THE SYSTEM OF TENSES IN HINDI GRAMMAR: STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONS AND LINGUISTIC FEATURES

ATABAYEVA FARANGIZ
4TH COURSE STUDENT THE ENGLISH FACULTY 1 UZSWLU

SCIENTIFIC SUPERVISOR: **YORMATOVA AZIZA**
SENIOR TEACHER ENGLISH LANGUAGE FACULTY 3, UZSWLU
DOI:https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.24465346

ABSTRACT: The Hindi language has a rich grammatical system that plays an important role in expressing thoughts, ideas, events and actions. One of the fundamental components of Hindi grammar is the tense system. Tense is a grammatical category that indicates the time of an action or state in relation to the moment of speaking. In Hindi, the expression of tense is closely connected with verb forms, aspect, gender, number and auxiliary verbs. The purpose of this article is to examine the main characteristics of the tense system in Hindi grammar, identify the structural differences between present, past and future tenses, and analyse their functions through linguistic examples. Special attention is given to the relationship between tense and aspect, as well as the importance of grammatical agreement in Hindi sentences. The study demonstrates that understanding the tense system is essential for developing grammatical competence and effective communication in Hindi.

Keywords: Hindi language, Hindi grammar, tense, verb system, present tense, past tense, future tense, aspect, grammatical structure, linguistic analysis.

Introduction

Language is one of the most important means of human communication. It allows people to express their thoughts, feelings, experiences and opinions. Grammar provides the structural foundation of a language and determines how words are combined to form meaningful sentences.

Hindi is an Indo-Aryan language belonging to the Indo-European language family. It is widely spoken in India and by communities in different parts of the world. Hindi has a developed grammatical structure that includes nouns, pronouns, adjectives, postpositions, verbs and other linguistic categories.

Among these grammatical categories, tense occupies a particularly important position. It helps speakers indicate whether an action takes place in the present, happened in the past or is expected to occur in the future.

The study of Hindi tenses is important not only for native speakers but also for foreign language learners. A clear understanding of tense structures makes it easier to construct grammatically correct sentences, understand written texts and participate in everyday conversations.

The main objective of this article is to analyse the tense system in Hindi grammar, explain its principal forms and examine the grammatical rules that influence the use of verbs.

1. The Concept of Tense in Hindi Grammar

Tense is a grammatical category that expresses the time of an action or situation. In Hindi, tense is generally discussed through three major temporal categories: present, past and future.

© Ushbu material Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) litsenziyasi asosida tarqatiladi.

However, the Hindi verbal system is more complex than a simple division into three tenses. Aspect also plays an important role in describing whether an action is continuing, completed or habitual.

Hindi verbs change their forms according to grammatical requirements. The form of a verb may depend on gender, number and the grammatical construction of the sentence.

For example, the verb पढ़ना (paṛhnā), meaning "to read" or "to study", can appear in different forms:

पढ़ता हूँ – I study (masculine speaker).

पढ़ती हूँ – I study (feminine speaker).

पढ़ रहा हूँ – I am studying (masculine speaker).

पढ़ रही हूँ – I am studying (feminine speaker).

These examples demonstrate that Hindi verbs contain important grammatical information.

2. Present Tense in Hindi

The present tense is used to describe actions that occur at the moment of speaking, habitual activities and general facts.

In Hindi, present-time meanings can be expressed through different grammatical constructions.

2.1. Simple or Habitual Present

The habitual present describes actions that happen regularly or repeatedly.

Examples:

मैं स्कूल जाता हूँ। – I go to school.

वह किताब पढ़ती है। – She reads a book.

हम हिंदी सीखते हैं। – We learn Hindi.

The habitual form is generally constructed using the appropriate verb stem, habitual participle and a form of the auxiliary verb होना (honā).

2.2. Present Progressive

The present progressive describes an action that is happening at the moment of speaking.

Examples:

मैं खाना खा रहा हूँ। – I am eating food.

वह गाना गा रही है। – She is singing a song.

बच्चे खेल रहे हैं। – The children are playing.

The progressive construction uses the verb form ending in रहा, रही or रहे together with an appropriate auxiliary verb.

The choice of form depends on the gender and number of the subject.

2.3. Present Perfect

The present perfect construction is used to describe completed actions that have relevance to the present.

Example:

© Ushbu material Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) litsenziyasi asosida tarqatiladi.

मैंने अपना काम पूरा किया है। – I have completed my work.

This construction combines a completed-action form with the auxiliary verb है or its corresponding forms.

3. Past Tense in Hindi

The past tense is used to describe events and actions that occurred before the moment of speaking. It is an important grammatical category in storytelling, historical descriptions and everyday communication.

Hindi uses several constructions to express past-time meanings.

3.1. Simple Past

The simple past generally expresses completed actions.

Examples:

राम ने खाना खाया। – Ram ate food.

मैंने एक पत्र लिखा। – I wrote a letter.

उसने किताब खरीदी। – He or she bought a book.

In many transitive perfective constructions, the marker ने (ne) is used with the subject. The agreement of the verb may then depend on the object, especially when the object is not marked by को.

3.2. Past Progressive

The past progressive describes an action that was continuing at a particular time in the past.

Examples:

मैं पढ़ रहा था। – I was studying.

वह खाना बना रही थी। – She was cooking.

बच्चे खेल रहे थे। – The children were playing.

This construction uses रहा, रही or रहे together with the past forms of the auxiliary verb होना.

3.3. Past Habitual

The past habitual describes actions that happened regularly in the past.

Examples:

मैं रोज स्कूल जाता था। – I used to go to school every day.

वह शाम को किताब पढ़ती थी। – She used to read a book in the evening.

