

# The System of Tense and Aspect in the Bantik Language

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The Bantik language, which belongs to the Sangiric micro-group (cf. Sneddon 1993) within the Philippine group, has two morphologically indicated tense oppositions—the non-past tense and the past tense. In addition, the language includes progressive, habitual, and iterative aspects.

This paper aims, first, to present an overview of the tense and aspect systems in the Bantik language. Although Philippine languages are normally described as not having tenses but, rather, as having aspect, a group of Bantik verbs seem to show a tense opposition. Second, it focuses on the classification of Bantik verbs with respect to the meanings they express by their tense forms. In short, stative verbs express a current event by using the non-past tense, while achievement verbs express a future event with the non-past tense. Activity verbs are categorized into two groups; the first group uses the non-past tense to express a current event, while the second group expresses a future event. Abilitative verbs, in contrast to the other verbs, use the non-past form to refer to a past event.

## 1. Overview of Bantik Morphology concerning tense and aspect

### 1.1 Overview of tense and aspect in Philippine type languages

In much of the literature on the Philippine type languages which are found across the Philippines and from North to Central Sulawesi, verbs are described as having aspect, but not tense. Most of those languages are claimed to have moods as well. For example, Himmelmann (2005:363) shows that the Tagalog verb paradigm has both a perfective/imperfective aspect opposition and a non-realis/realis mood opposition. These result in four distinct combinations: non-realis/perfective, non-realis/imperfective, realis/perfective, and realis/imperfective. Hirano (2012) describes Tagalog as having five different morphological aspects distinguished. These are Neutral, Imperative, Perfective, Imperfective, and Inceptive. Pendau, a language spoken in Central Sulawesi, is also described by Quick (2007) as having grammaticalised aspect and mood similar to Tagalog, but not tense.

On the other hand, Cebuano, which is closely related with the languages of North Sulawesi, is sometimes described as having grammaticalised tense. Tanangkingsing (2011: 34-35) claims that Cebuano has two tenses: future, which is marked by the prefix *m-*; and Non-future which is marked by the prefix *n-*. Räsänen & Räsänen (2007:149) also posit present (marked by *mi-*), and past (marked by *ni-*) tenses.

The Bantik verbs show the following oppositions. On one hand, the infix <um>, the prefix *ma-*, the prefix *maN-* form one group that shows some aspect or tense. On the other hand, the infix <im>, the prefix *na-*, the prefix *naN-*, form another group. I describe the former group as the non-past tense and the latter as the past tense, because a group of verbs behave in a way that perfectly fits the notion of a non-past vs past opposition when those affixes are attached. This group of verbs will be described as Group II verbs in section 2.3. They take non-past tense for ongoing events and future events, while taking past tense for events that occurred in the past. However, there are other types of verbs, namely Group III in section 2.4, which behave in a way that the

notion of imperfective/perfective aspect opposition pleasantly fits. Group I verbs exhibit more or less a non-future/ future opposition.

Preceding literature on Bantik such as Bawole (1993) and Danie et al (1991/1992) have not discussed the tense and aspect system in Bantik clearly. Bantik verbs in the non-past tense are translated into Indonesian as ‘*akan* + verb’, and those in the past tense are translated as ‘*sudah* + verb’. Although the Indonesian translations suggest that they regard the former as future tense and the latter as perfective aspect, I will label this morphological opposition of verbs a non-past/past tense opposition, since it seems to be the easiest label to use for understanding their actual usage.

## 1.2. Non-past and past tense forms

Bantik verbs have either non-past or past tense forms that are expressed by voice-indicating affixes.<sup>1</sup> Table 1 shows the paradigm of Bantik verbs. They are morphologically categorized into three groups according to the affix attached to their Actor Voice form. The first group of verbs takes the infix <um>/<im>, the second group uses the prefix *ma-/na-*, and the third group takes *maN-/naN-*<sup>2</sup>. The first and second affixes of each pair indicate non-past and past tenses, respectively. As for the two Undergoer Voice forms in Bantik, all the verbs behave similarly; no specific affixes are used for the non-past tense, but for the past tense, the prefix *ni-*, or its free variation form, the infix *-in-*, should be attached.

	Base	Actor Voice	Goal Voice	Conveyance Voice	Meaning
<b>Non-past</b>	<i>tonton</i>	<i>t&lt;um&gt;onton</i>	<i>tonton-an</i>	*	to watch
<b>Past</b>		<i>t&lt;im&gt;onton</i>	<i>ni-tonton-an</i> <i>t-in-onton-an</i>	/ *	
<b>Non-past</b>	<i>kiso</i>	<i>ma-kiso</i>	<i>kiso-n</i>	*	to rub
<b>Past</b>		<i>na-kiso</i>	*	<i>ni-kiso/ k-in-iso</i>	
<b>Non-past</b>	<i>bihei</i>	<i>ma-mihei</i>	<i>bih-an</i>	<i>bihei</i>	to give
<b>Past</b>		<i>na-mihei</i>	<i>ni-bih-an/</i> <i>b-in-ih-an</i>	<i>ni-bihei/</i> <i>b-in-ihei</i>	

**Table 1. Paradigm of Bantik verbs**

In Bantik, the non-past tense is considered to be a more unmarked tense for the following reasons. First, generic sentences are expressed in the non-past tense. Second, verbs in the habitual aspect are always in the non-past tense. Third, verbs in the iterative aspect and abilitative verbs are overwhelmingly in the non-past tense. Nevertheless, some cases require the past tense for iterative aspect and abilitative verbs. These cases will be investigated in comparison with their non-past tense counterparts later in this paper.

The reference point for tense selection is, in principle, the point of utterance. In complex sentences, the time of the main clause is usually the reference point of subordinate clauses. This will be discussed in section 4. Negative sentences can be in both non-past and past tenses.

<sup>1</sup> The Bantik verbs, by definition, show a tense opposition, whereas adjectives do not.

