Earlier Works on Tense and Aspect in Manipuri (Meeteilon)

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Abstract

Meeteilon is a tenseless language. But the traditional grammarians like KalachandShastri, Nandalal Sharma and Dwijamani Dev claimed that Meeteilon has tense that each Present, Past and Future is further analyzed into four units: Indefinite, Continuous, Perfect and Perfect Continuous. They analysed the language on the framework of Sanskrit and English languages. This claim is challenged by modern linguists like Bhat and Ningomba (1997) and Madhubala (1979). They observed that Meeteilon shows two tense distinctions as future and non-future (both past and present). This claim is further challenged by linguists like Thoudam (1991) and Mahabir (1988) arguing that Manipuri verbs are not morphologically marked by tense. Thoudam (1988) observes that the tense system found in Greek, Sanskrit, Latin, etc., is not found in Manipuri language. Tense, in this language, is shown by adverbial time element, not by morphological markers on the verb.

Keywords: Meeteilon, Tense, Aspect, Past, Present, Future.

Introduction

In this paper, I will present a brief review on the earlier works of tense and aspect by KalachandShastri (1971), M.S.Ningomba (1992), Nandalal Sharma (1976), P.C.Thoudam (1991), Singh (2000), Chelliah (1997), D.N.S Bhatt and M.S. Ningomba (1997) and observed their different opinions. This work mainly involved translating their books which were written in Bengali script into English.

1. KalachandShastri (1971)

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KalachandShastri in his book *Manipuri VyakaranKaumudi* published in Bengali script classifies Meeteilon tenses as having Past, Present and Future which are further subdivided into various subclass as shown below with examples:

1.1. Present Tense (BartamanKal)

i)   Present Indefinite: It expresses an action which is done at an unspecified time. *cai - caie, pai – paie, hai – haie* etc.

ii)   Present Progressive: It expresses an action which is going on and not yet completed. *cari – cari, hairi – hairi, thək-li*

iii)   Present Perfect: It expesses an action which has just completed. *carɛ – carɛ, pairɛ – pairɛ, hairɛ – hairɛ..*

iv)   Present Continuous: It expresses an action which has started and going on till now from that time. *čari – čarək-li, thəkli-thəkləkli*

1.2. PastTense (Bhutkal

i)   Past Indefinite: It shows the completion of an event at an unspecified time. Eg.*carəmmi[ca+rəm+mi], thəkləmmi [thək+ləm+mi]*

ii)   Past Progressive: It shows that an event occurred in the past but it was not completed. Eg. *carəmli, thəkləmli.*

iii)   Past Perfect: It expresses an action which is done in the past and has completed. Eg.*carəmle, thəklamle, hairəmle.*

iv)   Past continuous: It expresses an action which went on from that time till another. Eg.*cakhi - cakhirəmmi, paikhi – paikhirəmmi*

1.3.Future Tense

i)   Future Indefinite: It expresses an action which is going to happen at a coming time. Eg. *cagəni.*

ii)   Future Progressive: It expresses an action which is going to happen and carried on continuously at a coming time.
Eg.*cadunəleigəni* - will keep on eating,
thaktunaleigəni - will keep on drinking.

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iii) Future Perfect: It expresses an action which is certain to happen and completed at a coming time. Eg. *caragani, tʰəklagani.*

iv) Future Continuous : It expresses an action which is going to be started and carried on continuously at a coming time. Eg. *cakhragani, cathakhragani.*

2. Nandalal Sharma (1976)

Sharma in his book *Meeteilon* which was published in Bengali script in 1976 claims Meeteilon as having the three types of tense: Present, Past and Future.

2.1. Present Tense (BartamanKal)

According to Sharma, the simple present indefinite tense gives rise to three forms of construction. They are:

1. Participial present indefinite – This form is produced by adding the finite verbal suffix -*i*to the verbal root or the affixed root. Eg.,*cai* [√*ca*, eat + *i*, finite verbal suffix] 'He eats.'