This form is particularly useful when describing past routines and repeated activities.

4. Future Tense in Hindi

The future tense expresses actions, events or situations that are expected to take place after the moment of speaking.

It is frequently used in everyday conversations, plans, predictions and promises.

Examples:

मैं कल दिल्ली जाऊँगा। – I will go to Delhi tomorrow.

© Ushbu material Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) litsenziyasi asosida tarqatiladi.

वह हिंदी सीखेगी। – She will learn Hindi.

हम परीक्षा देंगे। – We will take the examination.

The future forms of Hindi verbs vary according to person, number and gender.

For example:

मैं जाऊँगा। – I will go (masculine).

मैं जाऊँगी। – I will go (feminine).

वे जाएँगे। – They will go.

The future tense is an essential part of communication because it allows speakers to discuss intentions, expectations and future activities.

5. The Role of Gender and Number in Hindi Verbs

One of the distinctive features of Hindi grammar is grammatical agreement. Unlike English, Hindi frequently marks gender and number in its verb constructions.

Hindi distinguishes between masculine and feminine grammatical forms. It also distinguishes between singular and plural forms.

For example:

लड़का पढ़ता है। – The boy studies.

लड़की पढ़ती है। – The girl studies.

लड़के पढ़ते हैं। – The boys study.

लड़कियाँ पढ़ती हैं। – The girls study.

These examples demonstrate that the verb form changes according to the grammatical characteristics of the subject.

Understanding gender and number agreement is therefore an important part of learning Hindi grammar.

6. The Role of Auxiliary Verbs in Hindi

Auxiliary verbs are an essential component of the Hindi verbal system. They help form different tense and aspect constructions. The verb होना (honā), meaning "to be", is especially important.

Some common forms include:

हूँ (hũ)

है (hai)

हैं (hain)

था (thā)

थी (thī)

थे (the)

© Ushbu material Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) litsenziyasi asosida tarqatiladi.

These forms are used in different grammatical environments.
For example:

मैं विद्यार्थी हूँ। – I am a student.

वह घर पर है। – He or she is at home.

मैं खुश था। – I was happy.

वे तैयार थे। – They were ready.

Auxiliary verbs help express temporal relationships and grammatical agreement. Their correct use is necessary for constructing natural and grammatically accurate Hindi sentences.

7. Comparison of Hindi and English Tense Systems

The Hindi and English languages both use grammatical structures to express time. However, their tense systems are not identical.

English generally uses auxiliary verbs such as "am", "is", "are", "have", "has", "will" and "was" to form different tense constructions.

Hindi, on the other hand, frequently uses participial forms, auxiliary verbs and grammatical agreement to express similar meanings.

For example:

English Hindi

I study. मैं पढ़ता हूँ।

I am studying. मैं पढ़ रहा हूँ।

I studied. मैंने पढ़ा।

I was studying. मैं पढ़ रहा था।

I will study. मैं पढ़ूँगा।

This comparison shows that the two languages use different grammatical mechanisms to communicate temporal meanings.

For students learning Hindi as a foreign language, comparing Hindi and English structures can help identify similarities and differences between the languages.

8. Common Difficulties in Learning Hindi Tenses

Foreign language learners may experience several difficulties when studying Hindi tense constructions.

First, grammatical gender can be challenging because learners must remember the appropriate masculine and feminine verb forms.

Second, the use of auxiliary verbs requires attention to the subject and sentence structure.

Third, the marker ने in certain past-tense constructions can be difficult for learners whose native languages do not have an equivalent grammatical marker.

Another common difficulty is distinguishing between habitual, progressive and perfective meanings.

These difficulties can be reduced through regular reading, writing, listening and speaking exercises.

© Ushbu material Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) litsenziyasi asosida tarqatiladi.

The use of example sentences, grammatical tables and practical communication activities can also improve learners' understanding of Hindi tense structures.

9. The Importance of Studying Hindi Grammar

Grammar is essential for developing language proficiency. Knowledge of grammatical rules helps learners construct meaningful sentences and communicate more accurately.

The study of tenses is particularly important because almost every conversation involves references to time.

By learning the Hindi tense system, students can describe daily routines, discuss past experiences, explain current activities and make plans for the future.

Furthermore, grammatical knowledge supports the development of reading comprehension, writing skills and translation abilities.

Therefore, Hindi grammar should be studied systematically, beginning with basic grammatical categories and gradually progressing towards more complex constructions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the tense system is one of the fundamental components of Hindi grammar. It provides speakers with the grammatical means to express actions and situations in different periods of time.

The three major temporal categories—present, past and future—form the basic framework for understanding Hindi tense constructions. At the same time, aspect, gender, number and auxiliary verbs contribute to the complexity of the verbal system.

The analysis presented in this article demonstrates that Hindi tense constructions have specific grammatical characteristics that distinguish them from those of English and other languages.

A systematic understanding of these structures is important for both theoretical linguistic research and practical language learning.

Further study of Hindi grammar can contribute to a deeper understanding of the language, improve translation skills and support effective intercultural communication.

References

1. McGregor, R. S. (1995). Outline of Hindi Grammar, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2. Snell, R., &Weightman, S. (2003). Teach Yourself Hindi, London: Hodder Education.
3. Kachru, Y. (2006). Hindi. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
4. Shapiro, M.C. (2003). Hindi. In G. Cardona & D. Jain (Eds.), The Indo-Aryan Languages. Languages. London: Routledge.
5. Masica, C. P. (1991). The Indo-Aryan Languages. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
6. Kellogg, S. H. (1876). A Grammar of the Hindi Language. London. Kegan Paul, Trench.

© Ushbu material Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) litsenziyasi asosida tarqatiladi.