Descriptive analysis of present tense in English and seereer siin.

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Abstract

The present tense is seen as a huge force in linguistics, it gives essential tools in the acquisition of language behaviour. This paper provides an understand of the present tense in both English and seereer siin , with a specific focus on a deictic category which relates the time of the situation referred to some other time usually to the moment of speaking, we have absolute tense and relative tense, distinguished as present, past and future (comrie,1976). Through the lens of two branches of linguistic, the paper explores the formation (morphology) and the usage (semantic) of the present tense in both English and seereer siin. Indeed, it is a situation that is represented without reference at some point or by one speaker or in one particular language to a particular endpoint which may be represented at another moment or by another speaker or in another language. The topic deals with the descriptive analysis of present tense in English and seereer siin.

***Key words**: Tense, present, seereer siin , English , morphology*
Temps, present, seereer siin , English , morphologie

1. Introduction

All activities take place in time and all languages have ways to express time. Language usage may be distinguished between the moment of utterance and the time in which an event takes place, this could be before, after or simultaneous.. Tense is a category which expresses a temporal relationship between the time of the described event and some reference time. In the simplest case, tense indicates the temporal relationship between

the time of an event and the time of the utterance describing the event. Therefore, Tense can be used to locate the situation either before this moment (past) as being simultaneous with it (present) or as following it (future). The present tense is formed and used in similar or different ways depending on the particularity of a language In other words, present tense construction and usage in both seereer siin and English is associated with interpretations.

2. Theoretical and conceptual framework of the study

2.1 Thesis statement

Technically speaking the real statement of this study is conducted in descriptive analysis in both English and seereer siin because when seereer siin students learn English, they find English language problematic.

Students 'explicit knowledge is facilitated by examining structures, verb formations, and meanings from their mother tongue (seereer siin).This translation is based on different premises: First foreign language acquisition depends on the first language acquisition. Secondly most of people acquired foreign language from the background of their native language. So knowing the contrastive study which exists in this both languages can help communicate easily and avoid mistakes so that to have a positive transfer. The transfer will be negative if the learner has tendencies to add unnecessary inflects due to the way he/she is used to expressing grammar points of his/her first language acquisition.

Finally, many seereer siin students are not interested themselves in their mother tongue and many are unable to utter a complete sentence without a language borrowed word so dealing with such topic will help them to understand the importance of knowing or learning a national language.

Seeing that English is the first language around the world, contrasting it to a senegalese national language such as seereer siin, will help us to show how languages work together. Then, it will allow us to bring in close seereer siin into education system.

It goes by saying this study will contribute in a broad sense to teach linguistic branches and their importance. The useful aspect of a contrastive study of present tense in English and seereer siin constitutes a very important feature at the apprehension of indo European and north Atlantic languages.

Besides to the best knowledge of researchers, hardly works have been done in present tense from a comparative point of view of seereer siin and English , then publications on the present tense of seereer siin are not in deep and no attention has been paid to how does the present tense operate comparatively with their counterparts?

This particular research is set out to investigate first of all the similarities of present tense in English and seereer siin.
Secondly, bring differences of present tense in both English and seereer siin.

2.2 Theoretical framework.

The theoretical foundation for descriptive analysis of present tense in English and seereer siin establishes that while English relies on temporal -aspectual contrasts (simple present , present continuous and present perfect), seereer siin lays on a Time-Mood –Aspect (TMA) system distinguishing stave and non stave verbs rather than strict time axes.

2.3 Conceptual framework

We need to clarify concepts:

Morphology: it accounts for the internal structure of words, it refers to the formation of words.
Seereer siin: It is an Atlantic branch belonging to the Niger-Congo family. It is spoken in Senegal particularly in Diakhao and fatick, it is an agglutinative language mostly suffixing, with a complex interaction. In an agglutinative language, stems do not change, affixes do not fuse with others, and each morpheme represents one grammatical meaning.

English: It is a west Germanic language which belongs to the indo-european language family. it is an analytic language that conveys grammatical relationship without using inflectional morphemes.

Tense: It is a category which expresses a temporal relationship between the time of the described event and some reference time.
Present: It is the current period of time, occurring now between the past and the future

2.4 Questioning

The questioning precisely wants to know: the differences and similarities of the present tense that exist in English and seereer siin?

2.5 Research questions

In trying to achieve the set objectives, the study tries to answer the following questions.
-How do seereer siin and English form the present tense?
-When do English and seereer siin use the present tense?

