**Tense and Aspect in Hamar**

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**Abstract**

This study deals with the linguistic description of the tense and aspect system of Hamar. Hamar is an Aroid language of the Omotic language family and it is an SOV language. It is spoken by close to 46,000 native speakers. The people are mainly semi-pastoralists and the majority live in the South Omo Zone of the Southern Nations Nationalities Peoples regional state in Ethiopia. The paper examines the different ways in which tense and aspect are expressed in the language. The study also includes discussion of the Hamar’s tense/aspect system in light of typological observations made by different authors including Bhat (1999) and Comrie (1985). It has been noted that the language has two sets of different systems in the affirmative and negative paradigms. In the affirmative Hamar has five tense/aspect categories, namely simple past, remote past, present perfect, present and progressive. On the other hand, in the negative, the tense/aspect categories are reduced to three giving an evidence of neutralization (cf. Binyam 2016). The way in which tense/aspect is marked in the language ranges from the use of morphemes to the use of complex verbal forms which include existential verbs.