Aspects in Manipuri and Kannada: A Contrastive Analysis

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Introduction

Aspects are considered as the beginning or duration or completion or repetition of the action of the main verb. The aspect may be broadly classified into two types, namely, progressive and perfect aspects. This paper tries to bring out the differences and similarities between the aspectual systems of Manipuri and Kannada.

Manipuri belongs to the Kuki-Chin group of the Tibeto-Burman sub-family of the Sino-Tibetan family of languages. Manipuri, otherwise called Meiteilon, is the mother tongue of the major ethnic groups, i.e., the Meitei, Meitei Pangals (Meitei Muslims) and the Bamons (Meitei Brahmins), mostly residing in the valley region of the state of Manipur, one of the seven states of north-east India. It is the main common medium of communication among 33 different mother tongues of different tribes in Manipur and also among other people inhabiting in Manipur. It is being used as the lingua-franca in the state of Manipur and is the state official language of Manipur.

Kannada belongs to the southern group of the Dravidian family which is one of the four language families of India (Andronov, 1969). It is the mother tongue of Kannada people residing in the southern states of India, mostly in Karnataka and is the state official language of Karnataka. No contrastive study has been done on the aspectual systems of Manipuri and Kannada.

Manipuri has two types of aspects, namely, progressive and perfect aspects. Each category may again be classified into two sub-categories as non-future and future since Manipuri

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doesn't have a clear tense formation. The progressive non-future sub-category has present and past forms which will be realized by the temporal particles.

The following diagram number 1 shows the classification of Manipuri aspect.

```
                            Aspect
              ┌────────────────┴────────────────────┐
         Progressive                             Perfect
      ┌───────┴────────┐                            │
 Non-future          Future                         │
      │         /-rəm-gəni/ ~ /-ləm-gəni/           │
      │                                             │
  Present                              ┌────────────┴───────┐
/-ri ~ -li/ and /-rək-li ~ lək-li/     │                    │
                                   Non-future             Future
          Past
  /-rəm-li ~ -ləm-li/
  /-re ~ -le/, /-khre/, /-rəm-le ~ -ləm-le/ and /-ru-re ~ -lu-re/
```

