

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THEOLOGY

TENSES IN MASIKORO

BY
CLOVIS REMBOHONY

*A Linguistic Project Submitted To The Graduate School
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts in Translation Studies*

JULY, 2008

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By

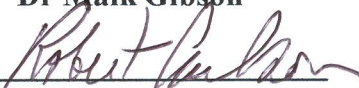
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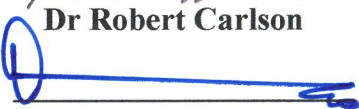
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July, 2008

Student's Declaration

TENSES IN MASI KORO

I declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other College or University for academic credit.

The views presented herein are not necessarily those of the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology or the Examiners.

(Signed) 

Clovis Rembohony

July, 2008

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is an attempt to provide a description of a limited topic in Masikoro grammar.

Up to now a few linguists have written about this language, basically on discourse, stories, and proverbs. Very little has been written on grammar. I have never found any grammar exclusively done on Masikoro language.

This linguistic project, therefore, is to describe tense in Masikoro in a way using linguistics theories I have learnt in class.

Masikoro has three tenses, the Present tense, the Past tense, and the Future tense. Only these three basic tenses have each their particular form. Complex tenses like Present Perfect or Pluperfect, and Aspects such as Progressive and Completed are covered under these three basic tenses. As for meaning, these basic tenses have two main roles. First, they express time reference, and second, they express the order of occurrence of events. The role of tense marking in subordinate clauses is also discussed.

Since this work is the first detailed study of this subject, I hope it will provide a foundation for those who will do further study on the Masikoro language in future. I also hope it will be a relevant tool for the Masikoro Bible translation team for understanding the overarching of the tense-system.

To
My wife Mihaja, a physician woman,
And,
My daughter Vololona.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First, “To God is the glory in the highest”.

Secondly, I would like to express my gratitude to the NEGST Community led by Dr Douglas Carew Vice- Chancellor that has encouraged me during my struggle in study.

Thirdly, my gratitude goes to the family of the Translation Department led by Dr Regina Blass,

In particular to Dr Maik Gibson my project supervisor who has unceasingly led me to achieve an academic work,

Fourth, to the whole family of SIL and WYCLIFFE, in particular to Dr Katherine Barnwell the mother of the “FIARAHA- MIASA LIOKA” (Luke Partnership) of Madagascar.

May God bless all who have contributed for the accomplishment of this project.

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ABBREVIATIONS

1, 2, 3	first, second, third person
ADV	adverb
ADVP	adverbial phrase
ART	article
ASS	associator
CON	conjunction
Cs	circumstantial suffix
D	derivational prefix
EXC	exclusive (we)
FUT	future
I	inflectional prefix
IMP	imperative
INC	inclusive (we)
INQ	informative question- marker
LOC	adverb of location
NEG	negation, negative
PART	participle
PASS	passive
PL	plural
PN	pronoun

POS	possessor
PR	preposition
PRG	progressive
PRS	present
PST	past
Q	question particle/marker
RECP	reciprocal
SB	subordinator
TEMP	temporal adverb
W	a clitic marking the want.

I. INTRODUCTION

In this linguistic project we present a study in the field of the Masikoro language, a language spoken in the south-western region of Madagascar between two rivers, Fihereña in the south and Mangoky in the north. Three tribes live side by side from east to west in that region; the Bara living on the long mountain of Añalavelo, the Vezo on the sea-cost, and the Masikoro living in the fertile flat land between the long mountain and the sea-cost. Velonandro, in his book, extends the geographical and dialectical delimitation of Masikoro up to the Onilahy river in the south far (Velonandro 1995, 10). But that delimitation exceedingly covers another tribe, the Tañolahy living on the side of Onilahy river. Its language, although very close to Masikoro, undergoes some influence from its neighbors like Mahafaly and Tañalaña. Thus, we think that Masikoro and Tañolahy are not the same language.

A grammatical research on Masikoro language will be the concern in this work. Up to now a few linguists have written about this language basically on discourse matter, stories, and proverbs. Only a small portion of those works deal with grammar or language rules. But grammar is among the most important linguistic features after vocabulary in learning language, a valuable tool for expressing ideas. People have satisfied themselves only with the traditional grammar of the national language, the ‘Malagasy Ofisialy’¹ on account of the idea that all languages² existed in Madagascar

¹ The *Malagasy Ofisialy* is the national, standardized language, formed by selection of vocabularies among all languages which exist in Madagascar. However, it is mainly drawn from the *Merina* language spoken in the capital-city. Thus, one remarks that there is almost no Masikoro word in this *Malagasy Ofisialy*.

² Thus, people think that, apart from the national language, the rest are just Dialects, not languages.

can be harmonized by one only rule. That is not totally true. Even though they have the same word order ‘Verb-Object-Subject’ (VOS) in general, some distinctions exist. It is evident that Masikoro differs much from the ‘Malagasy Ofisialy’ morphologically and semantically. Then those differences may cause dissimilarity in some constructions. As this is an introductory chapter we are avoiding to do more detail about that; we leave it to be discussed in the following chapter.

The topic of this work is the **“Tenses in Masikoro”**.

Tense means time. The tense of a verb refers to the time of the action or state of being it expresses. We immediately link tense to the verb because in Masikoro tense is primarily marked by prefix on verb as we will see in details later.

Going more profound concerning time, linguists speak also of what is called aspect.

Then, Comrie says,

“... Although both aspect and tense are concerned with time, they are concerned with time in very different ways... Tense locates situation in time while Aspect views the internal temporal constituency of a situation” (Comrie 1985, 3, 5).

To clarify this distinction between tenses and aspects, we consider the following English examples. (i) *I study Masikoro*. (ii) *I studied Masikoro*. The difference between the two examples is one of tense. (i) is in present tense centered on the present moment while (ii) is in past tense centered on the time prior to this present time. We know that (ii) is in past tense because of the physical form, the suffix *-ed* on verb *study* that expresses the past tense. Two more examples are, (iii) *I study Masikoro*. (iv) *I am studying Masikoro*. Both are centered on the present moment but there is a difference between them that is one of aspect. (iii) is in Simple Present, expressing a general situation or an habit while (iv) is in Present Progressive

expressing an action that is going on now. We know that (iv) is in Present Progressive because of the auxiliary *am* and the suffix *-ing* on the verb *study*.

Not all languages are tense-aspect-system like English or French. Some are just tense-system, as Comrie says;

“Just as some languages do not grammaticalise time reference to give tenses, so some languages do not grammaticalise semantic aspectual distinctions to give aspects.” (Comrie 1985, 6).

Coming back to our topic “**Tenses in Masikoro**”, my hypothesis is, “Masikoro is a Tense-system language. Tense is just a label, a common Form for groups of meaningful time references that are expressed by their appropriate adverbs”.

“The Malagasy language belongs to the Austronesian family” (Dahl 1993, 1). It has only three tenses: the Present tense, the Past tense, and the Future tense (Rajaobelina 1966, 14). This label Malagasy includes all tribal or regional languages existing in Madagascar. Masikoro is among them.

These three tenses differ from one another, by their form and their meanings.

About the form, two main points have to be made.

First, only these three tenses³ have each their particular form. All Complex tenses like Present Perfect or Pluperfect, and Aspects such as Progressive and Completed do not have form. So, they do not exist in Malagasy grammar in terms of form.

Second, as Payne says,

“Some tasks that are typically accomplished by one strategy in one language may be accomplished by one of the other strategies in the next language” (Payne 1997, 10, 11).

Thus, when some tense like the Past is expressed morphologically by a verb suffix in English, in contrary in Masikoro, all the three tenses are marked by prefixes on the verb’s root. That is what we call ‘Form’ since above. Where they differ precisely from

³ The three existed tenses precisely refer to Simple Present, Simple Past, and Simple Future.

one another is only on the first part of the prefixes; the Present is marked by **m-**, the Past is marked by **n-**, and the Future is marked by **h-**.

As for the meanings, different time references corresponding to what we have already judged not existing in Malagasy grammar (complex tenses and aspects) are implied by some adverbs or adverbial phrases. This is what Payne says,

“In other languages the time of situation is expressed periphrastically by temporal adverbial phrases...” (1997, 11).

But they are covered under the three existed tenses. Our argument on that is based in terms of form.

Saying that only these three tenses cover all the different time references means that each tense has more than one meaning according to different adverbs or adverbial phrases used with it. One can not bind a tense for a unique meaning.

In the following chapter, we will set a section dealing with some evidences of the non-existence of aspects in Masikoro even though different time references in each tense exist.

Therefore, a large part of this work will be the careful study on the use of those temporal adverbs or adverbial phrases with the three tenses for getting the correct meaning of any utterance.

But before that, in the preliminary study, as we already mentioned above, a simple study on morphological and semantic differences between Masikoro and the Malagasy Ofisialy shall be done. The reason is to show that this Masikoro language has to have its appropriate grammar but not always considered to be harmonized by the grammar of the Malagasy Ofisialy.

The second section of the preliminary study will deal with the tenses markers in more details in order to facilitate understanding of all data used in this book. We need to know how a prefix comes together with the root to form a meaningful verb in

accordance with the tense and the voice. That will help us to draw distinctions of situation type. For some roots yield two or three different verbs carrying different situations, and then that may affect the tense's meaning.

The last part of the preliminary study will be a section dealing with the non-existence of aspects in Masikoro.

II. PRELIMINARY STUDY

In the introductory chapter we proposed that three main studies shall be done in this current chapter before we will discuss the details of the main topic. The first section is a simple study on morphological and semantic differences between Masikoro and the Malagasy Ofisialy (MO). The second section is a study on the prefixes marking tenses with verbs root. And the third section deals with the non-existence of Aspects in Masikoro.

II.1 Morphological and Semantic Differences between Masikoro and the MO

II.1.1 *Morphological Distinction of Masikoro language*

The importance of this current subsection and the next one (II.1.2) is to confirm that this actual language under examination cannot be entirely controlled by means only of the grammar of the MO. Some particularities exist and may cause mistake if they are not well controlled.

Five things are very remarkable: the letter n/\tilde{n} ⁴ between vowels, the ultimas $-na/\emptyset$, $-ka/ky$, $-dy/ly$, and $-tra/tsy$. They mean that the $-n-$ surrounded by vowels in MO words is replaced with $-\tilde{n}-$ in Masikoro, the ultimas $-na$ is replaced with $-\emptyset$ (i.e. disappeared and no replacement), $-ka$ is replaced with $-ky$, $-dy$ is replaced with $-ly$, and $-tra$ is replaced with $-tsy$.

⁴ \tilde{n} is phonologically pronounced η .

a) Examples of the replacement *n/ñ***MO****Masikoro**

<i>any</i>	<i>añy</i>	‘there far’
<i>eny</i>	<i>eñy</i>	‘there’
<i>iny</i>	<i>iñy</i>	‘this/that’
<i>manary</i>	<i>mañary</i>	‘throw away’
<i>manarato</i>	<i>mañarato</i>	‘fish with a net’
<i>manefa</i>	<i>mañefa</i>	‘pay’
<i>manely</i>	<i>mañely</i>	‘spread’
<i>maniry</i>	<i>mañiry</i>	‘wish, desire’
<i>sanatria</i>	<i>sañatria</i>	‘may it never be!’
<i>trano</i>	<i>traño</i>	‘house’

And somewhat like special,

<i>ny</i>	<i>ñ</i> ’ or <i>ñy</i>	‘the’ (definite article)
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b) Examples of the ultima *-na/o***MO****Masikoro**

<i>lalana</i>	<i>lala</i>	‘road, path’
<i>namana</i>	<i>nama</i>	‘friend(s)’
<i>kendrena</i>	<i>kendre</i>	‘aimed’
<i>terena</i>	<i>tere</i>	‘pressed, compelled’
<i>lalina</i>	<i>laly</i>	‘dip’
<i>sofina</i>	<i>sofy</i>	‘ear’
<i>olona</i>	<i>olo</i>	‘a human being’

c) Examples of the ultima *-ka/ky***MO****Masikoro**

<i>mandroaka</i>	<i>mandroaky</i>	‘drive away’
<i>taranaka</i>	<i>taranaky</i>	‘descendant’
<i>mananika</i>	<i>mañaniky</i>	‘climb’
<i>emboka</i>	<i>emboky</i>	‘incense’

d) Examples of the ultima –dy/ly

MO

ady

fady

vady

atody

mody

Masikoro

aly ‘fight, war’

faly ‘taboo’

valy ‘spouse’

atoly ‘egg’

moly ‘go home’

e) Examples of the ultima –tra/tsy

MO

avaratra

mananatra

antitra

sempotra

varotra

Masikoro

avaratsy ‘north’

mañanatsy ‘advise, admonish’

antitsy ‘old’

sempotsy ‘out of breath’

varotsy ‘trade’

In addition to these morphological differences, Masikoro determiners (article and demonstratives) are influenced orthographically as well as phonologically by the environment of the word they determine, while for MO they are constant.