2. Infinitival present indefinite – This form is produced by adding the auxiliary finite verb -*ni*to the infinitive. The infinitive form is form by adding the infinitival infinite verbal suffix -*pa* to the verbal or affixed verbal root. *cabəni* [*cabə*, infinitive +*ni,* auxiliary finite verb; *cabə*, infinitive=√*ca*+*pa*, infinitival infinite verbal suffix] 'He eats.'

3. Interrogative present indefinite – This form is produced by adding the auxiliary finite verb –*ke, -no, -lə* to the infinitive or the affixed infinitive. *cabəge, cabəno,cabərə*[*cabəge/cabəno/cabərə= cabə*, infinitive+*ke/no/lə,* auxiliary finite verbs] 'Does he eat?'

2.2. Past Tense (Bhutkal)

The three forms of simple past indefinite tense is formed by adding –*khi*and -*lam* to the three forms of present indefinite constructions.

1. Participial past indefinite eg.,*cakhi, carəmmi* [√*ca*+*khi/lam*, past indefinite tense infixes +*i*, finite verbal suffix] 'He ate.'

2. Infinitival past indefinite eg.,*cakhibəni, cakhirəmni* [*cakhibə/carəmbə*, infinitives +*ni*, auxiliary finite verbs] 'He ate.'

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3. Interrogative past indefinite eg., *cakhibəge, carəmbəge, carəmbəno, cakhibəno*
[*cakhibə/carəmbə*, infinitives+*ke/no/lə*, auxiliary infinitive verbs]

2.3. Future Tense (Bhavisyakal)

The simple future indefinite tense gives rise to two forms of future indefinite constructions.

1. Participial future indefinite – It is formed by adding *kəni* to the verbal root or the affixed verbal root. eg.,*cagəni* [√*ca,*eat+*kəni*, finite verbal suffix] 'He will eat.'
2. Interrogative future indefinite - It is formed by adding auxiliary finite verbs *ke, no, lə*, to the participial future indefinite forms.eg., *cagədrə* [cɑgəni, participial future indefinite +*ke/no/lə*, auxiliary finite verbs]'Will he eat?'

3. P.C.Thoudam (1991)

P.C.Thoudam in his book *Remedial Manipuri* which was published in Bengali script in 1991 claimed that Meeteilon does not have a Tense system like those found in Greek, Sanskrit and Latin languages. It is expressed through other words in Meeteilon.

Examples:

(1) ei   ŋaraŋ   keitʰel   kai
    I   yesterday   market   go
    'I went to the market yesterday.'

(2) ei   hɑojik   keitʰel   kai
    I   now   market   go
    'I go to the market now.'

(3) ei   hayeŋ   keitʰel   kɑ-gəni
    I   tomorrow   market   go-FUT
    'I am going to the market tomorrow.'

In the examples given above the sentences are expressed in different forms of tenses. The sentence with *ŋaraŋ* shows that the event had occurred in the past, *haojik* expressed the occurrence of the sentence in present tense i.e. at the moment. And the sentence with *hayeŋ* shows that the event is going to happen in the coming time .i.e., it expressed the future time.

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Thoudam argued that while discussing tense and aspect, modality cannot be left out in Meeteilon. In the word *ca-sin-min-nə-khi-ru-nu-ko*, other than the root *ca*, the rest of the suffixes which gets attached to the root are all suffixes which expressed modality in Meeteilon. There are no tense or aspect markers here but it shows that the event had not occurred yet due to the presence of the suffix *–ru.*

According to Thoudam, Aspect in Meeteilon does not expressed time, rather it expresses Infinitive, Continuative, Completive, Non-realisation, Causation, etc. For example, the words *cai* 'eat', *cətli* 'going', *touwi* 'doing', are all in Infinitive aspect forms since it is not possible to say when the event of eating has started and how long it will continue. And in *cari* 'eating', *pairi* 'flying' etc., the event of eating is going on at the moment and it is not possible to say when it is going to be completed so it is said to be in Continuative aspect forms. And when the event is completed .i.e., *care* 'eaten', *toure* 'done', it is in the Completive aspect form. This shows the completion of an event which means that the work is done showing that it is Realised. In this way *cətke* 'will go', *cage* 'will eat' shows that the event has not occurred yet and may not occurred also, putting it in the Non Realised aspect state. If an event or action has been made to occurred it is referred to as Causation. Eg.*cahənle* 'made to eat'

The markers *–i, -li, -re, -ge, -le* which were earlier considered as tense markers are all aspect markers according to Thoudam.

