

Original Paper

Comparative Grammar of Wolof and English. The Present

Tense Use

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Abstract

This topic sets a comparative issue in which, the present tense of Wolof and English is treated. The syntactic rules that govern a language are influential in the structures. Within sentences particularly, verbs hold main roles in the tense rules system. This lead to comparing verbal constructs, while considering the present tense systems. With a method of data collection, a corpus is set in both languages for verbs' characteristics. Indeed, have shown that the verbs' occurrences as constituents in sentences vary thanks to the aspects and modalities. Then, these verbal constructs are compared for grammatical results, leading to widening teaching and learning strategies in the first and second languages.

Keywords

comparison, grammar, Wolof, English, present tense

1. Introduction

Comparative linguistics, formerly Comparative Grammar, studies the relationships or correspondences between two or more languages and the techniques used to discover whether the languages have a common ancestor (Note 1). This branch of Linguistics is primarily concerned with analyzing and comparing the grammatical structures of related languages or dialects.

Indeed, this research paper aims at putting grammatical correspondence between Wolof and English, leading to comparing grammatical patterns that behave between local and foreign language characteristics. It concerns the present tense of Wolof and English to take verbs as scientific comparative constructs.

Thus, studies and research experiments around linguistic issues lead to evolving resources that bring comparative elements between English and Wolof. Indeed, we put a short relationship between Niger-Congo and Indo-European languages to build innovative research tools.

“The Indo-European invaders” were not strangers but were genetically related to the original black inhabitants of the Mediterranean lands who spoke Niger-Congo languages. Genetics and linguistics now lead us to the same conclusion. Afro-Asiatic farmers, not conquering Aryans, gradually overlaid these black aboriginal inhabitants, giving rise to the olive-skinned Mediterranean race. The various alphabets, we now know, derive from an African syllabary” (Campbell-Dunn, 2012).

“Relation is considered to be established beyond a reasonable doubt” if a reconstruction of the common ancestor is feasible” (Barnhard, 1996).

Referring to these linguistic analogies, added to the experience of teaching English as a second language and Wolof as a mother tongue; while using the Latin alphabet in both languages lead to set comparative issues.

1.1 Problem

As previously outlined, this topic sets comparative issues between Wolof and English. The study mainly considers the verb constructs as comparative elements with regard to grammatical rules that govern Wolof and English languages. We mark a relationship between two languages from different families to describe the characteristics of appearance, tense mode, and aspects. In fact, is used the present tense bound to the characteristics of the aspects to mark the verbs’ occurrences within sentences. Thus, the study particularly compares the syntactic structures of verbs underlined within sentences that govern related or common sources languages.

2. Method

“Every linguistic fact is part of a whole in which everything is connected. One detail must not be linked to another detail, but one linguistic system to another” (Swiggers, 1985, pp. 181-195).

“All languages adhere to some kind of syntactic rules, but the rigidity of these rules is greater in some languages. It is very important to distinguish between the syntactic rules that govern a language and the rules that a culture imposes on its language” (Ellis, 1999, pp. 31-40).

These scientific theories are analyzed with an exhaustive comparison of the linguistic data based on the parts of speech of the concerned languages. For this, the grammatical rules will highly consider words and syntax structures depending on the nature of the language we compare.

Through the method of collecting natural data based on observations and lectures, we present patterns of Wolof and English verbs to treat the aspects and the mood of the present tense. This allows for considering the rules of different languages.

2.1 The Literature Review

Comparative issues between English and Wolof languages have been treated by some authors in the field. The issues mainly emphasize the characteristics of the grammar of English and Wolof in the present tense. The use of tense refers to the conjugation rules which imply specific functions of languages according to the standard rules.

Indeed, verb conjugation refers to how a verb changes to show a different person, tense, number, or mood (Note 3). Conjugation is a system or paradigm of verbal forms (Dubois et al., 1997, pp. 51-71). These rules are widely expressed within sentences that every concerned language treats.