Examples

MO

Article;

ny tany

Masikoro

ñy tany ‘the land’

<i>ny ala</i>	<i>ñ' ala</i>	‘the forest’
<i>ny olona</i>	<i>ñ' olo</i>	‘the human being, people’

The Masikoro article *ñy* becomes *ñ'* for words starting with a vowel.

Demonstratives;

<i>tany io</i>	<i>tany io</i>	‘this land’
<i>ala io</i>	<i>ala eo</i>	‘this forest’
<i>olona io</i>	<i>olo o</i>	‘this people’
<i>taratasy iny</i>	<i>taratasy iñy</i>	‘that letter’
<i>olona iny</i>	<i>olo oñy</i>	‘that people’
<i>zaza iny</i>	<i>ajà eñy</i>	‘that child’

We see that the Masikoro demonstratives *io* changes into *io*, *eo*, *o*, and *iñy* into *iñy*, *eñy*, *oñy* according to the word finally of the noun they determine.

It is necessary to do a remark that *eo* ‘this’ is a demonstrative as we already saw above. But in some cases it can also be an adverb of place meaning ‘there’.

Examples;

MO

Masikoro

ambony latabatra eo *añabo latabo eo* ‘on the table there’

In MO a demonstrative pronoun may be doubled surrounding a noun-topic while in Masikoro it does not.

Examples;

<i>Mahavokatra io tany io.</i>	(MO)
Fertile this land this.	
<i>Mahavokatsy tany io.</i>	(Masikoro)
Fertile land this.	
‘This land is fertile’.	

More examples;

<i>Hendry iny zaza iny.</i>	(MO)
Wise that child that	
<i>Hendry ajà eñy.</i>	(Masikoro)

Wise child that
‘That child is wise’.

This simple study in morphology and syntax attests the claim that the Masikoro cannot be entirely controlled by means only of the grammar of the MO.

II.1.2 Semantic Matter between Masikoro and the Malagasy Oficialy

If we consider only the replacement of ultimas to pass from MO to Masikoro as we already did above, it seems very easy to harmonize these two languages. But there are important confusions in semantic matter. For there are some words in both Masikoro and MO lexicons that are different in meanings and behave differently.

Examples;

MO	Masikoro	
<i>fady</i>	<i>faly</i>	‘taboo’
<i>faly</i>	<i>mazoto</i>	‘glad’
<i>mazoto</i>	<i>mahefa</i>	‘zealous, diligent’
<i>mahefa</i>	<i>mandily</i>	‘with authority’

We see that three words *faly*, *mazoto*, and *mahefa* are in both MO and Masikoro lexicons but in different meanings.

Then, the MO substantive *fady* ‘taboo’ gives birth to the verb *mifady* ‘to abstain from’. We see, it is enough just adding *mi-* as a prefix on the substantive to get the verb. But the Masikoro translation of this MO verb *mifady* is just *faly*. We see that the Masikoro *faly* is whether substantive or verb. As for the Masikoro verb *mifaly*, it means ‘beg pardon (with kneeling)’ that has no relation with *faly* ‘taboo’.

Examples;

Mifady osy ny Masikoro. (MO)
Abstain_from goat the Masikoro
Faly aosy ñy Masikoro. (Masikoro)
Taboo goat the Masikoro.

‘The Masikoro abstain from goat’.

As for the Masikoro verb *mifaly* ‘beg pardon (with kneeling)’, it is a transitive verb and we can say:

Mifaly anao aho Ndranañahary! (Masikoro)
 Beg_pardon you I God
 ‘I beg you pardon, O God!’

Mifaly also exists in MO lexicon and it is a verb from the adjective *faly* ‘glad’. It is an intransitive verb and its Masikoro translation is *misinisiny* ‘rejoice’.

Examples; (Lk. 1.47)

Mifaly amin’ Andriamanitra Mpamonjy ahy ny fanahiko. (MO)
Misinisiny amin- Ndranañahary Mpandomba ahy ñ’ aiko . (Masikoro)
 Rejoice in God Savior me the spirit_my
 ‘My spirit rejoices in God my Savior’.

By this simple study on few words we can figure out an interesting distinction between the Masikoro and the MO in semantic matter. A same word is included in both Masikoro and MO lexicons but in different meanings and in different derivations. That fact attests the claim that the Masikoro cannot be entirely controlled by means only of the grammar of the MO.

II.2 The Roots and Prefixes on Masikoro Verbs

From now we leave the MO and will concentrate our study only on Masikoro the main concern of this work. Although we are still in preliminary study, then we are going to discuss about the combination of a root with a prefix making up a verb.

This study has its importance in this work because of the claim that the three tenses differ from one another by the first letter or part of the marking prefix. That means the prefix has two parts.

Black gives a general definition of affixes (prefix, infix, and suffix) and says;

“... Derivational affixes either indicate word class (e.g., adjective, adverb, etc.) or else add lexical meaning. Inflectional affixes serve as signaling devices to show such grammatical characteristics as person, number, tense, case, and comparison” (1995, 55).

Coming back to the two parts of the prefix on Masikoro verb, the first part changes according to the tense, so it is an inflectional prefix; it is **m-** for the Present Tense, **n-** for the Past Tense, and **h-** for the Future Tense.

The second part is unchangeable whatever the tense is. It is a derivational prefix because its presence tells the formation of a verb; its operation concerns the transitivity, the situation type, and the lexical meaning of the verb.

On the other hand it is well attested that there are two groups of prefixes: the **ma-** group and the **mi-** group⁵ corresponding to the present tense.

We are going to discuss each group in turn, but to facilitate it we only do an investigation in accordance with **m-** (the Present marker), because **n-** (Past marker) and **h-** (Future marker) just imitate it.

II.2.1 The Ma- group of Prefixes

They are **ma-**, **maha-**, **mampan-**, **mampañ-**, **mam-**, **man-**, **mañ-**.

In order to expose the tense marker **m-** (the inflectional prefix) we set it apart from the derivational prefixes, thus they are written as follow;

m-a-, **m-aha-**, **m-ampan-**, **m-ampañ-**, **m-am-**, **m-an-**, **m-añ-**.

-a-, **-aha-**, **-ampan-**, **ampañ-**, **-am-**, **-an-**, **-añ-** are all derivational prefixes.

a) **-a-** operates to form a stative verb or an adjective used as a predicate⁶.

⁵ **ma-** and **mi-** for the Present, **na-** and **ni-** for the Past, and **ha-** and **hi-** for the Future.

⁶ And an attribute too. But, in this work we consider adjectives only as predicates, that is behaving like a verb.

Examples;

From the root *-tahotsy* ‘fear’

Matahotsy comes from *m-a-tahotsy*

- *matahotsy* used as a stative verb;

M -a- tahotsy an- Ndranañahary aho.

I -D- fear to God I

‘I fear God’.

- *matahotsy* as a predicative adjective;

Matahotsy aho!

Afraid I

‘I am afraid’.

From the root *-siaky* ‘angry / ferocious’

Masiaky comes from *m-a-siaky*

Used only as a predicate;

M -a- siaky maràmila eo.

I -D- angry soldier this

‘This soldier is ferocious’.

b) *-aha-* operates to form a verb expressing capability to complete, to finish, or to achieve an action, or expressing a state of being powerful.

Examples;

From the root *-vita* ‘finish’

Mahavita comes from *m-aha-vita*

M -aha- vita asa ñ’ olo fatratsy.

I -D- finish work the man strong.

‘A strong man can finish his work’.

From the root *-leha* ‘go / walk’

Mahaleha comes from *m-aha-leha*

M -aha- leha ñ’ olo mpilay.

I -D- walk the man runner

‘A runner is strong in walking’.

c) *-ampan-*, *ampañ-* are the same in function. They express an ‘asking or telling people to do something’. What they differ is that *-ampan-* is for the root starting with a consonant and *-ampañ-* for the root starting with a vowel.

Examples;

From the root *-lio* ‘clean’

Mampandio comes from *m-ampan- d(l)io* that is *m-ampan- lio* [l → d/n-]

M-ampan-d(l)io hazavà ñy sefon-tanà.

I -D- clean courtyard the chief of village.

‘The chief of village ask people to clean their courtyard’.

From the root *-loa* ‘pay’

Mampandoa comes from *m-ampan-d(l)oa* that is *m-ampan-loa* [l → d/n-]

M-ampan-d(l)oa ofan-traño ñy tompony.

I -D- pay rent house the owner.

‘The owner asks to pay the rent for house’.

From the root *-ary* ‘throw away’

Mampañary comes from *m-ampañ-ary*

M-ampañ-ary kifoka ahy babako.

I -D- throw_away garbage me father.my.

‘My father asks me to throw away the garbage’.

From the root *-onitsy* ‘compensate’

Mampañonitsy comes from *m-ampañ-onitsy*

M-ampañ-onitsy drala be olo maratsy iñy.

I -D- compensate money big man injured this.

‘The injured asks much money for compensation’.

This following one is an exception for *-ampañ-*, that is, not for asking or telling people to do something;

From the root *-anatsy* ‘teach’

Mampañanatsy comes from *m-ampañ-anatsy*.

M-ampañ-anatsy ajà maro Rehambany.

I -D- teach children many Rehambany

‘Rehambany teaches many children’.

d) *-am-*, *-an-*, *-añ-* operate to form dynamic verbs. Their differences are that *-am-* is for roots starting with bilabial (b, p) and labio-dental (f, v) consonants while *-an-* is for the rest of consonants. *-añ-* is for roots starting with a vowel.

Examples;

From the root *-varotsy* ‘sell’

Mamarotsy comes from *m-am-(v)arotsy* that is *m-am-arotsy* [v → ø/m-]

M-am-(v)arotsy vary Vololo.

I -D- sell rice Vololo

‘Vololo sells rice’.

From the root *-voly* ‘plant’

Mamboly comes from *m-am-b(v)oly* that is *m-am-voly* [v→b/m-]

M-am-b(v)oly vary ñy Masikoro.

I -D- plant rice the Masikoro

‘Masikoro people plant rice’.

From root *-leha* ‘go’

Mandeha comes from *m-an-d(l)eha* that is *m-an-leha* [l → d/n-]

M-an-d(l)eha an- koraky isa- maray ñy mpamboly.

I -D- go to- rice-field every-morning the cultivators

‘Cultivators go to rice-field every morning’.

From the root *-loto* ‘dirty / soil’

Mandoto comes from *m-an-d(l)oto* that is *m-an-loto* [l → d/n-]

M-an-d(l)oto salotsy ñ’ ajà.

I -D- soil clothes the children

‘Children soil clothes’.

From the root *-endy* ‘fry’

Mañendy comes from *m-añ- endy*

M-añ- endy fia Revao.

I -D- fry fish Revao

‘Revao is frying fishes’.

From the root *-iraky* ‘send’

Mañiraky comes from *m-añ-iraky.*

M-añ- iraky antsika hañambara ñy Talilisoa Jesosy.

I -D- send us proclaim the Gospel Jesus

‘Jesus sends us to proclaim the Gospel’.

II.2.2 The Mi- group of Prefixes

They are **mi-**, **mifam-**, **mifan-**, **mifañ-**, **mifampi-**, **miha-**.

In order to expose the tense marker **m-** (the inflectional prefix) we set it apart from the derivational prefixes, thus they are written as follow;

m-i-, *m-ifam-*, *m-ifan-*, *m-ifañ-*, *m-ifampi-*, *m-iha-*.

-i-, *-ifam-*, *-ifan-*, *-ifañ-*, *-ifampi-*, *-iha-* are all derivational prefixes.

a) One cannot categorize verbs with *-i-* for it operates to form either stative or dynamic verbs.

Examples;

From the root *-aritsy* ‘endure / suffer’ (stative)

Miaritsy comes from *m-i-aritsy*

M-i- aritsy ñy sarotsy ñy mpiavy.

I -D- endure the difficulty the foreigner
‘Foreigners endure difficulties’.

From the root *-tariky* ‘pull / lead’ (dynamic)

Mitariky comes from *m-i-tariky*

M-i- tariky sarety ñ’ aomby a Madagasikara aña.

I -D- pull cart the bull in Madagascar there
‘In Madagascar bulls pull cart’.

b) *-ifam-*, *-ifan-*, *-ifañ-*, *-ifampi-* operates to form verbs expressing reciprocity.

Corresponding to those in II.3.2.d) there differences are that *-ifam-* is for roots starting with bilabial (b, p) and labio-dental (f, v) consonants while *-ifan-* is for the rest of consonants, and *-añ-* is for roots starting with a vowel. *-ifampi-* passes everywhere.

Examples;

From the root *-vango* ‘beat’

Mifamango comes from *m-ifam-(v)ango* that is *m-ifam- vango* [v → ø/m-]

M-ifam- (v)ango ñy mamò.

I -RECP- beat the drunken
‘The drunken people beat one another’.

