

FIJIAN "SĀ" AND "SE" ASPECT

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ABSTRACT

The Fijian verbal particle *sā* has always been a serious problem to students of Fijian, not least to linguists. Though *sā* is very important and occurs with great frequency, its meaning and use are not at all adequately explained. One important reason for this is that what has traditionally been regarded as one particle, *sā*, is in fact two particles, *sā* and *se*, which have quite different meanings. This confusion has been caused in part by the clitic nature of some of the verbal particles and the stress and vowel length variations that this brings about. *Sā* indicates that a state or event is '*now, as of now*' in effect or particularly relevant, having regard to an actual or assumed starting point and previous situation. *Se* indicates that a state or event is '*meantime, as yet*' in effect or particularly relevant, having regard to an actual or assumed finishing point and following situation. If neither *sā* nor *se* is present the utterance is simply unmarked in these respects. When one considers texts and the actual situations of language use, it is apparent that this three-way aspectual contrast is a basic distinction within Fijian grammar.

PART I: BACKGROUND

One of the most frequently occurring particles in the Fijian vocabulary is the particle *sā*. Right throughout any discourse scarcely a sentence goes by without there being a real choice to be made as to whether *sā* will or will not be used. Yet in spite of this frequency of occurrence, linguists and teachers have not in point of fact been able to provide much assistance to the learner of Fijian as to when *sā* should be used and what its presence or absence contributes to the

utterance. This is quite a serious gap in the grammars of Fijian. This paper is an attempt to push a little further our understanding of this very difficult particle.

A perusal of what other grammarians have had to say will help us to see the state of the question. In his dictionary (Hazlewood 1850/1914: 101) Hazlewood says:

Sa, a sign of the narrative sense: and, hence may be either past, present, or future; but is more commonly present, and more frequently past than future. Some other circumstance in the connection must show when it is past, or future

His grammar adds an extra dimension (Hazlewood 1914:46):

They (e and sa) are generally used when a narrative is carried on after the sign of the past tense, or something else in the connexion has determined in what tense the speaker is speaking. A, or some other word, determines the tense, and then sa carries on the narrative in that tense, whatever it may be (Emphasis in original.)

Various pedagogical works on Fijian add a little to Hazlewood's explanation. Typical is the work by the Marist Brothers (1906:9):

There is no verb 'to be' in Fijian, but its meaning is commonly expressed by the verb or prefix sa; as sa tu, it is there, or literally, he, she or it stands.

Again, in the later version (Marist Brothers 1950:9):

The particle 'e' is used as an article before numerals; it is also a verbal sign indefinite in tense, and rather less definite in sense than 'sa'.

And (1950:13):

Sa: verbal sign of very wide use It is independent of tense when used alone, and is then like a narrative particle

Capell (1941) defines sā as follows:

... a verbal particle, independent of tense, but serving in a certain degree to add emphasis to the other particles; e sa is a more definite present than e, and the sa may also be lengthened to sā to add weight to it; similarly sā na is more definite future than ena. Used alone it is indefinite in tense: au sā kila, I know, I knew ... rather as a narrative particle

Churchward (1941:14) has this to say:

Very frequently the tense-signs are combined with the particles sā and e, which, though sometimes regarded as tense-signs, are really just predicative signs or signs of the predicate

And (1941:67):

Eratou kilā and eratou sā kilā both mean 'they know', but with a difference; similarly, ko na bale and ko sā na bale both mean 'you will fall', but with a difference. The fact is that sā makes the statement stronger, more positive or definite. As intelligent Fijians explain it, sā makes the statement bībī (heavy, weighty, forceful), while its omission makes the statement comparatively mamada (light). Thus ko na bale, you will fall; ko sā na bale, you will certainly fall: though the difference is not quite as great as this. Au sā vinakata e dua na i vola, I want a book; au vinakata e dua na i vola, I should like a book--where the omission of the sā makes the statement less forceful (and more polite).

Milner (1956/1972) gives a lot of attention to sā and its ordering. His more important statements on its meaning would seem to be:

It is not easy to state what the difference is between e and sā and to decide which of the two is more appropriate in any one sentence. In some cases either particle may be used indifferently. In others the one cannot be used for the other, or both may be found in the same sentence, either together or separated by a pronoun. Often, however, the difference between e and sā is a question of emphasis. (1972:13)

... The precise value of the emphasis introduced by sā depends to some extent on the base which is emphasized. It may be emphasis on the completion of a process ... or it may be emphasis on degree, quantity, quality, etc. Thus: e ra kana ka gunu e kē ka ra sā lako -- they ate and drank here (not necessarily well) and they have gone. But: e ra sā kana ka ra sā gunu mai Bau -- they have eaten and drunk well at Bau (1972:17)

If sā is used instead of e before numeral bases, it may denote that someone or something is present or available. (1972:14)

Cammack says (1962:45):

Sa corresponds very roughly to certain uses of English 'be'. A better label for the form is 'positor' for its function is to posit, or to affirm, the existence of a state, action, etc.

Being built around the concept of providing minimal grammatical explanations, Schütz and Komaitai's course on Fijian does not have much to say on this point:

In many sentences, sā and e are interchangeable. At times, sā is more emphatic than e. Attempts to explain the difference more explicitly have usually failed. Imitate the model. (Schütz and Komaitai 1971:20 footnote)

Most students of Fijian would probably agree with Schütz and Komaitai's assessment of previous explanations. But while these explanations might be far from clear or comprehensive, we should not underestimate the difficulty of explaining such complex aspectual

differences. (Think, for instance, of the many defective attempts to account for the English perfect.) Nor should we overlook the genuine points made.

There seem to be three main functions attributed to $s\bar{a}$. It is regarded as:

- a) a definite particle (cf. Churchward)
- b) an emphatic particle (cf. Milner)
- c) a narrative particle (cf. Hazlewood)

Of course, many questions can be asked about what is meant here. In what way does the sentence become more definite with $s\bar{a}$: more definite in time, more definitive or complete in action, more specific as to nouns, or what? Similarly, the term emphasis covers an extremely wide set of relations. What part of the utterance can $s\bar{a}$ be expected to emphasise? And then what exactly is a narrative particle (or a predicative one, for that matter)? What is it supposed to do?

I would hope to shed some light on some of these questions in this paper, for I think that the three functions mentioned above have a certain validity. However, rather than think of these as the important basic senses of $s\bar{a}$, I will provide $s\bar{a}$ with a fundamentally unary meaning different from these but which does in context have the effect of providing definiteness or emphasis, or of setting up focal points in a narrative, as the case may be.