Future

/-rəm-lə-gəni ~ -ləm-lə-gəni/, /-rək-lə-gəni ~ -lək-lə-gəni/, /-ru-gədəbəni ~ lu-gədəbəni/, /-rə-gəni ~ -lə-gəni/ and /-khrə-gəni/
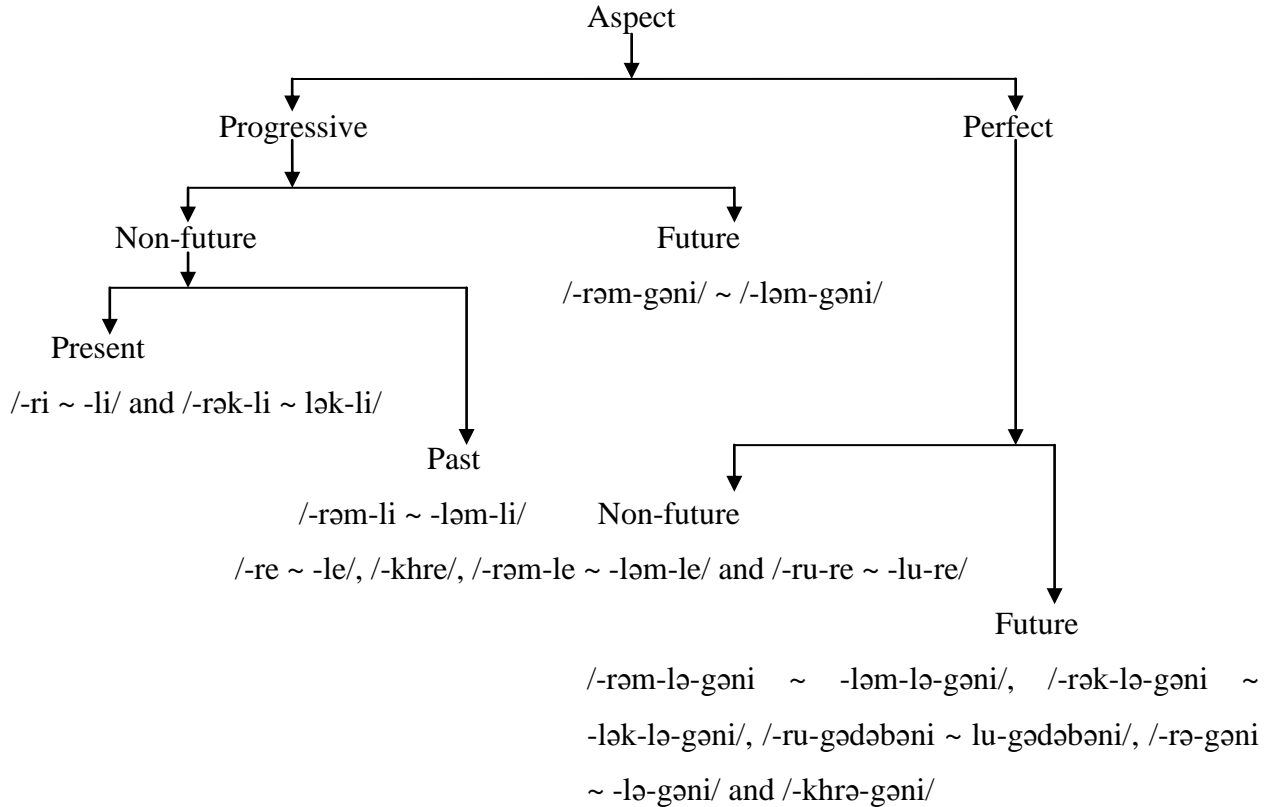
Diagram 1: Classification of Manipuri Aspects

Since Kannada has three tenses, the same is reflected in the aspects also. Both the categories may be classified into three sub-categories as past, present and future. Since the aspectual markers end with /-iru/, the tense markers are selected based on this and hence, the markers are same whatever be the main verb (Rajaram, 1967). The structure of perfect aspect is VP + -iru-tense + PNG and the structure of progressive aspect is V+ -uttaa-iru-tense + PNG.

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The following diagram number 2 shows the classification of Kannada aspects.

```
                          Aspect
                            │
              ┌─────────────┴─────────────┐
              ▼                             ▼
         Progressive                     Perfect
      /verb+ -uttaa-+-iru-/             /VP+-iru-/
              │                             │
      ┌───────┼───────┐                     │
      ▼       ▼       ▼                      │
    Past   Present  Future                   │
                                    ┌────────┼────────┐
                                    ▼        ▼        ▼
                                  Past    Present   Future
```
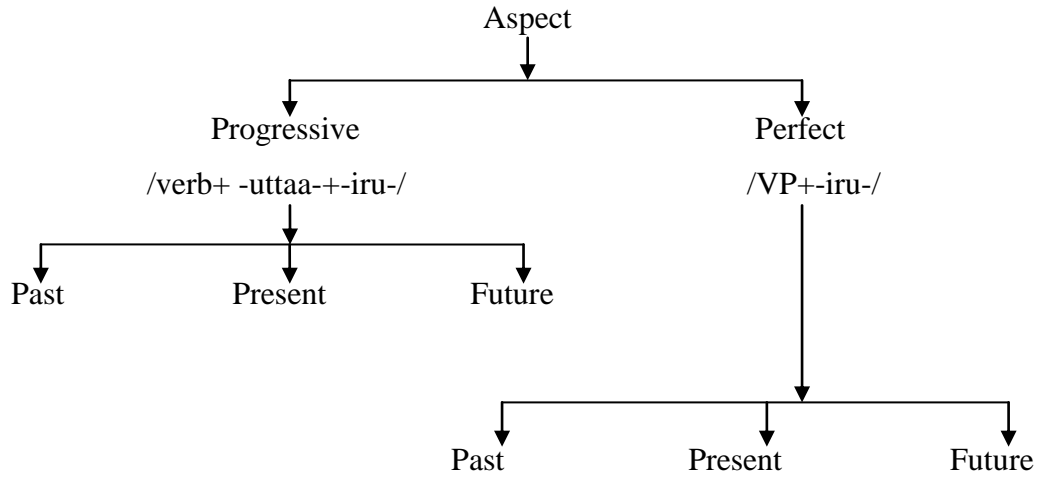
Diagram 2: Classification of Kannada Aspects