From the root *-ronjy* ‘push’

Mifandronjy comes from *m-ifan-dr(r)onjy* that is *m-ifan-ronjy* [r → dr/n-]

M-ifan- dr(r)onjy an- drano ao rozy.

I -RECP- push into river there they
‘They push one another into the river’.

From the root *-ody* ‘question’

Mifañody comes from *m-ifañ-ody*

M-ifañ- ody ñ’ olo lafa mivory.

I -RECP- question the people when meet

‘People question one another in meeting’.

From the root *-kaiky* ‘call’

Mifampikaiky comes from *m-ifampi-kaiky*

M-ifampi-kaiky hisa laboly ñ’ ajà.

I -RECP- call play ball the children

‘The children call one another to play ball’.

c) *-iha-* operates with an adjective to form progressive verb.

Examples:

From adjective *-soa* ‘good’

Mihaso comes from *m-iha-soa*

*M-iha-soa ñ’ andro*⁷.

I -PRG- good the weather

‘The weather is becoming better’.

From the adjective *-mora* ‘cheap’

Mihamora comes from *m-iha-mora*

M-iha-mora ñy vilin-draha an- tsena ao.

I-PRG- cheap the price-thing in-market there

‘Merchandise is becoming cheaper in the market’.

The last thing is to notify that some roots can take both **ma-** and **mi-** prefixes.

Examples:

From the root *-anatsy*, we have;

- *mañanatsy* from *m-añ-anatsy* ‘advise’
- *mianatsy* from *m-i-anatsy* ‘learn/study’.

From the root *-falo*, we have;

- *mamalo* from *m-am-(f)alo* that is *m-am-falo* ‘move’ (transitive verb)
- *mifalo* from *m-i-falo* ‘move’ (intransitive verb)

From the root *-lahatsy*, we have;

- *mandahatsy* from *m-an-d(l)ahatsy* that is *m-an-lahatsy* ‘arrange’
- *milahatsy* from *m-i-lahatsy* ‘stand in line’.

⁷ *Andro* has three meanings: sun, day, and weather.

II.3 The Non- existence of Aspects in Masikoro

We consecrate this section for the study in the three tenses the assumption of non-existence of aspects before we start the main discussion on our topic “**Tenses in Masikoro**”. It is said that Masikoro is a tense-system language. As for aspects and complex tenses, we assume that they do not exist because they do not have form. This means that only tenses are grammatically marked on the verb.

What we will do in this study is simply to show what form is adapted to the verb when the action or the state of being is complete, incomplete or describing a progression. By that study we will prove the non-existence on aspects in Masikoro⁸.

We already saw in the introduction that Masikoro has just three tenses, the Present that is marked by the prefix **m-**, the Past marked by **n-**, and the Future marked by **h-**. This study will be divided into three subsections corresponding to the three tenses, and based on significant numbers of data.

II.3.1 *The Present Tense*

The Present tense represents all time references centered on the time of speaking.

Examples;

Compare the verb *mianatsy* ‘study’ in examples (a) and (a’)

(a) *Mianatsy fivolaña Masikoro tsika*

M- i- anatsy fivolaña Masikoro tsika.

PR- study language Masikoro we

‘We study the Masikoro language.’

This example (a) describes a general situation. We can explain it, ‘Every day we study the Masikoro language’.

(a’) *Mianatsy fivolaña Masikoro tsika henane zao.*

M- i- anatsy fivolaña Masikoro tsika henane zao

PR- study language Masikoro we now

⁸ As for the non-existence of complex tenses, we do not do that in this section because the idea of this section is to show that Masikoro is not an aspect-system but a tense-system language.

‘We study the Masikoro language now’.

Only the adverbial phrase *henane zao* ‘now’ differentiates (a’) from (a). The verb *mianatsy* ‘study’ is the same both in (a) and (a’).

This example (a’) tells that our study in Masikoro is going on now, not already complete but still continuing. It does not tell us that we do Masikoro every day. It does not imply the duration of that action. But the center of the situation is the present moment. Considering only the meaning of this (a’) it seems to be an aspectual situation in the present tense. But in terms of form it is not marked on the verb. Either it describes a general situation or an aspectual situation, the form on the verb never changes. Just the adverbial phrase *henane zao* plays the role telling us that this describes an aspectual situation.

In some occasion, even this adverbial phrase is not needed. That is, the aspectual situation is just known by the context.

Examples;

At home, when I am in my office, my wife asks;

(b) *Manao ino iha?*
m- an- (t)ao ino iha?
 PR- do what you ?

‘What do you do?’ / ‘What are you doing?’

In that time, I know that she does not ask me my job but asks me what I do in my office in that moment. So, contextually the correct English translation of this is then

‘What are you doing?’

And I answer to her;

(c) *Mianatsy fandikan-teny aho.*
m- i- anatsy fandikan-teny aho.
 PR- study translation I

‘I study translation.’ / ‘I am studying translation lesson.’

Likewise, when she hears that answer, she figures out that I do not speak of my main study at NEGST but tell her what particular lesson I do in that moment. Contextually, the correct English translation is ‘I am studying translation lesson.’

More examples;

(d) *Mamboly hazo ñ' olo.*
m- am- b(v)oly hazo ñ' olo
 PR- plant tree the people

‘People plant trees.’

This is a general situation. We can explain it, ‘For application of the durable development launched by the government, people plant trees’.

But, if we say;

(d') *Mamboly hazo olo reo.*
m- am- b(v)oly hazo olo reo.
 PR- plant tree people those

‘Those people are planting trees.’

Assume that you and I are together on road now and looking at some people working.

You ask me, ‘What are they doing?’

I answer to you,

(d') *Mamboly hazo olo reo.* ‘Those people are planting trees’.

What is interesting in this example (d') is that the demonstrative *reo* ‘those’ implies the aspectual situation of the action. The verb *mamboly* ‘plant’ never changes form.

We have learned that the Present tense marker *m-* never changes whether the verb expresses a general situation or an aspectual situation. It is by another word like temporal adverb or some demonstrative or simply by context the aspectual situation can be known in present time.

II.3.2 The Past Tense

The past tense represents all time references centered on the time prior to the time of speaking.

Compare these three following examples;

(e) *Nanao asam- piangona aho.*

N- an- (t)ao asam- piangona aho

PST- do work-of church I

‘I did church’s work.’ / ‘I worked for church.’

(e’) *Nanao asam-piangona aho talohan’ ny niavy eto.*

N- an- (t)ao asam- piangona aho talohan’ ny n- i- avy eto.

PST- do work-of church I before the PST came here.

‘I did church’s work before I came here.’ / ‘I worked for church before I came here.’

(e’’) *Nanao asam-piangona aho tamin’ ie nikaiky ahy iñy.*

N- an- (t)ao asam- piangona aho tamin’ ie n- i- kaiky ahy iñy.

PST- do work-of church I when he PST- call me when

‘I did church’s work when he called me.’

They are all in past tense.

The example (e) expresses a general situation I had during some years in the past time.

The example (e’) has two verbs *Nanao* ‘did’ and *niavy* ‘came’. Both are in the same tense in past. But the temporal adverb *talohan’* ‘before’ tells that the action of *Nanao* happened and complete before the action of *niavy*. So, the tense of *Nanao* is past in past, that is a past action before another past action. (e’) should be translated ‘I had worked for church before I came here.’

The example (e’’) has two verbs *Nanao* ‘did’ and *nikaiky* ‘called’. Both are in the same tense in past. But the temporal adverb *tamin’* ‘when’ tells us that the actions of the two verbs are simultaneous. ‘I was at work in church, he called me’. So, the equivalent tense of *Nanao* in English is past progressive, and then (e’’) should be translated ‘I was working in the church when he called me.’

We see that the verb *Nanao* never changes form in the three sentences. It is by other words (adverbs) the perfect and the progressive aspectual situations can be known in the past time.

II.3.3 The Future Tense

The Future tense represents all times of situation centered on the time subsequent to the time of speaking.

Compare these following examples;

(f) *Hanasa siky rahay hamaray.*
h- an- (s)asa siky rahay hamaray.
 FUT- wash clothes we tomorrow
 ‘We will wash clothes tomorrow.’

(f’) *Hanasa rahay hamaray alohan’ ny handeha an- tsena.*
h- an- (s)asa siky rahay hamaray alohan’ ny h- an- d(l)eha an –tsena.
 FUT- wash clothes we tomorrow before the FUT- go to- market
 ‘We will wash clothes tomorrow before we will go to market.’

(f’’) *Hanasa siky rahay amin’ iha ho avy zay.*
h- an- (s)asa siky rahay amin’ iha ho avy zay.
 FUT- wash clothes we when you FUT arrive that.
 ‘We will wash clothes when you will arrive.’

They are all in Future tense.

The example (f) tells what we will do tomorrow, not giving a precise time.

The example (f’) has two verbs *Hanasa* ‘will wash’ and *handeha* ‘will go’. Both are in future tense. But, the temporal adverb *alohan’* ‘before’ tells that the action of *Hanasa* will be the first and after finishing it then the action of *handeha*. So, the correct equivalent tense of *Hanasa* in English is the future perfect, that is an action will be done before another action in the future time. Then (f’) should be translated ‘We will have washed clothes before we will go to market.’

The example (f’’) has two verbs *Hanasa* ‘will wash’ and *ho avy* ‘will arrive’. Both are in the Future tense. But, then temporal adverb *amin’* ‘when’ tells us that the actions of the two verbs are simultaneous. ‘We will at washing, you arrive’. If that, the action of

hanasa is progressive. So, (f') should be translated 'We will be washing clothes when you arrive'.

The verb *Hanasa* never changes form in the three examples. It is other words (adverbs) that show the aspectual situations.

In summary, we proved by all examples that verbs do not change anyway. They keep their form according to their time situation (Present time, Past time, Future time). But by their unique form they can express any aspectual situation in combination with an appropriate adverb. This study attested our claim that the Masikoro is not an aspect-system but indeed a tense-system because only Tenses have form or marked on verb.

In this chapter II titled 'Preliminary Study' we discussed three important things we need to know before we start the main topic of this linguistic project; the morphological and semantic differences between Masikoro and the Malagasy Ofisialy, the combination of a root with a prefix to make up a verb, and the non-existence of aspects in Masikoro.

We have seen in the first section that Masikoro cannot be controlled entirely by the traditional grammar of Malagasy Ofisialy because their differences possibly involve different rules.

We have seen in the second section the existence of inflectional and derivational prefixes that operate with roots to get meaningful verbs.

And we have proved in the third section that Masikoro is a tense-system Language.

III THE PRESENT TENSE

The Present tense is used to refer to situations which occupy a much longer period of time than the present moment, but which nonetheless include the present moment with them (Comrie 1985, 37). That claim fits well with the Masikoro Present tense. It expresses general truth, a habit, and a durable situation. It also expresses an on- going event in the time of speaking, and an action having future meaning. In these two last uses some temporal adverbs are involved. As we already have seen, the Present tense in Masikoro is marked by the inflectional prefix *m-* on the verb.

III.1 The Present Tense For General Truth, a Habit, and a Durable Situation

Examples;

(1) *Mamboly vary ñy⁹ Masikoro.*

M -am- b(v)oly vary ñy Masikoro [v → b/m-]

PRS -D- plant rice ART Masikoro

‘Masikoro people plant rice’.

(2) *Mañanatsy ñy havorohotany ñ’ olobe.*

M -añ- anatsy ñy havorohotany ñ’ olobe

PRES-D- advise ART family.3POSS ART elder

‘The elder advises his family’.

In these two examples the verbs *Mamboly* [root *voly* ‘plant’] and *Mañanatsy* [root *anatsy* ‘advise / learn / study’] are in Present Tense form. They express here general truth, describing the particular life of this tribe since their being and expected to continue in their future.

⁹ *Ñy* (or *ñ’* before a vowel) is the Definite Article. Sometimes it is *ny*. There is no Indefinite article in Masikoro language.

(3) *Tsy mihary aosy ñy Masikoro.*

Tsy m -i- hary aosy ñy Masikoro
 NEG PRS- D- raise goat ART Masikoro
 ‘Masikoro people do not raise goat’.

(4) *Tsy mañaniky lohan-traño ñ’ ampela Masikoro.*¹⁰

Tsy m -añ- aniky lohan-traño ñ’ ampela Masikoro
 NEG PRS -D- climb head- house ART lady Masikoro
 ‘Masikoro lady does not go up to the roof’.

(3) and (4) also express general truth. They are in Negative form. The adverb *Tsy* is the negative marker in Indicative mood¹¹ meaning ‘not’. It comes at the beginning of the sentence and the word order VOS unchangeably follows, that is, in a simple negative sentence the full word order is *Tsy* + VOS.

In Interrogative Form there are two types of information- questioning.

(5) *Mamboly ino ñy Masikoro?*

M -am- b(v)oly ino ñy Masikoro?
 PRS -D- plant what ART Masikoro?
 ‘What do Masikoro people plant?’

