

**EVENT VERBALIZATION IN ISIZULU L1 AND ENGLISH L2: A COMPARATIVE
ANALYSIS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TENSE AND ASPECT**

by

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DECLARATION

I, Muhle Praiseworthy 'MaShezi' Sibisi, declare that

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late father, Bhoyi Balcon Shezi, who always supported me and gave me sound advices on all my endeavours; and to my late father-in-law, Israel Zwelinjani Sibisi, who was always supportive and promoted educational growth and development.

(Hebrews 11: 13 “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them [...]”)

I really am standing on the shoulders of the giants!

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ABSTRACT

Event verbalization in isiZulu L1 and English L2: a comparative analysis with special reference to tense and aspect.

The current study investigates the verbalization of a series of events which culminate into a hypothetical laboratory incident at Mangosuthu University of Technology. The verbalization is in isiZulu (L1) and English (L2). Verbalizing events involves locating events in time as they evolve. As such, verbalization involves the use of tense frames to refer to an event in the past, present or future. The study, thus, focuses on the use of English tenses by isiZulu L1 speakers. A comparison is made in the verbalization of events using English and isiZulu. The study aims at investigating whether isiZulu L1 speakers conceptualize and verbalize events in the same way in both English and isiZulu.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were utilized in the process of this investigation. The findings thereof, will add to a pool of knowledge not only in the learning and teaching of second languages, including English, and assist educators thereof in deciding what best practices may be in the learning and teaching of a second language from the base of prior knowledge of the specific first language and all the related implications, more so in South Africa where an attempt is being made to bring all languages on par.

Lolucwaningo luphenya indlela yokulanda ngokwenzeka kwezigameko ezigcina ngokudala okuzenza sangozi e-laboratory eNyuvesi yobucwepheshe i-Mangosuthu. Ukulanda kwenziwa ngesiZulu (ulimi lwebele) kanye nesiNgisi (ulimi lwesibili). Ukulanda ngezigameko kumbandakanya ukuveza izikhathi izigameko ezenzeke ngazo. Ngakho-ke, ukulanda kukhombisa ukusebenza kwezinkathi njengokwenzeka kwezigameko: inkathi edlule, inkathi yamanje noma inkathi ezayo. Ngakho-ke, lolucwaningo lubheke ngqo ukusetshenziswa kwezinkathi zesiNgisi ilabo abakhuluma ulimi lwesiZulu njengolimi lwebele. Lolucwaningo luhlose ukubheka ukuthi labo abakhuluma ulimi lwesiZulu njengolimi lwebele bakubuka bese bekulanda ngendlela efanayo yini ukwenzeka kwezigameko uma besebenzisa ulimi lwesiNgisi kanye nolwesiZulu.

Lolucwaningo lusebenzise izindlela ezimbili zokucwaninga, e-qualitative ne-quantitative. Okuzotholakala kuzonezela emthonjeni wolwazi ayi kuphela ekufundiseni nasekufundisweni kolimi lwesibili, okuhlanganisa nolimi lwesiNgisi, kuzophinde kulekelele abafundisi ekuqhamukeni nezindlela ezingcono zokufunda nokufundisa ulimi lwesibili besebenzisa ulwazi lolimi lwebele kanye nokuyimithela yalo. Lokhu kuzosiza kakhulu kambe eMzansi Afrika lapho kunombhidlango wokufukula izilimi zesintu zonke zibe sezingeni elifanayo.

Keywords : Second language acquisition, second language learning, bilingualism, event verbalization, tense, grammatical aspect.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

L1	First language
L2	Second language
MUT	Mangosuthu University of Technology
RSA	Republic of South Africa
MOI	Medium of Instruction
LiEP	Language in Education Policy
LOLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
HL	Home Language
FAL	First Additional Language
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TM/FM	Tense marker/ Final marker
SC/SP	Subject concord/ Subject prefix
Aux	auxiliary verb
E,S,R	Event, Speech, Reference
SLL	Second Language Learning
LAD	Language Acquisition Devise
UG	Universal Grammar
CPH	Critical Period Hypothesis
ASP	Aspect
SADC	Southern African Development Community
MechEng	Mechanical Engineering
AnChem	Analytical Chemistry
E1	English group 1
Z1	isiZulu group 1
E2	English group 2
Z2	isiZulu group 2
RMT P	Remote Past (tense)
RCN P	Recent Past (tense)
P	Present (tense)
FT	Future tense
RF	Remote Future (tense)
ST/ SpT	Speech time
SitT	Situation time
RT	Reference time
EFL	English Foreign Language
ESL	English Second Language
SBJ	Subject
FV	Final vowel

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

In this study I seek to explore how isiZulu Home language (L1) first semester Engineering students at Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) use English Second Language (L2) tense and aspect morphology. This study emanates from the challenges posed to isiZulu L1 speakers when they use grammatical structures in English in order to mark tense and aspect. About these two grammatical features – i.e. tense and aspect– Shirai and Li write, “We speak of situations as being in the past, present, or future; and we talk about events as ongoing or completed” (Shirai and Li, 2000: 1). This statement provides the parameters and the basis of the current study as the study explores the use of tense and aspect morphemes in the case of event verbalization. Tense is explored in terms of the time at which events occur; and aspect is explored in terms of whether a given event is conceptualized as being completed or incomplete.

Event verbalization is understood to be a multifaceted, information processing operation during natural language production which is hypothesized to involve four stages: the computation of mental representations of conceived states of affairs; the transfer of the mental representations into propositional representations (preverbal messages); the formulation of grammatical structures incorporating phonological encoding; and finally the acoustic realisation of the utterances (Habel and Tappe, 1999: 117). The model of verbalizing conceived states of affairs as expounded by Habel and Tappe reflects the vastly influential architecture of the language production model, the ‘blueprint for the speaker’ as proposed by Levelt (1989). The language production model comprises of three broad components: the conceptualiser, the formulator and the articulator (Habel and Tappe, 1999: 117-118). The processes of language production and event verbalization outlined provide a background and basis for the current study. The study investigates the verbalization of a series of events which constitute a hypothetical laboratory incident (see chapter 2 below for a detailed explanation).

The current study explores how isiZulu (henceforth L1)/English (henceforth L2) learners verbalize a series of events which constitute one hypothetical laboratory incident. This hypothetical incident is described by the participants in both languages: isiZulu and English. The study focuses mainly on the use of the tense and aspect systems in the two languages. The two grammatical features, tense and aspect, are the units of analysis of the study. Aspect

is investigated as grammatical aspect “[...] marked explicitly by linguistic devices usually auxiliaries, inflectional and derivational morphology” (Shirai and Li, 2000: 3) not Vendler’s (1957) inherent lexical aspect of the verb as embedded in the Aspect Hypothesis (Ping-Yu, no date). The concept of grammatical aspect basically encompasses the condition of the action expressed by the verb; i.e. whether the expressed action is complete (perfect) or incomplete/ongoing/progressive (imperfect). The following example illustrates:

1. When he **was doing** example he wrongly **mixed** chemicals. [E1/09]¹

In the above example, two events happened: the event of conducting an example, which was on going for a particular period of time in the past; and the event of the mixing of the chemicals, which was a once off action and was completed at a particular point in time in the past. The inflections on the verb as well as the auxiliary verb show the condition of the action expressed: ‘-ed’ to denote an action completed in the past and ‘-ing’ to denote the progressive aspect with ‘was’ as an auxiliary verb for the past tense.

The point of interest are the challenges faced by isiZulu L1 speakers in using English tense and aspect systems. The study thus interrogates processes involved in second language learning (SLL) as well as factors relating to bilingual language production. The analysis of the use of tense and aspect markings in English by isiZulu L1 speakers may contribute towards development of intervention programs that can assist isiZulu L1/English L2 bilinguals² in the use of these grammatical elements when using English.

Chapter 1 outlines the background to the research problem of using English tense and aspect systems by English L2 speakers. This background is described by citing previous research and findings that relate to challenges inherent to second language learning. Thereafter, the problem statement and the need for the study are presented. Next, I describe the significance of the current study and implications of the research findings for the field of second language learning. I then present my primary research questions and establish a link between the questions and the problem statement. The theoretical framework around which the study is aligned and the parameters set for the study are also briefly presented. Subsequently, I detail the limitations. Lastly, I provide an outline of the entire dissertation.

¹ The example is taken from the data of the current study as is as well as all other examples which are followed by a square bracket specifying the phase of writing, e.g. English phase 1 (E1), and the participant, e.g., 09.

² In the context of the current study, the term bilingual denotes a speaker who can produce comprehensible utterances in two languages (isiZulu and English). The participants in the current study are referred to as bilingual speakers of isiZulu and English even though they can be categorised clearly as L2 learners of English.

1.2 Background to the research problem

In the context of the current study event verbalization entails the production of a written investigative report concerning a hypothetical laboratory incident in two languages: isiZulu and English. As mentioned earlier, the focal point is the use of tense and aspect morphology in the data, particularly in the English reports. The motivation behind this investigation involves the prevalent challenges faced by English L2 speakers in using English tense and aspect markings. These challenges lead to severe consequences, which – taken together – may result in a breakdown of the entire communication process. Such consequences are that meanings are being obscured and that miscommunication and ambiguity are created.

One of the challenges faced by English L2 speakers, which is relevant in the context of the current study, is associated with the multi-lingual nature of the South African society. South Africa has eleven official languages (Constitution of the RSA, 1996 chapter 1 subsection 6). Of these languages, English is the dominant language in the education sector due to the fact that for almost five decades prior to 1994 English was a declared medium of instruction (MOI) in South African schools. The situation changed in 1994 with the ushering in of the new dispensation of the democratic government instituted in 1994. The language in education policy (LiEP) of South Africa promulgated in 1997, which is a part of the National Education Policy Act No. 27 of 1996, promotes multilingualism and the development of all official languages on an equal footing. The policy stipulates that all learners shall be offered at least one approved language as a subject in grade 1 and grade 2. From grade 3 onwards, all learners shall be offered their language of learning and teaching (LOLT) and at least one additional approved language as a subject (LiEP, 1997). In referring to isiZulu L1 speakers; LiEP policy states that the speakers of isiZulu L1 are taught in isiZulu as a LOLT throughout grade 1 and grade 2 with English L2 as a subject. Then from grade 3 onwards, isiZulu L1 speakers are taught in the chosen LOLT (the standard practice is to choose English as LOLT) and another language is chosen as a subject (the standard practice is to choose isiZulu at Home Language (HL) level. The South African Schools Act (84) 1996 places the onus on the school governing body to decide on the language policy for each school (Chapter 2 section 6(2)), a condition in line with the new constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

Generally, schools in South Africa have conformed to the LiEP guidance, particularly in the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal. They introduce isiZulu as LOLT in the Foundation phase (grade R – grade 3 and subsequently as a subject at home language level (HL) from grade 4

to grade 12. Usually schools also offer the option to choose English as a subject at first additional language level (FAL). From grade 4 onwards, English is introduced as the LOLT and as a subject at FAL level, while isiZulu remains a subject offered at HL level up to grade 12 (LiEP, 1997). It is against this language background that the study explores the use of English tense and aspect system and the challenges faced by first semester students at Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT, situated in Umlazi, near Durban, South Africa) in terms of their usage of English tense and aspect markings. As will be detailed in chapter 4 (Methodology), these students have been exposed to English in a school environment for about 12 years on average, as a subject at FAL level, and as their primary language of teaching and learning (LOLT) for 10 years on average. It is worth noting that the students who are the participants in this study typically have very little direct contact with English L1 speakers; even the teachers who teach them English as L2 are L2 speakers of the language. Thus, English, for a large part, remains a language for academic interaction in the lecture rooms and during office consultations and is used even in these contexts, predominantly with other second language speakers of English.

Past research indicates a number of challenges that L2 speakers of English generally face with respect to learning the grammatical structures of English; many of these studies indicate problems with learning the tense and aspect system in particular. Schwartz (1993 in Salaberry, 2000: 136) states that inflectional verbal morphology which is learned linguistic knowledge lags behind in the second language learning process as inflectional endings are the most difficult features for adult L2 speakers to learn. In the same study, Salaberry notes how Spanish L1/English L2 adult learners who are in an intermediate phase of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) resort to using present tense morphology in contexts in which the past tense morphology is required. The same study reports on how participants relied mostly on using irregular past tense morphology rather than regularised forms of the past tense which indicates an inclination of avoiding verb inflections. This observation is supported by Lardiere (2003 citing Hawkins, 2000) that the acquisition of the English past tense morphology by Chinese L1 speakers requires parameter re-setting as not all languages are parameterised to have a past tense inflection as English does (Lardiere, 2003: 176). It is given therefore that structural differences among languages are generally a cause for challenges faced by L2 speakers.

In a paper presented by von Stutterheim and Nüse (2003) which investigates the process of conceptualization in language production, a conclusion is made that the structural differences

between languages account for the differences in the organisation of information in texts. Although no conclusion can be drawn at this stage pertaining to the current study, it is evident that the structural differences between isiZulu and English may be a potential major factor in how the participants in the study will verbalize the series of events in the two languages. Structural differences between isiZulu and English are to be expected as the two languages belong to different language groups as determined by the morphological typology of languages. Although both languages can be categorised as synthetic languages since they are both built of more than one morpheme (Spiegler, 2011: 19), they do belong to different sub-categories: isiZulu is an agglutinating language and English as a fusion language (Spiegler, 2011: 19-20). According to Spiegler, certain grammatical morphemes of agglutinating languages have a one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning. To this effect Spiegler claims, “Each prefix or suffix represents a certain grammatical concept and there are no morphophonological variations when they are combined (2011: 19-20). Canonici (1996: 8) as well as Botner and Kershner (2000: 164) concur. All three authors state that isiZulu is an agglutinating language with a high degree of inflected words. For example a verb in isiZulu typically carries: subject concord (SC) for the noun class of the subject of the sentence, tense marker (TM), root/stem and final tense marker as shown in the verb ‘*wafaka*’. The verb ‘*wafaka*’ can be analysed as follows:

SC (class 1) + TM (remote past– long form) + root+ TM

w-+-á-+fak-+-a¹ (*he added*)

English is categorized as a fusion language though English also exhibits a mix of characteristics of fusion and agglutinative nature (Pirkola, 2001: 336-336). According to Pirkola, fusional languages do not exhibit clear-cut boundaries between morphemes in a word (2001: 335). For example the word *took* in English denotes two things: the action ‘take’ and the past tense form of the word (ibid.). In English verbal morphology, inflections are limited to: *-ed*, *-ing* and *-en*. For example, the highlighted main verb in the following sentence illustrates this:

2. Fellow classmates were *interviewed* on the happenings [E1/01]

The verb ‘interviewed’ is made up of three morphemes: two root words and tense/aspect marker:

inter- (between) + *view* (look) + *-ed* (TM past tense and denotes perfect aspect)

In addition to the structural differences, it has also been observed in empirical studies that L2 speakers resort to L1 when encountering challenges in using L2 linguistic structures (Kang, 2005). Kang reports on studies (Gundel and Tarone, 1983; Jin, 1994; Jung, 1999; Kang 2004; White, 1985) which show that L2 speakers rely on L1 strategies and grammatical forms found in L1 especially when they lack appropriate L2 linguistic strategies and forms (Kang, 2005: 261). In the following sentence, one participant in the current study used past tense and present tense forms (highlighted verbs) in a context in which the past perfect forms would have been more appropriate:

3. Questions were distributed to the students who **attended** practical session on the 8th of April to give reasons what caused it, how it **happen** what damage was made. [E1/02]

Speakers of an L2 may either lack the appropriate morphological form to mark tense/aspect if it does not exist in their L1 or they may be unfamiliar with the form. As illustrated in example 3 above, isiZulu L1 speakers may be unfamiliar with past perfect form auxiliaries. In addition the participants in the current study, used a large quantity of verbs without the “-ed” and “-en” verbal inflections which seem to be unfamiliar for isiZulu speakers. The following two sentences illustrate this point (see chapter 5 section 5.3.2.2 for a more detailed analysis):

4. Ten student were **interview** on how it happened. [E2/02]
5. The investigation was **took** out into the lab incident. [E1/13]

Although English and isiZulu share the conceptualization of tense as a time continuum which can be diagrammatically represented as a straight time line on which events are located in temporal relation to each other (Dürich, 2005: 3); the two languages differ with regard to the morphological representations of tenses and aspect (detailed in chapter 3). The figure below shows the representation of time as a time line.



Figure 1.1: Diagrammatic representation of time as a time line (Dürich, 2005: 3)

In representing tense and aspect linguistically, English uses auxiliaries and inflectional morphology whereas isiZulu uses only inflectional morphology as isiZulu is regarded as an agglutinative language with prefixes and suffixes embedded on the verb root (Canonici, 1996: 8). The reports from the studies above and other studies in SLA gave rise to the research problem of use of English tense and aspect morphology by isiZulu L1 speakers that the current study seeks to investigate.

1.3 The problem statement and the need for the study

The aim of the study as mentioned earlier is to investigate how isiZulu L1/English L2 bilingual speakers use tense and aspect markings in the verbalization of a series of events using the two languages. Of particular interest, are the challenges these bilingual speakers face in using the English tense and aspect markings. Levinson (2009: 29) states about human languages that they are “profoundly variable in both form and content”. Consequently, second language learners encounter challenges as they develop the usage of their L2. The differences in the structural organisation of the languages give rise to these challenges.

The current study seeks to explore the extent of the challenge in the use of English tense and aspect morphology by isiZulu L1 speakers; a prevalent phenomenon in English L2 learning. In particular, among isiZulu L1 learners of English L2, the gap of the knowledge is around past tense markings (*-ed*) and (*-en*); and aspectual marking for incomplete action(s) (*aux + -ing*). English simple past tense markings on a regular verb take the form of inflecting a verb with ‘*-ed*’.

For example: demonstrate = demonstrate+ *-ed* = demonstrated.

English also marks the simple past tense on an irregular form of the verb by changing the verb.

For example: teach = taught.

The different markings for one tense, i.e. in this case English simple past tense, pose a challenge for isiZulu L1 speakers. Firstly, the verb in isiZulu is agglutinative. Affixes are added to the root of the verb to determine the grammatical categories such as gender, number, person, mood, tense, aspect, dependency and actuality (Canonici, 1996: 70). Secondly, isiZulu differentiates between the recent past (*inkathi esandukudlula*) and the remote past (*inkathi eyadlula*) tenses. IsiZulu marks the recent past tense in one form, by using the suffix morpheme: *-e/ -ile* in addition to subject concord (SC) and root of the verb (ibid.).

For example: *-tshengis+e* = [*u-/tshengis/-e*] or [*u-/tshengis/-ile*] (*he demonstrated to us*) [SC/ root/ tense marker].

In contrast, isiZulu marks the remote past tense in another form, by using the long and high morphological marker: */-á-/* (Canonici, 1996: 81).

For example: [*w-/á-/thath/-a*] (*he took*) [SC/tense marker/ root/ final tense marker]

IsiZulu L1 learners of English battle with the *-ed* inflection/change in the verb. The *-ed* can be overgeneralised across all verbs: regular, irregular and infinite. For example:

6. I have managed to **questioned** the lecturer. [E1/11]

Concerning the aspectual markings for non-completion of events or activities, isiZulu and English have major structural differences. English marks actions in progress by the verbal inflection with the suffix */-ing/* to indicate past, present or future actions in addition to the appropriate auxiliary verb. The two examples (7) and (8) illustrate this process:

7. He was mix/*-ing* the chemicals.
8. They were experiment/*-ing* with the explosives.

The only difference between the two sentences above is the auxiliary verb marking concord: ‘*was*’ for singular subject and ‘*were*’ for plural subject. In isiZulu the non-completion of activities is marked using seven different morphological markers which are inflected on the verb in addition to SC and tense marker(s): */-sa-/ -nga-/ se-/ -ka-/ -be-/ -ile* or *-é/ -yo- or -zo-/* (Canonici, 1996: 72-73) (more details in chapter 3). See the following examples (9) and (10) for an illustration:

9. *Uthe [e-/sa-/xub-/a] (as he was mixing). -sa- [progressive durative-aspect] or Bathe [be-/sa-/xub-/a] (as they were mixing).*
10. *Abafundi [ba-/be-/lalel-/e] (the students were listening). -be- [imperfect-durative] or Umfundi [u-/be-/lalel-/e] (the student was listening).*

The structural and organisational differences between isiZulu and English give rise to the challenges highlighted earlier. The challenges extend to the use of auxiliary verbs for the English compound tenses.

The verbalization events involves locating the events in time as they evolve. As such, verbalization involves the use of tense frames to refer to an event in the past, present or future. The tense to be used in verbalizing the event is determined by the relation between the ‘time of event occurrence’ (E); the ‘speech time’ (S) and the ‘time of reference’ (R) (Hackmack, 2007: 4). As the conceptualization of time can be diagrammatically represented in a straight line (refer to figure 1.1), the same applies to tenses with regard to (E), (S) and (R) (detailed in chapter 3)³. The point here is that, failure to locate an event in time – in relation to speech time in particular – results in a misrepresentation of events in terms of the time of occurrence.

³ Note that some cultures have a non-linear conceptualization of time, i.e. the Yupno construal of time “is not linear, but exhibits a particular geometry that appears to reflect the local terrain” Núñez, Cooperrider, Doan and Wassmann (2012).

The current study further seeks to investigate the extent of the above challenges among a cohort of first semester isiZulu/English bilingual university students as they write an investigative report on a hypothetical laboratory incident. The study is in part motivated by the anticipation that its results may contribute to the development of intervention strategies, which are particularly suited for isiZulu L1 speakers. Such intervention strategies might lower frustration levels in isiZulu speakers who have to learn English and lead to a more fulfilling language learning process.