Progressive Aspect in Manipuri

Manipuri has future and non-future tenses (Bhat and Ningomba, 1995 and Madhubala, 1979) and hence, in the case of progressive aspect also, this distinction is made. The progressive aspect markers remain the same for all the three persons, irrespective of number and gender.

Examples:

1. əi ŋa ca-ri.

   I fish eat-prg.asp.

   'I am eating fish.' (I psn.sg.)

2. nəŋ ŋa ca-ri.

   you (non-hon.sg/pl.) fish eat-prg.asp.

   'You are eating fish.' (II.psn.sg/pl)

3. məhak ŋa ca-ri.

   he/she fish eat-prg.asp.

   'He/she is eating fish.' (III psn.sg.)

The progressive can indicate that an action is being carried out in the past, present or future (Shobhana, 1997).

Non-Future Progressive

In the non-future category, the present and past progressive aspects are there.

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Present Progressive Aspect

The use of /-li ~ -ri/ indicates that the action is continuing (Yashwanta, 2000) and there is no indication of the time of beginning of the action.

Examples:

4. ima-nə həujik ɕak thoŋ-li.

    my mother-nom. now meals cook-prs.prg.asp.

    'My mother is cooking meals now.'

5. nupaməca-siŋ-nə həujik hoki sannə-ri.

    boy-pl.-nom.   now hockey play-prs.prg.asp.

    'The boys are playing hockey now.'

There is no progressive negative for the suffix /-li ~ -ri/ but the simple non-future negative is used.

Example:

6. ima-nə həujik ɕak thoŋ-de.

    my mother-nom. now meals cook-prs.prg.neg.

    'My mother does not cook meals now.'

The addition of /-rək- ~ -lək-/ to the marker /-li/ indicates that the action began in the past and is still continuing.

Examples:

7. ima-nə əyuk-təgi ɕak thoŋ-lək-li.

    my mother-nom. morning-from meals cook-prs.prg.asp.

    'My mother is cooking meals since morning.'

8. nupaməca-siŋ-nə puŋ əhum-dəgi hoki sannə-rək-li.

    boy-pl.-nom. three O'clock-from hockey play-prs.prg.asp.

    'The boys are playing hockey since three O'clock.'

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Past Progressive Aspect

The use of /-rəm-li ~ -ləm-li/ indicates that the action was continuing in the past time. It should be noted that these markers do not show the tense in the verb as discussed in the simple future and non-future tenses.

Examples:

9.   əi-nə ŋəraŋ yəukhibədə məkhoi thəbək təu-rəm-li.

   I-nom. yesterday reach-when they work do-pst.prg.asp.

   'When I reached yesterday, they were working.'

10.   əi-nə nəhal yəukhibədə məkhoi thəbək təu-rəm-li.

   I-nom. day before yesterday reach-when they work do-pst.prg.asp.

   'When I reached day before yesterday, they were working.'

When /-rəm- ~ -ləm-/ is used in the past progressive, the negative is formed with /-de/ as in the following sentence.

11.   əi-nə ŋəraŋ yəukhibədə məkhoi thəbək təu-rəm-de.