Or

(5’) *Ino ñy famboleanin’ ñy Masikoro?*

Ino ñy fambolea- nin’ ñy Masikoro?
 What ART plantation- ASS ART Masikoro?
 ‘What is the plantation of the Masikoro people?’

The adverb *Ino* ‘what’ is the information-question marker. It can be used with all of the Tenses.

In (5) the verb comes at the beginning of the sentence followed by *ino* ‘what’. The word order VOS does not change. Only the differences between the Interrogative and Affirmative forms are *ino* and the question mark (?). *Ino* takes the place of an Object for what it asks. Thus, in simple interrogative sentence, the word order is V + *ino* + S?

In (5’) *Ino* ‘What’ starts the question and the verb *mamboly* ‘plant’ becomes a noun *fambolea* ‘plantation’. Thus, we have a verbless sentence proving that this language

¹⁰ The examples (3) and (4) are about taboo.

¹¹ In Imperative, *ka* is used instead of *tsy*. Example; *Ka mangalatsy!* ‘Do not steal!’

has zero-copula or auxiliary ‘be’. Taking away *Ino* and the question mark (?), we have *ñy famboleanin’ ñy Masikoro* ‘the plantation¹² of the Masikoro’ the object matter of the question or the topic.

More examples;

(6) *Mihary ino ñ’ olo a Toliara ao?*¹³

M -i- hary ino ñ’ olo a Toliara ao?
 PRS-D- raise what ART people PREP Toliara LOC?
 PRS-D- raise what the people in Toliara there?
 ‘What do the people in Toliara raise?’

(6’) *Ino ñy fihareaniñ’ olo a Toliara ao?*

Ino ñy fiharea- ni- ñ’ olo a Toliara ao?
 What ART livestock- ASS- ART people PREP Toliara ADV?
 What the livestock- ASS- the people in Toliara there?
 ‘What is the livestock of the people in Toliara?’

All examples we have had so far are about the Present Tense for General truth or a habit.

The Present Tense is also used to express a durable situation, that is, a limited situation extended from a certain period in the past to a certain period in the future.

Examples;

(7) *Mianatsy amin’ ny NEGST aho.*

M -i- anatsy amin’ ny NEGST aho.
 PRS-D- study PREP ART NEGST 1SG
 ‘I study at NEGST’.

Mentioning NEGST, a college that has limited programs, one may not think that *Mianatsy*, in this example is a general truth or a habit. Maybe people learn or study during the whole period of life but study at NEGST is for a limited time. That is what we call ‘durable situation’.

(8) *Manoratsy ñy hevitso aho.*

M -an- (s)oratsy ñy hevitso aho. [s → ø/n-]
 PRS -D- write ART thesis.1POSS 1SG

¹² What people plant.

¹³ Sometimes some prepositions, especially those pointing a locality, have to be emphasized by a corresponding adverb.

‘I write my thesis’.

Writing a project or thesis is not for ever. But it takes much time not only one hour or one day. So, *Manoratsy* does not express a general truth or habit here but a durable situation.

In this first section we have seen that the verb plays alone the role showing the time reference, the Simple Present expressing a general truth, a habit, or a durable situation.

III.2 For an On- going Action, Event, or a State of Being in the Time of Speaking

We use the term ‘on- going’ to describe an action or an event, likewise a state of being that takes place at the moment of speaking. It may be continued but the focus is just on the time of speaking.

In Masikoro the verb is in Present Tense form. But, the verb only can not express that idea of ‘on-going’. It requires a temporal adverb to fulfill it.

In this section we have to talk about two things.

a) People like to compare the life in actual age to the former, and then they find contrast between the two.

In this purpose a temporal adverb *Henane* ‘nowadays’ must be used to convey implicitly this contrast. It is mostly used with stative verbs. It is a post-verbal adverb.

Examples;

(9) *Mazava ñ’ olo henane.*

M -a- zava ñ’ olo henane.

PRS-D- light ART people TEMP

‘People are intelligent nowadays’.

Here, *Mazava* is used as a metaphor, describing intelligence. Literally, it means ‘light’.

Having the adverb *henane* in this statement we can draw easily a contextual implication that the speaker wants to say implicitly that the former generation was less intelligent, or in other word the intelligence is not from the beginning.

(10) *Mitombo ñ' asa raty henane.*
M -i- tombo ñ' asa raty henane.
 PRS -D- increase ART work wrong TEMP
 'The evil deeds increase nowadays'

By his experience this speaker realizes that this actual age is worse than the former age, or in other word people progress in doing wrong.

Henane is never used with Past or Future tense.

b) The properly 'on-going' action, event, or state of being

Henane is replaced by *zao*.

Compare these two examples (11) and (11') below;

(11) *Miketriky vary valiko zao.*
M -i- ketriky vary valiko zao.
 PRS-D- cook rice wife.1POSS TEMP.
 'My wife is cooking rice now'.

(11') *Miketriky vary valiko.*
M -i- ketriky vary valiko.
 PRS-D- cook rice wife.1POSS.
 'My wife cooks rice'

Both (11) and (11') use the same verb *miketriky* that is in Present tense. But they differ in meaning because in (11) the verb is emphasized by the word *zao* 'now/right now' while in (11') it stands alone to give the meaning of the whole sentence.

Zao 'now / right now' is a temporal adverb especially used to express an idea of an on- going action, event, or a state of being in the time of speaking. It is a post-verbal adverb.

(11') just expresses a habit, that is, 'Every day my wife cooks rice'.

More examples;

(12) *Manasa volo a moramba ao ie zao.*

M -an- (s)asa volo a moramba ao ie zao [s → ø/n-]
 PRS-D- wash hairs PREP bathroom LOC 3SG TEMP
 PRS- wash hairs in bathroom there she now
 ‘She is washing hairs in the bathroom now’

(12’) *Manasa volo a moramba ao ie.*

M -an- (s)asa volo a moramba ao ie [s → ø/n-]
 PRS- D- wash hairs PREP bathroom LOC 3SG
 PRS- wash hairs in bathroom there she
 ‘She washes hairs in the bathroom.’

(12) shows that the action of washing hairs is going on now while (12’) shows that ‘She has habit to wash hairs in the bathroom’.

Henane and ***zao*** are two temporal adverbs used with the Present tense expressing an on-going action, event, or state of being. Their focus is on the time of speaking, not paying attention to the continuation of the action. Although their difference is clear; ***Henane*** covers a long period of time (some years) and implies contrast to the former that is understood, while ***zao*** points a short period of time, the time of speaking, right now.

The combination of the two, ***henane zao*** is the most common especially for answering to a question like ‘Where is Clovis?’ or ‘Have you seen Clovis?’ It is the same as ***zao***.

(13) *Mifitaky an- trañomboky ao ie henane zao.*

M -i- fitaky an- trañomboky ao ie henane zao.
 PRS-D- sit PREP- library LOC 3SG TEMP.
 PRS- sit in- library there he right now
 ‘He is sitting in the library now’.

(14) *Mamafa traño Mihaja henane zao.*

M -am- (f)afa traño Mihaja henane zao. [f → ø/m-]
 PRS -D- sweep house Mihaja TEMP.
 ‘Mihaja is cleaning rooms now’.

In this second section we have had two adverbs of time *henane* and *zao* meaning ‘now’ and used with Present Tense to express an on-going action or event.

Henane covers a long period of time, and *zao* points a short period of time. They are never used with other tenses than the Present.

The combination *henane zao* is the same as *zao*.

It is attested even in Masikoro that;

“Malagasy is a VOS language in which adverbials occupy a position either directly before the verb phrase or after the verb phrase” (Carnie 2000, 119).

We have already seen in examples (3) and (4) an adverb of negation *tsy* that is strictly a pre-verbal adverb. As for those temporal adverbs they are all post-verbal, and in standard Masikoro they always end the sentence, except for those that can play role for subordinating as we will see in the coming section.

III.3 The Present Tense for an Action Having Meaning of Future

This is about two interdependent actions in the future time. The sentence has at least two clauses, and there are two types of interdependence.

a) Subordinate clause to a purpose

The action expected to happen first is a subordinate clause of time introduced by the subordinator *lafa* ‘when’, and it is in Present tense. The second happening which is the main clause expressing a purpose is in Future tense.

Example;

(15) *Hamaky boky aho lafa mandeha iha.*
H -am- (v)aky boky aho lafa m -an- (d)leha iha.
 FUT-D- read book 1SG SB PRS -D- go 2SG
 ‘I will do reading when you go.’

The speaker has a purpose to do reading. In the time of speaking the two persons are both still at home. So, the action *mandeha* ‘go’ is not yet realized. But the speaker uses the Present tense for it showing that this shall be realized before the action

Hamaky boky ‘will read.’

More examples;

(16) *Hañory traño be aho lafa mahavory vato voho fasy.*
H -añ- ory traño be aho lafa m -aha- vory vato voho fasy
 FUT-D- build house large 1SG SB PRS -D- collect rock CON sand.
 ‘I will build a large house when I have stones and sand’.

The speaker has a purpose to build a large house. In the time of speaking ‘building a large house’ is still an intention. It depends on having stones and sand that are not collected yet. But the speaker uses the Present tense *mahavory* for the collecting stones and sand to imply that stones and sand shall be collected before the action of ‘building’.

b) Subordinate clause to a command

This second type turns the tense order we have seen in (a), that is, the subordinate clause is in Future and the main clause is in Present Imperative¹⁴.

Examples;

(17) *Mamohava ahy lafa handeha nareo.*
M -am- (f) oha- va ahy lafa h -an- d(l)eha nareo
 PRS -D- awaken -IMP me when FUT -D- go 2PL
 ‘Awaken me when you will go’.

Or more correct: ‘Awaken me when you will be about to go’.

Mamohava ‘Awaken’ is in Present imperative expressing a command. In the time of speaking the speaker is going to sleep and the addressees prepare to go. The speaker wants to see their departure for greeting on another. So, he asks them to awaken him when they are about to leave. The asking *Mamohava* is in Present tense even though the object in view (departure) will be realized in a future moment.

¹⁴ In Masikoro Imperative mood has only one tense, the Present.

Three things have to be clarified in this type;

First, the subject of the subordinate clause is also the co-referent-subject of the main clause. In (17), *nareo* is the subject of both the main clause and its subordinate. It takes place at the end of the subordinate. That is, for such a construction it sounds very odd to say (17') in which the subject is a repetitive word;

(17') *Mamohava ahy nareo lafa handeha nareo.*
M -am- (f)oha- va ahy nareo lafa h -an- d(l)eha nareo
 PRS -D- awaken -IMP me you when FUT -D- go you

Second, the co-referent-subject of both the main clause and its subordinate can also take place at the end of the main clause, and then we can say (17'');

(17'') *Mamohava ahy nareo lafa handeha.*
M -am- (f)oha- va ahy nareo lafa h -an- d(l)eha
 PRS -D- awaken -IMP me 2PL when FUT -D- go
 'Awaken me when you will go'.

Or more correct: 'Awaken me when you will be about to go'.

So, the speaker has two choices, either the construction (17) in which the co-referent-subject is at the end of the subordinate clause or the construction (17'') in which the co-referent-subject is at the end of the main clause.

Third, the subject is left unexpressed if it is a single person, thus (17) becomes (18) below;

(18) *Mamohava ahy lafa handeha.*
M -am- (f)oha -va ahy lafa h -an- d(l)eha [iha]
 PRS-D- awaken-IMP me when FUT -D- go [2SG]
 'Awaken me when you will go'.

Or more correct: 'Awaken me when you will be about to go'.

[*iha*] means that *iha* 'you' (singular) is the subject. It is left unexpressed but understood.

In this third section we have seen the use of Present tense in two types of interdependent actions in future. In this purpose the Present tense is used for one of

the actions implying that that action should be realized or happened before another one action that is in future.

Summarizing this chapter, we can reiterate the claim saying that ‘Tenses are just labels’. That claim is attested in the study we have done. The Present Tense is to refer not only to situations which occupy a period of time including the present moment but also to some situations expected to happen or to be realized in the future moment.

When the verb in Present tense goes alone, that is without adverb, it expresses a general truth, a habit, or a durable situation. When it expresses an on-going situation it must be completed by a temporal adverb like *henane* or *zao* or the combination *henane zao*. And finally, when a verb in Present tense is used in a clause having interdependence with another clause in future by a subordinator *lafa*, it implies a primacy in completion.

IV THE PAST TENSE

The Past Tense in Masikoro expresses in general a situation that started in the past time. That situation may be already completed, or it is still continued in the time of speaking.

It is marked by the prefix **n-** (the first part of prefix) on the verb's root.

The Past tense has some temporal adverbs, adverbial phrases, or prepositions that indicate their appropriate time references. Without these adverbs or prepositions and context we get the Simple Past.

