpreted as meaning that the state <the wind be strong> holds right at the time of speaking or it permanently exists. In (34), *láizhe* does not appear and the temporal adverbial *gānɡcái* locates the state in the past. There is no significant difference between the state being described in (32) and the one in (34) in terms of temporal information and the difference between the two sentences is that there is an emphatic mood in the former sentence so that the speaker reminds the hearer that the wind was very strong. *Láizhe* can only be used in informal everyday discourse, such as casual chatting with friends. In formal contexts, aspectual marking or the temporal adverbial has to be used.

Situations marked by the particle *de* are also located in the past; however *de* is only used when a past event has been known to both the speaker and the hearer, or at least the speaker assumes that the hearer has already known the past event, and the speaker wants to give more information about the event, such as the temporal location, spatial location, condition or purpose of the event in question. Consider the two sentences given in (35) and (36):

(35) Sīpho yòng gāngbǐ xiě de hànzi.

Sipho use pen write PSP Chinese Character

'Sipho used a pen to write (these) Chinese Characters.'

(36) Sipho *yòng gānbǐ* xiě hànzi.

Sipho use pen write Chinese Character

'Sipho uses a pen to write Chinese Characters.'

In (35), the appearance of *de* locates the event <Sipho use a pen to write Chinese> before the speech time. Without *de*, the sentence given in (36) is interpreted as meaning that Sipho has the habit of using pen to write Chinese Characters. However, the sentence given in (35) would only be appropriate to use if the speaker assumed that the hearer already knew the event that Sipho wrote Chinese Characters in the past or the fact that there are some Chinese Characters, but did not know that Sipho used a pen to write those Chinese Characters. As a result, like the particle *láizhe*, the particle *de* is also used in daily discourse. Furthermore, the past interpretation conveyed by *de* can be also indicated through other temporal devices with no difference on temporal location of an event in question.

We can see that the temporal particles *láizhe* and *de* are quite different from tense markers in isiXhosa in the sense that *láizhe* and *de* are only used in highly specific contexts, and also both can be replaced by other temporal devices while one of the three past tense markers in isiXhosa has to be used to encode a given past situation. For these reasons, although *láizhe* and *de* can locate situations in the past, they can hardly be regarded as tense markers.

In summary, isiXhosa is significantly different from Mandarin when it comes to expressing past location of situations. IsiXhosa has tense affixes to encode the past location of situations. By contrast, strictly, Mandarin does not have tense. The past location of situations in Mandarin is indicated through the following ways: (i)

aspectual marking which can give implications for temporal location of situations; (ii) using temporal adverbials; or (iii) using temporal particles in specific contexts.

### 4.3.2 Present Effects of Past Situations

This subsection examines whether past situations are encoded in terms of whether or not the effect of those situations are still in force at the time of speaking in the two languages. The original idea comes from Simango (2003). Simango claims that “there are potentially two different grammatical forms for expressing any past situations in Chichewa, ciNsenga, and related Bantu languages: one form asserts that the effect of a given situation still holds at the time of speaking whereas the other asserts that the relevant effect no longer holds” (2003:67).

Returning to the data shown in (19)-(21), one difference between the event described in (19) and the events described in (20) and (21) is that the effect of the former is still in force whereas the effect of the latter no longer exists at the time of speaking. Specifically, the sentence given in (19) denotes that students arrived in Grahamstown in the past and are still there at speech time, while the sentences given in (20) and (21) are interpreted as meaning that students arrived in Grahamstown in the past and they are possibly no longer there at the time of speech. This shows that the suffix *-e/ile* not only denotes that an event occurred at the time before speech time, but also that the effect of the event being said is still present. In other words, the suffix *-e/ile* refers to the relation between the time at which an event occurred and the speech moment at which the effect of the earlier event still holds. Consider further the two sentences shown in (37) and (38):

(37) USipho u-tshat-ile.

Sipho SC-marry-PST

‘Sipho is married.’

(38) Umama wam u-hlamb-e le bhatyi.

Mother my SC-wash-PST DET coat

'My mother washed/has washed this coat.'

In (37), the expression *utshatile* denotes that Siphoh got married in the past and he is still married at speech time. This sentence would be not appropriate to use if Siphoh got married in the past but at speech time he is divorced. Likewise, the sentence in (38) signals that the event <my mother wash this coat> occurred in the past and the effect of washing (e.g., the coat is clean) still holds at speech time.

Stative verbs better show how *-e/ile* expresses the effect of a past situation that still remains at speech time. Stative verbs, such as *-lamba* 'being hungry' and *-lala* 'being asleep', attached to *-e/ile* refer to states that exist at speech time, as illustrated by the sentence given in (39):

(39) Usiphoh u-lamb-ile.

Siphoh SC-be hungry-PST

'Siphoh is hungry.'

In (39), the expression *ulambile* denotes that the state <Siphoh be hungry> is present at the time of speech, but this state is a result of the earlier event of Siphoh getting hungry, that is, it refers to the inchoative of the state being hungry. Siphoh was not hungry before speech time and he is hungry at the time of speech. Further consider the following sentence given in (40) to make this point more explicit:

(40) Usiphoh u-ya-lamb-a.

Siphoh SC-ya-be hungry-FV

'Siphoh is getting hungry.'

In (40), no overt affixes appear and the sentence is interpreted as meaning that Siphó is in the process of becoming hungry at the time of speaking.

Note that the effect of some situations is very striking. For example, it is clear that the effect of <Siphó get married> referred to in (37) is the resulting state of being married. However, with regard to some situations, their effect is rather unclear and imperceptible. Consider the sentence shown in (41):

(41) USiphó u-cul-e amaculo.

Siphó SC-sing-PST songs

'Siphó sang/has sung songs.'

In (41), the presence of the suffix *-e* indicates that the event <Siphó sing songs> occurred in the past and its effect is still in force; however, the effect of this event is not obviously perceived. It is clear only in context. For instance, in answer to the question "why did Siphó lose his voice", this sentence is perfectly reasonable since it denotes that the effect of Siphó singing still holds at speech time. In this context, it would be odd to use the prefix *-be-* or *-a-* to reply to this question.

Furthermore, one event may have various effects. The suffix *-e/ile* only denotes that the effects are still in force, but it does not give any indication of which effect/effects is/are intended. Consider the following sentence shown in (42):

(42) USiphó u-fund-e isiXhosa.

Siphó SC-study-PST isiXhosa

'Siphó studied/has studied isiXhosa.'

In (42), the effect of the past event <Siphó study isiXhosa> can be that Siphó is able to speak isiXhosa fluently at the time of speaking. It is also possible that Siphó has received the credit from learning isiXhosa by speech time and there is no need to

register for the required isiXhosa course even if he cannot speak isiXhosa. Either effect would be clear in a specific context. For instance, when students are talking about registering for courses at the beginning of a new semester, the effect of the past event <Sipho study isiXhosa> only refers to the credit that Sipho received from studying isiXhosa: that this credit is still valid.

While the suffix *-e/ile* indicates that a situation occurred in the past and that its effects are still present, it does not exclude the possibility that the event is still occurring. For instance, the sentence (42) would be appropriate to use even if the subject Sipho was still studying isiXhosa at speech time.

On the other hand, if it is clearly shown that the effect of a past situation no longer holds at speech time, the prefix *-be-* or *-a-* must be used. For example, if the speaker's mother washed the coat but at the time of speaking the coat is dirty, it would be expressed in the following ways as shown in (43) and (44):

(43) Umama wam u<sup>3</sup>-be-hlamb-a le bhatyi.

Mother my SC-PST-wash-FV DET coat

'My mother washed/was washing this coat.'

(44) Umama wam w-a-hlamb-a le bhatyi.

Mother my SC-PST-wash-FV DET coat

'My mother washed this coat.'

In both sentences, the effect of <my mother wash this coat> is not present at speech time. It can be seen from the above that, like ciCewa and ciNsenga (see Simango, 2003), pastness in isiXhosa is grammaticalised to indicate whether or not the effect of a situation still holds at the time of speaking.

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<sup>3</sup> The prefix of Class1 and Class1a in the past tense can be *ube-* or *ebe-*.

Interestingly, Mandarin is similar to isiXhosa in the sense that it has a grammaticalized form to encode the fact that the effects of a past situation still hold at the time of speaking. In Mandarin, the sentence-final particle *le* indicates that situations occurred in the past and their effects are still present at speech time. For instance, in the sentence *Sipho chī fàn le* ‘Sipho ate/has eaten’ shown in (28), the appearance of the sentence-final *le* locates the event <Sipho eat food> before speech time, and simultaneously it indicates that the effect of Sipho eating food still holds at speech time. It would be a perfectly reasonable response to make when turning down an invitation to dinner. To clarify this point further, consider the example given in (45):

(45) Sipho jié hūn      le.