One of the things that has blocked a better explanation for $s\bar{a}$ than those given hitherto is that what has traditionally been regarded as one particle, $s\bar{a}$, is in fact two separate particles, $s\bar{a}$ and se , which have quite different - one might say contrary - meanings. How could a difference like this pass by unnoticed? One reason is the existence of what has been termed short sa . As we shall see in Part IV, $s\bar{a}$ loses its length on occasion, thus becoming short. For its part, se often has its vowel a bit centralised, or pronounced very quickly such that occasionally it appears to be absorbed in the s consonant, lengthening it (cf. Cammack below). What was really the particle se , therefore, was seen as just another form of short sa , and all three phonological elements $s\bar{a}$, sa and se were regarded as realisations of the same morpheme. This obviously had serious consequences when it came to explaining the meaning of $s\bar{a}$.

se did not in point of fact go by completely unnoticed. The Marist Brothers' book (1950:29) says: "Se is sometimes used for sa", and the book occasionally uses it before *bera* 'not yet'. Clearly, however, it did not recognise se as a fully separate particle.

Milner, on the other hand, does so recognise it (though mistakenly regarding it as long, *sē*). He points out (Milner 1972:107) that it is the subject of some controversy, and that it is not considered to be good Bauan. Apart, therefore, from glossing *se* as 'still' and providing one example, he gives it no further explicit treatment. However, it does also appear briefly in his work under another guise when he contrasts *sā qai* with what he writes *saqai* (actually *se qai*) on page 93. It is clear from Biggs and Nayacakalou's review (1958:83) of Milner that they regard *se* as worth more explicit attention even within Bauan.

Cammack's treatment of *se* is the most remarkable:

An idiomatic use of *sa* before certain bases is common in colloquial speech and appears occasionally in printed materials. It is called 'short *sa*' by some speakers and is pronounced [s:] or [se]. (Cammack 1962:46).

He then provides four minimal pairs between *sā* and *se*, glossing each partner of the pair quite differently, but failing to draw the straightforward conclusion that he was dealing with two distinct morphemes. (His examples correspond with Part II, Nos.4, 7, 8 and 22.)

Se occurs in Schütz and Komaitai's text on two occasions (1971:115 and 170), but there are no explanations or drills given for it, nor does it occur in the vocabulary, such that the student could be forgiven for believing that the *se* occurred by accident or was a misprint for *sā*.

Some Fijians certainly don't regard *se* as good Bauan. This was evidently the view of the eminent Fijian chief and statesman Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna, who also had a very informed interest and influence in matters cultural and linguistic. His views on this matter were widely adopted, and we still find that *se* is usually 'purged' from written materials by over-solicitous editors. However, in informal works, and texts that are not tightly edited, *se* continues to make regular appearances. And so it should, for there can be no doubt that it is an integral part of Standard Fijian today. Cammack's research leaves no doubt that *se* is as common on Bau itself as elsewhere. Dialect interference is probably the chief culprit for the confusion. Thus, whereas some western dialects, e.g. Wayan, have a form *si* corresponding to *se*, some dialects of Macuata and eastern Cakaudrove do indeed have a short *sa* contrasting with a long *sā* or *ba* (P. Geraghty: personal communication). Nevertheless, the Standard form is *se*.

Se then is a totally distinct particle of Standard Fijian warranting attention in its own right. To recognise this immediately makes the task of explaining *sā* much easier (though by no means easy!).

Another point that can confuse the explanation of *sā* is the tendency of writers on Fijian to want to contrast *e* with *sā* on the basis of such

apparent contrasts as *e lako* and *sā lako* (as well as *se lako*). Phonologically these are minimal pairs all right, but the full forms are *e lako* and *e sā lako* (as well as *e se lako*). It just so happens that *e* is frequently elided before *sā* and *se* (also in certain other places). *E* is not a verbal particle at all, but the third person unmarked pronoun. It is not *e* that is part of the contrast therefore, but \emptyset (zero), i.e. lack of *sā* or *se*. Here we shall be intent then on the three-way aspectual contrast between \emptyset , *sā* and *se*.

PART II: MEANINGS AND EXAMPLES OF *SĀ* AND *SE*

sā and *se* are particles of tense-aspect. Both of them indicate that a certain state or event has particular relevance to the contemporaneous moment (past, present, or future as determined by the presence or absence of tense particles and context). The difference is that *sā* contrasts this moment with a previous one, and *se* with a later one. The absence of both particles, (zero), simply leaves the sentence unmarked in these respects, though not necessarily totally so for other particles and context will contribute to these aspectual notions.

The most appropriate English gloss for *sā* seems to be '*now, as of now*'. *sā* indicates that a state or event is '*now, as of now*' in effect or particularly relevant, having regard to an actual or assumed starting point and previous situation.

The most appropriate English gloss for *se* seems to be '*meantime, as yet, still*'. *se* indicates that a state or event is '*meantime, as yet, still*' in effect or particularly relevant, having regard to an actual or assumed finishing point and following situation.

The above meanings appear straightforward enough but such definitions or explanations can only go so far in capturing the real sense of aspectual differences. Below are some examples contrasting the use of \emptyset , *sā* and *se* in comparatively simple sentences. More complex ones will be introduced in Part III. It should not be imagined that the readings given in each case are the only possible readings these sentences might have. The hope is that, after comparing the various examples, a broad concept of what this aspectual contrast involves will be gained.

- | | | | | | | |
|-------|----------|-------------|---------------------------|------------|-------------|--------------------|
| (1)a. | <i>e</i> | \emptyset | <i>levu na ibe</i> | 'there are | \emptyset | <i>many mats</i> ' |
| | b. | <i>sā</i> | | | | <i>now</i> |
| | c. | <i>se</i> | | | | <i>still</i> |
| | | | <i>it -- many the mat</i> | | | |

Sentence (1)a. (with \emptyset) is a general statement as to the quantity of mats. The speaker may be referring to a very specific pile of mats, but he is not commenting on any change in the quantity. Sentence (1)b.

- (4)a. e ∅ bera ko koya *'he is late'*
 b. sā *'he is late'*
 c. se *'he's not yet here'*
 it -- *not-yet the he*

E bera would be used simply to report he was late. It is probably of no particular account that he was late, or at least the speaker is not drawing attention to it. Sā bera would be used when the speaker (or someone) was waiting for him, or he was due to give a speech, or he was supposed to bring something, etc. Se bera is a straightforward use of se meaning 'as yet'.

- (5)a. e ∅ yawa na yanuyanu *'the island is ∅ a long way away'*
 b. sā *now*
 c. se *still*
 it -- *far the island*

Sentence (5)a. is an objective statement as to the distance of the island. (5)b. might be used when sailing to or beyond a particular island; in either case there is the implication of a change, impending or complete respectively, as to one's distance from the island. Or again, if one is merely planning one's trip and gets news, say, of bad weather approaching, (5)b. might be uttered to convey that it's a long way to go under such stormy conditions. (5)c. would normally be uttered after having already travelled a certain distance towards the island.