IV.1 The Simple Past

The Simple Past in Masikoro refers to situations that are very vague because of their non-precise period of time. That agrees with what Comrie notes;

“... the Past tense simply locates the situation in question prior to the present moment, and says nothing about whether the past situation occupies just a single point prior to the present moment, or an extended time period prior to the present moment, or indeed the whole of time up to the present moment. ... The use of Past only locates the situation in the past, without saying anything about whether that situation continues to the present or into the future...” (1985, 41).

Examples;

(19) *Nafana ñ' andro.*

N - a- fana ñ' andro.

PST-D- hot ART day.

'The day was hot' / 'It was hot'.

(20) *Nisa laboly ñy mpianatsy.*

N -i- sa laboly ñy mpianatsy

PST-D- play ball ART students

'The students played ball.'

In (19) the verb *nafana* ‘was hot’ stands alone exhibiting the past time. But we do not know precisely when it was hot, during how many days or weeks.

The same in (20), the verb *nisa* ‘played’ does not tell us the precise time.

They are two examples of simple Past with stative and dynamic verbs. We call it Simple Past because it is simply the verb that plays role alone showing the time reference.

So, wanting to let the reader or the hearer to have in mind knowledge of the precise time of a situation in the Past tense, an adverb or preposition or at least a context are required.

But not all of temporal adverbs show precise time. Some of them show a doubt concerning the time of a situation. The most common is *betibety* (or *betibetiky*) ‘some time ago’. This is a post-verbal adverb used for telling an event that happened some times, not less than one month ago, but the teller is not sure about the precise time. It is used only with an action or a state completely finished without continuation in the present time.

Examples;

(21) *Nahare hotroky aho betibety.*

N -aha- re hotroky aho betibety
 PST -D- hear thunder 1SG some_time_ago
 ‘Some time ago I heard thunder’.

(22) *Nandrio mbeñy rapolany bevata zay betibety.*

N -an- (d)rio mbeñy rapolany bevata zay betibety
 PST -D- pass_by LOC airplane big DEM TEMP
 Passed by there airplane big that some time ago
 ‘Some time ago a big airplane passed by there’.

Some people use an adverbial phrase *teoteo zay* but this is the same as *betibety* in meaning. Thus, we can say;

(23) *Nahare hotroky aho teoteo zay.*

‘Some time ago I heard thunder’.

IV.2 The Precise Completed Past

This second past time reference is for a situation that happened and completed at a precise moment prior to the time of speaking.

It is expressed by an adverb or an adverbial phrase of precise and delimited time¹⁵ like *nankaly* ‘last night’, *maly* ‘yesterday’, *nimaray* ‘this morning’, and *vola nimaty* ‘last month’.

Examples:

(24) *Nanintsy ñy nankaly.*
N -a- nintsy ñy nankaly.
 PST-D- cold ART TEMP
 ‘It was cold last night.’

First, we have to say that the adverb *nankaly* in this example is used as a nominal because it is qualified by a definite article *ñy* showing that it is the weather at that period which is the topic. But in this following example (25), *nankaly* is exactly an adverb.

(25) *Nanintsy aho nankaly.*
N -a- nintsy aho nankaly
 PST-D- cold 1SG TEMP
 ‘I was cold last night / I felt cold last night’.

Either in (24) or (25) the state of ‘being cold’ is already finished with a precise time *nankaly*, no relation with the time of speaking.

(26) *Niavy ñ’ora nankaly fa nafana ñ’ andro maly.*
N - i - avy ñ’ ora nankaly fa n -a- fana ñ’ andro maly.
 PST-D- come ART rain TEMP CON PST-D- hot ART day TEMP
 came the rain last_night because hot the day yesterday
 ‘It rained last night because it was hot yesterday’.

The action of ‘raining’ and the state of ‘being hot’ are already finished in their respective delimited times prior to the time of speaking.

¹⁵ ‘Delimited time’, that is, not expanded to the time of speaking.

More examples;

(27) *Nañelo Reolo tamin' ny vola nimaty*¹⁶ *iñy fe fa janga ie zao.*

N -añ- (h)elo Reolo t- amin' ny vola ni- maty iñy fe fa janga ie zao.
 PST-D- sick Reolo PST- during ART month PST- dead DEM but ADV recovered 3SG TEMP
 Was sick Reolo during the month dead that but already recovered he now
 'Reolo was sick during the last month but he is already recovered now'.

We have a preposition *tamin'* in this example. It is the Past of *amin'* that has multiple meanings such as 'during', 'in', 'on', 'to', and 'with'. That is so because the Past tense is marked by the inflectional prefix *t-* on prepositions. Contrarily the Future tense does not.

We have seen as examples adverbs *nankaly* 'last night', *maly* 'yesterday' and the adverbial phrase *vola nimaty* 'last month'. They are all adverbs of precise and delimited time, so they exhibit the completion of the situation.

Furthermore, we will see in the following section that these adverbs or adverbial phrase can be used with a preposition that governs the time reference.

IV.3 The Past Continued in the Present

What we call by 'Past continued in the Present' is a situation starting in the past time and continuing into the time of speaking or may continue into the future. So, it is not completed even called 'Past'.

All temporal adverbs or adverbial phrases for the Past tense like *maly* 'yesterday', *nankaly* 'last night', or *nimaray* 'this morning' express it. But they need the preposition *liany* 'since' to exhibit that this is an extended time period from the past up to now or beyond.

¹⁶ *Vola nimaty* (the month that was dead) = last month.
Vola ho peaky (the month that will appear) = next month.

So, as the situation still continues into the time of speaking, it corresponds to the aspectual Present Perfect Progressive tense in English even though the form is Past tense.

Examples:

(28) *Nitañy liany nimaray ajà eo.*

N -i- tañy liany nimaray ajà eo.

PST-D- cry PR TEMP child DEM.

Cried since morning child this

‘This child has been crying since this morning’.

(29) *Tsy niroro liany nankaly rahay fa manintsy traño toy.*

Tsy n -i- roro liany nankaly rahay fa m -a- nintsy traño toy.

NEG PST-D- sleep PR TEMP EXC CON PRS -D- cold house DEM

Not slept since last night we because is cold house this

‘We have not slept since last night because this room is cold’.

(30) *Tsy nifampivola liany maly Nahoda morovaly.*

Tsy n -ifampi-vola liany maly Nahoda morovaly.

NEG PST -RECP- talk PR TEMP Nahoda he_and_his_wife

Not talked_together since yesterday Nahoda and his wife

‘Nahoda and his wife have not been talking together since yesterday.’

IV.4 The Near Past

What we call by ‘Near Past’ is the time of an action or a state happened, finished or done few minutes or about one hour before the time of speaking or before another past action. We will divide it into two subsections.

IV.4.1 The ‘Near Past’ for a Situation Happened before the Time of Speaking

This corresponds to what Saeed calls by ‘Immediate past’ having a ‘just now’ sense (Saeed 2003: 127). The speaker wants to let the hearer to know that what is talked about happened a while ago and so still has its relevance to the time of speaking.

Baky ‘just from’ and ***lihaniky***¹⁷ ‘just’ are used to indicate that time reference.

IV.4.1.1. The use of “baky”

¹⁷ This two words *baky* and *lihaniky* are never used with negative sentence.

The basic meaning of *baky* is ‘from’, like ‘from’ doing something (action), or ‘from’ being (state). It is a preposition focusing on the completeness and recency of an action or a state, and that is why we translate it ‘just from’. It always starts its clause or sentence in Past tense.

Examples;

(31) *Baky nivavaky rahay.*¹⁸

Baky n -i- vavaky rahay.

PR PST-D- worship EXC

just from worshiped we

‘We are just from the worship’.

Sometimes people add the adverb *zao* emphasizing the focus on the time of speaking, then (31) becomes (31’)

(31’) *Baky nivavaky rahay zao.*

Baky n -i- vavaky rahay zao.

PR PST-D- worship EXC TEMP

just from worshiped we now

‘We are just from the worship now.’

(32) *Baky nivily raha tan- drova aňy rozy*¹⁹.

Baky ni- vily raha tan- drova aňy rozy.

ADV PST- buy thing(s) PST_PR- town LOC 3PL.

Be just from bought thing(s) in town there they.

‘They are just from buying thing(s) in town’.

An example with a stative verb;

(33) *Baky naňelo ajà eo.*

Baky n -aň- elo ajà eo.

Just from PST-D- sick child this

‘This child is just recovered from a sickness’.

IV.4.1.2 The use of “lihaniky”

Lihaniky is an adverb that means ‘just’. Its focus is only on the recency of the action, not implying completeness of that action. As it is a temporal adverb it always ends its clause or sentence. It does not fit *zao* to emphasize it, and then it sounds odd when it is used with *baky* in the same clause.

¹⁸ Masikoro has personal pronouns, *tsika* ‘we’ (inclusive) and *rahay* ‘we’ (exclusive).

¹⁹ *a* (or *an-* before a consonant) is a preposition indicating place or locality. It becomes *ta* (or *tan-*) when it is used in Past tense.

Examples;

(34) *Nahita rapolany aho lihaniky.*
N -a- hita rapolany aho lihaniky.
 PST-D- see airplane 1SG TEMP.
 Saw airplane I just.
 ‘I just saw an airplane’.

(35) *Namombo mañelo o lihaniky.*
N -am- (f)ombo mañelo o lihaniky
 PST-D- faint patient this just
 ‘This patient just fainted’.

IV.4.2 The ‘Near Past’ for a Situation Happened before Another Past

This corresponds to the Pluperfect in English, that is a ‘Past in Past’. In this subsection we have to study a sentence having two clauses or two propositions with two consecutive actions in the same tense (Past) prior to the time of speaking but happened in different times. Another ‘Past in Past’ will be again the concern of the next section but with other focus than this. Here, the ‘Near Past’, the first situation is introduced by *baky*. As we have already seen in IV.4.1.1, *baky* focuses on the completeness and recency of a situation.

Examples;

(36) *Baky niroro aho iha nikaiky iñy.*
Baky n -i- roro aho iha n -i- kaiky iñy
 PR PST- D- sleep 1SG 2SG PST-D- call DEM.
 just_from slept I you called that
 ‘I was just been from sleeping when you called’.
 ‘I had just gotten up when you called’.

First, we have to clarify this kind of construction. We have two clauses in subordination;

Clause 1: *Baky niroro aho*

Clause 2: *iha nikaiky iñy.*

Each of them has its own subject and main verb, and they are in the same tense, that is in the Past. The second clause *iha nikaiky iñy* seems to be an occasional construction

because its subject comes at the beginning. This happens because of the demonstrative *iñy* that plays role as a subordinator of this clause to the first one. In such a case the demonstrative always ends the clause it qualifies as it does with a noun (II.1) and the subject of that clause moves at the head position.

Second, even though the two main verbs are in the same tense, surely the action *niroro* ‘slept’ has the primacy in completion and may be happened a few minutes before *nikaiky* ‘called’. That implication (‘few minutes before’) is contextually drawn from the adverb *baky*.

More examples;

(37) *Baky namaky boky ie naña aminareo aňy iňy.*

Baky n- am- (v)aky boky ie n-a- ña aminareo aňy iňy
 PR PST- D- r ead b o o k 3SG PST-D- go PR. 2PL LOC DEM.
 Be_just_from read book he went to you there that.
 ‘He was just been from reading when he went to you’.

The action of *namaky boky* ‘read book’ happened recently before *naña* ‘went to’.

We have studied two types of ‘Near Past’; the ‘Near Past’ for a situation happened before the time of speaking and the ‘Near Past’ for a situation happened before another Past. This time reference is expressed by *baky* (for the two types) and *lihaniky* (only for the first). Completeness and recency are two focuses in this time reference. Thus, ‘Near Past’ means the situation happened ‘near’/ a while before the second one.

IV.5 The ‘Non-recent Past’

We are still discussing the Pluperfect, the ‘Past in Past’, but with other focus than the previous one we have called Near Past.

We call this actual Pluperfect ‘Non- recent Past’. That means it happened not recently some time before another past.

‘Non-recent Past’ is expressed by *tseky* ‘first / first of all / before’ and *taloha* ‘before’.

The common focus of these two prepositions is only on the succession of the two situations (two clauses). Recency and remoteness are no more the matter. But each of these prepositions has particular focus.

Tseky is part of the first clause and takes place immediately after the main verb (Non-recent Past). It conveys the primacy of the situation in that clause.

Taloha in its turn introduces the second clause conveying that this happened after.

The use of *taloha* changes the voice of the main verb in its clause into relative²⁰ or circumstantial. “In the circumstantial sentence the instrumental constituent of the active is moved to subject position” (Dahl 1993, 171).

Examples;

(38) *Nianatsy fivolaña Anglisy tseky aho talohan' ny nandehanako Andafy.*

N -i- anatsy fivolaña Anglisy tseky aho taloha- n' ny n -an- d(l)eha-na-ko Andafy
 PST-D- learn language English PR 1SG PR- ASS ART PST-D- go -Cs-AG exterior
 Learned language English first I before the went I exterior
 ‘I had learnt English before I went out to exterior’.