Sipho get marriage PRF

‘Sipho is married.’

Just like the isiXhosa equivalent given in (37), the sentence in (45) is interpreted as meaning that Sipho got married at some time before speech time, and it simultaneously denotes that Sipho is married at the time of speaking.

In the case where the situation is not an event like the above, but a state, the sentence-final *le* refers to a present state that has changed from an earlier state. That is, it indicates that the change from a prior state to the present state has occurred before speech time and the effect of the change is still in force. This point becomes clear when contrasted with sentences without this particle. Consider the pair of sentences given in (46) and (47):

(46) Tiān      rè      le.

Weather hot PRF

‘It has become hot.’

(47) Tiān hěn rè.  
Weather very hot  
'It is very hot.'

In (46), the appearance of the sentence-final *le* not only asserts that it is hot at the speech moment, but also indicates that it was not hot before speech time. In other words, the sentence-final *le* refers to the inchoative of a state from an earlier state, i.e. the entry into the state before speech time, and that this state is present at the time of speaking. Without the sentence-final *le*, the sentence in (47) just refers to the present state without any relation to the earlier state.

In Mandarin, in the case where the effects of a past situation are clearly shown that they do not exist, the particle *guo* can be used. Supposing that Siphó got married in the past and he is divorced at the time of speaking, it should be presented as below:

(48) Siphó jié guo hūn.  
Siphó get EXP marriage  
'Siphó was married.'

In (48), *guo* indicates that Siphó had the experience of getting married at least once before and that at the time of speaking he is not married any more. The sentence shows that the particle *guo* in Mandarin has the similar function to *-be-* or *-a-* in isiXhosa in the sense that it is used to describe situations that occurred before speech time and encodes the idea that at the time of speech the effects of those situations no longer hold. *Guo* in Mandarin also indicates the experiential nature of situations, whereas *-be-* or *-a-* in isiXhosa specifically locates a situation in the past regardless of whether or not the situation in question is an experience.

What has been shown here is that both isiXhosa and Mandarin have grammatical forms to express the idea that the effect of a given past event still holds at the time of speaking. Based on the facts presented here one can conclude that the sentence-final *le* in Mandarin and the suffix *-e/ile* in isiXhosa have common semantic features.

### 4.3.3 Degree of Remoteness in Past Situations

It is well documented in the literature (e.g. McLaren, 1936; Bennie, 1939; Mncube, 1957; Davey, 1973; Du Plessis, 1978) that isiXhosa does not just have a past tense but ‘past tenses’ in the sense that different tense forms refer to different degrees of remoteness from the time of speaking. The affixes *-e/ile* and *-be-*, for example, refer to a ‘recent’ past, whereas the affix *-a-* refers to a ‘remote’ past. Although this characterization of tenses is largely recognized in the literature, it is actually only partly true.

Going back to the sentences *abafundi bebefika eRhini* ‘students arrived in Grahamstown’ and *abafundi bafika eRhini* ‘students arrived in Grahamstown’ given in (20) and (21) respectively, one difference between the two sentences is that in contrast to the event described in (20), the one described in (21) occurred more remotely. That is, in general, sentences marked by the prefix *-be-* describe situations that are located in the recent past, while sentences marked by the prefix *-a-* describe situations that are located in the remote past. However, though these declarations are accepted by scholars, they have not yet adequately explained the boundary between the ‘recent’ past expressed by *-be-* and the ‘remote’ past expressed by *-a-*. The data collected in the present study shows that events that occurred or states that existed earlier on the day of speaking (i.e. today) or the day before the day of speaking (i.e. yesterday) are marked by the suffix *-e/ile* or the prefix *-be-*, but not the prefix *-a-*. That is, the prefix *-a-* usually indicates that a

situation occurred at least the day before yesterday (i.e. two days ago). Consider the following sentences in (49)-(52):

(49) Usipho u-fund-e isiXhosa *izolo*.

Sipho SC-study-PST isiXhosa yesterday

'Sipho studied isiXhosa yesterday.'

(50) Be-ku shushu *namhlanje*.

PST-SC hot today

'It was hot today.'

(51)\* Umama wam w-a-phek-a ipapa *kusasa namhlanje*.

Mother my SC-PST-cook-FV porridge morning today

'My mother cooked porridge this morning.'

(52) Utatomkhulu wam w-a-fund-a isiXhosa

Grandfather my SC-PST-study-FV isiXhosa

*nge-xesha w-a-ye-mncinci*.

LOC-time SC-PST-IPFV-young

'My grandfather studied isiXhosa when he was young.'

In (49) and (50), the temporal adverbials *izolo* 'yesterday' and *namhlanje* 'today' clearly point out that the temporal location of the situations is in a 'recent' past; the two situations are grammatically encoded by the suffix *-e* and the prefix *-be-* respectively. The sentence described in (51) is pragmatically odd in isiXhosa as the prefix *-a-* refers to a time at least prior to the day before yesterday, which conflicts with the meaning of *kusasa namhlanje* 'this morning'. In (52), in principle, the state "my grandfather" being young existed long time ago, thus the event <my grandfather study isiXhosa> is grammatically marked by the prefix *-a-*.

The data collected in this study reveals that the prefix *-be-* can be used to mark situations which occurred or existed in a fairly remote past, as shown by the sentence given in (53):

- (53) Utata wam u-be-cheb-a iigusha kulo nyaka uphelileyo.  
Father my SC-PST-shear-FV sheep the year RC-finish-RS  
'My father sheared/was shearing sheep last year.'

In (53), the temporal adverbial *kulo nyaka uphelileyo* 'last year' locates the event <my father shear sheep> at the time quite remote from speech time; it is grammatically correct for the sentence to be marked by the prefix *-be-*. This shows that *-be-* not only indicates situations that occurred or existed today or yesterday, but also situations located in a quite distant past.

Furthermore, different speakers, even the same speaker, may use different past tense markers for expressing events that occurred or states that existed in the same time period. For example, the event described in (53) can also be marked by the prefix *-a-*. This shows that the degree of remoteness expressed by *-be-* and *-a-* is to some extent subjective: it depends on the speaker's view of the remoteness of past situations.

With regards to the suffix *-e/ile*, which scholars refer to as the "recent past" tense, it was found in this study that this suffix does not directly indicate the recentness of a past situation. If the effects of a situation are still in force at the time of speaking, whether the situation occurred in the recent or remote past, the suffix *-e/ile* must be used. For example, the sentence *USipho utshatile* 'Sipho is married' given in (37) will be appropriate to be use as long as Sipho is still in the marriage even if he was married fifty years ago. Below is another example:

- (54) Unjingalwazi Cata u-hamb-ile e-Mzantsi Afrika

Professor Cata SC-go-PST LOC-South Africa

*nge-xesha w-a-ye-mncinci.*

LOC-time SC-PST-IPFV-young

‘Professor Cata went to South Africa when he was young.’

In (54), the suffix *-e/ile* is used to encode the event <Professor Cata go to South Africa> that occurred long time ago since the prefix *-a-* in the expression *wayemncinci* ‘he was young’ indicates that the state <Professor Cata be young> existed in the remote past. This sentence would be true as long as Professor Cata is in South Africa at the time of speech.

On the other hand, the suffix *-e/ile* cannot be used to describe situations that just happened minutes ago if their effects no longer hold at speech time. For example, in the case where Siphon went to visit Elizabeth this morning, and he has come back to Grahamstown at the time of speech, the suffix *-e/ile* is not appropriate to use.

What has been shown here is that the suffix *-e/ile* does not indicate the degree of the remoteness, but it indicates that the effect of a past situation still remains at speech time. However, events that occurred in the past, in particular, recent past, are predominantly expressed by the suffix *-e/ile*. For this reason, the suffix *-e/ile* is defined as “the recent past tense” (e.g. McLaren, 1936) or the “immediate past tense” (e.g. Mncube, 1957). Generally, it is more likely that a recent situation has present effect than a remote one. Similarly, the effects of a recent situation are more likely to exist at the time of speech than the effects of a remote situation. As a result, past situations that occurred not far from speech time are naturally marked by the suffix *-e/ile*. But, the recent location and the present effect are not a necessary and sufficient condition for each other. The effect of a remote situation can be still in force and a recent past situation can have no relation with the present at all. The ‘recentness’ is an implication, but not one part of the meaning of *-e/ile*.