- (6)a. ni ratou ∅ cauravou eratou volia yādua e dua na motokā
 b. sā
 c. se
 when they -- youth they buy-it each it one the car
 a. *'when they were ∅ youths they each bought a car'*
 b. *now*
 c. *as yet*

In (6)a. there is no explicit mention of from what viewpoint one is looking at the situation. (6)b., on the other hand, could suggest they bought the cars on becoming youths, almost as if they were awaiting that time. One is relating this action to their previous condition as children. As against this, (6)c. is relating this action to their later condition as mature men. They bought their cars before they moved out of their youth.

- (7)a. e ∅ sega na i-lavo me'u cakava
 b. sā
 c. se
 it -- not the money that-I do-it
- a. 'there's no money for me to do it'
 b. 'there's no longer the money for me to do it'
 c. 'there's not yet the money for me to do it'

The glosses here speak for themselves. In Fijian as in English, (7)a. is open, (7)b. implies that there was such money available, (7)c. that there will be.

- (8)a. e ∅ tū mai Niu Siladi ko Tīmoci
 b. sā
 c. se
 it -- stand over-at New Zealand the Timothy
- a. 'Timothy is ∅ in New Zealand'
 b. now
 c. still

Sentence (8)a. gives no indication of when Timothy may have arrived in New Zealand, whereas (8)b. might be said to indicate that Timothy has only recently arrived there. However, it might also be used if, for example, the speaker wants something done in New Zealand and suddenly recalls that Timothy is there and can do it for him. The gloss might then be better rearranged to read '*Timothy, now, is in New Zealand*, the '*now*' serving to call the matter to attention. (8)c. is straightforward enough, there being a strong presumption that he will return (or move) from New Zealand or is expected to.

- (9)a. keimami ∅ gadreva tū me sautū na vanua
 b. sā
 c. se
 we -- want-it stand that peaceful the land
- a. 'We ∅ want the country peaceful'
 b. now
 c. still

This example is similar to (8) above. Instead of being the main verb, however, tū is now an auxiliary (or particle) of state. In spite of its normally supplied gloss, tū '*stand*' usually indicates a state of long (stable) duration. (Similarly, toka '*sit*' indicates a state of short (unstable) duration, and tiko '*stay*' a state of ongoing (progressive) duration.) (9)a. expresses our general wish. (9)b. might be

The simple glosses here do not do justice to the possible meanings of these sentences. Unmodified Fijian verbs can be translated into English in a variety of ways. Context or modifying particles are the means used to provide further specification when desired. (12)a. is more likely to be understood as an aorist than a habitual or durative action, though all are possible. It can also be translated '*he went ...*', the past time normally being a proximate past. (12)b. can also be translated '*he now goes ...*' or '*he is now going ...*'. Although, therefore, *sā* with verbs can often be translated by the English perfect, its meaning is wider than that. The English perfect refers to a completed action that has continued relevance to the present. Fijian *sā* indicates that an action now taking place or that a state now in existence as the consequence of such an event has special relevance to the present. What has been said here re '*has gone*' and *sā* applies also to *se* in (12)c. and sentences like it. It should be noted that *se* can hardly be translated as '*still*' here, except in the sense of '*he is still gone*', and even that is not too accurate.

As just pointed out, (12)b. could be translated as '*he is now going to Suva*' or '*he has gone to Suva*', (and the same applies in the following five examples). What is held in common by these two readings that *sā* should be used for both? In the first reading, the person is '*now*' going - the speaker is pointing out that a new situation exists: the person was not going before, or if he was, it has only just come to the attention of the speaker. In the second reading, the speaker is referring to a completed action, but one that has direct relevance to the present, which is why in English we refer to this tense as the '*present perfect*'. Special relevance to the present is common to both readings - hence *sā*. If we now refer back to some of the earlier examples, we might be able to understand better what is in common to the number of readings given for the *sā* versions. Thus in example (1), the *sā* covers the situation where the objective reality has changed, or where as far as the speaker is concerned it is a new reality, or where the reality is by no means new but its special relevance to the present is seen by the speaker. The meaning of *sā* therefore is quite consistent as between the earlier examples involving states and these later ones involving actions.

Below are a few more examples involving verbs, with a few general comments following:

- | | | | | | | |
|--------|----|----|---------------------|----|------|--|
| (13)a. | e | ∅ | boko | na | cina | 'The lamp is out' |
| b. | | sā | | | | 'The lamp is now out' |
| c. | | se | | | | 'The lamp is still (or meantime)
out' |
| | it | -- | extinguish the lamp | | | |

- (14)a. era ∅ kauta mai e dua na kato
 b. sā
 c. se
 they -- carry-it hither it one the box
- a. *'They brought a box'*
 b. *'They have brought a box'*
 c. *'They have brought a box meantime'*
- (15)a. keirau ∅ volā e dua na i-vola lekaleka vei Pita
 b. sā
 c. se
 we -- write-it it one the letter short to Peter
- a. *'We wrote a short note to Peter'*
 b. *'We have written (or, are writing) a short note to Peter'*
 c. *'We have written (or, are writing) a short note to Peter meantime'*
- (16)a. e ∅ bokoca na cina na tūraga
 b. sā
 c. se
 he -- extinguish-it the lamp the man
- a. *'The man put out the light'*
 b. *'The man has put out the light'*
 c. *'The man has put out the light meantime'*
 or
 'The man is still putting out the light'
- (17)a. era ∅ vulica na sere makawa
 b. sā
 c. se
 they -- learn-it the song old
- a. *'They are learning the old song'*
 b. *'They are now learning the old song'*
 c. *'They are still (or meantime) learning the old song'*

The (a) versions of these sentences are variously translated according to whether the context might suggest a past, present aorist, continuous, or habitual reference. Similarly the (b) versions (with *sā*) admit various translations. The distinction between the (a) and (b) versions is still basically the same as already given. The (c) versions (with *se*) show an interesting fluctuation in translation between *'still'* and *'meantime'*. It is not so much that *se* varies in meaning, as that

the type of action and context being referred to make one or the other interpretation more appropriate. The *'still'* reading is more clearly given by adding one of the state particles *tū*, *tiko*, *toka*, etc. to the sentence. Even so, *se* with a *'still'* reading will also keep the end of the event or state in view such that the *'meantime'* element can still be seen as relevant. When an action has a result that lasts, but with a visible end in sight, e.g. (14) and (15), *'meantime'* becomes particularly appropriate. Thus in (14), if you were awaiting some other sort of receptacle, and still are, (14)c. is most appropriate. (15)c. is appropriate to the situation where you are planning to write a fuller letter later, or where you fully expect to hear news from him soon. The *'still'* reading for (17)c. would be appropriately said by a person surprised that the old song was not yet supplanted by the new song; also if it was simply taking a very long time to learn. The *'meantime'* reading is appropriate to where, say, a copy of the new version of the song has not yet appeared in the village. (16)c. likewise can readily be interpreted with either reading according to the context.