   I-nom. yesterday reach-when they work do-pst.prg.neg.

   'When I reached yesterday they were not working.'

Future Progressive

Future progressive aspect takes the marker /-rəm-gəni ~ -ləm-gəni/. The occurrence of these markers is phonologically conditioned; the marker /-rəm-gəni/ occurs after vowels and /-ləm-gəni/ occurs after consonants.

Examples:

12.   əi-nə cətlubədə məhak yum-də thəbək təu-rəm-gəni.

   I-nom. go-when he/she   house-loc. work do-fut.prg.asp.

   'When I go he will be working in the house.'

13.   məhak-nə kəurəkpədə əikhoi isəi sək-ləm-gəni.

   he/she-nom. call-when we song sing-fut.prg.asp.

   'When he/she calls, we will be singing.'

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For the future progressive negative, /-loi/ is used in the place of /-gəni ~ -kəni/ as in the following sentence.

14. əi-nə cətlubədə məhak yum-də thəbək təu-rəm-loi.

I-nom. go-when he/she   house-loc. work do-fut.prg.neg.

'When I go he will not be working in the house.'

Progressive Aspect in Kannada

Progressive aspect is otherwise called 'continuous tense' in the traditional grammars. The progressive aspect is marked by the auxiliary verb /-iru-/ which is added to the verb + uttaa+. The verb stems with the auxiliary /-iru-/ can be conjugated for all the three tenses and all persons. In other words, the conjugation is effected on the basis of the auxiliary verb /-iru-/.

Past Progressive Aspect

The auxiliary verb 'iru' is conjugated in the past tense as iddaa for avanu 'he' as the subject and is added to the progressive stem.

Examples:

1. avanu kelasa maaDuttaa idda.

he (non-hon.sg.) work do-prog.stem +-prg.aux-+pst.t-PNG

'He was doing the work.'

2. naanu doosa tintaa idde.

I   dosa   eat-prog. stem-prg.aux+-pst.t-PNG

'I was eating dosa.'

Present Progressive Aspect

The auxiliary verb 'iru' is conjugated in the present tense as idiini for naanu 'I' as the subject and is added to the progressive stem.

Examples:

3. naanu kelasa maaDtaa idiini.

I   work do- prog. stem-prg.aux+-pst.t-PNG

'I am doing the work.'

4. huDugaru taragatiyalli summane nagtaa iddaru.

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boys   class–in   for nothing laugh- prog. stem-prg.aux+-pst.t-PNG

'The boys were just laughing in the class.'

Future Progressive Aspect

       The auxiliary verb 'iru' is conjugated in the future tense or habitual form as irtiini for naanu 'I' as the subject and is added to the progressive stem.

Examples:

    5.   avanu naaval oodtaa irtaane.

        he (non-hon.sg.) novel read-prog. stem-prg.aux+-fut.t-PNG

        'He will be reading a novel.'

    6.   avaLu dinaa illige bartaa irtaale.

        she   daily here come-prog. stem-prg.aux+-fut.t-PNG

        'She will be coming here daily.'

   In Kannada illa 'not', iralilla 'was not' and iralla 'will not' are added to the progressive stem to indicate present, past and future progressive negatives respectively. The progressive negatives are used in the sentences as follows.

    7.   avanu bartaa illa.

        he (non-hon.sg) come-prg.stem prs.neg.

        'He is not coming.'

    8.   avanu bartaa iralilla.

        he (non-hon.sg) come-prg.stem pst.neg.

        'He was not coming.'

    9.   avanu bartaa iralla.

        he (non-hon.sg) come-prg.stem fut.neg.

        'He will not be coming.'

Perfect Aspect in Manipuri

       Since Manipuri has future and non-future tenses, that is reflected in the formation of perfect aspect also.

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Non-future Perfect

There are four markers to denote non-future perfect aspect.