1.4 Significance of the study and implications of the research findings

The challenges that isiZulu L1/English L2 bilingual speakers face in using English tense and aspect morphology which are due to the structural differences between the two languages may result in an incorrect representations of events when these are verbalized. In South Africa, as described earlier, all official languages enjoy an equal status including isiZulu and English. In addition to this, the constitution of the country promotes multilingualism. However, English is a highly influential language in South Africa; it is becoming a ‘de facto’ lingua franca, and the most widely used language of government, business and commerce (Kamwangamalu, 2000: 55). Thus, becoming conversant in English is beneficial for South Africans in order to be competitive in the global commercial sector. The current study seeks to explore the challenges in using the English tense and aspect systems with the anticipation that the results will shed light on possible intervention strategies to overcome such challenges. In the same breath, seeking to understand the nature of the challenges and the possible causes could inform developers of curricula and teaching materials for English L2 teaching who have the intention to address such challenges.

1.5 Primary research questions

The participants in the current study are isiZulu L1 speakers who have been exposed to English L2 as a LOLT for ten years on average. The main hypothesis of the study is that linguistic encoding differs between L1 and L2 in the verbalization of events. This hypothesis is based on the differences between isiZulu and English with regard to tense and aspect systems. On a more fine grained level of granularity, the current study seeks to address the following questions:

1. How do isiZulu L1 speakers express the same series of events using isiZulu and English subsequently?

2. To what extent do the differences between isiZulu and English tense and aspect systems pose challenges for isiZulu L1 speakers when using English in the verbalization of events?

The secondary research questions relating to the current study are as follows:

1. Are there gaps in information in the two versions of the written report? In other words, do both versions reflect the same details in the description of the investigation of the incident?
2. Does proficiency in isiZulu account for transfer into the English version of the report?

As the study highlights the data sourced, answers to these questions will be provided which in turn leads to insights into possible intervention strategies as a field of further research.

1.6 Theoretical framework

The study looks at processes of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Second Language Learning (SLL), the phenomenon of bilingualism and the process of event verbalization within the context of bilingual language production. The premise is that the participants in the current study are English L2 speakers who have been exposed to English as a subject at school level for twelve years on average and as a LOLT for ten years on average. However, because of the multilingual nature of South Africa, the participants would have been exposed to English language before school-going age through the mass media for example. Formal exposure to English started at about seven years of age; at this time the L1 should have been well established⁴. English is thus an additional language to the participants resulting in bilingualism.

SLA as a process evolves in three broad stages: the initial state, the intermediate state and the final state (Saville-Troike, 2006: 16). The initial state of L2 acquisition seems to have been initiated for most participants in the current study upon entering the school system at about seven years of age. After 10-12 years of exposure to English as a subject and LOLT, the participants can be categorised as being in the intermediate state of L2 acquisition because they have not attained native like competence in English (see data in chapter 5 below).

⁴ One variable that is very difficult to assess is the level of L1 proficiency, which is determined by a number of factors on its own. In the context of this study we have to rely on the self-assessment of the participants who claim that they have native speaker proficiency in isiZulu.

Working on the premise that the participants are on the intermediate state, one investigates the interplay between L1 knowledge, the role of universal grammar (UG) and development of interlanguage (more details in chapter 2). During the intermediate state the L2 speaker may use prior knowledge from L1 appropriately, (positive transfer) or inappropriately, (negative transfer/interference) according to Saviile-Troike (2006: 19).

Bilingualism evolves in different forms: as coordinate, compound or sub-ordinate (Romaine, 1995: 79). For the participants of the current study in the light of the language landscape of South Africa, it is supposedly appropriate to categorise the participants' type of bilingualism as "compound bilingualism". Romaine (1995: 79) defines compound bilingualism as occurring in a context where two languages are used concurrently resulting in interdependence where one mental representation may be tied to two different verbal labels; i.e. one from each of the respective languages. Bilingualism can also be additive or subtractive (Venzke, 2002: 12-13). In additive bilingualism the L2 does not reduce or disrupt the proficiency in the L1; whereas in subtractive bilingualism learning the L2 slows down and even reverses the development in L1 (ibid.). The data collected in the current study hopes to shed some light on the 'direction' of bilingualism for the isiZulu/English bilinguals under investigation. In the light of Constitution of the Republic of South Africa it would be ideal if bilingualism was additive.

In the current study the participants will verbalize an investigation into a hypothetical laboratory incident. Such a series of events can be categorised as a dynamic domain as opposed to a static domain (Habel and Tappe, 1999: 125). In a dynamic domain, there is a continuous flow of activity while in a static domain (i.e. a picture or still life) the components of the domain and the relations between them remain stable. In verbalising a dynamic domain, the participants have to employ more cognitive processes since dynamic events neither have fixed boundaries nor spatio-temporal permanence (ibid.). As a result, the verbalization of the conceived state-of-affairs is a 'mammoth task' for the participants as they have to accommodate two competing languages during the encoding process. The process of event verbalization for a bilingual speaker will be explored briefly in chapter 2.

1.7 Summary and structure of the dissertation

The chapter provides an overview of the contents of the current study. By exploring event verbalization in isiZulu L1 and in English L2, the study aims at gaining insights into the processes of language production and the interplay between isiZulu and English tense and

aspect morphology. The study emanates from previous research conducted in SLA. Tense and aspect grammatical elements feature prominently in past research into challenges in SLA. In the light of the language policy of South Africa and the prevailing practices in South African schools as they apply the LiEP and the constitution of the country; it is imperative that isiZulu L1 speakers improve in the usage of English L2. As the study explores the challenges that the cohort of participants encounter, future research can venture into developing appropriate strategies to address such challenges.

The following chapter presents a review of selected literature in the fields of second language acquisition and learning, bilingualism and event verbalization. The review of literature in these fields will be linked to the current study as these fields form the theoretical framework on which the study is based. Chapter 3 elaborates on the tense and aspect systems of the two languages under investigation. Chapter 4 details the methodology used in the current study. In chapter 5 data analysis is presented in two steps. Firstly data collected through the questionnaire will be analysed quantitatively so as to create a general profile of the cohort of participants for the current study. Secondly the written reports will be analysed quantitatively so as to identify the challenges in the use of English tense and aspect markings. The challenges are quantified for a summarised presentation. I compare between the use of tense and aspect morphology in the English reports with the use of tense and aspect morphology in the isiZulu report so as to gain insights into the sources of observed challenges. Chapter 5 also presents a discussion of the results in the light of past research findings. Chapter 6 provides a conclusion, recommendations, and prospects for further research. It also identifies a number of shortcomings and weaknesses of the current study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The current study investigates how isiZulu/English bilinguals verbalize the same series of events in their primary language (isiZulu L1) and in their second language (English L2). The verbalization of events in these two languages calls for a review of the theories which pertain to language acquisition, language learning and language production. Language acquisition is an important aspect of human development and, in a remarkable way, L1 acquisition exhibits a high degree of similarity in children across the world (Lightbrown and Spada, 2013: 5-6). This study will briefly discuss the process of L1 acquisition as a starting point in language development. The study recognises the links between L1 and L2 acquisition and influence of L1 acquisition on L2 learning. This chapter discusses selected studies on language acquisition, second language acquisition and learning, bilingualism, language production and event verbalization.

2.2 Language acquisition

2.2.1 First language acquisition

First language acquisition is a systematic and gradual process starting prenatally till puberty stage (e.g. Sakai, 2005: 815). Existing theories on language acquisition take three main perspectives: behaviourist, nativist, and interactional/developmental theories (Lightbrown and Spada, 2013: 15-29).

The behaviourist theory as pioneered by B. F. Skinner (1957) purports the role of input as positive reinforcement that the child imitates and subsequently applies to new situations which results in language development (Lightbrown and Spada, 2013: 15-19). The nativist theory as pioneered by Noam Chomsky (1965); on the other hand attributed language development in children to innate universal language principles leading to acquisition, comprehension and production of complex language which is not limited to the input received (Chomsky, 1981); hence the notions of the Language Acquisition Device (LAD), the logical problem of language acquisition/ poverty of the stimulus, Universal Grammar (UG) and Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) (see discussion below) were developed to challenge the behaviourist perspective (Lightbrown and Spada, 2013: 20-24). Proponents of the interactional paradigm (see Piaget, 1951; Vygotsky, 1978)) draw on both the behaviourist and the nativist theories and base their point of view on cognitive psychology; they advocate

interplay between innate predispositions for language and social factors (Lightbrown and Spada, 2013: 24-29).

The behaviourist theory upholds the hypothesis that children learn through imitation of the sounds in the environment (Lightbrown and Spada, 2013: 15). This theory dominated the early studies on language acquisition especially in the United States of America in the 1940s and 1950s mainly because of a high rate of imitation displayed by children in their discourse (ibid.). However, such discourse also showed novel and original utterances which the children had not been exposed to. As a result of the inadequate explanation for novel utterances offered by the behaviourists, the nativist theory emerged (Saville-Troike, 2006: 13). According to this theory children exhibit a similar pattern in language acquisition and development across a wide spectrum of languages; and as such, children are thought to be ‘programmed’ with universal abstract language facilities (UG, LAD) which account for the development from child grammar to complex grammar (Saville-Troike, 2006: 14). Subsequent to the nativist theory, the interactional/developmental theory attributes L1 acquisition to both L1 input and the innate language facility in complementary but unequal terms because children develop the competence of the language used in their immediate environment (Saville-Troike, 2006: 15). Thus, the interactional/developmental theory attributes more emphasis on the environmental input children are exposed to as well as the developmental processes (cognitive development) involved and less emphasis on the innate language learning ability (Lightbrown and Spada, 2013: 25).

All three approaches to language acquisition agree that acquisition evolves over time. Language learning possibly starts in utero (Gómez and Gerken, 2000: 179) and active language starts with babbling at about six months of age, the production of one-word utterances commences at about twelve to eighteen months, followed by two-word utterances in “telegraphic speech” before the acquisition of complex grammar which underlies adult linguistic competence (O’Grady and Cho, 2005: 413-430). The following table illustrates this universal time line:

Stage	Approximate age	Developments
Holophrastic	1-1.5 years	Single word utterances, no structure
Two-word	1.5-2 years	Early word combinations; presence of syntactic categories unclear
Telegraphic	2-2.5 years	Emergence of phrase structure; especially head-complement and subject-VP patterns

Figure 2.1: The development of phrase structure (O’Grady and Cho, 2005: 429)

Saville-Troike (2006: 13) contends that children master most of the distinctive sounds characteristic to their L1, develop an awareness of basic discourse patterns, and acquire control of most grammatical patterns between the ages of three to six years. According to Lightbrown and Spada (2013: 13) by the time children reach pre-school years, they develop metalinguistic awareness which enables them to use sensible phrases and to be aware of non-sensible phrases in the L1. Thus, the acquisition of L1 takes place in natural conditions with little conscious effort on the part of the child. The success rate of L1 acquisition varies due to the contributory factors involved in each child's situation but the role of input, innate facility and social interaction cannot be denied. Crucially the success rate of L1 acquisition is held to impact on the learning and development of L2; this success in L1 acquisition may be a useful tool in L2 learning (Storch and Wigglesworth, 2003: 760). It has been found that the success rate of L1 acquisition may be an influence on L2 performance. It is for this reason that the study analyses the use of tense and aspect systems in English as well as in isiZulu in order to identify the competence levels in this specific domain in both the first and the second language of the participants. The following section focuses on L2 acquisition and learning.

2.2.2 Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Second Language Learning (SLL)⁵

The term second language (L2) refers to any language learned after one has learnt one's home language (L1) (Richards and Schmidt, 2002:472 in Mungungu, 2010; Saville-Troike, 2012). Most of L2 learners in the South African context, including the participants in the current study, are exposed to English language unsystematically and to very varying extents – which may in fact be very limited, before school-going age (Kamwangamalu, 2000; Rudwick, 2008). Pre-school age exposure may largely happen through mass media such as television and radio. In addition to the media, huge sectors of South African society use English (and to a lesser extent Afrikaans) alongside their indigenous African languages; one consequence of this process is that a wide range of lexical terms have been borrowed from English (or Afrikaans) into the indigenous African languages (Rudwick, 2008: 101). Rudwick (2008: 102) points out that isiZulu L1 speakers, even monolinguals, use some lexical borrowings from English extensively because there are no translations equivalents for these in isiZulu. See figure 2.2 for examples of such borrowings (left column) and English terms that do not have any isiZulu equivalents (right column); both sets of examples are extracted from the data elicited in the current study.

⁵ SLA is used to denote unconscious, unstructured and informal development in L2. SLL is used to denote L2 development under structured and formal settings.

Borrowed terms	No isiZulu equivalents
<i>ama-khemikhali</i> (chemicals)	laboratory
<i>i-nyuvesi</i> (university)	Chemical Engineering
<i>ama-fayela</i> (files)	Mechanical Engineering
<i>i-khabethe</i> (cabinet)	gloves
<i>i-tafula</i> (tafel- <small>AFRIKAANS</small>)	glycerine
<i>i-kilasi</i> (class/ classroom)	practicals
<i>ama-windi</i> (windows)/ <i>i-fastela</i> (venster- <small>AFRIKAANS</small>)	test tubes
<i>u-manyazini</i> (magnesium)	locker
<i>ama-sampuli</i> (samples)	reaction
<i>i-ngilazi</i> (glass)	Chemistry
<i>i-plastiki</i> (plastic)	glass tube
<i>i-khathoni</i> (carton)	acid
<i>i-lebuli</i> (label)	hydro chlorine
<i>ubu-njiniyela</i> (engineering)	
<i>ama-thuluzi</i> (tools)	

Figure 2.2 Examples of isiZulu borrowed terms and English terms with no isiZulu equivalents. (Terms extracted from data of the current study).

The resulting levels of language competence may be limited to English words switched into isiZulu sentences (Rudwick, 2008: 106). The situation in South Africa is not unique as Saville-Troike (2012: 2) acknowledges that the scope of SLA includes informal and formal L2 learning as well as a mixture of these settings. When a large proportion of South African English L2 learners begin formal education, English is introduced as a subject at First Additional Language (FAL) level from grade 1. It is only at grade 4 that English becomes both a subject at FAL level and a Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) in accordance to the Language in Education Policy of 1997 (LiEP, 1997). At school entry level normally developing learners have already acquired their L1 (Saville-Troike, 2006: 16). The South African case will be further elaborated in section 2.3.1 below while in the following section I focus on other general features of the SLA process.

2.2.2.1 Stages in Second Language Acquisition

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) as a process is seen as encompassing three stages: the initial state, the intermediate state and the final state (Saville-Troike, 2006: 16).

In the initial state, L2 learning is characterised by use of the L1 knowledge, world knowledge and skills of interaction and all these can both assist or interfere with L2 development (ibid.). Linguists have different opinions about the initial state of L2 learning. Tsimpli and Roussou (1991: 149) report on two conflicting approaches. One approach attributes L2 learning to “exclusive inductive learning strategies” (Clahsen, 1988; Clahsen and Muysken, 1986; Bley-Vroman et. al., 1988 in Tsimpli and Roussou, 1991:150). The theory of exclusive inductive

learning strategies attributes L2 learning to inductive processes different from the processes involved in L1 learning and which do not fully involve the use of Universal Grammar (UG) (ibid.). The second approach as advocated by White, (1985 and 1990 in Tsimpli and Roussou 1991:150) attributes L2 learning to the influence of UG and parameter-resetting (parameters already set during the process of L1 acquisition) which results in transfer errors between the learners' L1 and L2. Thus, linguists do not agree on the extent/ existence of the influence of innate UG in the acquisition and learning of the L2 (Saville-Troike, 2006: 18). However, there is general agreement that L1 prior knowledge is a major component and advantage for L2 learning; knowledge of how a language works which is transferred from L1 to L2 during second language development (ibid.).

The intermediate state is characterised by the transfer of L1 knowledge to L2 learning and development in varying extents. Transfer can either be positive or negative. In the former case, L1 structures can be used appropriately and successfully to support L2 learning whereas in the latter case, structural properties of L1 interfere with L2 grammar and thus hinder its successful development (Saville-Troike, 2006: 18). The intermediate state approach has been investigated in vastly different ways over the years from the era of Contrastive Analysis (see e.g. Lado, 1957) to Error Analysis (see e.g. Corder, 1967) to Interlanguage approaches (see e.g. Selinker, 1972) (Saville-Troike, 2006: 34-43). The intermediate state begins when a learner begins to convey meaningful communication in the L2 and the subsequent development that follows until development stops (Saville-Troike, 2006: 42). Of the three approaches, the Interlanguage approach acknowledges that L2 learning may not lead to native-like competence, and that during L2 learning some fossilization may occur (further discussion in section 2.2.2.2 below). According to Groves (2010: 113) an interlanguage is the language of the learner, a temporal language system which falls short of native speaker competence. In addition, interlanguages are dynamic as the learners continually receive input and revise their hypotheses about the L2 (Lightbrown and Spada, 2013: 43). The final state in SLA is highly variable between the continuation of the intermediate state with traces of interference and fossilization – which may be labelled as interlanguage grammar – to achieving native-like competence in the L2 which may not very often be achieved (Saville-Troike, 2006: 21).

2.2.2.2 Interference and fossilization

Interference and fossilization are notions which are attributed to SLA/SLL and bilingualism; they are regarded as the characteristics of interlanguage grammar. Chen and Zhao (2013: 18) sum up Selinker's (1972) definition of fossilization as a state of cessation of interlanguage learning by the L2 learner before the standard target language is acquired which could be temporal if the L2 learner receives optimal input or – in the absence of such input – fossilization may be permanent. Fossilization is thus a state where the L2 learner cannot attain native-like competence in the L2. A permanent state of fossilization is attributed to internal factors such as learner's age, emotions and interference from L1; and external factors such as lack of learning opportunities in the L2, strategies of SLL, strategies of second language communication and the role of foreign language teachers (Chen and Zhao, 2013: 18-19). Fossilization can be gauged per individual as well as in a group of L2 learners (Chen and Zhao, 2013; Groves, 2010). As discussed by Selinker (1972 in Chen and Zhao, 2013; Groves, 2010), fossilization occurs in an individual level wherein either internal or external factors or a combination of both lead to repeated errors irrespective of the input received by the L2 learner. If such processes happen uniformly across an entire group of L2 learners fossilization may lead to a new dialect of the L2 e.g. Indian English (Groves, 2010: 114).

According to Romaine (1995: 51), interference applies at an individual level where it is sporadic and idiosyncratic as well as at a societal level where it is cumulative and results in deviant use of a language when compared to monolingual speech. At this point, it is worth noting that linguists do not necessarily agree in their opinions on interference and fossilization. May (2011: 235) reports on a view held by psycholinguists that learning L2 successfully results in achieving native speaker competence (e.g. Gardner and Wagner, 2004; Littlewood, 2004; Mitchell and Myles, 2004; Lightbrown and Spada, 2006). In other words, this perspective focuses on the final product of L2 learning; thus interference and fossilization are seen as undesirable. The opposite view detests the monolingual bias in SLA (e.g. Lourdes Ortega, 2009; 2010; Firth and Wagner, 1997 in May 2011) by pointing out that the traditional SLA perspective disregards the social context in which the language is used and the developmental processes involved. Thus, interference and fossilization are acceptable phenomena occurring between the initial and the final state in the process of SLA/SLL, and are seen as characteristics of interlanguage grammar. However, interference and fossilization errors may be permanent for some second language learners.

The monolingual approach to SLA and the idealised native speaker (see, e.g. May, 2011) which aims for native speaker-like competence in L2 has raised concerns in linguistic research. The monolingual approach to SLA has resulted in the ‘perception’ of the varieties of English which deviate from standard native-like norms are regarded as interlanguages (Groves, 2010: 115). This label raises debates since learning L2 is unique to different contexts and as argued by different linguists, languages evolve over time and variation is inevitable (Laver and Roukens, 1996; Gonzalez, 1983 and Hung, 2009 all in Groves, 2010). It is therefore imperative to study the context around L2 learning and such a study has to take into consideration the circumstances in the environment before comparing such a context to other contexts. The outcome of SLA/SLL is bilingualism.

2.3 Bilingualism

Bilingualism is complex, dynamic and interdisciplinary in nature and it ranges from a native-like control over two languages at one end of the continuum to just producing meaningful utterances in a L2 on the other end; and as such, bilingualism is a very relative concept (Romaine, 1995: 11). Linguists have, over the years, defined bilingualism in various ways. There is no consensus on the definition of a bilingual speaker since different linguists base their definitions on “[...] categories, scales and dichotomies such as ideal vs. partial bilingual, coordinate vs. compound bilingual etc., which are related to proficiency, function etc.” (ibid.). Romaine also describes bilingualism as being dependent on a number of variables including phonological and grammatical knowledge, lexical knowledge, semantic knowledge and stylistic knowledge. Moreover, bilingualism may manifest in some or all domains of an individual’s life depending on the task at hand whether it is speaking, writing or any other function of a language (Romaine, 1995: 13). The level of usage of the languages involved may also vary across tasks and environments.

On the issue of bilingualism, Kachru (1994, in May 2011: 234) states, “the languages in the multilingual's repertoire complement one another to produce the type of composite language competence that suits their needs.” Kachru points out this argument as he notes that the literature on bilingualism mostly defines a bilingual as one who has a monolingual speaker-like competence, which he sees as a rather limited definition (ibid.). The classic study on bilingualism (Weinreich, 1953 in Klein, 1986: 11) distinguished three types bilingualism: compound, coordinate and subordinate. However, subsequent studies confine bilingualism to compound and coordinate subcategories (e.g. Ervin and Osgood, 1954).

In coordinate bilingualism, the two languages are learnt in separate environments. As a result the two languages are independent and do not share meanings (Romaine, 1995: 78- 79). According to Pavlenko (2011: 21), “[...] coordinate bilinguals are speakers who learned their languages in distinct environments and have two conceptual systems associated with their two lexicons.”

In compound bilingualism, the two languages are learnt in the same environment and they are used concurrently. As a result there are fused representations of the languages in the speaker’s mind (Romaine, 1995: 79). The latter distinction of compound bilingualism tallies with Klein’s assertion that in compound bilingualism the two languages are learned in parallel and they share some common features and may employ the same categories (Klein, 1986: 11). The approach to introducing the L2 may determine the development process in the learner’s performance, among other things. In the case of isiZulu/English bilinguals in KwaZulu-Natal where the current study is based, the majority of the isiZulu/English bilinguals were introduced to English L2 through the coordinate approach because English is, for the majority, mainly a school language though English dominates the social context through media such as television and radio (Kamwangamalu, 2000: 54).