If you want to maintain all main verbs in active voice *taloha* shall be replaced with another adverb *vo* ‘then’. Thus, (38) becomes (38’).

(38’) *Nianatsy fivolaña Anglisy tseky aho vo nandeha Andafy.*

N -i- anatsy fivolaña Anglisy tseky aho vo n -an- d(l)eha Andafy
 PST-D- learn language English PR 1SG ADV PST -D- go exterior
 Learned language English first I then went exterior
 ‘I had learnt English first then I went out to exterior’.

In this (38’) *aho* ‘I’ is the same subject of the two clauses.

More examples;

(39) *Nampañanatsy ahy fivolaña Anglisy tseky Leoni vo nandeha Andafy aho.*

N -ampañ- anatsy ahy fivolaña Anglisy tseky Leoni vo n -an- d(l)eha Andafy aho.
 PST -D- teach me language English first Leoni then PST-D- go exterior I
 ‘Leoni had taught me English first then I went out to exterior’.

²⁰ “Malagasy has three voices: Active, Passive, and Relative” (Rajaobelina 1966: 15).

As we have seen in example (38) above, in accurate speech *tseky* and *taloha* are used together, but many people are used to use only *taloha* and in that *tseky* is understood.

Examples;

(40) *Nianatsy teolojy aho talohan'ny nanaovako pastora.*

N -i- anatsy teolojy aho taloha-n' ny n -an-(t)ao-va-ko pastora.

PST-D- study theology 1SG PR- ASS.ART PST-D- do -Cs-AG pastor.
Studied theology I before the did I pastor.

'I had studied theology before I became a pastor.'

(41) *Namory vato mpiasa reo talohan' ny nihalian- drozy tany.*

N -am- (v)ory vato mpiasa reo taloha-n' ny n -i- hali -an- drozy tany.

PST-D- gather stone workers DEM PR- ASS ART PST-D- dig -Cs- AG land.
Gathered stones workers those before the dug they land.

'Those workers had gathered stones before they dug land'.

Five time references have been discussed in this chapter dealing with the Past tense in Masikoro.

The Simple Past when the verb goes alone refers to a finished situation that has non-precise period of time.

The Precise Completed Past when temporal adverb or adverbial phrase of precise and delimited time like *maly* 'yesterday', *nankaly* 'last night', *nimaray* 'this morning', and *vola nimaty* 'last month' are used, refers to a situation that happened and finished at the precise time in the past.

The Past continued in the present, still with adverb or adverbial phrase of precise and delimited time but added with the preposition *liany* 'since' expresses a situation started in the past and not finished yet at the time of speaking.

The Near Past expressed by *baky* 'just from' and *lihaniky* 'just/ just now' means that the situation happened and is completed a while before the time of speaking or before another past. If this last one is the case it is the equivalent of the Pluperfect in English.

The Non-recent Past when *tseky* 'first' and *taloha* 'before' or *vo* 'then' corresponds to Pluperfect too, but its completion before another Past is not recent.

Therefore, the Past tense in Masikoro does not necessary tell a completed situation. It groups together a range of time references extended from the past to the present moment.

V. THE FUTURE TENSE

We are going to deal with the last basic tense, the Future.

Saeed gives a broad definition of the three basic tenses;

“Most Grammatical tense systems allow the speaker to describe situation as prior to, concurrent with, or following the act of speaking” (Saeed 2003, 125).

What he defines by “following the act of speaking” is the Future tense.

Then Comrie defines the Future tense as “locating a situation at a time subsequent to the present moment” (Comrie 1985, 43).

By these two parallel definitions we can say that the Future tense expresses a situation that will happen after the time of speaking.

Nevertheless, Masikoro speaker can use the future to say an action that might have happened in the past time.

So, we have different time references in this basket of Future tense marked by the prefix (inflectional prefix) **h-** on the verb root. Like we already did in the two last tenses we will start our study with the simpler future time reference that is, the larger in meaning and dependent on context.

V.1 The True Future

We call it “true Future” because it is used for a situation that is expected to happen in some time subsequent to the time of speaking.

There are two kinds of this true Future.

First, the time of an expected happening is not precise. Only the verb plays role to convey the meaning. What surely the hearer gets right away is that the speaker tells something that will happen or done some time later. The rest of the meaning depends on context.

Example;

(42) *Hivily boky aho.*

H -i- vily boky aho

FUT-D- buy book(s) 1SG

‘I will buy books’.

Hearing this sentence my hearer surely has a question in his mind: When will he buy books? It depends on context. He may infer that this action *Hivily* ‘will buy’ will be done today, if after a while he sees me going in a straight course to the bookstore at the time of speaking. Otherwise, the time is not clear.

(43) *Hamaha akoho Repela.*

H -am- (f)aha akoho Repela

FUT-D- feed chicken(s) Repela

‘Repela will feed chickens’.

Like the example (42) above, we do not know completely this example (43) because the time of the action ‘will feed’ is vague. And possibly this sentence may mean that Repela wants to be a chicken feeder. But if Repela is carrying a basket of feed and going to a poultry-yard at that time of speaking, then hearer knows that the speaker tells an action that will happen after a while.

We see that any sentence governed only by verb in Future tense is not clear completely without context or relevant happening to inference.

But there are degrees of inferring time of a given situation according to the meaning of the verb. If one considers these two following verbs *hihina* ‘will eat’ and *hianatsy* ‘will study’, one may figure out that the action *hihina* will be happened in no more than a hour while the action *hianatsy* can be considered to happen more time later.

Examples:(44) *Hihina aho.**H -i- hina aho*

FUT-D- eat 1SG

‘I will eat’.

Hearing this sentence one can not think that I tell a dinner I will take tomorrow or two days later although I do not precise the time. My hearer surely guess that, in the time of speaking, I am about to go to eat.

But, if I say,

(45) *Hianatsy aho.**H -i- anatsy aho*

FUT-D- study 1SG

‘I will study’.

The guessed-time for the action *hianatsy* ‘will study’ is so large; may be I am about to go to study in the time of speaking, or I speak of what I will do after a hour or after a day, even after some days. All are possible for the verb *hianatsy*.

What we can say for a summary of this section about simple Future is that using only a verb to show a meaning gives some obscurity about time if there is no relevant happening to inference. But that obscurity can be less significant with some verbs that give more degree of inference.

Second, the time of an expected happening is precise. This needs a temporal adverb like *hamaray* ‘tomorrow’, *fakamaray* ‘the day after tomorrow’, *kanikaniky* ‘after a while’, and adverbial phrases like *vola ho peaky* ‘next month’ or adverbial clauses starting with *lafa* ‘when’ to specify the time of the situation.

Examples:(46) *Hifalo traño Reolo hamaray.**H -i- falo traño Reolo hamaray.*

FUT-D- change house Reolo TEMP

‘Reolo will change room tomorrow’.

(47) *Liñisonareo fa hivory tsika kanikaniky.*
Liñi -so- nareo fa h -i- vory tsika kanikaniky.
 Wait-IMP- 2PL for FUT-D- meet INC after_a_while
 ‘Wait for we will meet after a while’

(48) *Hamototsy ñy fañetsà vary ñ' olo amin' ny vola ho peaky io.*
H-am- (f)ototsy ñy fañetsà vary ñ' olo amin' ny vola ho peaky io.
 FUT-D- start ART plantation rice ART people PR ART ADVP this.
 Will start the plantation rice the people on the next month this.
 ‘People will start to plant rice this next month’.

Hamaray, kanikaniky, and vola ho peaky are all post-verbal adverbs.

What we have seen so far is the ‘true Future’ in sentences with a single clause.

We are going now to study this ‘true Future’ in sentences in which the adverb *lafa* ‘when’ is used as a subordinator of two clauses.

The two following examples are about the use of *lafa* subordinating an adverbial clause to a main clause in Future tense. We have already seen its first use in III.3(a) where it is followed by a verb in Present active tense (present tense having meaning of future).

Here, *lafa* is followed by a verb in Present passive²¹ tense to make evident the proposition of the subordinate that delimits the proposition of the main clause.

(49) *Handeha holy rahay lafa vita ñy fianara.*
H -an- deha h- oly rahay lafa vita ñy fianara.
 FUT -D- go FUT- go home EXC SB PASS ART study
 Will go will go home we when finished the study
 ‘We will go home when the study is finished’.

The proposition *vita ñy fianara* ‘the study is finished’ delimits the proposition

Handeha holy rahay ‘We will go home’. The speaker wants to put in evidence *ñy fianara* ‘the study’. That is the reason of using the passive voice *vita* ‘is finished’ here.

²¹ In Masikoro, the Passive voice is almost always used to put in evidence the non-subject topic of an utterance.

(50) *Hanao fisinisia ñy longoko lafa azoko ñy diplomy.*

H -an- (t)ao fisinisia ñy longoko lafa azoko ñy diplomy.

FUT-D- do party ART family.POSS SB PASS.AG ART certificate
Will do party the family my when gotten I the certificate.

‘My family will do a party when the certificate is gotten by me’.

‘My family will do a party when I get my certificate’.

The proposition *azoko ñy diplomy* ‘the certificate is gotten by me’ delimits the proposition *Hanao fisinisia ñy longoko* ‘My family will do a party’. The speaker wants to put in evidence *ñy diplomy* ‘the certificate’. That is the reason of using the Passive voice *azoko* ‘gotten by me’ here.

What we want to show here (emphasized by III.3a,b) is that in Present and Future tenses, the subordinator *lafa* never connect two clauses in a same tense. That is, [Future + *lafa* + Future] and [Present + *lafa* + Present] are false. Thus, [Future + *lafa* + Present] and [Present + *lafa* + Future] are right.

V.2. The Future Tense for Blessing and Desire

These two kinds of utterance show their own individuality in Masikoro language. Many Blessings use participles in Future and the Want always starts with a clitic *ta-* following by verb in Future.

V.2.1 The Blessing

The blessing is pronounced in Future tense because it aims the life for all days following the time of speaking.

We will take as examples these shortest and common blessings. The first example (51) is pronounced by an elder to someone who will go far and the second one example (52) is for a daughter waiting for to be married.

(51) “*Ho tahi- Ndranañahary iha, hanintsy soa,²² hangatsakatsaky*”.

Ho tahi -n- Ndranañahary iha, h -a- nintsy soa, h -an- g(h)atsakatsaky
FUT PART -by- God 2SG FUT-D- cold well FUT-D- happy

²² *Hanintsy soa* ‘will be well-cold’ is metaphorically used to express good health.

Will blessed by God you, will cold well will happy
 ‘You will be blessed by God, you will well be cold, you will be happy’.

(52) “*Ho kojy traño abo loha iha rako!*”²³

Ho kojy traño abo loha iha rako!
 FUT PART house high roof 2SG Oh.POS
 Will met house high roof you oh my!

‘You will find a wealthy one to get you marry my daughter!’

We have a particle **Ho** written separately as a Future tense marker for participles.

Even though **Ho** is a Future marker we will see in V.3 another use of it expressing another thing.

V.2.2 *The Desire*

In Masikoro, the verb expressing the Desire is in Future tense preceded by a clitic *ta-* as a marker. ‘Desire / Want to’ is the true translation of *ta-*.

Examples;

(53) *Ta-hihina balahazo aho zao.*
Ta- h -i- hina balahazo aho zao.
 W-FUT-D- eat cassava 1SG TEMP
 ‘I want to eat cassava now’.

(54) *Ta-hitsangatsanga ñy gadra fe tsy mahazo lala.*
Ta- h -i- tsangatsanga ñy gadra fe tsy m -aha- (a)zo lala.
 W- FUT-D- walk ART prisoners but NEG PRS -D- get way
 ‘Prisoners want to have a walk but there is no way’.

Givón recognizes the verb ‘want’ to be a prototypical of modal verb (2001: 150), that is a verb expressing a mood. By these examples (53) and (54) above, grammatically speaking, a complement clause of modal verbs is made in Future tense. An important section about Complement clause will be done later.

²³ *Traño abo loha* ‘a house with high roof’ in blessing (43) is a metaphor describing a person having wealth or high rank.

V.3 The Future Tense in Counterfactual Conditional and ‘IF – BUT’ Clauses

With these two close constructions the particle **Ho** is used to express other thing than we have already seen in V.2.1 where it is used with participles in blessings.

What we will be discussing now are actually two kinds of construction in Past tense, talking about a proposition that ought to have been done but was not done. Thus, **Ho** is used to express that that proposition is an unaccomplished intention due to either an incomplete condition or a prohibition.

V.3.1 *The Counterfactual Conditional*

This is about the language use of conditional IF ... THEN construction, expressing anything that ought to have been done under complete condition. In Counterfactual Conditional the antecedent (IF-clause) is implied to be false.