Let us now turn our attention to the particle *láizhe* in Mandarin: as noted in Chapter 2, some scholars (e.g. Chao, 1968; Huang & Liao, 1997 and Zhang, 2002) claim that the temporal particle *láizhe* indicates that a situation occurred in the recent past. In order to examine whether this particle specifically denotes a recent past meaning, through a brute-force search, 394 sentences that contain the temporal particle *láizhe* were searched out from the Modern Chinese Corpus of Center for Chinese Linguistics PKU in the present study. Amongst these sentences, I found 254 sentences that do not contain temporal adverbials and situations being said in these sentences are often located in a recent past. However, the recent past meaning arises out of context rather than from the inherent meaning of the particle *láizhe*. As has been stated earlier, *láizhe* is used in everyday dialogue which usually refers to situations that occurred in a quite recent past. Consider the sentence below:

(55) Nǐ shuō shénme láizhe?

You talk what PSP

‘What did you say?’ (From PKUMCC)

The above sentence is appropriate to be used only if two speakers are chatting informally and one speaker is trying to remind the other or recall what s/he said, which clearly shows that this sentence has a recent past meaning.

In addition, there are 81 sentences in which temporal adverbials that have a recent past meaning appear and 59 sentences in which temporal adverbials with a remote past meaning appear. Here it shows that *láizhe* can be used to indicate both situations that occurred in the recent past and those that occurred in the remote past. For example:

(56) Wǒmen gānggāng yìqǐ liáotiān láizhe.

We just now together chat PSP

‘We just chatted together.’ (From PKUMCC)

(57) Nǐ xiǎo shíhou, wǒ chàbùduō hái bāwàng nǐ shēng bìng láizhe.

You small time, I almost still expect you get sick PSP

‘I almost expected that you got sick when you were young.’ (From PKUMCC)

The temporal adverbial *gānggāng* ‘just now’ and *nǐ xiǎo shíhou* ‘when you were young’ lexically locate the situations being said in (56) and (57) in recent and remote past respectively.

We can see here that unlike isiXhosa, in which pastness in isiXhosa is grammaticalised to indicate whether a given situation happened in the recent or remote past, Mandarin does not have grammatical forms for expressing the degree of remoteness; the language is reliant on temporal adverbials to express the degree of remoteness.

#### 4.3.4 Ongoingness of Past Situations

In Mandarin, just like present situations, the ongoing nature of past situations is also marked by the progressive marker *zài* or the durative marker *zhe*. A certain temporal device, such as a temporal adverbial, must be used to explicitly locate an event in question in the past, as illustrated below:

(58) Siphó zuótiān zài huà huà.

Siphó yesterday PROG draw picture

‘Siphó was drawing a picture yesterday.’

In (58), the progressive marker *zài* expresses that the event <Siphó draw a picture> is in progress and the temporal adverbial *zuótiān* ‘yesterday’ gives direct information about the location of the event on the time line. If there is no temporal adverbial *zuótiān* ‘yesterday’, as discussed in 4.1.2, the sentence *Siphó zài huàhuà* is interpreted as meaning that Siphó is painting at the time of speaking.

The ongoingness of past situations in isiXhosa is also grammatically marked. There are two grammatical forms: *-be-* and *-ye-*, which are involved in the expression of past ongoing situations. The prefix *-be-*, as has been presented in 4.2.1, indicates that a situation occurred in the recent past, and simultaneously it denotes that the event in question is in ongoing. That is, *-be-* is actually a fusion of a recent past tense and an imperfective aspect. If a situation was occurring at a time that is far removed from speech time, the auxiliary *-ye-* would be used to encode the ongoing nature of the event. Unlike *-be-*, the auxiliary *-ye-* does not refer to temporal location of situations, and the temporal location must be expressed by the remote past tense marker *-a-*. As a result, *-ye-* is always used together with *-a-* in sentences. Consider the two sentences given in (59) and (60):

(59) Udadewethu u-be-cul-a.

My sister SC-PST-sing-FV

‘My sister was singing.’

(60) USipho w-a-ye-fund-a isiXhosa.

Sipho SC-PST-IPFV-study-FV isiXhosa

‘Sipho was studying isiXhosa.’

In (59), the prefix *-be-* has two functions: it locates the event <my sister sing> in the recent past and it also indicates the ongoingness of the event, so the sentence is interpreted as meaning that the event was ongoing in the recent past. In (60), the prefix *-a-* locates the event <Sipho study isiXhosa> in the remote past, and *-ye-* indicates that Sipho was carrying out the act of studying isiXhosa.

While *-be-* and *-ye-* indicate the ongoingness of past situations, both are used to indicate states that once existed in the past. More specifically, past states that are described in sentences where stative verbs, adjectives or relatives are used as the predicate must be marked by either *-be-* or *-ye-*, as exemplified in (61) and (62):

(61) USipho *e-be-lamb-ile*.

Sipho SC-PST-get hungry-PST

'Sipho was hungry.'

(62) Utata wam w-a-ye-m-tsha.

Father my SC-PST-IPFV-DCC-young

'My father was young.'

In (61), both *-be-* and *-ile* appear in the same sentence; here, the prefix *-be-* locates the state <Sipho be hungry> in the recent past, and the suffix *-ile* indicates that the state is relevant to an earlier situation, so the sentence is interpreted as meaning that the state <Sipho be hungry> existed in the recent past, and it no longer holds at the time of speech. Without the prefix *-be-*, the sentence will be interpreted as meaning that Sipho is hungry at speech time. In (62), the past tense marker *-a-* indicates that the state <my father be young> existed in a fairly remote past; however, the auxiliary *-ye-* must be used; otherwise, the sentence will become ungrammatical. Here, it reveals that *-be-* and *-ye-* do not exclusively indicate the ongoing nature of past events: the two forms are also used to indicate that states simply existed in past time.

Furthermore, as noted in section 4.2.2, in cases where the effect of a recent past event is not in force at speech time, the prefix *-be-* is used. In such cases, the event does not necessarily have an ongoing nature. For instance, in order to express the fact that the students arrived in Grahamstown yesterday and they have left before the time of speech, the sentence *abafundi bebefika eRhini* 'students arrived in Grahamstown' [i.e. the example (20)] is used regardless of the ongoingness of the event. This shows that *-be-* does not merely refer to events that were ongoing in the recent past, but it is also used to describe recent past events whose the present effect no longer exists at the present moment.

From the above, we can conclude that although the ‘ongoingness’ of situations that occurred in the past is grammatically marked in both Mandarin and isiXhosa, the markers *zài* and *zhe* in Mandarin differ from *-be-* and *-ye-* in various ways. First, *zài* and *zhe* can be used to describe the ‘ongoingness’ of present, past or future events; in contrast, in isiXhosa, *-be-* and *-ye-* particularly express the ongoing nature of situations that occurred in the past; more specifically, *-be-* and *-ye-* indicate the ongoing nature of recent and remote past situations, respectively. Second, the Mandarin progressive marker *zài* is restricted in terms of the type of verbs with which it can be used as was noted in 4.1.2 above; whereas in isiXhosa, the affixes *-be-* or *-ye-* are not restricted in terms of the verbs they can be used with. Third, *-be-* or *-ye-* in isiXhosa are also used to refer to states that once existed before the time of speech while in Mandarin *zài* or *zhe* would not be appropriate to use for this purpose.

#### 4.3.5 Completeness of Situations

A past situation in Mandarin is marked in terms of whether or not it has been completed in its entirety. The verbal *le* is used if a situation has been completed before speech time. Consider the example given in (63):

(63) Siphō xiě le yì fēng xìn.

Siphō write COMPL one CLAS letter

‘Siphō wrote a letter.’

In (63), the verbal *le* indicates that the event <Siphō write a letter> has been completed in its entirety. Thus this sentence would only be appropriate to use if Siphō has finished writing the letter. If Siphō started to write a letter, and he has not finished it yet, the event cannot be marked by the verbal *le*, as illustrated in (64) below:

(64) Siphó xiě le yì fēng xìn, [\* kěshì hái méi xiě-wán] .

Siphó write COMPL one CLAS letter, [ but yet not write-finish]

‘Siphó wrote a letter, but he did not finish it yet.’

In (64), the completeness of the event conveyed by the verbal *le* conflicts with the second clause stating that the event has not yet been completed; the whole sentence is thus ungrammatical in Mandarin. To express the fact that a situation occurred, but it has not been completed in its entirety, the sentence-final *le* may be used in the following manner, shown in (65):

(65) Siphó xiě xìn le, kěshì hái méi xiě-wán.

