

## CHAPTER II

### A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1. General Comments

Since tense is related to time, first of all Time is diagrammed as follows.

Figure 1 : representation of time

Past	present ( Now )	Future
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As can be seen in the figure 1 above, time is divided into three parts, namely past, present (now) and future. The time before now is past and the one after now is future. This means that now or present time is the center from which time in the past and time in the future are measured. There are languages, such as English and Mee, that mark the time differences in their grammar. But other languages, such as Indonesian, do not mark the time differences in their grammar.

Now I would like to define three terms that are related to my paper, namely tense, aspect and modality. Let me begin with tense as in 2.1.1 followed by aspect as in 2.1.2 and modality in 2.1.3.

##### 2.1.1. Tense

In this section I would like to define tense based on a review of some studies. The first one is from Bernard Comrie (1985). Comrie defines tense as “grammaticalized expression of location in time” (Comrie,1985 : 9). As this definition indicates, tense marks location in time. In other words, tense markers are used to indicate events that take place in certain location or point in time. This is often accompanied by adverb of time such *at 10 am* or *yesterday*.

Timberlake states that ‘tense in language starts from the here-and-now of speech and constructs linkage to a second time – here termed the contextual occasion’ (2007:304). He goes on to say that ‘a time earlier than the time of speech for which the morphological categories would be past tense (= PST) or to a future time later than the time of speech (= FUT ) or remaining around of the speech time , the present tense (=PRS)’ ( 2007:304 ). Just as illustrated in the figure 1 above , Timberlake intends to say that tense is used to mark events that are taken place in the past or in the future viewed from now ( present ). Timberlake says that languages differ in the number of tense distinctions they express in morphology, for example, Lithuanian language has three tenses, past, for example : *dirbau*’ I worked ( was working ), present, for example : *dirbu*’ I work ( am working ) and future, for example : *dirbsiu*’ I will work ( will be working ).

Another language that marks tense in its grammar is Mee language. According to Kobepa ( 2015 ), there are 6 tenses in Mee language presented as follows :

Table 1: Tenses in Mee

Legendary past	Remote past	Prehodiernal past	Hodiernal past	Hodiernal future	Remote future
<i>Yoota, masak (no knowledge about the events at event time)</i>	<i>Yootegai, they cooked in the past anytime yesterday and backward (had knowledge about event at event time</i>	<i>Yoopai, they cooked last night</i>	<i>Yoogai, they cooked earlier today</i>	<i>Younegai or youpigai, they will cook later today</i>	<i>Yootai, they will cook anytime tomorrow onwards</i>

Legendary past tense is used to talk about events that took place in the past for which the speaker was unaware of the event at event time, for example, to talk about biblical stories. Remote past is used to talk about event that took place in the past for which the speaker was aware of the event at event time, for example to talk about event that the speaker participated,

usually yesterday backwards. Prehodiernal past is used to talk about event that took place last night. Hodiernal past is used talk about event that took place earlier today. Hodiernal future is used to talk about event that will take place today future or later today. Remote future is used to talk about event that take place tomorrow onwards. In this paper I would like to discuss today future (hodiernal future) only.

### 2.1.2. Aspect

Comrie defines aspect as “different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation” (1985 : 3). Comrie (1985) goes on to say that aspect “is not concerned with relating the time of situation to any other time-point, but rather with the internal temporal constituency of the one situation” (1985 : 5). This definition is exemplified in the following figure.

Figure 2: Progressive Aspect with verb eat

7:00am	7:10am	7:20am
Start eating	speech time	finish time

As the figure 2 shows there are three constituencies of the situation or event of *eating*, namely start part, ongoing part and finish part. When someone says *I am eating*, s/he is not talking about whole event of eating, but the progressive use is to indicate what is going on at speech time. That means the use of progressive form does not include start and finish time, but focuses only on what is in progress at speech time.

The one in figure 2 shows grammatical aspect where the progressive meaning is marked in its grammar with to be + V-ing. This is called grammatical aspect. The second class of aspect is called lexical aspect. Lexical aspect means aspectual interpretation is not grammatical but lexical. Aspectual interpretation is construed from lexical meanings of verbs. Verbs that carry activity sense in their meaning are the ones that are most likely to be used with progressive because one of major properties of progressive aspect is progressive having ongoing meaning.