<sup>2</sup> /N/ in *maN-/naN-* (and *kapaN-*, which appear in section 1.2 stands for nasalization or insertion of a homorganic nasal, which is widely observed in other western Malayo-Polynesian languages.

### 1.3. Progressive forms

The progressive aspect can be expressed in three different ways in Bantik. One progressive aspect marker is used for every verb: basic<sup>3</sup> or derivational, Actor Voice or Undergoer Voice. This aspect is formed by using *kahagasa*, which means ‘now’ if used alone, plus the linker *nu* and in the non-past tense (NOT a base). *Kahagasa nu ma-neno* is the progressive form of *ma-neno* (‘to bathe’, Actor Voice, basic verb), and *kahagasa nu paki-rampaŋ* is the progressive form of *paki-rampaŋ* (‘to be made to walk’, Conveyance Voice, derivational verb). Other examples are shown in (1) and (2).

- (1) *toumata kahagasa nu ma-ŋarimu? barei*  
 people now LK AV.NPST-make house  
 ‘People are/were building a house’
- (2) *salana kahagasa nu paki-pedeke? ni-linda si-hili*  
 trousers now LK CAUS-short GEN-Linda OBJ-Hilly  
 ‘The trousers are being shortened by Hilly who follows Linda’s order’

The second form requires one of the following prefixes *ka-*, *kapa-*, or *kapaN-*, as well as the suffix *-ne* attached to the base. This form expresses the basic verb meaning, and is considered to be in Actor Voice. *Kapa-neno-ne* is the progressive form of *ma-neno* (Actor Voice, basic verb), and *ka-rampaŋ-ne* is that of *r<um>ampaŋ*. Examples (3) and (4) demonstrate this form.

- (3) *kapara ka-tagoy=ne*  
 boat PROG-sink=NE  
 ‘The boat is/was sinking’
- (4) *i-terok kapa-suba=ne su gaheda*  
 NOM-Terok PROG-pray=NE LOC church  
 ‘Terok is/was praying in the church’

The last form employs reduplication of the first consonant and the onset and nucleus of the second syllable, as shown in the following example.

- (5) *tipasa? tudo-tudo su timbonan=ne*  
 sago.palm.juice PROG~drop LOC head=GEN.3sg  
 ‘Sago palm juice is dropping on his head’

The difference in meaning and usage among the above three forms has not been studied so far. The first one can be used with any verb in any voice, but the second and third forms can only be used for basic verbs in Actor Voice.

### 1.4. Habitual and iterative: forms with partial reduplication

Two forms of partial reduplication are found in the Bantik morphology. In one form, the first consonant of the base is reduplicated followed by an inserted vowel /a/. I will show this form with the formula ‘C1 + /a/ + Base.’ When this form is applied to a verb base, it expresses either ‘plurality of ACTOR’ (= subject of the clause, since this form is used in Actor Voice) (example 6) or ‘habitual aspect’ (example 7). The former, which will be called a ‘pluractional’ morpheme and glossed as PLUAC, is used both in the non-past and the past tense, while the latter, that shows ‘habitual’ aspect, is used only in the non-past tense. The habitual aspect usually expresses constantly repeated action that

<sup>3</sup> I use the term ‘basic verbs’ to refer to verbs that have no derivational affixes attached.

relates to the occupation of the actor.<sup>4</sup> This habitual form can also be interpreted as an adjective form that is used only for expressing occupation.

- (6) *i-pasko*      *bo*   *i-stenli*  
 NOM-Vasco      and   NOM-Stenly

*ma-n-a-nekoso?*/*na-n-a-nekoso?*      *manu?*=*ku*  
 AV.NPST-PLAC~/a/-steal/ AV.PST- PLAC~/a/-steal      chicken=GEN.1sg  
 ‘Vasco and Stenly will steal/stole my chickens’

- (7) *i-pasko*      *ma-η-a-ηopasa?*/*\*na-η-a-ηopasa?*  
 NOM-Vasco      AV.NPST-HAB~/a/-fish/ AV.PST-HAB~/a/-fish  
 ‘Vasco fishes constantly = Vasco is a fisherman’

The plural usage of the above ‘C1 + /a/ + base’ has the same lexical aspect as a non-reduplicated (=basic) verb; therefore, it will not be discussed separately. The habitual form of the verb, however, has features different from those of a basic verb. It will be a focus in the following discussion.

The second reduplication pattern is expressed by the formula ‘σ1 + C2V2 + Base.’ The first syllable (σ1) and the onset and nucleus of the second syllable (C2V2) are reduplicated before a base. The coda of the second syllable, if any, will not be reduplicated. If this reduplication pattern is used to express aspect, it indicates the iterative aspect, that is, the repeated action or behavior. This aspect is normally used in the non-past tense, irrespective of the actual time in which the repeated action took place, as in example (8).

- (8) *i-santi*      *ma-oyo-oyou*      *su*   *ake*   *bagai*   *ie*  
 NOM-Santy      AV.NPST-ITER~swim      LOC   water   big   this

*ada*   *kokonio?*=*ken*  
 when   small=CONT  
 ‘Santy used to swim in this river when (he was) small’

However, in some cases, the past tense is required for iterative aspect. These instances are discussed later.

### 1.5. *te* and *ken*: aspectual particles

*Te* and *ken* are particles that can be placed after verbs, adjectives, nouns, and pronouns. The following description explains the cases in which they are positioned after verbs. When placed after a verb, *te* denotes completive aspect (see examples 9 and 10, where *te* is glossed as CMPL), while *ken* denotes continuative aspect (see examples 11 and 12, where *ken* is glossed as CNT). However, these two particles may add somewhat different meanings, and will be discussed later in this paper.