Another differentiation between different types of bilingualism is the one between additive and subtractive bilingualism. According to Bournot-Trites and Tellowitz (2002), subtractive and additive bilingualism are a consequence of submersion bilingual education and immersion education respectively.

Submersion bilingual education on the one hand occurs where L2 learners are a minority group and are forced to assimilate into the mainstream culture which results in gradual diminishing of the L1 (Bournot-Trites and Tellowitz, 2002: 5). In South Africa, there is a gradual increase of speakers of African languages who send children to English medium schools wherein English is learnt as L1 and is the LOLT⁶. This results in the gradual diminishing of the African languages.

Immersion education on the other hand occurs where the L1 is the majority language and all or some of the subjects are taught in L2; the L2 being introduced at varied stages in different environments (Bournot-Trites and Tellowitz, 2002: 7). It is argued by Bournot-Trites and

⁶ Kamwangamalu (2000) reports on the increasing demand for English-medium education as opposed to mother-tongue instruction because of the socio-economic power and international status of English as well as the legacy of the Bantu Education Act of 1953 which equated mother-tongue education to inferior education.

Tellowitz (2002: 20) that the students in immersion education reach ‘functional bilinguality’ in their second language with no loss of their L1. As a result there is a mutually beneficial interplay between the L2 and the L1.

Sridhar (1994, in May 2011: 234) supports the notion of additive bilingualism against subtractive bilingualism on the basis that additive bilingualism means that the L2 is used along with L1 without replacing L1. In the case of English L2 in KwaZulu-Natal for the majority of isiZulu L1 speakers who attend isiZulu medium schools, English is introduced following the immersion approach.

2.3.1 Bilingualism in South Africa

Bilingualism is a phenomenon which involves learning a second language in addition to the home language. In South Africa, learning English (as L2) is initially unstructured and inconsistent for a large majority of the population as indicated above. Formal instruction typically begins at school-entry level, i.e. between six and seven years of age. The age of formal instruction in the L2 may subject the L2 speaker to internal constraints towards L2 learning (Weber-Fox and Neville, 1996: 248). These authors argue that, “[...] language proficiency and cerebral organisation for language processing are altered by delays in exposure to language [...] (1996: 247)”. English L2 learners in South Africa are exposed to English structure (form and meaning) at school where conscious learning of the lexicon, phonology, morphology, syntax and discourse take place.

English L2 learning in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa takes two predominant forms. For a substantial number of isiZulu L1 speakers, learning English takes place in isiZulu medium schools without encountering English L1 speakers since the English teachers are L2 speakers themselves. This group constitutes the majority of the participants of the current study – a representation of the larger isiZulu/English bilingual group. For a smaller proportion⁷ of the population learning English takes place in English medium schools with at least three years of pre-school/preparatory years and in the midst of English L1 speakers (children and teachers). For this group, English is taught as L1 and consequently learners are submerged into the English language cultural group in as far as language development is concerned. The larger group of the population who attend isiZulu medium schools do not speak English on a regular basis though and their active use of English is typically restricted

⁷ There is a steady growth of this group since the advent of democracy in 1994 and the resultant opening of former English-medium schools to all South Africans.

to lexical items which are used in isolation as loan words, borrowings and nonce borrowings. Rudwick (2008: 102) makes a similar point when she argues, “[...] despite substantial use of English lexical borrowings among rural and township isiZulu speakers, many Zulu people in these areas have remained loyal to their mother tongue.” For this group, English is introduced gradually, first as a subject at First Additional Language (FAL) level in the foundation phase, then as a LOLT and subject at FAL level in the intermediate phase (from grade 4 onwards) (LiEP, 1997). As a result of the immersion programme, a large proportion of L2 speakers may develop an interlanguage grammar which is characterised by interference from L1 and fossilization.

Therefore, SLL differs from context to context; as a result South Africa is a linguistic society with several varieties of English (South African English, South African Indian English, South African Black English) (see e.g. Rudwick, 2008). In addition, L2 speakers of English in South Africa vary considerably with respect to frequency of English L2 use and their proficiency levels in English. The current study investigates a small sample of participants which represents a large group of English L2 speakers with isiZulu as their primary language. In the following section I broadly discuss language production including event verbalization from conceptualization to articulation and relate the processes involved to the case of isiZulu L1 speakers. In addition I provide a description on how they use the English tense and aspect system.

2.4 Language production

Language production is a process which encompasses the encoding of ideas from the conceptualization stage to the formulation stage up to the articulation stage. Each of these three stages comprises of its own sub-processes as will be detailed hereunder. In the current study, language production is relevant since the study investigates the verbalization of a series of events (the articulation stage of language production in the current study is realized through the written medium). Thus the sub-sections below will be focused on event verbalization and the language production model with particular reference to the conceptualization process.

2.4.1 Event verbalization

The verbalization of events is a central research area in linguistics and philosophy alike for a variety of reasons.

On the one hand, events may have to be ‘construed’. They are often seen as only existing in the mind of the sapient beings and not as entities that exist ‘in the world’ (see, for example, Pianesi and Varzi, 2000: 3; Habel and Tappe, 1999: 125-127). Hence the current study looks at the verbalization of events as a window through which to understand event conceptualization.

On the other hand, event conceptualization is central for language production and comprehension. This view of event conceptualization is in line with the ‘Thinking for Speaking’ Hypothesis (Slobin, 1996a in Schiedtová, von Stutterheim and Carroll, 2011: 66) which holds that, “[...] the preparation of content for verbalization in the mind of a speaker is shaped by specific linguistic categories available in the speaker’s language system”. The outcomes of event conceptualizations are ‘situation concepts’, that is, the meanings of sentences in natural languages (Habel and Tappe, 1999: 118). The central element of every situation concept is the concept that can be seen as the meaning of the verb (e.g. Löbner, 2002: 20). The verb is the focus point of the current study since the main argument centres around the use of tense and aspect morphology in the verbalization of events.

Situation concepts are strictly pre-linguistic. In the course of language production, such situation concepts have to be encoded in accordance with the morpho-syntactic rules of the target language. In other words, the actual verbalization of events is governed by the linguistic constraints of the language in use. Each language has its set of rules which determine the ‘correctness in usage’ (Sharmini, Leng, Singaram and Jusoff, 2009: 134). The processes of language production are particularly interesting when we compare event verbalizations of bilingual speakers, that is, verbalizations in their primary language (L1) and their second language (L2). The verbalization of events may give insight into how the series of events were encoded.

Event verbalisation explores the nature of events to be verbalised. Event theories categorise events as either universals or particulars (Pianesi and Varzi, 2000: 5). On the one hand, the ideology behind the notion of events as universals is that events are recurring entities, not time-bound but properties of intervals of time (Pianesi and Varzi, 2000: 5-6). On the other

hand, the ideology of events as particulars is based on the Quinean ontology of events (see Quine, 1960) which describes events from the spatiotemporal point of view (Pianesi and Varzi, 2000: 8). In the latter view events are explored from a metaphysical perspective not a semantic one. This is to say that events are entities construed by the speaker as at a particular period of time and space. In close agreement to the latter view is the definition of an event given by Croft (1999, in von Steutterheim and Nüse, 2003:855) wherein event is conceptualised as a time-substance relation characterised by two features: dynamic and potentially bounded.

The verbalizations of a series of events which constitute the hypothetical laboratory incident allow for different descriptions of the unfolding of one series of events depending on how each participant construed the series of events within a particular time frame and space. Despite these different interpretations, the point of interest of the study is how the verbalizations capture the spatiotemporal location of the series of events hence the investigation of the use of tense and aspect morphology (as detailed in chapter 3).

The interest in verbal morphology is based on the premise expounded by Smith (2007: 424) that, “[...] situations [in the current study, events] are realized linguistically at the level of the clause by the verb and its arguments [...]”. Accordingly this study investigates the verbalization of the series of events with particular reference to the verbs used.

2.4.2 The language production model

Event verbalization is a multifaceted, information processing operation during natural language production which involves the computation of mental representations (situation concepts/ mentalese) of conceived state of affairs; the transfer of the mental representations into propositional representations (preverbal messages); the formulation of grammatical structures incorporating phonological encoding; and finally the acoustic realisation of the utterances (Habel and Tappe, 1999: 117). This is the basis of the investigation of the verbalization of a series of events that the current study undertakes though in this case, the realisation of utterances will be in writing. Also the current study will solely concentrate on temporal and aspectual morphology. The view expressed by Habel and Tappe (1999) reflects the vastly influential architecture of the language production model proposed by Levelt (1989), in which the conceptualization of events takes place before the linguistic encoding and hence the conceptualization is held to be largely independent of language. In other words, the preverbal message is produced in the conceptualizer then it is mapped onto linguistic

form by accessing the resources in the formulator (grammatical and phonological encoding) where it is prepared for articulation (Schmiedtová et. al., 2011: 67). The discussion in this study will not detail the intricate processes from conceptualization to articulation as illustrated in the diagram below.

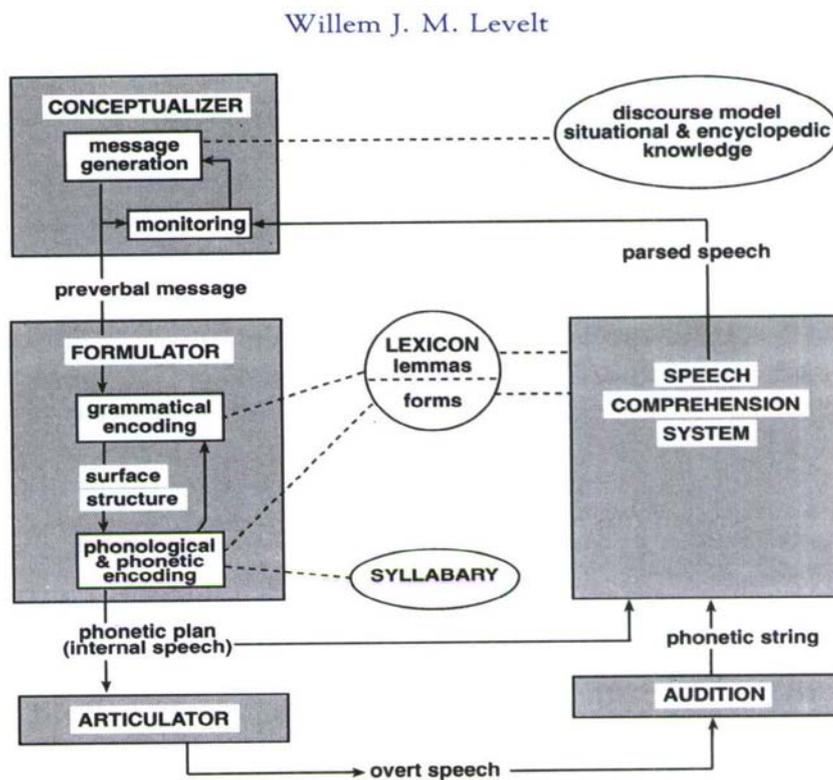


Figure 2.3: The blueprint of the speaker (Levelt, 1995: 14)

According to Guhe, Habel and Tappe (2000: 86), before an utterance is made, the speaker builds up “[...] conceptual entities representing spatio-temporal constellations of the external world.” Thus verbalization manifests how the speaker construes the event at hand; a stage which emanates internally from the conceptualization which results into mental representations of events which are pre-linguistic. Preverbal messages are propositional representations of the event as construed by the speaker, which are in the output structures of the conceptualizer; these preverbal messages are then forwarded incrementally to the formulator which ‘transforms’ them through grammatical and phonological encoding into linguistic structures (“phonetic plans”); and finally the phonetic plans are realised as either internal or external speech by the articulator. External speech can further be encoded into written output (Guhe, Habel and Tappe, 2000: 85). The following paragraph highlights the role of the conceptualizer, the starting point of event verbalization.

2.4.3 Event conceptualization

Levinson (2009: 29) states about human languages that they are: “[...] profoundly variable in both form and content”. In contrast to Levelt (1989), Levinson (2009: 34-37) assumes a strong interconnection between conceptualization and verbalization; to Levinson, languages – and the way they impose structure onto a conceptualizing mind – reveal insights about the flexibility and variability of the human mind and about the range in which the human mind is able to conceptualize the world. Much along the same lines, Lantoff, Dicamilla and Ahmed (citing Vyotsky 1986) contend that the language becomes the means through which thinking is completed (1997: 154).

However, even though these two perspectives (Levelt’s on the one hand and Levinson’s on the other) largely disagree on the interplay between linguistic and non-linguistic representations, they both acknowledge the role of the conceptualizer as a starting point of event verbalization. Thus, the use of linguistic elements, including tense and aspect morphemes, could be an indication of how the language user has conceptualized a given state of affairs. In the consequence crosslinguistic variation in event verbalization may provide insight into linguistic differences in the selection and structuring of the event features much in line with Slobin’s 1991 ‘Thinking for Speaking Hypothesis’ (Bylund, 2011: 108). In relation to the use of the grammatical aspect, Bylund (2011: 109) contends that bilingual speakers tend to use or to refrain from using the grammatical aspect of the verb in their L2 depending on the availability of this grammatical feature in their L1. The grammatical aspect of the verb may give insight into how the participants in the study have conceptualized events; the notions of completion and progression.

Studies on event conceptualization (e.g. Habel and Tappe, 1999; von Stutterheim and Nüse, 2003 among others) identify four incremental sub-processes taking place in the conceptualizer. These stages are: segmentation, selection, structuring and linearization (Bylund, 2011: 110). According to Levelt (1996, 1999 in Bylund 2011: 111) the first two sub-processes involve macroplanning whereas the last two involve microplanning of the utterance. Of these four sub-processes, structuring directly involves “[...] perspectivation of the event components according to spatial and temporal reference frames (Bylund, 2011: 111). Three conceptual components partake during this sub-process: the event, the timeline and the speaker (von Stutterheim and Nüse, 2003 in Bylund 2011: 111). However, the

outcome of these sub-processes in the conceptualizer is pre-verbal. Therefore, it is only in the formulator that any crosslinguistic differences that may exist can be accounted for.

Crosslinguistic differences have been studied with regard to the processes taking place in the conceptualizer (e.g. Bylund, 2008; Carroll et al., 2004; Schmiedtová and Flecken, 2008, von Stutterheim and Nüse, 2003; von Stutterheim et al., 2002; Schmiedtová, 2011 all in Bylund, 2011). These studies report on marked differences across a range of languages in as far as event conceptualization is concerned. In the studies on temporal structuring in the conceptualizer (e.g. Blyund, 2008; Carroll and von Stutterheim, 2003; Carroll et al., 2004, von Stutterheim and Nüse, 2003 all in Blyund, 2011); crosslinguistic differences manifest in two ways: in an anaphoric linking strategy and in an inclusion strategy. According to Klein, 1994 (in Blyund 2011: 113), in the former strategy “the assertion time of a given event is established in relation to the time of the preceding event by means of anaphoric temporal adverbials”. In the latter strategy, a pattern of deictic point of reference is characterised by ‘now’ wherein events are perceived as concurrently happening in the ‘now’ (Carroll, 2004 in Blyund 2011: 114). Thus, a speaker may perceive a series of events as sequential or as happening concurrently depending on a pattern of event construal in a particular language (Blyund, 2011: 114). However, these differences are accounted for based on the grammatical encoding process in the formulator.

The data to be described in chapter 5 may provide insights into the similarities and/or differences between isiZulu and English in as far as event construal is concerned.

2.5 Summary

In this chapter the concepts of Second Language Acquisition, Second Language Learning, bilingualism and event verbalization have been discussed. In the light of the current study which investigates the use of tense and aspect morphemes in the verbalization of a series of events in isiZulu and English; the concepts discussed give insight on the processes involved in L2 learning which the participants of the current study may have undergone. The discussions highlighted factors such as inter-language grammar as a prevalent factor in bilingual language use. Furthermore I explained some of the processes involved during language production from conceptualization to articulation; how each stage cascades input to the next stage in order to investigate the differences in the use of isiZulu and English grammatical structures (tense and aspect) in the verbalization of events. The use of these grammatical structures may give insight on the linguistic differences in the verbalization of

events by the isiZulu/English bilingual speakers. The next chapter focuses on the tense and aspect systems in isiZulu and English.

CHAPTER 3

TENSE AND ASPECT: ISIZULU AND ENGLISH

3.1 Introduction

Langacker (2005, 2000 in Zengin 2013: 5) attests that language is about meaning which is the primary means of engaging the world and ‘tense’ is a primary grounding element for achieving such an engagement. Tense and aspect may be assimilated into the verb component of the language construction; a feature which applies to both English and isiZulu, the languages under investigation in this study. Accordingly Booth (2007, in Alamelu and Menon 2011: 55) asserts that the verb being the most important part of the sentence expresses an action or state of the subject and also indicates time among other features. It is the time feature which is expressed by tense and aspect which will be detailed hereunder.

The tense and aspect systems as investigated in the current study entail the grammatical categories of a language; for tense– the category that expresses temporal relations in event occurrence and; for aspect– the category that expresses completion or non-completion of actions. In other words, tense and aspect encode the time of event occurrence as well as the duration of the event. According to Smith (2007: 420), the speaker’s time (speech time/ S) is the basic temporal orientation point in language and the speaker is canonical centre in linguistic communication. In addition, the time of the situation (SitT), also known as the reference time (R), is equally important (ibid.). The third element of the time feature is event time (E). This interpretation of tense and time is based on the traditional analysis of tense and time by Reichenbach in 1947 which also differentiates these three intervals in time: Speech time (S), Reference time (R) and Event time (E) (see e.g. Kibort, 2009; Hackmack, 2007; Smith, 2007).

Botne and Kershner (2000: 161) give a traditional and conventional meaning of tense thus: Traditionally, tense is the grammatical means for locating events in time therefore it is represented by an abstract time line which is construed as a continuum dividing the past and future temporal regions by the speech event (compare figure 1.1, chapter 1). Conventionally, tense “[...] refers to the relationship between the time of the speech event [...] and the location in time of the event denoted by the speech act” (ibid.). The following diagram represents time and tense relations:

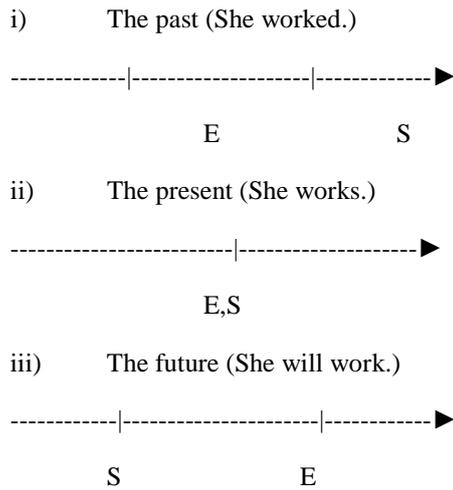


Figure 3.1: Diagrammatic representation of tense meanings (adapted from Shi, 2011: 18).

In line with Botne and Kershner, tense therefore refers to the grammatical markings using morphemes to inflect the verb so that it will reflect the time of the event/ action. In addition, aspect denotes the internal condition of the verb whether it reflects the completion or non-completion of the event/ action. One can then deduce that aspect reflects whether the event is completed or on-going at the time of occurrence. In other words, tense is deictic because it relates events to a reference point but aspect is non-deictic because the completion or non-completion is independent of a reference point (Comrie, 1986 in Posthumus 2009: 3).

For the purposes of this study, tense will be discussed in relation to its morphological aspect as encoded in the verb morphology and not its semantic and lexical aspect (Hackmack, 2007: 1)⁸. This supposes that the focal point of the current investigation is on verbal inflections as they denote the time of event occurrence and completion or non-completion of the event. To this effect, Shi (2011: 12) attests that the verbal morphology is the key component in expressing time in English. In the current chapter, an overview of both the English tense and aspect system and the isiZulu tense and aspect system will be provided. Thereafter, the two languages will be juxtaposed in order to compare and contrast their structural features as a way of sourcing the root of the challenge in the use of the English tense and aspect system by L2 speakers generally and in particular, the subjects of the current study.

Researchers have alluded to the usage of English tense and aspect system as challenge for English L2 speakers (see for example Zengin, 2013; Alamelu and Menon, 2011; Larsen-

⁸ The tense and aspect system is discussed from the point of view of grammar in the current study. This does not nullify the importance of semantics and lexical expressions but the scope of the study confines the discussion to the grammatical viewpoint thus verbal morphology as choices in the verbalization of events are made.

Freeman, Kuehn and Haccius, 2002). It is this challenge which led to the current study as the same challenge seems to prevail for isiZulu L1/English L2 speakers who are the subjects of the study. Empirical studies have been conducted on various tenses as well as aspect and use by English L2 speakers (e.g Kang, 2005; Housen, 2000; Salaberry, 2000; among others).

Kang (2005) conducted an investigation on written narratives produced by Korean L2 speakers of English. The outcome of the investigation indicated that L2 learners may not have control over some language-specific structures in the L2 and thus face difficulties in using such L2 structures in extended discourse and consequently they resort to L1 transfer (Kang, 2005: 261). Salaberry (2000) analysed written and oral narratives presented by Spanish L1 learners of English L2. The focus of the study was on the usage of verbs which were classified according to the inherent lexical aspectual semantics, tense markings and cognitive saliency. The study concluded that L2 learners' use of tense markings depended on the cognitive constraints of the task at hand. In cognitively demanding tasks such as oral narratives, present tense markings dominate. In written narratives, learners use the planning time available in choosing a wide range of tense markings thus minimising incorrect usage of tense markings (Salaberry, 2000: 145).

The studies highlighted here indicate the complexity of L2 acquisition and learning as well as the challenges involved in the use of tense and aspect grammar structures. The two languages under investigation in the current study: English and isiZulu share the characteristic of having both tense and aspect morphology. In addition to this common feature, English and isiZulu conflate the tense and aspect morphemes in the verb /verb phrase. Despite these common features, English and isiZulu still differ in the structural presentation of the tense and aspect morphology as will be detailed in the following sections, 3.2 and 3.3.