On the contrary, those that are state verbs are most unlikely to be used for constructing progressive aspect. Timberlake states that “predicates (verbs) report situations, and changes of situations, of the world” (Timberlake, 2007:284). What means is that predicates are situations or events and how these situations or events change.

### **2.1.3. Modality**

Modality is defined as a “semantic category which expresses the attitude of the speaker towards that expressed in the sentence” (Bussmann, 1996:754). This definition indicates that modality deals with attitude of participants in a speech events which includes commitments, surprises, amusements, assessments, and so on. This is often expressed through morphological means for example, *-ne* as discussed in this paper, lexical means, for example the use of modal auxiliaries, such as *can* and *would*, or even sentential adverbials such as the use of the words *hopefully* and *maybe*. When someone says for instance, ‘*I can do it*’, the speaker intends to say that s/he is capable of or willing to do something. The speaker’s attitude on the event *do* is shown by the use the modal verb *can*. Such as this example is part a topic called modality.

## **2.2. Near Future ( Hodiernal Future )**

In this section of the chapter, I would like to discuss what near future means and how it is illustrated with examples from some languages that mark near future on their verbs. Near future is generally defined as marking on the verb indicating an action, activity or event that is going to take place soon rather than later. That means the activity is done sooner or closer in time to now (or speaking time). Example (1) below shows this.

(1) I am going to buy a new mobile phone

The speaker in the example in (1) tells the hearer that the action of buying a mobile phone is going to take place soon. From the example, it is clear that a form used to describe an activity taking place soon is ***be + going to + infinitive***. One of the meanings of this form is to express

“what someone thinks will happen in the future, especially if it is going to happen soon....” (Davidson, 2003:227).

Similar forms may also be found in other languages, such as French. Booth (2008:162) states that the close future (le futur proche) is “an event or situation in the future, especially when it is the near future, can also be expressed by the futur proche which consists of the present tense of *aller* ‘go’ \_ *infinitive*. The example (2) taken from Booth (2008:162) below shows this. Glossing (which means labeling meanings underneath of each word) is mine.

(2) Je                   vais                   essayer  
1SG.SUBJ           go.1SG           try.INF  
*'I am going to try'*

In French, verb takes various forms depending on subject of the clause. As in (2), *aller* ‘go’ become *vais* ‘go.1SG’ because subject is first person singular.

As seen from these two examples from English and French, some languages mark near future in their grammar. Mee language is one them. I, therefore, would like to describe its structure and meanings in this paper.

### **2.3. Previous Studies**

Not many scholarly works available on Mee language. So the author reviews some available works on Mee language. The first grammar paper written on Mee was by Marion Doble entitled: ‘A Description of Some Features of Ekari language’ (1987). In this paper, the author discusses some features of Mee grammar. She mentions that Mee language has an open syllable system which means all the words in Mee language end with a vowel. Doble goes on to state that Mee has 10 consonants, namely b, p, d, t, g, k, n, m, and y and 5 vowels, namely: i, u, o, e, a. According to Doble (1987:61), its basic syllable structures are “(C)V or (C)VV”. Doble (1987:89) briefly presents some forms of a tense for which she calls “future today, not immediately but later today”. This tense is also referred to as Hodiernal Future (Kobepa, 2015: 4). Doble nor Kobepa, however, discussed in detail about this tense. Therefore, this is the topic

I would like to investigate in this research. Its counterpart, today's past, which is also called Immediate Past - IMPST in short was studied (Kobepa, 2015:).

Another work by Hyman & Kobepa (2012) entitled “On the analysis of tone in Mee (Ekari, Ekagi, Kapauku)” only focuses on the tone in the Mee language. Paginta (2016) wrote a paper on Tenses in Ekagi but it does not distinguish near and far future.

It is clear from the above review that no work has been done specifically on the near future. Therefore, I plan to do research to fill this gap.