According to Thoudam (1980) aspects in Meiteilon are classified into 7 different types. Theyare given with examples as follows-

3.1.Infinitive/habitual/stative/truth: *-i*

(4) əy   cak   cà-y(cà+i)
     i   rice   eat-infinitive
     'I eat rice.'

3.2.Continuative:*–li, -mi*

(5) əy   càk   cà-li
     i   rice   eat-continue
     'I am eating rice.'

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3.3.Completive: *-le, -me*
(6) əy   càk   cà   le
    'I   rice   eat+completive (I ate rice)'

(7) Root+Modality+Aspect+Aspect+Aspect
  cà +chən+həl+ləm+me
  'eat+in+causative+start+completive'

3.4.Realization: -lə
(8) Root+Aspect+Aspect+Aspect+Aspect
    ca+həl+lək+lə +ge
    'eat+causation+start+realization+non-realization.'

3.5.Non-realization: *-ge, -ke, -gə-*
(9) əy   càk   cà-ge
        I   eat   rice-non-realization
    'I will eat rice.'

(10) əy cà gəni
        I eat-non-realization-copula
    'I will eat.'

3.6.Causative:-*hən-, -həl*
(11)   əy-nə   ma-bu   càk   cà-hal-li
        I-by   him-to   rice   eat+cause+continue'
        'I made him eat rice.'

3.7.Started earlier/in process: *-ləm-, -lək*
(12) Root+Aspect+Aspect+Aspect
    cà+həl+lək+li
    'eat+causation+start+continue'

[Here, -khi is used as definite/certainty modal
e.g. Root+Aspect+Modality
    ca+hən+khi
    'eat+causation+definitive']

4. M.S.Ningomba (1992)

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M.S.Ningomba in his Bengali scripted book 'Meiteilonmit', classifies Meeteilon tense as having Future and Non Future tense which is further subclassified into past tense and present tense.

4.1. Future Tense: The suffix *-kani/-gani* is attached to any kinds of root.

      (13)   əŋaŋ   ədu   lɑk-kani
                child   DET   come-FUT
                'The child will be coming.'

      (14)   huinao   əsi   cɑo-gani
                puppy   DET   big-FUT
                'The puppy will grow bigger.'

4.2. Non Future tense: It is further classified into Past tense and Present tense according to the root in which it gets attached which may expressed process verb, action verb or stative verb.

4.2.1. Past Tense

(15)   caoba-nə   tomba pʰu-i
       chaoba-NM   tomba   beat-PRES
       'Chaoba beats Tomba.'

(16)   tomba   bol   kao-wi
       tomba   ball   kick-PRES
       'Tomba kicks the ball.'

(17)   caobi-khoi   kombirei   sɑt-li
       chaobi-PL   kombirei   bloom-PRES
       'Kombirei blooms at Chaobi's place.'

In the above examples the action verbs in (15) and (16) i.e. *phu-i, kao-wi* and the process verb in (17) i.e., *sat-li* expresses that the work or action is performed before the time of speaking. Therefore the verbs in these sentences have been referred to as past tense verbs.

4.2.2. Present Tense

(18) sumaŋ   əsi   pɑk-ii
      courtyard   DET   broad-PRES
      'This courtyard is quite broad.'

(19) pɑkʰəŋ   əsi   wɑŋ-ii
      bachelor   DET   tall-PRES
      'This young man is quite tall .'

(20) cu   əsi   tʰum-mii
      sugar   DET   sweet-PRES
      'This sugarcane is sweet.'

In the above examples, the verb expresses the character of a thing or a person. Such characteristics or features of a person or a thing remains the same at the time of speaking too. So, such types of tense is referred to as present tense.

4.2.2.1. Present Perfect

In Present Perfect, the suffix -le has been attached to a root to express that a work is completed. The suffix -le changes into different forms as shown in the examples given below:

(21) leima   lairik   pɑ-rɛ
      leima   book   read-PRF
      'Leima read the book.'