- (9) *sene=te*      *ka*      *ia?*      *m-ako=te* (*TB*)  
 there=COMPL      because      NOM.1sg      AV.NPST-go=COMPL  
 ‘(Stay) there because I’m going’ (‘Going’ action will surely be done in the very near future)

<sup>4</sup> This habitual form can also be interpreted as an adjective form used only for expressing occupation since it lacks the non-past vs. past tense opposition. I categorize this form as a verb of the habitual aspect because this form does not take derivational forms of adjectives.

- (10) *i-bohey*      *na-bei=te,*                      *yo*    *kudi?*    *isie*  
 NOM-monkey    AV.PST-return=COMPL            then   be.said   NOM.3sg
- na-dandi?=te* (TB)  
 AV.PST-sing=COMPL  
 ‘The monkey returned and sang, they say’
- (11) *abi?-ai=ken*      *nao*      *busa?=ku*                      *e*      *bohey* (TB)  
 climb-IMP=CONT    upwards   banana=GEN.1sg            DP    monkey  
 ‘Climb my banana tree upwards, please, monkey’
- (12) *isie*              *ma-hija=ken*                      *ka*              *i-ma?=ne*  
 NOM.3sg          AV.NPST-cook=CONT            because    NOM-mother=GEN.3sg
- aya*    *ma-bei*  
 not      AV.NPST-return  
 ‘She is still cooking because her mother hasn’t come back’

## 2. Lexical aspects of Bantik verbs

The categorization of verbs according to their lexical aspect (or aktionsart) is important for the following description. In Bantik, the following six categories of verbs can be posited from a semantic and aspectual viewpoint. Vendler (1957), Comrie (1976), and Chung and Timberlake (1985) are referred to for the below categorization.

- 1) Instantaneous verbs (or achievement verbs), which denote actions done in an instant. These verbs cannot take the progressive aspect.
- 2) Accomplishment verbs, which denote actions done in a certain duration of time and have a clear endpoint. The progressive form denotes an ongoing action.
- 3) Activity verbs, which denote actions done over a certain duration of time with no clear endpoint. The progressive form denotes an ongoing action.
- 4) Stative verbs, which denote events with no clear starting or ending point.
- 5) Iterative verbs, which denote actions done repeatedly.
- 6) Abilitative verbs, which denote the ability to perform an action.

From the perspective of the non-past versus past tense opposition, the above six categories are classified into three major groups—the instantaneous (1) and accomplishment (2) verbs form Group I; the activity (3) and stative (4) verbs form Group II; and the iterative (5) and abilitative (6) verbs form Group III. These will be described in detail in sections 2.2 to 2.4.

### 2.1. An overview of the usages of the non-past and past tenses

The following rule is valid for most Bantik verbs: the non-past tense is not used for past events, while the past tense is not used for future events. The only exception to this rule is observed in sentences with Group III verbs, that is, 5 (iterative) and 6 (abilitative) verbs. They are normally used in the non-past tense even if there is a clear indication within the linguistic or non-linguistic context that the event occurred in the past.

Ongoing events, or events occurring at the time of utterance, may be in the non-past tense for some verbs, but in the past tense for other verbs. The three groups are distinguished by the morphological tense a verb takes when it expresses an ongoing event.

The following categorization may change since a verb can take a different lexical aspect according to the context, as seen in examples (13) and (14). The verb *r<um>ampaŋ* ‘walk’ (non-past tense) in example (13) and *r<im>ampaŋ* ‘walk’ (past tense) in example (14) with the former interpretation is used as an activity verb (Group I), whereas *r<im>ampaŋ* ‘walk’ (past tense) in example (14) with the latter interpretation is categorized as an accomplishment verb that belongs to Group II. The endpoint of *r<um>ampaŋ* in (13) and *r<im>ampaŋ* in the former interpretation of (14) is not clear, but the endpoint of *r<im>ampaŋ* in (14) with the latter interpretation is clear; the stage when the baby starts to walk is the endpoint.

- (13) *isie r<um>ampaŋ su daren ene* (the non-past tense)  
 NOM.3sg <um>walk LOC road that  
 ‘He (usually) walks on that road/He is walking on that road (watching his action).’
- (14) *ana? kokonio? ene r<im>ampaŋ=te* (the past tense)  
 child small that <im>walk=COMPL  
 ‘That small child walked/That small child is already able to walk (watching the child walking).’

## 2.2. Group I

Group I includes instantaneous verbs and accomplishment verbs. These verbs take the non-past tense for events that have not yet occurred, but take the past tense for those that have begun to occur. In other words, the non-past tense is used up to the point when the action starts, and the past tense should be selected once the action has started. This is shown in Figure 1 below.

	start point	end point
non-past	past	past

**Figure 1. Non-past and past tenses with instantaneous and accomplishment verbs**

This rule seems to be quite natural for instantaneous verbs. Because an action expressed by an instantaneous verb has a very limited duration of time, it is difficult to observe an ongoing action. The non-past tense is used before it is done, and the past tense is used after it is done. Examples are shown in (15) and (16).

- (15) a. *i-mari ma-nabo bua nu hahompoŋan*  
 NOM-Mary AV.NPST-fall from LK chair  
 ‘Mary will surely fall from the chair’
- b. *i-mari na-nabo bua nu hahompoŋan*  
 NOM-Mary AV.PST-fall from LK chair  
 ‘Mary fell from the chair’
- (16) a. *i-maʔ=ku ma-iraŋ*  
 NOM-mother=GEN.1sgAV.NPST-die  
 ‘My mother is dying’
- b. *i-maʔ=ku na-iraŋ*  
 NOM-mother=GEN.1sgAV.PST-die  
 ‘My mother died’

Accomplishment verbs like *ma-noso?* ‘to smoke’ and *mam-bere* ‘to work’ take the past tense form once the action has begun. The endpoint of *ma-noso?* is the time when the smoking action ends. The endpoint of *mam-bere* is also clear; the work has to end at a certain point. More examples are shown in (17), (18), (19), and (20).