Siphó write letter PRF, but yet not write-finish

‘Siphó wrote a letter, but he did not finish yet.’

In (65), the sentence-final *le* indicates that the event <Siphó write a letter> occurred in the past, and the effect of this event still obtains at the time of speaking, but it does not give any indication as to whether or not the letter was finished. Consequently the whole sentence is perfectly acceptable in Mandarin.

The verbal *le* can therefore only be used to describe situations with a potential end, that is, a situation must be telic (i.e. accomplishments and achievements in Vendler’s classification), or the context clearly shows that there would be an end. For example, regardless of the length of the time, the event <Siphó write a letter> described in (63) has a potential end and the verbal *le* gives it its finality.

IsiXhosa is different from Mandarin in terms of marking the completeness of events. IsiXhosa does not have grammatical devices for expressing whether or not an event has been completed in its entirety. The situations marked by past tense markers have two possible outcomes. In other words, those situations could have been

completed or have not yet been completed. However, it should be noted that if there is no particular references or context to indicate that a situation was not completed, typically, the past situation is assumed to be complete.

Given the above comparison, the present study has revealed that Mandarin and isiXhosa are different from each other when it comes to encoding the completeness of a situation. In Mandarin, a situation that has been completed in its entirety is grammatically marked by the verbal *le*, while isiXhosa does not have grammatical forms for this purpose.

To summarize, Mandarin differs from isiXhosa in a number of ways when it comes to encoding past situations. First, in isiXhosa, a past situation must be encoded by a past tense marker; while Mandarin does not have a tense system. In Mandarin, the temporal location of past situations can be implied by aspectual marking in an indirect way, or be indicated through the use of temporal adverbials or temporal particles. Second, the degree of remoteness in isiXhosa is more or less grammatically encoded while in Mandarin it can only be conveyed by temporal adverbials. Third, Mandarin uses the verbal *le* to encode the completeness of a past situation; whereas isiXhosa does not have grammatical forms specifically for this purpose. Fourth, although the ongoing nature of past situations is grammatically marked in both languages, the markers have different features. However, the two languages are similar in the sense that both have grammaticalized forms to indicate whether or not the effect of a past situation is still in force at the time of speaking.

## **4.4 Future situations**

### **4.4.1 Temporal Location of Future Situation**

Future situations refer to states or events that obtain at a time subsequent to the time of speech. Based on the analysis of the data used in this study, this section outlines some of the key differences that exist in the ways that Mandarin and isiXhosa express future situations.

In isiXhosa there are two sets of grammatical forms: *-za ku-* and *-ya ku-*, which are used to encode future location of situations. A situation that occurs in the future is marked by either *-za ku-* or *-ya ku-*. Consider the examples given in (66) and (67):

(66) Abafundi ba-za ku-qubh-a.

Students SC-FUT-swim-FV

'Students will swim.'

(67) Ndi-ya ku-fund-a isiXhosa.

I-FUT-study-FV isiXhosa

'I will study isiXhosa.'

In (66), the expression *baza kuqubha* is formed by the auxiliary *-za* with the infinitive of the verb *-uku-qubha*. In (67), the expression *ndiya kufunda* is formed by the auxiliary *-ya* with the infinitive of the verb *-uku-funda*. In each case, the sentence is described in the future tense and the event is located in the future. In everyday speech, *-za ku-* and *-ya ku-* are often shortened into *-zo-* and *-yo-*, as shown by the two sentences below:

(68) Abafundi ba-zo-qubh-a.

Students SC-FUT-swim-FV

'Students will swim.'

(69) Ndi-yo-fund-a isiXhosa.

I-FUT-study-FV isiXhosa

'I will study isiXhosa.'

There is no nuanced difference in terms of temporal information between the event described in (66) and the one in (68) or between the event described in (67) and (69), but just that the forms have been contracted from *-za ku-* and *-ya ku-* to *-zo-* and *-yo-* in informal daily conversations.

Future location of situations in Mandarin can be encoded in two different ways. In one, the temporal auxiliary *yào*, which is grammaticalized from the modal verb *yào* that refers to the volition or intention, locates a situation in the future grammatically; in such cases the sentence-final *le* often appears and it indicates the inchoative of a future situation, that is, the situation being said does not happen or exist at speech time and it will appear after speech time. In the other, a lexical item, such as a temporal adverbial like *míngtiān* 'tomorrow' and *kuài* 'soon' is used to indicate the future location of a situation. The two different forms are exemplified by (70) and (71):

(70) Méiguì huā yào kāi le.  
Rose flower FU open PRF  
'The rose will blossom.'

(71) Lǐ jiàoshòu míngtiān dádào Grahamstown.  
Li Professor tomorrow arrive Grahamstown  
'Professor Li will arrive in Grahamstown tomorrow.'

In (70), *yào* locates the event <the rose blossom> at a time after the time of speaking and the sentence-final *le* indicates the inchoative of the future state <the rose be in blossoming>; hence the sentence is interpreted as meaning that the rose will come to blossom after the time of speech and it simultaneously implies that it does not blossom at speech time. The rise of the future reading is attributed to the presence of the auxiliary *yào*, which will become clear when the sentence (70) is contrasted with the sentence without *yào* as illustrated below:

(72) Méiguī huā      kāi    le.  
Rose   flower   open   PRF  
'The rose has blossomed.'

In (72), in the absence of the auxiliary *yào*, the event <the rose blossom> is assumed to be located in the past and that its effect is present at speech time; thus the sentence is interpreted as meaning that the rose has come to blossom before the time of speaking and it is still in blossoming at speech time. What has been shown is that the auxiliary *yào* functions as a future marker.

Going back to (71), without the temporal auxiliary *yào*, the temporal adverbial *míngtiān* 'tomorrow' lexically locates the event <Prof Li arrive in Grahamstown> in the future. This reveals that *yào* does not necessarily have to be used in terms of expressing the future location of situations, and temporal adverbials can be used alone to locate a situation in the future. It shows here that although the temporal auxiliary *yào* can locate a situation in the future, it differs from the future tense markers in isiXhosa.

#### **4.4.2 Degree of Remoteness in Future Situations**

It is commonly accepted that the future tense in isiXhosa is grammaticalized to indicate that a situation occurs in the near or remote future. Returning to the data given in (66) and (67), the expression *baza kuqubha* and *ndiya kufunda* represent what have widely been defined as the 'recent/immediate' and 'remote' future tense (e.g. McLaren, 1936; Bennie, 1939 and Mncube, 1957); *-za ku-* indicates that a situation will occur or exist in the near future and *-ya ku-* indicates that a situation will occur or exist in the remote future. However, the present study found something different. In the study it was found that the formative *-za ku-* is used to not only indicate situations that occur in the near future time like later on the day of speaking

(i.e. today) or next week, but also those that occur in the remote future like next year or some other the distant future time. Consider the two sentences given in (73) and (74):

(73) Ba-za ku-bhal-a iimviwo namhlanje.

SC-FUT-write-FV exams today

'They will write exams today.'

(74) Abantu bonke ba-za ku-fa nge-nye imini.

People every SC-FUT-die LOC-one day

'Human beings will die out one day.'

In (73), *-za ku-* indicates that the event <they write exams> will happen later today.

In (74), *-za ku-* is used to encode an event <human beings die out> that is located in a more distant future according to the general knowledge of the world. Interestingly, both sentences are grammatical in isiXhosa.

Certainly, situations that will occur in the future, particularly in the remote future, can be marked by *-ya ku-*, as illustrated in the sentences below:

(75) Inkwenkwe i-ya ku-fund-a isiXhosa kulo nyaka uzayo.

Boy SC-FUT-study-FV isiXhosa the year RC-come-RS

'The boy will study isiXhosa next year.'

What has been shown here supports Zotwana's (1994:54) observation that *-za ku-* and *-ya ku-* may be used interchangeably. However, the present study has further found that *-za ku-* is used much more frequently when expressing future situations when compared with *-ya ku-*. That is, speakers have a stronger preference for *-za ku-* than *-ya ku-* to express future situations, even for those situations that will happen in more remote future time. This suggests that the language is in constant

flux with respect to the encoding of the remoteness of future situations. Perhaps the grammaticalized distinction between the near and remote future is disappearing<sup>4</sup>.

Unlike isiXhosa, Mandarin only has one grammatical form, the auxiliary *yào*, to indicate future situations regardless of the degree of remoteness. The degree of remoteness in future situations is expressed lexically in Mandarin.