The *'meantime'* reading of *se* takes over almost completely when we move into the imperative or contingent mood.

- (18)a. (m'o) Ø taura mada na i-vola oqō
 b. sā
 c. se
 (that-you) -- take-it mind the book this
- a. *'Take this book'*
 b. *'Take this book now' or 'Now take this book'*
 c. *'Take this book meantime (or for now)'*

Sentence (18)a. is a straight command, although polite. (18)b. could on occasion be taken as a little sharp, but not necessarily. If, for instance, you thought the book useful to him in the studies he has just been talking about, then the use of *sā* would be a perfectly acceptable way of indicating the special relevance of the book to the present situation. (18)c. would not usually be read as *'still'*. To order that something be continued or kept on, the normal construction is to use an appropriate state particle together very often with *gā* - the construction exemplified in a declarative context in nos. (9), (10) and (11).

- (19)a. dou Ø kana! *'Eat!'*
 b. sā *'Now eat'*
 c. se *'Eat for the meantime'*
 you -- eat

(19)a. would be a very normal thing to say to a guest at meal time. If, however, the guest delayed in coming to eat, the host might eventually say (19)b. to him. It would be said, not just from the point of view of emphasis, but because it is now particularly relevant that he come and eat; the host is waiting for him, and there might soon be no more food left or the meal might be over. (19)c. is a straightforward use, but the speaker is probably thinking ahead to events that will take place once the meal is over.

- (20)a. nī Ø moce 'Goodbye'
 b. s̄a 'Goodbye now'
 c. se 'Goodbye for now'
 you -- sleep

All three sentences are of common occurrence as farewell greetings. (20)a. might be used as the last element in a longer greeting. By itself it is not a very enthusiastic sort of farewell. The s̄a of (20)b. sets the farewell off as an item apart, and thus gives the farewell more importance, as it were. (20)c. would be uttered, for instance, by a radio announcer who has just announced that he will be on the air again at some specific time in the future, and might also be rendered broadly as '*Till then, goodbye*'.

A construction that has received special attention is the use of s̄a and se with qai '*then, next*' (e.g. Milner 1972:93-4). However, it should not be regarded as an exceptional use of s̄a and se. They are interpreted in their normal way.

- (21)a. e Ø qai tau na uca '*It then rained*'
 b. s̄a '*It finally rained*'
 c. se '*It had just rained*'
 it -- then fall the rain

Qai indicates that a particular state or event follows another sequentially in time. (21)a. is therefore straightforward. Since s̄a conveys the special relevance of some state or event to the present, its use with qai often has the effect of indicating the culmination point from a previous event or number of events. Thus, if the speaker is narrating all the dire circumstances of a drought and the people's hope and prayers for rain, he might conclude by saying (21)b. (21)c. is the contrary, as it were. In this case the rain is the starting point for the sequence of events to be narrated.

- (22)a. (...) au qai butuka na delana (...)
 I then tread-it the top-its
 '(...) I then set foot on the top (...)'

- b. e dedē na noqu lako tiko, au sā qai butuka na delana
it long-time the my go stay I now then tread-it the top-its
 'I was going for a long time, and then (finally) set foot on
 the top'
- c. au se qai butuka na delana, sā sisi na vatu
I as-yet then tread-it the top-its now slip the rock
 'I had just set foot on the top when the rock slipped'

In (22)b. we see how the sā clause is the culmination of what has gone before. In (22)c. the se clause is the predisposition for what comes after. One could not use se in the context of (22)b., nor sā in the context of (22)c. Either, however, could be omitted. That is (22)a. could fit in both contexts, but this would have the consequence of changing the meaning to a simple series of events without much build-up.

In all previous examples, I have used sā and se with the unmarked (present) tense. Their use with the past and future tense markers follows the same lines.

- (23)a. e ā ∅ lako ki Suva 'He went to Suva'
 b. sā 'He now went (or had gone) to Suva'
 c. se 'He went (or had gone) meantime to Suva'
it past -- go to Suva

This example is simply a transposition of no. (12) into the past.

- (24)a. eda ā ∅ tekivūtaka mai e na mācawa sā oti e
 b. sā
 c. se
we past -- begin-it hither in the week now finish it
dua tale na noda i-talanoa vou
one again the our story new
- a. 'We began last week another new story'
 b. 'Now we began (or had begun) last week another new story'
 c. 'We began (or had begun) as yet last week another new story'

(24)a. is of course unmarked for aspect. (24)b. looks at the event from the point of view that there was no story before and then (the 'now' reading of sā in the past) the event began. (24)c. looks at the event from this side, from after the story began; it began 'as yet' last week. A complicating factor in (24)b. and (24)c. is that the sā and se may be relating the event to another past one or to the present. Thus as well as the interpretation already given for (24)b. relating the event to another past one, there can also be the interpretation

that that past event simply has special relevance to now. Context, usually, makes this clear. Similarly for (24)c., the *se* may be relating the event to something that occurred in the past between last week and now, or it may simply be relating it to now. Of course, since *sā* and *se* so often relate one event with another in the explicit context, they tend to occur very frequently with time phrases such as *e na mācawa sā oti*.

- (25)a. e ∅ na lako ki Suva 'He will go to Suva'
 b. *sā* 'He will now go to Suva'
 c. *se* 'He will go to Suva meantime'
 it -- future go to Suva

- (26)a. era ∅ na bose e na siga Mōniti
 sā
 se
 they -- future meet on the day Monday
 a. 'They will ∅ meet on Monday'
 b. *now*
 c. *still*

An interesting point about *sā* here is that, although it can be translated as a perfect (with the present tense) or pluperfect (with the past), it cannot be translated as a future perfect (with the future). This is really not so surprising, for the future perfect tense is focussing on the completion of an event by the time something else happens, whereas *sā* is concerned with the inception of an event - the fact that it is now in effect as distinct from before. However, just as in the past tense the 'now' of *sā* can apply to the 'now' of that past time or to the 'now' of the present, so also in the future tense the 'now' may refer to the present or to a 'now' in the future. (25)b. and (26)b. can be uttered to mean that as a result of a present decision, future events will change (will 'now' take place). For instance in (26)b. the meeting may have been scheduled for Tuesday but as a result of somebody's decision it may 'now' be scheduled for Monday. Such a reading for *sā na* is extremely common. The 'now' however, can also be one in the future. If the context is set in the future time, the change of event will take place 'as of then, then'. The same holds true for *se*. Thus in (25)c., 'he will go to Suva meantime', but this 'meantime' could begin as of now, or as of some future time indicated in the context.