As traditional grammar highlights, Wolof as well as English are governed by grammatical functions. The grammatical functions characterize word inflection patterns and syntax rules by which these words are combined into sentences (Matthew, 2019, pp. 227-237).

Murray's grammar represents comparative grammar as a practice that continues to develop throughout the 19th century and was still dominant in the 1960s when linguistics began to focus more on generative and transformational grammar because of the revolutionary and influential ideas of Noam Chomsky (Murray, 1795).

In short, by treating grammar rules of the languages, we consider the tense that varies between components such as mood, aspects, and number. Thus, the tense use is widely expressed in English as well as in Wolof which implements such traditional rules.

2.1.1 Verbs Tense Rules in English

One of the difficult grammatical areas for ESL/EFL students to master is the English verb tense-aspect system. Paradoxically, this area is not usually perceived as being especially difficult to teach. The reason for this is that many grammatical rules exist that capture the structural facts concerning the various tense-aspect combinations and the semantic facts related to what meanings these combinations convey (Larsen-Freeman, Kuehn, & Haccius, 2002). Helping students make appropriate English verb tense-aspect choices.

Only by controlling this immense inventory of conventional expressions and conventional modes of expression is it possible for speakers to put together a continuous flow of complex expressions in real-time (Langacker, 1987a, pp. 3-36).

If everything had to be computed from scratch, from general grammatical rules and traditionally recognized vocabulary, the exigencies of rapid, fluent speech would overwhelm our processing capacities. This is the state to which I was brought by traditional language training (Martin, 2012).

2.1.1.1 Verb Tense-Aspect As a System

The tense-aspect system of one language does not neatly align itself with another.

“Helping students adopt a new approach to learning verb tense forms can be facilitated by having them understand that verb tense-aspect combinations in English function as a system. Although the system is complex, a key to understanding it is to see it as a whole. Of course, for practical reasons, each tense is likely to be introduced singly. However, teachers can show students how each works as part of a system by showing how each contrasts with its neighbors, the ones with which it is easily confused” (Larsen-Freeman et al., 2002).

Characterizing verbs' rules structures in the system allows knowing that English has two tense forms, the present, and the past. It is well known that English speakers make use of a wide variety of other structures to indicate futurity (e.g., modals, phrasal modals, simple present, present progressive), but

the modal “will” is usually assigned to fill the role of the simple future.

Let’s analyze the behavior of the present in the verb tense-aspect system.

2.1.2 The Present Tense Rules in English

Ronald W. Langacker argues (e.g. 1987b) that the English present tense designates the process at the time of speaking (coincident with the ground). More precisely, the present tense indicates that the process of actions occurs, and precisely coincides with the time of speaking. Indeed, Ronald W. Langacker (1987b) shows two sentences as examples to illustrate the present tense apprehension in comparison with the progressive tense.

(15) a. *Bill {sleeps/paints a fence/changes a tire/learns a poem} right now.

(15) b. Bill {is sleeping/is painting a fence/is changing a tire/is learning a poem} right now.

To say these things, we must instead use the progressive, as in (15b).

As descriptions of actual, bounded events occurring at the time of speaking, sentences like (15a) are consistently infelicitous. Ronald W. Langacker (1987) shows that many uses of the present tense do not refer to the time of speaking. Standard uses of the “present” pertain to the future, to the past, to “timeless” situations, or even to “eternal truths”:

(16) a. Your driver’s license expires on your next birthday.

(16) b. I’m driving home last night and I hear a siren. I pull over and stop. This cop comes up and starts writing me a ticket.

(16) c. Hamlet moves to center stage. He pulls out his dagger. He examines it.

If a perfective event has a long enough duration, therefore, and extends through the time of speaking, we can describe its occurrence “right now” by means of a present tense progressive. By contrast, in the present tense, the immediate temporal scope must be the same in duration as the speech event (Langacker, 1987b, p. 21, p. 22, p. 23).

Langacker has mainly insisted on the time events duration and accomplishment to rule the present tense as observations highlight. We thus mark the system of rules and highly consider facts from observation. So, the present as tense system closer to the progressive has particular use regarding actions, events, duration, etc.