#### 4.4.3 Ongoingness of Future Situations

In Mandarin, just as for present and past situations, the ongoing nature of future situations is marked by *zài* or *zhe*. With regards to the future location of those situations, it must be expressed through lexical devices like temporal adverbials. However, the auxiliary *yào* cannot be used to locate the temporal location of ongoing situations in the future. Consider the two sentences given in (76) and (77):

(76) Míngtiān shàngwǔ bā diǎn, wǒ zài chī zǎofàn.

Tomorrow morning eight o'clock, I PROG eat breakfast.

'I will be eating breakfast at 8 o'clock tomorrow.'

(77) \* Míngtiān shàngwǔ wǒ yào zài gōngzuò.

Tomorrow morning I FU PROG work

'I will be working tomorrow morning.'

In (76), the progressive marker *zài* indicates that the event <I eat breakfast> is in progress and the temporal adverbial *míngtiān shàngwǔ bādiǎn* '8 o'clock tomorrow' locates the event in the future. Without this temporal adverbial, the sentence *wǒ hái zài chīzǎofàn* is interpreted as meaning that the speaker is still eating at speech time.

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<sup>4</sup> The flux of the degree of remoteness exists in languages. For instance, French had two past tenses, near past and remote past tense, in the seventeenth century; however there is no temporal distance difference of past tense in Modern French (Comrie, 1985:93)

The sentence given in (77) is not accepted grammatically in Mandarin because the auxiliary *yào* cannot be used to refer to ongoing events.

isiXhosa is similar to Mandarin in the sense that it has a grammatical form to express the ongoing nature of future events. Future situations that are in progress in isiXhosa are expressed by the auxiliary *-ba-* along with the future tense marker *-za ku-* or *-ya ku-*, as illustrated below:

(78) Utata wam u-za ku-ba e-tyal-a,  
Father my SC-FUT-IPFV PM-plant-FV  
xa ndi-goduk-a kule nyaga izayo.  
when I-go home-FV DET month RC-come-RS  
'My father will be planting when I come home next month.'

In (78), *-ba-* expresses the idea that the event <my father plant> is in progress and *-za ku-* locates the event in future. isiXhosa only has this one form to express the ongoing nature of future situations, so whether a situation will occur in the recent or remote future, *-ba-* is used to indicate the ongoing nature of the situation in question.

While *-ba-* indicates the ongoingness of future situations, it is also used to indicate states that will exist in the future. That is, future states that are described in sentences where stative verbs, adjectives or relatives are used as the predicate are expressed by *-ba-* along with a future tense marker *-za ku-* or *-ya ku-*, as exemplified in (79):

(79) Ku-za ku-ba shushu.  
It-FUT-IPFV hot  
'It will be hot.'

In (79), the future tense marker *-za ku-* locates the state <it be hot> in the future; *-ba-* is compulsory to be used; otherwise, the sentence would become ungrammatical in isiXhosa. As noted in section 4.2.4, *-be-* and *-ye-* are used to describe states that existed in past time, so it can be concluded here that the imperfective markers in isiXhosa are not only used to indicate the ongoing nature of events, but they are also used to describe states.

It is interesting to note that the data in this study shows that the prefix *-be-* can also be used to refer to the ongoingness of a future situation along with the future tenses. The sentence in (78) can be paraphrased by the sentence below:

(80) Utata wam u-za ku-be e-tyal-a,  
 Father my SC-FUT-IPFV PM-plant-FV  
 xa ndi-goduk-a kule nyaga izayo.  
 when I-go home-FV DET month coming  
 'My father will be planting when I come home next month.'

In (80), *-be-* refers to the ongoing nature of situations and the future tense marker *-za ku-* has to appear to locate the situation being said in future time.

To sum up, this section has shown that isiXhosa differs from Mandarin in terms of the mechanisms for expressing future location of situations. Future location of situations in isiXhosa must be encoded by tense markings regardless of the presence of temporal adverbials. Mandarin, in contrast, has two different mechanisms, the grammatical and the lexical, to indicate situations that occur in the future. However, the two languages are similar to each other when it comes to indicating the ongoing nature of future situations.

This chapter has shown that Mandarin to a large extent differs from isiXhosa; nevertheless the two languages still share some similarities with respect to the

expression of temporal relations. The two languages are distinct from one another in the following ways: (i) past and future location of situations is encoded by tense markers in isiXhosa while in Mandarin, temporal particles or auxiliaries do not necessarily have to be used and past and future situations can be indicated through aspectual marking or using temporal adverbials; (ii) Mandarin makes a formal distinction between the ongoing and non-ongoing situations that are located in the present, past or future, while in isiXhosa only the ongoingness of past and future situations is grammatically marked and there is no formal distinction between ongoing and non-ongoing situations that occur in the present; (iii) the degree of past remoteness in isiXhosa is encoded grammatically while Mandarin does not grammatically distinguish degree of remoteness; (iv) past situations are grammatically marked in terms of the completeness in Mandarin while isiXhosa does not have any grammatical marker for this purpose; (v) isiXhosa has a persistive aspect to indicate that a situation still occurs, which can only be expressed through lexical references in Mandarin. However, both languages are similar to each other in the following aspects: (i) the present location of a situation is not overtly marked; (ii) both languages have grammatical forms to encode the fact that the effects of situations that occurred or existed in the past still hold or no longer hold at the time of speech.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusion**

This study sought to explore the ways in which Mandarin and isiXhosa express temporal relations and to determine the extent to which the two typologically distinct languages differ or are similar in this respect. Specifically the study set out to answer the following questions:

- (i) How are temporal relations in isiXhosa and Mandarin expressed?
- (ii) To what extent are the ways of expressing temporal relations in the two languages different from or similar to each other?

The study has shown that although the two languages use different devices in encoding temporal relations – isiXhosa is more reliant on tense whereas Mandarin is more reliant on aspect – the two languages show some striking similarities in spite of their obvious differences.

#### **5.1 Grammaticalisation of Temporal Relations**

Temporal relations in isiXhosa are overtly grammaticalized. Tense is the most important linguistic device for encoding temporal relations in isiXhosa. Characteristically, each sentence in isiXhosa must be marked for tense. This grammatical category indicates an ordering relation between the time of situation being described and the time of speaking; that is, the situation may be located before, after or simultaneously with speech time. IsiXhosa overtly expresses this relationship: tense is an unavoidable feature of the language. Furthermore, 'pastness' in this language is grammaticalised to indicate the degree of remoteness. The different past tenses, to a certain extent, show the distance of a past situation

relative to speech time. In the same way, the different future tenses also provide an indication of the distance of a future situation from speech time; however, unlike past tenses, the grammatical distinction of the degree of remoteness related to future tenses seems to be disappearing in isiXhosa.

In contrast to isiXhosa, although Mandarin has certain grammatical devices (i.e. the particles *láizhe* and *de* and the auxiliary *yào*) that can locate a situation on the time line, these grammatical markers do not necessarily have to be used and they can be replaced by other temporal devices like temporal adverbials to express the temporal relations. More importantly, these markers can only be used in highly specific contexts. For example, the particle *láizhe* can only be used in informal everyday discourse and simultaneously it expresses certain emphatic mood. As was stated in Chapter 2 - tense markers tend to be obligatory in a language and all tense markers in one language fit into a coherent system in that languages - Mandarin does not have a tense system.

In the absence of tense in Mandarin, aspectual markers contribute in an essential way to the understanding of the relations between the temporal location of situations and the time of speech. The 'ongoingness', 'completiveness' and 'experience' of situations are clearly marked by aspectual markers in Mandarin. Aspect is the most important grammatical category in this language. A sentence must be marked by aspectual markers (i.e. the progressive marker *zài*, the durative marker *zhe*, the completive *le* and the experiential *guo*) to indicate whether or not the situation is ongoing, or has been completed in its entirety or experienced. Those aspectual markers do not directly locate a situation on the time and they can be used to describe past, present and future situations, but when there are no overt temporal devices (e.g. temporal adverbials) in sentences, the function of aspectual markers is to provide pragmatic cues which imply the existence of certain temporal

relations. More specifically, in the absence of overt temporal references (i.e. the reference time is located at the time of speech), situations marked by the progressive marker *zài* or the durative *zhe* are assumed to be located in the present time while situations marked by perfective marker *le* or the experiential marker *guo* are assumed to be located in the past.