(22) tʰabəlei   kəkciŋ   cət-le
      thabalei   kakching   go-PRF
      'Thabalei went to Kakching.'

(23) tomca   isei   ŋəŋ-ŋe
      tomcha   song   sing-PRF
      'Tomcha sings a song.'

4.2.2.2. Present Progressive

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In order to expressed that a work is going on and not completed yet a suffix -*li* is attached to a root. The suffix -*li* like the suffix –*le* has different forms.

(24) leima-khoi   kəkciŋ   cət-li
     leima-PL   kakching   go-PRES
     'Leima and party is going to Kakching.'

(25) makhoi   privɛte   təm-li
     they   private   learn-PRES
     'They are taking tuitions.'

(26) makhoi   cɑksəŋ-da   isiŋ   tʰək-ii
     they   kitchen-LOC water   drink-PRES
     'They are drinking water in the kitchen.'

5. Chelliah (1997)

Chelliah (1997) has proposed that there is no tense marking in Meeteilon. The Meeteilon verb must minimally consist of a verb root and an inflectional suffix which can be one of two indicative markers: -*e* 'assertive' which marks an emphatic non-future declarative as shown in example (27a) and -*i* 'nonhypothetical' which marks a simple non-future as shown in example (27b) given below:

27(a) niŋthəw-tu-nə   jərnəl-tu   lan-mi-təgi   tok-hən-khi-rə-e
      king-DDET-AGN   general-DDET   war-man-ABL   stop-CAUS-STILL-PRF-ASRT
      'The king had the general dismissed from the army.'

  (b) nupa-ti   ə-ŋɑŋ-pu   cəy-nə   phu-í
      man-DLMT   ATT-small-PAT   stick-INST   beat-NHYP
      'Only the man beat the child.'

The nonhypothetical functions like the English present tense to express a general statement of fact. (eg.,*Babies cry for two reasons*); a habitual or daily occurrence (eg., *He goes to*

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school.); a situation that exists at the moment of speaking (eg., *I have a dollar.*) or the equivalent of the English present perfect (eg., '*He has eaten.*')

(28) tomba-tu   yu-kə   thək-li-ne
     tomba-DDET   wine-UNANT   drink-PROG-SI
     'Tomba was drinking rice wine.'

   The nonhypothetical and the progressive as shown in (27b) have similar allomorphs distinguished only by tone which speakers identify quite easily. The progressive has rising tone while the nonhypothetical has falling tone. Thus, for example, the progressive -*li* with the allomorphs -*li*, -*ri*, and -*mi* must be distinguished from the nonhypothetical-*í* with the allomorphs -*li*, -*ri*, and -*mi*.

Chelliah (1997) assumed that Meeteilon aspect consist of -*li* 'progressive', -*lə* 'prospective' and -*lə* 'perfect'. The progressive can indicate that an action is being carried out in the past (29), present (30), or future (31).

(29) əy-gi   phəmmuŋ-də   tum-mi-bədu   kəna-no
     I-GEN   bed-LOC   sleep-PROG-DCOMP   who-INQ
     'Who was it that was sleeping in my bed?'

(30) əŋaŋ-du   cɑk   cɑ-ri
     child-DDET   rice   eat-PROG
     'The child is eating.'

(31) sɑtrə-siŋ-nə   innə-gə-dəw-ri-bə-ni
     student-PL-CNTR   follow-POT-OBLG-PROG-NOM-COP
     'The students should be following the teachers.'

   The prospective aspect -*lə* indicates an action viewed from the point of its initiation as given in example (32). It can be translated as 'was/is/will be going to V.'

(32) məhɑk   əy-bu   ŋɑy-dunɑ   ləy-rəm-lə-gə-ni
      he   I-PAT   wait-ING   be-EVD-PRO-POT-COP
      'He is probably going to be for me.'

The perfect indicates a completed action which has relevance at the time of speech. It can be differentiated from the homophonous prospective aspect marker in that the prospective aspect marker occurs before the mood markers whereas the perfect marker appears after the mood markers. The primary way to express past tense is -*le* which is composed of -*lə* 'perfect' and -*e* 'assertive'.