Examples so far used have contrasted ∅, *sā* and *se* in identical environments. Although some of these examples were elicited for this

paper, many were not, but were noted at various times. The contrasts registered here have been observed in many live situations. Below are some examples where the contrast between \emptyset , $s\bar{a}$ and se can be viewed syntagmatically rather than paradigmatically.

- (27) e se $duri$ $vinaka$ $t\bar{u}$ $g\bar{a}$ na bai $makawa$ ni $koro$,
it as-yet stand good stand just the fence old of village
 $s\bar{a}$ $kabasu$ $g\bar{a}$ e $s\bar{o}$ na $yasana$
now broken-down just it some the side-its
'The old fence of the village is still standing in good condition, only a few of its sides are broken down'

There is illustrated here the clear contrast between an ongoing condition (se) and a changed one ($s\bar{a}$).

- (28)A. Au se liu $mada$ ki tai . $Me'u$ $s\bar{a}$ $bokoca$
I as-yet go-ahead mind to other-shore that-I now extinguish-it
na cina?
the light
- B. $Veit\bar{a}lia$, au qai $bokoca$. $Lako$ $mada$ $g\bar{a}$ $d\bar{e}$ ko na
Never-mind I then extinguish-it go mind just lest you will
qai berata na basi
then be-late-for-it the bus
- A. *'I'll go ahead to the other side. Should I put out the light?'*
 B. *'Never mind, I'll put it out. Just go lest you miss the bus'*

The se here draws explicit attention to the fact that A is only going ahead for a time, that B will be following shortly. The $s\bar{a}$ here is an excellent example showing the immediacy of the action. The putting out of the light can be done only in that brief time before he sets off. By contrast B's reply has no $s\bar{a}$ as the time for putting it out is quite indefinite. The remaining sentence likewise has no cause to use $s\bar{a}$ or se .

- (29) $Nomun\bar{t}$ se qai $yaco$ mai $kon\bar{t}$ se $rairai$ $c\bar{a}$. $Oq\bar{o}$
your as-yet then arrive hither you as-yet looking bad this
 $n\bar{t}$ $s\bar{a}$ mai $munemuneke$ me $vak\bar{a}$ na $panikeke$ $vakatubu$ $vinaka$.
you now come podgy that like the pancake make-grow good
'At your arrival you as yet looked rather poorly. Now you have become podgy like a well risen pancake'

The se that occurs with the qai is a straightforward use indicating the very time of arrival. The second se does not mean that he still looked

poorly from some former time, although that too would be a valid reading. However, in the situation where this sentence was uttered, the speaker had never met the addressee prior to his arrival. The 'as yet' reading gives the right idea that a change was pending. The *sā*, of course, goes with the change itself.

- (30) *ā se bau vinaka cake o Tīmoci, o Samu sā qai*
past as-yet somewhat good up the Timothy the Sam now then
cā sara
bad very

'Even Timothy was somewhat better. Sam is really terrible'

The situation here is that Timothy and Sam were consecutive presidents of an association. The *se* holds our attention back at the time before the presidency changed; the *sā* refers to the situation afterward.

- (31) *kevakā e ā sega, ke'u ā se tukuna vei kemudou*
if-like it past not then-I past as-yet tell-it to you
'If it had not been so, I would already have told you'

The *se* here gives the idea of before now, or before some other time indicated in the context. A *sā* here would probably mean '*I would then have told you*' as of that past time when the event took place, though it could also be used to indicate the relevance of this past event to the present.

In Part I, I referred to the 'definite', 'emphatic', and 'narrative' meanings for *sā* that have been put forward by other linguists. From the examples so far given, I think it is easy to see how *sā* (or for that matter *se*) can be regarded as providing definiteness. It does specify a particular time relevance to a state or event. Clearly, this can also be seen as a type of emphasis, for a speaker, by choosing to use *sā*, is attributing that particular relevance to the state or event he is talking about, and this in context could emphasise it. Similarly, a speaker can freely use *sā* within the longer scope of his discourse to highlight certain events as the focal ones around which his narrative is built. It is difficult to illustrate this 'narrative' use except over quite a long text.

We have so far been looking at \emptyset , *sā* and *se* only within very restricted sentences. In order to get a better idea of their use in context and their relationships to one another, we will now look at a continuous text.

PART III: TEXT AND COMMENTARY

Below is a short formal written text with glosses and a rather literal line-by-line translation. Following on this is a broader and more flowing translation. Following on this again is a commentary.

This text was written by Ratu Luke Vuidreketi, editor of the Fijian weekly newspaper *Nai Lalakai*, and appeared as part of an editorial in that publication on 11 March 1971. According to the policy of the paper, both *sā* and *se* were printed in the original as simply *sa*. I have consulted with the original author as to the interpretation of the text, and would like to express my deep appreciation to him. At the same time any errors are entirely mine.

Each point in the text where there is a choice between \emptyset , *sā* and *se* has been marked with a superscript number by which it is referred to in the commentary. Actually there are some additional points of choice where *sā* and *se* could theoretically occur, but their occurrence is so unlikely as not to be worth separate treatment. In some instances, the same superscript number occurs twice (the second time in parentheses). In such instances, the choice is limited in that if *sā* or *se* occurred in one spot they could hardly occur also in the other - (though see also example (36), Part IV).

Text

VAKARAU NI SE¹ SIGA TOKA
ready when still day squat
 GET READY WHILE IT'S STILL DAY

Sā² kā ni veitalanoa vakadedē tiko mai oqō na
Now thing of talk long-time stay hither this the
It has been a matter of talk for a long time now, the

veisTvT ni i-sau ni cakacaka kei na i-sau ni kākana kei na
contest of price of work and the price of food and the
contest of the cost of wages and the cost of food and

i-yāyā, vakā kina na kena³ kunekune drēdrē na cakacaka
goods similar to-that the its find difficult the work
goods, as well as work being difficult to find

me baleti ira na luveda era sā⁴ biu vuli tiko e na
that concerning them the child-our they now leave study stay in the
for our children who are leaving school

veiyabaki.
years.
each year.