In Masikoro the conjunction **laha** ‘if’ expressing condition is in use. The consequent (THEN-clause) is in **Ho**+Past tense, expressed by a succession of particle **ho** marking future tense and a main verb in Past tense. It is better to put the consequent at the first position. The antecedent is in normal Past tense.

Examples;

(55) *Ho niavy aho laha nikaiky iha.*

Ho n -i- avy aho laha n -i- kaiky iha.

FUT PST-D- come 1SG if PST-D- call 2SG

Will came I if called you

‘I would have come if you called me’.

It is clear that this example talks about a meeting of two persons that might be done some time ago but it has been failed because of a non-communication. The use of *Ho* in front of the verb *niavy* neither means that the speaker will come next time nor promises to come if another appointment will be done. He simply implies: ‘my coming depended on your call; your call first and then my coming, but you did not’.

More examples;

(56) *Ho niasa mpiasa reo maly laha nihain-drozy ñ'asa hatao.*

Ho n -i- asa mpiasa reo maly laha n -i- hain-drozy ñ 'asa h- a- tao.
 FUT PST-D- work workersDEM yesterday if PST-D- know-3PL ART task FUT-D- do
 Will worked workers those yesterday if knew them the task to do.
 These workers would have worked yesterday if they knew the task to do'.

The same as in (55) *Ho* in this example (56) implies that the 'working' depended on 'knowing the task'.

V.3.2 The 'IF-BUT' Clauses

Apart from the "IF-clause... THEN-clause" Masikoro has another construction, the "IF-clause... BUT-clause". For construction matter it only differs from counterfactual conditional by *fe* 'but' instead of *laha* 'if'.

The BUT-clause includes a proposition that opposes or forbids the one in IF-clause.

Examples;

(57) *Ho nianatsy Revao fe tsy nañenky reniny.*

Ho n -i- anatsy Revao fe tsy n -añ- enky reni- ny
 FUT PST-D- study Revao but NEG PST-D- accept mother-POSS
 Will studied Revao but not accepted mother her
 'Revao would have studied but her mother did not accept'.

Assume that Revao is an illiterate girl. She wanted to learn but her mother did not let her to go to school. That was the fact not a condition. **Ho** does not mean that Revao regrets and then she will go to learn. It simply implies what Revao thought to do but her mother did not accept. The negative *tsy nañenky* opposes the proposition *nianatsy*. But the idea of forbiddance or prohibition is not only necessary by a negative. We will see in the following example that is possibly by an affirmative sentence too.

More examples;

(58) *Ho nitsangatsanga rahay fe niavy ñ' ora.*

Ho n -i- tsangatsanga rahay fe n -i- avy ñ' ora
 Will PST-D- walk EXC but PST-D- come the rain
 Will walked we but came the rain.
 'We would have taken a walk but it rained'.

In this (58) the fact *niavy ñ' ora* forbids the proposition *nitsangatsanga*.

The *Ho* used in both counterfactual conditional and If-But clause expresses that the proposition of its clause was not accomplished due to the condition or the prohibition in the second clause.

This involves us to the final study on future tense, the Future in past that is just close to these two types we have just recently done.

V.4 The Future in Past

In general people use the Past tense in narrating events. But, in some case the Future may be used to express an action that was about to be in process but hindered by a sudden happening.

Ie is used in this purpose and means ‘when’²⁴. It bounds the clause including an ‘action that was about to be in process’ and makes that clause a temporal complement of the second clause including a hindering happening.

Examples;

(59) *Ie rahay tamin' ny lahady maray handeha hivavaky ie niavy ñ' ora ka la nipetraky ndraiky nandiñy ñy hiketrahany.*

Ie rahay tamin' ny lahady maray h-an-d(l)eha h -i- vavaky ie
 When EXC PR ART Sunday morning FUT-D- go FUT -D- worship EM
 When we on last the Sunday morning will go will worship when

n -i- avy ñ' ora ka la n -i- petraky ndraiky n -an- d(l)iñy ñy fiketrahany.
 PST-D-come ART rain and so PST-D- sit again PST-D- wait ART ceasing-POSS
 came the rain and so sat again waited the ceasing its.

‘Last Sunday morning, when we were being about to go to worship it rained and so we sat again to wait for its ceasing’.

In this sentence,

h -an- d(l)eha h -i- vavaky

²⁴ It is necessary to know that in most usage *ie* is the third personal pronoun ‘he / she / it’.

FUT-D- go FUT -D- worship
will go will worship

is the ‘action that was about to be in process’. It is in Future tense conveying that this process was not yet accomplished at the time when another hindering action happened. This Future also conveys that this action might be postponed until the hindering action was finished.

The hindering action is

n -i- avy ñ’ ora
PST -D-come ART rain
came the rain .

More examples;

(60) *Je ñ’olo hamototsy asa an-koraky eñy ie nangotroky tampoky ñ’ andro ka la noly iaby.*

Ie ñ’ olo h -am- (f)ototsy asa an- koraky eñy ie n -an- g(h)otroky
When ART people FUT -D- start work PR- ricefield there EM PST-D- thunder
When the people will start work in ricefield there when thundered

tampoky ñ’ andro ka la n- oly iaby.
suddenly ART day and so PST-come back all.
suddenly the day and so came back all.

‘When people were about to start work in rice field it suddenly thundered and so all came back’.

In this sentence,

h -am- (f)ototsy asa an- koraky eñy
FUT -D- start work PR- ricefield there
will start work in ricefield there

is the ‘action that was about to be in process’, and the hindering action is,

n -an- g(h)otroky tampoky ñ’ andro
PST-D- thunder suddenly ART day
thundered suddenly the day.

Simply the use of Future tense in past indicates that that action was not done before, but after another action.

We have studied in this fifth chapter the Future tense and we have seen that three main things are necessary to be discerned.

First, the Future tense is used to express a situation that will happen after the time of speaking. Without any temporal adverb it may cause more or less obscurity according to the degree of inference given by the verb. That obscurity is totally removed when any temporal adverb like *hamaray* ‘tomorrow’, *fakamaray* ‘the day after tomorrow’, *kanikaniky* ‘after a while’, and adverbial phrases like *vola ho peaky* ‘next month’ are used.

Second, the Future tense is used with past, not to express a situation after the time of speaking, but to exhibit an unaccomplished intention due to either an incomplete condition or a prohibition. If it is due to an incomplete condition then the conjunction *laha* ‘if’ is the indicator within the sentence. If it is due to a prohibition then *fe* ‘but’ is the indicator.

Third, the Future tense is used in past, for a clause surrounded by *ie* ‘when’ to express a situation that was about to be in process but hindered by an unexpected happening. So, one can not expect that the Future tense in Masikoro always describes a situation following the act of speaking. It is just a basket grouping all time references expressed by the prefix *h-* or the independent one *ho*.

VI THE VERBAL COMPLEMENTS

We already did a detailed study on the three basic tenses, the Present, the Past, and the Future. And then we have seen their form under which all time references are expressed, and their signification. But, our work does not yet finish with what we have done so far. We still have one finding that is deliberately left not discussed with these three basic tenses, and for that then, we create this chapter.

Now we are going to study the succession of two verbs whether it is immediate or not.

What we mean by immediate succession is that two verbs come together without intermediary. In that succession the second verb stands to be a complement of the first. They are all possible whether the two verbs are in the same tense or not

depending on the class of the first verb. For this Givón distinguishes three classes:

Modality verbs, Manipulation verbs, and PCU (perception-cognition-utterance) verbs (2001, 40,41).

It is the second verb that is of importance in this succession. However, as we already implied above the class of the first verb governs the behavior of the second verb.

Therefore our current study is to answer to this question: “What does happen to a verb going along with a modality verb, or a manipulation verb, or a PCU verb?”

As this fact may touch all the three tenses our examples shall deal with them.

VI.1 Going along with a Modality Verb

One of the semantic characteristics of a modality verb is that says Givón;

“The subject of the main clause is co-referent to – ... that is, the subject of the complement clause” (2001, 149).

We take *mamototsy* ‘start/begin’ and *mañandra* ‘try’ as examples of modality verbs.

Examples;

(61) *Mamototsy mamboly vary ñ’ olo henane zao.*

M -am- (f)ototsy m -am- b(v)oly vary ñ’ olo henane zao.

PRS -D- start PRST -D- plant rice the people now

‘People start to plant rice now’.

In this example both *mamototsy* and *mamboly* are in the Present tense.

(62) *Namototsy namboly vary ñ’ olo tamin’ ny vola nimaty²⁵ iñy.*

N -am- (f)ototsy n -am- b(v)oly vary ñ’ olo t- amin’ ny vola nimaty iñy.

PST -D- start PST -D- plant rice the people PST-on th month dead that
Started planted rice the people on last month

‘People started to plant rice on last month’.

In this example both *namototsy* and *namboly* are in the Past tense.

(63) *Hamototsy hamboly vary ñ’ olo amin’ ny vola ho peaky io.*

H -am- (f)ototsy h -am- b(v)oly vary ñ’ olo amin’ ny vola ho peaky io

FUT-D- start FUT -D- plant rice the people on the next month this
Will start will plant rice the people on the next month this

‘People will start to plant rice this next month’.

In this example both *hamototsy* and *hamboly* are in the Future tense.

We see that the two verbs *mamototsy* ‘start’ that is a modality verb and its

complement *mamboly* ‘plant’ are always in the same tense [Present – Present], or

[Past – Past] or [Future – Future].

Before we will infer to a conclusion we are going to see another verb.

Examples;

(64) *Mañandra mivola Anglisy aho.*

M -añ- andra m -i- vola Anglisy aho

PRS -D- try PRS-D- speak English 1SG

‘I try to speak English’.

Both *mañandra* and *mivola* are in Present tense.

(65) *Nañandra nivola Anglisy aho.*

²⁵ See note in Past tense.

N -añ- andra n -i- vola Anglisy aho
 PST-D- try PST-D- speak English 1SG
 Tried spoke English I
 ‘I tried to speak English’.

Both *nañandra* and *nivola* are in Past tense.

(66) *Hañandra hivola Anglisy aho.*
H -añ- andra h -i- vola Anglisy aho
 FUT-D- try FUT-D- speak English 1SG
 Will try will speak English I
 ‘I will try to speak English’.

Both *hañandra* and *hivola* are in Future tense.

Like *mamototsy* and *mamboly* in the examples (61), (62), (63), the modality verb *mañandra* ‘try’ and its complement *mivola* ‘speak’ are always in the same tense

[Present – Present], or [Past – Past] or [Future – Future].

We are concluding that in Masikoro a modality verb and its verb-complement are in the same tense. That is so because they have the same subject.

We can draw a chart to show that.

Modality verb	Verb complement
Present	Present
Past	Past
Future	Future

VI.2 Going along with a Manipulation Verb

The difference between modality and manipulation verbs is that the complement clause of a manipulation verb has its own subject that is the manipulee of the Agent (manipulator) of the main clause. As for that manipulee, Givón says:

“The manipulee of the main clause is either the direct Object or indirect Object” (2001, 149).

That fits well with Masikoro manipulation verb.

We take *mañiraky* ‘ask /send’ and *mañina* ‘order’ as examples of manipulation verbs.

Examples;

(67) *Mañiraky ahy hivily vary an-tsena aña valiko.*

M -añ- iraky ahy h -i- vily vary an-tsena aña vali-ko.
 PRS -D- ask 1SG FUT-D- buy rice in-market there wife-POSS
 Asks me will buy rice in market there wife my
 ‘My wife asks me to buy rice in the market’.

In this example, first, we have to clarify the existence of two clauses, that is the main clause and the complement clause.

- Main clause:

Mañiraky ahy valiko.

M -añ- iraky ahy vali-ko.
 PRS -D- ask 1SG wife-POSS
 Asks me wife my
 ‘My wife asks me’.

ahy ‘me’ is in this main clause a direct Object of the verb *maniraky* ‘ask’, and then it is the manipulee of the Agent *valiko* ‘my wife’. This *ahy* ‘me’ is the subject of the complement clause which is embedded within the main clause.

- Complement clause:

ahy hivily vary an-tsena aña.
ahy h -i- vily vary an-tsena aña
 1SG FUT-D- buy rice in-market there
 me will buy rice in market there

If this clause is uttered independently *ahy* ‘me’ shall be *aho* ‘I’ and it must move at the end according the standard VOS.

hivily vary an-tsena aña aho.
h -i- vily vary an-tsena aña aho
 FUT-D- buy rice in-market there 1SG
 will buy rice in market there I
 ‘I will buy rice in the market’.

Second, back to the example (67), *Mañiraky* ‘asks’ (manipulation verb) is in Present tense while *hivily* ‘will buy’ is in Future tense.

What will be happened if we change the tense of *Mañiraky* into Past or Future?