(33) məhak   lɑk-le
       he   come-PRF
      'He came.'   Chelliah (1997) has not described aspects in Meiteilon in details.
However, she mentions
progressive -*li* and perfect –*lə*, aspects along with the following examples:

(34) əŋəŋ-du   cɑk   cɑ-ri
      child -DDET   rice   eat –PROG
      'The child is eating.'

(35) purəkmənkhre
       pu -lək   -mən   -khi   -lə   -e
       carry -DISTAL -EXCESS -STILL -PRF -ASRT
       'has carried too much from a distance'

6.   D.N.S. Bhat and M.S.Ningomba (1997)

As pointed out in Bhatt and Ningomba (1997), Meeteilon does not appear to show many of the characteristics of mood prominent languages unlike the majority of Tibeto-Burman languages which are generally found to give greater prominence to mood than to tense and aspect. He proposed that the basic distinction among its verbal forms is temporal rather than modal. Its verbs show several aspectual distinction but only very few modal distinctions. Compared to tense and aspect, mood appears to be poorly grammaticalized.

6.1 Tense Distinction

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Bhatt and Ningomba (1997), assumed that tense distinction in Meeteilon is primarily between future and non-future which occurs not only in the indicative mood but also in negative, the distinction is retained in relative clauses, questions, exclamatory sentences, and also in certain adverbial constructions.

6.1.1. Future Indicative Suffix

The suffix used for denoting future indicative meaning is considered to be *gani* (which is *kani* after voiceless consonants) as shown in the examples given below:

(36) ey-nə   maŋon-da   cithi   əma   i-gəni

I-NOM   he-LOC   letter   one   write-FU

'I will write him a letter.'

(37) puŋ   məŋa-da   numit   thok-kəni

hour   five-LOC   sun   rise-FU

'The sunrise will occur at five O'clock.'

6.1.2. Non-future Indicative Suffix

The suffix used for denoting non-future indicative meaning in Meeteilon is -*li*.It has several alternants depending upon the sound which precedes it. It generally denotes past meaning in the case of dynamic verbs (actions and processes) and present meaning in the case of state verbs as shown in the examples given below:

(38) məhak-nə   tebəl-də   cəphu   khil-li

he-NOM   table-LOC   POT   place-NFUT

'He placed the pot on the table.'

(39) səm   phurit-tə   pək-i

hair   shirt-LOC   stick-NFUT

'The hair stuck to the shirt.'

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6.1.3 Negative Suffixes

Meeteilon makes use of two negative suffixes, namely *-loy* and *–de*, which has been describe as representing a future/non-future tense distinction in the negative. The following pairs of sentences exemplify the contrastive use of these two negative suffixes:

(40)   məhak   ləphoi-du   ca-roy

        he   banana-that   eat-FNg

        'He will not eat that banana.'

(41)   məhak   ləphoi-du   ca-de

        he   banana-that   eat-NFNg

        'He did not eat that banana.'

(42)   məhak   lɑm-moy

        he   hungry-FNg

        'He will not be hungry.'

(42)   məhak   lɑm-de

        he   hungry-NFNg

        'He is not hungry.'

6.2 Aspect Distinctions

Aspect distinctions are represented in Meeteilon by both suffixes as well prefixes. There are also certain verbal bases that can occur either as adverbials or as main verbs for denoting aspectual distinctions.

6.2.1. Perfect Suffix

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Meeteilon uses the suffix -*le* for denoting the notion of 'perfect'. This suffix indicates that a given event has been completed but its effect or relevance persists at the time of speaking (present) or at some other specified time (past or future).

(43) məhak   bəjar-də   cət-le

      he   market-LOC   go-PRF

      'He has gone to the market.'

6.2.2. Completive Suffix

Meeteilon uses a completive suffix in order to indicate that the event under consideration has been completed (or will be completed) before some other specified or unspecified event takes place, and further that no effect of the former persists. The completive suffix may denote future or past completions of events depending upon the suffixes with which it is associated. The following set of sentences exemplify the contrast between the non-future, perfect and completive (non-future) suffixes:

(44) məhak-nə   Imphal-də-gi   lak-i

      he-NOM   Imphal-LOC-GEN   come-NFU

      'He came from Imphal.'