Era⁵ sega ni⁽⁵⁾ cegu na i-tubutubu ni gone e na
They not that rest the parent of child in the
The parents of the children don't rest in

nodra⁶ veivosakitaka ki na Veitabacakakaka ni Matanitū,
their discuss-it to the Departments of Government
their discussing with Departments of Government

Veimatabose, veikābani kei na veiblsinisi yādudua e sō - ayā
Councils companies and the business individual it some that-is
councils, companies and businesses individually - that is

kivei ira na nodra veikilai e keā - dē⁷ rawa ni ra⁽⁷⁾
to them the their acquaintances at there lest able that they
with their acquaintances there - whether it might be possible that they

bau vakacurumi kina na luvedra ka ra se⁸ qai rawata
at-all be-entered to-there the child-their and they as-yet the get-it
be entered there, their children who have just got

oti gā mai na veitarogi oqō se na veitarogi koyā, ra sā⁹
finish just hither the exam this or the exam that they now
this exam or that exam, who have

yacova na i-vakatāgedegede vinaka e sō ka ra¹⁰ gadreva tū
reach-it the standard good it some and they desire-it stand
reached certain good standards and who want

me ra¹¹ vakayagataka na nodra vuli vei ira na nodra i-tubutubu,
that they use-it the their study for them the their parent
to use their studies for their parents,

wekadra, nodra kawa tamata kei na nodra vanua.
relation-their their race man and the their land
their relations, their race and their country.

Ia e¹² dau kā ni rarawa ni sō na qara cakacaka
But it customarily thing of sadness that some the seek work

But it is regularly a sad fact that some of those searches for work

oqori e¹³ dau tini mate wale, ni sā¹⁴ sega dina sara
that it customarily end dead only that now not truly very
simply end up dead, for there is absolutely no

gā na cakacaka e¹⁵ galala tū e na veivanua era sā¹⁶ la'ki
just the work it free stand in the places they now go-and
work that is available in the places they have gone and

vakatataro kina na i-tubutubu se weka ni gone vuli.
ask to-there the parent or relation of child study
asked there, the parents or relations of the children.

E sō na gone era sā¹⁷ rawa ni⁽¹⁷⁾ lesu ki na koro
It some the child they now able that return to the village
Some of the children can return to the village

ka ra¹⁸ la'ki vakayagataki gele; e levu cake gā era sā¹⁹ sega
and they go-and use soil it many up just they now not
and go and use the land; more however

sara gā ni⁽¹⁹⁾ rawata na lesu ki na koro ni ā²⁰ sega ni⁽²⁰⁾
very just that get-it the return to the village that past not that
can not manage a return to the village for it was never

bau vakamātautaki vakadua vei ira e na gauna era ā se²¹
at-all be-made-proficient once to them at the time they past as-yet
once made familiar to them at the time they were as yet

qai tubu cake tiko mai kina, se me ra²² vakarailasani wale
then grow up stay hither at-then or that they be-made-familiar only
growing up, nor were they made familiar

mada gā e na veikilai kei ira na dui wekadra era²³
mind just in the knowing with them the respective relation-their they
even in acquaintance with their various relatives who

tū vakavanua mai na koro
stand traditional-style over-at the village.
live traditional style in the village.

E²⁴ qai dau kena i-tinitini vei ira koyā me ra²⁵
It the customarily its end for them that that they
The normal end for them therefore is that they

tū yāciriciri voli e Suva kei na veikoro vaka-Vavālagi tale
stand drifting around in Suva and the villages European again
wander around Suva and the other European towns,

e sō,²⁶ sega na cakacaka, ka ra sā²⁷ qai i-kuri ni leqa
it some not the work and they now then continuation of trouble
with no work, and are an addition to the problem

vakaitikotiko ka sā²⁸ bini rawa tū e na veikoro lelevu ni
habitation-wise and now pile-up get stand in the villages large of
of housing that is piled up in the large working towns.

cakacaka.
work.

E dua na i-dusidusi vinaka e²⁹ na yaga me da³⁰
It one the pointer good it future useful that we
One good pointer it will be useful for us

bau nanuma toka e kē, oyā ni sā³¹ i-mātai ni kā yaga
at-all think-it squat at here that that now first of thing useful
to consider somewhat here, that is that the first thing useful

vei ira na luveda, e na gauna era se³² gone lalai voli
for them the child-our at the time they as-yet child small around
for our children at the time they are still small children around the
place

kina, me ra³³ vakarailasani e na gādē ki na noda veikoro
at-then that they be-made-familiar in the trip to the our villages
is that they be made familiar by trips to our villages

Translation

GET READY WHILE IT'S STILL DAY

'The contest between the cost of wages and the cost of food and goods, as well as the difficulty of finding work for our children leaving school every year, has been a matter of talk for a long time now.

The parents of the children don't rest in their going to discuss with the various individual Government Departments, Councils, companies, and businesses - that is, with their acquaintances there - whether there might be any place for their children who have just passed this or that examination, have got certain good grades, and want to use their learning for the benefit of their parents, their relations, their race, and their country.

But it is regularly a sad fact that some of these searches for work prove to be only a dead end, for there is absolutely no work available in the places the children's parents have gone and made their enquiries.

Now some of the children can return to the village and go on the land; but the greater number really can't cope with a return to the village, for it was never once made familiar to them when they were still growing up, nor were they made familiar in acquaintance with their various relatives living traditional-style in the village.

The normal consequence of this for them is to be drifting around Suva and other European towns, without work, and thus an addition to the housing problem that has accumulated in the large working centres.

It would be useful for us to think a bit on one good point here, and that is that the first thing useful for our children while they are still small is that they be familiarised by trips to our villages'

Commentary

(The numbers have reference to the superscripts in the text.)

1. In view of what follows, this title is clearly figurative. The use is a classic use implying a finishing point before which a certain action should be taken.
2. This is an important use of *sā* and is probably an example of what the linguists writing earlier meant in referring to a 'narrative' use of *sā*. The article could well have started off *e kā ni ...* but this

would make the statement more general. *Sā* makes it more immediate, like saying in English, *'Now it's been a matter of talk for a long time ...'*. The English *'now'* is serving a similar purpose to *sā*.

3. The verb here is nominalised. It is not usual to provide much by way of modification to such a verb - the nominalised verb phrase is kept simple. There is certainly no reason to mark it in this instance.

4. This *sā* could readily be omitted. The author, however, has chosen to indicate a special relevance for this school-leaving. We can easily see why as the article progresses, for what happens to school-leavers is one of its main topics. It is a similar use, then, to that above in 2.

5. The author does not give this sentence prominence with *sā*. It is the children's plight he is concerned about, not the parents'. This sentence illustrates the opposite point to 4 above.

6. Another nominalisation that has no reason to be marked.

7. As in 5, the author is not highlighting this particular clause, even though there is obviously some urgency in the situation. Nor is he wanting to say that the parents are trying to find out whether the children can enter these jobs now as distinct from having been able to at some former time. It was not a relevant question for those children then. Hence he has chosen not to use *sā*.

8. This instance and the following two make for an interesting comparison of the use of *se*, *sā* and \emptyset , in that order. The *se* indicates the children are still in the state of just having got their exams. They haven't yet moved far beyond this new phase in their careers.