3.2 English tense and aspect system

As alluded to in Van Dao (2008:37), “[...] in English, a finite verb carries both tense and aspect”. This section investigates the tense and aspect system which poses challenges for English L2 speakers. The challenge emanates from the assertion that in English, tense and aspect are “intimately related” (Hornstein, 1990 in Hackmack, 2007: 3) and there is a thin line between tense and aspect as alluded to in Sharmini et al. (2009: 135). In English, according to Smith (2007: 420), tense is obligatory in main ‘tensed’ clauses and “each tense assigns a temporal location to the situation talked about in its clause”. Smith thus defines a temporal morpheme as, “[...] a morpheme, either an inflection or an auxiliary, that appears in

the main verb phrase of a sentence and has a temporal meaning (ibid.)”. This definition then presents grammatical tense as a feature which gives a time signal and time difference between the moment of speaking and the actual occurrence of the action/event. According to Tyler and Evans (2001, in Zengin, 2013: 6), distance is the key element signalled by tense and in English the literal meaning of tense is “temporal reference (Zengin, 2013: 6)”. The definitions given by different linguists of English tense tally with the notion that English has two tenses: the present (non-past) and the past tense (Smith, 2007; Larsen-Freeman et. al., 2002; Hackmack, 2007). The discussion below will deal with tense and aspect separately.

3.2.1 The English tenses

English has two simple inflectional tenses: the past and the present or non-past; and in addition, the ‘prototypical’ future which is expressed by the modal auxiliary ‘will’ (Hackmack, 2007; Smith, 2007; Larsen-Freeman et. al, 2002). The issue of the future tense is debatable among grammarians. The debate is based on the premise that tense is morphologically bound; since ‘will’ is classified as an auxiliary that is marking mood and not as a morphological inflection on the verb, many linguists argue that English does not have a future tense (Shi, 2011: 13). To concur, Posthumus (2009: 5) cites linguists (Lyons, 1968; Smith, 1980; Comrie, 1986; and Posthumus (1983), inter alia) who also uphold the view that the verb forms which are indicative of the future are only modal distinctions. By contrast, linguists who advocate three tenses in English: past, present and future, base the division on the time perspective which is a semantic viewpoint (Shi, 2011: 17). Smith (2007: 434) argues, “[...] the present tense has the value of simultaneity ($RT = SpT$); the past tense has the value of anteriority ($RT < SpT$); future ‘will’ has the value of posteriority ($RT > SpT$)”. This view is supported by Langacker (2001:22, in Zengin 2013: 6) who states that the “[...] present tense morpheme imposes an immediate scope coinciding with the time of speaking in contrast to the past tense morpheme imposing an immediate scope prior to the speech event”. In Hackmack’s terms, tense “[...] comprises of two values: past and non-past. The other tenses are formed with parameters such as aspect or perfect” (2007: 2). The following table illustrates the relations between (S) and (R) and between (E) and (R):

Relation	Meaning	Name	Relation	Meaning	Name
S,R	S simultaneous with R	Present	E,R	E simultaneous with R	Simultaneous
S-R	S precedes R	Future	R-E	R precedes E	Posterior
R-S	R precedes S	Past	R-E	E precedes R	Anterior

Figure 3.2: Relations between S and R and between E and R (Hackmack, 2007:7)

In addition to the simple tenses: past, present and future, English adds the aspectual markers of perfect and progressive which, when put together, yield twelve verb tense-aspect combinations (Larsen-Freeman et. al., 2002; Hackmack, 2007). The following table illustrates these combinations.

	Simple 0	Perfect <i>have + -en</i>	Progressive <i>be + -ing</i>	Perfect progressive <i>have + en be + -ing</i>
Present	Simple present <i>Plays</i>	Present perfect <i>has/have played</i>	Present progressive <i>am/is/are playing</i>	Present perfect progressive <i>has/have been playing</i>
Past	Simple past <i>Played</i>	Past perfect <i>had played</i>	Past progressive <i>was/were playing</i>	Past perfect progressive <i>had been playing</i>
Future	Simple future <i>will play</i>	Future perfect <i>will have played</i>	Future progressive <i>will be playing</i>	Future perfect progressive <i>will have been playing</i>

Figure 3.3: Twelve verb tense-aspect combinations (Larsen-Freeman et. al., 2002: 3).

However, linguists disagree on the exact number of English verb tense-aspect combinations. Hornstein (1990, in Hackmack, 2007: 13) tables six basic tense structures and an unspecified number of derived tense structures; whereas Reichbach’s system of tenses allows for 13 tense-aspect combinations though not all of these may be realised in English (Hackmack, 2007:9). The complexity of the tense-aspect structure is one possible challenge English L2 speakers encounter. In addition to this, the semantics of the tense-aspect system is varied as Hackmack states that there is no 1-to-1 mapping between any tense-aspect combination and meaning; rather the context specifies the appropriateness of the choice made (2007: 4).

3.2.2 The English grammatical aspect

As indicated in the discussion above, aspect refers to the temporal constituency of the action/ event as reflected in the verb. The following discussion is focussed on the grammatical aspect which is confined to the marking of the internal temporal constituency of a situation (Shi, 2011: 29). In the words of Hackmack (2007: 3), aspect “[...] has more to do with the temporal structure of the event or situation itself [...].” Thus, the grammatical aspect is concerned with the duration of the event at the time of occurrence. According to Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999, in Van Dao 2008: 37), English has four aspects: the zero aspect, the progressive aspect, the perfect aspect and the perfect progressive, which is a combination of the progressive aspect and the perfect aspect. Smith (2007: 422) takes a slightly different viewpoint and asserts that, “[...] the main overt aspectual viewpoints are perfective and

imperfective”. Shi (2011: 30) differentiates the two aspects – perfective and imperfective as follows:

In English, the perfective aspect is indicated by a combination of the auxiliary ‘have’ with the ‘-ed’ particle of the verb. The imperfective aspect is combined ‘be’ with ‘-ing’ form.

Aspect thus indicates whether an event is either completed or on-going at the time of its occurrence. The following diagram originated by Comrie (1976, in Shi 2011) illustrates the grammatical aspect.

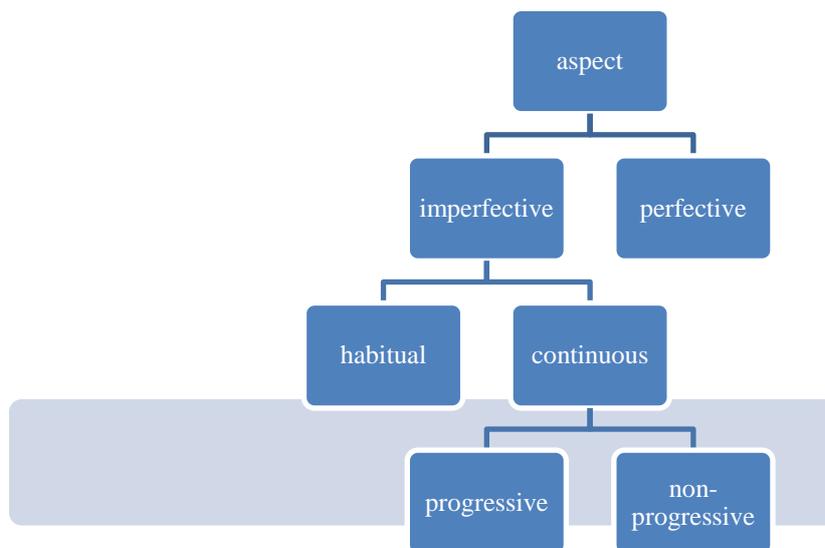


Figure 3.4: Classification of aspectual category (adapted from Comrie 1976, in Shi 2011: 29).

A number of studies have investigated the challenges with regard to the use of English tense and aspect system by English L2 speakers. One challenge is the use of the progressive aspect which is reported on, e.g., in Van Dao (2008). The challenge with the progressive aspect is two-fold. In some cases, English L2 speakers omit the copula ‘be’ and in other cases they omit the ‘-ing’ inflection in narrating progressive events (Swan and Smith, 2001 in Van Dao 2008). Two examples of the omission of both ‘be’ and ‘-ing’ appear as follows:

1. ‘They eat dinner tonight’ instead of ‘They are eating dinner tonight’. (Malaysian and Indonesian students)
2. ‘What do you read?’ instead of ‘What are you reading?’ (Chinese students)
(Both examples extracted from Swan and Smith (2001:287, 315 in Van Dao, 2008:42).

In other instances, English L2 students omit the ‘-ing’ inflection to denote progression in continuous events. The following example illustrates:

3. 'He is work in the office at the moment' instead of 'He is working at the office at the moment'. (Vietnamese students)
(Van Dao, 2008:42).

Another dimension of the challenge with the progressive aspect is experienced when English L2 speakers overuse the '-ing' inflection even when a zero aspect is appropriate. Citing Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999), Van Dao (2008: 42) gives the following examples to illustrate this dimension.

4. 'I am knowing the answer' instead of 'I know the answer'.
5. 'I am wanting to see you' instead of 'I want to see you'.

The examples given indicate the extent of the challenge English L2 speakers experience in using English progressive aspect. Van Dao (2008: 42) attributes such usages to the misconceptions of the semantics attached to each verb such as stative verbs (example 5), mental perception verbs (example 4) and sensory perception verbs (example 6 below) all of which are not used with the progressive aspect. The following example further illustrates this point:

6. 'I am loving my little sister' instead of 'I love my little sister'.

English L2 speakers more often than not encounter a challenge in distinguishing between the simple past which has zero aspect and the present perfect to denote completion before speech time. Hackmack (2007: 6) acknowledges with appreciation Reichenbach's system for clarifying the distinction between these two aspects. Both the simple past and present perfect refer to events in the past and according to Hackmack (2007: 10), the two "[...] share certain properties, but differ in their syntactic behaviour". Following Reichenbach's system, the simple past and the present perfect are distinguished thus:

- E,R-S: simple past/ simultaneous past
- E-S, R: present perfect/anterior present
(Hackmack, 2007:10)

This representation denotes that in the simple past (E) and (R) are simultaneous and they precede (S). In other words, the event took place before speech time; the event time and the reference time are both in the past before speech time. For the present perfect, this representation denotes that the event preceded the speech time before reference time; the reference time is at another point in the past. To add clarity on the present perfect, according to Shi (2011: 44), "The present perfect indicates an event which is closer to the utterance time than the one denoted by the simple past [...] a situation which indicates a present condition as

a result of some past action”. This distinction is a cumbersome hurdle for the English L2 speakers. The following examples illustrate this fact:

7. For generations, Nepal has produced the world’s greatest soldiers (and still does)
8. For generations, Sparta produced the world’s greatest soldiers (but does not anymore)
(Example 7 and 8 taken from Hackmack, 2007: 5)

These examples clarify that in the simple past, the event referred to, is completed whereas in the present perfect, the event is closely related to the time of speech (Hackmack, 2007: 5) and has an effect in the present moment.

Another noted challenge pertains to the distinction between the simple past and the past perfect. In both these instances, the event time and the reference point precede the speech time. However, in the simple past the (E) and (R) occur simultaneously before (S), whereas in the past perfect (E) and (R) occur at different points in time which are both temporally situated before (S) as shown below:

9. Fellow students were interviewed. (E1/01) [E,R-S]
10. They had not rinsed the apparatus (when they left the laboratory). (E1/01) [E-R-S]
(Both examples taken from data of the current study).

Example 9, on the one hand, denotes an event which took place and was completed at a particular moment in the past (before speech time). Example 10, on the other hand, denotes an event which took place and was completed in the past before another event in the past; “past-in-the-past” (Shi, 2011: 45).

Reichenbach’s system, even though it is criticized by a number of linguists (see below), assists in clarifying the use of tenses and aspect in as far as time of event occurrence and completion are concerned. Reichenbach’s system is criticized for its overcapacity since it allows for 13 tenses some of which are not morphologically realised in English (Declerck, 1986 in Hackmack, 2007: 10). The point of clarity in the uses of tense and aspect supersedes this criticism, however. Other critics include Vet (2007) and Hornstein (1990) both alluded to in Kibort (2009). Kibort notes the ambiguity in the relations between (E), (R) and (S). Firstly, she notes that (E), (R) and (S) are regarded, according to Reichenbach’s system, as ‘points’ in time which do not reveal duration of the event. According to Kibort (2009: 1395) “[...] tense meanings are conceived of as independent of aspectual meanings”. Secondly, (R) is an imaginary temporal location chosen by the speaker as a temporal reference for the clause and it may or may not be expressed lexically but it may remain implied (Kibort, 2009: 1393).

3.3 IsiZulu tense and aspect system

IsiZulu is a language which follows the subject/verb/object ordering of sentences (SVO) and it also has a rich system of tense and aspect (Buell, 2005: 6; Zeller, 2012: 134). Like other South African native languages, isiZulu uses time reference and tense to locate events in time relative to a particular point (e.g. Hall, 2006: 21). In addition, isiZulu, like other African languages, indicates the location of events in time morphologically and lexically (Posthumus, 2009: 2). The discussion of the isiZulu tense and aspect system in the current study will be limited to the use of tense and aspect markers which are conflated in the verb morpheme in isiZulu; i.e. the morphological realisation of time. This, however, does not nullify the other important features of time reckoning in isiZulu. Posthumus (1990:22, in Hall 2006: 22) identifies the following time reckoning features: tense; the semantic traits of the verb; the interlocutor's knowledge of the world; the influence of aspectual morphemes; the influence of auxiliary verbs; the text and context; the interrelation between tense forms and temporal adverbials. All of these features bring about a composite insight of the tense system and its application. However, due to the limited scope of the current study, they will not be discussed. The focal point of the study is the grammatical representation of the unfolding of the series of events culmination to a hypothetical laboratory incident; hence the focus on tense and aspect markers in the verb morphology.

The isiZulu tense system is rich and complex. Tenses in isiZulu manifest in the verbal forms or moods which express the predicate category together with aspect, actuality dependency and finality (Canonici, 1996: 70). The moods (verbal forms) in the verbal predicate in isiZulu are: the infinite and the imperative (both non-finite); the indicative, the subjunctive, the potential and the participial (all finite) (Canonici, 1996: 71-72). The current discussion is limited to the indicative mood, the mood for reality which is declarative, marked for tense and it “[...] fully expresses the relationship between tense, time and aspect” (Canonici, 1996: 77).

IsiZulu distinguishes between absolute and relative tenses. According to Posthumus (2009: 7) absolute tenses include, “[...] tense forms wherein the interpretation of event time is grammatically marked (within verbal morphology) in relation to coding time (the deictic centre)”. IsiZulu distinguishes five absolute tenses: the near past, the remote past, the present, the near future and the remote future (Hall, 2006; Posthumus, 2009). This distinction is in

line with the notion of anteriority and posteriority to the speech time as advocated by Reichenbach (1947) (see figure 3.1 above).

The near past (recent past or perfect) describes events which happened immediately prior to speech time and were completed; they are thus categorised as perfect. Perfectivity is identified by the variation of the final marker ‘-ile/-e) for the long and the short form respectively (Buell, 2005: 116). According to Zeller (2012: 138), the recent past tense in isiZulu distinguishes between the long (disjoint) and the short (conjoint) form of the verb; ‘-ile/-e’ respectively.

The remote past describes events which took place relatively long before speech time and were completed. It is identifiable by morpheme ‘-a-’ after the subject marker and the final suffix marker ‘-a’ (Buell, 2005: 118). There is no clear demarcation in terms of time between the near past and the remote past therefore the two overlap.

The present tense describes events coinciding with speech time, the ‘now’. Morphologically, the present tense is realized by the final tense marker ‘-a’ (Hall, 2006: 27) to indicate an event coinciding with coding time. The following example appears in Buell (2005: 93):

11. *U- cul- a i- zingoma.*
1.SBJ- sing- **FV** 10- 10-song
“She sings songs”. (final vowel/ tense marker ‘a’ highlighted)

IsiZulu distinguishes between the long (disjoint) and the short (conjoint) form of the verb in the affirmative present tense (Zeller, 2012: 138). The conjoint form of the verb is used when the object is realized (ibid.). The following example appears in Zeller (2012: 138-139):

12. (a) *U-mfana u-ya-dl-a.*
1-1.boy SM1-DIS-eat-FV⁹
‘The boy is eating.’
(b) *U-mfana u-dl-a.*
1-1.boy SM1-eat-FV
(c) *U-mfana u-dl-a isinkwa.*
1-1.boy SM1-eat-FV 7.7.bread
‘The boy is eating bread.’

⁹ The numbers (1 and 7) indicate the noun class category in isiZulu according to the noun class numbering system associated with Carl Meinhof (Canonici, 1996: 15).

The two future tenses differ in terms of temporal distances to speech time; the near (immediate) future referring to events immediately after speech time; the remote future referring to events long after speech time. These tenses are identifiable by the morphemes ‘-zo-’ and ‘-yo-’ respectively (Buell, 2005: 120). Like the past tenses, there is an overlap in the future tenses since there is no clear demarcation in terms of time between the two.

IsiZulu language distinguishes between the degrees of remoteness in the past; recent past and remote past; as well as in the future; recent future and remote future. There no clear demarcation between these degrees of remoteness, hence an overlap (Posthumus (2009: 5; Hall, 2006: 23). The diagram below further illustrates this distinction albeit it does not show the overlap that exists between the remote and near past on the one hand and between the remote and near future, on the other hand:

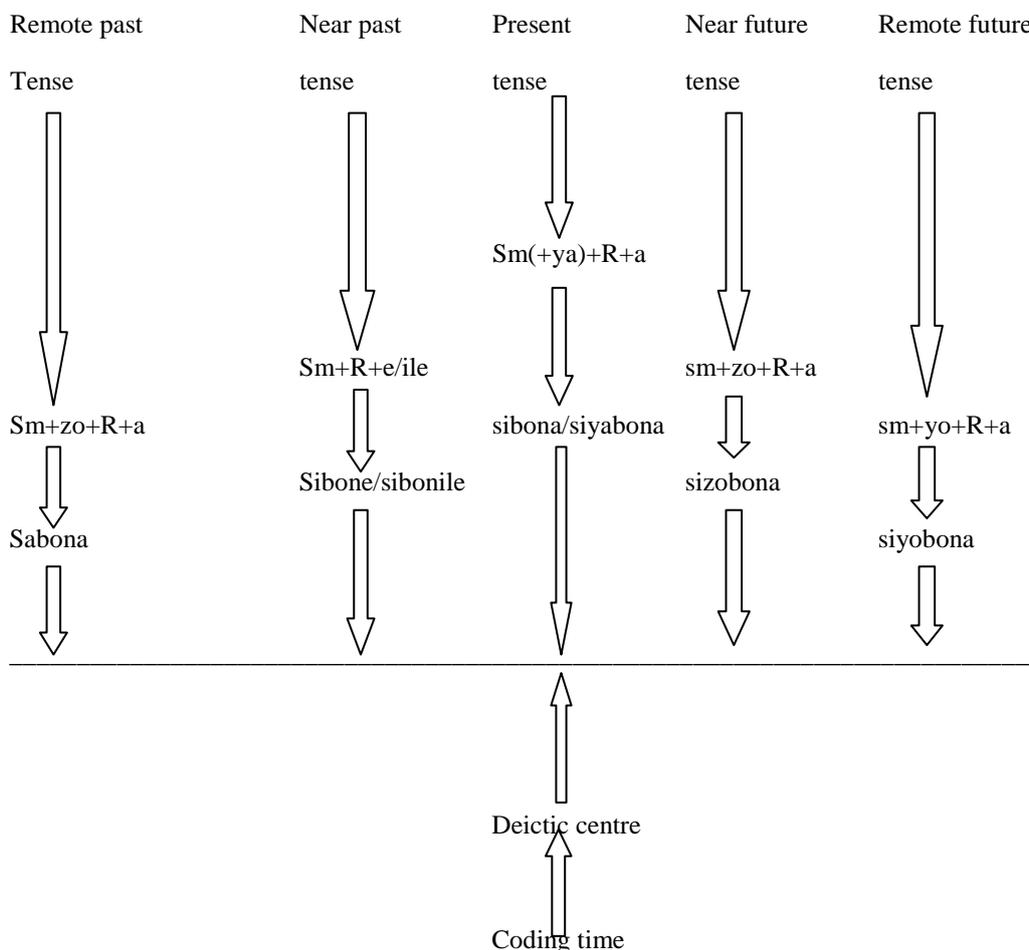


Figure 3.5: IsiZulu absolute tenses (adapted from Hall, 2006:28; Posthumus, 2009:9) (sm=subject morpheme, R= root).

The tense forms for the absolute tenses in isiZulu are marked morphologically on the verb by the combination of the subject agreement morpheme/prefix/ marker, the aspect marker, the

verb root, the tense marker and the final tense marker (Hall, 2006: 26). This description is in line with the following assertion: “In the complex, agglutinative structure of the Zulu verb, tense and/or aspect markers are attached either as prefixes or suffixes to the stem” (Botner and Kershner, 2000: 164). The diagram below illustrates the verb structure in isiZulu.

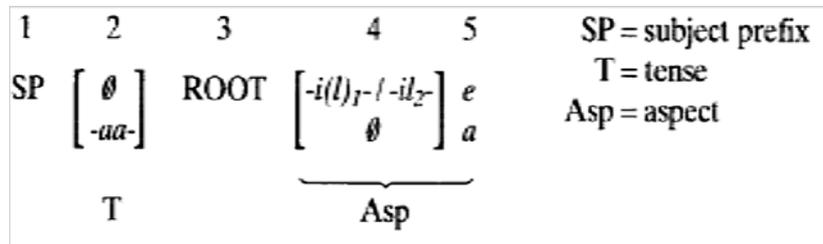


Figure 3.6: The Zulu verb template. (Botner & Kershner, 2000: 164)

In the above template, position 1 is for the subject prefix, position 2 is for the tense category marked with *-aa-* for remote past or \emptyset for non-past, position 3 is for the verb root, position 4 and 5 are aspectual; for completeness with ‘-a’ denoting neutrality (Botner and Kershner, 2000: 164-165). The verbs in the following sentences are examples of instantiations of the verb template given above:

13. *Uthisha w-a-gcin-a esedabukelwa ijazi lakhe. (Z1/01)*
Uthisha SP-T(Remote past)-ROOT- \emptyset -a(FM) esedabukelwa ijazi lakhe.
 The lecturer **ended up** with his coat being torn.
14. *Abafundi b-a-buz-i-w-e ukuthi yini imbangela yengozi. (Z1/06)*
Abafundi SP-T(Recent past)-ROOT-Asp-PASSIVE-e(FM) ukuthi yini imbangela yengozi.
 The students **were asked** that what caused the accident.
 FM= Final marker.
15. *Umbiko olandelayo u-khulum-a ngengozi yase-labotatory. (Z1/24)*
Umbiko olandelayo SP- \emptyset -ROOT- \emptyset -a(FM) ngengozi yase-laboratory.
 The report which follows **talks** about an accident of the laboratory.