The ways in which isiXhosa encodes the internal structure of a situation time differ from those used in Mandarin. IsiXhosa is less precise when it comes to encoding the internal structure of an event or situation. It has been noted that neither the ongoingness of present situations, nor the completive and experiential natures of situations are grammatically marked. As a result, situations described in present tense are always ambiguous in isiXhosa: they can be interpreted as having either an ongoing or habitual meaning. Similarly, situations described by past tenses may have been completed or may have not been. Furthermore, aspectual markers must be used in a certain tense that directly indicates the position of a situation on the time. So unlike in Mandarin, aspect in isiXhosa does not really provide pragmatic cues as to the location of a situation on the time line. That function is fulfilled by the tense forms in the language.

It is interesting to note that although Mandarin and isiXhosa are quite distinct in terms of tense and aspect, the two languages share one significant feature: in each language, pastness seems to be grammaticalised to simultaneously express that the effects of a situation in question either persist or no longer persist at the time of speaking. Another similarity between the two languages is when there is no temporal device (e.g. tense affix, temporal adverbial or particle), the situation under description is assumed to hold at the present time. In other words, both languages do not have formal devices for marking the location of situations in the present time. This conforms to Labov's (1990:22) theory that the present is generally unmarked

across languages in contrast to the past and future. In addition, although the ongoingness of present situations is not marked in isiXhosa, the ongoing nature of situations that occur in the past and future is grammatically marked in both Mandarin and isiXhosa. This shows that although the two languages are completely different from each other morphologically and syntactically, they still share some similarities, which may reveal the non-accidental properties of natural languages.

## **5.2 The Value of Lexical Device**

In both Mandarin and isiXhosa, temporal adverbials constitute an important lexical device for specifying the temporal relations between situation time and speech time. However, the assignment of relational values to temporal adverbials in each language is different. In isiXhosa, tense is the only obligatory device in the sentence. A temporal adverbial is just used as a complement to tense to further specify the temporal location. Whether or not a temporal adverbial appears in a sentence, the fundamental temporal relation between situation time and speech time (i.e. whether a given situation occurs before, after or simultaneously with speech time) remains the same and is captured by the relevant tense used in the sentence. Sentences referring to past situations are still interpreted as having a past reading and those referring to future situations are still interpreted as having a future reading even if temporal adverbials are not present.

By contrast, temporal adverbials in Mandarin are used independently and specifically to express different positions of situations on the time line. There are many sentences that just contain a temporal adverbial to indicate whether a situation occurs before, after or at the present moment, as well as the degree of remoteness. In other words, the determination of whether the said situation obtains in future time or in past time rests on the existence of the temporal adverbial. In such

sentences, if the temporal adverbial is removed the situation would be assumed to hold at the time of speaking.

This suggests that although temporal adverbials can indicate temporal relations in both languages, the weight assigned to temporal adverbials in Mandarin in terms of locating situations in past or future time, is different from that assigned in isiXhosa. The study has shown that Mandarin relies more heavily on temporal adverbials to express the temporal relations.

By juxtaposing two typologically distinct languages, this study has revealed some important differences as well as similarities between Mandarin and isiXhosa. The expression of temporal relations in isiXhosa relies on the grammatical category, tense, while Mandarin it relies on lexical and pragmatic devices – the use of temporal adverbials and the implication of aspectual marking.

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## Appendix

### Part I Present Situations

States	No.	English (Meaning)	Mandarin	IsiXhosa
	1	My old sister is beautiful.	Wǒ jiějie hěn piàoliang.	Usisi wam mhle.
	2	The apples are very sour.	Zhèxiē píngguǒ hěn suān.	Ezi ziApile zimuncu kakhulu.
	3	The baby is fat.	Zhège yīngér hěn pàng.	Usana lutyebile.
	4	The baby has been fat.	Zhège yīngér pàng le.	Usana lutyebile.
	5	I am hungry	Wǒ hěn è.	Ndilambile.
	6	I have become hungry.	Wǒ hěn è le.	Ndilambile.
	7	The students are sitting in the classroom.	Xuésheng zài jiāo shì lǐ zuò zhe.	Abafundi bahleli eklasini.
	8	Sipho wears clothes	(1) Sipho chuān zhe yīfu. (2) Sipho chuān yīfu.	(1) USipho unxibe impahla. (2) USipho unxiba impahla.
	9	I am still healthy	Wǒ hái hěn jiànkāng.	Ndisaphila.
	10	Prof Cata still fears dogs.	Cata jiàoshòu réngrán pà gǒu.	UNjingalwazi Cata usazoyika izinja.

	11	There are still many people here	Zhèlǐ rén hái hěn duō	Basabaninzi abantu apha.
Events	12	Sipho studies isiXhosa.	Sipho xuéxí kǎosà yǔ.	USipho ufunda isiXhosa.
	13	Sipho is studying isiXhosa.	Sipho zài xuéxí kǎosà yǔ.	USipho ufunda isiXhosa.
	14	Professor Cata teaches isiXhosa.	Cata jiàoshòu jiāo kǎosà yǔ.	Unjinglwazi Cata ufundisa isiXhosa.
	15	Prof. Cata is teaching isiXhosa.	Cata jiàoshòu zài jiāo kǎosà yǔ.	Unjinglwazi Cata ufundisa isiXhosa.
	16	Sipho eats food	Sipho chī fàn.	Usipho utya ukutya.
	17	Sipho is eating food.	Sipho zài chī fàn.	Usipho utya ukutya.
	18	Mama cooks every day.	Māma měitiān zuò fàn.	Umama wam upheka yonke imihla.
	19	I go to church every Sunday.	Wǒ měigè xīngqī tiān qù jiàotáng.	Ndiya ecaweni rhoqo ngeCawa.
	20	Sipho is wearing clothes.	Sipho zài chuān yī fu.	USipho unxiba impahla.
	21	My mother is washing clothes now.	Xiǎnzài wǒ māma zài xǐ yī fu.	Umama wam uhlamba iimpahla ngoku.
	22	Sipho is still studying isiXhosa.	Sipho hái zài xué kǎosà yǔ.	USipho usafunda isiXhosa.
	23	Sipho still studies isiXhosa.	Sipho hái xué kǎosà yǔ.	USipho usafunda isiXhosa.
	24	My old brother usually visits my grandma.	Wǒ gēge chángcháng qù kàn wǒ nǎi nai.	(1) Ubhuti <i>udla</i> ngokundwendwela umakhulu. (2) Ubhuti wam <i>usoloko</i> endwendwela umakhulu.

				(3) Ubhuti uyamhambela umakhulu <i>ngamaxesha athile</i> .
	25	Amanda always goes to Grahamstown by car	Amanda <i>zǒngshì</i> kāichē qù Grahamstown.	UAmanda <i>usoloko eya eRhini</i> ngemoto.

## Part II Past Situations

**Table 1**

States	No.	English (Meaning)	Mandarin	IsiXhosa
	1	The wind was very strong.	(1) Fēng ( <i>gāngcái</i> ) hěn dà. (2) Fēng hěn dà <i>lái</i> zhe.	(1) Umoya <i>ubumkhulu</i> kakhulu. (2) Umoya <i>wawumkhulu</i> kakhulu.
	2	My father was young.	(1) Wǒ bàba ( <i>céngjīng</i> ) hěn niánqīng. (2) Wǒ bàba hěn niánqīng <i>lái</i> zhe.	Utata wam <i>wayemtsha</i> .
	3	Sipho was once fat.	(1) Sipho <i>céngjīng</i> hěn pàng. (2) Sipho <i>céngjīng</i> hěn pàng <i>guò</i> .	(1) USipho <i>wayetyebile</i> (2) USipho <i>ebetyebile</i> .
	4	Sipho was hungry.	(1) Sipho ( <i>gānggāng</i> ) hěn è. (2) Sipho hěn è <i>lái</i> zhe.	(1) USipho <i>ebelambile</i> . (2) USipho <i>walambile</i> .