2.1.3 The Tense Rules System of Wolof

The Wolof tense rules system is strongly based on the pronouns’ identification to express the verb matter. However, the aspects are hardly determined due to the modal indicators. The Wolof tense rule system is thus constructed according to a process of displaying morphemindicators or of time or by the addition of a tense marker -y expressing the actions in the present (Benjamin, 2009, p. 123).

Moreover, the oral aspect of Wolof as being a language inherited from the oral tradition highly impacts the tense rules system which shows that the linguistic basis is not constructed with the birth of the language. This is generally the case for African languages (Childs, 2003).

“As for what properly concerns the Wolof language, I had no model to imitate; everything is new. I searched everywhere for the folds of this ancient language to discover its fundamental principles,

which I tried to make fruitful and luminous through clear and methodical developments. If I have not been able to discover all the forms of languages used in Senegambia, at least I would not put forward a single proposal, a single rule in this grammar. About the same subject, I hold guarantees from several interviews and discussions with the priests and the elders of the country” (Dard, 1826, the postface of the book, p. xij).

Thus, native speakers would not elaborate language construction methods for advanced research in the field of Wolof.

It was in the 20th century that native writers and linguists began to realize the grammatical aspects of Wolof until today. Accordingly, other views about Wolof Grammar have been developed by some authors to contribute to the field of Cognitive Linguistics.

“Our main concern throughout our writing has been to produce a grammar book that makes a modern analysis of Wolof simply, fairly, and clearly. Anywhere, we would rather adopt a sustained approach with enough examples drawn from spontaneous production of native speakers, or built by ourselves as native speakers, which could reduce intensely the number of secular readers” (Diouf, 2001).

“Wolof holds a huge literature. It accumulates within a few two centuries at least works that we find more or less intact. The effort to renew the field while widening it has increasingly raised since the first half of the nineteenth century” (Path é 1971).

Going from these basic theories, some standard rules have been widely implemented, but require more elaborative techniques for further results. We note that Wolof is governed by a system of specific rules related to the parts of the speech. Among the specialists in the field, some have analyzed the nouns, and others have treated the issues of Syntax or Morphology, etc. while having all the tools or elements of comparison as foreign languages. These remarks consider the various grammatical rules that govern Wolof for the interest of all readers and scholars. This parallel study method between Wolof and English widens technics, elaborating Wolof language as being able to treat rules with regard to foreign languages.

Our contribution to verbs considers these grammatical functions that show that Wolof holds a handful of rules and occurrences based on tenses. The tense is thus ruled by aspects that vary according to the modes.

2.1.3.1 The Mode

In the Wolof tense rules, the mode is not clearly defined because does not really correspond to standard rules. The term mode is the basis of all verbal constructs in which, the models of conjugation are built. In other words, the use of personal pronouns is based on modes and appearance (Ciss é 2014).

Thus, the mode holds two varieties of functions. The six (6) modes rule the pronouns that tightly consider the subject and the two aspects as accomplished/unaccomplished. These aspects vary in use and the tense mood is in relation to the speaker. Thus, the verbal system can be confusing for no-Wolof speakers, and personal pronouns integrate the mood and appearance of the verbs” (Amadou, 2001).

In almost all the descriptive and comparative works of Wolof, the term mode is not explicitly defined.

However, it is the keyword on which, are basing all the verbal constructs in the tense rules system. Furthermore, the use of personal pronouns is shortly related to such tense modes aspect rules. These notions of mode and aspect relating to the use of verbs are decisive factors in the analysis of time. We mark the aspect as an element favoring descriptive facts with verbs, and modes as indicators of time.

2.1.3.1.1 The Present Tense

As certain characteristics of grammar emphasize, the tense of Wolof is less crucial than the aspect or mode. "In Wolof, tenses like the present, the past, and the future hold a secondary role, they even play almost no specific role. From the speaker's point of view, the aspect of the action is crucial" (Diop, 2012, Note 4).