The verbs used to denote the near and the remote future do not conform to the template advocated by Botner and Kershner (2000) in all instances. Sometimes the future tenses use auxiliary ‘-be’ in addition to the morpheme ‘-zo-/-yo-’; in other instances the main verb conflates the morphemes ‘-zo-/-yo-’ into the main verb. The following sentences illustrate this:

16. *Umbiko ophелеle uyobe sewulungiswa... (Z2/17)*
 A full report **will then be presented**...
17. *Umbiko ngophenyo u-zo-ku-ethul-w-a ngomhlaka 23 kuyo inyanga kaMbaso.(Z2/22)*
Umbiko ngophenyo SP-FUTURE-SEMIVOWEL-ROOT-PASSIVE-FM ngomhlaka 23 kuyo inyanga kaMbaso.

The report on the investigation **will be presented** on the 23rd of the month of April.

Botner and Kershner (2000: 164) do acknowledge that the template they advocate does not include all the potential affixes of the verb complex in isiZulu.

Relative tenses, which are the next category of differentiation, are distinguished from the absolute tenses by the fact that they interpret events from a reference point which does not coincide with the coding time but which is located at another point in relation to the coding time (Hall, 2006; Posthumus, 2009)¹⁰. The relative tenses are identifiable by the morphemes ‘-be/-ba’ and they interpret the event from two points: the primary reference point for temporal interpretation of event time and the deictic centre which is the secondary reference point (Posthumus, 2009: 11). Other grammarians use the term compound tenses to refer to the relative tenses (e.g Poulos and Msimang in Hall, 2006). However, Hall (2006: 17-18) notes a confusion generated by the term compound tenses and like Posthumus advocates the term relative tenses. The scope of the current paper does not allow an extended discussion of this class of tenses. A description of the aspect morphology in isiZulu follows hereunder.

Aspect is non-deictic because the internal temporal constituency of an event is independent of any reference point (Comrie, 1985 in Hall 2006: 25). IsiZulu distinguishes between perfect and imperfect aspects (Hall, 2006: 25). Aspect denotes the completion or non-completion of an event or state. Canonici (1996: 72-73) identifies the following seven aspectual morphemes and categories: ‘-sa-’ for progressive-durative, limitative and completion; ‘-nga-’ for perfecto-punctative and potential; ‘-se-’ for inceptive-exclusive; ‘-ka-’ for negative-exclusive; ‘-be-’ for imperfect-durative-habitual; ‘-ile/-é’ for perfective; and ‘-yó/-zó’ for future intention. Of interest in this paper are the morphemes ‘-sa-’ and ‘-ile/-é’.

The morpheme ‘-sa-’ is translated into English as ‘still’ and ‘no longer’ for the affirmative verb and negative verb respectively (Buell, 2005: 111). This morpheme is found between the subject prefix and the verb root in the affirmative verb, and between negative marker and the verb root in the negative verb where it takes the form of either ‘-sa-’ or ‘-se-’ (ibid.). The following examples illustrate the use of ‘-sa-’ to show non-completion of the event at the time of occurrence:

¹⁰ Although the grammarians who have studied and analysed isiZulu do not necessarily agree on how to define the distinction between absolute and relative tenses (Comrie, 1986; Botner, 1986 both in Posthumus, 2009), the classification into absolute and relative tenses itself stands. This paper will not dwell on this argument.

18. *Sathi si-sa-qhubek-a nesifundo...* (Z1/03)
Sathi SP-ASP-ROOT-FM nesifundo
 As we were still continuing with the lecture...
19. *...ngenkathi uthisha e-sa-khomb-is-a abafundi.* (Z1/31)
...ngenkathi uthisha SP-ASP-ROOT-CAUSATIVE-FM abafundi.
 ...during the time when the lecturer was still displaying to the students.

The morphemes ‘-ile/-e’ indicates the completion of events which have taken place in the recent past but should not be confused with the use as a stative wherein the verb is the lexical property of the stem indicating the state of the subject not the action (Buell, 2005: 116). To denote completion, these morphemes indicate the long form (*ile/-*) and the short form (*-e*) use respectively whereas the stative does not consistently use the ‘-e’ variant (ibid.). The following examples illustrate the use of ‘-ile/ -e’ as well as the distinction with a stative verb.

20. Perfect (recent past)
 Long: *ba-cul-ile* “they sang”
 Short: *ba-cul-ê kakhulu* “they sang a lot”
 Stative
 Long: *ba-lamb-ile* “they’re hungry”
 Short: *ba-lamb-ile kakhulu* “they’re very hungry” (Buell, 2005: 116)

An extensive discussion on the distinctions between the perfect and the stative is beyond the scope of the current study.

Botne and Kershner (2000: 165-166) distinguish between inchoative and non-inchoative verbs in isiZulu, the inchoative being the verbs which express a change from one state to another; the non-inchoative being punctual verbs in line with Vendler’s (1957) classification of verbs according to semantic properties of states, activities, accomplishments and achievements. According to Botner and Kershner (2000: 165), the inchoative verbs have an inherent internal structure which has three phases: an onset, a nucleus, and a coda. The onset phase is the initial state of the event, the nucleus is the core state which is punctual in nature and the coda is the final state which depicts change from the onset state. In the same breath, Botner and Kershner (2000: 166) distinguish between the perfective as an aspect providing an external perspective on event structure and the completive as an aspect providing an internal perspective on the event structure. However, as pointed out earlier, the focus of the study is not on the semantics of the tense and aspect system but on the morphological realisation of these grammatical categories.

3.4 Summary

The two languages under discussion: English and isiZulu, mark tense and aspect morphologically on the verb. This would appear to place the two languages at equilibrium in as far as the learning and use of the tense systems are concerned. However, this is not the case. As alluded to earlier, past research indicates that L2 speakers of English encounter challenges in using these grammatical elements. Among others, the following factors differentiate English and isiZulu. English, on the one hand, distinguishes between the past and the non-past (the non-past being the present and the future) as the main tense classes. IsiZulu, on the other hand, distinguishes between five absolute tenses. The verbal morphology which identifies the tense and aspect categories of each language are distinct thus the challenge in using these categories in the verbalisation of events.

The use of both English and isiZulu tenses can largely be accounted for by adopting Reichenbach's theory of time and tense; that is, the realisation of time as a continuum with the speech time at the deictic centre in relation to event time and reference time. Again, this factor may lead a L2 speaker to assume that the time and tense manifestations are transferable from L1 to L2. English and isiZulu speakers may have a shared concept of time but the realization of tenses and aspectual categories differs morphologically between their languages.

In this chapter, theories of time, tense and aspect in language use have been discussed broadly and specific attention has been drawn to English and isiZulu. In both languages, the morphology of the tenses and the grammatical aspect categories have been discussed and illustrated with examples. The discussion reveals vast differences between the two languages, a potential source of challenges for L2 speakers of English. The chapter has not discussed in any detail the semantic and lexical aspects of verbal morphology as these two categories are outside the scope of the current study. The following chapter will discuss the methodology adopted for this study.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The aim of the current study is to compare how isiZulu/English bilingual speakers verbalize a series of events which constitute a hypothetical laboratory incident using English and isiZulu tense and aspect morphology. The essence of the study is to describe, discuss and interrogate the similarities and/or differences in the two versions of the verbalization. The underlying hypothesis is that the verbalization of a series of events may differ between L1 and L2, in this case, isiZulu and English. The study thus hopes to generate an insight of why a speaker of both isiZulu and English may experience problems in employing the correct tense and aspect morphology in the two languages.

The study highlights important aspects in language learning and, in particular, second language learning. The following phenomena have an impact on this study: bilingualism, the interlanguage state in second language acquisition, and the language production process (a more detailed discussion of these phenomena is presented in chapter 2).

The design of the study is the focus of this chapter. The details of the site where the study was conducted and the participants from whom data were sourced is presented. The data collection methods are discussed including the issues of validity and reliability. The discussion includes the data analysis process and the measures taken to ensure validity and reliability of the process. Finally, concluding remarks on the methodology used sum up this chapter.

4.2 Design of the study

The design of the current study is based generally on the philosophy of phenomenology, the social constructionist perspective and specifically on the concept of ethnomethodology (Neuman, 1997: 347). According to Potter (1996: 42), ethnomethodology is concerned with the methods people use for conducting social life in a way that is accountable, in particular, the methods for producing and understanding factual descriptions. De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delpont (2011: 317) concur by stating that the focus of ethnomethodology is placed on how people accomplish day-to-day interactions. Ethnomethodologists “[...] examine ordinary social interaction in great detail to identify rules for constructing social reality and common sense, how these rules are applied [...]” (Neuman, 1997: 347). Starting off from this basis, the current study explores how the participants verbalize one series of events constituting a

hypothetical laboratory incident since laboratory experiments are part and parcel of their study life. The focus of the verbalization is on the use of English L2 tense and aspect morpheme, however, the isiZulu verbalization will also be looked at. Tense and aspect morphemes form part of everyday utterances in language usage since the verb is central to the sentence structure in both English and isiZulu.

4.3 The site

The study is conducted at Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT). MUT is located in a peri-urban setting of Umlazi Township, about fifteen kilometres south of Durban in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. MUT was founded in 1979 as Mangosuthu Technikon with an aim of equipping previously disadvantaged students with technical skills in the fields of Engineering Sciences, Natural Sciences and Management Sciences. In 2007, the technikon was transformed into a university, i.e. Mangosuthu University of Technology. To date, MUT opens its doors to students from all the provinces of South Africa and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region but the majority of the student body still comes from previously disadvantaged communities of KwaZulu-Natal.

Most of the university's staff and student population are isiZulu home language (L1) speakers whose second language (L2) is English. The institutional statistics of the year 2013 revealed the following about the student composition of MUT. The total enrolment is nine thousand nine hundred and thirty six. From that number, nine thousand nine hundred and nine are African students, twelve are Coloured, ten are Asian and five are white. (Directorate of Institutional Planning and Research, 2013). The table below illustrates the student population per racial classification as at 19 March 2013.

RACE FACULTY	BLACK	WHITE	INDIAN	COLOURED	TOTAL
ENGINEERING SCIENCES	4055	1	5	6	4067
NATURAL SCIENCES	1246	2	5	2	1255
MANAGEMENT SCIENCES	4608	2	0	4	4614
TOTAL	9909	5	10	12	9936

Figure 4.1: 2013 MUT First semester student composition

4.4 The population and the sampling frame

The population from which the sample group is drawn is the total number of students enrolled in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at MUT, a department in the Faculty of Engineering Sciences. The department consists of five hundred and ninety seven students in total. The sample group is made up of the first semester students studying towards the National Diploma in Mechanical Engineering (MechEng). Ninety six students participated in the current investigation; i.e. sixteen percent of the total population (96/597). The majority of these students are males and in their late teenage years as the results chapter (chapter 5) shows. Among the 96 students are students with other language constellations, for example three or more languages or a different L1 to isiZulu. The group with other language constellations will be excluded from the study since these students are in the minority.

The participants have been exposed to English as a subject at first additional language (FAL) level for about twelve years on average and English as a Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) for at least ten years on average. These approximations are in accordance with the South African Language in Education Policy. The policy stipulates that all learners shall be offered at least one approved language as a subject at grade 1 and grade 2; from grade 3 onwards, all learners shall be offered their language of learning and teaching (LOLT) and at least one additional approved language as a subject (LiEP, 1997). In practice, in particular in KwaZulu-Natal, English is offered as a subject at FAL level from grade 1 to grade 12. From grade 4 to grade 12, English becomes the LOLT.

The sampling criterion used is a purposive one (Neuman, 1997: 206). Purposive sampling assists in selecting informative cases and in gaining a deeper understanding of the subject under scrutiny (Neuman, 1997: 206). The reason for such sampling is the anticipation that the written reports to be produced by this group and analysed will enable an in-depth investigation into the usage of English tense and aspect markings by isiZulu L1 speakers. In essence, the study aims at getting an understanding of the difficulties isiZulu L1 speakers face when using English tense and aspect markings.

4.5 Data collection and instrumentation

Data was collected during class time for a Communication course for Mechanical Engineering first semester students. The collection of data was done in four phases, two

preliminary phases (giving consent to partake in the study and filling in the questionnaire) and the last two major phases (writing the two reports: isiZulu and English).

During the first phase, the students were given consent letters (Appendix 1) and the research project was explained to them. They were allowed to ask questions in order to get clarity on their involvement in the study and how the study runs concurrently with their semester programme.

During the second phase, the students were given questionnaires to fill in (Appendix 2).

During the third and fourth phases, the students (henceforth to be referred to as participants) were required to produce two versions of the written investigative report, one in English (Appendix 3.1) and one in isiZulu (Appendix 3.2). The participants had been taught the conventions of writing an investigative report. The table below illustrates the four phases of data collection.

Phase	1	2	3	4
Activity	Consent letter	Questionnaire	Report 1	Report 2
Time span	15-20min	10-15min	40min	40min
Date	16/04/13	22/04/13	23/04/13	23/04/13

Figure 4.2: Data collection schedule

4.5.1 Consent letter

When ethical clearance was granted both by MUT (Msci/01/2013) as well as the University of KwaZulu-Natal (HSS/0219/013M)¹¹; the participants were given consent letters in order to formalise their participation in the study. A total of 77 informed consent letters were returned. Of the 77; 74 students filled and returned the questionnaire.

It was clarified to the participants that while the written reports were part of the classroom programme, they were able to refuse consent to the utilisation of their reports for further analysis within the research project without being penalised. Hence while all students had to write both versions of the report, any of the participants who did not want their written reports to be used in the study were able to withdraw their writing samples and their questionnaire from the research project at any time without any negative implications. A total of 64 participants were present on the set date for writing and they all volunteered their

¹¹ Ethical clearance from both institutions were required as MUT is the site of the data collection whereas UKZN is the institution at which the current Masters dissertation is registered and supervised.

written reports for research purposes. Participants were informed that their data samples and questionnaires were rendered anonymous for research purposes and that neither the researcher nor any future audience would be able to trace back the information provided in the questionnaire or the written reports to specific individuals.

It is worth noting at this point that the chosen data collection instruments were preferred by the researcher because of the time constraints of the project at hand. Other instruments could have been employed such as interviews in order to access on-line usages of tense and aspect markings but were not. Interviews, too, could have yielded minimal responses which are not representative of the abilities of the participants and which may not give enough samples of the use of tense and aspect morphemes.

4.5.2 The questionnaire

The questionnaires were administered and collected in class. In total, the questionnaire consisted of twenty two items and took ten to fifteen minutes for the participants to complete (see Table 4.2 above). It consisted of three sections: The first section contained six items about the personal biographical and background information of each participant. The second section consisted of six items about the language profile of each participant. The third section consisted of ten items assessing language utilisation patterns for each participant in order to assess language dominance. The questionnaire was selected as a data collection instrument because each participant was to give information about him/herself privately and in a well-thought off manner. The questionnaire was a preferred tool compared to oral interviews wherein participants can give information without giving it much thought and later to find that the information was not accurate. The questionnaires afforded each participant time to recollect information about those items which required past experiences in terms of language exposure (e.g. items: 1.5; 1.6; 2.7; 2.8; 2.9; 2.10; 2.11) as well as day-to-day language usage (e.g. items in section 3).

4.5.3 The written reports

All participants were given prior notice (one week in advance) that the investigative reports were going to be written on Tuesday, 23 April 2013 during class time, from 10h55-12h20; i.e. the total duration of the primary data collection session was 1hour 20 minutes excluding a 5-minute interval between the two reports.

The participants were given instructions to write a report on a hypothetical laboratory incident. The instructions relating to the same scenario were provided in both English and isiZulu (see appendix 3.1 and appendix 3.3). In the instructions, a hypothetical incident was described. The incident included a minor explosion which was alleged to have occurred during a practical session which the participants had been attending in the laboratory. The instructions were accompanied by two pictures: One picture shows a person (referred to as their lecturer) wearing a slightly burnt laboratory coat. The other picture is a caricature depicting a person working with a hot liquid in a laboratory (indicating that the handling of a hot liquid may have caused the explosion).

The participants were aware of the dual purpose of the written report: First, the writing of the reports was meant to be a classroom practice exercise on writing an investigative report as part of their curriculum. Secondly, the reports were to be analysed for research purposes in the context of the current research project. The participants were aware of the general purpose of the research project, i.e., to investigate how bilingual students use their languages to interpret reality/ life experiences. However, they were not aware of the specific elements to be analysed, i.e., the usage of tense and aspect markings in isiZulu and English; neither were they aware of the researcher's objective to compare the usage of tense and aspect morphology between the two languages.

The participants were randomly divided into two sub-groups. The first sub-group started by writing the English version of the report and subsequently wrote the isiZulu version of the report. The second group started by writing the isiZulu version of the report and subsequently the English version of the report. Each completed version was collected before the second version was written. The writing exercise prompted the participants to use the past, present and future tenses since the format of the investigative report requires the terms of references stating who commissioned the report, when and why; the procedure to be used in investigating the incident; the findings which emanate from the procedure; the conclusions and deductions made about the cause of the incident; and finally the recommendations on what can be done to prevent the same incident in future.

The report was to be written in both English and isiZulu according to the respective language-specific instruction and in accordance with the report format the students had been familiarised with during their lectures. Both versions of the report were elicited in one sitting. This was done to maximize the availability of all participants for both versions and to make

the two versions maximally comparable in terms of the time line: If there had been a variation of time lapses between the two versions; the second versions of the report would have been incomparable to the first ones because the conditions of time would no longer be the same across all participants.

The time frame for the production of the two reports gave rise to some concern, however the participants produced the two versions of the report within a short space of time (1 hour, 20 minutes). The short time interval (5 minutes) between the production of the two versions may have affected the second version of the report. There is a possibility that the second version would be a direct translation of the first version (recency effect). The element of direct transfer from one language to the other may thus inhibit a good comparison between the two languages on an intra-individual level. However, it was anticipated that the sequencing of the production of the reports (one half of the participants produced the isiZulu version first while the other half produced the English version first) would assist in uncovering any direct transfer from the first written report to the second (see results in chapter 5 section 5.5 for a discussion of this aspect). Moreover, the study is not focusing solely on observing and comparing use of tense and aspect on an individual level but the major focal point is on the English tense and aspect use by isiZulu L1/English bilinguals.

The written reports were selected as a data collection instrument since writing allows the participant time to plan and structure the thought processes before presentation. On the same note, writing was favourable to oral production because written presentations appear to be longer and more detailed than on-line oral presentations. To support this assumption, in the study conducted by Salaberry (2000) where the participants produced both oral and written narratives of the pictures they had seen, the written narratives were slightly longer than the oral narratives. Salaberry concluded that the written narratives provided the participants planning time and monitoring of the presentation (2000: 145). To support this argument, a study conducted by Kang (2005) looked at the written narratives produced by Korean learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Kang opted for written narratives because of their rehearsed nature which allows for optimal display of discourse skills as well as linguistic knowledge (2005: 261). Consequently, the written report task is a preferred instrument for data collection in the current study.

4.6 Reliability and validity

Neuman (1997: 138) asserts that validity and reliability are salient issues in social research. The reasoning behind this assertion is that the research results have to be precise, dependable and a true reflection of the construct under investigation. According to Neuman (1997: 138), reliability means that the data collection instrument used will yield the same results each time the same construct is being measured. In other words, the instrument is dependable. To concur, De Vos et al. (2011: 163) assert that a reliable measurement procedure will yield consistent results over time if the same variable is measured under similar conditions. Validity, on the other hand, measures the degree of fit between the construct under investigation and its indicators (Neuman, 1997: 141). In other words, the issue of validity asks, 'Does the indicator actually capture the meaning of the construct of interest?' (Babbie 2007, in de Vos, et al., 2011: 160).

In the current study, the questionnaire and the written report are the two primary data collection instruments used. Each has been subjected to an assessment for validity and reliability.

4.6.1 The questionnaire

With the questionnaire, reliability was established by conducting a trial administration as well as replication. A group of Analytical Chemistry (AnChem) students (twelve in total), doing their first semester studies, were used during the trial administration of the questionnaire. This measure established that the questionnaire was clear enough to understand and easy to answer. The success with AnChem students ensured good administration with the target group, MechEng students as participants in the current study. The trial administration of the questionnaire established representative reliability (Neuman, 1997: 139). The fact that the questionnaire was administered successfully to the two groups of students indicated that it is representative and can be given to yet another group who shares the same characteristics as the two and will still be administered successfully.

The questionnaire is also replicated. Out of twenty two items in the questionnaire, sixteen items have been collated from previous studies in Linguistics research (Keijzer, 2007; Ngcobo, 2011; Schmid and Dusseldorp, 2012). The fact that the questionnaire was replicated ensured face validity (Neuman, 1997: 142). Face validity is shown by the fact that the

majority of the items had been successfully used previously by other researchers. Therefore, the questionnaire collected data in a valid and reliable manner.

4.6.2 The instructions for the written reports

With the written report, validity and reliability was established by external moderation. The instruction for the written report was given to two colleagues for moderation and constructive input before administering it to the students. One colleague is a language expert, a lecturer and Associate Professor in the Department of Communication at MUT. He advised in terms of clarity. This moderation provided validity of the instruction as a data collection instrument. The second colleague is a coordinator for Mechanical Engineering first semester programme and a lecturer in the department of Mechanical Engineering at MUT. His advice was on the suitability of the instruction in terms of the content that MechEng students are taught at first semester level. This assessment aimed at prompting the participants to give relevant information that is required. The two independent assessments and moderation of the instruction ensured reliability. In other words, the instruction can be given and administered to another group of first semester MechEng students in the subsequent years.