5	Sipho loved his wife.	(1) Sipho ( <i>yǐqián</i> ) ài tā de qīzi. (2) Sipho ài guò tā de qīzi.	(1) USipho ebemthanda umfazi wakhe. (2) USipho wamthanda umfazi wakhe.
6	Prof. Cata lived in Grahamstown.	(1) Cata jiàoshòu ( <i>yǐqián</i> ) zhù zài Grahamstown. (2) Cata jiàoshòu zài Grahamstown zhù guò. (3) Cata jiàoshòu zài Grahamstown zhù láizhe.	(1) UProfa Cata ebehlala eRhini. (2) UProfa Cata wahlala eRhini.
7	It was hot yesterday	(1) Zuótiān tiān hǎn rè. (2) Zuótiān tiān hǎn láizhe.	Bekushushu izolo
8	Just now the wind was very strong.	(1) Gāngcái fēng hǎn dà. (2) Gāngcái fēng hǎn dà láizhe.	Umoya ubumkhulu kakhulu.
9	Her scarf was new last month.	(1) Tā de wéijīn shànggè yuè hǎn xīn. (2) Tā de wéijīn shànggè yuè hǎn xīn láizhe.	(1) Isikhafu sakhe sasisitsha kule nyanga iphelileyo. (2) Isikhafu sakhe besisitsha kule nyanga iphelileyo.
10	The teacher had three	(1) Zhège lǎoshī qùnián yǒu sāngè	(1) Utitshala wayenabafundi

		students last year.	xuésheng. (2) Zhège lǎoshī qùnián yǒu sāngè xuésheng láizhe. (3) Zhège lǎoshī qùnián yǒu guo sāngè xuésheng.	abathathu. (2) Utitshala ebenabafundi abathathu.
	11	My old sister wore a red skirt.	(1) (Nàtiān) wǒ jiějie chuān zhe yí jiàn hóngsè de qúnzi. (2) Wǒ jiějie chuān guo hóngsè de qúnzi.	(1) Usisi wam wanxiba isiketi esibomvu. (2) Usisi wam ebenxibe isiketi esibomvu.
	12	My old sister liked wearing a red skirt when she was young.	Wǒ jiějie xiǎo de shíhou xǐhuan chuān hóngsè de qúnzi .	Usisi wam wathanda ukunxiba isiketi esibomvu <i>ngxa wayemtsha.</i>
Activities	13	Sipho studied isiXhosa.	(1) Sipho (yǐqián) xuékǎo sà yǔ. (2) Sipho xué guo kǎosà yǔ. (3) Sipho xué kǎosà yǔ le. (4) Sipho xué kǎo sà yǔ láizhe.	(1) USipho wafunda isiXhosa (2) USipho ufunde isiXhosa.
	14	Sipho was studying isiXhosa.	(1) Sipho (qùnián) zài xué kǎosà yǔ.	(1) USipho ebefunda isiXhosa.

			(2) Siphō <i>zài xué kǎosà yǔ lǎizhe.</i>	(2) USiphō <i>wayefunda isiXhosa.</i>
15	My mama cooked food.		(1) Wǒ māmā ( <i>yǐqián</i> ) zuòfàn. (2) Wǒ māmā zuò <i>guo</i> fàn. (3) Wǒ māmā zuòfàn <i>le.</i> (4) Wǒ māmā zuòfàn <i>lǎizhe.</i>	(1) Umama <i>wapheka</i> ukutya. (2) Umama <i>upheke</i> ukutya.
16	He studied isiXhosa yesterday.		(1) Tā <i>zuótīān</i> xué kǎosà yǔ <i>le.</i> (2) Tā <i>zuótīān</i> xué <i>guo</i> kǎo sà yǔ. (3) Tā <i>zuótīān</i> xué <i>de</i> kǎo sà yǔ. (4) Tā <i>zuótīān</i> xué kǎosà yǔ <i>lǎizhe.</i>	Ufunde isiXhosa <i>izolo.</i>
17	Siphō once worked in ShopRite.		(1) Siphō <i>céngjīng</i> zài ShopRite gōngzuò. (2) Siphō <i>céngjīng</i> zài ShopRite gōngzuò <i>guo.</i> (3) Siphō <i>céngjīng</i> zài ShopRite gōngzuò <i>lǎizhe.</i>	USiphō <i>wakhe wasebenza</i> kwaShoprite.
18	My old sister was singing.		(1) Wǒ jiějie ( <i>gāngcái</i> ) zài chànggē. (2) Wǒ jiějie zài chànggē <i>lǎizhe.</i>	(1) Udadewethu <i>ebecula.</i> (2) Udadewethu <i>wayecula.</i>
19	Siphō sang songs.		(1) Siphō chànggē <i>le.</i>	(1) USiphō <i>ucule amaculo.</i>

			(2) Siphō chànggē <i>lái</i> zhe.	(2) USiphō wacula amaculo.
20	Siphō was drawing a picture yesterday.	(1) Siphō <i>zuótiān zài huàhuà</i> . (2) Siphō <i>zuótiān zài huàhuà lái</i> zhe.		USiphō ebezoba umfanekiso <i>izolo</i> .
21	My father was shearing sheep last year.	(1) <i>Qùnián wǒ bàba zài gēi yáng jiǎ nmáo</i> . (2) <i>Qùnián wǒ bàba zài gēi yáng jiǎ nmáo lái</i> zhe.		(1) Utata wam ubecheba iigusha <i>kulo nyaka uphelileyo</i> . (2) Utata wam <i>wayecheba</i> iigusha <i>kulo nyaka uphelileyo</i> .
22	My grandfather studied isiXhosa when he was young.	(1) <i>Yéye niánqīng de shíhou xué kǎosà yǔ le</i> . (2) <i>Yéye niánqīng de shíhou xué guo kǎosà yǔ</i> . (3) <i>Yéye niánqīng de shíhou xué kǎosà yǔ lái</i> zhe. (4) <i>Yéye niánqīng de shíhou xué de kǎosà yǔ</i> .		Utatomkhulu wam wafunda isiXhosa <i>ngexesha wayemncinci</i> .
23	My father was planting when I came home last year.	<i>Qùnián wǒ huíjiā de shíhou, bàba zài zhòngdì</i> .		(1) Utata <i>wayelima xandandifika ekhaya kulonyaka uphelileyo</i> . (2) Utata <i>ebelima xandandifika</i>

				<i>ekhaya kulonyaka uphelileyo.</i>
	24	Professor Cata was just teaching isiXhosa.	(1) <i>Gāngcái</i> Cata jiàoshòu zài jiāo kǎosà yǔ. (2) <i>Gāngcái</i> Cata jiàoshòu zài jiāo kǎosà yǔ <i>lázhe</i> .	UNjingalwazi Cata ebefundisa isiXhosa.
Accomplishments	25	Sipho ate two apples	(1) Sipho chī <i>le</i> liǎnggè píngguǒ. (2) Sipho chī <i>guo</i> liǎnggè píngguǒ.	(1) USipho utye amaApile amabini. (2) USipho watya amaApile amabini.
	26	I wrote a letter two days ago.	(1) <i>Liǎngtiānqián</i> wǒ xiě <i>le</i> yì fēng xìn. (2) <i>Liǎngtiānqián</i> wǒ xiě <i>guo</i> yìfēng xìn.	(1) Ndibhale incwadi kwintsuku ezimbini ezidlulileyo. (2) Ndabhala incwadi izolo ezimbini.
	27	My grandmother wrote a book many years ago.	(1) <i>Hěn duō niánqián</i> wǒ nǎinai xiě <i>le</i> yìběn shū. (2) <i>Hěn duō niánqián</i> wǒ nǎinai xiě <i>guo</i> yìběn shū.	Umakhulu wam wabhala incwadi kwiminyaka eminizi eyadlulaya.
	28	My mother washed this coat.	(1) Wǒ māma xǐ <i>le</i> zhèjiàn yīfu. (2) Wǒ māma xǐ <i>guo</i> zhèjiàn yīfu. (3) Wǒ māma xǐ zhèjiàn yīfu <i>le</i> .	(1) Umama wam uhlambile le bhatyi. (2) Umama wam wahlamba le bhatyi.

	29	My mother was washing this coat.	(1) Wǒ māma ( <i>zuótiān</i> ) zài xǐ zhèjiàn yīfu. (2) Wǒ māma zài xǐ zhèjiàn yīfu <i>lái</i> zhe.	(1) Umama wam ebehlamba le bhatyi. (2) Umama wam wayehlamba le bhatyi.
	30	My old sister was singing that song.	(1) Wǒ jiějie ( <i>zuótiān</i> ) zài chàng nà shǒu gē. (2) Wǒ jiějie zài chàng nà shǒu gē <i>lái</i> zhe.	(1) Udadewethu wayecula la ngoma. (2) Udadewethu ebecula la ngoma.
	31	I was reading this book the day before yesterday.	(1) <i>Qíantiān</i> wǒ zài kàn zhèběn shū. (2) <i>Qíantiān</i> wǒ zài kàn zhèběn shū <i>lái</i> zhe.	(1) Ndayendifuna le ncwadi izolo elinye. (2) Bendifunda lencwadi izolo elinye.
Achievements	32	The students arrived in Grahamstown.	(1) Xuésheng ( <i>zuótiān</i> ) dá dào Grahamstown. (2) Xuésheng dàodá Grahamstown <i>le</i> .	(1) Abafundi bafika eRhini. (2) Abafundi bafikile eRhini.
	33	My mama lost money.	(1) Wǒ māma diū <i>le</i> qián. (2) Wǒ māma diū <i>guo</i> qián. (3) Wǒ māma diū qián <i>le</i> .	(1) Umama walahla imali. (2) Umama wam ulahlekelwe yimali.