9. The *sā* here makes it clear that reaching these grades is a new achievement. It is one in addition that has particular relevance to the context.

10. The author does not wish to indicate any immediacy about this action. The desire is longstanding, presumably. To use *sā* here might imply the same time relation as for 9 above. It might be inferred that the desire to use one's learning started just with the reaching of certain grades, and was not a previously existing disposition.

11. The desire here is simply to use the learning in general. *Sā* would presume a context in which some specific use for the learning

was contemplated. It could also indicate an impatience to put the learning to work immediately.

12. The author leaves this sentence unmarked. He could have used *sā* here somewhat as in 2, and thus made a new focal point in his article. By not doing so, it is tied in more closely with what has gone before.

13. As for 12.

14. It is not a question here of there having been work before but no longer, although that sort of reading is common for *sā* with *sega*, cf. example (7). Rather the fact of no work is a point of particular relevance to this narrative, so the author highlights it. This is perhaps an example of the classical 'definite', 'emphatic' and 'narrative' senses rolled into one. This sentence can be likened too to the English, '*Now there's really absolutely no work*', where the English '*now*' can serve as little else than an additional emphasis marker.

15. A *se* here would imply there had been work available previously. A *sā* might imply there had not. *Sā* could nevertheless have been used to draw attention to the availability of work, somewhat as in 14. The author has chosen, however, not to so emphasise it. Stylistically, it would be questionable coming so soon after another strong *sā*.

16. This *sā* marks the statement as immediately relevant to the present, somewhat like the English perfect.

17. This *sā* plays a role in organising the narrative, somewhat as in 2. We can translate the sentence, '*now some children can return to the village ...*', the '*now*' conveying the desired effect in English. This *sā*, however, also expresses immediate relevance in another way. Though the children have always been physically capable of returning to their villages, their ability to return has particular relevance to this time when they are in difficulty. Hence *sā*.

18. The use of *sā* here would tend to make '*using the land*' a more separate item from '*returning to the village*'. In fact this sentence is meant to be also subordinate to *rawa ni*, hence another *sā* would be most unlikely.

19. This *sā* is a partner to 17, and also to 14.

20. There is no reason to further mark this sentence. The reference is obviously to something very general.

21. This is another typical use of *se*. We are holding our attention back on a situation which has since changed.

22. As in the case of 20, to which it is connected, the reference is to something general.

23. A *sā* here would be poor. The relatives have certainly not just moved into this situation, and there is no other cause to highlight such a very ordinary fact. The reference is to their general life-style over a considerable period.

24. If the author had wanted to make this sentence the culminating point of the various events related earlier, he would have used *sā*. As it is, although the very word '*end*' is mentioned, this final stage is merely presented as next in the series without any build-up. *sā* could also have been used for the 'narrative' purpose already referred to in other examples.

25. The author here is simply stating a fact without putting special weight on it, or contrasting it with a previous situation. It is part of the build-up to 27.

26. The fact that there is no work has already been given considerable emphasis in 14. There is no need to emphasise it again. It is included, almost in passing, as part of the build-up to 27.

27. In this case, unlike 24, the author is using the *sā* to indicate the culmination point of a sequence. The preceding events leading up to this point are just the two immediately preceding ones.

28. This usage is a bit like the English perfect. A state has been reached that has continuing relevance for the present. The author wants to mark this, even though the subject is not taken up again later.

29. Here we have a simple future. A *sā* could have been used to indicate a new item of prominence in the narrative: '*Now it will be useful ...*'. It could also have been used to indicate that this thinking was particularly relevant for us at the present moment. The author chose not to give this idea that prominence, however, (possibly because it is only one of a number of ideas he puts forth in the complete article, only a portion of which is given here). A *sā* might also imply it will be useful as of now, but it would not have been before - an implication the author certainly wouldn't want.

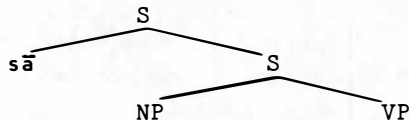
30. There is no reason for further marking here.
31. Putting things in order implies a set of different stages. Since *sā* can indicate the progression from one state to another, it is very commonly used with ordinals such as *i-mātai*.
32. This *se* has similarities with 21. *Se* very often occurs in cross-reference with time phrases, as in this case.
33. This instance is just like 22.

PART IV: GRAMMATICAL NOTES

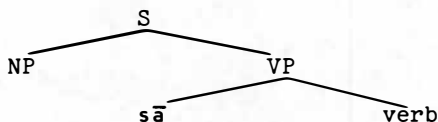
So far we have been concerned chiefly with the relative semantics of \emptyset , *sā* and *se* - with trying to describe what they contribute to the utterance and seeing how they occur in context and relate to 'reality'. Numerous questions immediately arise as to the grammatical relationships entered into by *sā* and *se*. I will mention some of these questions, but not answer them - not just through lack of space, but because much more research is needed into the totality of Fijian grammar in order to provide the backdrop for such answers.

For example, what part of a sentence do *sā* and *se* modify? In phrase-structure terms, is (32)a. or (32)b. (or some other structure) more appropriate?

(32)a.



(32)b.



Perhaps it enters into either relationship, and this could account for some of the different readings given. Thus (32)a. could be the structure behind 'narrative' uses, where it seems that a whole idea is being foregrounded or presented as new, and (32)b. the structure behind 'definite' uses, where it would appear to be the time relation of the verb that is being further specified. At the same time we must be careful not to merely transpose English categories and structures into Fijian. The fact that I have sometimes provided alternative glosses, and have spoken of 'uses' that correspond to what other linguists

described, does not mean that such distinctions exist formally within Fijian grammar. They have been used here as a descriptive device to assist the English speaker. As indicated in Part I, I see the meanings of *sā* and *se* as basically unary, but the way they relate formally with other parts of the utterance must await further research.

It is not clear that there are any notable restrictions on the use of *sā* and *se* according to verb type. As regards the basic agent-patient (or accusative-ergative) verb dichotomy in Fijian (cf. Arms 1974:41), *sā* and *se* occur freely with either class. Similarly, they occur with stative verbs (or adjectives) as with others, though there is still much work to be done on the subclassification of Fijian verbs.

Se occurs very frequently with states or with events and actions that have been modified by a 'stative' auxiliary or particle (*tū*, *toka*, *tiko*, etc., cf. examples (9) and (10)). This raises the question of the grammatical relations existing within the verb phrase itself. Consider some possible phrase-structure trees for the relevant portion of example (10):

(33)a.



(33)b.



(33)c.



(33)d.



Of these possible trees we might expect (33)a. to be more probable than (33)b. or (33)d. However, if we compare examples (8), (9), (10) and (12), and take into account the greater frequency of occurrence of examples like (8), (9) and (10) as distinct from (12), a good argument could be mounted for the tree of (33)c.