"the Wolof grammatical tense system is not like in French because has no grammatical present tense" (Dial, 2001).

For the use of tense generally, the most important distinction is whether an action is an accomplished perfective, an unaccomplished imperfective, or whether it progresses from the point of view of the speaker. Accordingly, the action itself takes place in the past, the present, or the future.

Other aspects indicate whether an action takes place regularly, or whether an action wishes to emphasize the role of the subject, the predicate, or the object of the sentence. Consequently, the conjugation is not made by tenses, but by aspects or modes. Nevertheless, the present is used according to the aspect and the mode in which we refer to establish comparative constructs. Thus, the verb patterns are marked through facts in the comparative section.

3. Result

The study of Wolof and English verbs mainly considers the comparative elements based on the tense-mood-aspect. As the basic elements previously characterized, we put in parallel the present aspects of both languages thanks to constructive elements. Thus, the occurrences of such aspects are analyzed.

3.1 *The Wolof Present Tense Constructs*

In Wolof, tenses are determined thanks to aspects which shortly relate to actions. As outlined, the aspects are generally outstanding in the Wolof tenses usage. The present tense includes the affirmative with the aspect of fulfillment. The affirmative is fulfilled with an accomplished aspect of an action that has been carried out. This is to say that two actions occur with the aspects according to whether they are accomplished or unaccomplished. Such aspects even occur with all tenses and modes next to the present.

3.1.1 The Accomplished Perfective Aspect

As the name indicated, the accomplished occurs with achieved actions. The assessment of the tense occurs with the marks of the aspect as being accomplished. As the assessment, English would consider it as the present perfect.

Considering the verb ‘dem’ “to go”, the accomplished aspect is used with the modality aspect in the following table:

Table 1. Characteristics of the Perfective Accomplished Aspect

Pronouns	Verb	Accomplished Aspect	Translation
1st singular (man)	dem	naa	I have gone
2 nd singular (yaw)	dem	nga	you have gone
3rd singular (moom)	dem	na	he/she has gone
1st plural (nun)	dem	nanu	we have gone
2 nd plural (yeen)	dem	ngeen	you have gone
3rd plural (ñun)	dem	nañu	they have gone

These marks of the accomplished actions are performed with the modalities free to the verb as outlined. The verb occurs before the modality or tense aspect mark.

The aspect shows the accomplished action of the verb which stands as the present perfect in English. Otherwise, the actions are accomplished in the time of speaking. This is near the preterit with past actions as being accomplished. We both consider in the sentence the present when referring to the actions occurring in the time speaking, and the past to the assessment of the performed action.

3.1.2 The Imperfective Unaccomplished Aspect

The unaccomplished aspects occurs with the modality ‘a ngiy’ free to the verb and the other elements. Considering the same verb ‘dem’, is marked the unaccomplished perfective in the table below.

Table 2. Characteristics of the Imperfective Unaccomplished Aspect

Pronouns	Accomplished aspect	Verb	Translation
1 st singular (man)	maa ngiy	dem	I am going
2 nd singular (yaw)	yaa ngiy	dem	You are going
3rd singular (moom)	mu ngiy	dem	He/she is going
1st plural (nun)	nu ngiy	dem	we are going
2 nd plural (yeen)	yeen a ngiy	dem	you are going
3rd plural (ñun)	ñu ngiy	dem	they are going

The unaccomplished aspect is set with actions in progress. The element “a” stands freely as linking the verb and the modality “ngiy”. Thus, the enunciator exerts on his person an action in progress to be realized.

3.1.3 The Negation

The negation of the present tense in Wolof occurs with the mark ‘-ul’ which stands as a morpheme

bound to the verb and varies with the pronouns. Whether the negation is accomplished or unaccomplished, it varies with the pronouns.