2.6 Hypotheses and objectives

- Hypotheses

According to my questioning and all the data I got, two main hypotheses can be given for this work.

Firstly, seereer siin and English form the present tense differently.
Secondly, the present tense usage of English and seereer siin is not the same.

-Objectives

The general aim of the study is to show the descriptive analysis of present tense in English and seereer siin.
In fact, it is marvellous to establish whether the present tense of English is as complex as seereer siin language. The specific objectives are:
-Show the the morphology of present tense in English and seereer siin.
-Make understand the usage of the present tense in English and seereer siin.

3. Literature review

Tense is a deictic category which relates the time of the situation referred to some other time usually to the moment of speaking, we have absolute tense and relative tense, distinguished as present, past and future (comrie,1976: 37). It can be seen too as a system where the basic or characteristic meaning of the terms is to locate the situation, or part of it, at some point or period of time (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002: 116).

I assume that tenses have both a temporal and an aspectual value. The temporal value of a tense form locates a situation in time with respect to a deictic centre, which in the standard case is constituted by the moment of utterance. Tense can be used to locate the situation either before this moment (past) as being simultaneous with it (present) or as following it (future). So present tense means location of the situation prior to the present moment (Comrie, 1985:14) and the present is

conceptualized as a threshold between past and future that involve immediate memory, the omega field and immediate imagination, the alpha field (Giorgi and pianesi, 2000 : 331).
Tense shift often occurs in different texts especially in academic texts where a researcher describes how a research was carried out (past tense) and draws a conclusion from the results (present tense) (Estling vannestal, 2015:197). By this way (Renaudier, 2012 : 391) declares that seereer siin language has 4 tenses: first of all, we have the present which can be accomplished when it bears the morpheme /a/ at the end, or unaccomplished when it ends with the inflectional morpheme /aa/, secondly we have the past expressed by the morpheme /oog/ when the action is unaccomplished and by a glottal stop (‘) if it is the accomplished form, thirdly the future which can be expressed in two ways /xan/ and the phoneme /k/,finally we have the narrative form that seereer siin considers as a tense.

4. Research methodology

In this particular study, I will use contrastive qualitative methodology. This approach allows me to identify and systematically compare the morphological and semantic structures of both English and seereer siin. The qualitative approach owing to its suitability in social research and the fact it can be applied in the subject.
Then the rationale behind the choice of the qualitative approach is centred in its strength, that is flexible and emphasizes people’s lived experiences, perceptions, their assumptions as connected the world; furthermore in qualitative research we will collect data from the participants who have proficiency in English and seereer siin. Primary data are collected from the population whereas the secondary are collected from desk research, libraries and universities.

Individual face to face unstructed interviews is used because I want the respondents to bring out the information on the present tense formation as well the usage.

Not only this, but also maximize the flow of valid, reliable information while reducing the distortions during interviews to obtain an inside view of both seereer siin and English tense for better insurance that primary and secondary data are collected .

Primary data is collected from the population whereas the secondary data is collected through desk research such as universities and libraries.
To analyse sentences we used Leipzig glossing of Bernard comrie and Balthasar Bickel
Our study concern two languages meaning seereer siin and English.
Seereer siin is an Atlantic branch belonging to the Niger-Congo family. It is spoken in Senegal particularly in Diakhao and fatick, it is an agglutinative language mostly suffixing, with a complex interaction. In an agglutinative language, stems do not change, affixes do not fuse with others, and each morpheme represents one grammatical meaning.
English: is a West Germanic language which belongs to the Indo-European language family. it is a analytic language that conveys grammatical relationship without using inflectional morphemes.

Here, the main objective is to have detail information on the formation and usage of the present tense in both English and seereer siin. So, to reach the goal, it becomes necessary to use the contrastive qualitative methodology.

4.1. Documentation

Universities such as Cheikh Anta Diop University and Cheikh Hamidou Kane University (ex UVS), libraries, CLAD and

IFAN, internet and grammar books have provided us some information from different scholars. I collect data related to my topic with the linguists and scholars' implication in both English and seereer siin tense. However we must notice that the survey (data) sometimes reveals various link on the understand of present tense of English and seereer siin.

4.2 Corpus building

This corpus is drawn with a population who understand present tense in seereer siin and English. It can be considered as a small group of the total set of objects events or people which together comprise the subject of the study. To rationalize the collection I have chosen a restricted set of people, sentences and texts from which the actual information would be drawn. I employ too the purposeful method which assist me in an appropriate manner.