Similarly for *sā*. Occurring on most occasions that the word *oti* 'finish' occurs in the verb phrase whether as a main verb or as an auxiliary (or particle), *sā* could be construed as entering into a special relationship with it. When *oti* is occurring as an auxiliary (or particle) therefore as in (35) and (39), we could posit a phrase-structure tree like (33)c.

The close connection between *sā* and *oti* as a main verb is matched by a similar relationship between *se* and *bera* 'not yet', and these provide us with idiomatic constructions.

- (34) *ni (se) bera na qito au raici ira kece na gone vuli,*
when as-yet not-yet the game I see them all the child study
ia, ni (sā) oti na qito au sega ni bau raica e dua
but when now finish the game I not that at-all see-it it one
'Before the game I saw all the students, but after the game I
didn't see a single one'

Se bera na qito and *sā oti na qito* by themselves mean respectively 'the game is not yet (begun)' and 'the game is finished'. In construction with the conjunction *ni* 'when', as in the example, they provide idiomatic expressions for 'before' and 'after' in Fijian. Note, however, that after *ni* in those particular constructions, the *sā* and the *se* can be omitted, apparently with little or no difference in meaning. It should be pointed out that these idioms again characterise for us in a typical way the aspectual differences between *sā* and *se*. *Se* keeps in view the finishing point of a state or event; before that point arrives, the state or event *se* qualifies is 'as yet, meantime' in effect or relevant. *Sā* keeps in view the starting point of a state or event; after (or as of) that point, the state or event *sā* qualifies is 'now, as of now' in effect or relevant.

Below is another idiomatic use of *se* with *bera* and *sā* with *oti*:

- (35)A. *Se bera ni o vodo e na bāvelo.*
as-yet not-yet that you ride in the canoe
 B. *E sega. Au sā vodo oti kina.*
it not I now ride finish in-there
 A. 'You haven't yet ridden in the canoe.'
 B. 'Not so. I've already ridden in it.'

Se bera ni is a typical way of saying that a state or event is 'not yet' in effect, *sā ... oti* is a typical way of saying it is 'now or already finished'. Note that although *oti* can occur as an auxiliary (or particle), there is no corresponding auxiliary (or particle) for *bera*.

I have treated here only the most obvious co-occurrence preferences for *sā* and *se*. Their relationship with time phrases (already referred to above) and with other pre- and post-verbal particles, of which there are very many, needs further investigation. Of special interest are *tale* 'again', *baci* 'yet again', *mada* 'mind, please, first', *taumada*

'foremost' and *tei 'first, meantime'*, which is a formal word occurring only in contingent and imperative contexts, is closely synonymous with *se*, but co-occurs readily with \emptyset , *sā*, or *se*.

Reference has already been made in Part III (cf. end of introduction, and superscripts 5, 7, 17, 19 and 20) to restrictions on the occurrence of *sā* and *se* in sentences introduced by *e sega ni ... 'it is not that ...'* and *e rawa ni ... 'it is possible that ...'*. Apparently the verbs *sega* and *rawa* enter into such close construction with the verb in the clause dependent on *ni* that the two clauses are regarded as virtually one. It is therefore not possible to have *sā* and/or *se* occurring in both the upper and lower sentence at the same time (except for the special case of *se* with *sega* as in example (36) below). However, they may occur in either, apparently with little or no difference in meaning. The upper spot is usually preferred.

- (36) *au se sega mada ni se ralci koya vakadua e llu*
I as-yet not mind that as-yet see him once at before
'I never saw him once before'

This example is an exception to the above rule. One *se* is indeed redundant, for either can be omitted without changing the meaning. Some Fijians would claim that (36) is not really 'correct', but such sentences with *se* and *sega* are of common occurrence.

To conclude this section, the following points of grammar should be noted.

- (37)a. *koya* OR *ko koya* '*(it's) him*'
 b. *sal koya* OR *sā ko koya* '*it's him*'
 c. *se(i) koya* OR *se ko koya* '*it's still him*'

These structures are identificational ones. All the pronouns and all proper nouns can be used in this way. The contrasts between a., b. and c. here are parallel to those already described in Part II. What is of particular interest, however, is the grammar. *E* does not occur with these identificational sentences, and in the first alternatives the vowel *i* is appended to the *sā* and *se* (though it is optional and in fact usually omitted from the *se* form). The vowel *a* of *sā* is thereby shortened, thus giving us an example of short *sa* (see below).

- (38) *sā ra bluta otl*
now they leave-it finish
'they have already left it'
- (39) *se'u qai yaco wale gā mal*
as-yet-I then arrive only just hither
'I've only just arrived'

In these examples the subject pronoun is occurring after the *sā* and *se* rather than before. All the subject pronouns can invert in this way around *sā* and *se*; also around the past-tense marker *ā*. Where a tense marker and a tense-aspect marker occur together (that is, where *ā sā*, *ā se*, *sā na*, and *se na* occur), the pronouns invert around the first element only (e.g. *ā ra se lako*, *se ra na lako*). The first person exclusive pronouns, however, prefer to come after the second element (e.g. *ā se keimami lako*, *sā na keimami lako*).

This inversion does not correlate with any real semantic difference, but is a matter of style, and occurs much more frequently in informal than in formal contexts.

When the pronouns invert in this way, all except the first person exclusive ones tend to cliticise onto *ā*, *sā*, and *se*, becoming one word with them. This has the effect of making the *ā* and *sā* short (e.g. *a'ra lako*, *sa'ra lako*). The same happens when *ā se* and *sā na* occur together; they tend to be pronounced *ase* and *sana*. These examples are just the application of a more general rule of Fijian whereby a primary or secondary stress can sometimes supplant length. (An example would be *sā butako* '*it is stolen*', where the *sā* might be given a secondary stress to emerge as *sà butáko*.)

It is clear that there are many instances where *sā* will actually be phonologically realised as short *sa*, and it is this fluctuation which has given rise to the confusion about the existence of *se* (see Part I).

CONCLUSION

Aspect - a dimension of the way men view things - is obviously an important part of any language. It would certainly be interesting to know what aspectual distinctions are held in common throughout the Austronesian family or certain branches of it. In the Romance languages, for instance, the contrast between imperfect and perfect and/or aorist has existed for a long time. Before we can determine such things for Austronesian however, we must have a good understanding of what aspects exist in the individual languages.

Through a description of the situations and contexts in which they are used and by providing some points of grammar, I have attempted in this paper to improve our understanding of the Fijian tense-aspect markers *sā* and *se*. Much work still remains. I hope, however, that some elucidation has been achieved. In particular, I would hope that *sā*'s little brother, *se*, will get the full recognition, as a particle in its own right, that it deserves.

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