3.1.3.1 The Accomplished Negation Aspect

The negation mark varies according to the different pronouns with the same verb 'dem' as the following table shows:

Table 3. Characteristics of the Accomplished Negation Aspect

Pronouns	Verb	Negation mark	Translation
1 st singular (man)	dem	-uma	I do not go
2 nd singular (yaw)	dem	-uloo	you do not go
3rd singular (moom)	dem	-ul	he/she does not go
1st plural (nun)	dem	-unu	we do not go
2 nd plural (yeen)	dem	-uleen	you do not go
3rd plural (ñun)	dem	-u ñu	they do not go

3.1.3.2 The Unaccomplished Negation Aspect

The unaccomplished negation plans actions that occur in near future or are in progress. In such cases, the verbal modalities set the negation marks as outlined in the table below:

Table 4. Characteristics of the Unaccomplished Negation Aspect

Pronouns	Negation mark + modality	Verb	Translation
1st singular (man)	duma	dem	I am not going
2 nd singular (yaw)	doo	dem	you are not going
3rd singular (moom)	du	dem	he/she is not going
1st plural (nun)	dunu	dem	we are not going
2 nd plural (yeen)	dungeen	dem	you are not going
3rd plural (ñun)	du ñu	dem	we are not going

The modality and the negation mark form a single unit. The progressive aspects mark the '-ing' form as being unaccomplished. The position of the verb varies between accomplished and unaccomplished actions as shown.

The study of the Wolof present tense mainly occurs with the aspect as outlined. For further details, the study follows the same rules of the present tense in English.

3.2 The English Present Tense Constructs

The English conjugation is characterized by limited number of verbal forms and certain complexity in tense use. In fact, the rules of tense use are mainly guided by the aspect than the action on the timeline.

According to Oswald Ducrot (1972) The indications of aspect are always inferior to predicate. The predicate indeed includes not only the idea of a certain quality or a certain action (“being blue”, “coming to dinner”), but the idea of a certain mode of manifestation in the time of this action or of this quality, an indication of how they complete the period covered by the statement” (Note 5).

In more explicit terms (Imbs, 1960), marks a difference between appearance and tense when he points out that: “the aspect gives an indication in relation to the time when the trial takes place, and not in relation to the moment when we speak, whereas the time indicates where the process is situated in relation to the act of enunciation, at the moment when the aspect informs about its progress and its evolution (Note 6).

These terms refer us to the use of time and aspect, precisely of the present to mark the characteristics in the use of verbs.

3.2.1 The Simple Present Tense

As in French, the English simple present belongs to the indicative mode. We use this tense to describe factual actions, and general truths to express our tastes. It is used to speak of universal truths. It also expresses actions that are continually repeated. The simple present with adverbs that refer to routines, habits such as: ‘every day’, ‘every month’, ‘always’, ‘never’, ‘generally’, ‘usually’, etc. (Note 7).

In the use of the present tense, the affirmative form occurs with the subject, plus the verb as a basic element with which, one adds ‘s’ to the third person with regular verbs.

The following table shows the occurrences of the simple present tense of the verb “to walk”.

Table 5. Characteristics of the Simple Present Aspects

Pronouns	Verb	Aspects
I	walk	zero aspect
you	walk	zero aspect
he/she	walk	(s)
we	walk	zero aspect
you	walk	zero aspect
they	walk	zero aspect

The aspect mainly determines the different types of usage related to the pronouns. It would differ from irregular verbs which change the forms with pronouns.

Considering irregular verbs, we add ‘-es’ when the morphemes -o, -s, -x, -ch, occur in the final position of the stem verb. For example, the irregular verb ‘to do’ occurs as:

‘he/she does’

‘to guess’ ‘he/she guesses’.

‘to fax’ ‘he/she faxes’

In short, the third singular is determinant with the aspect. These characteristics of the simple present can be seen through the other aspects or modes of the present perfect that English puts in the facts accomplished in the present.

3.2.2 The Present Perfect

The present perfect is characterized by the use of the auxiliary 'have', associated with verbs and pronouns. The table below shows the characteristics of the present perfect.