Examples:

(68) *Nañiraky ahy hivily vary an-tsena aña valiko maly.*

N -añ- iraky ahy h -i- vily vary an-tsena aña vali-ko maly
 PST -D- ask 1SG FUT-D- buy rice in-market there wife-POSS yesterday

Asked me will buy rice in market there wife my yesterday
 ‘Yesterday, my wife asked me to buy rice in the market’.

The manipulation verb *Nañiraky* ‘asked’ is in Past but *hivily* ‘will buy’ is still in

Future tense.

(69) *Hañiraky ahy hivily vary an-tsena añy valiko hamaray.*

H -añ- iraky ahy h -i- vily vary an-tsena añy vali-ko hamaray
 FUT -D- ask 1SG FUT-D- buy rice in-market there wife-POSS tomorrow
 Will ask me will buy rice in market there wife my tomorrow
 ‘Tomorrow, my wife will ask me to buy rice in the market’.

In this example *Hañiraky* ‘will ask’ and *hivily* ‘will buy’ are now in the same tense, the Future tense.

We are concluding now that the verb of the complement clause that has its own subject is always in Future tense whatever the tense of the manipulation verb of the main clause is. We can draw a chart to show that.

Main clause (manipulation verb)	Complement clause
Present	Future
Past	Future
Future	Future

That is so because in such a sentence there are two different agents, the manipulator in the main clause and the manipulee in the complement clause. And then, like we saw in V.5, the use of the Future tense here does not mean that it expresses an action or a state that will happen after the time of speaking, but it simply conveys that the action of the manipulee always happens after the asking or the order of the manipulator.

VI.3 Going along with a PCU Verb

PCU is a so large class grouping verbs of perception, of cognition, and of utterance.

There is no rule that makes them equal because the verbs of perception and of

utterance always require a direct object that is the subject of the complement clause, while the verb of cognition does not require that.

We will take as examples the verbs *mahita* ‘see’ (for perception), *mahay* ‘know’ (for cognition), and *mitalily* ‘tell / narrate’ (for utterance).

Examples;

(70) *Mahita ajà mitsinjaky aho.*

M -a- hita ajà m -i- tsinjaky aho.

PRS-D- see child PRS -D- dance 1SG

‘I see a child dancing’.

In this example (70) the two verbs *mahita* ‘see’ and *mitsinjaky* ‘dance’ are all in Present tense. As *mahita* ‘see’ is a verb of perception it has *ajà* ‘child’ a direct object.

So, in the sentence (70) the complement clause is embedded within the main clause.

What will be happened if we change the tense of *Mahita* into Past or Future?

(71) *Nahita ajà nitsinjaky aho lihaniky.*

N -a- hita ajà n -i- tsinjaky aho lihaniky.

PST-D- see child PST -D- dance 1SG just

Saw child danced I just

‘I just saw a child dancing’.

The two verbs *nahita* ‘see’ and *nitsinjaky* ‘dance’ are all in Past tense.

(72) *Hahita ajà hitsinjaky aho hamaray.*

H -a- hita ajà h -i- tsinjaky aho hamaray.

FUT-D- see child FUT -D- dance 1SG tomorrow

Will see child will dance I tomorrow

‘I will see a child dancing tomorrow’.

The two verbs *hahita* ‘will see’ and *hitsinjaky* ‘will dance’ are all in Future tense.

We are concluding now that the two verbs are always in the same tense. That is so because the two actions happen at the same time. What is seen now is happened now.

What was seen yesterday was happened yesterday. And what shall be seen tomorrow shall happen tomorrow.

We can draw a chart to show that.

Main clause (verb of perception)	Complement clause
Present	Present
Past	Past
Future	Future

As for a verb of cognition it has two possibilities. It can take immediately another verb like the modality verb does, but it can have a direct object that is the subject of its complement clause like a manipulation verb does.

Examples;

(73) *Mahay manao vola Masikoro aho.*

M -a- hay m -an- (t)ao vola Masikoro aho.

PRS-D- know PRS -D- do speak Masikoro 1SG

Know do speak Masikoro I

‘I know to speak Masikoro’.

In this example we have an immediate succession of a verb of cognition *Mahay*

‘know’ and its verb-complement *manao* ‘do’. They are all in Present tense.

(74) *Nahay nanao vola Masikoro Rostvig*²⁶.

N -a- hay n -an- (t)ao vola Masikoro Rostvig.

PST-D- know PST -D- do speak Masikoro Rostvig

Knew did speak Masikoro Rostvig

‘Rostvig knew to speak Masikoro’.

The two verbs are all in Past tense.

(75) *Hahay hanao vola Masikoro nareo.*

H -a- hay h -an- (t)ao vola Masikoro nareo.

FUT-D- know FUT -D- do speak Masikoro 2PL

Know do speak Masikoro you

‘You will know to speak Masikoro’.

The two verbs are all in Future tense.

These three examples (73), (74), and (75) are for an immediate succession. As we already told above, taking a direct object is another possibility with a verb of cognition.

²⁶ Rostvig was the first Norwegian Lutheran missionary who worked in Masikoro region (1874).

Examples;

(76) *Mahay olo mandoko traño aho.*

M -a- hay olo m -an- d(l)oko traño aho.

PRS-D- know people PRS -D- paint house 1SG

Know people paint house I

‘I know one who paints house’. / ‘I know a house-painter’.

In this example (76) the verb *Mahay* ‘know’ has *olo* ‘people’ a direct object.

Corresponding to (73) the two verbs are in Present tense.

(77) *Nahay olo nandoko traño aho.*

N -a- hay olo n -an- d(l)oko traño aho.

PST-D-know people PST -D- paint house 1SG

Knew people painted house I

‘I knew one who paints house’. / ‘I knew a house-painter’.

Corresponding to (74) the two verbs are in Past tense.

(78) *Hahay olo handoko traño aho.*

H -a- hay olo h -an- d(l)oko traño aho.

FUT-D-know people FUT -D- paint house 1SG

Will know people will paint house I

‘I will know one who paints house’. / ‘I will know a house-painter’.

Corresponding to (75) the two verbs are in Future tense.

We are concluding now that a verb of cognition and its verb-complement are always in the same tense.

On the other hand the verb ‘know’ (hence *mahay*) is considered as a stative verb. As

for these stative verbs, Saeed says:

“These verbs allow the speaker to view a situation as a steady state,...
Moreover the speaker does not overtly focus on the beginning or end of
the state” (2003: 119).

That means the focus is on the actual existence of what is known.

In addition to that, especially for the verb *mahay* ‘know’ used here, it does not express knowledge as a result of a study or learning, but expresses a seeing. The action of knowing / seeing coincides with the actual existence of something or someone known

or seen. One knows now something that has existence now. That is why a verb of cognition and its verb-complement are always in the same tense.

We can draw a chart to show that.

Main clause (verb of cognition)	Complement clause
Present	Present
Past	Past
Future	Future

For verbs of utterance like *mitality* ‘tell / talk’ they always require a direct or indirect object that is the subject in the complement clause. And what does it differ this last one from all above is that the complement clause has its independence from the main clause concerning the tense.

Examples;

(79) *Mitalily olo nangalatsy maly zao ie.*

M -i- talily olo n -an- g(h)alatsy maly zao ie.
 PRS-D- talk people PST-D- steal yesterday that 3SG
 Talks people stole yesterday that he
 ‘He talks about that one who stole yesterday’.

In this example we have two clauses;

-the main clause with verb in Present tense:

Mitalily ie.

M -i- talily ie.
 PRS-D- talk 3SG
 Talks he
 ‘He talks’.

-the complement clause with verb in Past tense:

olo nangalatsy maly zao.

olo n -an- g(h)alatsy maly zao.
 people PST-D- steal yesterday that
 people stole yesterday that
 ‘that people who stole yesterday’.

So, in (79) the two verbs are in different tenses. This is so because the two actions happen in different times. The action *Mitalily* ‘talks’ is in the time of speaking, talking about the action *nangalatsy* ‘stole’ someone did yesterday.

Also, one can say:

(80) *Nitalily olo nangalatsy maly zao ie.*
N -i- talily olo n -an- g(h)alatsy maly zao ie.
 PST-D- talk people PST-D- steal yesterday that 3SG
 Talked people stole yesterday that he
 ‘He talked about that one who stole yesterday’.

The two verbs are in all in Past tense, telling us that the two actions all happened some time before the time of speaking.

Or,

(81) *Hitalily olo nangalatsy maly zao ie.*
H -i- talily olo n -an- g(h)alatsy maly zao ie.
 FUT-D- talk people PST-D- steal yesterday that 3SG
 Will talk people stole yesterday that he
 ‘He will talk about that one who stole yesterday’.

The two verbs are in different tenses. *Hitalily* ‘will talk’ is in Future, telling the audience that a witness comes to talk about what he knows about someone who stole yesterday.

We see that since the example (79) *nangalatsy* ‘stole’ remains to be in Past tense. But, that is not a rule, we can say another construction:

(82) *Mitalily olo hangalatsy zao ie.*
M -i- talily olo h -an- g(h)alatsy zao ie.
 PRS-D- talk people FUT-D- steal that 3SG
 talks people will steal that he
 ‘He talks about that one who will steal’.

Assume that there is a rumor that there is a robber who plans to steal in a village but some witness forecasts that plan.

The two actions are in different tenses. The action *Mitalily* ‘talks’ is in Present, telling people about what will happen some time later. The action *hanganalatsy* ‘steal’ is in Future because it is not happened yet.

We see that the complement clause of a verb of utterance has no dependence on it concerning the tense. So, there is no rule for the relation between the two verbs.

A succession of two verbs is frequently a fact in Masikoro.

It is the first main verb that has a status to be a true expression of time.

As for the second verb it may be an expression of time too as we have just seen above where the first verb is either of perception or of utterance or of cognition. Or it is just an equivalence of infinitive in English whatever its tense form is, as we see in VI.1, where the first verb is a modality verb. Or it simply conveys that the action always in Future happens after another action included in the main clause of a manipulation verb.

VII. CONCLUSION

“Tenses in Masikoro” is the topic we have studied in this linguistic project.

By a careful morphological and semantic study that shows significant differences between the ‘Malagasy Ofisialy’ and this language in examination we acknowledge that Masikoro cannot be controlled entirely by the traditional grammar of Malagasy Ofisialy because their differences possibly involve different rules.

We explored in detail the clear existence of the three basic tenses, the Present, the Past, and the Future, with all their covered time references, with their forms, their markers, and their meanings.

In form we have seen that tenses are marked by inflectional prefixes on the verb’s root; **m-** for the Present, **n-** for the Past, and **h-** or the independent **ho** for the Future.

In meaning, these three tenses have each two important roles.

First role: they truly express times, such as the Present tense for a situation concurrent with the act of speaking, the Past tense for a situation prior to the act of speaking, and Future tense for a situation following the act of speaking. Two groups of time references have been discussed: those in which verbs go alone to convey the whole meaning of sentences and those in which temporal adverbs or adverbial phrases, and even prepositions are required to convey precisions on time.

Second role: they express some things else having less relation with times.

We have seen that the Present tense may have future meaning and is used to express the primacy in completion for an action interdependent with another action in Future.

The Past continued into present expresses a situation started in the past and not finished yet at the time of speaking.

The Future tense may be used with the Past to exhibit an unaccomplished intention due to either an incomplete condition or a prohibition.

Also the Future tense is used in past, for a clause surrounded by *ie* ‘when’ to express a situation that was about to be in process but hindered by an unexpected happening.

It is very clear now for tenses in Masikoro are just labels, common forms for groups of meaningful time references that are expressed by their appropriate adverbs.

As for these adverbs, precisely temporal adverbs or adverbial phrases, or prepositions related to temporal adverbs, they have important role, going with verbs to convey the true meaning of the sentence and to give precise time.

Some of the adverbs are specially for only one tense like *henane* ‘nowadays’ and *henane zao* ‘right now’ for Present tense, *baky* ‘from’, *betibety* ‘some time ago’, *nankaly* ‘last night’, *maly* ‘yesterday’, *nimaray* ‘this morning’, and *vola nimaty* ‘last month’, *tseky* ‘first’ and *taloha* ‘before’ or *vo* ‘then’ for Past tense, and *hamaray* ‘tomorrow’, *fakamaray* ‘the day after tomorrow’, *kanikaniky* ‘after a while’, and adverbial phrases like *vola ho peaky* ‘next month’ for Future tense.

The subordinator *lafa* ‘when’ can be used with all tenses. The conjunctions *laha* ‘if’ and *fe* ‘but’ are used with the Future tense exhibiting an unaccomplished intention due to either an incomplete condition or a prohibition.

Finally, a succession either immediate or not of two verbs is a fact in Masikoro that show again that tenses may express other thing than time references. We pick two distinguished evidences. When the first verb is a modality verb the second one whatever its tense is an equivalence of infinitive in English. And when the first verb is

a manipulation verb the second one that is always in Future simply conveys that the action always in Future happens after another action.

Tenses in Masikoro are, first expression of time references, and second expression of order of happening or infinitive equivalence.

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