- (17) *ana?*=*ku*            *ma-neno*  
 child=GEN.1sg    AV.NPST-bathe  
 ‘My child will bathe’
- (18) a: *ia?*            *ma-ki-denoana?*=*nu*  
 NOM.1sg    AV.NPST-CAUS-bathe child=GEN.2sg  
 ‘I’ll let your kid take a bath’
- b: *ana?*=*ku*            *na-neno*  
 child=GEN.1sg    AV.PST-bathe  
 ‘My child is bathing/My child bathed’
- (19) a. *i-boŋkoro*            *ma-noso?*=*te*                            *soso?*=*nu*  
 NOM-Bonkoro    AV.NPST-smoke=COMPL            cigarette=GEN.2sg  
 ‘Bonkoro is about to smoke your cigarette now!’
- b. *i-boŋkoro*            *na-noso?*                            *soso?*=*nu*  
 NOM-Bonkoro    AV.NPST-smoke            cigarette=GEN.2sg  
 ‘Bonkoro started to smoke your cigarette/Bonkoro smoked your cigarette’
- (20) a. *side*            *mam-bere*            *su*    *saŋkoi*    *n-side*  
 NOM.3pl    AV.NPST-work    LOC    field    GEN-3pl  
 ‘They will work in their field’
- b. *side*            *nam-bere*            *su*    *saŋkoi*    *n-side*  
 NOM.3pl    AV.PST-work    LOC    field    GEN-3pl  
 ‘They are working in their field (looking at the people working in front of the speaker)/They worked in their field (at certain point in the past)’

2.3. Group II

Group II includes stative and activity verbs. These verbs take the non-past tense until the events end; that is, ongoing events are expressed in non-past tense. They denote events that require relatively long duration. Figure 2 illustrates the usages of the non-past and past tenses of these verbs.

start point	end point
non-past	non-past      past

Figure 2. Non-past and past tenses with stative and activity verbs

In examples (21) and (22), the activity verbs *m-hahi* ‘to run,’ *r<um>apa ŋ* ‘to walk’ and *ma-mosada?* ‘to revenge’ are illustrated. The stative verbs *ma-hara?* ‘to wait’ and *ma-tiho?* ‘to know’ are found in example (23) and (24). Examples (21) and (22) are taken from oral texts that are predominantly told in the past tense.

- (21) *yo*    *kudi?*    *toumata*    *na-ka-bua*            *si-side*,    *ma-hahi*            *ka*  
 then be.said    people    AV.PST-ABL-see    OBJ-3pl    AV.NPST-run    because

*kohasa? bo ure? (KU)*

Iguana and snake

‘Then, they say, people saw them (=Iguana and Snake) and ran because of Iguana and Snake.’

- (22) *dira ni-kapuna r<im>oaŋ=te.*  
tongue GEN-dog <im>be.out=COMPL

*yo ene i-kapuna ma-dou=te bo*  
then that NOM-dog AV.NPST-thirsty=COMPL and

*ma-hutuŋ=te.*  
AV.NPST-hungry=COMPL

*i-kapuna r<um>apa=te, tou kan su huaŋ*  
NOM-dog <um>get.near=COMPL but food LOC inside

*nu teriŋ.*  
LK bamboo.

*bo isie ma-upi? kai-bahoa*  
and NOM.3sg AV.NPST-angry because NOM-heron

*ma-mosada? si-sie. (KB)*  
AV.NPST-revenge OBJ-3sg

‘Dog’s tongue stuck out, that means Dog is already thirsty and hungry. Dog got near, but the food was in the bamboo. And he was angry because Heron got revenge on him’

- (23) a. *i-pasko ma-hara? oto?*  
NOM-Vasco AV.NPST-wait car  
‘Vasco is waiting for a car/ Vasco will wait for a car’
- b. *i-pasko na-hara? oto?*  
NOM-Vasco AV.PST-wait car  
‘Vasco was waiting for a car/ Vasco waited for a car’
- (24) a. *isie ma-tiho? m-iripi? e*  
NOM.3sg AV.NPST-know AV.NPST-dive DP  
‘S/he knows how to dive’
- isie na-tiho? n-iripi? e*  
NOM.3sg AV.PST-know AV.PST-dive DP  
‘S/he knew how to dive’

#### 2.4. Group III

Verbs in the iterative aspect and the abilitative verbs comprise Group III. These verbs normally take non-past tense, as in examples (25) and (26). The verbs that denote habitual meaning are also categorized in Group III. As shown in (27)a, the habitual action is normally stated in non-past tense, even if the habit is in the past. If the past tense is used, as in (27)b, it then denotes an action (not a habit) that occurred in the past.

- (25) a. *ia? ma-ka-abi? bajo huntia n*  
NOM.1sg AV.NPST-ABL-climb coconut.tree every LK

*rou*  
day  
'I can climb a coconut tree every day'

- b. *ia?*            *ma-ka-abi?*            *baŋo*            *ene* *tou*  
NOM.1sg      AV.NPST-ABL-climb      coconut.tree      that      but

*ie*    *aya=te*  
now    not=COMPL  
'I could climb that coconut tree, but not anymore'

- (26) a. *ia?*            *ma-hiŋa-hiŋa?*            *ada* *ma-bei=te*  
NOM.1sg      AV.NPST-ITER~cook      if      AV.NPST-return=COMPL

*su*    *banua*  
LOC    village  
'I always cook when I return to my village'

- b. *ia?*            *ma-hiŋa-hiŋa?*            *ada* *ma-ŋuda=ken*  
NOM.1sg      AV.NPST-ITER~cook      if      ADJVZ-young=CONT  
'I used to cook when I was young'

- (27) *isie*            *pona*    *ma-noso?*            *tou* *ie*    *aya=te*  
NOM.3sg      before    AV.NPST-smoke      but    now    not=COMPL  
'S/he smoked before, but not any more'

- (28) *isie*            *na-noso?*            *kabaini*  
NOM.3sg      AV.PST-smoke      just.now  
'S/he smoked just now'

Sometimes both tenses are allowed, as in example (29) below.