(45) məhak-nə   imphal-də-gi   lak-e

      he-NOM   imphal-LOC-GEN   come-PRF

      'He has come from Imphal.' (and is still here)

(46) məhak-nə   imphal-də-gi   lak-əm-mi

      he-NOM   imphal-LOC-GEN   come-COMPL-NFU

      'He had come from Imphal.' (and has gone somewhere else)

6.2.3 Durative Suffix

The suffix used for denoting durative meaning in Meeteilon is more like tense suffixes in that it generally occurs in the word-final position.

(47) məhak   həytup   ca-ri

      he   apple   eat-DUR

      'He is eating an apple (now).'

(48) satrəsiŋ-nə   yam-nə   laŋ-ŋi

      students-NOM   much-ADV   noisy-DUR

      'The students are being very noisy.'

6.2.4 Progressive Suffix

      There is a suffix *khi* 'progressive' used only with suffixes denoting future such as *gəni* 'future', *loy* 'future negative', *lu* 'imperative', *lo* 'persuasive', *hənu* 'prohibitive', *sənu* 'concessive' and *ge* 'desiderative'. Examples:

(49) məhak   hotel   əsi-də   cə-khi-gəni

      he   hotel   this-LOC   eat-PROG-FU

      'He will continue to eat in this hotel.'

(50) məhak   lak-tri-   phaw-bə   cə-khi-gənu

      he   come-NEG-NFU   -until-INF   eat-PROG-PROH

      'Do not start eating until he comes.'

(51) ey   ca-khi-ge

      I   eat-PROG-DES

      'I wish to continue to eat.'

6.2.5 Habitual Suffix

      Meeteilon uses the suffix *gən* which may be followed by future, non-future, perfect and progressive suffixes in order to provide habitual meaning as shown in the examples given below:

(52) məhak   nuŋthin-də   ca-gəl-li

      he   afternoon-LOC   eat-HAB-NFUT

      'He usually dines in the afternoon.'

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(53) məhak   saw-gən-gəni

      he   angry-HAB-FU

      'He will usually be angry.'

(54) na-bə-də-gi   məhak   saw-gəl-le

      ill-INF-LOC-GEN   he   angry-HAB-PRF

      'He has been usually getting angry since his illness.'

(55) məhak   həwjik-su   saw-gəl-li

      He   now-also   angry-HAB-DUR

      'He is in the habit of being angry even now.'

6.2.6 Quantifier Suffix

   The suffix -*mən* is used in Meeteilon as a quantifier suffix. It also functions as an independent verb. As a suffix, it denotes that someone is doing something, or something is happening, for too long or for too many number of times. Examples:

(56) məhak-ki   yum   cakməl-le

      he-GEN   house   burn-much-PRF

      'His house has burnt too much.'

(57) phurit   əsi   əyŋon-də   cin-məl-li

      shirt   this   I-LOC   tight-much-NFUT

      'This shirt is too tight for me.'

   Thus, as seen above in Bhatt and Ningomba (1997), a question has been raised as to whether the primary distinction between -*gəni* and -*li* occurring in the indicative mood is one of tense (future/non future) or of mood (realis/irrealis) and they have regarded it as one of tense because in most of the usages the two appear to have the function of denoting the relevant temporal distinction.

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Meeteilon differs from other Tibeto-Burman language like the neighbouring Mao Naga (Giridhar 1994), or Khezha (Kapfo 1993) in not showing a complex system of modal distinctions. It has very few suffixes that can be regarded as modal in their primary connotation. However, there are several verbal bases in this language which are used with the infinitive form of the main verb in order to denote the various epistemic and deontic modal distinctions.

7. Singh (2000)

According to Singh (2000), Tense is not so clear in Meeteilon like other languages and it is felt necessary to analyse in a different way. He claimed that it would be more feasible to discuss 'Aspects' instead of 'Tense' in Meeteilon.

