

## The desistive persistive aspects in siSwati

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*In this talk I propose a temporal verbal paradigm for siSwati (Bantu S 43) which includes two aspects described as DESISTIVE and PERSISTIVE, which encode an activity polarity switch, encoding whether an action is on-going or discontinued. The PERSISTIVE and DESISTIVE formatives -sa- and -se- are in complementary distribution although alternative strategies (including temporal adverbs) can be employed in order to encode both aspects in an expression. The PERSISTIVE is categorised in terms of two sub-aspects which are differentiated by the presence or absence of external forces on the continuation of the action.*

*The DESISTIVE -se- encodes a polarity switch from NEGATIVE > POSITIVE, or from POSITIVE > NEGATIVE if used with a negation marker. The PERSISTIVE -sa- encodes continuation, from POSITIVE > POSITIVE or NEGATIVE > NEGATIVE. The same switch across polarity can also be seen in the contrast between the TAM forms nga-be ngi-ta-wu- and be-ngi-ta-wu-, the first of which is often analysed as FUTURE PERFECT, but both can better be analysed as another example of the morphological encoding of polarity change (NEGATIVE > POSITIVE).*

*The formatives -sa- and -se- are complex and productive in their functionality. My empirically gathered data provide part of the answer, as to how the DESISTIVE, PERSISTIVE and PROGRESSIVE aspects are expressed in siSwati. The proposed analysis is based on work on temporal expression within Cognitive Linguistics (Botne and Kersner 2008, Wilkins and Hill 1995, Fauconnier 1985) and argues that the siSwati aspectual system focuses on the transition between activities (such as expressed by the PERSISTIVE and DESISTIVE) rather than on the aspectual characteristics of the activities themselves (for example, PROGRESSIVE, which is not encoded in the siSwati TAM system).*