- (29) a. *ia?*            *man-dea-ndea?*            *dompēt=ku*            *tou* *aya*  
NOM.1sg      AV.NPST-ITER~search      purse=GEN.1sg      but    not

*ni-ka-dea?*  
UV.PST-ABL-search  
'I looked and looked for my purse, but could not find (it).'

- b. *ia?*            *nan-dea-ndea?*            *dompēt=ku*            *tou* *ay*  
NOM.1sg      AV.PST-ITER~search      purse=GEN.1sg      but    not

*ni-ka-dea?*  
UV.PST-ABL-search  
'I looked and looked for my purse, but could not find (it).'

In other cases, however, the past tense form is preferred for Group III verbs. If the action was repeated for a limited number of times, only the past tense is allowed (see example 30). If a past event is described, even abilitative verbs should take the past tense, as in example (31). When a repeated action has a specific object, as in examples (32) and (33), only the past tense is accepted.

- (30) a. \**baŋo*    *ie*    *pona*    *ka-abi?=ku*            *ka-dua*  
coconut    this    before    ABL-climb=GEN.1sg      KA-two

- b. *baŋo ie pona ni-ka-abi? =ku ka-dua*  
 coconut this before UV.PST-ABL-climb=GEN.1sg KA-two  
 ‘This coconut tree, I climbed twice’
- (31) a. *\*ia? ma-ka-sukun r<um>ampaŋ puro ŋ*  
 NOM.1sg AV.NPST-ABL-be.able <um>walk ten LK  
*kilo kanehaba?*  
 kilometer yesterday
- b. *ia? na-ka-sukun r<im>ampaŋ puro ŋ*  
 NOM.1sg AV.PST-ABL-be.able <im>walk ten LK  
*kilo kanehaba?*  
 kilometer yesterday  
 ‘I was able to walk ten kilometers yesterday’
- (32) a. *\*ia? ma-hiŋa-hiŋa? ure? pona tou ie aya =te*  
 NOM.1sg AV.NPST-ITER~cook snake before but now not=COMPL
- b. *ia? na-hiŋa-hiŋa? ure? pona tou ie aya =te*  
 NOM.1sg AV.NPST-ITER~cook snake before but now not=COMPL  
 ‘I used to cook snakes, but not any longer’
- (33) a. *\*pona ia? k<um>a-k<um>an babi tou ie aya =te kuari*  
 before NOM.1sg <um>ITER~eat pig but now not=COMPL able
- b. *pona ia? k<im>a-k<im>an babi tou ie*  
 before NOM.1sg <um>ITER~eat pig but now  
*aya =te kuari*  
 not=COMPL able  
 ‘I used to eat pork before, but I can’t eat it any more’

The examples below are taken from Bantik texts. The repeated actions in examples (34) to (36) are described by verbs in the past tense and iterative aspect. The actions are limited in length (example 35), or have a limited goal (example 36 and 37).

- (34) *‘ia? m-ako nu banua ramo? gare? ia?’*  
 NOM.1sg AV.NPST-go LK village big only NOM.1sg  
*indo? =ne, bo isie k<im>ompo-kompo? n-ako nu*  
 answer=GEN.3sg and NOM.1sg <im>ITER~jump AV.PST-go LK  
*banua ramo?*  
 village big  
 ‘I will go to the town by myself, he answered, and he went to the town jumping (= he jumped until he reached the town)’
- (35) *təpaksa, i-kasimbaha? r<im>ampaŋ ni-diŋan =ne*  
 be.forced NOM-Kasimbaha <im>walk UV.PST-take=GEN.3sg  
*ana? man-dea? ada su sunte =te i-ma?*  
 child AV.NPST-search if LOC where=COMPL NOM-mother  
*nu-ana?*  
 GEN-child

*r<im>ampa-rampañ isie na-i-ako ni-tou*  
 <im>ITER~walk NOM-3sg AV.PST-NVOL-go GEN-PRO

*gagudañ.*

elder.person

‘Kasimbaha was forced to take his child and search for the child’s mother and walked and walked until he encountered an old man’

- (36) *poso? papondo bo p-in-atiñka-riñku-riñkunan=ne*  
 put basket and UV.PST-APL-VLT-ITER~coil=GEN.3sg

*su huañ=ne e*  
 LOC inside=GEN.3sg DP

‘The basket was put down and he was made to coil repeatedly inside the basket’

### 3. Verbs in generic sentences and habitual verbs

As already stated in section 1.1, generic sentences are stated using non-past tense. Examples (37), (38), and (39) are generic sentences. Habitual verbs, such as *ma-ka-kantar* in example (40), can only take non-past tense.

- (37) *manu? ñ-koto? ñ-kayu t<um>ara?*  
 bird GEN-top GEN-tree <um>fly

‘Birds fly. (Lit. Birds of the tree (as opposed to chickens, which are also denoted by *manu?*) fly.’

- (38) *ana-ana? iñka? nu-gagudañ*  
 children order GEN-parent

‘Children are given orders by their parents’

- (39) *toumata ma-iray*  
 people AV.NPST-die

‘Man is mortal’

- (40) *i-ama?=ku i-tou ma-k-a-kantar, tou*  
 NOM-father=GEN.1sg NOM-PRO AV.NPST-HAB~/a/-sing but

*na-iray=te*

AV.PST-die=COMPL

‘He was a singer (=he used to sing), but he died’

#### 3.1. Tense selection within the subordinate clauses

As stated in section 1.1, the reference point of tense selection or tense locus within a subordinate clause is found in its main clause. (‘*Nai?*’ in example (41) is an irregular verb; *nai?* is the non-past form and *si-nai?* is the past form).

