

I. The silence of the goats (I/I)

When Esperanto speakers want to specify the time of an event simply with respect to current time, they use simple tenses:

Past: mangis (ate), Present: mangas (eat), Future: mangos (will eat) When they want to specify the time of an event with respect to another (anchor) point in time they use a suffix and an ending. The ending, taken from the simple form indicates the anchor time. The suffix indicates past, present or future with respect to the anchor time. The form of the verb is Root-X(n)t-Ys, where: X and Y are a, o, or l for present, past, and future respectively.

X(n)t is a suffix that indicates the time of the event in relation to the anchor time expressed by the ending Ys. Ys is the ending which indicates the anchor point in time (in relation to the present moment) The absence of n in a X(n)t suffix indicates passive voice; its presence indicates active voice.

The time relations shown by the morphemes used in the material:

o-(n)t — future	o-s - future
i-(n)t — past	i-s - past
a-(n)t — ?	a-s - present

8. La kapro manĝontos. ont+os = future in relation to future, active voice.

The goat will be going to eat = The goat will be about to eat .

9. La kapro manĝitas. it+as = past in relation to present, passive voice

The goat has been eaten = The goat was eaten.

10. The goat was eating. Present in relation to past, active voice. In the material, there is no suffix indicating the present tense in relation to another point in time, but it can be detected using the table above – a(n)t.

La kapro manĝantis.

11. The goat is being eaten. Present in relation to present, passive voice.

La kapro manĝatas.

Comment: the fact is, that the complex forms used in the problem, which are only used in spoken Esperanto, are shortened from the standard form **esti** (to be) + **participle**, f.e. „**La kapro manĝontis**” is shortened from **La kapro estis manĝonta** (was + future participle)

(with contributions from Anatole Gershman)