The instruction on the written report was translated into isiZulu by the researcher. Before the date of writing the report, the isiZulu instruction was subjected to an assessment for validity. One colleague, a lecturer in the Department of Communication at MUT, whose L1 is isiZulu and L2 is English and who has studied translation, was consulted. The colleague was requested to do a back translation. He viewed the English instruction and translated it to isiZulu. Another colleague whose L1 is also isiZulu but who had studied English as L1 was requested to translate the instruction from isiZulu to English. The colleague who has studied translation was requested to compare the four versions of the instruction: the researcher's isiZulu version to his own English to isiZulu translation; the researcher's English version to the other colleague's isiZulu to English version. He was then requested to do a back translation of English to isiZulu, and isiZulu to English translations. Any discrepancies between the versions of the instruction were rectified. This exercise ensured that the isiZulu translated version of the written report instruction was valid.

4.7 Data analysis

The questionnaires and the written reports were analysed quantitatively.

4.7.1 Quantitative analysis of the questionnaire

The objective of this analysis was to establish the pattern of language usage of the participant thereby making conclusions on the characterisation of the sample population. The questionnaire had three sections: section 1, 2 and 3. In section 1, each response was coded. Question 1 dealt with age categories. There were 16-19, 20-24 and over 25 categories. The codes were as follows: 1.1A, 1.1B and 1.1C respectively (section 1, question 1, category A, B and C). Question 2 was coded as 1.2 (section 1, question 2) and the responses A and B as they follow each other on the questionnaire. The same pattern of coding applied to the rest of section 1.

Section 2 was coded as 2 followed by the question number and the response option. The response options were coded as follows: 'always' (A), 'sometimes' (B), 'not sure' (C), 'not really' (D) and 'not at all' (E). Consequently, codes for section 2 were, e.g. 2.7A, 2.8B, 2.9A and so on. Section 3 items were given numbers 13-22 as they follow each other in the questionnaire. Each response was given labels A-E as they follow each other in the questionnaire. As a result, in section 3 there were codes such as 3.13B for 'mostly English' response on the item on language used in thinking. Although the questionnaires are anonymous, the information gathered assisted in giving an insight about the responses generated through the written reports. This is based on the premise that the language profile of the sample group as coined by the questionnaire justifies the responses generated in the written reports.

4.7.2 The quantitative analyses of the written reports

The main focus of the study is on the English version of the report on the usage of tense and aspect markings by isiZulu L1/English L2 speakers; and to establish how intermediate English L2 speakers verbalize events both in English and in isiZulu. However, a comparison was made with the isiZulu version in terms of the usage of tense and aspect markings. The point of interest of the study was to analyse how isiZulu L1/English L2 speakers present a series of one event in two languages.

Firstly, each report was given a unique trace number in order to ensure anonymity and objectivity. However, as the researcher, I am able to identify the reports written by one participant. Secondly, each report was broken into smaller component sentences where the targeted units of analysis, that is, temporal morphology and aspect morphemes were

highlighted for analysis. Thirdly, the units of analysis were categorised according to tense types and aspect markings. For tenses, the following categories were shown: past tense, present indefinite tense, future tense. For aspect, the categories showed imperfection or non-completion of the action, i.e. progressive tenses in the past, present and future; and perfect aspects or completion), i.e. perfect tenses in the past, present and future. Fourthly, the units were analysed in terms of frequency and format. The objective here was to establish whether the participants have an inclination towards particular tenses or the usage is widely distributed. The assumption was that the analyses was going to show how the mapping from conceptualisation to the event verbalisation might differ between the two languages and hence come to an understanding of the underlying difficulties isiZulu L1 speakers experience when using English tense and aspect morphology.

4.8 The reliability of data analysis

Validity and reliability is hereunder discussed in relation to the two primary data collection instruments, the questionnaire and the written reports.

4.8.1 The questionnaire

The questionnaire had three sections: section 1, 2 and 3. Data code sheets were created. The responses from section 1 were recorded as nominal level and responses from section 2 and 3 were recorded as ordinal level (de Vos, et. al., 2011). Coding was done by two independent coders and verified by a third independent coder. The assessment gave the results credibility.

4.8.2 The written reports

The units of analyses were the tense and aspect markings. Data code sheets were created wherein the tense and aspect markings used by the participants were slotted in. Coding was conducted independently by the two coders. The services of a second coder were sought for the analyses phase in each of the groups of reports: English and isiZulu. The coding process was subjected to several steps in order to attain inter-coder reliability. These steps included the segmentation of the text, code sheets creation, actual coding, assessment of reliability, code sheet modification, and final coding (Hruschka, Schwartz, St. John, Picone-Decaro, Jenkins and Carey, 2004: 310). An independent assessor assessed the reliability of the coding process. If discrepancies occurred in the assessment of the coding process, the steps of code sheet modification, coding and assessment were to be reiterated until a consensus was reached. The whole process was intended to establish the reliability of data analysis.

4.9 Limitations of the study

In as far as the limitations of the study are concerned, three elements need to be discussed. The first element concerns the questionnaire. Although the questionnaire is simple and straightforward, one may not rule out the possibility of the participants giving out inaccurate information. For example, in section 1, item 4; there is a very thin line between rural and semi-urban residential areas. So a participant may easily misallocate his/her residential area. However, the assumption is that the majority of the responses are accurate and inaccurateness such as the one explained for question 1.4 have no 'major' effect on the language profile of the participants.

The second and third elements of limitations concern the written reports.

On the one hand, since the written reports are an open response exercise, which Burstein, Tetreault and Andreyev call "the noisy data domain" (2010: 681), participants were able to present their reports in a manner which would not yield sufficient data to analyse. Hence some participants presented the report in incomplete sentences which are not properly organised due to the limited time provided to write the reports (this will be justified below). Moreover, since the participants were not explicitly instructed to use tense and aspect morphology, they may have avoided those grammatical features which they are uncomfortable with in both isiZulu and in English. On the other hand, the participants had been taught the conventions of writing an investigative report, the different parts which make up an investigative report and how information should be presented in such a report.

The third influential factor could have been that the report-writing task is an informal classroom assessment task, the participants may have felt anxious while producing the reports. As a result, the reports may not present a 'natural' response to show language production in its optimal state. However, it was also anticipated that the formal environment would be suited to elicit the use of a variety of tenses. In order to alleviate the potential anxieties, the participants were reassured that no marks were to be allocated for the task but the task is merely an observation of their competency in report-writing. The reports were to be written in a controlled environment so that each participant was able to display his/her competency without discussing the report with other participants.

Due to the limited nature of the scope of the current study, the written reports were sourced only from English L2 speakers. It would, however, be interesting to compare reports done by English L2 speakers to those done by speakers of South African English in terms of using tense and aspect morphology. This comparison needs to be left to further research into the use of English tense and aspect morphology. Furthermore, in future, interviews could be conducted to source on-line utterances on the use of tense and aspect morphemes.

4.10 Summary

In this chapter, a detailed discussion of the methodology used to conduct research for the current study has been given. The chapter started off by giving the aim of the study in relation to the research method and instruments that were used to collect data. Since the focus of the study is to investigate the use of English tense and aspect morphemes by isiZulu L1 speakers, each participant presented two written reports: English and isiZulu on the investigation into a series of events culminating to a hypothetical laboratory incident which allegedly took place at MUT. The background information on the site where data was sourced (MUT) as well as on the participants in the study has also been given (L2 speakers of English who have been exposed to English in formal settings for ten to twelve years on average).

The discussion included a detailed description of the data collection instruments: The questionnaire and the written investigative reports; the reason for their choice as well as measures taken to establish validity and reliability in the data collection process. The written reports being the primary data collection instrument has been favoured because of the plenary time it will afford each participant though minimal but such time will enable the production of substantial data for analysis. In this chapter also the discussion on the data analysis process, instruments used as well as how reliability has been established has been covered. Using two coders for each report group ensured the reliability of the analysis process. The following chapter deals with the data analysis process in detail.

CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

The methodology discussed in the previous chapter provided the basis for data collection and analysis. In this chapter, the data collected will be presented and interpreted.

First semester Mechanical Engineering students at MUT were the target population in the study. Two data collection instruments were used: the questionnaire and the written investigative reports on a series of events culminating in a hypothetical laboratory incident. The reports were in isiZulu and in English. The questionnaire was used in order to acquire information on the dominant language each participant used on a day-to-day basis. The rationale behind this exercise was the anticipation that the dominant language used by each participant would influence the performance in the writing of the investigative report.

The objective of the study was to explore the hypothesis that English L2 speakers experience difficulties in using English grammatical structures. In the current study, this hypothesis was levelled against isiZulu L1 speakers. The grammatical structures investigated were the tense and aspect morphemes. In the written investigative reports, the participants detailed the terms of reference of the report; the procedure/ methods used to conduct the investigation; the findings from the methods used; the conclusion drawn from the findings and finally the recommendations they suggest to avoid the occurrence of such an incident in future. The data sourced was meant to respond to the following questions:

1. How do isiZulu L1 speakers express the same series of events using isiZulu and English subsequently?
2. To what extent do the structural differences between isiZulu and English tense and aspect systems pose challenges for isiZulu L1 speakers when using English in the verbalisation of events?

The observation on how isiZulu L1 speakers express the same series of events in the two languages: English and isiZulu was meant to indicate the extent of the challenges isiZulu L1 speakers face in using English tense and aspect systems. The challenges are believed to emanate either from the structural differences between isiZulu and English or they are a general phenomenon in the use of English Second Language (ESL). Therefore, the data to be presented in this chapter exposes how the participants used the tense and aspect systems in both isiZulu and English. The chapter will describe each data collection measure and how the

analysis has been conducted. It will further present significant responses given by the participants. A comparison between the English and isiZulu reports will also be made. In concluding the chapter, a general discussion on the use of tense and aspect morphemes by the participants will be given.

5.2 Data collection and analysis

Two tools were used to collect data: the questionnaire and the written reports. In chapter 4, the table specifying the data collection procedure was provided (Figure: 4.2). The questionnaire was administered as phase two of data collection. The estimated time for the completion of the questionnaire by each participant was the maximum of 15 minutes. However, some participants took five minutes more than the estimated time to complete filling in the questionnaire. This exercise was done during the last 20 minutes of class time on Monday, 22 April 2013. The written reports (English and isiZulu) were done as phase three and four of data collection. Each report took 40 minutes to complete. The reports were detailing an investigation into the series of events culminating into a hypothetical laboratory incident which had allegedly taken place at MUT four weeks before the reports were written.

5.2.1 The Questionnaire

A total of 74 questionnaires were completed and returned. Of these, 65 were analysed (isiZulu L1 speakers); the remaining nine reports were produced by students with other home languages than isiZulu. The questionnaire was divided into three sections: section 1- personal information; section 2-language profile; and section 3- the most commonly used language. In section 1, all responses were tallied and percentages were calculated (see Appendix 4.1 for all the questionnaire scores). The results are given in section 5.3.1 below (figure 5.2). In section 2 and 3, all responses were tallied and presented in graphs in section 5.3.1 below (figure 5.3 and 5.4).

5.2.2 The written reports

The reports were written on Tuesday, 23 April 2013 during lecture time from 10h55 to 12h20, a period of 1 hour 25 minutes. Two investigative reports on a series of events culminating to a hypothetical laboratory incident were written by each participant. Half the class started with the isiZulu version of the report and the other half started with the English version of the report. The total number of reports written and submitted was 125: 61 isiZulu and 64 English. The difference in number emanates from the fact that not all participants

were isiZulu L1 speakers. After 40 minutes, the first set of reports was collected and the second set of instructions was distributed; all students who had written the first report in English received instructions in isiZulu and vice versa. The following table shows the distribution of the writing and the division of the cohort of participants.

IsiZulu 1 (Z1)	IsiZulu 2 (Z2)	English 1 (E1)	English 2 (E2)	Total
32	29	31	33	
61		64		125

Figure 5.1: Writing distribution and division of cohort

Firstly, the reports were coded depending on the session of report-writing and then a number was assigned to each individual report. The reports written by the group which started with isiZulu were labelled as Z1/1-32; the reports written by the group which started with English were labelled as E1/1-31. The reports which were written during the second session were labelled as E2/1-33 (previous Z1/1-32) and Z2/1-29 (previous E1/1-31).

Secondly, each report was segmented into propositions. Phrases which contained finite verbs were counted as propositions/ events. The meaning of a verb is a concept representing an eventuality (an event, state or process) (Löbner, 2002: 20). Subsequently, the finite verbs used were categorised according to tenses. Two pairs of independent coders¹² segmented the texts into propositions, categorised and counted the various tense morphemes. The scores were compared and adjustments were made on reaching consensus. The next stage was to colour-code certain verbs which were used: Black was used to identify common verbs/tenses used in uncommon contexts; red was used for common verbs/tenses constructed in uncommon manners; and green was used in the English reports to label irregular verbs which were inflected with ‘-ed’. The colour-coded verbs/ tenses were analysed in order to ascertain the use of tenses and aspect morphology in the verbalization of events as the study entails. The verbalization of events was gauged against the expected timeline of the unfolding of events as depicted in figure 5.5 below. The analysis also focused on the frequency of tenses to establish if there is an inclination towards particular tenses or if the usage is widely distributed as the task demands.

¹² In the case of the English texts the author of the current study and her supervisor coded the occurrence of tenses; in the case of the isiZulu texts the author and an educator of isiZulu Home Language (L1) served as coders.

5.3 Data presentation of significant responses

5.3.1 The questionnaire

The following table shows the results of section 1 (personal information) of the questionnaires in accordance to the cues in the questionnaire (see Appendix 2). The vertical axis numbers 0-7 represent numbers 0-70 for the number of participants and the responses.

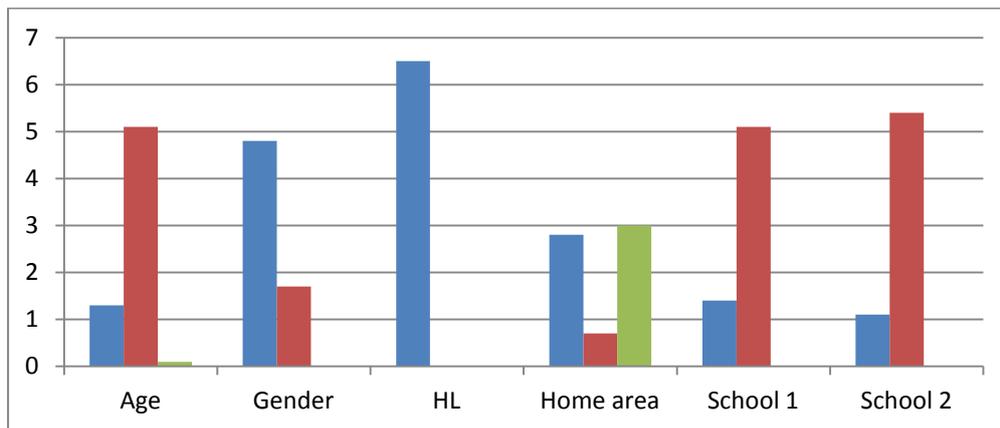


Figure 5.2: Section 1 of the questionnaire

Responses which have an impact on the results of the study are the responses pertaining to home language, home area, school where the participants started schooling (school 1) and the school where they matriculated (school 2). Colour codes used in the bar graph are presented according to how the cues in the questionnaire follow each other.

Therefore, the chart above indicates that the bulk of the participants either live in rural areas (blue/column 1) or semi-rural areas (green/column 3). These participants together make up 89% of cohort. This geographic location impacts on the language used on day-to-day basis since these areas are populated by people of African descent. Another factor pertains to the schools where the participants started schooling and where they matriculated. This has impact on the results of the study. The majority of the participants started schooling in African schools i.e. red bar/column 2 on school 1 in the graph (78.46%), and matriculated in African schools i.e. red bar/column 2 on school 2 in the graph (83.07%). The implication of these results is that the majority of the participants do not have any significant exposure to English L1 speakers. They are taught English L2 by English L2 speakers and they also live among African people. Therefore, for the majority of the participants, English is dominantly a Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) at school. Any other exposure to English is

varied and opportunistic through mass media such as radio, television, newspapers and books, if the learner has access to these media.

Section 2 of the questionnaire looked at the language profile of the participants in terms of how much they use their home language. The diagram below illustrates the responses as per item in the questionnaire. The vertical axis numbers 0-6 represent numbers 0-60 as per total cohort of participants.

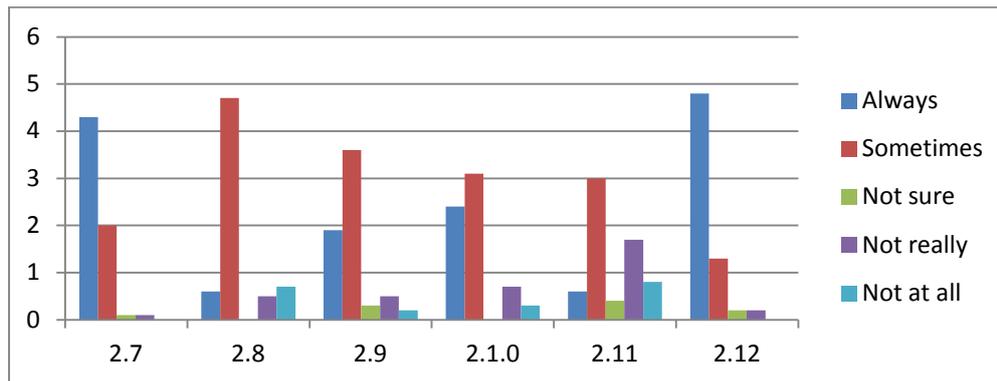


Figure 5.3: Section 2 of the questionnaire

The diagram above illustrates the significant responses given by the participants. Question 2.7 asked for the language used when talking to family members and friends; 2.8 asked for information on reading books written in the home language; 2.9 asked if the participant mixes English and the home language when speaking; 2.10 asked if the participant understands better when reading in or listening to English if he/she thinks about that idea in the home language; 2.11 asked if the participant finds difficulty in speaking English throughout a conversation; and 2.12 asked if the participant is proud of using his/her home language. It transpires from the responses that the participants mostly use the HL (isiZulu) when communication with friends and family, when reading and when thinking. The diagram also indicates that the participants do mix English and isiZulu in conversation and when they cannot finish the conversation in English, they mix it with or resort to isiZulu.

Section 3 of the questionnaire looked at the language most used by each participant while directly comparing English to the home language. Question 3.13 asked for the language he/she thinks with; 3.14 asked for the language in which he/she prays; 3.15 asked for his/her dominant language; 3.16 asked for the language he/she has the most vocabulary in; 3.17 asked for the language he/she pronounces clearly; 3.18 asked for the language which he/she is able to translate into; 3.19 asked for the language in which he/she is able to understand

jokes; 3.20 asked for the language spoken by most of his/her friends; 3.21 asked for the language he/she uses the most on a daily basis; and 3.22 asked for the language he/she considers to be his/her home language. The diagram below illustrates the results of this section. The vertical axis numbers 0-5 represent numbers 0-50 as per responses of the participants.

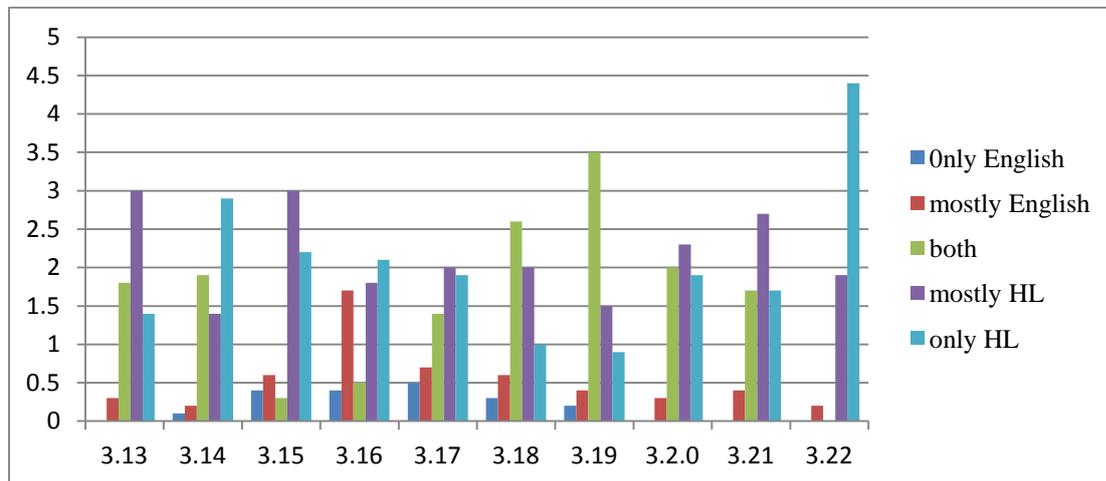


Figure 5.4: Section 3 of the questionnaire

In comparing the language most used by the participants, it transpires that isiZulu dominates the day-to-day interactions they engage in. One deduces that the participants are more conversant in isiZulu as compared to English. However, English is also prominent but to a much lesser degree in comparison to isiZulu. This latter finding supports the characterisation of the participants as L2 learners with an intermediate level of proficiency.

5.3.2 The written reports

The reports were a probe to indicate the use of tense and aspect morphemes as the unfolding of the investigation was being tabled. The anticipation was that the reports were going to follow the timeline of the unfolding of the series of events as indicated in the diagram below, hence the use of tense and aspect morphemes would be used to express the order of events on this time line in relation to one another.