- (41) a. *isie ma-hiña? kanen hibi ka sinage nai?*  
 NOM.3sg AV.NPST-cook food evening because people come  
 ‘S/he will cook dinner because the guests are coming’
- b. *isie ma-hiña? kanen hibi ka sinage si-nai?*  
 NOM.3sg AV.NPST-cook food evening because people PST-come  
 ‘S/he will cook dinner because the guests came’
- c. *isie na-hiña? kanen hibi ka sinage nai?*  
 NOM.3sg AV.PST-cook food evening because people come  
 ‘S/he cooked dinner because the guests would come’

- d. *isie na-hija? kanen hibi ka sinage si-nai?*  
 NOM.3sg AV.PST-cook food evening because people PST-come  
 ‘S/he cooked dinner because the guests had come’
- (42) a. *isie nam-bere ka ene nu aya h<um>utuŋ*  
 NOM.3sg AV.PST-work because that LK not <um>hungry  
 ‘S/he worked in order not to starve’
- b. *isie nam-bere ka ene bo aya*  
 NOM.3sg AV.PST-work because that and not  
*h<im>utuŋ*  
 <um>hungry  
 ‘S/he worked to avoid starving’

In the case of a sentence with two equivalent clauses that denote two consecutive events, the latter event becomes the tense locus. *Ni-kauman* (which is past tense of the Conveyance Voice, and whose non-past Active Voice counterpart is *ma-kauman*) is categorized in Group I, that is, verbs that take the past tense for an ongoing action. The meaning of *ni-kauman* changes according to the verb tense in the main clause.

- (43) a. *isie ma-nekoso? pona si-sia? tou ni-kauman*  
 NOM.1sg AV.NPST-steal before OBJ-1sg but UV.PST-witness  
 ‘S/he tried to steal something from me before, but was found before doing so’
- b. *isie na-nekoso? pona si-sia? tou ni-kauman*  
 NOM.1sg AV.PST-steal before OBJ-1sg but UV.PST-witness  
 ‘S/he stole something from me before, but was witnessed doing so’

### 3.2. Summary of tense selection in Bantik

Bantik verbs are categorized into three groups according to their selection of tense. If we look at the verbs in Groups II and III, which take the non-past tense for ongoing events and the past tense for events which have finished, ‘imperfective’ and ‘perfective’ seem to be the appropriate terms for the morphological opposition that concerns time. Then, this opposition is not related to tense but to aspect. However, Group I verbs, particularly activity verbs, require the opposition to be that of tense: non-past versus past.

## 4. Aspectual particles

I have pointed out that the two particles, *te* and *ken*, add aspectual meanings to verbs and adjectives in Bantik. The same particle has a different aspectual meaning according to the type of verbs to which it attaches. In this section, we are going to see which aspect these particles demonstrate when they attach to the verbs in each group. First, usages of *te* and *ken* are presented, then the variations of their aspectual meanings are illustrated.

### 4.1. *Te* and *Ken*

*Te*, as a completive particle, indicates a high probability of an event when it is attached to a non-past tense verb as in (44), but sometimes it shows that the event has occurred, as in (45). The difference is caused by the lexical aspect of the verb. In example (44), the Group I verb *ma-mokei* ‘to call’ is used, and *te* displays an immediate and probable future. In example (45), the Group II verb *ma-turau* ‘to live’ is used, where *te* shows that the event is underway.



- (44) *ia?*            *ma-mokei=te*                    *si-heis*  
 NOM.1sg    AV.NPST-call=COMPL            OBJ-Heis  
 ‘I’m going to call Heis (right now)’
- (45) *ia?*            *ma-turau=te*                    *su*    *buha*  
 NOM.1sg    AV.PST-live=COMPL            LOC    Buha  
 ‘I (started to) live in Buha (the name of the village in which Bantik is spoken)’

When it is attached to the past tense verb, it shows that the event has occurred. For stative verbs, it can show a current situation, as in (47)a. When *te* is not attached, a stative verb in the past tense indicates a past situation. In example (48), it demonstrates that the event denoted by the *te*-affixed verb occurred before another event.

- (46) *isie*            *na-bañon=te*  
 NOM.3sg    AV.PST-wake.up=COMPL  
 ‘He woke up (so he is awake now)’
- (47) a.    *ia?*            *na-biaha?=te*                    *k<im>an*    *su*  
 NOM.1sg    AV.PST-alive=COMPL            <im>eat    LOC  
  
*pakabiñan*  
 wedding.party  
 ‘I am full (after) eating at the wedding party’
- b.    *ia?*            *na-biaha?*                    *k<im>an*    *su*    *pakabiñan*  
 NOM.1sg    AV.PST-alive            <im>eat    LOC    wedding.party  
  
*kahibi*  
 yesterday  
 ‘I was full (after) eating at the wedding party yesterday’
- (48) *ia?*            *na-mokei=te*                    *si-heis*    *bo*  
 NOM.1sg    AV.PST-call=COMPL            OBJ-heis    and  
  
*na-hara?*            *si-sie*  
 AV.PST-wait.for    OBJ-3sg  
 ‘I called Heis and waited for him’

*Ken* is called a ‘continuative’ particle. When it is attached to a verb, it may have three somewhat different meanings. First, it shows that one event will occur before something else, as in (49), or after a little while. Second, it may mean that the event is still going on, as in (50). Third, it sometimes indicates that the event will be repeated again.

- (49) *i-stenli*            *ma-neno=ken*                    *buhu*    *m-ako*            *nu*  
 NOM-Stenly    AV.NPST-bathe=CONT            new    AV.NPST-go    LK  
  
*benang*  
 port  
 ‘Stenly will bathe first, then go to Benang (=Manado city)’
- (50) *i-heis*            *na-noso?=ken*  
 NOM-Heis    AV.PST-smoke=CONT  
 ‘Heis still smokes’
- (51) *i-stefi*            *ma-bañon=ken*  
 NOM-Stevy    AV.NPST-wake.up=CONT  
 ‘Stevy will wake up again’

4.2. *Te* with verbs

*Te* can be said to add a ‘completive aspect,’ but its aspect may vary. When it is attached to a Group I verb, which takes the non-past tense for future events and the past tense for ongoing and past events, it adds the meaning that ‘the event is **surely** done’ or ‘the event will be done in the **very near future**.’ The examples below have Group I verbs in the non-past tense with *te* attached.