Table 6. Characteristics of the Present Prefect Aspect

Pronouns	Auxiliary	Verb	Aspects
I	have	walk	-ed
you	have	walk	-ed
he/she	has	walk	-ed
we	have	walk	-ed
you	have	walk	-ed
they	have	walk	-ed

The present perfect is near the progressive; while differing from the aspect of being accomplished or unaccomplished. The perfect has an accomplished aspect, while the progressive is to be accomplished.

3.2.3 The Progressive Present

Table 7. Characteristics of the Present Progressive Aspect

Pronouns	Auxiliary	Verb	Aspects
I	am	walk	-ing
you	are	walk	-ing
he/she	is	walk	-ing
we	are	walk	-ing
you	are	walk	-ing
they	are	walk	-ing

As previously mentioned, the characteristics of the tense aspects that occur differently allow to set a comparative study, based on the observed facts. Thus, we have presented the partens of each language as descriptive elements. Indeed, the study has mainly developed the mode and aspects of the verbs as they appear. Is found that in the Wolof tense usage, the notion of mode and aspect characterizes the verbs. The same as the English tense with the aspect that marks the actions. The descriptive study of the verbs; thus considers the present mode of both languages. In other words, the accomplished aspect stands as achieved with perfective actions, whereas the unaccomplished aspect is imperfect.

The verb ‘dem’ and ‘to walk’ have characterized these tense patterns in their respective usage. The same aspect occurs with the negation, whether it is accomplished or unaccomplished as:

The accomplished negative perfective occurs as:

man demuma	‘I didn’t leave’
yaw demuloo	‘you are not gone’
moom demul	‘he is not gone’, etc

As for the uncomplicated negative imperfective it occurs as:

man dumay dem	‘I’m not leaving’
yaw doy dem	‘you don’t leave’
moom duy dem, etc.	‘he/she doesn’t leave’

These elements of the present aspect are realized with such characteristics that we correlate with English to compare the occurrences.

4. Discussion

By referring to the syntactic structures of sentences, the description of grammatical elements highlights different patterns according to whether the aspect is accomplished or not. The comparative elements of the results are discussed thanks to the verbs aspects for tense rules characteristics.

4.1 Verbs Structural Rules

The modes and aspects are determinant factors in tense usage. But they should consider the pronouns as personal indicators. Treating the aspects and modes of the verbs in Wolof requires to set the structures to implement rules. Considering the Wolof verb ‘dem’, is characterized by the constituents of the pronoun, the verbal modality, and the aspect. In Wolof, the pronoun is generally omitted in usage because is in relation with the verbal modality. In other words, the pronoun is semantically related to the verbal modality, added to the aspect. The speaker or the receiver understands the meaning of the pronoun through such verbal modality. The following sentences consider the perfective and the imperfective aspects to mark the occurrences:

4.1.1 The Present Perfective:

1. Moom dem na “he/she has gone”

The pronoun is replaced by the personal indicator or mark “moom”, it is related to the modality “na” which follows the verb. Such a modality might vary the position according to the aspect.

4.1.2 The Present Imperfective:

2. moom mi gniy dem “she/he is going”

Wolof speakers intend the meaning of the pronoun ‘moom’ in both sentences. What remains are the verbs and their modalities:

1. Dem na “he/she has gone”
2. Mi ngi dem “he/she is going”

By comparing with English, Wolof verbs use pronouns according to the aspect. Otherwise, the pronouns are known thanks to the aspect, with which they can be replaced. Besides, the third singular personal pronoun in Wolof is neutral, and is semantically used both with male and female gender.

It differs from English which specifies the gender between “he” and “she”. Accordingly, the Wolof sentences have used this third singular gender in English as:

The masculine: “He has gone”

The feminine: “she has gone”

The other particularity that characterizes the English grammar is the use of the auxiliary “have” in the present perfect. This auxiliary “have” is taken as the verbal modality that Wolof uses with ‘na’ in the sentence:

3. Moom dem na ‘he/she has walked”

To mark the aspect, Wolof considers the accomplished actions of the perfective present with the verbal modality ‘na’, whereas English puts the auxiliary “have” to mark the perfective actions. The following sentence shows such varieties.