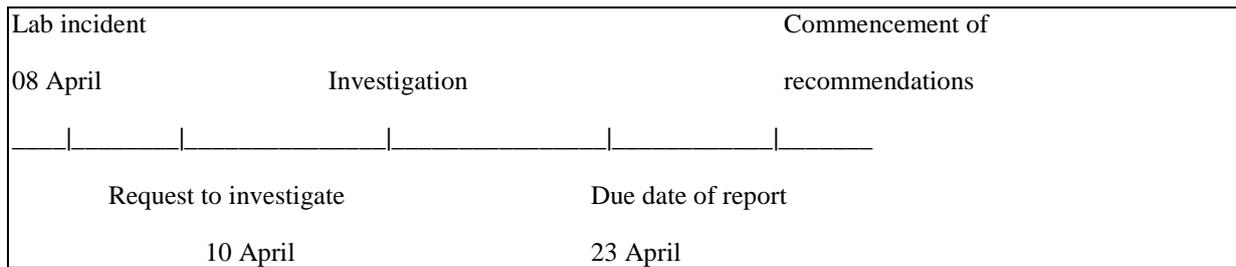


Figure 5.5 Timeline for the investigative report

In the English reports, the series of events probed the use of simple past, present and future tenses which denote the event occurrence in the past, present or future of the speech time (ST); as well as past perfect, present perfect, past continuous, present continuous tenses which indicate the aspect of completion and non-completion of the action either in the past or present time of speech time. In English, tense and aspect morphemes are conflated in the verb. For example:

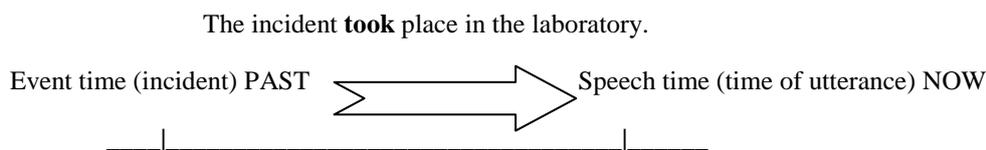


Figure 5.6 Time and tense in English

The verb ‘took’, which is an irregular verb in the past tense form because it does not inflect the root with ‘-ed’, indicates that the event happened at a particular point in the past before the time of the utterance (speech time); and was completed because the event does not extend to speech time.

In the isiZulu reports, the series of events probed the use of *inkathi eyadlula* (remote past tense: RMT P), *inkathi esandukudlula* (recent past tense: RCN P), *inkathi yamanje* (present tense: P), *inkathi ezayo* (future tense: FT) and *inkathi eyofika* (remote future: RF). IsiZulu differs from English in the fact that isiZulu uses particular morphemes to indicate tense as well as aspect. Tense and aspect are found synthesized in the verb (refer figure 3.1 in chapter 3); hence isiZulu is regarded as an agglutinative language. The verb root morpheme is inflected with subject concord (SC), tense morpheme/marker (TM), aspect morpheme or Ø (null aspect), verb stem and final tense marker. For example:

(1) *Abafundi besaqhubeka nesifundo...* [Z1/20] (As the students were continuing with the lecture...)

b-/-e-/-sa-/qhubek-/-a (they were continuing)

SC/RCN P-*sa-*/VB stem/final TM

The morpheme ‘-sa-’; indicates the progressive-durative aspect form of the verb. As a result of the synthesis of morphemes, isiZulu has shorter sentences than English.

5.3.2.1 IsiZulu reports

A total of 61 reports were written in isiZulu. As the class was divided into two, the first group (Z1) produced 32 reports and the second group (Z2) produced 29 reports. The diagram below illustrates the breakdown of the use of tenses between the two groups.

IsiZulu (61)	Z1 (32)	Z2 (29)
Verbs used/events	296	219
Tenses used	79	65
RMT P verbs	201	160
RCN P verbs	53	39
P verbs	21	16
F verbs	21	4

Figure 5.7: Distribution of tenses in the isiZulu reports

The table above indicates the overall occurrences of the most common tenses as used by the participants in the study. From these common tenses, I will now look for incidents where common tenses have been used in uncommon contexts and incidents where common tenses have been constructed in uncommon manners.

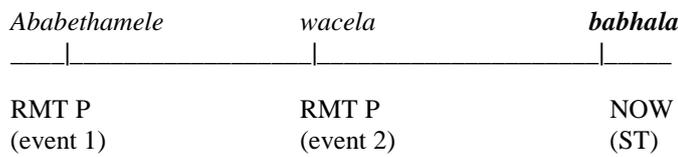
Common tenses in uncommon contexts

In this section I look at incidents where a particular tense has been used even though another tense would have been expected considering the unfolding of the series of events and the investigation into the hypothetical laboratory incident. It is noticeable though that, such occurrences were not frequent in the isiZulu reports as indicated below. A few examples are shown hereunder.

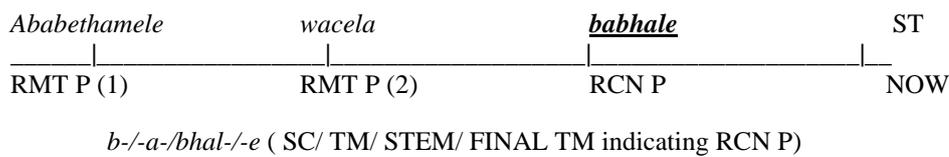
(2) *USolwazi wacela abafundi ababethamele lesisifundo benze uphenyo babhala umbiko ngokuqhuma komlilo. Z2/02* (The Professor asked the students who had attended the lecture to do an investigation **write** a report about the fire explosion.)

The example above indicates the use of the verb ‘bhala’ (write) in the present which coincides with speech time whereas it should denote an event which has taken place in the

recent past because the writing had to be done before speech time. Diagrammatically the events (as depicted by the verbs) in this sentence could be represented thus:



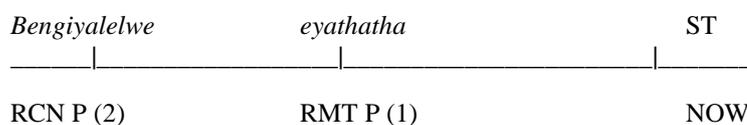
This representation does not depict the precise picture of the unfolding of events. In comparison, the following representation is precise:



The underlined verbs have been used appropriately in the context of the events depicted. However, the verb in bold, ‘*babhala*’, has been used in an uncommon context in the unfolding of the events. In the second representation, the verb ‘*babhale*’ has been placed in the preferred context according to the unfolding of events because the writing would have taken place before speech time. Another example of a common tense in an uncommon context is the following:

(3) *Bengiyalelwe ukuba ngiphenye kabanzi ngembangela yengozi **ethatha** indawo e-laboratory. Z2/13* (I have been instructed to investigate thoroughly on the cause of the accident **which happens** in the laboratory).

The verb ‘*ethatha*’ (happening) is common and has been constructed in a common manner but it has been used in an uncommon context. Looking at the unfolding of events as depicted in the sentence, ‘*ethatha*’ denotes a current event which coincides with the speech time. However, this is not the case if we refer back to the timeline of the unfolding of events (figure 5.5). The common context would be the use of verb form: ‘*eyathatha/eyenzeka*’ (happened). A direct translation of the sentence will be: ‘I have been instructed to investigate thoroughly on the cause of the accident which happened in the laboratory’. Two events are reported in this sentence: being instructed and the happening of the accident. The accident happened in the remote past whereas being instructed happened in the recent past. Thus, the appropriate representation of these events is as follows:



Of the total 515 verbs/ events reported in isiZulu, only 5 verbs were used in uncommon contexts. This translates to 1.5% of such usages. The implications of using common tenses in uncommon contexts will be discussed in sub-section 5.5 below.

Common tenses constructed in uncommon manners

There are instances where participants constructed common tenses in uncommon manners. This category does not include agreement errors and orthographic errors. A few examples are presented hereunder.

(4) *Mhla zingu 8 ku Eprel kwenzekala umlilo emalebhu esikole. Z1/31* (On the 8th of April there **was** a fire in the university laboratories.)

The above sentence is appropriately placed in the unfolding of events as an occurrence which took place prior to speech time. This is depicted by the final tense marker ‘-a’ on the verb ‘*kwenzakala*’. However, there is a morpheme ‘-la’ that is unaccounted for. The expression ‘*kwenzekala*’ can be broken down as follows:

Kw-/enzek-/a [-la?]

SC/∅/ STEM/TM indicating RMT P

The addition of morpheme ‘-la’ to the above verb construction is uncommon as this morpheme plays no role in the verb construction. Another example is:

(5) *Ucwaningo lutholaka ukuthi izinsiza kusebenza kazikho ezingeni. Z2/12* (The investigation **finds** that the equipment is not of good standard.)

The sentence is placed appropriately in the present time which coincides with the speech time. Like in example (4), there is an unaccounted for morpheme ‘-ka’. The verb construction can be represented thus:

Lu-/thol-/a/ [-ka?]

SC/∅/ STEM/ TM indicating P

In another example, the tense has been presented appropriately but the manner does not reflect the exact doer of the action hence it is uncommon. Here is the example:

(6) *Umbiko ophелеle ngaloluphenyo uyobe sewulungisiwe bese wethula ekilasini... Z2/17* (The complete report on this investigation will have been prepared and **present** in class...)

The sentence implies that the report will do the presentation whereas it will be the writer of the report who will present the report. Therefore, the common manner of verbalizing this event will be ‘*wethulwa*’ (be presented) to indicate that the doer is not the direct subject but

the indirect subject in the sentence. Of the total 515 verbs used in isiZulu reports, only 15 were constructed in uncommon manners. This makes 2.9% of the total usage. The implications of this usage will be discussed in section 5.5 below.

5.3.2.2 English reports

A total of 64 reports were submitted: 31 for the first group (E1/1-33) and 33 for the second group (E2/1-36). The diagram below illustrates the use of tenses between the two groups:

English (64)	E1 (31)	E2 (33)
Verbs used/ events	522	522
Tenses used	66	81
Simple Past verbs	387	367
Present verbs	127	128
Present Perfect	5	5
Past Perfect	6	7
Future	2	12

Figure 5.8 Distribution of tenses in the English reports

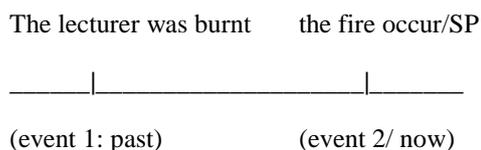
The table above indicates the use of tenses by the participants in the study. From the tenses used, I will now identify tenses used in uncommon contexts and tenses constructed in uncommon manners.

Common tenses in uncommon contexts

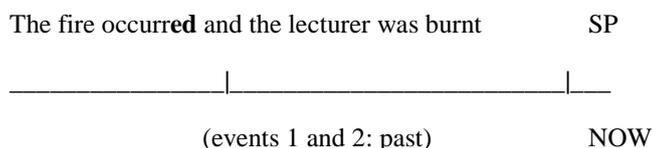
This section looks at the usage of a tense in a context in which another tense would have been more appropriate in accordance with the unfolding of the series of events. A few examples are presented hereunder.

(7a) The fire **occur** and the lecturer was burnt. E1/31

According to the timeline for the unfolding of events, the two verbs used in the above sentence denote events which happened and were completed in the past before speech time. However, the first verb ‘occur’ is placed to coincide with speech time which blurs the appropriate context of the unfolding of events. In a timeline representation, the above sentence could be presented as follows:



This representation does not tally with the timeline representation given in figure 5.5. Thus the context is uncommon. The more appropriate representation could be as follows:



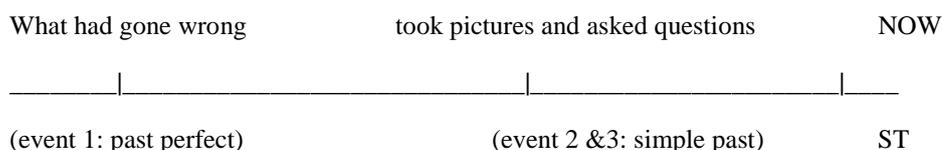
The above representation indicates the two events as coinciding at a particular point in the past. Another example of an uncommon context is as follows:

(8a) I took pictures and carried out investigative questions on what **went** wrong amongst my classmates. E1/01

In the above sentence, three events are reported on: taking pictures, asking questions and something that went wrong. As presented, it seems all three events happened simultaneously in the past. As a result, the sentence does not present an appropriate context of the series of events. In an appropriate context, the sentence would be:

(8b) I took pictures and carried out investigative questions on what had gone wrong amongst my classmates.

The event of something going wrong happened at a particular point in the past, prior to the event of taking pictures and of asking questions. In other words, event 1 happened and was completed before events 2 and 3 as shown in the representation below:



Of the total of 1044 verbs used in the English reports, 135 were used in uncommon contexts. This amount translates to 12.9% of total usage. The implications of using common tenses in uncommon contexts will be discussed in section 5.5 below.

Common tenses constructed in uncommon manners

This section looks at tenses which have been constructed in uncommon manners. A few examples are presented hereunder.

(9a)The students were interviewed on how **did** the fire **started**. E2/30

The series of events reported on this sentence are appropriately placed in the past context. However, the report on the event of the fire starting is constructed in an uncommon manner. The participant used an auxiliary verb and inflected the main verb with ‘-ed’ which is uncommon in the use of simple past tense in English in active declarative sentences. This event can be reported on thus:

(9b) The students were interviewed on how the fire started.

Another example is as follows:

(10a) Investigation report on an incident that **had took** place on the 8th of April in the lab. E2/04

In the above example, the event is appropriately placed in the past and as an event which had been completed before speech time. However, the construction of the tense to denote completion at a particular point in the past before starting of an investigation is very uncommon since the main verb is to change to its past participle form. In a common manner, this event can be reported thus:

(10b) Investigation report on the incident that **had taken** place on the 8th of April in the lab.

Of the total of 1044 verbs used in the English reports, 53 common verbs were constructed in uncommon manners. This translates to 5.07% of usage. The implications of such usage will be discussed in section 5.5 below.

One other area which has been mentioned relates to the construction of irregular verbs in uncommon manners. This is where irregular verbs were inflected with ‘-ed’ morpheme. Very few verbs fell into this category, a total of 6 out of 1044 which is 0.57%. Because of the limited number, these verbs will not be considered for analysis and discussion in this study. The next section will compare the use of tenses between isiZulu and English reports.

5.4 Comparative analysis of isiZulu and English written reports

The comparative analysis in this section will be based on the figures presented in figures 5.7 and 5.8 above. Firstly, the English reports were longer than the isiZulu reports. As alluded to in chapter 3, the verb phrase structure and the tense framework for isiZulu and English differ structurally. The result of these structural differences is evident in the written investigative reports generated by the participants. Collectively, the two isiZulu groups used a total of 515 finite verbs or events reported on. Contrary to this, the two English groups used a total of 1044 finite verbs or events reported on. Secondly, the English reports indicate a high rate of

common tenses in uncommon contexts and common tenses constructed in uncommon manners when compared to the isiZulu reports. The following table illustrates:

	English	%	isiZulu	%
Total events	1044	100	515	100
Black-coded verbs	135	12.9	8	1.55
Red-coded verbs	53	5.07	15	2.91

Figure 5.9 Comparison between English and isiZulu reports

Concerning the use of tenses, both the English and the isiZulu reports show an inclination to use the past tense (remote past for isiZulu). However, isiZulu reports also show a moderate use of recent past tense. One deduces that the participants avoided the use of the perfect form in the English reports. A conclusion one draws from this is that the participants may have not been comfortable with the construction of the perfect, and hence chose to avoid it. This deduction is based on examples like 8a, 10a and 17a. The English reports show a substantial use of the present tense. In a number of instances, the use of the present tense occurs in an uncommon context. These are the cases where participants did not inflect the verb according to the context in which it occurred. Two examples are given below:

(11) Questionnaires were distributed to the lectures who **conduct** practical session. [E1/10]

(12) Lab assistant and technician **states** that sometimes you give procedure to students they don't listen carefully... [E1/15]

Such usages have been classified as common tenses in uncommon contexts (refer to 5.3.2.2 above).

The differences in the tense systems between English and isiZulu influence the usage of these two languages as the data presented shows. With regard to the past tense, isiZulu differentiates between the recent past and the remote past whereas English does not. Even with isiZulu, the remote past dominates the verbalisation of events. In my view, this influences the use of past tense in English and leads to a less frequent use of the perfect aspect in English than would be expected. The participants are not at ease to use the past participle form '-en' on the verbs. For them, an event that happened in the past is presented as such disregarding the sequence of more than one event in the past.

5.5 Discussion on the use of tense and aspect morphemes in the study

5.5.1 IsiZulu reports

Chapter 3 described the tense and aspect systems for isiZulu. IsiZulu uses predominantly four tenses: remote past (*inkathi eyadlula*), recent past (*inkathi esandakudlula*), present (*inkathi yamanje*), remote future (*inkathi eyofika*) and immediate future (*inkathi ezofika*). Of all these tenses, the reports in isiZulu were largely written using the remote past tense. In the reports, the participants focused largely on the series of events prior to the investigation and on how the information was collected. Few reports mention the findings from the investigation and the conclusions drawn. As a result, the present tense is used sparingly. Even on the events reported in the past, the inclination among participants is to use the remote past tense as compared to the recent past tense. This is to say, participants narrated the events in isiZulu as entities which happened in the past and were completed in the past before speech time. It is for this reason that the events are reported on largely in the remote past tense and lesser on the recent past tense.

The isiZulu aspect system is expressed by morphological markers to indicate completion, durative, perfecto-punctative, limitative, progressive, inceptive-exclusive, negative exclusive, perfective and future intentions as grammatical aspects of the verb (Canonici, 1996: 72-73). Of all the morphemes to indicate aspect, the reports show the use of two morphemes: ‘-sa-’ and ‘-ile/-e’. The morpheme ‘-sa-’ indicates the progressive-durative aspect of the verb. The morpheme ‘-ile/-e’ indicates the perfective aspect of the verb and also denotes the recent past tense. The reports in isiZulu thus present the series of events as either completed or progressive. The dominant aspect is thus that of completion since the recent past tense uses the morpheme ‘-ile/-e’ as a standard form. Four reports were noted to have used the morpheme ‘-sa-’, which denotes the progressive-durative aspect of the verb; see the four examples (13) – (16):

(13) *Sathi sisaqhubeka nesifundo kwabakhona ukuqhuma...Z1/03.* (As we were continuing with the lecture there was an explosion...)

(14) *...lapho abafundi besaqhubeka nesifundo sabo ...Z1/20.* (...at the time when the students were continuing with their lecture...)

(15) *... kwaqhuma ikhemikhali ngenkathi uthisha usakhombisa abafundi Z1/31.* (...there was a chemical explosion as the lecturer is displaying to the students.)

(16) *...bayasazi isimo se-laboratory basamatasa kokwenza izinguquko...Z1/36.* (...they are aware of the condition of the laboratory they are busy implementing changes...)

In example 15, the event of “displaying” is verbalised as being in progress however, the whole event sequence is temporally situated in the past; i.e. before the speech time. In this case, either an orthographic error has occurred on the SC ‘u-’; or the aspect form of the verb was used in an uncommon context. The rest of the examples narrate the progression of events in a common manner as actions which are in progress at a particular point in the past prior to speech time. The participants used the isiZulu tense and aspect morphology in an appropriate manner to a large degree. Thus, the participants managed to narrate the unfolding of events in a clear manner even though the reports in isiZulu were short as mentioned earlier.

5.5.2 English reports

The English tense and aspect system was discussed in chapter 3. English uses two tenses: past tense and present tense. Over and above these tenses, the English verb structure indicates completion and non-completion of the action by the perfect (-en) and continuous (-ing) morphemes inflected on the main verb in addition to the appropriate auxiliary verb in the past, present and future. The variety or combination of these forms (perfect and continuous) is also called tense even though these actually indicate the grammatical aspect of the verb which is positioned either in the past, present or future of the speech time.

In the written reports, the participants used the past tense to a large extent. In the events reported on in the past tense, one finds the usage of verbs in an uncommon context as defined on in section 5.3.2.2 above. In these instances, the participants reported on events as having happened and completed in the past whereas in most of these instances, more than one event happened, one after the other, but this sequence does not reflect in the reports. This is to say that the participants used the past tense even to verbalise events that would more appropriately have been verbalised in the past perfect aspect/tense. One example is provided in (17a):

(17a) The students who **attended** the practicals were requested to investigate the accident.
E1/05

Two events are reported on: attending practicals and being requested to investigate. The first event (attending practicals) happened and was completed before the second event started. Therefore, this sequence should be reflected by the use of the perfect aspect in the past tense. Thus, the expected verbalisation would be as in (17b):

(17b) The students who had attended the practicals were requested to investigate the accident.

With regard to the progressive aspect, the participants indicated competency in the use of this aspect and were able to indicate the continuity of the actions reported on. This is to say that the participants appropriately inflected the main verb of the event reported on with ‘-ing’ to show continuity of an action. One example is (18):

(18) Students experiences fire from laboratory where they **were mixing** chemicals for experimental purposes. E2/13

The English reports show an appropriate use of the continuous aspect.

The participants mostly struggled with aligning each event with the timeline of the unfolding of events. Instead of verbalising the events as unfolding in a sequence, the participants seemed to have regarded the events uniformly as “something that occurred in the past” with little regard for the perfect aspect. This may be an indication that there are grammatical forms which the participants are not comfortable with such as the irregular past participle form which mostly requires attaching the suffix ‘-en’. The participants thus used the suffix ‘-ed’ widely to refer to the events which occurred prior to speech time. In the consequence, the reports on the unfolding of events do not to show the most appropriate narration one would expect.

5.6 Summary

In this chapter the data presented by the participants was described and illustrated. I started off by referring to the primary research questions that the study seeks to address. Then I presented the data collection instruments, how the analysis was conducted, the kind of data that was collected and a description of the data.

The participants had a tendency to use tense and aspect morphology in two ways which were out of the ordinary and which have been identified as distinct types of unusual uses of tense/aspect morphology. The first category of unusual uses of tense/aspect morphology was termed “common tenses in uncommon contexts”. In this category, the participants displayed an inclination towards certain tense and aspect structures to the detriment of others. It was observed that in the English reports, the inclination was towards the past tense even though the perfect aspect would have been preferred in many utterances. In the isiZulu reports, the inclination was towards the remote past tense and present tense in contexts in which the recent past tense would have been more appropriate. Overall the usage of common tenses in uncommon contexts is more prevalent in the English reports than in the isiZulu reports.