- (52) a. *ia?* *s<um>u?*=*te* *sikora ene, aya*  
 NOM.1sg <um>enter=COMPL school that not  
*ma-mikihi?* *bari-ne*  
 AV.NPST-think other-NE  
 ‘I’m going to enter that school, I won’t change my mind’
- b. *\*ia?* *s<um>u?* *sikora ene, aya ma-mikihi?*  
 NOM.1sg <um>enter school that not AV.NPST-think  
*bari-ne*  
 other-NE
- (53) *isie ma-hija=te ka i-ma?*=*ne*  
 NOM.3sg AV.NPST-cook=COMPL because NOM-mother=GEN.3sg  
*aya ma-bei*  
 not AV.NPST-return  
 ‘S/he will surely cook because her/his mother will not return’
- (54) *isie ma-iraj=te*  
 NOM.3sg AV.NPST-die=COMPL  
 ‘S/he is dying’
- (55) *na-ka-suei tamai na-hija?, kapuna*  
 AV.PST-ABL-finish upwards AV.PST-cook, dog  
*na-mokei=te si-manu? baho ka k<um>an=te (KB)*  
 AV.PST-call=COMPL OBJ-bird heron because <um>eat=COMPL  
 ‘After finishing cooking, Dog called Heron to eat’

When instantaneous verbs (Group I) are in the past tense, *te* means either the event **has occurred** or the event **has started**. It is quite often the case that *te* is added to show that one event happened before another event, as in (56). With activity verbs (Group I), *te* in conjunction with the past tense verb may express that the event **has begun**, and the entity denoted by the subject NP is **still doing the action**. In (57), *na-bei=te* (returned=COMPL) describes that the ‘returning’ action has begun. The two verbs that follow it describe what happened during the return action. Example (58) has two verbs that explain the state of a banana tree, and *te* is added after the Group I verb in the past tense to denote an ongoing event.

- (56) *i-mari na-nabo=te bua nu hahomponan*  
 NOM-Mary AV.PST-fall=COMPL from LK chair  
*buhu ia? na-bei*  
 new NOM.1sg AV.PST-return  
 ‘Mary fell from the chair, and (after that) I returned’
- (57) *isie na-ɲara? bo ni-diɲan n-ako*  
 NOM.3pl AV.PST-take and UV.PST-take AV.PST-go

- nu barei, isie na-bei=te n-ako*  
 LK house, NOM.3pl AV.PST-return=COMPL AV.PST-go
- nu barei, ni-diŋan=ne*  
 LK house UV.PST-take=GEN.3sg  
 ‘She took (a banana) and (the banana) was taken to her home, she returned home, (the banana) was taken by her’
- (58) *yo busa? ma-bua=te, aya na-tahaŋ yo*  
 then banana AV.NPST-fruit=COMPL not AV.PST-long then
- na-bua=te, bo r<um>oŋkoŋ=te busa? e. (TB)*  
 AV.PST-bruit=te, and <um>get.fat=COMPL banana DP  
 ‘Then the banana (tree) was about to bear fruits, before long it bore fruits, and the bananas got fat’

When *te* is attached to Group II and Group III verbs in non-past tense, the event has **occurred**, and the event is currently being observed. Example (59) has a stative verb, while (60) demonstrates an activity verb II, and (61) has an abilitative verb.

- (59) *uai ene ma-tasa?=te*  
 mango that AV.NPST-get.ripe=COMPL  
 ‘That mango is already ripe’
- (60) *side r<um>ampaŋ=te su daren ene*  
 NOM.3pl <um>walk=COMPL LOC road that  
 ‘They are walking on the road’
- (61) *ia? ma-ka-abi?=te bayo*  
 NOM.1sg AV.NPST-ABL-climb=COMPL coconut  
 ‘I am already able to climb a coconut tree’

When Group II and III verbs are in the past tense in conjunction with *te*, they emphasize that the event has **already occurred** (example 62) or the state **has begun** (example 63).

- (62) *side r<im>ampaŋ=te su daren ene buhu*  
 NOM.3pl <im>walk=COMPL LOC road that new  
*oto? si-nai?*  
 car PAST-come  
 ‘They were walking on the road and then the car came’
- (63) *ni-ka-hibi-an=te be yo gare*  
 UV.PST-ABL-night-GV=COMPL DP then only  
*na-ka-hompa?=te be hohian insau? (K)*  
 AV.PST-ABL-encounter=COMPL DP hut one  
 ‘The night had come, then (they) only encountered one hut’

#### 4.3. *Ken* with verbs

*Ken* has three meanings, as already explained in 6.1. When Group I verbs in the non-past tense take *ken*, it means that the event **will be done after a while** (not immediate future), as in examples (64) and (65), or **before another event**, as in (49) above. When the context requires, it can mean that the event will be done **again**, as in (66).

- (64) *ia? ma-tiki=ken su sini kainapa bo*  
 NOM.1sg AV.NPST-sleep=CONT LOC here because and

- hibi=te* (K)  
evening=COMPL  
'I will sleep before long because it is already evening'
- (65) *ia?* *maŋ-kede?*=ken *ma-noso?* *ka sokor-an*  
NOM.1sg AV.NPST-stop=CONT AV.NPST-smoke because cough-GV  
'I will stop smoking after a while because of coughing'
- (66) *ana?* *sikora ene ma-kina?*=ken  
child school that AV.NPST-ask=CONT  
'That student will ask again'

When Group I verbs take the past tense, *ken* adds the meaning that the event **has begun** but **has not finished**, as in (67). It also implies that the event occurred before some other event(s), as in (68). It can also mean that the event happened again, as in (69).