/-re ~ -le/

        The marker /-re ~ -le/ conveys the meaning of completed action (Yashwanta, 2000) and is used in the conjugation with all the three persons. Russel (2007) adds the marker /-khre/ also in this group.

Examples:

   1.   əi-nə thəbək-tu təu-re.

       I-nom. work-det. do-non-fut.prf.asp.

       'I have done the work.'

   2.   məhak-nə nobel-du pa-re.

       he/she-nom. novel-det. read-non-fut.prf.asp.

       'He/she has read the novel.'

/-khre/

        The marker /-khre/ is used to indicate definiteness of the completion of action and is used only with the third person.

 Example:

   3.   məkhoi yum-də cət-khre.

       they   house-dat. go-non.fut.prf.asp.

       'They have gone to the house.'

       There is no negative construction for the above type of affirmative sentences.

/-rəm-le ~ -ləm-le/

        The marker /-rəm-le ~ -ləm-le/ denotes the past action connected to an action in the past time itself.

Examples:

   4.   pulis-nə məkhoi-bu phu-rəm-le.

       police-nom. them-acc. beat-non-fut.prf.asp.

       'The police have beaten them.'

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5. əi lakpədə nəkhoi tum-ləm-le.

    I   come-when you (pl.) sleep-non-fut.prf.asp.

    'When I came you have slept.'

/-ru-re ~ -lu-re/

   /-ru- ~ -lu-/ when added before the perfect aspect marker /-re ~ -le/ denotes the location of the action. If an exact location is used to show the place of occurrence of the action these markers are used.

Examples:

6. əi hotel-də cak ca-ru-re.

    I   hotel-loc. meals eat-non-fut.prf.asp.

    'I have taken meals in the hotel.'

7. əi məkhoi-gi yum-də cət-lu-re.

    I   their-gen. house-loc. go-non-fut.prf.asp.

    'I have gone to their house.'

   The non-future negative perfect is formed with /-dre ~ -tre/ except for the construction with /-khre/ as in the following sentences.

8. əi-nə thəbək-tu təu-dre.

    I-nom. work-det. do-non-fut.prf.neg.

    'I have not done the work.'

9. əi məkhoi-gi yum-də cət-lu-dre.

    I   their-poss. house-loc. go-non-fut.prf.neg.

    'I have not gone to their house.'

Future Perfect

   /-rəm-lə-gəni ~ -ləm-lə-gəni/, /-rək-lə-gəni ~ -lək-lə-gəni/, /-ru-gədəbəni ~ -lu-gədəbəni/, /-rə-gəni ~ -lə-gəni/ and /-khrə-gəni/ are the future perfect markers. It is to be noted that the marker /-gən-i ~ -kən-i/ is the future tense marker.

Examples:

10. məkhoi tum-ləm-lə-gəni.

    they   sleep-fut.prg.asp.

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'They would have slept.'

The future perfect denotes an action not completed in the past as in the following sentence.

11. əi məkhoi-gi yum-də cət-lu-gədəbəni. (ədubu cət-lu-dre.)

    I they-poss. house-dat. go-fut.prf.asp.

    'I would have gone to their house.' (but I have not gone.)

The future perfect denotes an expected action to be done in future also, if a future time particle is used in the sentence.

Example:

12. məhak hayeŋ sigumkandə cennəi-də cət-lə-gəni.

    he/she tomorrow at this time Chennai-dat. go-fut.prf.asp.

    'He/she would have gone to Chennai at this time tomorrow.'

    If the marker /-khrə-/ is used instead of /-rə- ~ -lə-/, it denotes definiteness of the action.

Example:

13. məhak hayeŋ sigumkandə cennəi-də cət-khrə-gəni.

    he/she tomorrow at this time Chennai-dat. go-fut.prf.asp.

    'He/she would have gone to Chennai at this time tomorrow.'

The corresponding negative sentences are formed by substituting /-roi/ in the place of /-gəni ~ -kəni/.