The second type of unusual uses of tense/aspect morphology was referred to as “common tenses constructed in uncommon manners”. In the English reports, the participants found it most challenging to use the suffix ‘-en’. This seems to indicate unfamiliarity with the structure and as a result the participants seem to avoid using this structure.

In the isiZulu reports, only a few tenses were constructed in uncommon manners. These few constructions include an addition of an extra morpheme which is not needed in a particular construction as well as passive voice constructions (the latter of which are outside the scope of the current study).

The two versions of the reports, i.e. the English and the isiZulu one, have been compared and a discussion of tense and aspect morphemes in the students’ writing was provided. The following chapter will draw conclusions on the study; give recommendations and point out areas for further research on event verbalization with particular reference to tense and aspect morphology.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of findings generated by the current investigation of event verbalization with special reference to tense and aspect in English L2 by isiZulu L1 speakers. Included in this chapter are the implications of the study with respect to English L2 research as well as research on the teaching and learning of English L2. I also present limitations of the current study alongside concluding remarks on the entire study.

6.2 Summary of the findings

The participants in the current study were given written instructions to follow in the writing of the investigative reports into a series of events which culminated into a ‘hypothetical’ laboratory incident. The instructions detailed the incident on which the report was to be based. In the details of the incident, tenses were used as a way of probing for the use of a variety of tenses in the writing of the reports. The data collected indicates that for a substantial number of responses, the tenses used in the writing instructions are reflected in the reports generated by the participants. However, the participants extended their use of tenses in the written reports beyond the tenses found in the instruction sentences of the written report.

The research questions posed at the onset of this investigation are:

1. How do isiZulu L1 speakers express the same series of events using isiZulu and English subsequently?
2. To what extent do the differences between isiZulu and English tense and aspect systems pose challenges for isiZulu L1 speakers when using English in the verbalization of events?

The secondary research questions relating to the current study are as follows:

1. Are there gaps in information in the two versions of the written report? In other words, do both versions reflect the same details in the description of the investigation of the incident?

2. Does proficiency in isiZulu account for transfer into the English version of the report?

The data collected indicates that the participants in the current study exhibit an inclination of using the past tense verbs indiscriminately when referring to events which have occurred in the past. In isiZulu, the participants verbalize events in the past using the remote past tense to a large extent when compared to the use of recent past tense. In English, the participants use the simple past tense with zero aspect more than the past perfect aspect of the past tense. In consequence, the verbalizations of the series of events do not show marked differences between isiZulu and English and the verbalizations do not show evidence of gaps in information between the isiZulu and the English reports. However, the realization of individual tense morphemes differs between isiZulu and English. The morphological differences between the two languages account for the challenges faced by the participants. The participants battle with the inflection morphemes ‘-en’ (aux+ -en); ‘-ing’ (aux+ -en+ -ing). The participants exhibit characteristics of English L2 learners’ challenges as alluded to in the studies conducted by linguists. See e.g. Salaberry (2000), Housen (2000) and Kang (2005).

The current study aimed at contributing to research on event verbalization in English L2 by isiZulu L1 speakers. The point of particular interest was on the use of tense and aspect morphemes in the verbalization of a hypothetical series of events. The premise behind the study emanated from previous research studies which reported on marked challenges in using English tense and aspect morphemes by English L2 speakers as alluded to in chapter 2. The challenges are broadly categorised into two: challenge with English inflectional verbal morphology as well as structural differences between the L1 and the L2 which may result in transfer of L1 structures into L2.

The study focused on the tense system in English and isiZulu. In this regard, the main issue was on how the participants use the tenses and aspect morphology in the two languages in order to verbalize how events unfolded over the period of time as well as how the nature of events in terms of completion or non-completion was expressed in each of the languages under investigation. Thus, the study focused on English and isiZulu tenses; the tenses being an indication of the conceptualization of the series of events within a particular time frame. Many linguists agree that English has two tenses: the past and the present. But there is also the prototypical future which, for the purposes of this study, is regarded as a tense. With

regard to aspect, the focus was on completion and non-completion/ progressive aspects as indicated in the inflected verb morphemes to indicate how the participants conceptualized the internal constituency of the events.

The results of the investigation show that isiZulu L1 speakers do not consistently inflect the English verbs to appropriately reflect the occurrence of an event on the time line of the series of events. This finding is based on the results as shown in figure 5.8 which is evidence that isiZulu L1 speakers predominantly use simple past tense to refer to events which happened in the past regardless of the point in the past at which the events took place. Besides the past tense verbs, isiZulu speakers exhibit a frequent use of present tense verbs to refer to events as they happen. A general finding is that isiZulu L1 speakers seem to have an overall understanding of the use of the English past tense morphology although in some cases they overgeneralize the regular past tense formation rule (“use suffix ‘-ed’”) and in other cases they omit the inflection altogether.

These findings concur with the findings by Salaberry (2000) on the study of Spanish L1/English L2 intermediate phase learners. The participants in Salaberry’s study used present tense morphemes instead of past tense morphemes and also used irregular past tense morphemes instead of inflecting the regular verbs with ‘-ed’.

The main challenge for isiZulu L1 speakers is the correct use of perfect forms requiring the suffix ‘-en’ inflection. This observation holds for both the present and past tenses. I assume that the unfamiliarity with the irregular past participle form in particular led to an extensive use of the past tense form in contexts where a perfect form of the verb would have been more appropriate. In the consequence there is a noticeable amount of instances in which isiZulu L1 speakers use English common tenses in uncommon contexts: 12, 9%. In addition, on a small scale, 5.07%, isiZulu L1 speakers construct English common tenses in uncommon manners like lack of inflection with ‘-ed’ suffix on verbs or overgeneralization of the rule.

The study also gave a broad overview of the tense and aspect systems in both English and isiZulu. Both languages reflect a conceptualization of linear time that unfolds on a time continuum from the past to the future. It is the linguistic representations of this continuum in the form of linguistic tenses as well as the sub-categories of each tense which differ. As a result, isiZulu L1 speakers succeed in conceptualizing events in the past, present and future and are in principle able to verbalize the time line in both languages; however they battle with the appropriate realisation of each of the tenses in their L2, i.e. English.

6.3 Implications of the study

The differences in the morphological realisation of tenses between English and isiZulu pose challenges for isiZulu L1 speakers. Therefore, strategies have to be devised to assist isiZulu/English bilinguals in understanding the representation of tenses and the inflections on the verb morphemes. The isiZulu L1 speakers in the current study have the tendency to use the simple past tense inflection ‘-ed’ indiscriminately for all events that take place in the past irrespective of their occurrence on the time continuum; this poses a challenge when events need to be reported on in a precise manner that happen at different points in time in the past. It was observed that the participants struggled in particular with the irregular past participle morpheme ‘-en’ in addition to the ‘be’ auxiliary verb to formulate the perfect form. In consequence, the participants seem to have opted for an avoidance strategy which leads to the ‘overuse’ of the simple past tense in the English version of the report. By contrast the isiZulu versions of the reports do not reflect a comparable challenge; hence the participants in the current study seem to be predominantly competent in the use of isiZulu tense and aspect morphemes.

6.4 Limitations of the study

The study used data which was sourced from a comparably small and quite homogenous cohort of isiZulu L1 speakers; i.e. students who are enrolled for a first year of study at Mangosuthu University of Technology. The participants have been exposed to English as a LOLT for ten years on average, in the form of immersion education. The limited scope of the study and the time constraints did not allow for the collection of comparative data on the verbalization of events by English L1 speakers. It would have been beneficiary to compare L1 and L2 English data. Comparison of tense and aspect use with L1 speakers would give insights into whether L1 speakers use the tense and aspect morphology that seems to be avoided by L2 learners, or, whether these morphemes might generally be less common in written English than expected.

There is not enough corpus data on the use of English tense and aspect morphemes by isiZulu L1 students. As a result, the data collected cannot be compared outside the confines of the study.

The limited nature of the study (being a mini dissertation) meant the use of limited data collection instruments. The written reports were used to source data. Writing was

advantageous for the participants because they could engage in some planning before their (written) verbalization. In an extended study, oral interviews would have to be used as a data collection instrument so as to source actual on-time responses on the use of tense and aspect morphemes.

It is difficult to discuss the grammatical aspects of tense and aspect without discussing them jointly with the semantic viewpoint. However, the scope of the study is very limited and discussions had largely to be confined to grammatical aspects.

6.5 Future research

In an endeavour to further investigate the issues raised in the current study, research aimed at answering the following questions could further enhance SLA and SLL research:

- Are there particular teaching strategies which need to be put in place in as far as teaching English tense and aspect morphology to isiZulu L1 speakers is concerned?
- How can competence in isiZulu be used to benefit the teaching and learning of English?

Further investigations into the issues highlighted can benefit the development of competency in English without detrimental effects on isiZulu thus achieving the objectives of the LiEP and the constitution of South Africa; an equal status to all South African languages.

There is more room for further exploration in other factors that a mother tongue can impact on, either negatively or positively, in the acquisition of a second language. Factors such as the following can be avenues for further research in this regard:

- Use of L1 knowledge as a building block to L2 acquisition and learning;
- Ways of overcoming interference and fossilization in order to attain optimum competence in L2; and
- Promotion of additive bilingualism in an immersion education setting.

6.6 Conclusion

The current study focused on the use of English tense and aspect morphology in the verbalization of events by isiZulu L1 speakers. In chapter 1, I presented the background to the study, past research studies in English L2 learning, the problem statement and the

research questions. In chapter 2, I discussed past research studies in the fields of SLA, SLL, and briefly clarified the concepts of SLA, SLL, bilingualism, language production and event verbalization. In chapter 3, I focused the discussion on the tense and aspect systems in general and on the tense and aspect systems of both English and isiZulu in particular. In chapter 4, I presented the methodology used in the data collection, the design of the study and the analysis criteria. In chapter 5, I presented the data collected as well as the data analysis and interpretation. The current chapter presents the summary of the research findings, the implications of the study, the limitations of the study and areas for further research.

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REFERENCE: Masters (CW) Informed Consent letter- APPENDIX 1

RESEARCHER: M.P. Sibisi (muhlepsibisi@webmail.co.za / 031-907 7405)

SUPERVISOR: Prof. Heike Tappe

DEPARTMENT: Linguistics, School of Arts, UKZN, Howard College

Dear Student

I hereby implore you to partake in a research study that I am currently undertaking. The study is aimed at unearthing possible challenges faced by tertiary students in the usage of English Second Language. It is envisaged that the results of the study will pave a way for assisting students to overcome challenges in the usage of English as they pursue their academic endeavours.

The title of the study is:

“Event verbalisation by IsiZulu L1 and English L2 speakers: a comparative analysis with special reference to tense and aspect.”

The study will be based on a written assessment task to be done in class as part of the semester mark. The study will fulfil the requirements of the Masters of Arts dissertation project that I am conducting under the supervision of Professor Heike Tappe, Department of Linguistics, School of Arts, University of KwaZulu-Natal. Prof. Tappe can be contacted on: (031) 260 1131 during office hours/ tappe@ukzn.ac.za/ Office G 108, Memorial Tower Building, Howard College, UKZN.

The focus of the study is on first year students enrolled for Mechanical Engineering and Analytical Chemistry at MUT. Therefore your participation will contribute towards the success of the study.

As part of the study you are requested to read this letter and sign it upon agreeing with its contents. You will then be required to fill in a questionnaire which is designed to evaluate your Home Language usage. Your consent will mean that a written assessment task which will be given to you in class as part of your semester mark will be used as information to base the study on. This means that this study will be conducted concurrently with your semester work . No extra work will be required on your part.

The usage of your work will not compromise the assessment of the written task. No remuneration of any kind will be awarded for partaking in the study. The work you will produce will be analysed as per requirements of the study. However, no names will be used to refer to the participants. Thus anonymity is guaranteed.

Although the study is part of your semester work, participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any stage and for whatever reason. However, your participation will render valuable input.

If you wish to obtain information on your rights as a participant, please contact Ms Phumelele Ximba, Research Office, UKZN on (031) 360 3587.

DECLARATION: I _____ (full names) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE _____

QUESTIONNAIRE (UHLOLOVO)**APPENDIX 2**

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS INTENDED TO FIND OUT THE STUDENTS' LANGUAGE PROFILE.

LOLUHLOLOVO LUHLOSE UKUTHOLA ULWAZI NGOLIMI OLUSETSHENZISWA NGABAFUNDI.

Section 1: Personal information (Okumayelana nawe)

The first set of questions is meant to gather background information about the student who answers this questionnaire. Mark with a cross (X) on your response.

Isigaba sokuqala semibuzo sihlose ukuthola ulwazi mayelana nomfundi ophendula imibuzo yalolucwaningo. Khombisa ngophawu (X) kuleyompendulo oyikhethayo.

1. Age (*Ubudala*)

16-19	20-24	Over 25
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2. Gender (*Ubulili*)

Male	Female
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3. Home language (*Ulimi lwasekhaya*)

isiZulu	isiXhosa	Tshivenda
siSwati	seSotho	Olunye

4. The type of place where my home is.

Uhlobo lwendawo ikhaya lami elikuyo.

Rural	urban	semi-urban
Isemaphandleni	kusedolobheni	kungaphandle kancane kwedolobha.

5. The racial composition of students where I started schooling.

Uhlanga lwabafundi esikoleni engiqale kuso ukufunda.

Multiracial	African
Esixubile	abomdabu

6. The racial composition of students in the school where I matriculated.

Uhlanga lwabafundi esikoleni engigogode kuso umatikuletshehi.

Multiracial	African
Esixubile	abomdabu

Section 2: Language Profile (*Isimo solimi*)

Put a cross (X) on the option which represents your honest and accurate response to each of the given statements.

Tshengisa ngophawu (X) uvo lwakho oluyiqiniso kulowo nalowo walemisho enikeziwe.

7. I use my home language when talking to my family members and my friends.

Ngisebenzisa ulimi lwasekhaya uma ngikhuluma namalunga omndeni wami kanye nabangani bami.

always <i>njalo</i>	sometimes <i>ngezinye izikhathi</i>	not sure <i>angiqinisekile</i>	not really <i>angisho</i>	not at all <i>sanhlobo</i>
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8. I read books, newspapers and magazines written in my home language.

Ngiyazifunda izincwadi, amaphephandaba kanye namabhuku abhalwe ngolimi lwami.

always <i>njalo</i>	sometimes <i>ngezinye izikhathi</i>	not sure <i>angiqinisekile</i>	not really <i>angisho</i>	not at all <i>sanhlobo</i>
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9. I mix English and my home language when speaking.

Ngiyaxuba isiNgisi kanye nolimi lwasekhaya uma ngikhuluma.

always <i>njalo</i>	sometimes <i>ngezinye izikhathi</i>	not sure <i>angiqinisekile</i>	not really <i>angisho</i>	not at all <i>sanhlobo</i>
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10. To better understand what I read and hear in English, I think about it in my home language.

Ukuze ngiqonde kahle engikufundayo nengikuzwayo okungesiNgisi, ngiyaye ngicabange ngolimi lwami lwasekhaya.

always <i>njalo</i>	sometimes <i>ngezinye izikhathi</i>	not sure <i>angiqinisekile</i>	not really <i>angisho</i>	not at all <i>sanhlobo</i>
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11. I find difficulty in speaking English throughout a conversation.

Ngiba nobunzima ekusebenziseni isiNgisi inkulumo ize iphele.

always <i>njalo</i>	sometimes <i>ngezinye izikhathi</i>	not sure <i>angiqinisekile</i>	not really <i>angisho</i>	not at all <i>sanhlobo</i>
------------------------	--	-----------------------------------	------------------------------	-------------------------------

12. I am proud of using my home language.

Ngiyaziqqaja ngokusebenzisa ulimi lwami lwasekhaya.

always <i>njalo</i>	sometimes <i>ngezinye izikhathi</i>	not sure <i>angiqinisekile</i>	not really <i>angisho</i>	not at all <i>sanhlobo</i>
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Section 3: The most used language (*Ulimi olusebenza kakhulu*)

This section will establish the roles that each language plays in your life.

Lengxenywe ihlose ukuthola izimo osebenzisa kuzo ngalunye lwezilimi ozisebenzisayo.

Put a (X) in each if the statements given showing your accurate response.

Faka uphawu (X) kulowo nalowo musho onikeziwe ukhombise uvo lwakho oluyilo.

	only English	mostly English	both	mostly home language	only home language
Language I think with <i>Ulimi engicabanga ngalo</i>					
Language in which I pray <i>Ulimi engikhuleka ngalo</i>					
Dominant language <i>Ulimi engimuhle kakhulu kulo</i>					
Language I have most vocabulary <i>Ulimi engazi amagama amaningi kulo</i>					
Language I pronounce clearly <i>Ulimi engiluphimisa kahle</i>					
Language in which I am able to translate <i>Ulimi engikwazi ukutolikela kulo</i>					
Language in which I understand jokes <i>Ulimi engizwa ngalo amancoko</i>					
Language spoken by most of my friends <i>Ulimi olukhulunywa abangani bami abaningi</i>					
Language I use most on daily basis <i>Ulimi engilusebenzisa kakhulu nsukuzonke</i>					
Language people consider as my home language <i>Ulimi abantu abalubona kuwulimi lwami lwasekhaya</i>					

Thank you very much for your time. *Ngiyabonga kakhulu ngesikhathi sakho.*

APPENDIX 3.1: LABORATORY INCIDENT REPORT (ENGLISH VERSION)

AN INVESTIGATIVE REPORT ON THE LAB ACCIDENT WHICH TOOK PLACE ON MONDAY, 6 AUGUST 2012 AT MUT



On Monday, 6 August 2012, your class group attended a practical session at the laboratory. The practical session involved the use of explosive chemicals. In the course of the practical an explosion took place as a result your lecturer ended up with a burnt coat as shown in the photo. Also in the lab that day were the lab technician and the lab assistant.

On Wednesday, 8 August 2012, the Head of Department in your Faculty, Professor D.C. Mantua, requested that each student who attended the practical session on the 6th of August should investigate the incident which was classified as Class B type of fire (what caused it, how it happened, what damage was made).

You were instructed to use at least two methods of investigation. The report on the outcome of the investigation will be prepared and submitted in class on Tuesday, 4 September 2012.

USE THE APPROPRIATE FORMAT OF REPORT WRITING



APPENDIX 3.2: UMBIKO NGENGOZI YASE- LABORATORY

UMBIKO NGOPHENYO LWENGOZI EYENZEKA E-LABORATORY NGOMSOMBULUKO MHLA ZIYISITHUPHA KU-NCWABA NGOWEZI-2012 ENYUVESI YOBUCHWEPHESHE I-MANGOSUTHU.



NgoMsombuluko mhla ziyisithupha kuNcwaba ngowezi-2012, ikilasi lakho laba nesifundo sokucwaninga kusetshenziswa izinto ezibonakalayo neziphathekayo e-laboratory.

Lesisifundo sasibandakanya ukusetshenziswa kwamakhemikhali ayiziqhumane.

Sisaqhubeka lesisifundo kwaba khona ukuqhuma okwabangela ukuthi uthisha wenu agcine eshelwe ijazi lakhe lokuzivikela njengoba kubonakala esithombeni. Ngalolosuku kwakukhona nochwepheshe osebenza e-laboratory kanye nomsizi wase-laboratory.

NgoLwesithathu ziyisishiyagalombili kuNcwaba ngowezi-2012, inhloko yomnyango ofunda kuwo, uSolwazi D.C. Mantua, wacela ukuba bonke abafundi ababethamele lesisifundo mhla ziyisithupha kuNcwaba benze uphenyo bese bebhala umbiko ngokuqhuma komlilo

okwenzeka ngalolosuku othathwa njengokwisigaba- Class B somlilo (imbangela, waqala kanjani, kwenzeka umonakalo ongakanani).

Umfundi ngamunye wanikwa umyalelo wokuba asebenzise okungenani izindlela ezimbili zokwenza ucwaningo. Umbiko ngophenyo uyobe sewulungiswa bese wethulwa ekilasini mhla zizine kuMandulo ngowezi-2012.

Sebenzisa izigaba ezifanele zokwethula umbiko wophenyo.



QUESTIONNAIRE CODING SHEET

APPENDIX 4.1

SECTION 1 of the questionnaire/ responses per question

1.1A 13	1.1B 51	1.1C 1	
1.2A 48		1.2B 17	
1.3A 65		1.3B ---	1.3C ---
1.3D 1		1.3E 3	1.3F 2
1.4A 28	1.4B 7	1.4C 30	
1.5A 14		1.5B 51	
1.6A 11		1.6B 54	

SECTION 2 of the questionnaire/ responses per question

2.7A	43	2.7B	20	2.7C	1	2.7D	1	2.7E	0
2.8A	6	2.8B	47	2.8C	0	2.8D	5	2.8E	7
2.9A	19	2.9B	36	2.9C	3	2.9D	5	2.9E	2
2.10A	24	2.10B	31	2.10C	0	2.10D	7	2.10E	3
2.11A	6	2.11B	30	2.11C	4	2.11D	17	2.11E	8
2.12A	48	2.12B	13	2.12C	2	2.12D	2	2.12E	0

SECTION 3 of the questionnaire/ responses per question

3.13A	0	3.13B	3	3.13C	18	3.13D	30	3.13E	14
3.14A	1	3.14B	2	3.14C	19	3.14D	14	3.14E	29
3.15A	4	3.15B	6	3.15C	3	3.15D	30	3.15E	22
3.16A	4	3.16B	17	3.16C	5	3.16D	18	3.16E	21
3.17A	5	3.17B	7	3.17C	14	3.17D	20	3.17E	19
3.18A	3	3.18B	6	3.18C	26	3.18D	20	3.18E	10
3.19A	2	3.19B	4	3.19C	35	3.19D	15	3.19E	9
3.20A	0	3.20B	3	3.20C	20	3.20D	23	3.20E	19
3.21A	0	3.21B	4	3.21C	17	3.21D	27	3.21E	17
3.22A	0	3.22B	2	3.22C	0	3.22D	19	3.22E	44