- (67) *isie naŋ-kede?*=ken *na-noso?*  
NOM.3sg AV.PST-stop=CONT AV.PST-smoke  
'He has stopped smoking (recently)'
- (68) *side nam-bere*=ken *buhu k<im>an*  
NOM.3pl AV.PST-work=CONT new <im>eat  
'They worked, and then ate (lunch)'
- (69) *rumanai mai ie, na-nahiti*=ken  
afternoon DP this AV.PST-rain=CONT  
'This afternoon, it rained again'

When Group II and III verbs in the non-past tense are accompanied by *ken*, the event **is going on** at the tense locus (see examples 69 and 70).

- (70) *ia?* *ma-tiho?*=ken *m-iripi?* *e*  
NOM.1sg AV.NPST-know=CONT AV.NPST-dive DP  
'I still know how to dive'
- (71) *ia?* *ma-hiŋa-hiŋa?*=ken *huntia rou*  
NOM.1sg AV.NPST-ITER~cook=CONT every day  
'I still cook every day'

If Group II and III verbs are in the past tense, *ken* indicates that the event or state **has continued** at the tense locus.

- (72) *i-pasko na-hara?*=ken *oto?* *manen hibi*  
NOM-Vasco AV.PST-wait=CONT car although evening  
'Vasco was still waiting for a car although it was already dark'
- (73) *ia?* *na-tiho?*=ken *m-iripi?* *e taon*  
NOM.1sg AV.PST-know=CONT AV.NPST-dive DP year  
*insau?*  
one  
'I knew how to dive last year'
- (74) *uai ene na-tasa?*=ken *buhu side k<im>an*  
mango that AV.PST-ripe=CONT new NOM.3sg <im>eat  
'That mango was ripe when they ate it'

#### 4.5. Aspectual particles and types of verbs

The following table 2 summarizes the meanings of aspectual particles when they attach to various types of verbs.

Verbs		only verbs	with <i>te</i>	with <i>ken</i>
Group I	non-past	future action	highly probable future action	action will occur in a while, action will occur before another action
	past	ongoing action, past action	the action has occurred, the action is still going on	action has begun, action has not finished
Group II	non-past	future event, ongoing event	the event has begun	the event still continues
	past	past event	the event has started and still continues	the event continues until the tense locus
Group III	non-past	iterative event, or ability in future, present, and past	the event has begun	the event still continues
	past	limited event	the event has started and still continues	the event continues until the tense locus

**Table 2. Summary of aspectual particles and verb types**

### 5. Summary

The system of tense and aspect in the Bantik language is complex. Morphologically, the non-past and past tenses are distinguished for verbs. The lexical aspect of each verb affects the interpretation of each tense.

The starting point of the event is crucial for Group I verbs. The non-past tense is selected before the starting point, and the past tense is required once the event has started. This group includes instantaneous verbs and some of the activity verbs (activity verbs I).

In contrast, the end point is crucial for Group II verbs. The non-past tense is selected for future events as well as present events. The past tense is used for events already completed. Group II includes stative verbs, accomplishment verbs, and some of the activity verbs (activity verbs II). At present, the factor that distinguishes the two groups of activity verbs is not known.

Group III verbs, in general, take the non-past tense. Only a limited event (limited time of occurrence, has limited object, etc.) in the past is expressed by the past tense form.

The aspectual particles *te* and *ken* also play an important role in expressing the aspect of each verb in a sentence.

More research, especially on the tense usage in the text, is needed on the verbs of the Bantik language.

**Abbreviations and other conventions**

1sg	First person singular	1pEXC	First person plural
2sg	Second person singular	3sg	Third person singular
3pl	Third person plural	ABL	Abilitative prefix <i>ka-</i>
ADJVZ	Adjectivizing prefix <i>ma-</i>	APL	Prefix <i>pa-</i> which derives an applicative verb
AV	Active Voice	CAUS	Causative prefix <i>paki-</i> or <i>ki-</i>
COMPL	Clitic <i>te</i> , which denotes completive aspect	CONT	Clitic <i>ken</i> , which denotes continuative aspect
DP	Discourse particle	GEN-	Noun marker for genitive NPs
GV	Suffix <i>-AN</i> , which indicates Goal Voice	HAB	Partial reduplication expressing habitual aspect
IMP	Suffix <i>-ai</i> which derives an imperative form	ITER	Partial reduplication expressing iterative aspect
KA	Derivational prefix <i>ka-</i> which attaches to numerals to add the meaning of ‘times’, such as <i>ka-dua</i> (KA-two) ‘two times’	LK	Linker, Genitive marker, Complementizer
LOC	Locative marker	NE	Enclitic which occur in combination with nominalizing prefix <i>ka-</i>
NOM	Noun marker for subject NPs (for singular human)	NOMZ	Nominalizing prefix <i>ka-</i>
NPST	The non-past tense	NVOL	Nonvolitional derivational prefix <i>i-</i>
OBJ	Noun marker for object NPs (for singular human)	PLAC	Reduplication of the first consonant of the base, followed by /a/, which derives a pluractional verb, and takes an NP or NPs which denote(s) plural actors as subject
PRO	Pronoun for third person singular (both human and non-human)	PST	The past tense
SU	Noun marker for object NPs (for plural human and non-human)	UV.PST	The prefix <i>ni-</i> the past tense marker for Undergoer Voices
VLT	Prefix <i>tinka-</i> which derives a volitional verb		

**Sources of examples**

- (K) From *Kasimbaha?* ‘Story of the man who married an angel’
- (KB) From *Biou ni-kapuna bo i-bagau* ‘Story of a dog and a heron’
- (KU) From *Biou ni-kohasa? bo i-ure?* ‘Story of an Iguana and Snake’
- (TB) From *Biou ni-timpunu bo i-boheŋ* ‘Story of a Turtle and a Monkey’
- (TBR) From *Tumpere m-ako nu banua ramo?* ‘Story of the frog who went to a big town’

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