	34	Prof Cata left Grahamstown in 2000.	(1) Liǎngqiānnián Cata jiàoshòu lí k āi <i>le</i> Grahamstown. (2) Liǎngqiānnián Cata jiàoshòu lí k āi <i>guo</i> Grahamstown.	(1) Ujingalwazi Cata umke eRhini ngo-2000. (2) Ujingalwazi Cata wemka eRhini ngo-2000.
	35	My brother won the game.	Wǒ gēge yíng <i>le</i> bǐsài.	(1) Ubhuti waphumelela umdlalo kunyaka. (2) Ubhuti wam uphumelele umdlalo.
	36	Sipho graduated	Sipho bìyè <i>le</i> .	Umntakwethu uthweswe isidanga.
	37	That old man has died.	Nà gè lǎorén sǐ <i>le</i> .	Indoda endala ibhubhile.

**Table 2**

Completeness	Sipho wrote a letter [ <i>the letter has been completed</i> ].	Sipho xiě <i>le</i> yìfēng xìn.	(1) Usipho ubhale ileta. (2) Usipho ebebhala ileta. (3) Usipho wabhala ileta.
	Sipho wrote a letter [ <i>the letter has not been completed yet</i> ].	(1) Sipho xiě xìn <i>le</i> . (2) Sipho xiě xìn <i>lái</i> zhe. (3) Sipho xiě <i>guo</i> yìfēng xìn.	(1) Usipho ubhale ileta. (2) Usipho ebebhala ileta. (3) Usipho wabhala ileta.

	My grandfather painted a picture [ <i>the picture has been completed by speech time</i> ].	Wǒ yéye huà le yī fú huà.	(1) Umakhulu wam wazoba umfanekiso. (2) Umakhulu wam uzobe umfanekiso. (3) Umakhulu wam ebezoba umfanekiso.
	My grandfather painted a picture [ <i>the picture has not been completed by speech time</i> ].	(1) Wǒ yéye huà huà le. (2) Wǒ yéye huà huà lǎ izhe. (3) Wǒ yéye huà guo yī fú huà.	(1) Umakhulu wam wazoba umfanekiso. (2) Umakhulu wam uzobe umfanekiso. (3) Umakhulu wam ebezoba umfanekiso.
The present effect	When he was young, Prof Cata went to South Africa [ <i>He is not in South Africa at speech time</i> ].	Cata jiàoshòu niánqīng de shíhou qù guo nánfēi.	Ujingalwazi Cata wahamba eMzantsi Afrika nge-xesha wayemncinci.
	When he was young, Prof Cata went to South Africa [ <i>He is still in South Africa at speech time</i> ].	Cata jiàoshòu niánqīng de shíhou qù nánfēi le.	Ujingalwazi Cata uhambile eMzantsi Afrika nge-xesha wayemncinci.
	Sipho got married [ <i>he is</i>	Sipho jié guo hūn.	(1) USipho wayetshatile.

	<i>divorce at speech time</i> ].		(2) USipho <i>ebetshatile</i> .
	Sipho got married [ <i>he is still married at speech time</i> ].	Sipho <i>jié hūn le</i> .	USipho <i>utshatile</i> .

### Part III Future Situations

States	No.	English (Meaning)	Mandarin	IsiXhosa
	1	It will be very hot tomorrow.	<i>Míng tiān</i> tiān hěn rè.	(1) <i>Kuza kuba shushu kakhulu ngomso.</i> (2) <i>Kuzoba shushu kakhulu ngomso.</i>
	2	It will become hot.	<i>Tiān yào rè le.</i>	(1) <i>Kuza kuba shushu.</i> (2) <i>Kuzoba shushu.</i>
	3	The boy will become fat.	<i>Zhège nánhái yào pàng le.</i>	(1) <i>Inkwenkwe iza kutyeba.</i> (2) <i>Inkwenkwe izotyeba.</i>
	4	Students will be a lot next year.	<i>Míngnián</i> xuésheng hěn duō.	(1) <i>Abafundi baza kubaninzi kulo nyaka uzayo.</i>

				(2) Abafundi bazobaninzi <i>kulo nyaka uzayo</i> .
	5	I am going to be married.	Wǒ yào jiéhūn le.	(1) Ndiza <i>kutshata kwakamsinyane</i> . (2) Ndizotshata kwakamsinyane.
	6	The rose will blossom.	Méiguīhuā yào kuài le.	(1) iRose iza <i>kubhenqa</i> . (2) iRose izobhenqa.
Events	7	I will study isiXhosa.	(1) Wǒ ( <i>míngnián</i> ) xué kǎosà yǔ. (2) Wǒ yào xué kǎosà yǔ le.	(1) Ndiza <i>kufunda isiXhosa</i> . (2) Ndizofunda isiXhosa.
	8	Students are going to swim.	(1) Xuésheng ( <i>xìàwǔ</i> ) yóuyǒng. (2) Xuésheng yào qù yóuyǒng.	(1) Abafundi baza <i>kuqubha</i> . (2) Abafundi bazoqubha.
	9	My friends will play football next week.	Wǒ de péngyou xiàxīngqī tīzúqǐ ú.	(1) Abahlobo bam baza <i>kudlala ibhola kuleveki izayo</i> . (2) Abahlobo bam bazodlala ibhola <i>kuleveki izayo</i> .
	10	My old sister will go to America next month.	Wǒ jiějie xiàgèyuè qù měiguó.	(1) Udadewethu uza <i>kuya eMelika kule nyanga izayo</i> . (2) Udadewethu uzoya eMelika <i>kule nyanga izayo</i> .

11	The boy will do isiXhosa next year.	Zhègè nánhái <i>míngnián</i> xué kǎosà yǔ.	(1) Inkwenkwe iza <i>kwenza isiXhosa kulo nyaka uzayo.</i> (2) Inkwenkwe iya <i>kwenza isiXhosa kulo nyaka uzayo.</i>
12	The human race will die out one day.	Rénlèi <i>yǒu yìtiān jiāng</i> mièwáng.	(1) Abantu bonke baza <i>kufa ngenye imini.</i> (2) Abantu bonke bazofa <i>ngenye imini.</i> (3) Abantu bonke baya <i>kufa ngenye imini.</i> (4) Abantu bonke bayofa <i>ngenye imini.</i>
13	They will write an exam today.	Tāmen <i>jīntiān</i> kǎoshì.	(1) Baza <i>kubhala iimviwo namhlanje.</i> (2) Bazobhala <i>iimviwo namhlanje.</i>
14	Professor Li will arrive in Grahamstown tomorrow	Lǐ jiàoshòu <i>míngtiān</i> dá dào Grahamstown.	(1) Unjinglwazi Li <i>uza kufika eRhini.</i> (2) Unjinglwazi Li <i>uzofika eRhini.</i>
15	I will be eating at 8 o'clock	<i>Míngtiān shàngwǔ bādiǎn</i> wǒ zài	(1) Ndiza <i>kube ndisitya ngo-8</i>

	tomorrow.	chī fàn.	<i>ngomso.</i> (2) <i>Ndiza kuba ndisitya ngo-8 ngomso.</i>
16	He will be working next Monday morning.	<i>Xiàxīngqī yí shàngwǔ tā zài gōng zuò.</i>	(1) <i>Uza kube esebenza kusasa kulo Mvulo uzayo.</i> (2) <i>Uza kuba esebenza kusasa kulo Mvulo uzayo.</i>
17	I will be doing exams on 20 <sup>th</sup> , Nov next year.	<i>Míngnián shíyíyuè èr shíhào wǒ zài kǎoshì.</i>	(1) <i>Ndiza kuba neemviwo ngomhla we20 kuNovemba kulo nyaka uzayo.</i> (2) <i>Ndiza kube ndibhala iimviwo nge-20 kaNovemba kulo nyaka uzayo.</i>
18	My father will be planting trees when I go home next month.	<i>Xiàgè yuè wǒ huíjiā de shíhou, bà ba zài zhòng shù.</i>	(1) <i>Utata uza kube etyala imithi xa ndigoduka kule nyanga izayo.</i> (2) <i>Utata uza kuba etyala xa ndigoduka kule nyaga izayo.</i> (3) <i>Utata uya kuba etyala xa ndigoduka kule nyaga izayo.</i>