Examples:

14. məhak sao-rəm-lə-roi.

    he/she angry-fut.prf.neg.

    'He/she would not have got angry.'

15. məhak cak ca-rəm-lə-roi.

    he/she meals eat-fut.prf.neg.

    'He/she would not have eaten meals.'

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However, future perfect negative is not possible if there is a time particle and the marker /-khre/ is used.

Perfect Aspect in Kannada

The perfect is used when the completed action or event or state has implications for a subsequent action occurring in the present time (Renuga, 1997). In the time axis the past may be connected to the present, the past or the future. In Kannada /-iru/ is the auxiliary verb added to the verbal participle form of the main verb to show perfect aspect. The conjugation is effected on the basis of the verb 'iru' (Halemane, 1989).

Past Perfect Aspect

The past perfect is used when there is reference to an action completed in the past (Sridhar, 1990). The auxiliary verb 'iru' is conjugated as /idda/ for 'he' as the subject.

Examples:

1. avanu nan manege bandidda.

    he (non-hon.sg.) my house-dat. come-VP-prf.asp-pst.t.-PNG

    'He had come to my house.'

2. avaru film nooDiddaare.

    they   film see-VP-prf.asp-pst.t.-PNG

    'They had seen the film.'

Present Perfect Aspect

The present perfect denotes an action done in the past which has relevance to the present time. The auxiliary verb 'iru' is conjugated as /idda/ for 'he' as the subject.

Examples:

3. avanu oLLeya kathe barediddaane.

    he (non-hon.sg.) good story write-VP-prf.asp-prs.t-PNG

    'He has written a good story.'

4. avaru namma manege bandidaare .

    they   our   house-dat. come-VP-prf-prs.t.-PNG

    'They have come to our house.'

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Future Perfective Aspect

The future perfect denotes an incomplete action of the past. The auxiliary verb 'iru' is conjugated as /iruttaane/ for 'he' as the subject.

Examples:

5. makkaLu eeLuvasTaralli appa hoogiruttaane.

    kids   get up-before   dad   go- VP-prf-prs.t.-PNG

    'Dad will have gone by the time the kids get up.'

    The future perfect denotes an expected but incomplete action.

6. avanu maduvege bandiruttaane. (aadare bandilla.)

    he (non-hon.sg.) marriage-dat. come-VP-prf.asp-fut.t-PNG

    'He would have come to the marriage.' (But he did not come.)

In Kannada illa 'not', iralilla 'was not' and iralla 'will not' are added to the verbal participle form to indicate present, past and future perfect negatives respectively. The perfect negatives are used in sentences as follows.

7. avanu bandilla.

    he (non-hon.sg.) come-VP-prs.neg.

    'He has not come.'

8. avanu bandiralilla.

    he (non-hon.sg.) come-VP-pst.neg.

    'He had not come.'

9. avanu bandiralla.

    he (non-hon.sg.) come-VP-fut.neg.

    'He would not have come.'

Conclusion

The aspects in Manipuri and Kannada are broadly classified as progressive and perfect aspect. In Manipuri both progressive and perfect aspects are classified as non-future and future.

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Since Kannada has three tenses, the same is reflected in both progressive and perfect aspect also. This is a major difference between the Manipuri and Kannada progressive aspectual systems.

In Manipuri both the perfect and progressive aspect markers are added directly to the verb root whereas in Kannada the perfect aspect marker is added to the verbal participle form of the main verb and the progressive marker is added to the progressive stem. Another contrasting feature is that in Kannada the subject agrees with the verb and hence the PNG markers are added after the tense marker.

In Manipuri there are lots of markers to denote different functions and uses in both progressive and perfect aspects; there are some phonologically conditioned allomorphs also. This kind of formation is not there in Kannada.

Negative formation in Kannada is different from that of Manipuri.

This study will be of much help to the second language learners, teachers, material producers, translators, et al.

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