4. Fatimata dem (na)

Fatimata (has) gone

These changes occur with all the pronouns respectively.

In the Wolof present tense characteristics, the pronouns are semantically related to the subjects and the modalities as verbal functions. Whether the tense is perfective or imperfective, the actions and the aspects are grammatically bound to.

4.2 *The Present Progressive*

In Wolof, the present progressive occurs with the actions in progress, or to be realized progressively. Similar occurrences are underlined with the progressive present that Wolof uses with the imperfective actions as:

5. Fatimata mi ngiy dem

Fatimata is going

In Wolof, there is no auxiliary with the progressive present tense, and no action has been perfectly accomplished. This is why, no perfective mark is noted with the use the progressive action. It stands as imperfective with marks of aspects and modalities as:

6. Man maa ngiy dem “I am going”

Moom mi ngiy dem “he/she is going”

The modality of the verb in the third singular person in Wolof is ‘mi ngiy’, whereas the first singular is “maa ngiy” before the verb.

In English, the aspect varies with the verbal constructs. The progressive aspect and modes are used differently. The auxiliary “be” is used with pronouns.

4.3 *The Present Perfect*

The present perfect occurrence is not attested in Wolof. It is understood by the use of the present simple

with perfective aspects. According to the assessment of the actions accomplished in the recent past, occurs the accomplished perfective present as:

7. Man dem naa “I have gone”
Moom dem na “he/she has gone”

Compared to English, the auxiliary “have” occurs to mark an assessment with the accomplished actions as:

- I have gone
He/she has gone

These characteristics in Wolof vary thanks to the aspects, which differ from English between the present simple, the perfect, and the progressive. Indeed, occur the auxiliary ‘have’ and ‘be’ that Wolof replaces with the verbal modality ‘na’ as the examples illustrate.

4.4 The Study Objectives

This comparative study aims at putting together both literary and grammar aspects of two languages from different contexts, while sharing common characteristics with English thanks to the Latin alphabet. It also puts academic relationship between Wolof and English for second language learners, leading to develop technical strategies between local and second language learning. Furthermore, this study enables readers and researchers interested in grammar of Wolof and English, to wider knowledge and issues in language research and diversity.

4.5 The Study Limits

In the comparative study between Wolof and English, are noticed unbalanced data due to different historical linguistic background. Otherwise, data are wider in English than Wolof regarding literary basis issues. Many Wolof literary works are drawn from an oral tradition. Indeed, Wolof is a language with an oral basis, so that the sources of its data do not develop with the birth of the language. This leads to lacking data of the old or ancient scripts. Besides, few documents have treated such comparative issues between Wolof and English.

5. Conclusion

The study of the present tense of Wolof and English puts in relation the aspects and modes of the verbs. Indeed, we have marked the actions as the elements characterizing the use of the present tense. Whether the present of Wolof is perfective or imperfective, negative or affirmative, it occurs with the pronouns, associating with the verbal modalities which vary according to the number. The English language can thus use the bare auxiliary with affirmative forms in present tense, the auxiliary “do” and “have” in the simple and perfect present, as well as the verbal modalities that vary in gender and number. The study of the description of the present tense in Wolof and English allowed to better apprehend the comparative elements of the aspects related to times and actions to set such tenses’ characteristics.

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Notes

Note 1.

<https://www.google.com/search?q=What+is+Comparative+Linguistics%3F&ei=HqlrY-wpxYL27w->

Note 2. <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-comparative-grammar->

Note 3. https://www.wikiwand.com/fr/Conjugaison_anglaise

Note 4. https://www.pcsenegal.org/new_wolof_book

Note 5. Oswald Ducrot et Tzvetan Todorov, Dictionnaire encyclopédique des sciences du langage, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1972 (ISBN 978-2-02-005349-5).

Note 6. L'emploi des temps verbaux en français moderne. Essai de grammaire descriptive, 1960.

Note 7. <https://www.ispeakspokespoken.com/temps-anglais/>