The purposeful method is connected to the relevance of my topic that's the reason why I choose specialised in descriptive linguistics and those who have proficiency in English and seereer siin tense. The study is conducted in Senegal particularly in Dakar. The characteristics of participants are teachers, PHD students and doctors from universities, then we have used books, articles, internet, in order to have data collection.

In order to collect data about the topic, instructed interviews are conducted with informants.

Participants are consulted individually by myself at their respective place of work or home with their permission and agreement.

The aim of the qualitative investigations is to find out good news on the formation and usage of the present tense in both language.

Each time I meet participants I create a relaxed atmosphere and I always explain the research purpose which is to know the

differences and similarities of present tense in both seereer and English.
I made some investigation by using the following interview questions:
Can you tell me about the present tense?
How does English form the present tense?
How does seereer siin form the present tense?
What are the similarities between the present tense of seereer siin and English?
What is the social context that instigates the use of present tense in both languages?
Informants are educated on what exactly the study is about and the specific information that are required..

4.3 Corpus treatment

After I received all the information, I started reading and began texts studies in order to classify data that will allow me to compare the present tense of seereer siin and English for a better understanding of similarities and differences.

5. Results and didactic recommendations.

Results have shown that Firstly, in affirmative, seereer siin forms the present tense with the aspectual morpheme /a/. (Faye, 1979) indicates that the 1st and 2nd pronoun of singular are suffixed to the verb, furthermore in plural an optional suffix /yo/ can be added at the end of the verb, finally we find the consonant mutation preceding the verb in plural, whereas in English the formation is: /Subject + infinitive without /to/

According to (Comrie, 1985), At the third person of singular (he/she/it) English adds inflectional morphemes/s/,/ es /, /ies/ depending on the verb to indicate agreement with the subject, if the head of the noun is in plural there is no inflection.

The only similarity they have is both seereer siin and English use infinitive to form the present.

The formation of the accomplished present of seereer sin language is not regular. It always depends on the pronoun subject. (Faye, 1979) says in the first and second person of singular we have: Verb+ a+ subject and in other persons of singular and plural we have: Subject + verb +a.

Example (**1**) **a**. Gar - a - um

Come - ASP-1SG

I have come.

b. Gar -a -o

Come-ASP-2SG

You have come.

c. A gar - a

3SG come - ASP

She /He has come.

Negative form exists in both languages but, English uses an /auxiliary +not/ in order to express the negative form while seereer siin uses the morpheme /eer/.

Example **(2) a.** Gar -ee(r) -um

Come -NEG -1SG

I haven't come.

b. Gar - ee(r) - o

Come - NEG -2SG

You haven't come.

- In passive voice, we have the following similarities and differences:

English always uses the auxiliary /to be/ in present plus the past participle of the verb while seereer siin adds an inflectional morpheme/e/ to the verb.

Example (3) a. Fad -e -um

Beat-PASS-1SG

I am beaten.

b. Fad - e - o

Beat -PASS-2SG

You are beaten.

c. A fad - e

3SG beat -PASS

He /She /It is beaten.

Negatively, In passive voice, English uses the auxiliary /to be/ in the simple present with /not+ pp/.while seereer siin takes /verb +aand/. Besides, at the first and second person of singular, seereer siin adds the morpheme /e/ after the inflectional morpheme /aand/.The first and second person of singular of seereer siin are always suffixed to the verb (Faye, 2013)

Example **(4) a.** I lay -aand -yo

1PL inform -NEG-PL

We are not informed.

b. Nu lay - aand - yo

PL inform - NEG - PL

You are not informed.

Semantically , between the present tense of seereer siin and the simple present of English the main differences are: seereer siin uses it to talks about results and accomplishment, whereas English denotes it when we talk about a general truth or a scientific truth ,furthermore seereer siin establishes the link between the cause and consequence .Meaning the action is in the past but results are visible in the present, it doesn't focus on the moment of the events but on the consequences of this latter.

In a nutshell, the accomplished present of seereer siin is an aspect that is used to express actions which already happen whereas the present simple of English is a tense which deals with the reality of events.

Example **(5)** Lay -a - um - fo -ten

Speak-ASP-1SG-PREP-3SG

I have spoken to him

Conclusion

At the end of the research necessarily incomplete and sometimes suggestive, having a conclusion becomes impossible. During the analysis, perspectives opened up from point to point , from one paragraph to another one , I have explored the contrastive study of the present tense of English

and seereer siin to show similarities and differences that occur in both morphology and semantic branch. Results have shown that each language has a particular way to form the present, then the usage of the present tense in seereer siin is different from that of English.

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