7.1. MeeteilonAspects

Singh (2000)pointed out that Aspects is not concerned with relating the time of the situation to any other time point, but rather with the internal temporal constituency of the one situation. An event or a situation in Meeteilon can be divided into four units: the first is the simple habitual expression of the event, the second discusses about the event is going on; the third expresses the event is completed and the fourth talks about the event will be performed in the next moment. So, Aspects are divided into four types.

7.1.1. Simple Aspect

It expresses simple statement, habitual meaning and universal truth. The markers are *--y, -mi, -ni, -pi, -* and *-li* which occur under phonological conditions.

Examples

(58) ei cɑ thək-y
    I tea drink-ASP
    'I drink tea.'

(59) nupamcɑ-si həwnə kəp-pi
    boy-DET loudly cry-ASP
    'The boy cries loudly.'

7.1.2. Progressive Aspect

It shows that the action is continuing. This is indicated by *–ri/-li*.

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Examples:

(60) john həujik ləyrik pɑ-ri

    john now book read-ASP

    'John is now reading.'

(61) nita ləy yek-li

    nita picture draw-ASP

    'Nita is painting.'

7.1.3. Perfect Aspect

This is denoted by the suffix –re/-le or -khre.

Examples:

(62) ey philəm ədu yeŋ-le

    I film that see-ASP

    'I have seen the film.'

(63) məhɑk komlə ədu cə-re

    He orange that eat-ASP

    'He has eaten the orange.'

The suffix –khre indicates certainty of the completion of an action, as in the following sentence:

(64) john hidɑk cɑ-khre

    john medicine eat-CMPL

    'John has taken the medicine.'

7.1.4. Unrealized Aspect

This is used for action which will take place in the near future. The

relevant aspect marker is –gəni/-kəni.

Examples:

(65) ɪmɑ kəythel cət-kəni

    mother market go-ASP

    'Mother will go to market.'

(66) məhɑk həyeŋ ciŋ kɑ-gəni

    he tomorrow hill climb-ASP

    'He will climb the hill tomorrow.'

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Conclusion

The different opinions of the Meeteilon grammarians regarding tense and aspect is seen clearly in this research paper by having a deep review on their works, with the earlier ones claiming to have tense contrary to the modern ones. It is interesting to see how Bhat and Ningomba (1997) considers Meeteilon having tenses namely, Past, Perfect and Future which is indicated by the suffixes *–li, -le, -kəni* respectively and the way how P.C.Thoudam (1991) arguing that Meeteilon does not have a tense system like those found in Greek, Latin and Sanskrit and thus claiming those markers to be aspect markers rather than tense. Yashawanta (1995) has also expressed the opinion that in Meeteilon aspect is more significant than tense. Interestingly, Chelliah.S.L.(1997) is also of the opinion that the language lacks Tense morphology altogether rather, temporal reference is marked through the use of a variety of moods/modal markers in combination with evidential and directional affixes.

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ABBRVIATION

ABL - Ablative   ACC- Accusative
ADJ - Adjective   ADV- Adverb
AGN - Agent   ASP - Aspect
ASRT - Assertive   ATT - Attributive
CAUS - Causative   CMPL - Complementizer
CNTR- Contrastive   COP - Copula
DAT - Dative   DCOMP - Determiner complimentizer
DET - Determiner   DDET - Distance determiner
DECL- Declarative   DEIC - Deictic
DES -Desiderative   DIR - Directional
DISTAL - Distal   DLMT - Delimitative
DO - Direct object   DUR - Durative
ERG - Ergative   EVD - Indirect evidence
EXCESS - V to excess   FUT - Future Tense
FNg - Future negative   GEN- Genitive
HAB - Habitual   ING - V-ing
INQ - Inquistive   LOC - Locative
Ng - Negative   NFNg- Non future negative
NFUT- Non future   NHYP - Nonhypothetical

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NOM - Nominative	NZR - Nominalizer
NPOT - Non potential	PAT -Patient
PL - Plural	PRES- Present
PRF - Perfective	POT - Potential
PRO – Prospective	PROG - Progressive
PROBH - Prohibitive	PROX - Proximal
PST -Past	SI - Shared information
STILL - Still	UNANT - Unanticipative

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